

Profile: Lucy Dean

Hometown:

Wellington, New Zealand

Program:

Volunteer Cambodia

Length of time spent overseas?

4 Months in placement, 1 month travelling

Tell us where you lived and what you got up to in Cambodia?

I lived in Siem Reap, a really busy and entertaining part of Cambodia. There is lots of tourist traffic through the city, with the Temples being a big foreigner magnet. I taught English to Orphans and blind students from Monday through Friday.

Most of my weekends were spent travelling around other parts of Cambodia or soaking up the sun at one of the local hotel pools!

What are some experiences that you had which made an impact on you?

All the 'firsts'. The first Tuk Tuk ride through town, the first time walking through the markets, the first time street kids harass you for money, the first dish of Amok, the first bit of Cambodian rain, the first time your students learn a new skill, and the first time you smell 'Cambodian Cheese' (fish paste!).

Were there any hard times?

Of course. Cycling to work in 38 degree heat, working around the communication barrier with your students and having to argue down the price of everything (even when you really just want to have the souvenir and be done with it).

How did you like Cambodia?

Amazing people make an amazing place. There is something truly magical about the people of this country. Despite what we would consider 'inadequate' living standards they are always smiling and only too happy to help and make friends, even when you don't want a Tuk Tuk.



Tell us something unexpected/different/strange about Cambodia compared with other places you have lived?

The roads! There is only one rule; there are no rules! It's about gripping your handle bars and being assertive; overtake that moto with 6 people and rice bags on it and don't get the wobbles when that truck 5 cms away from you hurtles past.

Did you enjoy your experience going on an IEP volunteer program and did you feel supported by them?

IEP and Interweave are a great support base to have whilst over here. Everything from helping you find the supermarket to weekend trips is made so much easier with these guys help!

