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VIDOTOUR IN FOCUS

More than a month ago, we completed our amateur smartphone photography course. Participants then put their new skills into practice, creating technically strong and emotionally engaging photographs.

The 10 Best Amateur Photos of 2026 competition was organised to encourage creativity, practical learning and a passion for photography.

Through the lenses of 39 amateur photographers, 74 diverse entries told imaginative and emotional stories—some only fully understood after their creators revealed the ideas behind them.

The judging panel selected the **Top 25 “Promising Photographers”** before honouring the ten best works as the **“Top 10 Best Amateur Photos”**:

1. Nguyễn Văn Phương (Sài Gòn về đêm)
2. Võ Thị Thúy Hằng (Vươn mình)
3. Nguyễn Thùy Hoa (Bóng mẹ)
4. Trương Ngọc Minh Anh (Giao thoa)
5. Vũ Xuân Thuận (Giấc ngủ bình yên)
6. Nguyễn Nguyên Phúc Hưng (Chờ đợi)
7. Nguyễn Thị Bích Liên (Ánh nhìn)
8. Huỳnh Thị Kim Ngân (Tuổi thơ)
9. Nguyễn Thị Kim Thoa (Tĩnh lặng)
10. Huỳnh Đại Triều (Bản giao hưởng về đêm)



Top 10 Best Amateur Photos



Sài Gòn về đêm
Saigon by night



Vươn mình
Rising



Bóng mẹ
Mother's silhouette



Giao thoa
Convergence



Giấc ngủ bình yên
Peaceful slumber



Chờ đợi
The waiting



Ảnh nhìn
Look



Tuổi thơ
Childhood



Tĩnh lặng
Silence



Bản giao hưởng về đêm
A nocturnal symphony

Two special "**Càng xem càng lạ**" awards (The More You Look, the Stranger It Gets) went to:

1. Trần Thị Thu Hương (**Khoảnh khắc ngưng đọng** – *Frozen in time*)
2. Trần Lương Kiên Trình (**Hồi sinh** – *Rebirth*)

Their explanations revealed the distinctive ideas behind their works.

Following the presentations of the ten winning photographs, Nguyễn Thùy Hoa received the "**Best Storytelling**" award for "**Bóng mẹ**" (*Mother's silhouette*).



Trần Thị Thu Hương – Trần Lương Kiên Trinh – Nguyễn Thủy Hoa



Khoảnh khắc ngưng đọng
Frozen in time



Hồi sinh
Rebirth



Bóng mẹ
Mother's silhouette

The awards ceremony on 24 July was lively, warm and emotional, leaving both instructors and participants with many memorable moments.

Following the Saigon awards ceremony, the spotlight now moves to our Hanoi team, with *The 10 Best Amateur Photos of 2026* competition taking place this August.

TRAVEL UPDATES

VIETNAM

Three Countries, One Destination

Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos have agreed to launch a joint tour package and coordinated action plan to advance their “Three Countries, One Destination” campaign and attract more international visitors to mainland Southeast Asia.

The three countries reviewed the initiative’s progress and endorsed priority measures to strengthen cooperation. A key outcome was the development of a nine-day joint package tour, featuring three days in each country.

The plan will be presented to the three countries’ tourism ministers during their first trilateral meeting, held alongside the 20th Ho Chi Minh City International Travel Expo from 24 to 29 August, 2026.



Dr. Chuk Chumno (Cambodia) – Ms. Phonemaly Inthaphome (Laos) – Ms. Nguyen Thi Hoa (Vietnam)

HUE – PHONG NHA HERITAGE TRAIN

The tourist train route connecting **Hue and Phong Nha** is scheduled to officially launch on **September 1, 2026**. Following the major success of the Hue – Da Nang heritage train, this new route aims to seamlessly link the top historical and natural heritage sites in Central Vietnam.

Route & Travel Time

- Distance: Approximately 190 km.
- Key Station Stops: Departing from Hue, passing through Dong Ha (Quang Tri), My Trach, Dong Hoi, and terminating at Tho Loc Station (Quang TRI). Tho Loc Station is located just a few kilometers away from the heart of the Phong Nha area.
- Travel Duration: Expected to take around 4 hours and 30 minutes.

Onboard Experiences

- Train Design: Comprises 7 carriages specifically designed for scenic experiential travel.
- Cultural Space: Dedicated areas showcasing Central Vietnam's local history and regional culture.
- Culinary Zone: Food counters serving local delicacies and specialty dishes.
- Shopping & Entertainment: Spaces displaying regional OCOP products alongside live traditional art performances throughout the trip.

This train route will make it easier than ever for travelers to combine a trip starting from the Hue Imperial Citadel, moving through historical sites in Quang Tri (such as the Old Citadel and Vinh Moc Tunnels), and ending at the natural wonders of Phong Nha – Ke Bang National Park.



HEALTH DECLARATION CLARIFICATION

Routine health declarations are **not currently mandatory** for all international travellers. They will only be activated if required by a specific disease situation.

LONG THANH INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

ACV has proposed starting commercial operations on **1 December 2026**. This remains subject to final approval.



CAMBODIA

PRAGUE – SIHANOUKVILLE CHARTER FLIGHTS

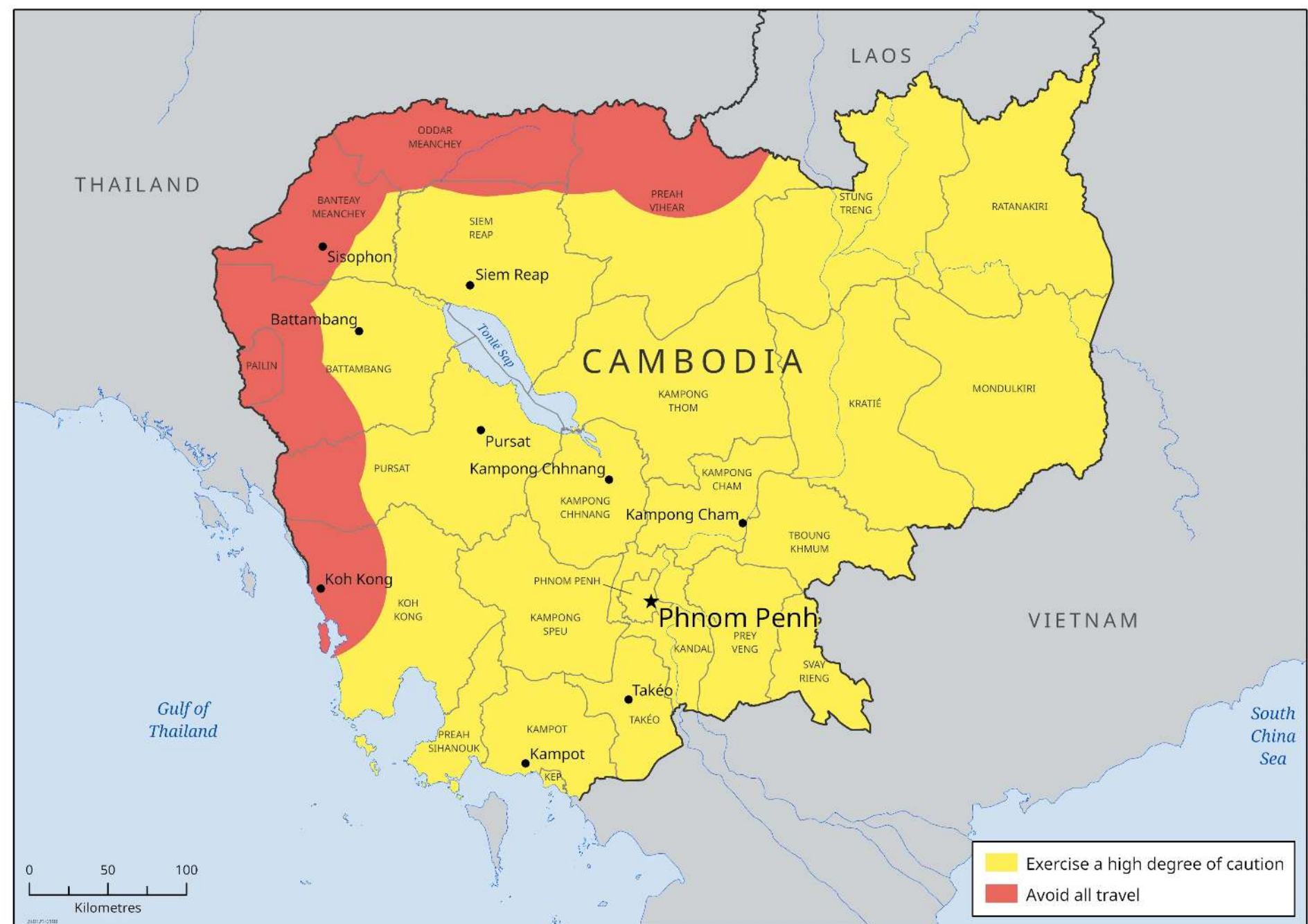
TUI Airways will operate the first weekly charter flights between Prague and Sihanoukville from **19 December 2026 to 3 April 2027**. The service will provide direct access to Cambodia's coast and nearby islands, including Koh Rong, Koh Rong Sanloem and Koh Russey.

Aircraft: Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner with a capacity of 305 passengers.



THAILAND – CAMBODIA BORDER

Overland itineraries via Poipet and other Thai–Cambodian crossings should still be avoided. Official advice warns against travel within 50 km of the border due to continuing tensions.



LAOS

TOURISM GROWTH

Laos welcomed more than 2.1 million international visitors during the first five months of 2026, up 8% year on year, although Luang Prabang recorded a decline.



HOTEL CONFIRMATION REQUIRED

Inbound tour operators must provide confirmed accommodation covering the clients' entire stay when submitting group entry documents.

NEW CULTURAL EXPERIENCE IN VANG VIENG

A new full-day, community-based experience showcasing Vang Vieng's natural beauty and Laos' cultural and spiritual traditions. The programme includes Tham Chang Elephant Cave, a riverside Buddhist temple, the Blue Lagoon and a Hmong village, where guests join a traditional baci ceremony, enjoy a home-cooked lunch and discover local storytelling, basket weaving and embroidery. It concludes with an organic farm visit and a longtail boat ride along the Nam Song River.



NEW CAVE ADVENTURE

Sang Thong Cave (formerly known as Loup Cave or Tham Loup) is one of the most magnificent and newly developed karst caverns in Vang Vieng, Laos. Located north of the main town, it is famous for its massive, illuminated limestone formations, towering stalactites and stalagmites, and a beautiful internal Buddha shrine.

- Location: North of Vang Vieng town, typically accessed via the Namong River bridge.
- Impressive array of "show cave" rock formations, walking paths, and a tranquil rural setting.
- Best Time to Visit: Early morning to avoid the heat and catch the best lighting.

