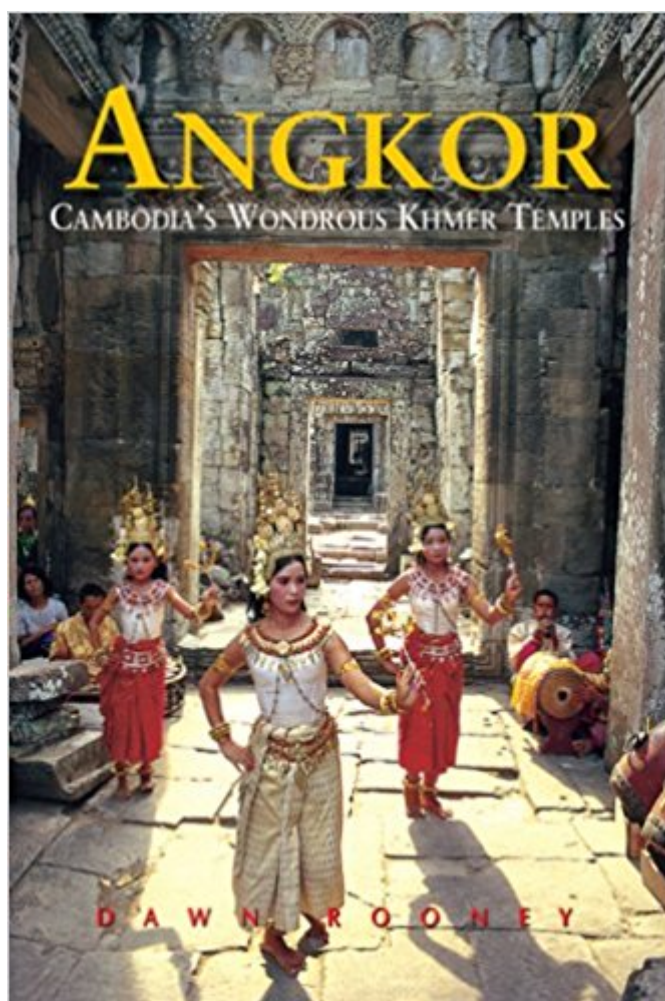


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Angkor: Cambodia's Wondrous Khmer Temples (Odyssey Illustrated Guides)



Synopsis

The great legacy of the ancient Khmer civilization, the temples of Angkor cover an area well over 200 square kilometers (77 square miles) in northwest Cambodia. These monuments, built between the ninth and 15th centuries; the classic period of Khmer ar

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.

This book is one of the best travel guides I have ever had in my hands (full disclosure: I am a fanatic when it comes to ancient cultures, something not every reader will share). Where to start? Rooney, a PhD in art history, offers a detailed description of all major and minor temples, suggested paths to explore them, and fascinating background info. Each temple is shown in a photograph, a drawn map is provided, and all relevant info given in a concise way (i.e., time built, period, king, religion).

This is not your typical Lonely Planet or Rough Guide. This is a thick, heavy book for those interested in diving into the culture and history of one of the wonders of the world. When my girlfriend and I spent 7 days in Siam Reap, we relied on this book to select the sites most interesting to us. The author groups temples in half-day visits in order to allow the visitor to plan her time better - a very smart approach as most people are overwhelmed by the sheer number of possible temples and regrettably just follow the standard tourist routes (Small and Grand Tour Circuit). With Rooney's book in your hands, you don't need a human guide anymore, just a tuktuk driver or a rented mountain bike to carry you around. The book offers so much more, though. While probably designed as an after-thought, Rooney provides hotel and restaurant recommendations for both Siam Reap and Phnom-Penh. We found them to be more accurate than a second travel guide on Cambodia that we had brought along. We also have to credit Rooney to encourage us to visit the wonderful capital of Phnom Penh and its spectacular National Museum BEFORE heading out to the temples. There was no better introduction into the Khmer life than wandering through the museum in Phom Penh. Most visitors come only once in their life to Siam Reap to explore the temples. Most regret spending only a few days there. If you are blessed to be able to visit the temples, do it right - take Rooney's guide with you in order to really get your arms around the Khmer culture and explore exciting smaller temples many tourist fail to visit.

The 6th Edition is misrepresented on the website, which states that it has "an additional 180 pages of text and more than 80 new color photographs." In fact, the "long awaited" 6th Edition (2011) has exactly one(1) more page about the temple sites than the 5th Edition (2006) -- 404 pages to 403 -- and appears to be virtually unchanged. The book then switches gears to offer general tourism advice for Cambodia in what the 6th Ed. calls "General Information" and the 5th Eds. calls "Practical Information." Much of that is the same also, although with some modest updating. Overall, the 6th Ed. has eight(8) more pages than the 5th Ed. It is hard to see how this glaring promotional inaccuracy could happen. (Of lesser note, the binding on the 6th Edition is just as poor as on the 5th Edition.)

I bought this guide for a trip to Cambodia based on reviews online. I'm a very picky person, so this was a leap of faith to me. It was the best choice I ever made. This guide is amazingly detailed. You feel like you're in Angkor temples. The book provides several step-by-step tour guides to you. It provides tons of information and talks about all Angkor temples, even the ones on the off beaten track. It almost doesn't require a tour guide. If you are in doubt in which guide to buy, this guide should

be your choice.

Having just returned from 4 days in Siem Reap, I found this guide book provided not only a wonderful introduction to the history and architecture, but also detailed information for visiting the specific temples: maps, spotlight photographs, tips, and itinerary routes. The author has made 100 trips to Angkor, and this 2010 book is in its 6th edition (the 5th edition was in 2005). So what are you waiting for? As noted by others, its heavy weight makes it difficult to carry on the actual visits, so read about the specific temples before setting forth. Highly recommended!

This is a great book to have if you are going to visit Angkor Wat or if you are interested in history and archaeology. It gives a brief overview of the history of Angkor temples and civilization, some background on the religions of that period, an overview of the art and architecture of that period, and then the best part is a detailed description of each monument with pictures and maps (lots of maps!) However, I gave 4 stars instead of 5 because the book is too heavy. It feels as heavy as a college textbook. Imagine carrying a college textbook with you on your trip around Cambodia. As a result, it's just inconvenient to take with you on a trip. I'm not sure why it's so expensive. The paper used is the glossy kind, which is difficult to write on if using a pencil. The front and back cover is quite thick for a book. I am still glad I bought it, but I know I will be cursing it as I travel around Cambodia.

This is a very detailed read about the temples in and around Siem Reap Cambodia. While visiting the temples, the sheer number of temples were overwhelming and the information was lost on me. This book gave me detailed information to enjoy. This is an excellent book to read before going to Angkor Wat, read after going, OR simply to read at home about the beauty and splendor of Cambodia - truly a lost nation. The people were amazing and so friendly. I'd recommend the book and highly recommend a visit there.

This book is everything you need to know to visit Angkor Wat. The format is easy to use with background, history, important things to know and exceptional coverage of everything to see in the entire area. It has fantastic maps and diagrams, directions and tips. Do not leave home without it.

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