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The "8 responsible Businesses in Siem Reap List"

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**Jaya House Hotels**

Inspiring

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"Our 8 responsible Businesses in Siem Reap List" - not definitive but definitely a good start in making a real difference.

Driven to retain its immaculate historical treasure that is called Angkor, small and medium-sized businesses in Siem Reap are taking similar steps. The sustainable aspect is slowly yet surely emerging in what is known as Temple Town. And for reasons aplenty.

As tourism continues to thrive, so do those entrepreneurs and philanthropists with sustainability in mind. For decades, Cambodia lay in the shadows of tourism powerhouses such as neighbouring Thailand and Vietnam. However, it has made dramatic improvements in supporting good causes, protecting its national treasures, and climbing up the ladder as a leader in operating a responsible tourism model. In many aspects, as measured by credible agencies and tourism-promoting associations, the country has grown from strength to strength in delivering quality tourism on many fronts.

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With Siem Reap leading the way as the hub for Cambodian exploration, so are a few operators following sustainable tourism practices with velocity and determination.

If sustainability is on your agenda, seeing what can be done on a small scale yet is making a huge impact on all aspects of exploring and encountering inside and beyond the realms of Angkor, then these 8 organisations must find a spot in your itinerary.

Phare, The Cambodian Circus <https://pharecircus.org>

Phare Ponleu Selpak (meaning “The Brightness of the Art”) is a Cambodian NGO supporting community development through the means of education and art, which it believes as aiding human development and social change. Established in 1994, it provides underprivileged children, young adults and their families a nurturing environment to attend its Visual and Applied Arts School's painting, drawing and sculpture classes, and vocational courses such as fine arts, graphic design and animation.

The famous Phare Cambodian Circus of young and talented artists perform an energetic and unique performance as part of this hugely accomplished social enterprise. Local artists take to the stage to show off their talents in this dynamic spectacle of tightrope walkers, contortionists and acrobats. The show blends visual arts, traditional music, modern dance and classic circus skills suited to all age groups, including children.

Jaya House River Park Hotel www.jayahousehotels.com

An award-winning boutique property on a mission, Jaya House River Park Hotel is a 36-room only sanctuary, hugging the Siem Reap River. Since 2016, the hotel has banned single-use plastic out of its entire property, and has been internationally recognised as being one of the first in the region. Boasting two swimming pools, an all-day dining restaurant, a spa, as well offering a broad range of activities supporting local communities and the underprivileged, Jaya House River Park's owners continue to raise awareness and campaign heavily to deliver sustainable standards. Aside from impeccable service standards, the hotel has launched its own line of health and beauty products - **Jaya Organics** - using only locally sourced suppliers.

Widely known as one of the leading resorts in Siem Reap behind large clean-up events, tree planting initiatives, and community-driven projects that provide a positive impact, this secluded sanctuary is one to look out for in Siem Reap.

Haven Restaurant. <https://havencambodia.com>

Under its motto “Where Helping Tastes Good”, Haven Restaurant has made a name for itself in the most positive sense of the word. A socially-driven enterprise from birth, Haven is a centre of education, support, and giving the less-fortunate the chance to earn an honest living. Situated a short walk from downtown Siem Reap, this Khmer-styled eatery includes all the ingredients to be a leader in culinary delights with a kind and not-for-profit heart.



Image courtesy of Alessandro Vannucci

Under the management of 2 Swiss nationals, all earnings are being put back in Haven to allow the most vulnerable and poorest in Cambodia to make an honest living through an in-house education programme (based on the Swiss Apprenticeship model), resulting in delicious creations at its own restaurant.

Haven Restaurant is both unique and enticing in its approach. And their gastronomical results are what drives hungry patrons back to its tropical gardens for another meal, made with love and a smile.

Sala Bai www.salabai.com/restaurant

Sala Bai Hotel School is a social enterprise in Siem Reap focused around fighting poverty and reducing human trafficking. This school offers a professional training scheme teaching underprivileged Cambodians vocational skills to use within the hospitality industry that once perfected can be used outside of this setting. Eating at their restaurant or staying in the hotel is an enlightening experience to observe the NGOs' work first-hand whilst allowing the students to practise their skills.

With 150 students and interns under its protective wings every year, Sala Bai has been a pioneer in creating opportunities for the lesser-privileged at no cost. Founded in 1985 by a French NGO, Agir Pour Le Cambodge, many of Sala Bai's graduates have found full-time employment in leading hotels and resorts across the country. Its vision, mission and core values remain unchanged: to provide vocational training to efficiently fight human trafficking and poverty.

Made in Cambodia Market

An ambassador for everything truly Cambodian with a strong sustainable and responsible aspect. Called "Made in Cambodia", this day market (open daily from 12 noon until 10 PM) showcases some of the most outstanding examples of local craftsmanship and works of artisans.

Situated along the famous King's Road Angkor, the creators of Made in Cambodia founded the market not only to put forward quality products with a Khmer touch, but also wanted to offer grounds for the less fortunate to develop skills and make an honest living. It is all about creating jobs, especially for those who normally do not have the chance.



Image courtesy of Alessandro Vannucci

Do expect original work from award-winning designers, such as Ammo, Rehash Trash, Friends International, Sombai Liqueur and more. Woven into the Made in Cambodia Market are small stalls selling Khmer food, live performances from local artists (from 6 pm onward), and regular appearances of the famous Phare Cambodian Circus.

Treeline Urban Resort www.treelinehotels.com

A sustainable vision translated into a 48-key resort overlooking the Siem Reap River; Treeline Urban Resort has been a major player in exceeding expectations in terms of service standards and making a recognisable contribution in protecting the planet. Astounding design concepts and original Cambodian art decorate this 'urban resort' where their philosophy centres on community, nature, art and design while providing local Khmer artists an opportunity to exhibit their works.

The attention to detail is impeccable, as well the richly flowing foliage of trees and plants embracing the four main dining areas (our favourite is Romiet restaurant, one of the best riverside locations in the city offering amazing re-imagined South East Asian dishes designed for sharing, it's not to be missed). The infinity-edge rooftop pool and serene spa, make this resort a true haven from the hustle and bustle just outside it's walls. Certainly one of Cambodia's leading-by-example sustainable resorts.

It is the latter that makes Treeline Urban Resort a must; environment and community are proudly taking centre stage in everything the resort stands for. No single-use plastics, maximising recycling, composting, using solar power and sourcing locally only and with a large focus on philanthropy through it's grants programme and CSR programme, this is why Treeline Urban Resort makes it an award-winning concept of responsible proportions.

Little Red Fox

An Australian-owned coffee shop with the heart in the right place. Little Red Fox may be small but has made its name in Siem Reap because of its sustainable philosophy. From sourcing its beans, and other ingredients to employing and training only coffee-brewing colleagues who never had a fair chance, this quaint little haven has all the ingredients of the

typical Australian coffee culture with some serious responsible vibe flowing through it.

Outside making some of the most delicious cups of coffee, liquid alternatives and well-balanced all-day dining menu for thirsty and hungry explorers, Little Red Fox has popped up as a source for local arts, music, and creativity. Advocating 'what's right for the community' while strongly maintaining social and environmental practices to alleviate the carbon footprint, Little Red Fox has an outstanding track record in staying true to its sustainable word.

Open daily from 7 AM, and located in Siem Reap's Kandal Village, Little Red Fox is worth a visit if you're keen on seeing how fabulous roasts, local and western delicacies and Khmer smiles are on your agenda.

Mamma Shop Italian Restaurant

Aside from quality products with an equally charming dose of Khmer/Italian hospitality, there are a few restaurants truly worth being added as sustainably conscious. Tucked away in a small stress just a few steps from Siem Reap's famous Pub Street, Mamma Shop Italian Restaurant lives and breathes that taste of Italy in Cambodia. And quality is what is delivered here with every serving.

The family feeling is strong here, and in good tradition, this Italian-owned establishment ensures that every guest is welcomed with that sense of being part of the family. This is not only translated into excellent service standards but also its life-long mission of making contributions - both monetary as well as vocational - for the less fortunate. Parts of the revenue is put back into education and causes against any form of child abuse, trafficking, and prostitution.

Whatever you fancy, prefer or need to have, Mamma Shop Italian Restaurant serves it with quality in mind. Be it vegetarian, gluten-free or simply enjoying a Mediterranean-flavoured dinner with the family, Mamma Shop Italian Restaurant never disappoints for multiple reasons.

Make your \$\$\$ go further

The amount of sustainable business in Siem Reap is certainly on the rise, with more awareness created on how to deliver without losing touch with Khmer culture and making that positive impact on the environment, the community, and the future of tourism in Cambodia. However, it needs to be said that several businesses and not-for-profit organisations in Cambodia's most popular tourist destination may claim they tick off all the sustainable boxes. When digging deeper into their operations, too many are not fully embracing what is currently seen as geared towards operating with a 100% commitment to making the world a better place.

Things change, organisations come and go, and those eagerly setting the example hope that this list of most sustainable businesses in Siem Reap will grow with leaps and bounds in a not too far future.

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