

Amansara

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The former guesthouse of King Norodom Sihanouk, Amansara is situated in Siem Reap, just 10 minutes from the entrance to Cambodia's Angkor Unesco World Heritage Site. The resort draws its name from two Sanskrit-derived words – *aman* ('peace') and *apsara* (the 'heavenly nymphs' of ancient Hindu mythology). A garden estate with two swimming pools, a state-of-the-art gym and a spa, the 24-suite resort has the ambience of a gracious private home. A variety of temple tours and cultural walks are available, and guests can travel to and from the temples in their own private remork with driver and guide.

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Situated in Siem Reap, the cultural capital of Cambodia, Amansara lies just 10 minutes from the entrance to Angkor Wat. Once the guest villa of King Norodom Sihanouk, today this walled garden estate serves as a tranquil 24-suite retreat with the ambience of a gracious home. Just a 15-minute drive from Siem Reap airport, Amansara provides an ideal base for exploring the Unesco-protected temples of Angkor, and discovering Khmer culture.

Amansara combines the Sanskrit-derived word for 'peace' with *apsara*, the 'heavenly nymphs' of ancient Hindu texts. Built with 12 suites in 1962 by French architect Laurent Mondet, today Amansara presents 24 suites, 12 with private swimming pools. Similar in design, each suite enjoys an open-plan layout and a private courtyard.

Across a manicured lawn from the suites and adjacent to the main 17-metre swimming pool is the circular Dining Room with its soaring ceiling and shaded terrace. Serving a menu of Khmer and Western cuisines, it includes a walk-in wine and cheese cellar and a casual lounging area. The Roof Terrace offers a seasonal venue for early or late evening drinks and private dinners.

Taking advantage of the resort's tranquil setting is the Aman Spa, which overlooks an ancient rain tree. There are four treatment rooms, each with an attached relaxation area overlooking a reflection pond set against a 43-metre sandstone relief. Other resort facilities include a 25-metre lap pool, a state-of-the-art gym, a library and a gallery displaying local crafts and artwork available for purchase.

A variety of temple tours and customised excursions are available as part of the Amansara guest experience. Complimentary house outings focusing on the temples surrounding Angkor Wat are conducted in the early mornings and late afternoons, utilising Amansara's own fleet of remarks (moped-powered trishaws), each with its own Amansara driver and guide.

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Amansara combines the Sanskrit-derived word for 'peace' with *apsara*, the 'heavenly nymphs' of ancient Hindu texts. Once known as Villa Apsara, this former royal retreat was built in 1962 by French architect Laurent Mondet. Quintessentially '60s in character, it featured 12 low-slung chalets spaced around a curved swimming pool and a shady lawn. Aman acquired the property in 2002 and meticulously reconstructed it from old photographs. Amansara opened in December 2002.

Today Amansara presents 24 suites, all with private courtyards and 12 with private swimming pools. Private plunge pools measure six metres by five metres. Similar in design, each suite enjoys an open-plan layout with terrazzo and timber finishes. A combined sleeping and living area features a king-size bed, a large writing desk and a sofa. Adjacent is a dressing area and an informal dining area. Down a few steps is the bathroom, with floor-to-ceiling glass doors opening onto the courtyard. The bathroom provides twin vanities, a large soaking tub and a separate shower and toilet.

Across a manicured lawn from the suites and adjacent to the main 17-metre swimming pool is the circular Dining Room with its soaring ceiling and shaded terrace. The focal point of the property, it serves a menu of Khmer and Western cuisines and includes a walk-in wine and cheese cellar and a casual lounging area. As well as helping themselves to the home-baked cakes on display, guests can choose to dine poolside or in-suite. The Roof Terrace offers a seasonal venue for early or late evening drinks and private dinners. It is also an ideal place for yoga or quiet contemplation, especially at sunrise.

Taking advantage of the resort's tranquil setting is the Aman Spa, which overlooks an ancient rain tree. There are four treatment rooms, each with an attached relaxation area and private steam bath and shower. The spa menu

features a range of massage and beauty treatments using Cambodian techniques and Aman's own natural spa product range. All the treatment and relaxation rooms look out onto a reflection pond set against a 43-metre sandstone relief.

Other facilities include a 25-metre lap pool situated behind a six-metre wall, a state-of-the-art gym, a library and a gallery displaying local crafts and artwork available for purchase.

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