



**VISION TRIP TO CAMBODIA
2024
GRAND CENTRE ALLIANCE
CHURCH**

OVERVIEW

Between 1975 and



1979 Cambodia was devastated by the reign of the Khmer Rouge, a rural communist guerrilla movement. During the Khmer Rouge's control, at least 1.5 million Cambodians were killed or died, a monumental tragedy from which the country still suffers. Even so, Cambodia is still known as the Kingdom of Wonder and attracts more than two million tourists each year.

Cambodians are hard-working social people and tend to have a strong sense of loyalty and pride for their family and village. Strong emphasis is placed on honouring and loyalty to one's family, friends or community will.

Cambodians are proud of their strong history, which stretches back to the Angkor Empire, starting in the 9th century and lasting until the 15th century. They are proud of their rich culture, which includes apsara dancing, traditional arts, and artisanal crafts.

International Workers

Darren & Minako Polischuk

Darren and Minako Polischuk moved to Cambodia from Calgary in 2015 and began working in the garbage dump communities. Four years later, Minako started a sewing center called Clothed in Dignity Center where she invited at-risk women, who previously scavenged to survive, learn how to sew. Since that time, and despite COVID, the organization has grown to 23 full-time staff. Six of those ladies were recommended by an anti-trafficking organization and some previously worked in karaoke bars, which are often a disguise for brothels. The ultimate goal is to help as many of the marginalized to have hope through Jesus, an education of reading, writing, basic mathematics, and to provide marketable skills development. Since one of the largest industries in Cambodia is textiles using the cut-make-pack model, Clothed in Dignity taught the ladies how to sew and was able to get orders beginning with 10,000 drawstring bags, to 30,000 face masks and now 30,000 t-shirts along with numerous other orders.

In 2020, Darren started a welding shop called Made for This Fabrication. He began with 4 men and is now at 35+ employees. They build things such as

furniture, trailers, playgrounds, tractors, and equipment for the fish farming industry as well as running their own commercial farms. They were recently asked by the Cambodian prison system to own and operate Fish Farms in the Cambodian prisons as part of the development of a vocational training program for the prisons with access granted to employ prisoners while disciplining them. There are 29 prisons and 45,000+ prisoners and as a ministry, Made for This Fabrication hopes to see many of these captives set free as they go on to become fishers of men in every corner of the country.

Purpose

Our purpose will be to connect more deeply with the Polischuk's. To spend time in their environment, dream with them, pray with them and be an encouragement to them. I believe if we spend time seeing their chosen neighbourhood, meeting the people they are trying to reach and take the time to understand their specific ministries and unique challenges it enables us to return home to pray and support them differently. In our virtual world we can gain information quickly and know many of the details of their life but there is no substitute for face to face contact and on the ground experience.

In the seven days we are there we will spend time with Darren and Minako learning about their ministry, the culture they serve in, their hopes and

see firsthand where God is at work in Siem Reap. We will see the Clothed in Dignity sewing center and the Made for This Fabrication site, meet and hear the stories of the men and women they are working with and learn about the culture they live in. We want to return home with a deeper friendship and understanding that will motivate us to engage and pray differently.

We always encourage our people to reflect on our motto of 'Pray, Give, Go.' We are convinced of God's great love for all people and believe that He is fully engaged and at work within His kingdom. Consider coming along on this adventure to breathe the air of Siem Reap, to smell the smells and to take some time out of a busy life to see firsthand where God is at work in another culture and how He may be asking you to be involved differently.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

I believe a trip like this should always begin with prayer. Here are some questions to ask yourself and to pray through.

- What makes me nervous or fearful about this experience?
- Am I willing to go and serve?
- Am I able to give up the required time to prepare for and go on this trip?

TIME COMMITMENTS

Exact dates have not been set but we would be leaving at the end of March. We will be gone approximately 10 days with 7 days in Siem Reap and 1.5 travel days on either end of the week.

Our goal is to be well prepared, so with that in mind, we expect our teams to fully participate beforehand with regular team training meetings and fundraising. Understanding before we leave why we are going and how we can best serve in a new culture is important. Taking time as a team to learn and pray together beforehand is crucial to building team unity and to being prepared to serve well when we arrive in Siem Reap.

COSTS

The cost for this trip is still being calculated but will include airfare, accommodations, meals, and in country travel. As a team, we are responsible to raise these funds. Individually, each team member is required to personally pay \$500 toward the trip. The remaining costs will be raised through sending out support letters and by participating in fundraisers.

A current passport, entrance visa, travel vaccinations and Health Insurance are required and the responsibility of the individual. In addition, the cost of meals while in transit to and from Siem

Reap and spending money will be the responsibility of the individual. The currency of Cambodia is the Riel, but the USD is widely accepted. Credit Cards are not reliably accepted.

DOCUMENTS & HEALTH

Passport – A current passport is required. Your passport must be valid six months beyond the expected departure date from the country.

Entry Visa – To be secured before departure. Is approximately \$40 USD.

Vaccinations – It is advisable that whenever you travel you visit a travel health nurse and make sure all your vaccinations are up to date. It is highly recommended you have Hepatitis A&B, Typhoid and Tetanus vaccinations.

We recommend taking **Dukoral** before the trip. It is an over-the-counter oral vaccine that helps with traveller's diarrhea.

You will need to bring along any prescribed and over-the-counter medications you need as they may not be readily available there. Your team leader must also be made aware of any prescriptions you are bringing or any health concerns, including anxiety or mental health concerns.

Some miscellaneous things to be aware of as you consider this trip.

- The average daytime temperature in April is 34 degrees with 70% humidity.
- Our meals are being arranged for us so we cannot guarantee being able to accommodate all dietary restrictions.
- Cambodia is 14 time zones ahead so there will be jetlag to contend with.

If you are still reading this, I hope it means you are considering coming along. I believe that a mission trip not only encourages our International Workers but also strengthens our faith and enables us to serve differently when we return home. It should be said that preference will be given to people who have not taken a trip with us before as we want as many as possible to have this experience and connection. If you have further questions or need to talk about if you should be considering this trip, please feel free to contact me.

Corinne Keith

Missions Coordinator

corinne.keith@gcalliance.org