

CAMBODIA: THE COMPREHENSIVE LOCAL & SUSTAINABLE FOOD GUIDE

Food is a direct connection to Cambodia's heritage. To truly experience the Kingdom, you must dine where the locals dine. This guide is built on a "Local First" philosophy: celebrating the small, family-owned noodle stalls, decades-old local institutions, and pioneering social enterprise restaurants where both locals and international travelers dine side-by-side.

Every recommendation here is verified as currently active and operating, supporting the local economy directly and practicing sustainability in its most authentic, low-waste form.

OUR LOCAL & SUSTAINABLE SELECTION CRITERIA

We vet establishments based on the following sustainability and community-support pillars:

- Local Ownership (Economic Retention):** 100% owned by local families or operated as social cooperatives, keeping tourism revenue directly within the Cambodian community.
- Social Inclusion & Education:** Highlighting enterprises that provide culinary and hospitality vocational training to marginalized street youth, orphanage leavers, or victims of human trafficking.
- Low-Waste & Traditional Dining:** Supporting local eateries that naturally minimize single-use plastics through dine-in habits (reusable bowls, chopsticks, and glassware).
- Local Sourcing (Zero Food Miles):** Prioritizing spots that buy ingredients fresh daily from neighborhood wet markets, local fishermen, or organic farms.
- Strict Wildlife Protection:** Absolute prohibition of serving endangered animals, forest game, or illegal wildlife spirits.

8 ICONIC LOCAL DISHES & HOW TO EAT THEM SUSTAINABLY

To eat responsibly in Cambodia, embrace local habits and reject single-use plastic waste:

1. Fish Amok

A delicate, soufflé-like freshwater fish curry steamed in a banana leaf cup with coconut milk and slok ngor (local bitter herb).

 **Sustainable Practice:** Sourced from the Tonle Sap lake, supporting local fishermen. The banana leaf cup is a perfect, zero-waste packaging method, always appreciate this natural, biodegradable alternative.

2. Beef Lok Lak

Tender stir-fried beef served over lettuce, tomatoes, and onions, with a dipping sauce of lime juice, sea salt, and black Kampot pepper.

3. Kuy Teav (Khmer Noodle Soup)

A popular breakfast noodle soup made from pork or beef broth, rice vermicelli, and topped with fresh herbs, bean sprouts, and lime.

 **Sustainable Practice:** Eat at small, open-air street stalls where locals eat. These shops use reusable bowls and chopsticks, generating near-zero packaging waste.

4. Nom Banh Chok (Khmer Noodles)

Fermented rice noodles topped with a cold green fish gravy made from lemongrass, turmeric root, and kaffir lime, served with fresh seasonal vegetables.

5. Bai Sach Chrouk (Pork and Rice)

The most popular breakfast dish in Cambodia. Thinly sliced pork marinated in garlic and coconut milk, slow-grilled over charcoal, and served over broken rice.

6. Crab with Kampot Pepper

Freshly caught blue crab stir-fried with green, immature peppercorn bunches from Kampot.

7. Kari Sach Moan (Khmer Chicken Curry)

A mild, coconut milk curry made with lemongrass, sweet potatoes, and local herbs, traditionally eaten with French bread or rice.

8. Prahok Ktis

A savory dip made from prahok (fermented fish paste), minced pork, coconut milk, and tiny pea eggplants, served with fresh, raw local vegetables.

 **Sustainable Practice:** Prahok is the ultimate traditional preservation method for surplus freshwater fish, representing a cornerstone of sustainable food security.

REGIONAL EATERY DIRECTORY (20 ACTIVE STALLS & RESTAURANTS)

SIEM REAP REGION

★ Featured Social Enterprise: Haven Training Restaurant

Locality & Sourcing: Sources organic vegetables and meats from local farms; trains disadvantaged youth.

The Impact: Haven takes young adults leaving orphanages and safe shelters, providing them with professional hospitality training, safe housing, medical care, and life skills to break the cycle of poverty.

 **Location:** Chocolate Rd, Wat Damnak Area, Siem Reap.

★ Featured Local Institution: Tevy's Place

Locality & Sourcing: 100% locally owned, employing and empowering vulnerable local women.

The Impact: A highly active, affordable local restaurant supporting women's livelihoods. They source fresh ingredients daily from the local market and contribute a portion of profits to clean water projects in rural villages.

 **Location:** Next to Siem Reap Hostel, Wat Bo Area, Siem Reap.

Additional Recommended Local Spots in Siem Reap:

Eatery & Location	What Makes It Special
3. Spoons Cafe & Restaurant <i>Wat Damnak St, Siem Reap</i>	Social enterprise training underprivileged youth, constructed entirely of local sustainable bamboo.
4. Marum <i>Wat Damnak St, Siem Reap</i>	Friends-International vocational training restaurant serving creative Khmer tapas.
5. Mahob Khmer Cuisine <i>137 Traing Village, Siem Reap</i>	Locally owned modern Khmer dining sourcing ingredients from their own organic farm.
6. The Sugar Palm <i>Wat Bo Rd, Siem Reap</i>	Locally owned heritage restaurant run by Chef Luu Meng's family, famous for serving the most authentic Fish Amok.
7. Wild Siem Reap <i>Wat Damnak St, Siem Reap</i>	Eco-friendly creative spring roll restaurant with zero plastic, composting, and rainwater collection.

PHNOM PENH REGION

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Featured Social Enterprise: Friends the Restaurant

Locality & Sourcing: Sourced from local markets; run by Friends-International.

The Impact: Mitigates youth poverty by training former street children in culinary and service skills. All profits are directly reinvested into child protection and family reintegration projects in Phnom Penh.

📍 Location: 215 St 13, Phnom Penh.

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Featured Local Institution: Eleven One Kitchen

Locality & Sourcing: 100% locally owned and operated.

The Impact: A pioneer in local sustainable dining, serving MSG-free Khmer dishes. They operate a strict zero-single-use-plastic policy and source 99% of their ingredients from local organic farming cooperatives.

📍 Location: 37 St 123 (Toul Tom Pong) & St 334 (BKK1), Phnom Penh.

📍 Additional Recommended Local Spots in Phnom Penh:

Eatery & Location	What Makes It Special
3. Romdeng <i>74 St 174, Phnom Penh</i>	Friends-International training restaurant housed in a colonial villa, famous for serving regional Khmer dishes.
4. Kravanh Restaurant <i>St 268, Phnom Penh</i>	Locally owned, famous for upscale traditional home-style Khmer cooking, zero-waste principles.
5. Daughters of Cambodia Visitor Centre Cafe <i>Sisowath Quay, Phnom Penh</i>	Social enterprise training and employing victims of human trafficking.
6. Brown Coffee Roastery <i>St 57, BKK1, Phnom Penh</i>	A successful locally owned coffee roastery sourcing Robusta and Arabica directly from smallholder farms in Mondulkiri.

Eatery & Location	What Makes It Special
7. Orussey Market Street Food Stalls <i>St 182, Phnom Penh</i>	Highly active, historic market stalls where locals stand to eat Nom Banh Chok and grilled pork rice with zero packaging.
8 Farm to Table <i>16 St 360, BKK1, Phnom Penh</i>	Open-air courtyard restaurant sourcing directly from small organic farms and hosting local farmer's markets.