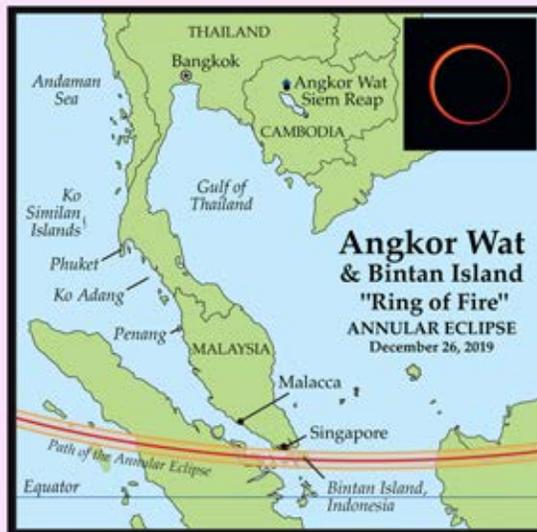


# ANGKOR WAT & BINTAN ISLAND "Ring of Fire" !

December 18-27, 2019



*Explore the mysteries of Angkor Wat!  
And discover the amazing  
500 Lohan Statues on Bintan Island  
beneath the lofty gaze of the  
"Ring of Fire" of the Annular Eclipse,  
December 26, 2019!*



For information, contact Terri or April  
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THE BEST OF MAN AND NATURE WORLDWIDE SM



## **ANGKOR WAT & BINTAN ISLAND “RING OF FIRE” EXPEDITION**

**December 18 – 27, 2019**

### **OVERVIEW**

JOIN US! AS WE EXPLORE THE MYSTERIES OF ANGKOR WAT! AND DISCOVER THE AMAZING 500 LOHAN STATUES ON BINTAN ISLAND BENEATH THE LOFTY GAZE OF THE “RING OF FIRE” OF THE ANNULAR ECLIPSE ON DECEMBER 26TH!

This adventure will enable you to explore the most renowned archaeological site in southeast Asia, Angkor Wat, and Angkor Thom, Bayon Temple, and other temples which are part of the Angkor complex! Angkor Wat is a great source of national pride in Cambodia, and offers a tremendous artistic legacy from the 12<sup>th</sup> century.

You will also discover the fascinating array of 500 life-size Lohan statues (a legacy of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, which only opened in 2017) during the Annular Eclipse or “Ring of Fire” on Bintan Island! This ethereal location will be that much more fascinating as the light softens, and the eclipse occurs!

Bintan is just an hour by ferry from Singapore, and for centuries it was renowned as a harbor for pirates -- Pirate Island!

The Lohan statues are a modern-day creation, which we suspect may become renowned like the “Terra Cotta Warriors” of China over the millennia. It is quite astonishing to arrive at the site and see the magnificent array of 500 life-size statues spread out in front of you, each one different than the others.

Exploring these extraordinary cultural and archaeological wonders (built 9 centuries apart) will certainly be a lifetime experience. The frosting on the cake will be watching the “Ring of Fire” pass over the Lohan site!

We hope you will take advantage of this opportunity to join us!

For reservations, please **phone Terri, April, or Taunya (800) 252-4910** or email: **[betchartterri@gmail.com](mailto:betchartterri@gmail.com)** or **[betchartapril@gmail.com](mailto:betchartapril@gmail.com)** or **[betcharttaunya@gmail.com](mailto:betcharttaunya@gmail.com)**

Please contact us right away. Space on flights and at hotels is limited; first come, first served.

### **DAILY ITINERARY**

#### **Days 1/2 San Francisco to Singapore**

Wed Dec 18/Thurs Dec 19

Check in by 9:30 pm at San Francisco International Airport for SQ #1 to Singapore, departing at 12:05 am December 19th. Cross the International Date Line en route.

#### **Day 3 Singapore & Siem Reap / Angkor Wat**

Fri Dec 20

Arrive Singapore December 20th at 12 Noon and check in for your flight to Siem Reap, departing 1:40 pm. Arrive, go through customs and immigration. Meet Dr. Chris Carpenter, your expedition leader. Transfer to your *Angkor Wat Hotel (3 nights)*. Have a welcome gathering and dinner. D

#### **Day 4 The Ancient Capital of Angkor Thom & Angkor Wat**

Sat Dec 21

Today, we will begin our visit to the extraordinary archaeological complex at Angkor Wat. In the morning, we will visit the ancient capital of Angkor Thom (12 century). See the South Gate with its huge statues depicting the churning of the ocean of milk and Bayon temple whose 54 towers are decorated with over 200 smiling faces. We will also get to see Baphuon, which was recently opened after years of restoration, plus the Elephants Terrace and Terrace of the Leper King. Lunch at the hotel.

In the afternoon, we’ll visit Prasat Kravan with its unique brick sculptures and also go to the Royal Baths.

We’ll then visit the most famous of all of the temples on the plain of Angkor: Angkor Wat. The complex covers 81 hectares (the size of the Imperial Palace in Beijing). This 12<sup>th</sup> century masterpiece is considered by art historians to be the prime example of classical Khmer art and architecture. The five towers symbolize Meru’s five peaks, the enclosed wall represents the mountains at the edge of the world, and the surrounding moat represents the ocean beyond. Enjoy sunset at Angkor Wat and dinner at a local restaurant. B,L,D

## **Day 5            Banteay Samre & Ta Prohm**

Sun Dec 22

Our exploration of the Angkor complex will continue with a visit to Banteay Samre, one of the most complete complexes at Angkor due to restoration using the “anastylosis” method. The Samre were an ethnic group of mountain people who inhabited the region at the base of Phnom Kulen and were probably related to the Khmers. No inscriptions have been found for this temple, but the style is similar to the classic middle period of Angkor Wat. It has beautiful proportions, and a fascinating interior moat. Lunch at hotel.

We will continue to Ta Prohm, one of the most beautiful temples. It has been relatively untouched. Unlike other monuments at Angkor, Ta Prohm remains largely swallowed by the jungle, like most of the Angkor temples were when first discovered. A tangle of roots and vines climb over the ruins.

Also visit Chau Say Tevoda and Thommanon temples, and Preah Khan temple, a place of towered enclosures and shoulder-hugging corridors, like Ta Prohm. It is in a reasonable state of preservation and preservation work continues.

We'll then visit Neak Pean, a fountain built in the middle of a pool, representing a paradisiacal Himalayan lake.

Enjoy Sunset at Pre Rup, and dinner with an Apsara Dance show at a local restaurant.    B,L,D

## **Day 6            Angkor National Museum & Siem Reap to Singapore**

Mon Dec 23

This morning we will visit the spectacular Angkor National Museum, with a unique collection of invaluable art objects from the ancient Khmer Kingdom. It will give us a deeper understanding of the customs, traditions, and beliefs of this ancient empire.

Then transfer to the Siem Reap airport for MI flight #613 to Singapore, departing 12:25 pm, arriving Singapore 4 pm. Transfer to our *Hotel (1 night)*. You then have time at leisure to explore this charming and vibrant city as you wish.

B

## **Day 7            Ferry to the “Pirate Island,” Bintan Island, Indonesia**

Tues Dec 24

Today, we will transfer to the ferry terminal and check in for the ferry to Bintan Island, Indonesia. Bintan is one hour by boat south of Singapore and is the largest of the Riau Islands.

Since the third century AD, this historic island was an important trading point on the route between China and India. It became known as the “Pirate Island” in the 12<sup>th</sup> century since Malay pirates used it as a base for looting ships. Over the centuries, hundreds of ships with Malay sailors forced Chinese ships to ports in Bintan. An Arabian author of the 13<sup>th</sup> century wrote: “Here there are little Islands, from which armed black pirates with poised arrows emerged, possessing armed warships; they plunder people but do not enslave them.” Even centuries later,

Bintan is still referred to as the “Pirate Island.” It became part of the Dutch East Indies in 1824. Upon arrival in Tanjung Pinang, the primary city on Bintan, we will transfer to the *Aston Tanjung Pinang Hotel (3 nights)*. Lunch at the hotel, and afternoon leisure or excursion options. Dinner at our hotel. B,L,D

**Day 8           Bintan Island, Indonesia**

Wed Dec 25

Today we will explore Bintan Island. We will visit historic Penyengat Island, which has been nominated as a World Heritage Site, and the Kwan Im Temple, the biggest temple on Bintan Island. We will then have a mangrove adventure along the Sebung River which will include a chance to look for macaque and silver leaf monkeys, monitor lizards, and other wildlife of the mangroves. You may have a chance to see some Orang Lauts (sea gypsies), and their homes built on stilts (kelongs). In the late afternoon we’ll gather at the hotel for a briefing about the Annular Solar Eclipse and its “Ring of Fire” which we will see tomorrow!

Dinner at the hotel.

B,L,D

**Day 9           Annular Solar Eclipse and 500 Lohan Statues**

Thurs Dec 26

Today we will see the Eclipse as we visit the 500 Lohan Statues which are part of a stunning hilltop Buddhist monastery complex. We will enter through an impressive archway and a pavilion with Buddhist images and statues. We will then step into an amazing garden where 500 life-size sculptures of arhats (people who have reached nirvana or are on the path to enlightenment) stand in orderly rows at the end of the garden. We will explore these remarkable statues – a photographer’s wonderland – as we prepare for the Annular Solar Eclipse or “Ring of Fire!”

The Eclipse is relatively long and will begin at midday. As it progresses, the Moon will cover 97 percent of the sun’s surface at its maximum at 12:25 pm (for 3 min 40 seconds) leaving a spectacular Ring of Fire around it! This will give amazing opportunities for photography of these remarkable statues with the Eclipse overseeing all! We will then return to our hotel for a celebration and lunch!

B,L,D

**Day 10          Bintan Island to Singapore & Home**

Fri Dec 27      OR Begin Star Clipper adventure along the west coast of Thailand

We will depart for the ferry terminal today and ferry across to Singapore. Transfer to the airport for flights home on Singapore Airlines flight #2, departing at 6:30 pm.

We’ll arrive back in San Francisco at 7:40 pm today (same day, due to International Date Line).

For information about the Star Clipper adventure, from Singapore to Phuket, on the 4-masted tall ship December 27 – January 5, 2020, please contact [betcharttaunya@gmail.com](mailto:betcharttaunya@gmail.com)

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**Please Note:** This itinerary is a guideline and is subject to change due to local circumstances and flight schedule changes. Your leader will keep you informed.

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**RESERVATIONS**

#1570AW

**YES!** I/We want to join the **Angkor Wat & Bintan Island “Ring of Fire” Expedition, December 18 - 27, 2019** offered by Betchart Expeditions Inc. Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ space(s). As a deposit, I/we have enclosed a check for \$\_\_\_\_\_ (\$1,000 per person), payable to Betchart Expeditions Inc. Trust Account.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ double \_\_\_\_\_ twin or \_\_\_\_\_ single accommodations.

\_\_\_\_\_ Please send information about the Star Clipper post-trip, Singapore to Phuket, Dec 27 – Jan 5, 2020.

Please mail to: **Angkor Wat & Bintan “Ring of Fire” 2019  
Betchart Expeditions Inc.  
17050 Montebello Road  
Cupertino, CA 95014**

**COSTS & CONDITIONS**

**Angkor Wat / Bintan Fee:** \$3,295 per person (twin share) + group air fare of approximately \$1,695 per person from San Francisco to Angkor Wat & Singapore, RT. Air Fares are subject to change until ticketed.

**Singles:** We encourage singles to register twin share. If you do not have a roommate, there is an \$895 additional cost for single accommodations. (Limited singles are available.)

**Angkor Wat – Bintan Trip Fee Includes:** Group airport transfers; tours as indicated; accommodations twin share; most meals; group entrance fees; leadership, administration.

**Fee Does Not Include:** Air fare (quoted separately); lunches & dinners in Singapore; independent in-transfers; optional excursions on Bintan Island; beverages at meals; personal items such as alcoholic beverages, laundry, phone calls, bottled water or soda, snacks; passport, visa, personal insurance; tips to local guides; gratuity to expedition leader.

**Questions, Reservations, Deposits, and Payments:** To reserve your place on the Angkor Wat & Bintan “Ring of Fire”, please phone **Terri, April, or Taunya at Betchart Expeditions Inc. (800) 252-4910** or email: **[betcharttaunya@gmail.com](mailto:betcharttaunya@gmail.com), [betchartterri@gmail.com](mailto:betchartterri@gmail.com), or [betchartapril@gmail.com](mailto:betchartapril@gmail.com)**

**Please mail the reservation form and your deposit check for \$1,000 per person to: Betchart Expeditions Inc., 17050 Montebello Road, Cupertino, CA 95014.** The final payment is due August 15, 2019; 120 days before departure.

**What to Expect:** This adventure is for the travel enthusiast who would enjoy exploring and learning about Angkor Wat, the most renowned archaeological site in southeast Asia, and seeing the remarkable 500 Lohan statues under the light of the Annular Solar Eclipse “Ring of Fire” December 26, 2019. Leading the expedition will be an excellent local naturalist well known to Betchart Travelers, and local guides. There is a good chance of clear skies for the Eclipse on Bintan Island, but it could possibly be obscured by clouds or rain. We will have a marvelous adventure in any case! (No smoking in buses or lecture rooms please.)

**Cancellations & Refunds:** The initial deposit is refundable until 120 days before departure, less a handling fee of \$100 per person. There is no refund for any cancellation after the 120-day period unless your space can be resold; then a \$100 per person handling fee applies. No refunds are made for unused services. Air fare is non-refundable, non-transferable.

**Responsibility:** Betchart Expeditions Inc. acts only as agent for the passenger with respect to transportation and hotels and exercises every care possible. Betchart can assume no liability for injury, damage, delay, loss, accident, or irregularity in connection with the services of any airplane, ship, motorcoach, or any other conveyance used in carrying out the arrangements of the tour. We cannot accept any responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, terrorism, quarantine, acts of God, or other causes beyond our control. All such losses or expenses will have to be borne by the passenger, as tour rates provide for arrangements only for the time stated. We reserve the right to substitute another leader of similar expertise or to cancel any tour prior to departure in which case the entire payment will be refunded with no further obligation on our part. The right is also reserved to decline to accept or retain any person as a member of the tour. No refund will be made for the unused portion of any tour unless arrangements are made in sufficient time to avoid penalties. The price of the program is based on current tariffs and rates, and is subject to change. Any tariff, exchange rate, or fuel increases will be passed on to participants. Baggage is carried at the owner’s risk entirely. It is understood that the air ticket when issued shall constitute the sole contract between the passenger and the airline concerned. The airlines concerned are not to be held responsible for any act, omission, or event during the time passengers are not on board their plane or conveyance.