

Suggested Reading List for Cambodia

Books

A History of Cambodia (*David Chandler*)

A concise overview of Cambodian history from the famous Angkor ruins that attract more than one million visitors each year to the revolution and the final collapse of the Khmer Rouge, this book details the historic events that have shaped the country as well as the external influences that played a major role in defining the character of the people.

Angkor: Cambodia's Wondrous Khmer Temples (*Dawn Rooney*)

Including a foreword by His Majesty King Norodom Sihamoni of Cambodia, this book provides a practical guide to the Angkor temples as well as a background into Khmer art, religion and cultural traditions. The great legacy of the ancient Khmer civilization is described in fascinating detail, with descriptions of each temple including pre-Angkor sites such as Preah Vihear and Banteay Chhmar.

The Civilization of Angkor (*Charles Higham*)

Beginning in the prehistoric era, this book details the development of the Khmer empire, describing the rich and expansive chiefdoms that existed at the dawn of civilization. From the origins of early states to the establishment, zenith and decline of the great Angkor civilization, the author draws on archaeological research to provide a concise account of a remarkable culture whose most impressive achievement was the gilded temple of Angkor Wat.

Beyond the Killing Fields: Voices of Nine Cambodian Survivors in America (*Usha Welaratna & James M. Freeman*)

After years of devastation and upheaval caused by civil war, Cambodia was taken over by the communist Khmer Rouge led by Pol Pot. What ensued over the next four years became one of the most horrific instances of genocide in history. An estimated one and a half million Cambodians had been killed or died of starvation, torture or sickness. This book tells the story of survival through powerful first-hand accounts of nine Cambodians – men, women, and children who fled the holocaust and began new lives as refugees in America.

Cambodia: Report from a Stricken Land (*Henry Kamm*)

Written by a former Southeast Asia correspondent for the New York Times and Pulitzer Prize winner, this book provides an insight into Cambodia's recent history, during those thirty turbulent years of revolution, invasion, coups d'etat, and genocide. Through his high-level political and military connections, the author gained unparalleled access to the leaders who shaped Cambodia into what it is today and creates a poignant portrait of a beleaguered nation and its people.

First They Killed My Father (*Loung Ung*)

The daughter of a high-ranking government official, Loung Ung lived a privileged life in the Cambodian capital of Phnom Penh until the age of five. That all changed when, in April 1975, the family was forced to flee and disperse as the Khmer Rouge stormed the city. This autobiographical novel describes Luong's harrowing and powerful story of survival, and of a family shaken and shattered, yet miraculously sustained by courage and love.

Television and Films

The Killing Fields (1984)

Based on a true story, this film offers a compelling insight into the country's war-torn history. Following New York Times journalist Sydney Schanberg through his experiences in Cambodia while trying to locate his local contact, Dith Pran, who was sent to a working camp under the Khmer Rouge regime. Schanberg makes it his mission to locate Pran and reunite him with his family, who were given refugee status in America.

The Last Reel (2014)

Internationally acclaimed, this film by Cambodian director and producer Kulikar Sotho is a contemporary family drama that takes a heartfelt look at the legacy left behind by the Khmer Rouge and the families that continue to suffer from the trauma of that era. A story of love, shattered dreams, loss and hope, this film depicts the impact of terror on subsequent generations.

The Missing Picture (2013)

Nominated for Best Foreign Language Film at the 86th Academy Awards, this film tells the life story of Cambodian film-maker Rithy Panh who was 13 years old when his family was rounded up with other Phnom Penh residents and sent to 're-education' camps. Panh uses simple clay figures to recreate the atrocities of the Pol Pot regime, interspersed with propaganda material, news and documentary footage.

Websites

<https://edition.cnn.com/travel/destinations/cambodia>

Blogs

<https://khmerbird.com/>

<https://wheninphnompenh.com/>

<https://www.goatsontheroad.com/category/southern-asia/cambodia/>