Food and drink in Phnom Penh

The Royal Palace’s glimmering spires, the fluttering saffron of monks’ robes and the mighty Mekong River – Cambodia’s capital is Asia at its most alluring. We suggest the best spots to eat, drink and sleep here.

**EATING**

**Boat Noodle**

**THAI FUSION**

(00 855 12 774 287; 57 Samdech Sothearos Blvd)

This long-running Thai-Khmer restaurant has some of the best-value regional dishes in town. Choose from the contemporary space at the front or a traditional wooden house behind. There are delicious noodle soups and lots of local specialities, ranging from fish cakes to spicy curries.

**Chinese House**

**FUSION**

(00 855 12 774 074; 45 Sisowath Quay, cnr St 84)

Housed in one of the city’s true colonial-era masterpieces, Chinese House’s menu promises contemporary Asian flavours, such as black king fish with marinated squid, honey-mustard dressing and crispy baby potatoes, plus affordable and delicious East-meets-West tapas.

**Malis**

**CAMBODIAN**

(malis-restaurant.com; 136 Norodom Blvd)

The leading Khmer restaurant in the Cambodian capital, Malis is a chic place to dine alfresco. The extensive menu includes baked goby fish with lemongrass and garlic, and traditional soups and salads. It’s popular for boutique breakfasts, too.

**Romdeng**

**CAMBODIAN**

(tree-alliance.org; 74 St 174)

Set in a gorgeous colonial villa with a small pool, Romdeng specialises in Cambodian country fare, including a famous fish amok, prawn and pomelo salad, and lots of veggie options. Sample tarantulas in black pepper lime sauce or stir-fried tree ants with beef and basil if you dare.

**Drinking**

**BattBong**

(battbong.business.site; 51 St 55)

A new speakeasy, BattBong is tricky to locate. Look out for the Coca-Cola machine at the end of the alley and locate the hidden button. Inside is a decadent beatnik-style bar with bottled beers, wine by the glass and some stiff drinks.

**Botanico Wine & Beer Garden**

(www.facebook.com/botanicowineandbeergarden; 98 St 29)

Bringing US-style craft brewing to Phnom Penh, this great little hideaway stocks Irish red, IPA and other micro-brewed beers. It’s set in a verdant garden tucked down a winding alley. Monthly specials include yoga and beer, plus pork-knuckle nights.

**FCC**

(www.fcccambodia.com; 363 Sisowath Quay)

A Phnom Penh institution, the ‘F’ is housed in a colonial gem with great views and cool breezes. It’s one of those must-see places in Cambodia. Happy hours are 5pm to 7pm and 10pm to midnight. If the main bar is too crowded, head up to the rooftop, which often sees live music at weekends to add a soundtrack to the sunset views.

**Sundown Social Club**

(www.facebook.com/sundownsocialclub; 86 St 440)

See the Russian Market from a different angle from this funky rooftop bar. Head here for Club Tropicana-inspired cocktails and craft beers drunk under bamboo lightshades from long-legged cane chairs.

**Pontoon**

(pontoonclub.com; 80 Jayavarman 7 St)

After years of floating from pier to pier (hence the name), the city’s premier nightclub found a permanent home on terra firma. It draws top local DJs and occasional big foreign acts. Thursday is gay-friendly night, with a lam lady-boy show. The adjacent Pontoon Pulse is more of a lounge club.

**Don’t miss**

Interested in Cambodian cooking? Learn the art of Khmer cuisine through Frizz Restaurant on St 240. Classes are held on a breezy rooftop near the Russian embassy. Reserve at least one day ahead (frizz-restaurant.com). It’s supposedly the oldest cooking class in the city and the fish amok recipe is the best you’ll find.

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### Sleeping

**Mad Monkey**
Best for socialising
(madmonkeyhostels.com)
A rooftop bar, plus spacious dorms with air-con that sleep up to eight, 12 or 22; there are also doubles, triples and twins.

**Palace Gate Hotel**
Best for surrounding architecture
(palacegatepp.com)
Overlooking the Royal Palace and close to the river, this hotel has lovely contemporary décor and bright, airy rooms.

**Pavilion**
Best for French colonial grace
(thepavilion.asia)
Housed in an elegant French villa with two pools, the atmospheric Pavilion also has suites with private plunge pools.

**Sundance Riverside**
Best for a budget option
(sundanceriverside.com)
This place has a great setting on the river, with a bar, pool table and darts downstairs. Rooms are small, but clean and well cared for.

**Teahouse**
Best for lovely common areas
(theteahouse.asia)
Rooms here are exceptional value given the chic look. The open-air reception area under a Chinese-style pavilion has relaxed seating.

**Villa Langka**
Best for low-key elegance
(villalangka.com)
One of the first players in the poolside-boutique game, Villa Langka has long been a Phnom Penh favourite.

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**FURTHER READING**
Our *Cambodia* guide (£15.99) has a chapter on Phnom Penh which is available to download separately for £2.99 from shop.lonelyplanet.com.