



Bon Om Touk



Cambodian Water Festival

Bon Om Touk

- Takes place on the full moon of the Buddhist month of Kadeuk (usually in November).
- It celebrates a major natural occurrence: the reversing flow between the Tonle Sap and the Mekong River.



- For most of the year, the Tonle Sap empties into the Mekong River.
- However, when the rainy season arrives in June, the Mekong rises, reversing the flow to dump water into the lake, increasing its size ten-fold.
- When the rainy season ends in November, the Mekong drops once more, allowing the current to reverse again, emptying the excess waters of Tonle Sap back into the Mekong.



Bom Om Touk

- This natural occurrence is celebrated in Cambodia with three days of festivals, fluvial parades, boat races, fireworks, and general merriment.



An Ancient Thanks to the River

- Then as now, Tonle Sap is a major focus of life for many Cambodians.
- It's a source of livelihood for fishermen and farmers alike - it's rich in fish stocks, and the silt deposits left by the floods fertilize the fields.



- No wonder Cambodians have celebrated Bon Om Touk for centuries - it's a way to give back to the river that's given them so much.

Bon Om Touk

- Bon Om Touk dates back to the 12th century, to the time of the Angkorian King Jayavarman VII.
- The Water Festival was celebrated by the King's Navy to kick off the Cambodian fishing season



Three Day Celebration

- People come from far and wide to join the celebrations.
- School is closed, and most workers go on vacation. Upwards of a million Cambodians gather at the river banks to celebrate; those who can't find hotel rooms often just camp out along the streets!





- DPETNS celebrated Bon Om Touk last year
- Boat racing, kick boxing and Khmer food tasting all took place
- [Look at this video where children from DPETNS explain all about Bon Om Touk](#)

