

# Off the Beaten Track



## The Trail

Traveling by mountain bike along the Mekong Discovery Trail allows you to travel 'off the beaten track'. This Trail takes you through two 'biodiversity hotspots' along the Mekong River, where local organizations are working with communities to protect these strongholds of nature's richness.

**Distance:** 190 km from the Laos border to Kratie

**Transport Options:**



Mountain bike



kayak

### Tour Brief:

- Riding off the beaten track
- Village homestays
- Remote adventure destinations rarely seen by travelers
- Hotspots full of rare and endangered biodiversity – Cantor's Giant Soft-shelled Turtle, Irrawaddy dolphin, Mekong River Giant Catfish, Lesser Adjutant, Great Egrets
- Adventure kayaking and mountain bike tours (please contact Xplore-Asia, listed on this sheet)
- For the hard adventure cyclists, good quality mountain bikes can be hired in Stung Treng and Kratie (Xplore asia).



## Itinerary

You can experience the whole Mekong discovery trail with human pedal power. Whether you are planning an epic tour of the entire trail or just a day trip the best way to start is by contacting one of the local adventure tour operators. They can arrange local guides, tour logistics, mountain bikes and kayaks depending on your personal needs. Many shorter cycling trails are easily done without a guide, but for adventure cycling and kayaking parts guides are a necessity.

Starting from Dong Krolog you will hit a paved but quiet road, and after turning to Ou Svay you will be on a gravel road with appealing forest views. (See other itinerary for things to do in Preah Rumkel.) From Ou Svay you can kayak through famous Ramsar flooded forests. Most of the half a day kayaking you can do in the shade of the flooded forests surrounded by massive roots and sandy beach islands. At Koh Ky you have an option to start cycling or to continue kayaking all the way to Sameakki and Stung Treng. Bicycling from Koh Ky to Stung Treng begins on a gravel road and continues along quiet paved roads. If you have time take the single track river side trails at Koh Kan Din and Thmei. If you are fit and keep up some speed you can get from the border to Stung Treng within the same day. (See other itineraries for attractions in Stung Treng.)

From Stung Treng you cycle south on a gravel river side road and at Srae Krasang you switch again to kayak. Keep your eyes open at the southern tip of Koh Preah as you can usually spot dolphins there. Continue to kayak through a fascinating labyrinth of small islands to Koh Khnhaer.

Here begins the 45 km long Koh Rougniv, the biggest Mekong island in Cambodia and the northern half of the island is the most advantageous part of the trail. You should begin the island first thing in the morning, have a local guide with you and due to the challenging trail arrange your bags to be taken directly to the next overnight location. Cycling single trail tracks through the jungle is a memorable experience. After you reach half way at Khsach Makak the trail gets easy and the next 20 km you cycle through villages and appealing rural sceneries. The island has 4000 inhabitants, but only a couple of motos and absolutely no cars. You can stay overnight at Koh Phdao homestays or if you are fit continue to Kratie. (Please see Koh Phdao brochure for things to do in the village.) Ask a boat to take you to the west bank directly or via 100-pillar Wat. The west bank trails are again very appealing village trails. There are a couple of ferries that will take you across the river to the eastern side.

If you want to visit Kampi pool you can cross the river from Vodthonac or you can ask your tour operator to arrange a dolphin commission boat to pick you up from Kampi west bank to see the dolphins. Kampi is the biggest dolphin pool and it is almost certain that you will see the dolphins here.

Once you have arrived in Kratie you can enjoy the many attractions of the town and if you are in favour of more cycling you can continue to Kampong Cham along the west or east bank river side roads.

## What to Bring

- Sturdy shoes
- Personal first aid
- Flashlight
- Insect repellent
- Always carry plenty of water
- Spare parts
- Sunscreen
- Water full protective gear
- Toiletries (basic)

## Contacts

### Mountain biking and kayaking tours and mountain bike rental (Stung Treng and Kratie)

#### *Xplore-Asia*

Tel: 023 218 810 (Phnom Penh)  
074 973 991 (Stung Treng)  
017 982 644 (Kratie)  
(English speaking)

### Homestay

#### *Preah Rumkel*

Tel: 074 973 631 / 023 214 409  
(English speaking)  
Tel: 011 899 891 (Khmer speaking)

#### *Ou Svay*

Tel: 011 256 092 / 085 906 045  
(Khmer speaking)

#### *Koh Phdao*

Tel: 023 357 230 / 012 635 865 /  
099 834 353 (English speaking)  
Tel: 011 709 329 (Khmer speaking)

#### *Koh Trong*

Tel: 011 554 056 / 012 352 358  
072 971 584 (English speaking)  
Tel: 012 552 073 / 099 530 947  
(Khmer speaking)

### Accommodation

#### *Mekong Nature Lodge*

Tel: 012 796 699 / 099 557 797  
(English speaking)

