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**Tour Name:** Sambo Prei Kuk World Heritage Site Full Day Excursion

**Tour Code:** A1M

**Tour Duration:** 1 day

**Tour Operates:** all year round / on demand

**Number of Pax:** available upon request

**Tour Price:** available upon request

### **Pick-up and drop off location**

Can be anywhere upon request

Hotel in Siem Reap

Upon arrival in Siem Reap airport

Upon arrival in Siem Reap bus station

Upon arrival in boat pier in Chong Kneah floating village

Any AirBnB and residences in Siem Reap.

### **Pick-up and drop-off direction**

Kindly provide your pick-up and drop-off styles for direction!

### **SAMBO PREI KUK TEMPLE GROUP**

**Sambo Prei Kuk** – in the morning, you will be met and welcomed by our English speaking guide, picked up and transferred onward to Sambor Prei Kuk.

Prasat Sambor Prei Kuk is an archaeological site in Cambodia located in Kampong Thom Province, 30 km (19 mi) north of Kampong Thom, the provincial capital, 176 km (109 mi) east of Angkor and 206 km (128 mi) north of Phnom Penh. The now ruined complex dates back to the Pre-Angkorian Chenla Kingdom (late 6th to 9th century), established by king Isanavarman I as central royal sanctuary and capital, known then as Isanapura. In 2017, Sambor Prei Kuk was declared as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Located on the Eastern bank of the Tonle Sap lake, close to the Sen River, the central part of Sambor Prei Kuk is divided into three main groups. Each group has a square layout surrounded by a brick wall. The structures of the overall archaeological area were constructed at variable times: the southern and north groups (7th century) by Isanavarman I, who is considered a possible founder of the city and the central group (later date).

The buildings of Sambor Prei Kuk are characteristic of the Pre-Angkorean period with a simple external plan. The principal material is brick, but sandstone is also used for certain structures. Architectural features include numerous prasats, octagonal towers, shiva lingams and yonis, ponds and reservoirs, and lion sculptures. Sambor Prei Kuk is located amidst mature sub-tropical forests with limited undergrowth. The area has been mined and could still contain unexploded ordnance.

### **The Clusters**

The whole compound is made of three clusters classified as group C for Central, N for North and S for South (Michon & Kalay, 2012). They are enclosed in a double-walled encircling 1,000 acre in which there were 150 Hindu temples today mostly in ruins.

**1. Group N:** is considered the main temple and it dates from the 7th century. It was dedicated to one of the



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reincarnations of Shiva known as Gambhiresvara (from Sanskrit गम्भीर - gambhir, profound, deep, solemn - and शिव, shvara, Shiva, Śiva, The Auspicious One).

**2. Group S:** Prasat Yeah Puon includes 22 sanctuaries dated from the 7th century (600 - 635 AD) during the reign of Isanavarman I in dedication to Shiva.

**3. Group C:** It is occupied by the Central Sanctuary or Prasat Boram with lion sculptures that had inspired the popular name of Prasat Tao (The Lions' Temple). It is, however, the newest group dating the 9th century. The other main feature is the Tower of Ashram Issey, but there were also other constructions (18 temples) now in ruined (Palmer, 2011).

### 7th century

Isanavarman I reigned over the Chenla Kingdom between 616 and 637 AD, taking Isanapura as his capital and it is argued that he built the main temple Prasat Sambor (Group N), as there is an inscription on the site attributed to his reign and dated 13 September 627 AD. The king is also known for sending his first embassy to the court of the Sui Dynasty in China (616-617). Chenla conquered different principalities in the Northwest of Cambodia after the end of the Chinese reign period yǒnghuī (永徽) (i. e. after 31 January 656), which previously (in 638/39) paid tribute to China.

The last important king in Isanapura was Jayavarman I, whose death caused turmoil to the kingdom at the start of the 8th century, breaking it in many principalities and opening the way to a new time: Angkor. This site is also claimed as an early capital of Jayavarman II (O'Reilly & Jacques, 1990).

### 20th century

After the Lon Nol's coup d'état to Prince Norodom Sihanouk in 1970, US President Richard Nixon ordered a secret bombing of Cambodia to fight the Khmer Rouge guerrillas and any influence of North Vietnam in the country. The US aircraft bombed positions inside the archaeological site, causing craters near the temples, while the guerrillas left several mines on the land that were cleared only in 2008.

This site was added to the UNESCO World Heritage Tentative List on January 1, 1992 in the Cultural category.

Lunch at local restaurant (at your own costs)

### Official religion

The official religion at Sambor Prei Kuk city was Shaivism, one of the four most widely followed sects of Hinduism, which reveres the god Shiva as the Supreme Being and the Lingam (in Sanskrit लिङ्गं, liṅgam, meaning "mark", "sign", or "inference") or Shiva linga representing Shiva to be worshiped in temples. In Cambodia as it is in India, the lingam is a symbol of the energy and potential of god Shiva himself and this phallic symbol is often represented with the Yoni (Sanskrit: योनि yoni, literally "vagina" or "womb"), symbol of goddess Shakti, female creative energy.

Shaivism was the religion of Chenla (ca. 550 - ca. 800 AD), including elements of Hinduism, Buddhism and indigenous ancestor cults. In the Sambor Prei Kuk temples, it is possible to contemplate stone inscriptions in both Sanskrit and Khmer, naming both Hindu and local ancestral deities with Shiva and several altars with the lingam.

Return to Siem Reap.

**TOUR ENDS**



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### PRICE

- private solo tour: USD220
- private tour for 2 persons: USD118 per person
- private tour for 3 persons: USD83 per person
- private tour for 4 persons: USD65 per person
- private tour for 5 persons: USD56 per person
- private tour for 6 persons: USD50 per person
- private tour for 7 persons: USD45 per person
- private tour for 8 persons: USD41 per person
- private tour for 9 persons: USD38 per person
- the more people, the better price.

### INCLUDED

- Full tours and transfers by private luxury A/C vehicle
- English speaking guide
- Sambo Prei Kuk ticket.

### EXCLUDED

- Meals not mentioned
- Accommodation
- Visa fees \$30 (visa on arrival, please bring 1 of your recent passport-size photo to visit your Cambodia visa). Southeast Asian passport holders do not require a Cambodian visa
- Drinks, laundry, telephone calls, tips and expenditure of a personal nature
- Personal travel insurance
- Any services not mentioned in itinerary.

### Creating Unique Touring Experiences

Our expert travel team has planned your trip so that you can experience the very best of what Cambodia Vietnam, Laos and Thailand have to offer. We understand that many will have various needs and wants for each particular tour that may not be included in an itinerary. We will plan any tour to meet your particular demands. Please **Send inquiry>>>**

Or feel free to contact us at

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