

Into the wild

19 DON'T DROP ANGKOR



If there's one thing more astounding than the temples of Angkor Wat, it's the crowds they attract. Don't let them put you off — you can still find that sense of discovery and mystery on a new avoid-the-hordes tour from the specialist outfit About Asia (aboutasiatravel.com). Yes, you take in the must-sees of Ta Prohm and Angkor Wat itself — dodging the busiest times, naturally — but then you head off to a bunch of seriously remote 12th-century temple complexes that most tourists, and many guides, haven't even heard of, let alone considered visiting. For example, there's the hilltop Prasat Phnom Sondark, which can be reached only by a tough nine-mile trek through virgin jungle; and forgotten Prey Veng, an exquisite jumble of Angkor ruins hidden down a 15-mile forest track. It was documented by French colonists, but has been all but lost to the advancing greenery. Hope you like the unearthly atmosphere, because you'll be camping here overnight. All the wonder, then, but none of the wanderers. The seven-day tour starts at £701, B&B, including transport, permits and guiding, but not flights; returns to Siem Reap via Shanghai with China Southern start at about £650 through Skyscanner.net or Opodo.co.uk.