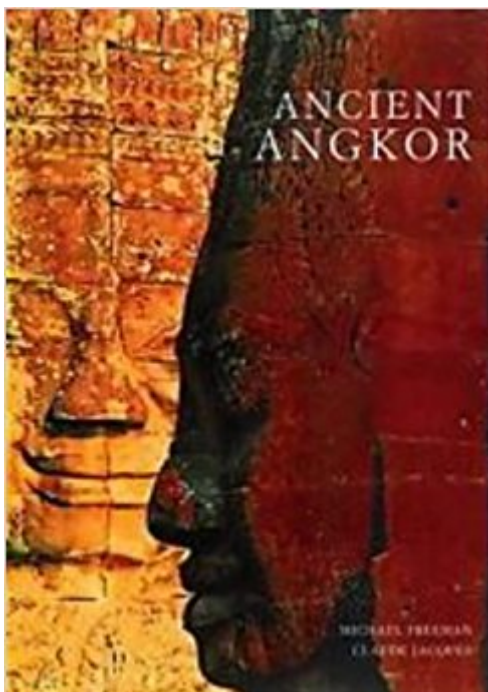


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Ancient Angkor



Synopsis

The Khmer civilization centred on Angkor was one of the most remarkable to flourish in Southeast Asia. Between the 8th and the 13th centuries, a succession of Hindu and Buddhist kings created magnificent temples in stone. Their elaborate carvings and intricate architecture amazed the first Europeans who visited in the 19th century and continue to fascinate today, when after many years of political turmoil, Angkor is once again accessible. The renowned French scholar Claude Jacques has studied Angkor and its history for the past 30 years, while Michael Freeman has made many photographic trips there during a 15-year period; Ancient Angkor embodies the fruits of their collaboration and includes the results of new research and discoveries made during recent excavations. Detailed plans and descriptions unravel the complex reliefs of Angkor Wat and the Bayon, while small but interesting temples not covered in other books are also described. Grouping the temples into easy-to-visit itineraries, and with useful hotel and travel information, Ancient Angkor will serve both as a history of the temples in its own right and an invaluable companion guide. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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Customer Reviews

This is a great guide to get around all of the Angkor temple complexes. It contains fantastic maps, detailed historical information and even suggested itineraries of the sites and of the landmarks at each site, which was a probably the most helpful thing in the book for me. It seriously contained everything I needed to know for my husband and I to hit the ruins solo. And since the book contains

some pictures of the ruins, you can use that to help prioritize which sites you want to see. Helpful hint- whichever site(s) you want to see the most, go to that one earliest, like 6 am, before the crowds come in around 9 or 10 am. Good Luck!

Bring this book with you to the Angkor temples. It has complete maps of all the temples with descriptions of how to find some of the hidden reliefs and sculptures in the temples. It also has suggested itineraries and lets you know the best time to visit each site for photography. There are two authors of the book: Freeman is the photographer, and several of his stunning photos are on each page. I would be lucky if any one of my vacation pictures from Angkor come out as good as his. Claude Jacques is the historian, who wrote the background information. This part leaves a little to be desired - I recommend Michael Coe's book if you want historical background. Jacques is recognized as a thought leader on Khmer history, but his writing in English is not very informative. His introductory chapters did not give me any real understanding of the Khmer temple-builders. And some of the descriptions of the reliefs will state things like "on the south wall a warrior is riding an elephant." Well duh, I can see that. However, some of the descriptions are very good. They will describe the story from the Hindu Veda that the relief is depicting, like the story of the monkey army in the Ramayana seen on many temples. Outside any of the Angkor temples, you will find hustling Cambodian kids selling pirated versions of this book for under two dollars. The pirated version is compact and lightweight, but you would be missing out on Freeman's amazing color photographs. If you are lucky enough to visit Angkor, here are my suggestions: 1. Get a hotel or guesthouse in Siem Reap with AC and a pool. On your first day there, find a driver you trust that you will hire for the rest of your trip (twenty bucks a day is reasonable for a tuk-tuk, more for a car). 2. Wake up 4:30am every day and have your driver take you to a temple for sunrise (when the light is best for photography and temperature is reasonable). 3. Have your driver take you back to the hotel for a swim and a nap (so you will not be out at the hottest part of the day when the big tour groups come through the temples). 4. Have your driver take you to another temple for sunset. 5. Don't miss the Bayon or Ta Prohm temples, or the Kampong Phluk floating village.

This is a great book to take along on your trip to Angkor. There aren't many signs on-site and unless you are paying for a guide, you may miss the contextual history and architectural significance that will make the trip more interesting. Pro-tip: many locals sell this book at Angkor for a few bucks if you want to wait until you get there. I was offered the book multiple times while I was at the archaeological park.

Excellent overview of the Angkor temples. I purchased the book by Dawn Rooney as well, but Freeman's book is more 'portable' and I plan to take it with me on my travels in Cambodia.

This book will guide you step by step (literally) through the magnificent temples of Angkor. And even if you weren't planning to go, you will want to for sure, after viewing Michael Freeman's superb photographs and reading Claude Jacques' expert commentary. No matter where you wander on the very large site of Angkor, Freeman and Jacques are right alongside you, suggesting places to look and explaining what you are looking at. There are maps and temple plans, a glossary, and an index. For visitors with limited time, the suggested itineraries (from one to seven days' length) will let you make the most of your visit. The book is especially helpful for photographers. Freeman, who has photographed professionally at Angkor for over a decade, describes the best vantage points and subjects, suggests the best time of day to shoot, and provides itineraries that take you to each location just when the light is best. The book is well designed and contains many helpful features. For example, a cross-referenced list of architectural features and mythological scenes makes it easy to locate temples that contain whatever the visitor is most interested in seeing. In short, carrying this book with you is like having an expert photographer and historian as personal guides during your visit to Angkor. You probably won't even need to engage an actual guide, unless you want to pick up a bit of local color; everything you need is right there in the book.

Good recap of the temples. Glad I was able to get this book on , as I regretted not getting this from one of the vendors at the temples in Siem Reap

Very authoritative and well written. Just the right amount of information. There are too many temples in the area to see them all. This guide facilitates a judicious choice.

useful

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