

SACRED CURRENTS

feng shui



My trip to SE Asia - Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam - last month, was all I could have hoped for. It had beauty and adventure; thrills for the senses and meditative times to reflect. In my feng shui practice I have learned that beyond all the charts, formulas and adjustments, it's connecting with the 'chi' of people and their environment that makes me effective. During my travels, it was connecting to the chi of the land, food, history and people that gave life to my experiences.

These are a few of my lasting impressions and lessons learned...



Angkor Wat in Siem Reap, Cambodia (which happens to be the largest religious monument in the world), began as a Hindu temple to the god Vishnu and later became dedicated to Buddhism. Evidence of this is in its breathtaking carvings. The Khmer (referring to both the people and language of Cambodia) style of Buddhism practiced today by over 90% of the population, blends elements of Theravada Buddhism, Hinduism, animism and ancestor-spirit worship.

This may explain the gentleness of the Cambodian people, which is notable in the face of their recent history of war and genocide. Actually 60% of the present population is under the age of 16. A fact I find amazing and is directly opposite to our aging population.



Luang Phabang, Laos is a UNESCO World Heritage city with a whopping 34 Buddhist temples and monasteries - quiet a lot for its relatively small size. It is no wonder that the very air feels peaceful here. Every dawn, hundreds of monks from the various monasteries walk through the streets collecting alms. I had the privilege of being a part of this intimate daily ritual.



Everyone in here greets each other with their palms together and respectfully says, "Sabaidee". It is a beautiful sound and means everything from good morning to good evening. In days gone by,

the cooks of Luang Prabang were hired by the kings. Its rich culinary history of using the freshest ingredients favored with the most delicate herbs, made each meal heaven on earth.

Hoi An, Vietnam also a World Heritage site was remarkably untouched by the wars that destroyed much of the country. From the 15th to the 19th century it was a trading port between China, India, Japan and Europe and beautifully preserved. At night the town comes alive with bright colored silk lanterns strung everywhere. Old women and young girls sell lotus shaped paper lanterns with candles for making wishes. Seeing hundreds of these flowing down the river is magical.



Our wonderful local guides added so much to every experience. I so appreciated how proud they all were to be the first in their family to get a higher education, earn a living away from the farm and provide a better life for their children. Speaking of the future, I am aware that my enjoyment has added to the pollution of the planet. The Carbon Fund is my 'go to' organization for offsetting the carbon footprint created from daily living, travel, special events, etc. The future of our planet and all the beautiful things on it depend on us preserving it. So as a reminder to us all - "reduce what you can - offset what you can't."



Chinese Lunar New Year is February 19th, 2015. I will be back in touch soon with my yearly notes on all of the zodiac animals. Until then, I recommend that you plan an adventure for yourself this year and may it be a healthy and loving one.

Judith / Sacred Currents