

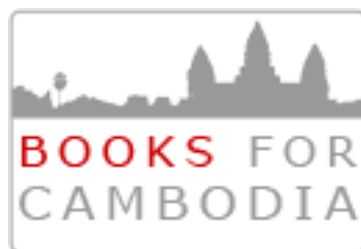
# Discover Cambodia

## Tour Information Booklet



“We were first time travelers looking for an ‘off the beaten track’ type trip with a bit of adventure. We certainly had this. We enjoyed the company of a great group of fellow travelers. The attention to detail by Pacific Discovery and the tour leaders was exceptional.”

Mary-Anne and Trevor Stretton



[www.booksforcambodia.org](http://www.booksforcambodia.org)

**pacific discovery**  
insightful small group adventures

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# Discover Cambodia Tour

Cambodia, 15 days

Cambodia's spirit is embodied in the stunning, ancient temples of the Angkor Empire, a civilisation which once presided over most of present day Southeast Asia. People are wonderful, the rural landscapes are gorgeous and its cities are Asia at its bustling best. Cambodia is a fascinating and safe country to visit, and travelling here with us will be a pivotal and heart-warming experience.

30 years of war, and cultural genocide during the Khmer Rouge regime had a devastating effect on the country, particularly on the education system. BOOKS FOR CAMBODIA is helping to change that and we are inviting you to join us for a very special experience of this wonderful country.

**Tour price:** NZD \$3,750 / USD \$2,600

**Tour dates:** 28 Dec 2011 – 11 Jan 2012; 28 Dec 2012 – 11 Jan 2013

**Duration:** 15 days from Phnom Penh (we can assist with international flights – see next page)

**Trip start / finish:** Phnom Penh / Siem Reap, Cambodia

**Activity:** Itinerary focused on cultural insight and experiences, NGO visits, volunteer project

**Accommodation:** 8 nights locally owned guesthouses, 5 nights homestays

## Highlights

- Participating in a Books for Cambodia initiative
- Markets and museums of Phnom Penh
- NGO visits looking at education, health and vocational training
- The relaxing coastal town of Kampot
- Insight into rural life, home-staying with a wonderful Cambodian family
- Architecture and ambience of Battambang
- Floating village homestay and boat trip in Prek Toal Biosphere bird sanctuary
- Incredible temples of Angkor Wat
- Very personalized small group experience
- Fantastic tour leader supported by local guides

## Itinerary at a glance

- Day 1** Arrive Phnom Penh, sightseeing
- Day 2** Phnom Penh visits
- Day 3** Drive to Kampot
- Day 4** Kampot volunteer project
- Day 5** Boat trip to Koh Tonsay, drive to Takeo, rural homestay
- Day 6** Homestay, school and NGO visits
- Day 7** Homestay, school and NGO visits
- Day 8** Homestay, school and NGO visits
- Day 9** Drive to Battambang
- Day 10** Battambang sightseeing
- Day 11** Boat trip to Prek Toal, floating village homestay
- Day 12** Boat trip to Siem Reap, Angkor Wat
- Day 13** Explore Angkor temples
- Day 14** Explore temples and NGO visits
- Day 15** Farewell Cambodia, depart Siem Reap



Tour cost NZ\$3,750 / US\$2,600  
Note: Based on US:NZ rate of 0.70. NZD price may be subject to currency fluctuations

### Tour inclusions

- All tour related travel and transport from tour start to finish
- All accommodation\*
- Most meals as indicated in the itinerary
- All excursions, activities and entry fees as described in the itinerary
- Escorted by a Pacific Discovery tour leader and English-speaking local guides
- \$500 donation to Books for Cambodia projects and initiatives

*\*Twin or double share basis. Single supplement available for additional US\$180 / NZ\$260*

### Tour exclusions

- Some meals (as indicated)
- Travel insurance (we can assist)
- Siem Reap departure tax (US\$25)
- Items of a personal nature eg. phone calls, email, laundry, snacks, drinks
- International flights and Cambodia visa-on-arrival (US\$20) (we can assist - see below)

### International flights & visa

You have the option of arranging your own flights to Phnom Penh/from Siem Reap, or utilising those recommended for this tour and arranged by our travel agents in New Zealand and North America. Flight options and fares will be confirmed at the time you make your booking. Your Cambodia visa will be issued on arrival – a very simple process – and we provide you with clear information about how to do this.

The cost for flights from New Zealand, recommended for this tour, is approx. NZ\$2400 departing from Auckland, Wellington, or Christchurch.

If travelling from North America, our agent in San Francisco can arrange flights from any city in the US or Canada. The cost for flights from the US, recommended for this tour, is approximately US\$1200 departing from the West Coast.

### Suitability

This tour is suitable for anyone who is moderately active - we've had 10-80 year olds join us on our itineraries. Southeast Asian towns and cities are often best explored on foot and bicycle however, motos, cyclos, and taxis are available for the less active.

### Group

Our group size is limited to 12, escorted by a Pacific Discovery tour leader. English-speaking local guides accompany us at times, to assist with interpretation of regional and historical sites and cultural experiences.

### Accommodation

Our accommodation is diverse, comfortable and carefully chosen to enhance our experience. On this itinerary we enjoy: 8 nights in locally owned character hotels and guesthouses with private bathroom/ensuite and air conditioning; 5 nights in simple homestays with shared facilities.

### Meals

Food is a highlight when traveling in Asia and throughout there will be the opportunity to eat authentic Khmer or Western style food. Special dietary requirements are catered for. Asian style eating is often a communal affair, and allows for a far greater variety of dishes to be sampled - it's also more fun. Most meals are included as indicated in the itinerary but we do have some independent meals enabling a choice of where, when and what you eat.

### Transport

The itinerary has been designed to maximise comfort and safety whilst also giving you the opportunity to experience local transport and take part in daily life. We utilise private vans, taxis, boats, and tuk-tuks.

# Discover Cambodia Itinerary

## Day 1. Phnom Penh

Usually a mid-morning arrival in Phnom Penh. You will be met on arrival and will transfer to our guesthouse near the riverside, a short walk from the Royal Palace and the banks of the mighty Tonle Sap – the river that flows backwards. After an introductory briefing, we'll visit Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, the Royal Palace, and enjoy a welcome dinner at Friends Restaurant, a vocational training NGO supporting some of Phnom Penh's 20,000 street kids. D

## Day 2. Phnom Penh

Exploring Cambodia's historical and cultural landscape, we start with an early morning visit to the Killing Fields. On the outskirts of Phnom Penh, the Killing Fields were used as a mass grave during the Khmer Rouge era. Many of the graves have been left untouched, a memorial has been erected and today, they are surprisingly peaceful. We return to the city and lunch at Lotus Blanc, an inspiring NGO that provides vocational training and support for young people from the Stung Meanchey dump community. We may take a short visit to an orphanage nearby, to gain some insight into life in these marginalised communities. Lightening up this afternoon, we visit the Russian Market and enjoy a Seeing Hands Massage. BL

## Day 3. Kampot

Free time this morning gives us the chance to wander along the riverfront or explore nearby sights and markets – there are wonderful textiles and crafts on offer. After an early lunch we depart Phnom Penh and drive (4 hrs) by private van to Kampot, a quiet and beguiling provincial capital on the south coast, famed for its black pepper and colonial architecture. After settling into our hotel, we'll have time for a stroll and drink on the riverfront, before visiting a local school to speak English with their students and assist with their language development. BD

## Day 4. Kampot volunteer day

Today will be a challenging and rewarding day of hands-on work with Sahmakum Teang Tnaut (STT), an NGO that assists poor communities to improve their housing and living conditions. The morning and early afternoon will be spent working with STT and a marginalised community in poverty, to build a simple home for a community member – often a solo mother or widow. We return to Kampot for an early dinner before watching a performance from children at the Kampot Traditional Music and Dance School. BL

## Day 5. Koh Tonsay and Takeo

We drive from Kampot to Kep (20 mins), and boat out to Koh Tonsay, an island in the South China Sea, to experience life on this small island. After a seafood lunch, swim and walk on the beach, we return to the mainland, and drive (2 hrs) to Takeo for a rural homestay with a wonderful Cambodian family, who work in education. BLD

## Day 6-8. Rural homestay and education

We have three full days with our homestay family and community, and will spend time in local high schools assisting with English language, and working on a project initiated by the school community and Books for Cambodia. There will also be time to visit an interesting local market, the family's pagoda, and learn about rice production and Khmer cooking. BLD, BLD, BLD

## Day 9-10. Battambang

Farewell our wonderful hosts and drive (5 hrs) to Battambang, a riverside town in Western Cambodia with some of the best preserved French-era architecture. We have a full day in Battambang to explore this lovely city, and the surrounding countryside. BLD, B

## Days 11-12. Tonle Sap Biosphere

Departing Battambang, we embark on Cambodia's most spectacular boat journey, navigating narrow waterways and

marshland, to arrive in the floating village of Prek Kanteal, in the heart of the Prek Toal Biosphere Reserve, a bird sanctuary. We homestay in the very simple homes of families in the village. This provides a unique insight into the lives of people living on the lake. At sunrise the next day we boat into Prek Toal Core Area to observe some of Southeast Asia's rarest birdlife. The nesting area in a flooded forest is spectacular in itself. Continuing by boat we arrive in Siem Reap for a late lunch followed by sunset at Angkor Wat.

BLD, BD

### **Day 13-14. Siem Reap & the Temples of Angkor**

From vibrant Siem Reap we explore the impressive remnants of the Angkor Empire, renowned for their superb temples and monuments. They are a UNESCO World Heritage site, the largest temple ruins on earth, and truly awe inspiring. See the restoration of some temples, and the disintegration of others, as the jungle reclaims them. The temples are best explored at dawn and dusk. In between, we'll be visiting the Landmine Museum, Artisans D'Angkor (silk weaving NGO), and the Angkor Children's Hospital. B, B

### **Day 15. Farewell Cambodia**

There will be time for a final sunrise at Angkor Wat for anyone who is keen, before most depart Siem Reap on the midday flight. Undoubtedly Cambodia will have left an indelible impression and we hope you will treasure your experiences and continue to nurture friendships made with the people and place. B

*"Our trip was so very wonderful. That was a life-altering experience. Thank you for helping it happen and give our best to Jennie and Roger, two of the very best people we have ever met."*  
Rhonda and John O'Brien

*"Jennie and Roger had great knowledge of the country and its people and ensured that we made the most of our time. I would not hesitate to recommend them and travel with them again."* Roger Duncan

*"I want to thank you again for such a wonderful trip through Southeast Asia, and Cambodia in particular. I am so grateful for having the experiences you shared with the group – I don't believe I would have gotten that with anybody else, let alone, travelling on my own."*  
Erica Scholz

# Cambodia

Cambodia's spirit is embodied in the stunning and ancient temples of the Angkor empire, a civilisation which once presided over most of present day Southeast Asia. Cambodia gained full independence from France one year before Vietnam, in 1953. King Sihanouk ruled for a peaceful ten years until the country became embroiled in the Vietnam conflict and a coup overthrew the monarchy. Massive corruption and the B52 carpet-bombing of eastern Cambodia enabled the renegade Khmer Rouge to gain support. They took control of the country in 1975 and began one of the worst episodes of genocide in recent world history, until they, in turn, were overthrown by the Vietnamese in 1979. Since UN assisted elections in 1993 and 1998, Cambodia has been a democracy. The Cambodian people, for all that they've endured, are among the friendliest you'll find anywhere, with a remarkable ability to put the past behind them and enjoy life.

## Tonle Sap Lake and Prek Toal Biosphere Reserve

Cambodia's great lake, Boeung Tonle Sap, is the most prominent feature on the map of Cambodia. In the wet season, the Tonle Sap Lake is one of the largest freshwater lakes in Asia, swelling to an expansive 12,000 km<sup>2</sup>. During the dry half of the year it shrinks to as small as 2500 km<sup>2</sup>, draining into the Tonle Sap River, which eventually merges with the Mekong River at the confluence opposite Phnom Penh. During the wet season a unique hydrologic phenomenon causes the river to reverse direction, filling the lake instead of draining it. This phenomenon is caused by the Mekong River, which becomes swollen with snow melt and runoff from the monsoon rains in the wet season. The swollen Mekong backs up into the Tonle Sap River forcing the waters back upriver into the lake. The inflow expands the surface area of the lake more than five-fold, inundating the surrounding forested floodplain and supporting an extraordinarily rich and diverse eco-system. More than 100 varieties of water birds including several threatened and endangered species, over 200 species of fish, as well as crocodiles, turtles, macaques, otter and other wildlife inhabit the inundated mangrove forests.

The lake is also an important commercial resource, providing more than half of the fish consumed in Cambodia. In harmony with the unique ecosystems, the human occupation at the edges of the lake is similarly distinctive - floating villages, towering stilted houses, huge fish traps, and an economy and way of life deeply intertwined with the lake, the fish, the wildlife and the cycles of rising and falling waters.

The 'bird sanctuary' at the Prek Toal core area of the Tonle Sap Biosphere Reserve has been called "the single most important breeding ground in Southeast Asia for globally threatened large water birds." The Biosphere covers 31,282 hectares at the northwest tip of the Tonle Sap Lake and plays host to species including Greater and Lesser Adjuncts, Black-headed Ibis, Painted Stork, Milky Stork, Spot-billed Pelican, Grey-Headed Fish Eagle and many more species. The best time of year for viewing is the dry season when flocks of migratory birds congregate at Prek Toal.

## Education in Cambodia

In Cambodia 30 years of war and cultural genocide over the four years of the Khmer Rouge regime have had a devastating effect on the country. In 1979 the education system had totally ceased to exist and has had to be reconstructed.

In the years since it has been a struggle to rebuild it. The lack of facilities, shortages of textbooks, poorly trained teachers and halftime school attendance have made it difficult to provide quality education for students.

In 2000 a government study in cooperation with UNDP and UNESCO revealed that 63% of adults were totally illiterate or had basic skills that were so poor that they were unable to

read. This study also confirmed the close link between the person's ability to read and write and his or her socio-economic level.

Today 93% of children attend primary school but the dropout rate remains very high and 69% of them reach secondary school and the quality of the education system is slowly improving. (Source: Cambodian Ministry of Education and UNESCO)

## Books for Cambodia

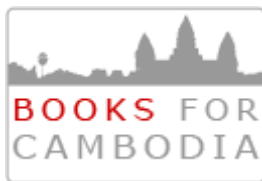
Books for Cambodia was initiated by Jennie Wilson, a former volunteer in Cambodia with Volunteer Service Abroad (VSA), and now a tour leader with Pacific Discovery. The other trustees have visited schools in Takeo Province on Adventure trips (a collaboration between VSA and Pacific Discovery). They have become aware of the paucity of reading materials and have joined the trust to help library development. There are over 4000 students in the schools Books for Cambodia has been supporting, and more schools will be included in the future.

Funds raised for Books for Cambodia are used to buy books in the Khmer language as well as bi-lingual material (Khmer-English). Having a well-run library means the books are better utilised and funds raised are also contributing to equipping the libraries, funding training for the librarians, and renovating the libraries (which were basically storerooms for text books).

One hundred percent of all donations received are put to the purchase of books and the development of school libraries. Administration costs are covered by the trustees and Pacific Discovery.

Books for Cambodia Trust is a New Zealand registered charitable trust, #CC11467.

For further information, please contact:



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Tel. +64-6-364 6602  
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Web: [www.booksforcambodia.org](http://www.booksforcambodia.org)

Pacific Discovery Group Leader and Books for Cambodia Founder  
Jennie Wilson  
Tel. +64-3-922 0866  
[jennie@pacificdiscovery.org](mailto:jennie@pacificdiscovery.org)

# Regional Climate

The climate of Southeast Asia is governed by two monsoon seasons. Put simply - 'the wet' season from approximately May to October is characterised by rain and high humidity whilst 'the dry' season from November to March brings cooler, dryer weather. Between the two is 'the hot' season from March to June when temperatures soar.

We believe we have selected the best times to visit the region, at the conclusion of the wet season, when temperatures are cooler. Below is a guide to the average monthly temperatures and rainfall during the time we visit.

## **Phnom Penh**

Temperature range min/max, 22-24/30°C

Rainfall, 40-120mm

## How do I book my tour?

Booking on the small group tour of your choice is simple!

1. Check availability – see the trip schedule online or contact us.
2. Submit your booking form and deposit, \$400 – complete online booking form, or the booking form below (post or fax to us).
3. We will confirm your place on the tour and send you a pre-travel dossier with comprehensive information on flights, visas, travel insurance, climate, health, responsible travel, and a gear/packing list.
4. Up until departure we liaise closely with you to ensure you are taken care of. We can assist with international flights, travel insurance and extension options.

## To contact us

Pacific Discovery New Zealand Basecamp

Contact: Rachel Sanson or Scott Burnett

PO Box 899, Nelson 7040 (mail)

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# Pacific Discovery Tour booking form

Name of tour you are booking	
Departure date of tour	

<b>Full name/s as in passport</b>	First / middle names	Surname
Traveller 1: Ms / Mrs / Mr		
I like to be called		
Traveller 2: Ms / Mrs / Mr		
(if applicable) I like to be called		
Full postal address		
Home & cell phone numbers		
Email address		

<b>Passport details</b> (if available)			
Traveller 1:		Traveller 2:	
Date of birth		Date of birth	
Passport number		Passport number	
Date of issue		Date of issue	
Date of expiry		Date of expiry	
Authority		Authority	
Nationality		Nationality	

**Accommodation preference** (tick one)

- I will share a room with..... twin / double preferred  
 I am happy to share with another group member of the same sex  
 I prefer a single room and will pay single supplement

**How did you discover us?**

- Referral from (name) .....  Internet search  
 Advertisement in (publication) .....  Travel evening  
 Other .....  Flyer / brochure

I/We have read, understand and agree to the Booking Conditions and Liability Release (over)

**Signature/s** .....

**Date** .....

A deposit of \$400 per person is payable with this booking. We will confirm your place on the tour of your choice by sending you a receipt, medical form and tour dossier.

If paying by cheque, please make payable to: **Pacific Discovery**

If paying by credit card please complete payment information:

- Visa       MasterCard

Card number .....

Expiry date ...../.....

Name on card .....

Cardholders signature .....

**Please post, fax or email this form with deposit to:**

Pacific Discovery      NZ fax +64 3 546 7256  
 PO Box 899              US fax +1 206 984 3763  
 Nelson 7040              info@pacificdiscovery.org  
 New Zealand

If you would like us to send information about this tour to a friend, please write their name and email address here:

## Booking Conditions and Liability Release for Pacific Discovery Limited Tours

### Payment Schedule & Booking Conditions

Prices in our booklets and website are correct at the time of publishing.

Pacific Discovery reserves the right to alter these prices at any time. The price of your tour is guaranteed when you have paid in full. Prices for departures beyond current seasons' tours are indicative only.

All tour participants must acknowledge acceptance of the Liability Release and complete a Medical Form, which will be forwarded to you upon payment of your deposit.

Upon receiving your booking and confirming space on the tour of your choice, we will send you a dossier of pre-travel information covering gear to bring, health & vaccinations, travel insurance, climate, spending money, cultural tips, and a list of recommended books and films.

If the tour date you request is already full we will offer you an alternative date, alternative tour, or a full refund of your deposit.

The final payment covering balance of tour cost, optional flights and single supplement is due 90 days before tour departure, unless late booking. Bank transfer, cheque, Master Card or Visa accepted.

Bookings accepted less than 90 days prior to departure can be secured with the deposit; full payment must then reach us within a further 14 days.

If the balance is not received by the specified date, we reserve the right to cancel your booking and your deposit may be forfeited.

### **Cancellations**

If you decide to cancel your tour, the following fees apply at the time (prior to departure) we receive written notice of your cancellation: More than 91 days before departure - loss of deposit; 31 to 90 days before departure - 50% of tour cost; 0 to 30 days before departure - 100% of tour cost.

If you fail to join the tour, join after its departure or leave prior to its completion, Pacific Discovery reserves the right to set the amount of refund (if any). Such terms are adopted in a similar form throughout the travel industry. They are usually covered by your trip cancellation/travel insurance, provided the reason for cancellation falls within the terms of the policy.

### **If we cancel a tour**

Pacific Discovery reserves the right to cancel any tour if sign-up is inadequate to make the tour economically feasible for us to operate. If this happens, we give a full refund of tour cost paid. However, Pacific Discovery is not responsible for additional expenses incurred by you in preparing for the trip (e.g. non-refundable air tickets, gear or medical expenses). If a tour is under-booked we will inform you before final payment is due.

### Liability Release

All tour participants must complete a Booking Form (submitted with deposit), and accept the Liability Release. By advancing deposit to Pacific Discovery, the depositor thereby agrees to be bound by the booking conditions & payment schedule.

### **Medical Considerations**

Pacific Discovery is not a medical facility and therefore is unable to accept any responsibility regarding medical advice, medications or inoculations that you or your doctor deem necessary for your safe participation. Pacific Discovery assumes no liability regarding provision of medical care.

### **Insurance**

Travel insurance is compulsory for all tour participants. Your travel insurance must provide cover against personal accident, medical expenses, emergency repatriation and personal liability. We also recommend it covers cancellation, curtailment and loss of luggage and personal effects.

### **Responsibility**

By participating in a Pacific Discovery tour, you assume certain obligations to Pacific Discovery and the other tour members. It is your responsibility to:

- Understand the conditions implied in the itinerary and trip suitability description.
- Select a tour that is appropriate to your interests and abilities.
- Prepare for the tour by familiarizing yourself with the itinerary and tour dossier.
- Bring appropriate gear and clothing as recommended by Pacific Discovery.
- Follow considerate standards of personal hygiene in order to reduce risk of contracting diseases.
- Follow considerate social behavior with other tour participants and respect their habits.
- Act in an appropriate and courteous manner befitting the customs of countries you visit.
- Complete the tour itinerary as scheduled (or as adjusted by your tour leader as necessary).
- Respect the countries we visit by using environmentally safe products, staying on established routes of travel and not littering.

You are aware that travel within a group may involve compromise to accommodate the diverse desires and physical abilities of group members. Your tour leader will do their utmost to ensure that any problems are solved for the benefit of the group as a whole. Signing this Liability Release Form signifies your acceptance of the leader's authority to make decisions affecting the group or individuals. For instance, he/she may require an individual to leave the group if he/she believes that a person's health is at risk, if an illegal act is committed, or their behavior becomes detrimental to the safety, enjoyment and well-being of the group. Should the leader take such action, that person would not be entitled to any refund. Similarly, a participant leaving a tour en-route will not be entitled to any refund. Under these circumstances Pacific Discovery reserves the right to set the amount of refund (if any).

Pacific Discovery will not accept responsibility or liability for any tour participant who contravenes any law or regulation of any country visited.

You acknowledge that travel on a Pacific Discovery tour requires a degree of flexibility, and understand that the route, accommodation and modes of transport are subject to change without prior notice due to local circumstances. We reserve the right to make reasonable changes in the itinerary where deemed advisable for the comfort and well-being of tour members. These changes are binding and additional expenses will be charged to you if the

reason for any alteration is outside the control of Pacific Discovery.

You acknowledge that Pacific Discovery contracts with a network of companies, government agencies and individuals to assist in the running of its tours. To the best of Pacific Discovery's knowledge, these third parties are qualified to perform the duties they are contracted to perform. However Pacific Discovery will not be held liable for any injury, damage, loss, delay or irregularity that may occur due to the behavior of these third parties.

Any air travel that is part of any tour is subject to the conditions as stipulated by the airline concerned and liability is limited in accordance with International Convention.

No employee, servant or agent of Pacific Discovery has authority to vary these conditions.

The terms and conditions of all agreements made with Pacific Discovery shall be subject to, and governed by, New Zealand law. You agree New Zealand will be the forum for resolution of any dispute related to your participation in this tour.

If a dispute arises, you will try to resolve it directly with Pacific Discovery. If you cannot resolve the dispute you agree to go to mediation first. You will agree the mediator with Pacific Discovery within 10 days of notification of the dispute. If a mediator is not agreed or appointed, you and Pacific Discovery agree to participate in arbitration under the Arbitration Act 1996 (NZ).

The terms of this agreement shall serve as a release and assumption of risk binding on your heirs, executor, administrator and all members of your family.

You understand that traveling with Pacific Discovery may involve risks (and rewards) above and beyond those encountered on a more conventional holiday, and that you are undertaking an adventure tour with inherent dangers. You understand that you are traveling to geographical areas where, amongst other things, the standard of accommodation, transport, safety, hygiene, cleanliness, medical facilities, telecommunications and infrastructure development may not be of the standard you are used to at home or would find on a conventional holiday. You have read and understood the itinerary and suitability for this tour you are undertaking and have provided details of any pre-existing medical conditions. You accept these risks and obligations and you fully assume the risks of travel. You release Pacific Discovery from any liabilities connected to these risks to the maximum extent permitted by law.

*I understand that this is a release of liability and a contract between me and Pacific Discovery Limited and/or its contracted tour operators or affiliated organizations, and I accept this agreement of my own free will. If any part of this agreement is deemed unenforceable, all other parts shall remain in full force and effect.*

Please contact us with any questions:

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Nelson 7040, New Zealand  
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info@pacificdiscovery.org