

# A guide to entering Koh Kong River, Cambodia

(Use at your own risk)

## **Preamble:**

Always keep in mind that checking out & in to a country on a yacht is a formal procedure, getting it wrong can have serious ramifications; boat impoundment, legal issues with immigration and so on. Never assume anything, always check that you have the right visa, often visa requirements at ports are different to those at airports, even to the point where although you may not require a visa to enter a country at the airport you may need one at a port. Most often Ports do not have the ability to issue visa's on arrival.

Always assume that the customs representative will visit and inspect the yacht, so tidy up before you leave and put out of sight anything that perhaps you may have been required to declare and dress appropriately.

Understand the terms used in the description of the people on board a vessel. The Crew does not mean the people helping you sail the vessel. The term Crew designates people that remain associated with the vessel legally when at port, on a small vessel this is quite simply the Captain. The term used for everyone else on the vessel is Passenger. A passenger when checked in will no longer be associated with the vessel and will receive a visiting visa and is free to leave the port as if a normal tourist.

In certain countries the Crew (Skipper) will not receive a visa, instead he will receive what is generically termed a Crew pass. This can mean that you are not allowed to leave the Port. Generally you can not check a vessel into a port without having at least one Crew member.

Qualifications in some countries are a requirement for operating a vessel in their waters. If you have a certification of any type take it with you.

## **Checking out of Thailand:**

Before heading out to Cambodia you must have checked out of Immigration, Customs and the Harbour Department and received a port clearance. Without a port clearance from Thailand you will not be able to check into Cambodia or anywhere for that matter.

## **Preparations:**

Visa—At the time of writing it was possible to use the "Visa Online" service. Be careful when applying, often these sites have difficulty with some internet browsers, Internet Explorer works best, Google Chrome does not work. You should select Koh Kong as your port of entry and allow at least 3 working days for the Visa to be issued.

## **Boat documents.**

You should have the originals and carry at least 2 copies of each with you. You will also need to send scanned copies of these documents to the agent in Cambodia so be sure to have these files on your computer.

Crew list, including passport details,.

Yachts Registration

Passports for all people on the boat

Port clearance

Authorization (if you are not the owner)

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## Passage Planning

My preferred option is to anchor in Ao Yai in Koh Kut and depart at sunrise to make the short crossing to the river mouth, in any case you will need to arrive at the mouth of the Koh Kong river in the morning, approx. 8:00am on a week day. This will provide an appropriate arrival time at the Café Laurent's Approx 9:30am but more importantly fishing vessels will be entering the river at this point and will provide a pilot to navigating the river channel, that is, you can just follow a fishing boat up the river. Note on the second image there is a note stating Uncharted Channel, the only way I know of confidently crossing this section of the river is to follow a fishing boat. Once you cross this section of the river you can proceed along the shore in good water all the way up to the bridge. The Café Laurent's is situated on the river adjacent to the bridge, you can anchor directly in front of it and access the café via dinghy to the floating dock, this is the meeting point for the agent.

## Procedure.

Email the Agent at least 3 working days before you plan to depart Thailand, indicate your intended arrival date, size of vessel and number of people on the yacht.

As instructed by the agent, you will probably need to send all of the above documents via email (excluding the port clearance as you will not have that until you check out of Thailand).

When you arrive, you meet the agent at Café Laurent's, he will check all documents and then arrange for you to go to the Thai Cambodian Boarder to check in to immigration. Once this is done you will return to Café Laurent's and receive your port clearance, with that you are clear to go and proceed to your next port. Note: always check the port clearance for accuracy, this is the most important document and is required when checking in at your next port.

## Costs (guide line only)

Action	USD
Visa On line	25
Agents fee	250
Taxi to Boarder and back	20
Immigration fee per person	30

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