

## Day Fourteen: Cambodia – Floating Village



Day 14 – our last day in Cambodia - was one of our most exciting days with a visit to a unique Cambodian village on the river.

It took about an hour by bus through the countryside before arriving at a riverside village where we boarded a boat and headed out to see a floating village. The village is on the side of the largest lake in Southeast Asia.

And so we find ourselves on a boat yet again! Our boat is pictured on the left, in the foreground is our tour guide Sothy. Big surprise, Wendy is on the bow of the boat – prime photo taking seat!



Monks crossing a bridge over the river



Houses are made from bamboo and are built on stilts. In rainy season water can rise up to 20 feet.



Their primary source of income is fishing



The stilts are as high as 25 feet in some cases



It's like Florida – everyone has a boat! Many are powered with old cranky engines; the others are rowed or paddled.



Houses not on stilts float; they build them atop bamboo rafts or barrels. Don't like your neighbor? No problem, move your house! Wish our neighbors would move their house!!



The river empties out into the lake where more homes are anchored. The lake is so big you cannot see the other side.



4 million people live on the lake and rivers.



This was by far one of the most fascinating places we've visited culturally. People in Cambodia are



amongst the poorest in all of Southeast Asia. 30% of children do not go to school because their parents need them to work the farm or fish. The other side of the lake is a UNESCO bird sanctuary – however there is quite a bit of controversy as the government wants to start drilling for oil in the lake. Sothy was not sure if this was a good or bad thing. It was unanimous the comments from our group this is bad and Sothy should oppose as much as possible.

As poor as these people are, everyone has a smile and waves to us crazy tourists. There really isn't much more to say about the place. In 30 years it will be gone and people displaced because of corruption and greed for oil. We're fortunate to have witnessed this innocence and simplistic, happy way of life before it becomes extinct.



Supporting the local entrepreneur! Beer Run!



Ice truck. They chop it up and put in their coolers as there is no refrigeration. Rice husks insulated the ice while it's being transported.



What is that thing dangling??!



Our mechanic would LOVE this engine lift!!

And now for "Life on the Lake" by Wendy Longman Photography:







Next time we write, we'll be Stateside.

Cheers,

B