

Steppes East

Presents

A Private Journey

To

THAILAND, CAMBODIA & LAOS

specially prepared for

**MR I HARRIS &
MS J WORMLEIGHTON**

4 February 2001 to 27 February 2001

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QUICK REFERENCE ITINERARY

Day 1	Fly London Heathrow/Bangkok (overnight)
Day 2	Fly Bangkok/Siem Reap Angkor
Day 3	Angkor
Day 4	Angkor
Day 5	Angkor/Phnom Penh
Day 6	Phnom Penh /Sihanoukville
Day 7	Sihanoukville/ Phnom Penh
Day 8	Phnom Penh/ Vientiane
Day 9	Vientiane /Luang Prabang
Day 10	Luang Prabang
Day 11	Luang Prabang
Day 12	Luang Prabang/ Vientiane
Day 13	Vientiane /Saravan Province
Day 14	Saravan Province/Tad Lo
Day 15	Tad Lo
Day 16	Tad Lo /Koh Samui
Day 17	Koh Samui
Day 18	Koh Samui
Day 19	Koh Samui
Day 20	Koh Samui
Day 21	Koh Samui
Day 22	Koh Samui

Day 23

Fly Koh Samui/Bangkok

Day 24

Fly Bangkok/London Heathrow

FLIGHT SCHEDULE

DATE	ROUTE	FLT No.	CHECK IN	DEPART	ARRIVE
04/02/01	London Heathrow/Bangkok	TG911	09:50	11:50	06:10*
05/02/01	Bangkok/Siem Reap	VJ033	07:00	09:00	09:45
26/02/01	Koh Samui/Bangkok	PG140	18:10	20:10	21:30
27/02/01	Bangkok/London Heathrow	TG910	22:45	00:45	06:20

* = Arrival the following day

DETAILED ITINERARY

Sunday 4 February London Heathrow/ Bangkok

Depart London Heathrow on the Thai Airways flight to Bangkok, flying overnight.

Monday 5 February Bangkok/ Siem Reap

Depart Bangkok on your flight to Siem Reap. On arrival in Siem Reap, Cambodia you will pass through immigration where your visas (costing USD20 with 2 passport photos) will be stamped into your passport. Here you will be met by a representative who will drive you to your hotel.

Spend the afternoon sightseeing around some of the temples and visit Angkor Wat for sunset. Overnight at Sofitel Royal Angkor in a room on a bed & breakfast basis.

Tuesday 6 February Angkor - Wednesday 7 February

Angkor was 'rediscovered' by a French archaeologist towards the end of the last century and fulfilled the ideal of an exotic lost city. Built during at the height of the Khmer empire (840-1420), this huge temple complex rivals any ancient site in its atmosphere and magnificence. The early temples were built to house Hindu gods while the later ones were Buddhist, however elements such as the *naga* (a mythical serpent) and *apsaras* (beautiful celestial nymphs) create an art style which is truly unique. Silhouettes of the flame-shaped prangs (towers) instil one of the most memorable images of Angkor in all who visit. The 400 or so temples are surrounded by a complex system of canals and *barays* (ponds) filled by the enormous Tonle Sap Lake.

You may enjoy the spectacular sunrise at Angkor after which you will return to the hotel for breakfast. You will then spend the days sightseeing with breaks during the hottest part of the day. Morning visits will include the South Gate of Angkor Thom, Bayon, Baphoun, Royal Enclosure, Phimeanakas, Elephants Terrace and Terrace of the Leper King. After lunch continue with visits to Angkor Wat and sunset at Phnom Bakheng temples.

Overnight at Sofitel Royal Angkor in a room on a bed & breakfast basis.

Thursday 8 February Angkor/Phnom Penh

In the morning you will be taken to the hydrofoil terminal for your departure at 0700 hrs. The boat journey takes approx. 4 hours and passes down the Tonle Sap River. On arrival check it into the Sofitel

Cambodiana. Spend the afternoon sightseeing around the capital. Overnight at Sofitel Cambodiana on a bed & breakfast basis.

Friday 9 February

Phnom Penh /Sihanoukville

In the morning you will be driven down to the coastal town of Sihanoukville with sightseeing stop offs en route. Arrive in Sihanoukville in time to explore the old port town. The beaches are fairly popular, especially at the weekends with people coming down from Phnom Penh. On arrival check into the Seaside Hotel, this hotel is located on the beach and has been extensively renovated. The rooms are bright and large with air conditioning. Overnight at Seaside Hotel in a room on a bed & breakfast basis.

**Saturday 10
February**

Sihanoukville/Phnom Penh

Return to Phnom Penh by private car at your convenience. Overnight at Sofitel Cambodiana on a bed & breakfast basis.

Sunday 11 February

Phnom Penh/ Vientiane

Transfer to the airport and fly to Vientiane (VN840 Departs Phnom Penh at 1310 arrives Vientiane at 1455). On arrival you will be met and taken to the Settha Palace to spend the night. There may be a chance to do some sightseeing in the meantime. Overnight at Settha Palace on a bed & breakfast basis.

Monday 12 February

Vientiane /Luang Prabang

In the morning fly from Vientiane to Luang Prabang (QV101 Departs at 0940 arrives at 1010). On arrival you will be met and transferred to the Villa Santi to spend the night. The town is set high in the mountain valleys of the Mekong and is the old sovereign capital of Laos. As well as the businesses associated with life by an important river, this small and peaceful town also specialises in silver work and silk weaving. After settling in there will be a city sightseeing tour which will include visits to some of the many beautiful temples. At the top of a flight of steps leading from the Mekong is Wat Xieng Thong, the most important of the royal wats. Built by King Setthathirat in 1559 it is decorated in red and gold and has fabulous paintings, roof tiles, mosaics and intricate carvings. Wat Chom Si, built in 1804, is the only remaining monastery on Mount Phousi, from where there is a panoramic view of the city and the Mekong River. A short distance from Mount Phousi is Wat Visun built originally in 1513 but rebuilt in 1898 after being destroyed by marauding Chinese tribes. It contains Buddha's over 400 years old, the largest Buddha in the town and stela engraved with Pali scriptures. A visit to a silver smiths workshop is also recommended. One shop in particular made hand-finished silverware for the last king of Laos and his skills are continued to this day.

Overnight at Villa Santi on a bed & breakfast basis.

Tuesday 13 February Luang Prabang

After breakfast your guide will take you to visit the Kwang Sy Waterfalls. This is a good way to see some of the area outside Luang Prabang, on the drive to Kwang Sy. The waterfalls are very pretty and there are series of viewing bridges to walk around on, there is even a pool to swim in. On your return to Luang Prabang you may stop off at Hmong and other tribal villages to meet some of the local people. Overnight at Villa Santi on a bed & breakfast basis.

**Wednesday 14
February Luang Prabang**

In the morning take the slow boat up the Mekong River to the Pak Ou caves. This is a particularly atmospheric journey with buffaloes bathing on the banks of the river. On arrival, walk up the steep steps into the caves which are stacked with every conceivable size and shape of Buddha image. Every corner is filled and the smell of joss sticks give the caves a very atmospheric feel. Continue up the steps to the highest cave, set deep in the limestone cliff, several small alters are scattered in the darkness. Lunch can be taken on some picnic benches over looking the Mekong. Return to Luang Prabang in the afternoon.

Overnight at Villa Santi on a bed & breakfast basis.

**Thursday 15
February Luang Prabang/Vientiane**

In the morning fly to Vientiane (QV102 Departs at 1040 arrives at 1110). On arrival you will be taken to your hotel. Spend the afternoon sightseeing around Vientiane. Vientiane is situated on the banks of the mighty Mekong River. Although it is the capital city of Laos it has fewer than half a million people. Likely visits will include the That Luang Stupa built in 1566, the most impressive Stupa in Vientiane, which has a central stone structure over 30m high and the Anousavari Monument dedicated to those who died before the revolution. It is in fact incomplete but has a wonderfully detailed painted ceiling. In addition, there are many temples (wats) in the city and you will see two including the oldest, Wat Sisaket. This wat has a number of unique features including the cloister, the frescoes inside the Sim and an estimated 6,840 images of Buddha. Wat Phra Keo, the former temple of the Lao monarchy, has been converted into a museum showing the history of the Lao Buddhists through the years and stand next to the well manicured gardens of the former Presidential Palace. The main market is worth a visit as is a walk along the riverbank. Overnight at Settha Palace on a bed & breakfast basis.

Friday 16 February Vientiane/Pakse/ Champassack

In the morning fly from Vientiane to Pakse in the south (QV201 Departs at 0700 arrives at 0800). On arrival you will be met by your guide and taken to the boat to go to Champassack. On arrival you check into the very simple Sala Wat Phu. You may have time to visit Wat Phu at sunset. Overnight at Sala Wat Phu on a bed & breakfast basis.

Saturday 17 February Champassack /Tad Lo

Visit Champassack in the morning and visit Sala Wat Phu. As you cross over the river visit Om Muang and then drive to Tad Lo. Tad Lo is a set of simple bungalows based on the river edge, it is possible to swim in rock pools here. Overnight at Tad Lo Lodge in a bungalow room on a bed & breakfast basis.

Sunday 18 February Tad Lo

Spend half the day sightseeing around some of the ethnic villages in the Saravan Province or walk around the neighbouring villages to Tad Lo. Overnight at Tad Lo Lodge in a bungalow room on a bed & breakfast basis.

Monday 19 February Saravan Province/Bangkok/ Koh Samui

In the early morning you will be taken to the airport to fly to Bangkok and onto Koh Samui. On arrival in Koh Samui you will be met by a representative from Baan Taling Ngam who will collect you and drive you to the hotel, which will take approximately 20 minutes. Once at Baan Taling Ngam you will be taken to your accommodation.

At Baan Taling Ngam hotel you will have a chance to enjoy the beautiful surroundings of the hotel including one of the many swimming pools, Jacuzzi, fitness rooms, sauna, therapeutic massages and the beauty salon.

There is also a licensed PADI dive school and dives in private boats can be arranged. There are other choices for leisure activities, including tennis courts, mountain bikes (for adults and children), ocean kayaks, windsurf boards and materials, a catamaran, water skiing and amazing snorkelling. It is possible to make marine excursions to neighbouring islands by speedboat and longtail boat. Sailing boats are available from Chaweng Beach if you so wish.

The resort itself, comprises 42 deluxe guest rooms and suites, 7 Beach villas and 33 Cliff villas. There is dining available either in the villa or at the Lom Talay Thai and European restaurant, and the Promenade specialises in fresh seafood and Mediterranean cuisine.

Drinks and snacks are also available at the Veranda Bar which affords the most beautiful views across the Bay. Overnight at Baan Taling Ngam in a deluxe sala room on a room only basis.

Tuesday 20 February Koh Samui

– Sunday 25

February

Free days to relax and enjoy your environment. Overnight at Baan Taling Ngam in a deluxe sala room on a room only basis.

Monday 26 February Koh Samui/ Bangkok

Free day to relax. Check out of the room is at 1200 but if you speak to reception they may allow you to keep your room until departure. Depart Koh Samui on the Bangkok Airways flight to Bangkok.

Tuesday 27 February Bangkok/ London Heathrow

Depart Bangkok on the Thai Airways flight to London Heathrow.

Cost: £3,310.00 per adult

Cost Includes: Cost includes international Thai Airways International flights, regional and domestic flights, accommodation on double room basis with breakfast except at Baan Taling Ngam which is on room only basis, airport transfers and transportation by private car, all boat journeys, Sightseeing with English speaking guide, entrance to monuments

Cost Excludes: Cost excludes items of a personal nature, tips, additional meals