

Inspirations 2016



table of contents

01-02



about us

03-04



inspirations

05-10



arts & culture

11-16



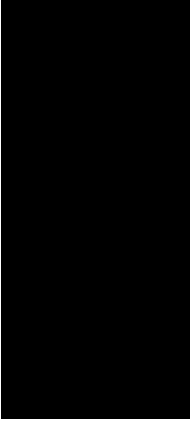
family

17-22



adventure

23-28



cruising & sailing

29-34



culinary

35-40



walking & cycling

41-46



luxury

47-48



contact



about us

ICS Travel Group is a premier destination management company with over 20 years of experience in providing a wide range of travel services in Asia. We specialise in creating authentic, tailor-made programmes to Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, Indonesia, India, Nepal, Bhutan and Sri Lanka.

From luxury holidays to special-interest tours, we offer customised itineraries to suit individual or group requirements. Our highly knowledgeable guides, unique products and top-notch service continue to earn us accolades from satisfied travellers, and we are committed to delivering immersive and exceptional experiences for your clients.



inspirations

In all of our destinations there are must-see sights and places, and these will figure prominently in our itineraries. To optimise a traveler's journey however, and to provide a full 360 degree experience, we suggest adding in enhancements catered to their specific interests. Herewith are a few inspirations to help you craft authentic and memorable experiences for your clients.



Exploring the thriving contemporary arts scene in Cambodia's Battambang, joining a professional photographer to uncover Saigon's most photogenic spots, going behind the scenes on a Bollywood film shoot – our experiences offer the chance to get immersed in the daily lives of local people and gain a deeper understanding of their cultures.



Art & Culture Walk - FD

Thailand - Bangkok

Explore the rich cultural heritage of Bangkok strolling through the heart of bustling Chinatown and into the Portuguese Quarter. Hop on an iconic longtail boat and cruise along the klongs (canals), passing stilted homes - a setting reminiscent of a Bangkok of days gone by, and wind up at Bang Luang, a small artists community and performance space. Experience a traditional puppet show, and stroll around the eclectic group of studios neighbouring the arts space.



Delhi's Little Tibet - HD

India - Delhi

Experience a little bit of Lhasa in Delhi! Visit a Tibetan settlement where narrow alleyways are home to more than 350 exiled Tibetan families. Walk through the area and see how ancient Tibetan culture has been preserved. Pass by tailors stitching Thangkas, metal-smiths crafting intricate jewellery, and small shops selling prayer wheels. Learn about the daily life of the villagers – their Buddhist beliefs, and their challenges as exiles. Savour the aromas of Tibetan food and sample tasty specialties such as Thukpa and Thenthuk.



Khmer for a Day - HD

Cambodia - Siem Reap

Gain rich insight into the daily lives of the Khmer on this half-day excursion to a nearby village where you'll meet local families and join them in their daily activities. Take an ox cart ride through the village, and if you wish, try your hand at navigating the cart. Take part in a seasonal activity happening at the time - this could be planting or harvesting rice, weaving thatch for roof repairs or a number of other activities. You'll help prepare a delicious Khmer lunch prepared from locally sourced food, and then take a walk through the village visiting workshops and learning about on-going projects.



Bollywood Close-Up - EV

India - Mumbai

Take a glimpse behind the scenes of the glamorous and vibrant world of Bollywood. Through energetic dance sequences, casts of thousands, catchy songs, dashing heroes and glamorous leading ladies, Bollywood movies capture the essence of India. Visit a location site to see a movie being filmed, and a studio to see technicians at work. Depending on the filming schedule, you may get a chance to peek inside a film star's make-up room and pose for snapshots. You will also drive past the lavish homes of famous Indian movie stars set in the most exclusive areas of Mumbai.



Cho Lon - A Photogenic Experience - HD

Vietnam - Saigon

Join a professional photographer on a guided tour through the streets and narrow alleyways of Cho Lon, one Saigon's most photogenic areas. Visit the Thien Hau Pagoda, with hundreds of smoking incense sticks, the Pagoda offers excellent opportunities for photos. Explore small hidden alleys and capture the lively local street life. Away from the tourist trail, pass by different themed streets and alleys, home to a diverse array of goods grouped by theme such as fabrics, housewares, and apothecary street stalls, to name a few.



Art Insider & Cruise - FD

Cambodia - Battambang

In Cambodia, Battambang is known for its vibrant arts scene and is home to a thriving community of artists. The city was once considered to be Cambodia's artistic hub, but the scene was completely destroyed under the Khmer Rouge regime. It's undergoing a renaissance now though, and new galleries and art spaces are springing up all over the city.



Family-friendly attitudes in Asia make this a welcoming place for family holidays. Our enriching and inspirational experiences are designed to open up the eyes and minds of young people, yet be fun for the whole family.



Explore the Capital by Tuk Tuk - FD **Laos - Vientiane**

Hop on a private tuk tuk and tour the city, sampling savoury street food and visiting local artisans along the way. Go behind the scenes in the kitchen of a popular local restaurant that provides training and support for street youth, and visit a local NGO working to improve the lives of people affected by landmines. Learn to make traditional Lao offerings and about Buddhist traditions with a visit to a local temple.



Authentic Minority Experience **Vietnam - Hoi An**

Travel outside of Hoi An or Danang for an authentic experience and insight into traditional minority village life. A number of activities are on offer including village trekking with a local guide from the Co Tu tribe, crossbow shooting, handicraft tours seeing local artisans at work, cycling and much more. An easy day trip from either city, but ICS recommends an overnight stay in one of the village's stilted bungalows, hand-crafted by the Co Tu and with all modern conveniences.



Bangkok by Train, Boat, Foot & Tuk Tuk - FD **Thailand - Bangkok**

Join ICS on a city safari through some of Bangkok's most exciting areas using a variety of transport. Take the Skytrain to a pier and board an express boat on the Chao Phraya River to see Wat Po and the famous Reclining Buddha. Hop on a tuk tuk to Wat Saket, the 'Golden Mount', and enjoy panoramic views of the city. Continue to the Giant Swing for a walking tour of the area and a tasty Thai lunch. Cap the journey off with another boat ride through Saen Saeb canal to the beautiful Lanna-style house of Jim Thompson, who was famous for bringing the Thai silk industry international recognition.



Living Land Experience - HD

Laos - Luang Prabang

Experience daily life on a rice farm, learning how rice is grown and gaining insight into the lives of rice farmers. Learn about the eco-friendly traditional farming methods used on the farm including composting, buffaloes for ploughing and ancient husking mortars instead of chemicals and tractors. Take to the fields for hands-on participation in the daily activities on this educational and immersive encounter.



Phare Ponleu Selpak - EV

Cambodia - Siem Reap

After having performed in many countries around the world, the young and talented artists from the famous Phare Ponleu Selpak in Battambang have now brought their exciting and energetic circus show to Siem Reap. Watch this unique show which combines traditional and modern theatre, music, dance, acrobatics, juggling and contortion. The beautifully choreographed and energetically performed show tells a story about Cambodian contemporary life in an ever changing society.



Indochina for Families

Laos - Vietnam - Cambodia

Discover Indochina on this 16D/15N tour of Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia - from an early morning alms collection and Baci ceremony in UNESCO-listed Luang Prabang, to a unique and immersive experience in a home-stay at Moon Garden outside of Hanoi, our hand-picked activities will delight the whole family while offering a rich and memorable experience for all. Other highlights include: a cruise along Halong Bay, the AO Show in Saigon - an innovative modern circus performance, and three full days exploring the magnificent temples of Angkor in Siem Reap.



Geographically and culturally diverse, Asia offers a wide range of options for active travel. Head off the beaten path and trek through remote villages, meeting friendly locals along the way. Ascend high into the trees for a thrilling zipline ride through the jungle canopy, or hit the open roads on a motorcycle, far off the tourist trail. Whatever your flavour, an exciting journey awaits.



Hoi An on a Vespa - HD Vietnam - Hoi An

Take an electric scooter tour and discover the charm of Hoi An and the surrounding countryside in a sustainable, and eco-friendly way. Drive through the countryside to experience first-hand the beauty of the rice paddies, monkey bridges and grazing buffalos. This picturesque area offers abundant photo opportunities.



Hit the Open Roads of Isaan Thailand Motorcycle Tours

Routes and itineraries are created by locally-based riders who know the most engaging roads, spectacular scenery and hidden treasures along the way. Select from 2, 4, 8 or 10 day itineraries - custom tours are available as well for individuals and groups. All tours are operated with a support van with support staff and a travel guide, along with a road captain leading the riders.



Mount Victoria Trekking Myanmar

This journey offers rich cultural immersion and adventurous trekking into an area of the country where few have ventured. On this trekking expedition into the mountainous Chin State in western Myanmar, you'll stay in bungalows in local villages, get to know the fascinating Chin tribes and gain insight into their daily lives. The friendly Chin are perhaps most famous for the intricately designed tattoos adorning the faces of the women.



Elephant Hills Beach & Rainforest Safari Thailand - Khao Sok

Enjoy a thrilling adventure set amidst spectacular scenery, and spend the evenings in style in a luxury tented jungle camp. This active journey includes canoeing through mangrove channels and cruising onboard a classical Burmese junk boat. You'll trek through lush rainforest and have a special lunch cooked over a fire. Enjoy a once in a lifetime chance to meet and interact with elephants - help prepare and feed them one of their daily meals, scrub and clean the gentle giants, and watch them bathe.



Tree House Adventure Laos - Vieng Phoukha

For an unforgettable, adrenalin-filled, and eco-friendly adventure, try the Gibbon Experience. Wake up high atop the forest canopy in a tree house, and fly across the jungle and over plunging valleys on a zipline. Experience the immense natural beauty of Laos in a sustainable manner – the Gibbon Experience is an eco-tourism project and each visit helps to support forest conservation.



Jungle Trek & Beach - FD Cambodia - Kep

Discover the laid-back charm and natural beauty of Cambodia's coast and the Kep National Park on this excursion which combines a jungle trek with a relaxing afternoon on the beach. Visit the Crab Market and sample some of Kep's famous seafood, then trek into Kep National Park to outlook points and take in sweeping vistas of nearby Kampot, the islands and Vietnam. Then, board a local boat to Rabbit Island and stroll along its lovely beaches and through small fishing villages, or just relax on the beach. For an overnight stay in understated luxury, ICS recommends the boutique property Knai Bang Chatt.



Take in the colourful riverside cultures and beautiful scenery along the Mighty Mekong and Irrawaddy Rivers, sail amongst Halong Bay's breathtaking panoramas, or cruise deep into the heart of Indonesian Borneo. Criss-crossed by mighty rivers and graced with dramatic coastlines with turquoise waters, great options abound in Asia for cruising and sailing.



Paradise Cruises on Halong Bay

Vietnam - Halong Bay

Relax in style amidst the breathtaking karsts of Halong Bay on a Paradise cruise. With four categories of vessels to select from, each with five star accommodations and service, there are options to suit all tastes and requirements. Each boat features a stylish restaurant and bar, along with a wide range of onboard experiences.



Pandaw River Expeditions

Myanmar - Bagan to Mandalay

Discover a hidden side of Myanmar and vibrant riverside cultures on a Pandaw river expedition. Modelled after colonial river steamers and outfitted with teak and brass finishes, guests will experience this magical country in luxury aboard Pandaw's ships. With a low passenger/crew ratio, guests can also be assured of a personalized and memorable experience.

Into the heart of Borneo

Indonesia - Kalimantan

On this 8D/7N river cruise and overland expedition guests will journey into parts of Indonesian Borneo where few tourists venture, and experience remote indigenous tribes, pristine rainforest, exotic flora and wildlife. Cruise the jungle-lined waterways, visit the BOS Orangutan Foundation Centre, and climb aboard a water plane to fly deep into the heart of Borneo.





Mekong Sun Cruise

Laos- Luang Prabang to Vientiane

Cruise downstream from Luang Prabang to Vientiane enjoying the magnificent scenery of the Upper Mekong region. Shore excursions include a guided walk up Mount Phousi, for a spectacular sunset view over the Mekong and surrounding mountains, a visit to the Kuang Si Waterfall, local tribe villages and the colourful night market of the Hmong minority.



Islands & Rainforest by Catamaran - FD

Thailand - Phuket area

Enjoy a day cruising aboard a catamaran through the Andaman Sea, taking in its spectacular vistas, and stopping to explore dense rainforests, relax on white sand beaches and swim in crystal clear water.



Stylish Sailing Adventure

Myanmar - Mergui Archipelago 6D/5N

Tucked away in Myanmar's remote south, the Mergui Archipelago hosts 800 remote islands, pristine white beaches and indigenous tribes. Enjoy this beautiful and unspoiled paradise, still very much off the tourist trail, in style on a cruise aboard a sailing yacht.



Home to some of the world's most delicious food, a culinary journey in Asia excites the taste buds with exotic ingredients and unfamiliar tastes. Our programmes uncover the rich culinary heritages of our destinations and give you a taste of local traditions through cooking classes in private homes, visits to bustling wet/dry markets, and insider access to the best of Asia's famous street food.



Evening Foodie Safari - EV Cambodia- Phnom Penh

Hop on a remork and head off the tourist trail with a local food expert to uncover delectable local favourites and savoury Khmer delicacies. Sample yellow bean cake and taste seasonal fruits grown in and around the city, such as dragon fruit, mango, and tiny pineapples. Wander around food stalls where you can often find snacks such as fried tarantulas, fried crickets, and green mango with chilli and salt. Have cocktails at a rooftop bar, and then visit a dessert stall for a local sweet treat to close the evening.



Intro to Lao Cuisine - EV Laos - Vientiane

Journey to Ban Thaphalansay Village, where an experienced chef will welcome you into her home for a cooking class. Learn how to create three local dishes using traditional ingredients and techniques. No need for note-taking - you'll be given your own recipe book to take home, so you can recreate your favourites and remember your time spent in Laos for years to come.

Keralan Cooking Class - HD

India - Kerala

Learn how to cook delicious Keralan food from a culinary expert in her own home! You'll visit the beautiful home of Nimmy and Paul, and in keeping with the tradition of their families, they enjoy having guests over to their home, showing them the wonderful Keralan hospitality and serving them good food. Nimmy is a professional cooking instructor and a food consultant to writers, chefs and magazines. Articles by her, and about her, have appeared in many magazines and newspapers. She will teach the nuances of traditional Keralan recipes and help you to understand how the various spices and flavourings are used to create delicious local delicacies.





Lifestyle of a Lanna Family - HD

Thailand - Chiang Mai

This rich cultural experience will take you to the home of a host family in an authentic Thai neighborhood. Spend time with the Thai family learning about traditional Thai architecture and the graceful teakwood homes and structures. Stroll through the orchard and herb garden with your hosts, who will also demonstrate how to make bamboo baskets and cigars from banana leaves. Wrap up the visit with a delicious home-cooked Northern Thai lunch or dinner that you will prepare with the family.



Hanoi Stret Food Tour - HD

Vietnam - Hanoi

Experience Vietnamese culture and eat like a local on this informative walking tour through the city's streets. You'll sample the savoury Bun Cha, the northern classic of barbeque pork with fresh noodles, at one of the best places in town for this popular dish. Walk to the bustling Cho Hom market, one of the city's largest, and see the wide array of fruits, vegetables and meats on offer. Stop and try tasty papaya salad and fresh spring rolls and a refreshing glass of che.



Burmese-Style Tea Party

Myanmar - Bagan

Set along the way to Mount Popa and Salay, Shwe Hlaing Village is renowned for the products it produces from palm trees, such as palm sugar and liquors. You'll see how locals climb the trees to harvest the sap and how the products are produced, then enjoy a traditional Burmese tea in a local family business.



Walking and cycling tours are the best way to get up close and personal with local people, their cultures, and their natural surroundings. From the picturesque emerald rice paddies of Ubud, and the awe-inspiring temples of Angkor Wat, to the hidden alleyways of its bustling cities, Asia offers a diverse array of settings for unforgettable experiences.



Walk the Rail Tracks of Hanoi - HD
Vietnam - Hanoi

Stroll along railroad tracks that snake through Hanoi's Old Quarter – in some areas only a few short steps from the front doors of residents. Enjoy an up-close look at the lives of locals and how they adapt when the train passes by twice daily. The journey continues through the neighborhood's shops and to the nearby urban island to see its orchards and relax.



Walking Tour of Old Yangon - HD
Myanmar - Yangon

Yangon boasts glittering temples, excellent examples of colonial-era architecture, a lively street scene and friendly locals. Start the walk in Chinatown and see the fresh markets, teeming with activity in the mornings. Stop at a local shop and see how flat rice noodles and rice flour pancakes are made. Stroll to the Indian Quarter, passing Hindu temples, a Jewish synagogue and the famous Bogyoke Aung San (Scott's Market). Continue the journey via trishaw, viewing colonial-style buildings before capping off the experience with a drink at the historic Strand Hotel.

Cycle through Rural Villages - HD
Indonesia - Bali

Visit a traditional Balinese compound in an authentic village in the district of Susut and enjoy a cup of coffee or tea with a local Balinese cake. Before starting the cycling tour, the guide will give a briefing and information about the cycling route. Set out cycling along back roads and through rural villages and experience the daily life and culture of locals. Along the way, take in views of serene landscapes with undulating rice fields. Lunch will be served in a rice field.





Mekong Delta Cycling 4D/3N

Vietnam – Saigon- My Tho- Vinh Long - Can Tho

Venture off the beaten track by bicycle and visit the islands, waterways, markets and communities of the Mekong Delta. Explore the narrow canals and lush orchards of the Mekong River Islands, and ride through rice paddies and alongside scenic canals spanned by flimsy 'monkey' bridges. Cycle back in time to small fishing communities that live a life far removed from the modern world. Take a boat ride among the vessels and barges of the floating markets and barter and haggle for fresh tropical fruits.



Agra Heritage Walk - FD

India - Agra

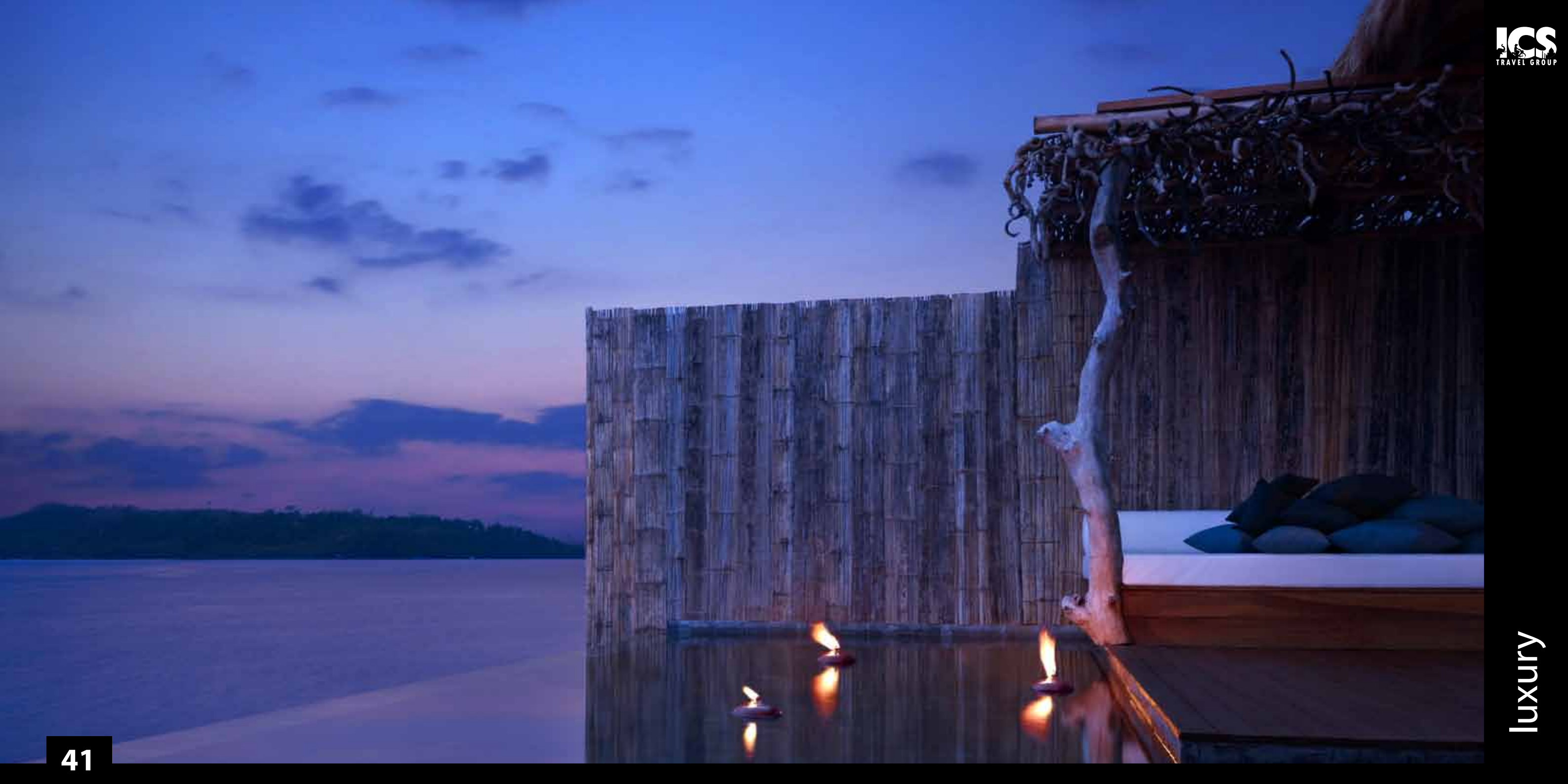
Step back in time and gain insight into Mughal history visiting the ancient village of Kachhpura, in the outskirts of Agra. Accompanied by a young guide from the community, learn the history and stories behind some of the lesser known monuments that lie in the shadow of the Taj Mahal and the Red Fort. Visit local cottage industries to see the manufacture of fine leather shoes, and even try your hand at making traditional earthenware pots. Stroll through the central courtyard to see the cloth bags, musical instruments, toys and fans that are handmade by local women.



Roluos Group on an E-Bike HD

Cambodia - Siem Reap

Enjoy touring the temples of the Roluos Group of monuments in an eco-friendly and fun way – on an e-bike. Visit the three temples that comprise this famous group, Lolei, Preah Ko and Bakong. The temples mark the beginning of the Classical Period of Khmer art, and dating back to the late ninth century, they represent some of the earliest of the great temples built by the Khmer.



Explore Asia in style with our authentic, hand-crafted experiences designed to suit individual requirements and expectations. We offer the very best in luxury accommodations throughout the region, from exclusive resorts to more intimate boutique options.



Private Helicopter Tours Cambodia - Siem Reap

Marvel at the vast scale of UNESCO-listed Angkor Wat on a private helicopter tour. The flights depart from Siem Reap International Airport and continue to the magnificent Angkor complex. Several sightseeing options are available which include nearby temples, such as Roluos Group and Banteay Srei, as well as Tonle Sap floating and villages.



Hanoi to Halong on a Seaplane Vietnam

Getting there is half the fun on this seaplane experience connecting Hanoi and Halong Bay. You'll fly at a low altitude for unforgettable views of Halong Bay's thousands of islets, and the thrilling experience of taking off and landing on water.

Hot Air Ballooning in Myanmar

Bagan, Inle Lake & Mandalay

Experience Myanmar from a fresh perspective in a hot air balloon, enjoying spectacular panoramic views of this amazing country. Options include flights over Mandalay, Bagan, and Inle Lake in 4-8 passenger balloons. All pilots have commercial UK balloon licenses and many years of flying experience.





Take a Ride on the Elephant Coach

Myanmar

Step back in time and enjoy sightseeing in Myanmar in a unique and luxurious way on board an Elephant Coach, a lavishly restored, post-Colonial Chevrolet passenger bus. The buses have been painstakingly reconstructed, and the stylish interiors are designed using locally sourced materials. Each bus holds a maximum of 8 passengers, is well equipped with luxury armchairs, A/C, reading-lights, wooden parquet floors, 220V sockets and on board beverages.



Sunrise at Ta Phrom - HD

Cambodia - Siem Reap

Wake up early to experience a special sunrise at Ta Phrom, followed by Yoga at the deserted North Gate, overlooking the moat. Afterwards, head to the Khmer Village House to enjoy a simple breakfast set in a verdant garden overlooking the 13th-century reservoir of Srah Srang. Round off a wonderful morning with a relaxing foot massage.



Indonesian Islands in Style

Java, Bali, Lombok 14D/13N

Immerse yourself in culture, art, wellness and spiritualism on this luxury Indonesian adventure. Experience a tranquil retreat ringed by smoking volcanoes in Central Java; cliff-top temples, sacred ceremonies and sunset dances in exotic Bali; and a culinary experience fit for a king on laid-back Lombok.



sales offices

Americas

T: +1 415 434 4015

E: info@is-americas.com

Europe

T: +49 89 2190986-60

E: info@is-eu.com

Asia-Pacific

T: +66 (0) 2 248 7485

E: info@is-intl.com

UK/Ireland

T: +44 1273 459186

E: uk-sales@is-intl.com

Australia

T: +61 42 757 0844

E: australia-sales@is-intl.com



A FRESH PERSPECTIVE ON TRAVEL IN ASIA

VIETNAM
CAMBODIA
LAOS
MYANMAR
THAILAND
INDONESIA
INDIA
NEPAL
BHUTAN
SRI LANKA