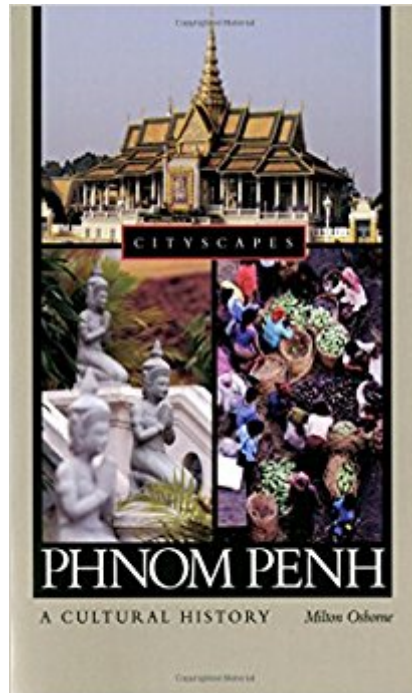




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Phnom Penh: A Cultural History (Cityscapes)



Synopsis

As a one-time resident of Phnom Penh and an authority on Southeast Asia, Milton Osborne provides a colorful account of the troubled history and appealing culture of Cambodia's capital city. Osborne sheds light on Phnom Penh's early history, when first Iberian missionaries and freebooters and then French colonists held Cambodia's fate in their hands. The book examines one of the most intriguing rulers of the twentieth century, King Norodom Sihanouk, who ruled over a city of palaces, Buddhist temples, and transplanted French architecture, an exotic blend that remains to this day. Osborne also describes the terrible civil war, the Khmer Rouge's capture of the city, the defeat of Pol Pot in 1979, and Phnom Penh's slow reemergence as one of the most attractive cities in Southeast Asia.

Book Information

Series: Cityscapes

Paperback: 256 pages

Publisher: Oxford University Press; 1 edition (September 4, 2008)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0195342488

ISBN-13: 978-0195342482

Product Dimensions: 8.2 x 0.7 x 5.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 13.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 2 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,304,285 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #94 in Books > Travel > Asia > Cambodia #927 in Books > Travel > Asia > Southeast #1455 in Books > History > Asia > Southeast Asia

Customer Reviews

Milton Osborne is an Adjunct Professor in the Faculty of Asian Studies at the Australian National University, Canberra. He is the author of nine books on the history and politics of Southeast Asia.

I can't praise this book highly enough. I bought many books for a trip to SE Asia and while they all served their purposes, only this one was riveting reading. Even if you're just visiting the Angkor sites and not even going to Phnom Penh, I would still recommend that you buy this book (perhaps the paperback if you're traveling) because Osborne memorably sketches the history of Cambodia through the history of its capital. This book deepens and broadens the material you find in

conventional guidebooks. His personal experiences in the capital provide street-level savvy and the descriptions of the city during and just after the Khmer Rouge regime are unforgettable. This book made me want to read every other volume in the "Cityscapes" series, but I fear not all will have this author's experience and accessible prose style.

This is a well-written, entertaining and thorough introduction for a general reader to the complexities of Phnom Penh's political and cultural history. I found it invaluable.

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