

# VIETNAM CAMBODIA



## Cycle Vietnam to Cambodia 25 February - 7 March 2010

A trip of a lifetime - cycle through breathtaking countryside from Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon) to the fascinating temples of Angkor Wat and support the lifesaving work of humanitarian landmine clearance charity MAG.

Registration fee and minimum sponsorship apply.

**Contact MAG for further information**

**Call 0161 236 4311 Email [events@maginternational.org](mailto:events@maginternational.org)**

**[www.maginternational.org/vietnamtocambodia](http://www.maginternational.org/vietnamtocambodia)**



Registered charity 1083008. MAG is a landmine clearance charity and co-laureate of the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize.

**saves lives builds futures**



# Itinerary

This evocative cycle challenge links two countries untouched by modernisation. Both lands of symmetry, symbolisation, and spirituality. We start from the graceful city of Ho Chi Minh and gradually make our way through the paddy fields of southern Vietnam before crossing into Cambodia. We continue past Tonle Sap lake, the life-blood of Cambodia, and onto one of the wonders of the ancient world, the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Angkor Wat.

## DAY 1 DEPART

We depart London on an overnight flight via Seoul.

## DAY 2 ARRIVE VIETNAM

We land in Ho Chi Minh (formally known as Saigon) in the late evening to be met by private bus and transferred to our hotel in the heart of the city. We arrive to a light box dinner before collapsing into our beds!

## DAY 3 HO CHI MINH

Today we have a free morning to explore the wonders of Ho Chi Minh before attending a bike fitting later in the afternoon. In the evening we will sit down to a welcome dinner at a local restaurant and have a short briefing with our guides who will talk us through the adventure ahead.

## DAY 4 TAY NINH

**APPROX 77KM**

After an early breakfast we transfer (approximately 1.5 hours) to the historic Cu Chi Tunnels which lie about 60km northwest of Ho Chi Minh. This incredible underground tunnel network was constructed by Vietnamese resistance fighters during the long years of struggle for independence. After stopping for a picnic lunch we commence our challenge proper. The route to Tay Ninh unwinds along quiet rural roads with the scenery transforming into a patchwork of paddy fields. We will look out for the water buffalo as we continue riding through the local villages on route to the bustling market town of Tay Ninh and our hotel for the night.

## DAY 5 SVAY RIENG

**APPROX 80KM**

After an early breakfast we set off for the Moc Bai border crossing via the striking Caodai Great Temple. Once formalities have been completed we can enter Cambodia and catch our first glimpses of rural Cambodian life. We pass traditional wooden houses on stilts framed by a backdrop of vast rice fields before stopping at a school for snacks, to be greeted by smiling children eager to welcome us. The day comes to a close in the quiet provincial town of Svay Reing.

## DAY 6 KOMPONG CHAM

**APPROX 108KM**

Today begins with a short one hour transfer from our accommodation in Svay Rieng to the provincial town of Neak Lung from where our ride commences. We continue our journey north through paddy fields dotted with coconut palms as far as the eye can see. Whilst crossing the Mekong River, we hope to be treated to the sight of the rare Mekong River dolphin. Our day draws to a close upon cycling along the flat terrain into the former French trading post of Kompong Cham, the third largest city in Cambodia.

## DAY 7 KOMPONG THOM

**APPROX 112KM**

After breakfast, we leave the city behind and embark on the longest day of the challenge. Heading into the backwaters of Cambodia, we cycle through tropical countryside where the jungle stretches all the way to the foot of the road. A 10km off road section will take us right to the heart of the sleepy backwaters. Towards the end of the day we ride through colourful market towns and can sample fruit from the numerous pagodas that line the streets.

## DAY 8 ANGKOR WAT

**APPROX 85KM**

Today we avoid some of the poorer roads in Siem Reap province by transferring one and a half hours to the Ancient Bridge at Kampong Kdei, one of the best examples of the remaining 800 year old bridges in Cambodia. From the bridge we follow the historic highway connecting the provinces of Kampong Thom and Angkor Wat. We stop for lunch near Bantey Samrey, one of the main outlying temples belonging to Angkor Wat. The road into the World Heritage Site of Angkor Wat is lined with temples and creates a fitting entrance to this unique and spiritual city. After celebrating our arrival in Angkor Wat, we cycle the last few kilometres to Siem Reap where we will spend the night and enjoy a well earned celebratory meal together.

## DAY 9 PROJECT VISIT SIEM REAP

This morning, after a good local breakfast, there will be a chance to meet MAG demining teams and learn more about MAG's lifesaving work. The afternoon and evening will be free to explore Siem Reap and the World Heritage Site of Angkor Wat, which, along with its surrounding temples, are justifiably regarded as one of the wonders of the world.

## DAY 10 DEPART CAMBODIA

We have a full free day where we may take the opportunity to explore more of the outlying temples of Angkor by Tuk Tuk, or perhaps souvenir hunt in the markets of Siem Reap. We depart for the airport early evening for an overnight flight via Seoul.

## DAY 11 ARRIVE HOME

This itinerary is complicated and subject to change.



# Frequently Asked Questions

## Who is organising the event?

MAG has appointed Action Challenge, a specialist event management company to run the event on our behalf.

## Who can take part?

Anyone over 18 years old is welcome as long as you are fit and healthy enough to do the challenge. Those aged 65 years or over will be asked to get a doctors signature to confirm they are fit to take part.

## 460km over five days seems a long way! Am I fit enough?

This ride is aimed at people of average fitness who are prepared to put in plenty of training to enable them to meet the challenge. We will provide you with a set of training guidelines to help you on your way.

## What will the weather be like?

In February/March daytime temperatures should be in the region of 30°C and humidity will be high.

## What type of accommodation will we be staying in?

We will be staying in basic hotels/lodges, likely to be on a twin-sharing basis. We will endeavour to put people together if requested, though couples should note it is not always possible to share.

## What do I need to take with me?

We will supply you with a list of what you will need to take, recommending the type of kit that you will require. You will need a cycling helmet and must wear it at all times when cycling. You will have the use of 18 gear bikes.

## Do I need any inoculations?

It is recommended that visitors to Vietnam and Cambodia are up-to-date with the following inoculations: Polio, Tetanus, Typhoid, Hepatitis A and Diphtheria. Malaria tablets are essential. Please consult your GP for professional medical advice.

## What kind of support is provided?

Experienced staff (tour manager, guides, doctor, mechanic) will be there to provide help and encouragement whenever you need it. A representative from MAG will also travel with you. Support vehicles will carry all luggage and day packs (small bum bags are useful for carrying small items with you, such as sunscreen, camera etc). The vehicles will be available for you to ride in if necessary.

## What do I need to provide?

When you register to take part in Cycle Vietnam to Cambodia we request a registration fee of £250 with your registration form and that you raise a further £2,950 in sponsorship. You will also need to pay airport taxes (in the region of £200-£300 but this is subject to change), personal travel insurance and arrange your own visas (current cost £38 for Vietnam and £15 for Cambodia). Details of how to do this will be provided nearer the time. You must provide your own cycle helmet.

## Do I need insurance?

Yes you need to make sure that you are covered for cycling on a charity event in Vietnam and Cambodia.

## I want to extend my stay in Cambodia. Is this possible?

A small percentage of the group will be able to extend their stay on a first come, first served basis. We cannot guarantee that all those wanting to extend their trip will be able to. Information is released once the group flight booking has been made.

## How do I raise £2,950?

There are many different ways of raising money, through your friends and family, organising a fundraising event or asking companies and businesses to support you, and don't forget that we are here to help. We will provide you with tips, advice and resources to make reaching your target as painless as possible and will help you in any way we can. Once you set your mind to it, it's amazing what you can achieve! If you are unsure about anything or need MAG's help please give us a call on 0161 236 4311 or email [lesley.achim@maginternational.org](mailto:lesley.achim@maginternational.org)

## What is included in the event cost?

- International flights and transfers in Vietnam and Cambodia
- All hotel accommodation whilst on the event
- All meals, water and snacks (except evening meal on day 8 and lunch on day 9)
- Medical and mechanical support
- Support vehicles
- Experienced guides
- Bikes

## What is not covered in the event cost?

- Evening meal on day 8 and lunch on day 9
- Airport taxes (in region of £200 - £300 but this is subject to change)
- Personal travel insurance
- Visas (current cost £38 for Vietnam and £15 for Cambodia)

## How much of my sponsorship will go to MAG?

We are asking each participant to raise £2,950 in sponsorship. Of this, approximately half will cover the cost of running the event but the more you raise above this target, the more MAG will receive, so please raise as much as you can! The £250 registration fee is not included in this total and is non-refundable

## What if I don't raise the sponsorship money?

We do request that £2,000 of the sponsorship target is received by MAG ten weeks before departure – Friday 18 December 2009. If you do not raise this amount you are liable to forfeit your place on the ride. The remaining £950 is then due four weeks before we depart, on Friday 29 January 2010. If you do experience any unexpected difficulties, please contact us as soon as possible and we will try to help you out in any way that we can.

## How much is MAG hoping to raise from the Cycle Vietnam - Cambodia?

We hope to raise (in profit) approximately £57,000 from this event. This will help MAG reduce the threat of death and injury and release safe land and other vital resources back to the local community



# MAG in Cambodia and Vietnam

Cambodia is one of the most heavily mined countries in the world. MAG has been working in Cambodia since 1992, clearing the remnants of conflict from both the Vietnam War (1959-1975) and the Cambodian – Vietnamese War (1975-1989). Despite the fact that war has ended, families and communities remain physically endangered and socially and economically disadvantaged from the mines and bombs left behind. No one knows how many landmines remain in Cambodia, but estimations are between four and six million. From 2001 to the present day, nearly 5,000 Cambodian men, women and children have been reported as maimed or killed by weapons left behind after decades of conflict.

MAG has been working in central Vietnam since 1999, particularly in Quang Tri province which saw the majority of fighting and bombing during the 1960s and 70s. Military reports indicate that approximately 20 per cent of Vietnam's land area is still contaminated by the 350,000 to 800,000 tonnes of unexploded ordnance (UXO) left as a legacy of the conflicts fought on Vietnamese soil throughout the 20th century. According to UNICEF, between 1975 and 2000 there were 44,000 UXO-related accidents reported in Vietnam. As the largest non-military clearance organisation operating in Vietnam, MAG plays a key role in reducing the risk and impact of landmines and unexploded ordnance on the local population, and also in facilitating post-clearance construction and resettlement in these worst affected provinces.

MAG's work in Cambodia and Vietnam does not just save lives; it clears the path to rural development. The extent of contamination means that much of the rural population lives day-to-day with the threat of injury or death outside their door. MAG is committed to reducing the threat of injury and death by clearing land that will increase the social and economic opportunities of the local community through providing safe access to agricultural areas, schools, wells, health clinics and other community resources.

*...because of war I lost my first beloved husband, and it has been difficult to live ever since as I could not cultivate [the land] to support my family. Every breath we took, we lived in fear... I didn't want to see any of my children becoming amputees or dying because of landmines... I believe that in the future, my family and all who live in this village will live in safety because MAG has cleared the mines away.*

**Lay Rim (48) Au Chhurkram village, Krong Pailin, Cambodia**

*...thank you MAG for clearing the landmines and rebuilding the village. Now I can better my life and grow crops on my land.*

**Chieu Nguyen, landmine survivor and farmer, Truc Lam village, Quang Tri Province, Vietnam**

