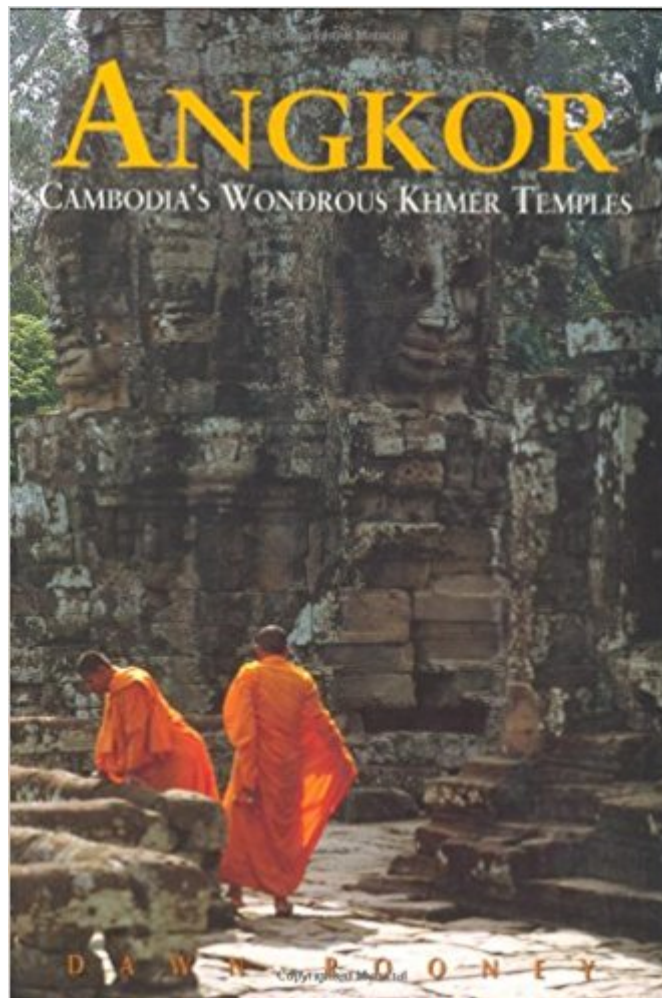




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Angkor: Cambodia's Wondrous Khmer Temples, Fifth Edition (Odyssey Illustrated Guide)



Synopsis

The great legacy of the ancient Khmer civilization, the temples of Angkor cover an area of over 77 square miles in northwest Cambodia. These monuments, built between the ninth and 15th centuries, the classic period of Khmer art, are unrivaled in architect

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

An excellent guide, well-written, with beautiful photographs. -- The New York Times
Don't leave home without Angkor by Dawn Rooney. -- San Francisco Chronicle

American-born, Dawn Rooney has spent many years researching art history in Southeast Asia. Awarded a PhD in art history in 1983, she has written a number of books on Cambodian and Thai art and culture and has contributed to *Oriental Art* and numerous other journals. She lives in Bangkok. Magnus Bartlett was born in the Orkney Islands, Scotland. He studied at the London School of Film Technique and taught at the Royal College of Art before moving to Asia where he is now based. Born in Cleveland, Ohio, and educated at Minnesota in computer science and East Asian studies, Peter Danford is a freelance photographer and multimedia developer based in Australia.

ANGKOR, Cambodia's Wondrous Khmer Temples is not only a very practical guide for visiting the Khmer monuments at the Angkor archaeological park but also for visiting the Khmer monuments in

Phnom Penh. Furthermore this guidebook includes the most important remote temples (Banteay Chhmar, Koh Ker, Preah Vihaer, Beng Mealea). Apart from a clear description of each temple it also gives a description from their location and from the access. Important to mention also is the fact it gives a short but clear insight in the old epics (Mahabharata, Ramayana etc.) and legends and this book includes a list of the most forthcoming gods, deities and divinities which makes it easier to understand the bas-reliefs of the Khmer art and architecture. The book also includes general and practical tourist information as well as for Siem Reap as for Phnom Penh. Together with the book from Michael Freeman and Claude Jacques "Ancient Angkor" and the book from Jean Laur "Angkor, temples and monuments" one will have the most actual existing complete information about the Khmer art and architecture in Cambodia. Ancient Angkor (River Book Guides)

I just returned from Cambodia and am very glad I had the guidebook with me. Yes, it is heavy, but well worth the extra space and weight in your tote or backpack. There isn't a local guide who will tell you more. Even if he could, his broken English will make the delivery less than fluid. The only annoying thing in the book were a number of pictures not matched up with the temples being described on the adjacent page. There are many such instances. One learns to read the picture captions carefully.

This book has every possible detail you need to make your experience better. I got this book because I was impressed on the information it contained for each temple, and especially as a photograph enthusiast, this book gives plenty of hints where to be to get the best pictures.

If you are like me and avoid tour guides as much as possible, but still like to know about the places you are visiting, then this book is for you. It gives excellent descriptions of the temples. It has lots of background information on the history and on the art you'll see. It also contains wonderful photography. Plus, it has lots of general information on traveling in Cambodia including a section on Phnom Penh. If you are doing a basic Cambodia visit of Siem Reap and Phnom Penh, then this book is all you really need. My only complaint is that it is a big book, bigger than other tour books like Lonely Planet or Rough Guide. This is a problem if you are trying to travel as light as possible. However, I still recommend taking it. A general suggestion for visiting the temples: be aware that they are now apparently the second most visited tourist destination in Asia. Lots of Asian tour groups everywhere. To avoid them, go early! Get going at 6AM (or even earlier and go see the sunrise over Angkor Wat!). Then you'll have the temples to yourself for a couple of hours. Midday,

when the tours go back to their hotels for lunch is also good, as is late afternoon/early evening. But even with the tour groups around, it is still an amazing place!

This is, without doubt, THE must-have guide to the Angkor area. Dawn Rooney writes with clarity, thoroughness and a balanced view of the monuments without talking down to (or over the head of) the reader. Some books on this area read like travel brochures, others like snobby scholarly textbooks. Ms. Rooney's book strikes the perfect balance between the two. I'm a research-aholic about my travel, and collect guide books by the dozens. This is one of the best I've read anywhere, about any area. This revised edition features tons of full-color photographs, good maps and many, many touring tips. I especially liked the fact that she talks about when to visit certain areas, where the best photography opportunities are, along with what makes each temple/monument unique. The first portion of this book gives a "just-the-right-depth" overview of the history of the area, plus overviews of the artistic styles, royal lineages, construction methods, restoration efforts, etc. Then the second portion goes into detail about each monument - grouped into logical touring sequences. I cannot recommend this book highly enough. If you've been searching for a guide book to the Angkor area - end your search now. This is the one.

After 6 days in Siem Reap with a licensed guide, this book is 'Cliff Notes' to what the guide tells you. I don't recommend touring the temples without a licensed guide, unless you want a quick, superficial tour. The only book that contains info on the temple Koh Ker (3 hours from Siem Reap, built in 900 AD) & the Preaek Toal Bird Sanctuary (2.5 hours by boat across Tonle Sap Lake). If you want to truly enjoy & understand the carvings, the history (Buddhist & Hindu) & culture of what you see, read this book before you depart (it's too heavy to take), hire a licensed guide (not a driver who cannot legally take you inside the temples) who is trained to explain how the temples were built (different materials & methods) & what the carvings depict (Hindu mythology, Buddhist kings). Then when you return, reread the sections on the temples you visited... and it will bring back a flood of images & memories. Floor plans are confusing, pictures scant, but her historical descriptions & distances are accurate, lesser known, less touristy temples are included for the adventurous or art lover.

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