

Angkor wat essay

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Angkor Wat History The whole Angkor period spans for more than VI centuries, and more precisely from IX till XV century. During this period the Khmer empire reached its maximum splendor as one of the most powerful southeast asian kingdoms. In this period the whole area of Angkor was built. We can consider Jayavarman II as the man that started everything.

He define himself Devaraja (good king) and he established the Khmer empire in 802. After him, Indravarman, a king considered by many of its time an usurper: we prefer to remember him for starting building the Baray, a complex irrigation system to bring waters in the area of Angkor. He also started to build the Bakong and the Preah Ko temples. His son Yasovarman went further in his father's project: he built the Phnom Bakheng and the Lolei temples, and with him, Angkor become the new capital of the kingdom.

These two king further extent the Baray's system too. Then the capital was moved to Koh Ker for a short period, under the kingdom of Jayavarman IV, an usurper, but after only 14 years Angkor become again the capital under Rajendravarman II.

His son, Jayavarman V, was instead a great king, and with him the empire expanded to its maximum extent. Two wonderful temples, as Banteay Srei and Ta Keo were built. After him, Udayaditavarman II built the pyramid of Baphuon and the western Mebon (we are now at the half of XI century), and here we are really close to the very peak of the Khmer civilization, two great king the left once forever their footstep in the history of this planet and they are Suryavarman II and Jayavarman II. The first king built Bang Melea but it also the one that built Angkor Wat. The second king has built Preach Khan,

Ta Phrom and Angkor Thom. As you will see with your eyes these last temple are traces of a high level civilization, with an exquisite taste for art.

An enormous job that involved not only an army of thousands workers doing the hard job, building, moving rock and materials and so on. There was another parallel army of thousands of artists and artisans. Angkor Wat is also them. We will never know their names, or their faces, but what they left us fulfill our hearts with something magic.

The walls of Angkor, they also speak about their lives, their customs, their salaries: Angkor was not only a religious place, but a capital crowded with a million people. The great temples of Angkor Wat are situated in the province of Siem Reap. This area is considered the biggest temple complex of the world and revealed itself after being hidden in the Jungle for many years. The whole area is about 400 km² that also includes the surrounding forest, so you will need good shoes to make it around that area by feet. Never the less you can also visit the temple complex with a “remorque” motorbike which is a small motorbike where you can sit side by side in two behind the driver. This is a great way to visit the area as it is very cheap and the driver can tell you much about the temples and history. Taxi are available too, as well as motor and bikes for rent. For those who love to see from the top, you can rent an hot air balloon, or even an helicopter.

There are two ways to visit this area and still see the main attractions, the little circuit and the big circuit. The little circuit is 17 km and brings you to the main temples of Angkor. The big circuit takes 26 km and is an extension of the little one but continues on east side of the area.

To visit Angkor you have to pay quite a high entry fee, you have choice of three different passes which you can buy at the entrance boot. A one-day pass cost US 20 dollar, a three-day pass cost US 40 dollar and a one-week pass cost US 60 dollar. Remember to have a photo with you if you desire to buy a pass for more than one day. There are more than a 100 temples in the whole area, more than you can see on your visit but the most famous ones you will discover during both circuits trough the temple area.