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DRAGON Asia Summit – 24 June 2009

Visit of the Tonle Sap lake, a flooded forest and a floating village (Prek Toal)

Experience a Nature Tour to PREK TOAL or PEAK KANTEL

Osmose proposes you a relaxing but educative visit which will enable you to understand the ecological and human aspects of the Tonle Sap lake.

A unique natural habitat - water birds - Traditional fishing villages

Not far from the ancient temples of Angkor, in the heart of Cambodia, lies the huge Tonle Sap lake, one of the world's most productive bodies of fresh water. Each year, millions of fish come to spawn in the seasonally flooded forest surrounding the lake, attracting a myriad of water birds as well as people, who have settled in villages along the shores and who live with the rhythm of the water.



This ecosystem of extraordinary biological richness and balance between humans and nature has been classified as a Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO in 1997.

It is this fusion of water and forest, this dense and intertwined world of fish, birds and people that we invite you to immerse yourself in.

A sensitive balance between fish, birds and people

A BIRD SANCTUARY

Prek Toal bird sanctuary is a protected site located on the North Eastern shore of the Tonle Sap lake, one hour by boat from Siem Reap port. The area consists of a vast undisturbed flooded forest where thousands of water birds come each year to breed during the dry season.

A TRADITIONAL FLOATING VILLAGE

At the edge of the flooded forest, a lively human community has settled in floating houses, a practical solution to cope with the changing water level of the lake. In the village, the visitor will see floating grocery boats and stores, coffee and dessert sellers paddling gently along.

All village life is organised around and heavily relies on fishing. Various types of traditional fishing gears are encountered on the lake as well as in the village and in the streams of the flooded forest. Some villagers raise fish in pens while others have set up crocodile farms behind their floating homes.

The tours are ideal for people with an interest in nature and responsible tourism.

Detailed schedule

- 6.00 am Pick up the guest at their hotel in Siem Reap and drive to the Tonle Sap lake (Chonk Kneas).
- 6.30 am Board on the boat and travel for 1.5 to 2 hours (include stops for explanations) across the lake to reach Prek Toal floating village. On the way, Osmose guide will explain about the ecosystem and habitats of the local flora and fauna. Breakfast will be taken on the boat.

GROUP 1:

- 8.45 am Visit of the flooded forest. We may have the opportunity to observe a few birds along the waterways.
- 10.15 am Visit of the water hyacinth handicraft workshop and presentation of the Osmose project, include environmental education class.
- 10.45 am Visit the floating village on a paddle boat tour organised by the community. You will discover different aspects of the village activities: fish raising, diver, fishing operation preparation, boat shops, spirit houses, floating schools, crocodile farms, floating gardens, etc....
- 12.30 Typical fresh fish meal cooked by villagers in Prek Toal.
- 2.00 pm Travel back to Chong Kneas and Siem Reap: arrival at your hotel around 4.30 pm.

GROUP 2:

- 8.45 am Visit of the water hyacinth handicraft workshop and presentation of the Osmose project, include environmental education class.
- 9.15 am Visit the floating village on a paddle boat tour organised by the community. You will discover different aspects of the village activities: fish raising, diver, fishing operation preparation, boat shops, spirit houses, floating schools, crocodile farms, floating gardens, etc....
- 10.45 pm Visit of the flooded forest. We may have the opportunity to observe a few birds along the waterways.
- 12.30 Typical fresh fish meal cooked by villagers in Prek Toal.
- 2.00 pm Travel back to Chong Kneas and Siem Reap: arrival at your hotel around 4.30 pm.

What do you need to bring along with you?

Hat, long sleeved shirts and trousers, sunscreen, your binoculars if you have some (Osmose also provides binoculars), rain coat (just in case: it is raining season!).

The price includes:

- ✓ Transportation (boat)
- ✓ Osmose certified guide
- ✓ Visit of the village on paddle boat
- ✓ Lunch
- ✓ Fruit and water for the day

Purpose and spirit of Osmose:

Osmose is a not-for-profit organisation.

Osmose goal is to facilitate both the conservation of the Tonle Sap lake environment and the sustainable livelihood of the floating villages communities.

By boarding with Osmose you will contribute to the community by:

- Directly supporting the village economy (paddlers, village tour, cooks, home stays, handicraft),
- Providing fund to Osmose environmental education program (covering 1,100 children) and Osmose Local Development program (schooling assistance, medical assistance, distribution of water filters, etc.),
- Providing fund for conservation through the entrance fee to the Environmental Research Station.

We reserve the right to change the itinerary due to weather issues (storm, rain, wind...).