

Baphuon Temple

Baphuon temple is the west of the road to the Dei Chhnang Gate and near the Bayon temple. The temple was built in the 11th century, around 1060, by **King Udayadityavarman II** (AD 1050-1066), dedicating to Brahmanism.



A highlight of the temple is the bas-reliefs, which differ from most others as they are other as they are vignettes carved in small stone squares set one above the other on the temple walls, similar to tiling. Unfortunately few of these are visible because of the poor state of the temple.

Baphuon is a single temple mountain sanctuary situated on a high base symbolizing Mount Meru. A rectangular sandstone wall measuring 425 by 125 meter encloses the temple. A special feature is the 200 meters long elevated eastern approach supported by three rows of short, round columns forming a bridge to the main temple. Originally a central tower shrine with four porches crowned the peak, but it collapsed long ago. The first, second and third levels are surrounded by concentric sandstone galleries.

Phimean Akas Temple

Phimeanakas temple is the south of the Baphuon temple, within the confines of the Royal Palace. The temple was built in the late 10th and early 11th centuries by three different kings -**King Rajendrarvarman**, **King Jayavarman V** and **King Suryavarman I**. It was the temple where the



king worshipped. The temple was originally known as **Hemasrngagiri** which means gold. It must originally have been crowned with a golden pinnacle, as Chinese emissary **Zhou Daguan** described it as the Tower of Gold. It is small compared to others, but, even so, it has appeal and is situated in idyllic surroundings.

The single sanctuary stands on the base with three laterited tiers and is approached by four steep stairways, one on each side. These stairways are framed by walls with six projections two per step decorated with lions. Elephants one stood on sandstone pedestals in the base, but, today, they are mostly broken.

Terrace Of Leper King



The terrace of the Leper King is located on the way from the Bayon temple to the DeiChhnang Gate on the left and north of Terrace of the Elephants. It was built in late 12th century by **King Jayavarman VII**. The curious mane of this terrace refers to a statue of the Leper King that is one the platform of the terrace. The naked figure is depicted in a seated position with his right knee raised. Today statue is a copy. The original is in the National Museum in Phnom Penh. Who was Leper King? Mystery and uncertainly surround the origin of the name. The long-held theory that king **Jayavarman VII** was a leper and that is why he built so many hospitals through out the empire has no historical support whatsoever. Some historians think the figure represents **Kubera**, god of wealth, or **Yasovarman I**, both of whom were allegedly lepers. Another idea is based on an inscription that appears on the statue in characters of the 14th or 15th centuries which maybe translated as the equivalent of the assessor of **Yama**, god of death or of judgment. Yet another theory suggests that the Leper King statue got it name because of the lichen which crown on it. The position of the hand, now missing, also suggests it was holding something.

The Terrace of Leper King is supported by a base 25 meters on each side and 6 meters high. The sides of the laterite, base are faced in sandstone and decorated with bas-reliefs divided into seven horizontal registers. The exterior wall contain mythical beings-nagas, garudas and giants with multiple arms, carries of swords and clubs, and triangular coiffures with small flaming discs-adorn the walls is remarkable condition. The deeply carved senses are similare to those on the exterior and the vertical representation of a river.

Royal Palace

Royal Palace is situated at the heart of the city of Angkor Thom, the Royal Palace area I distinguished by two terraces that parallel the road. Evidence of the Royal Palace it self is illusive because only the stone substructure remains. Like much of Angkor Thom, the residences of the king, and those who worked in the palace, were built of wood and have disintegrated, leaving no traces.



The Terrace of the Elephants

The Terrace of the Elephants is located directly in front of the east *gopura* of the Royal Palace rampart. The terrace was built in the late 12th century by **King Jayavarman VII**. One the main attraction of this terrace is the façade decorated with elephants and their riders depicted are using their trunks to hunt and fight while tigers claw at them. The Terrace of the Elephants extends over 300 meters long from the Baphuon to the Terrace of the Leper King. It has three main platforms and two subsidiary ones. The south stairway is framed with three-headed elephants gathering lotus flowers with their trunks which form columns. The central stairway is decorated by lions and garudas in bas-reliefs in a stance of support for the stairway. Several projections above are marked by lions and naga balustrades with garudas flanking the dais. The terrace has two levels one of which has a gaggle of sacred geese carved along its base. It is likely that these platforms originally formed the based for wooden pavilions which were highlighted with gold.



At the northern end of the platform behind the outer wall, a large house with five heads sculpted in high-relief stands on each side at the base of the inner retaining wall. The horse is an exceptional piece of sculpture, lively and remarkably worked. It is the horse of a king, as indicated by the tired umbrellas over his head; it is surrounded by Apsaras and menacing demons armed with sticks in pursuit of several people bearing terrified expressions. Some believe this is a representation of Avalokiteshvara in the form of the divine horse Balaha.

The North and South Klianq Temple

The North and South Klianq are located behind Sour Proat temple and facing the Terraces of the Elephants and the Leper King. These sandstone temples were built in the late 10th and early 11th centuries by **King Jayavarman V** and **King Suryavarman I**.

The temples consist of a pair of large sandstone façade that look quite grand against a jungle background. They are similar in time, layout, style and decoration; although inscriptions suggest that the South Klianq was built slightly later than north one. Some scholars believe the name storehouse is inappropriate for these temples and suggest they may have been reception halls for receiving foreign dignitaries.



The workmanship of the architecture and decoration of North Klianq is more carefully executed than that of the South Klianq. To the rear of the north Klianq there is a laterite wall with high level horizontal windows which encloses smaller halls in the courtyard. The long rectangular structure of South Klianq, however is unfinished, but it stands on a molded platform. The interior decoration is limited to a frieze under the cornice.

Preah Palilay Temple



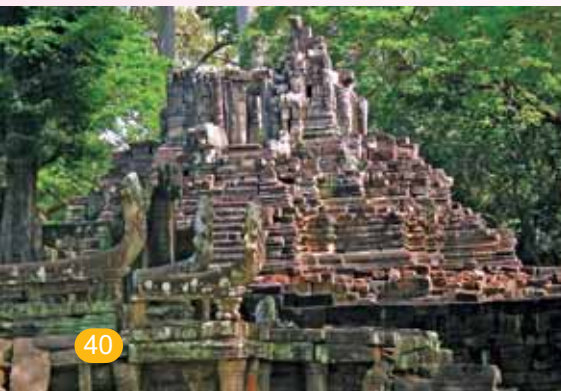
Palilay temple is located north of phimeanakas temple and behind Tep Pranom. The temple was built in the 12th century by **King Jayavarman VII's** father, **King Dharanindravarman** (AD 1150-1160), who was a Buddhist. The temple's lintels and pediments lying on the round afford a rare

opportunity to see relief at eye level. Many depict Buddhist scenes with Brahmanism divinities. Only the central century remains intact. The sandstone tower opens on four sides, each one with a porch. The tower stands on a base with three tiers intercepted by stair on each side. The upper portion is collapsed and a truncated pyramid forms a cone which is filled with reused stones. The principle feature of interest at this temple is the Buddhist scenes on the frontons. They are some of the few that escaped defacement in the 15th century. The scenes depicted are: east, a reclining Buddha, which is especially beautiful in the midmorning sun; north, a standing Buddha with his hand resting on an elephant.

Preah Pithu Temple

Preah Pithu is a group of temples located northeast of the Terrace of the Leper King. Studies of their style indicate that all except one are Brahman temples built during the 12th century by King Suryavarman II. The lone Buddhist temple, built sometime between the 13th and 16th centuries, has many Buddha bas-reliefs and other signs related to Buddhism. Most of the structures are in poor condition, but their bases remain and, from the vidence, the

temples were of excellent quality in design, workmanship and decoration. Preah Pithu temples consist of two cruciform terraces and five sanctuaries situated in seemingly random order amongst ramparts, moats and ponds. All the shrines are square with false door, stand on a raised platform and are oriented to the east.



Sour Proat Temple

Sour Proat temple is located at the beginning of the road leading to the Victory Gate, in front of the Royal Palace. The temple was built in the late 12th century by King Jayavarman VII and features a row of 12 square laterite and sandstone towers, six on one either side of the road leading to the Victory Gate.



The two towers closest to the road are set back slightly from the others. The towers have an unusual feature of windows with balusters on three sides. Entrance porches open toward the west onto the parade ground. The interior of each tower has two levels and on the upper one there is a cylindrical vault with two frontons. The frames, bays and lintels were made of sandstone.

According to a Cambodian legend, the towers served as anchoring places for ropes which stretched from one to another for acrobats performing at festivals, while the king observed the performances from one of the terraces. This activity is reflected in the name of the towers. Zhou Daguan wrote about the entirely different purpose of the towers in describing a method of settling disputes between men. Some think that they may have served as alter for each province on the occasion of taking the oath of loyalty to the king.

Takeo Temple

Ta Keo temple is located east of Thommanon and Chao Say Tevoda on the east bank of Stung Siem Reap. The temple was built in the late 10th to early 12th centuries by King Jayavarman V and Suryavarman I, dedicating to Shiva Brahmanism. Had it been finished, Ta Keo, undoubtedly, would have been one of the finest temples at Angkor.

The temple rises to a height of 22 meters to the sky, giving an impression of strength and power. An innovation at Ta Keo is a porch at each cardinal point on the five towers of the top level. A gallery was situated on a second base and had a roof of brick which is now destroyed. Enormous blocks of feldspathic wacke—a very hard to carve, greenish-grey sandstone—were cut to a regular size and placed in position. This absence of decoration gives it simplicity of design that separates it from other temple.

Ta Keo temple is a replica of Mount Meru with a rectangular plan and five square towers arranged in a quincunx, standing majestically on a finely molded three-tiered pedestal that is 12 meters high. Long rectangular halls on both levels probably sheltered pilgrims. Two libraries on the east



side of the platform open to the west. The upper platform is square and stands on three diminishing tiers with stairways on each side. Most of the space on the upper level is occupied by the five towers, all unfinished, opening to the four cardinal points. The central sanctuary dominates the layout which is given further importance by the development of porches.

Ta Prohm Temple

Ta Prohm temple is located about 1 kilometer east of the Victory Gate, southeast of Ta Keo temple. Its rampart is near the northwest corner of the rampart of Banteay Kdey temple. The temple was built in AD 1186 by King Jayavarman VII, dedicating to his mother. Shrouded in jungle, Ta Prohm temple is ethereal in aspect and conjures up a romantic aura. Trunks of trees twist amongst stone pillars. Fig, bayan and kapok trees spread their gigantic roots over, under and in between the stones, probing walls and terraces apart, as their branches and leaves intertwine to form a roof above the structures.



The Sanskrit inscription on stone tells something about its size and function. Ta Prohm owned 3,140 villages. It took 79,365 people to maintain the temple including 18 high priests, 2,740 officials, 2,202 assistants and 615 dancers. Among the property belonging to the temples was a set of golden dishes weighing more than 500 kilograms, 35 diamonds, 40,620 pearls, 4,540 precious stones, 870 veils from China, 512 silk beds 523 parasols.

The monastic complex of Ta Prohm is a series of long, low building standing on one level connected with passages and concentric galleries framing the main sanctuary. A rectangular, laterite wall, which is 700 by 1,000 meters enclose the entire complex. The east entrance is signaled by a gopura in the outer rampart of the temple. There is a sandstone hall just north of the gopura known as the Hall of Dancers which is distinguished by large, square pillars. The central sanctuary itself is easy to miss and stands out because of its absence of decoration. The stone has been hammered, possibly to prepare it for covering stucco and gilding, which has since fallen off. This accounts for the plainness of the walls of this important shrine. Evenly spaced holes on the inner walls of the central sanctuary suggest they were originally covered with metal sheets.

