

MENLO ABROAD



CAMBODIA



May 19-June 9, 2024



Menlo Abroad: Cambodia

May 20-June 9, 2024



IN BRIEF

Menlo Abroad offers transformative experiences through guided immersive travel in the global South. Emphasizing relationship-building through homestay and community engagement, students develop knowledge, skills, and a greater understanding of themselves and their world. They emerge with a renewed sense of purpose and a desire to serve.¹



Menlo Abroad: Cambodia is developed and offered in coordination with Where There Be Dragons.

Dates: May 20-June 9, 2024

(Note that participants will be out of the country and unable to return for Commencement or related activities. June 9 is a required day of reflection and celebration on the Menlo campus.)

Enrollment Limits: 16 students

Enrollment Eligibility: Menlo students in grades 9-11. We are not requiring pre-testing but reserve the right to change that to requiring pre testing if Covid numbers are higher at departure time. For medical questions or exemption requests, contact the Menlo's school nurse.²

Trip Leaders: There will be two Menlo-affiliated trip leaders: Upper School Science teacher Tanya Buxton and Upper School Latin and English teacher Tom Garvey, and one or two leaders from Where There Be Dragons..

All-Inclusive Fee²: \$6000. Financial aid may be available. Current financial aid recipients should contact Rose Garza (rose.garza@menloschool.org) for information.

¹ Menlo Abroad is an elective option for MTerm and is considered and assessed as an M Term course. But while other MTerm courses will end May 31, Menlo Abroad courses complete on the evening of June 9, 2024. Menlo Abroad service participation earns students 15 community engagement credits.

² Fee includes all flights • hotel accommodation • all meals • all surface transportation • museum, park, and temple entrance fees • course preparation manual and reading materials • donations to charitable causes in the host country • instructor and extra guide fees • on-site equipment rental where needed • comprehensive risk management systems and administrative support 24/7. The fee does not include trip cancellation insurance or expenses for petty cash expenditures (est. at \$100), travel medicine or immunization or obtaining passports and visas.



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

While Cambodia is often viewed from the outside as a montage of jungle, ancient temples, and the site of horrific persecution and genocide, it is actively seeking to rewrite its story as a land of creativity, entrepreneurship, healing, and optimism. Our trip explores the various dimensions of Cambodia's society, including its history and its contemporary ethos. The first day of the program on the Menlo campus and our initial days in Cambodia are dedicated to orientation, health and safety protocols, and introductions to local cultural mores. We begin by exploring the booming capital of Phnom Penh. We'll learn basic Khmer words and phrases, as well as smart travel skills, observing the stark economic disparities in the nation's capital. Interactive workshops and site visits, including the S21 museum and a quiet pagoda, introduce themes of history, spirituality, and development.

The adventure continues as we travel to a remote fishing village and then to the island of Koh Pdao in the middle of the Mekong River. This is the heart of our program, offering an extended period of guided community immersion and rural homestay experience. Students engage in activities with a local chief, director of a rural clinic, village elders, youth, farmers, and fishermen, gaining hands-on insights into their lives.

Here, the hospitality of homestay families and the rhythm of rural Cambodian life take center stage. Mornings are dedicated to local community engagement, while afternoons involve soccer with local youth, swimming in the Mekong, and bonding with homestay families.

Our final destination is Siem Reap, where we reflect on our experiences and visit the ancient temples of Angkor Wat. The journey concludes on the Menlo campus, where we join other Menlo Abroad groups for shared reflections and insights into our transformative journey.



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ITINERARY

(Note: Itinerary is subject to change.)

Monday, May 20 **Menlo Campus - SFO**

Cambodia orientation (morning)
Departure of Cambodia (evening)
(cross international dateline)

Wednesday, May 22 **Phnom Penh**

Arrival
Orientation (continued)
Market visit
Scavenger hunt
Stay at downtown hotel

Thursday, May 23 **Phnom Penh**

Morning check in
Visit to S 21 museum
Afternoon visit to pagoda
Introduction to Theravada Buddhism
Stay at downtown hotel

Friday, May 24

Phnom Penh

Morning check in
Visit to killing fields (extension of S 21)
Afternoon visit with local entrepreneurs
Stay at downtown hotel

Saturday, May 25 **Phnom Penh**

Morning check in
Complete orientation
Mindfulness exercise
Leadership exercise
Stay at downtown hotel

Sunday, May 26

Kratie

Morning check in
Transfer to Kratie (4 hours)
Afternoon meeting with Cambodia Rural Development team
Stay at Kratie Hotel

Monday, May 27

Koh Pdao

Morning check in
Boat transfer to Mekong River island of Koh Pdao (30 minutes)
Meet homestay families
Community mapping activity
Stay with homestay families

Tuesday, May 28

Koh Pdao

Breakfast with family
Check in
Community engagement activities: public health agriculture, spirituality and education
Stay with homestay families

Wednesday, May 29 **Koh Pdao**

Breakfast with family
Check in
Community engagement activities: public health agriculture, spirituality and education
Stay with homestay families

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ITINERARY (cont.)

(Note: Itinerary is subject to change.)

Thursday, May 30 Koh Pdao

Breakfast with family
Check in
Community engagement activities: public health agriculture, spirituality and education
Stay with homestay families

Friday, May 31 Koh Pdao

Breakfast with family
Check in
Community engagement activities: public health agriculture, spirituality and education
Stay with homestay families

Saturday, June 1 Koh Pdao

Breakfast with family
Check in
Community engagement activities: public health agriculture, spirituality and education
Stay with homestay families

Sunday, June 2 Koh Pdao

Breakfast with family
Check in
Community engagement activities: public health agriculture, spirituality and education
Stay with homestay families

Monday, June 3 Koh Pdao

Breakfast with family
Check in
Full day with homestay family
Celebration
Final night with homestay families

Tuesday, June 4 Siem Reap

Full day of travel
Stay at Metta Karuna retreat center

Wednesday, June 5 Siem Reap

Breakfast
Check in
Full day exploration of Siem Reap, collaboration with PEPY
Stay at Metta Karuna retreat center

Thursday, June 6 Angkor Wat

Full day at Angkor Wat starting at sunrise
Stay at Metta Karuna retreat center

Friday, June 7 Siem Reap

Morning Check in
Time in Siem Reap
Transference activities
Closing dinner
Stay at Metta Karuna retreat center

Saturday, June 8 Transit to SFO

Sunday, June 9 Menlo Campus

Post-trip activities, project and reflection
Celebratory dinner with parents and guardians.³

.....³ Students must attend the final day to receive full credit for the course.

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TIMELINE OF APPLICATION AND ENROLLMENT PROCESS

January 9	Announcement of Menlo Abroad and Borderlands programs at upper school assembly
January 23	Applications due
February 2	Participants notified
February 9	Forms and Payment due by 3:00 pm
April 23, 6:00 pm	Pre-departure information night (Spieker Center) for enrolled students and their parents (meeting is mandatory for student and at least one parent)
May 20, 12:00 pm	Menlo Abroad: Cambodia begins with orientation on Menlo campus
May 20 - June 8	Cambodia trip
June 9	Re-entry day on Menlo Campus and completion of final projects, reflections, celebration. ⁴

.....⁴ Students must attend the final day to receive full credit for the course. The time and nature of the celebration is to be determined.



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PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Menlo Abroad: Cambodia is built around interrelated academic and experiential program components intended to create a holistic, immersive experience. Below is a list of these components as they relate to this program.

- 1. Survey of Development Issues:** Our program explores a range of development issues, from resource management and environmental impact to education to market- and community-oriented development. Students learn through their direct experiences, meetings with community members and leaders, and related activities.
- 2. Independent or Small-Group Study:** Menlo students will have the opportunity to investigate—individually or in small groups—a topic of particular interest, availing themselves of local knowledge and resources.
- 3. Language Study:** English is an official language of Khmer but the local vernacular is Khmer. We do not expect participants to come with Khmer language skills; we do expect that students will want to interact with locals as closely as they can. Few things do more to empower participants and to facilitate ease of cultural understanding than frequent use of the local language.
- 4. Immersive Travel:** Traveling to traditional communities in developing countries requires students to get out of their comfort zones. In Menlo Abroad, students are travelers rather than tourists. They travel in a style that enables them to genuinely know the people of the countries they visit. For adaptable participants, it offers the most authentic experience and profound learning adventure. Students should expect to cope with cold water showers, basic infrastructure, and pit toilets in the rural areas.
- 5. Homestay:** Often the most challenging and fulfilling component, homestays take students to the core of their experience. Homestays are carefully set up with each student's individual personality in mind in order to provide the best experience in cultural and language immersion possible. In Koh Pdao, homestays are coordinated through community leaders. Each student will be placed in a homestay, most likely together with another Menlo student. The cohort will gather most mornings to check in and to engage in group activities.
- 6. Community Engagement:** Students will learn about themselves and each other through their experiences working on community engagement projects of mutual interest and benefit.
- 7. Guided Reflection:** Students will regularly meet with Menlo and Dragons leaders to investigate, monitor, problem solve, and reflect on events or issues particular to the individual students. Students will journal and blog frequently to communicate their experience with friends and family back home.



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MENLO ABROAD ASPIRATIONS

- 1. Knowledge and Global Competency**⁵: Menlo Abroad programs advance students' self-knowledge and global competencies, including intercultural capabilities, historical perspectives, and attentiveness to diversity. Through direct experience, students develop awareness of global systems and issues impacting their host communities.
- 2. Dispositions of Global Engagement**⁶: Menlo Abroad programs cultivate internationally minded students who recognize their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet and strive to create a better and more peaceful world. Among the many positive dispositions they develop are agency, leadership, confidence, empathy, compassion, humility, feelings of interconnection, and respect.
- 3. Relationships**: Menlo Abroad programs build sustaining relationships between students and diverse, underserved foreign communities and individuals through shared common experiences of everyday life.
- 4. Community Engagement**: Menlo Abroad programs contribute to solutions based on mutually beneficial work, apprenticeship, or study, in activities that at the same time support students' knowledge of, and appreciation for, local cultures and issues at hand.
- 5. Transference**: Menlo Abroad programs generate sustaining interest and connections with Menlo curricula and programs.

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⁵ *Global competency* includes the ability to investigate the world beyond the immediate environment, the recognition of one's own and other perspectives, and the ability to communicate ideas effectively with diverse audiences.

⁶ By *Global engagement*, we mean the dispositions necessary to be connected and of service to others, including those beyond national borders.





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TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The program is being offered by Menlo School in conjunction with Where There Be Dragons. In cases of programs offered in conjunction with other organizations, participants are required to complete forms, registration, waivers, and medical forms provided by both Menlo School and the third-party organization.

By February 9: To secure a place in the program each of the following must be submitted.

1. A check payment payable to Menlo School for \$6000. Financial aid recipients will be contacted by the financial aid with a revised program fee.
2. Completed and signed *Parent Permission and Waiver, Medical Release, Emergency and Medical Information Form - Overnight*
3. Completed and signed *Waiver and Release for Program within the United States*
4. Completed and signed Menlo School *Trip Contract*
5. Third party organization forms, waiver and release.

By April 16: Any remaining and required forms.

Equipment lists, air travel instructions, and further information about the program will be provided subsequently.

Our intention is to address the goals and curricular elements listed in the program description, but all participants are advised that course itineraries will likely change to incorporate participant goals and interests, to adjust to the health of members of the group, or in response to weather conditions, problems with transportation, political or social unrest or other unforeseen problems. Regardless of such changes, we will always work to structure and implement the course so that it stays true to the original intent.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Given the uncertainty of conditions at the current time, Menlo encourages participants to consider purchasing travel insurance or trip cancellation insurance policy for the Borderlands trip. Check your primary medical insurance provider to ensure your child will have medical coverage while traveling. If that is in question, travel insurance including medical coverage should be purchased.

If the participant is on financial aid, travel insurance purchases for this trip will be reimbursed at the rate of financial aid.

[Here](#) are some insurance options you might consider. [Academic Explorer Adventure](#) is another option designed especially for school travel and especially this trip. (If you use the Academic Explorer option, call the 877 number and ask for Kathy.) But Menlo makes no recommendation regarding these options: Please read all policies carefully to ensure that your needs are met.

CANCELED TRIPS: A full refund will be made for canceled trips that arise out of insufficient registration, though Menlo is not responsible for other costs incurred by the student or family preparing for the trip. For trips canceled due to any other circumstance that is beyond Menlo's control, Menlo will refund all recoupable tuition. If Menlo decides to cancel the trip at its own discretion, Menlo will fully refund participants' payments.

REFUND POLICY: If Menlo does not cancel the trip but a participant chooses to withdraw, the participant must inform the Global Programs Director (pbrown@menloschool.org) and the Program Director of (simon@wheretherebedragons.com) in an email communication. Menlo will refund recoupable fees according to the following schedule: By 3/21, 75% refund; by 4/20, 50%; by 5/5, 25%, by 5/19, 5%. No refunds will be given for withdrawal on or after 5/20 or for participants departing the trip early.*

MEDICAL AND EVACUATION EXPENSES: It is the responsibility of the student and the student's family to understand the limits of any medical and evacuation policy, and to provide up-front payment of emergency services when required.

CELL PHONES: In order to maintain the integrity of Borderlands' immersive experience, students will relinquish their cell phones to trip leaders upon entry into the target area. Cell phones will be returned to students when they are in the airport awaiting the return flight home.

VIOLATION OF RULES AND REGULATIONS: If a participant acts in a way that is injurious to himself or herself, people of the host community, or other participants on the trip, or generally conducts himself or herself in a way that is disruptive to the trip, we reserve the right to send the participant home without refund or to require parental pickup at the travel site. Underage use of alcohol and the use of illegal drugs are cause for dismissal. Participants sent home early or who choose to return for any reason, including sickness, personal emergencies or injury, will be responsible for all medical costs and will absorb travel and related costs associated with an unscheduled departure.

*Recoupable fees do not include airline fees and deposits. Menlo pays to travel organization on the student's behalf.

Please contact Peter Brown with any questions at 650.330.2001 ext. 2238 or email pbrown@menloschool.org.

READ THIS DESCRIPTION CAREFULLY BEFORE SIGNING FORMS.

Interested in applying? [Apply online today!](#)