

Reading Ex. > Angkor Archeological Park: Hard as a Stone

Siem Reap is a small town near the world-famous temple of Angkor Wat. The town is beautiful and worth exploring, with some fine examples of Khmer and French colonial architecture set among the more modern developments. Nowadays, visitors are coming often, using it as a base for visits to the nearby temples.

A Carved City

From roughly AD 802 to AD 1431, when Europe was still fighting of the Dark Ages, the Cambodian Empire of Angkor covered most of present-day Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, and Thailand. The heart of this empire during the 12th century was the ancient capital of *Angkor Thom*, near present day *Siem Reap*, the site of the world's largest temple complexes, which were rediscovered in 1861. Here, visitors can enjoy the spectacular Hindu temple dedicated to Vishnu, *Angkor Wat*, which was built under the reign of King Suryavarman II (1113-1150), and the *Angkor Archeological Park* which covers about 400 square kilometres and is full of the finest examples of *Khmer* art and architecture.



In the park visitors will find thousands of stone structures and temple buildings, each of which contains numerous statues, sculptures and reliefs that have aged extremely little over the last 800 years. They look like fantastic. To see the whole thing can take several days. The most important sites to visit in the area are *Angkor Wat*, especially at sunrise or sunset; *Angkor Thom*, the remains of the capital; *Ta Prohm*, a palace overgrown by jungle; and *Bayon*, a distinctive temple with serene and smiling stone faces of Brahma on the many towers around it.

Considerations to Take into Account

(1) Visas are required (with no exception) to enter Cambodia. Tourists can obtain one on arrival at *Siem Reap International Airport* for US\$20, and one passport photo is required per person. (2) Visitors will also need another passport photo for the *Angkor Temple Entrance Pass*. (3) Tourists should wear comfortable walking shoes, light clothing and plenty of water to drink as it is hot and humid all year round. (4) The most commonly accepted currency in Cambodia is the US dollar.

A. Based on the previous article, decide if the following statements are true (T) or false (F).

	T	F
1. <i>Siem Reap</i> is a famous destination for its modern developments.		
2. Its local architecture seems to have European influence.		
3. The Cambodian empire of Angkor lasted over 12 centuries.		
4. <i>Siem Reap</i> was the previously known city of <i>Angkor Thom</i> .		
5. The construction of <i>Angkor Wat</i> took less than four decades.		
6. The stonework of <i>Angkor Wat</i> is still in good condition.		
7. The park contains iconic examples of classical <i>Khmer</i> architecture.		
8. A visit to the archeological park can take some hours.		
9. Most of temples contain faces of Brahma on their towers.		
10. Tourists who visit Cambodian temples are required to get a pass only.		
11. The weather in Cambodia is consistently very warm.		
12. Cambodia operates on a dollar-currency system only.		



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 Authored by Andrés Barón-Ávila
 MA Education and Technology – UCL – IOE

