



Condé Nast Traveller

SPECIAL DOUBLE ISSUE

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THE HOT LIST 2017

THIS YEAR'S BEST NEW HOTELS, BEACH CLUBS, BARS & RESTAURANTS

FREE NIGHT AT LONDON'S SMARTEST HOTEL

BALI ON THE INSIDE
THE REAL ISLAND STYLE

EXCLUSIVE FIRST LOOK

THE MOST TALKED-ABOUT INDIAN OCEAN HIDEAWAY

URBAN FIXES

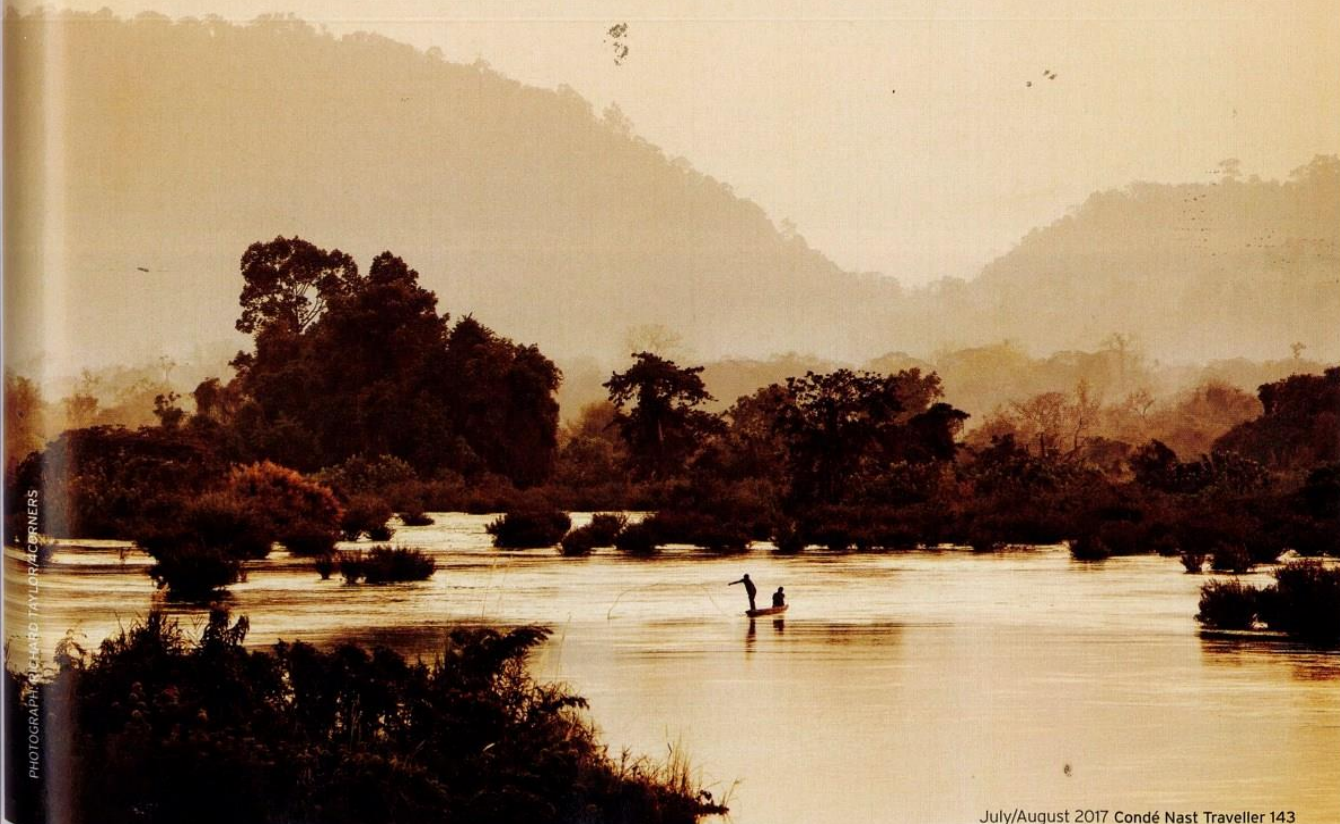
- BERLIN
- PALM SPRINGS
- TOKYO
- MEXICO CITY
- ATHENS



THE COMING OF AGE CAMBODIA

AFTER THE ECO-LUXE HIT OF SONG SAA ISLAND, OTHER AREAS ARE GETTING IN ON THE ACT

'I've been going to Cambodia for 15 years and I'm constantly discovering new places, new beauty,' says Bill Bensley, the Thailand-based architect whose fantastical creations – over 200 in 30 countries, from Bangkok's The Siam to Four Seasons Golden Triangle – have defined Asian hotel design. Now he's working on his most personal project yet: an ultra-luxurious, ultra-low-impact camp called Shinta Mani Wild, straddling a river valley between the Bokor and Kirirom national parks. When it opens next year, there will be 15 antiques-filled tents on stilts, outdoor massages in the Cardamom mountains, and activities such as wildlife tracking with stationed researchers. Guests will arrive by zipline to be greeted by a gin and tonic. 'It's going to feel like another planet,' Bensley promises. But at the heart of the hotel mini-chain is the Shinta Mani Foundation which, among other community and conservation projects, supports a hospitality school for young Cambodians. Bensley's not alone in championing the country beyond Angkor Wat, and later this year both Six Senses (on Krabey Island) and Alila (Koh Russey) land off the pristine south coast. Shinta Mani has an eye on the islands too, after adding 10 walled-garden pool villas to its Siem Reap flagship and a new hotel in Phnom Penh, where Rosewood also arrives this autumn. And it's not just the flurry of hotels that's putting Cambodia into focus. Angelina Jolie's latest directorial outing, *First They Killed My Father*, shines a light on sleepy Battambang. The country's second city felt the full wrath of the Khmer Rouge and this Khmer-language film tells the story of human-rights activist Loung Ung's childhood under the regime. Today, Battambang is emerging as a creative hub with several galleries nurturing local talent. A generation on from the genocide, the new sense of optimism is palpable. And other areas of the country are being put back on the map. 'I'm a temple junkie,' says Richard Saward of Cambodia experts ABOUTAsia Travel, 'and northern Cambodia is dotted with world-class sites no one goes to. Huge infrastructure investment is making getting to these more far-flung complexes easier – three years ago, for example, Banteay Chhmar was a 10-hour drive from Siem Reap along muddy tracks; now it's just three hours by proper roads.' Cambodia's progress is gathering speed.



PHOTOGRAPH BY CLAUDIO TAYLOR/ACORNERS