RP RIEL PROPERTY

The Cambodia Property Guide 2026

Buying, owning and investing in Phnom Penh, Sihanoukville and beyond

November 2026 edition

www.rielproperty.com

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About Riel Property

About This Guide

Cambodia is one of the few property markets in Asia where foreigners can own a home in their own name, pay for it in US dollars and live in it on a simple, renewable visa. It is also a young market, with its own rules, risks and habits. This guide brings together what buyers need to know before they commit.

It is written for three kinds of readers: people buying a home to live in, whether now or in retirement; first-time buyers looking at a condo in Phnom Penh or on the coast; and international investors comparing Cambodia with other markets in the region. The rules are the same for all three, but the priorities differ, so each chapter points out what matters most for each group.

The information reflects the position in November 2026. Laws, tax incentives and visa rules in Cambodia change regularly, so use this guide as a starting point and confirm the details that matter to you with a qualified lawyer, tax adviser or the Riel Property team before you sign anything.

> *This guide is general information, not legal, tax or financial advice. Figures are typical ranges, not quotes, and individual cases vary.*

1. Cambodia at a Glance

Topic	Key fact for buyers
Currency	The US dollar is used for property prices, rents, salaries and banking alongside the Cambodian riel.
Foreign ownership	Freehold ownership of condo units on strata title, on any floor above ground level.
Foreign quota	Up to 70% of the private units in a co-owned building can be foreign-owned.
Land	Reserved for Cambodian citizens and Cambodian-majority companies. Foreigners use long-term leases.
Stamp duty	4% of the official transfer value, with relief for many developer purchases until 31 December 2026.
Capital gains tax	Postponed until 1 January 2027, then 20% of the gain. A simplified method caps the effective rate at 4% of the sale price.
Long-stay visa	E-class visa ($35), extendable in-country for up to 12 months at a time.
Main airport	Techo International Airport, Phnom Penh, opened in 2025.

For a country of around 17 million people, Cambodia has a surprisingly international property market. Phnom Penh has grown from a low-rise city into a capital with dozens of modern condominium towers, international schools, hospitals and a large expatriate community. The coast, centered on Sihanoukville and the islands of Koh Rong, is being repositioned as a tourism and lifestyle destination.

The market is not without challenges. Prices across Phnom Penh softened in 2025 and early 2026, with the National Bank of Cambodia’s residential index showing a decline of around 4.5% year on year in January 2026. Underneath that headline, well-built and well-managed condos in prime districts have held their value far better than older or speculative stock. That split is the single most important thing for buyers to understand, and it runs through the rest of this guide.

2. Why Buyers Are Looking at Cambodia in 2026

A dollar-based economy

Buying, renting and selling in US dollars removes the currency risk that comes with owning property in most foreign countries. For buyers with dollar income or savings, there is no exchange rate to watch. For buyers in other currencies, the property itself holds its value in a widely used reserve currency.

Real ownership, not just a lease

Cambodia's 2010 law on foreign ownership of private units in co-owned buildings gives foreigners freehold title to condo units in their own name. In several popular regional markets, foreigners can only lease property, or face tighter quotas. A strata title can be sold, inherited and transferred.

Simple long stays

Cambodia's visa system is one of the most straightforward in the region. Workers, business owners and remote workers use a business extension, and retirees aged 55 and over use a retirement extension with no published minimum deposit. Both can be renewed year after year without leaving the country.

Regional shifts

In 2026, Thailand cut its visa-free stay for most nationalities from 60 to 30 days, and its banks tightened account opening for foreigners without long-term visas. Some long-stayers, retirees and remote workers who used to base themselves in Thailand are now comparing Phnom Penh. The land border between the two countries has been closed since June 2025, so travel between them is now by air.

Lower entry prices

A modern one or two-bedroom condo in a well-located Phnom Penh building costs a fraction of a comparable unit in Bangkok, Singapore, Hong Kong or most Western cities. That makes ownership possible for first-time buyers and allows investors to spread capital across more than one unit.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Home buyers:** dollar pricing and freehold condo title make Cambodia one of the simplest places in the region to own a home.
- **Investors:** the case rests on currency stability and ownership rights, not on rapid price growth. Building selection drives returns.
- **Retirees and relocators:** renewable 12-month extensions and lower living costs are the main draws, with healthcare the main gap to plan for.

3. What Foreigners Can Own

The title is the most important document in any Cambodian property purchase. It decides what you own, how well that ownership is protected and how easily you can sell later.

Title	Registered with	Can foreigners hold it?
Soft title	Local commune or district office	No
Hard title	Cadastral office, Ministry of Land Management	No
LMAP title	National systematic registration with GPS survey	No
Strata title	Cadastral office, Ministry of Land Management	Yes, above ground level

Strata title

A strata title gives you ownership of a private unit in a co-owned building, together with a share of the common areas such as lobbies, lifts and pools. It is registered nationally and is the only way foreigners can own property directly in Cambodia. The key rules are:

- Foreigners can own units on any floor above ground level (not the ground floor or basement levels), however the developer numbers its floors. Some local projects call the first level above the lobby the 2nd floor, so confirm the unit is above ground level rather than relying on the floor number.
- Total foreign ownership in a building cannot exceed 70% of its private units.
- The title is in your own name and can be sold, inherited or transferred.

Soft and hard titles

Soft titles are possession certificates recognized locally. They are common for older houses and land and transfer quickly, but give weaker protection. Hard titles are registered nationally through the cadastral office and are the standard for new boreys (gated housing estates) and major developments. LMAP titles are hard titles issued through systematic registration with GPS-surveyed boundaries.

Houses, villas and land

Because land is reserved for Cambodians, foreigners who want a house or land usually use one of these structures:

- **Long-term lease:** under the Civil Code, a lease of 15 years or more (up to 50 years, renewable) is a long-term or “perpetual” lease. Registered at the cadastral office against a hard title, it becomes a property right that survives a sale of the land by the owner. An unregistered lease gives far weaker protection.
- **Cambodian-majority company:** a company at least 51% owned by Cambodians can hold land. This suits larger projects more than single homes.
- **Marriage to a Cambodian citizen:** the Cambodian spouse holds the title, with proper legal advice for both partners.

Informal nominee arrangements, where someone holds land on your behalf without a proper legal structure, are a common source of disputes and are best avoided.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Home buyers:** a strata-titled condo above ground level is the only direct route to ownership for foreigners.
- **Investors:** buy strata or hard title only, and confirm the building has foreign quota left, since that also protects your resale market.
- **Villa and island buyers:** a registered long-term lease is essential; avoid nominee arrangements.

4. Buying Step by Step

1. **Set your goals and budget.** Decide whether the property is a home, a future retirement base, an investment or a mix, and budget for costs on top of the price.
2. **Shortlist buildings.** Compare location, developer, building management and, for investors, real rents and occupancy.
3. **Reserve.** Pay a reservation deposit, often between $1,000 and $5,000, to hold a specific unit while checks are done.
4. **Legal checks.** An independent Cambodian lawyer checks the title, the developer, the foreign quota and the contract.
5. **Sign the sale and purchase agreement.** Pay the first installment, usually by international bank transfer in US dollars.
6. **Pay the balance.** For ready units, the balance is paid before transfer. For off-plan units, installments follow the agreed schedule.
7. **Transfer the title.** For a ready unit, the strata title transfer usually takes around 12 weeks. For off-plan, the title is issued after completion and registration of the building.

Many international buyers complete most of these steps remotely. A typical pattern is a video tour, a reservation, contract review by a lawyer, and a single visit to sign or inspect.

> **KEY TAKEAWAYS**
>
> - **Home buyers:** most of the process can be done remotely, with one visit to sign or inspect.
> - **Investors:** never pay more than a deposit until your lawyer has searched the registry.
> - **Everyone:** budget for costs on top of the price before you reserve.

5. Off-Plan or Ready?

Most new condos in Phnom Penh are sold before they are built. Buying off-plan secures an early price and spreads payments over the construction period. Buying a ready unit lets you move in or earn rent straight away and see exactly what you are getting.

	Off-plan	Ready
Price	Usually lower, with better payment terms	Market price, sometimes negotiable
Payments	Spread over two to four years	Larger payments over a few months
Main risk	Construction delays and developer risk	Building condition and management
Best for	Buyers who can wait and want staged payments	Buyers who want to live in or rent out now

Typical payment plans

- **Full payment upfront** in return for a larger discount, suited to cash and crypto buyers.
- **Construction-linked installments** tied to stages such as foundations, structure and completion. These give the most protection.
- **Monthly installments** over the build period, suited to buyers paying from income.
- **Small deposit with the balance at handover**, which keeps capital free during construction.

How to check a developer

- Track record of completed projects, and whether they were handed over on time.
- Control of the land and a valid construction permit for the project.
- Approval for individual strata titles.
- Visible site progress. A site with no movement for months is a warning sign.
- Reliance on bank loans or future sales to keep building.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Home buyers who want to move in now:** a ready unit removes construction risk.
- **Investors:** off-plan offers the best entry prices, but only with developers that finish on time, and with construction-linked payments.
- **Retirees planning ahead:** buying off-plan a few years before you move spreads the cost.

6. Costs and Taxes

Cost	Typical amount	When
Stamp duty	4% of the official transfer value, with 2026 relief for many developer purchases	At transfer
Legal fees	About 0.5% to 1% of the price	Before signing and at transfer
Agent commission	Usually paid by the seller or developer	At sale
Building management	About $1 to $2 per square meter per month	Monthly
Annual property tax	0.1% of the assessed value above about $25,000	Yearly
Rental tax	10% of gross rent; foreign owners are typically taxed at 14%	Monthly
Capital gains tax	20% of the gain on sales from 1 January 2027	On sale

The 2026 stamp duty relief

Until 31 December 2026, buyers of borey houses and condo units from housing development companies benefit from relief. First-time buyers pay no stamp duty on properties valued at $210,000 or less, with $210,000 deducted from the taxable value above that. Second and later purchases receive a $70,000 deduction. The published notices do not clearly address foreign buyers, so eligibility should be confirmed in writing by the developer and your lawyer. The relief has been extended year by year, but there is no guarantee it will continue into 2027.

A worked example

For a $150,000, 60 square meter condo bought new from a developer:

Item	Without relief	With first-time relief
Stamp duty at 4%	Up to $6,000	$0
Legal fees (about 0.75%)	$1,125	$1,125
Bank and admin costs	$300 to $500	$300 to $500
Total one-off costs	**About $7,400 to $7,600**	**About $1,400 to $1,600**
Management fee per year	$720 to $1,440	$720 to $1,440
Property tax per year	Around $100	Around $100

As a rule of thumb, buyers paying full stamp duty should budget around 6% to 8% on top of the price. Stamp duty is charged on the official value set by the General Department of Taxation using its reference rates, not on the contract price, so the actual amount, particularly on resale units, may differ from the 4% of price shown in the example.

Capital gains tax from 2027

Capital gains tax on property applies to gains arising from 1 January 2027, at 20%. Sellers can choose one of two calculation methods:

- **Lump-sum method:** 80% of the sale price is deducted as a deemed cost, so tax is 20% of the remaining 20%. The effective rate is therefore 4% of the sale price, whatever you originally paid.
- **Actual cost method:** deduct the documented purchase price, stamp duty, legal fees and improvements. This needs full records, such as the sale agreement and receipts, and can produce a lower bill where the real gain is small.

The tax is declared and paid together with stamp duty before the transfer is registered. Keep every contract, receipt and transfer record from the day you buy, so you can use whichever method gives the better result.

> **KEY TAKEAWAYS**
>
> - **Home buyers:** check whether the 2026 stamp duty relief applies before the 31 December deadline.
> - **Investors:** model running costs and the 4% effective capital gains cap into your exit plan.
> - **Everyone:** keep full records of every payment from day one.

7. Paying for Your Property

Bank transfer

Most purchases are paid by international wire in US dollars, directly to the developer's company account or the account named in the contract. Because prices are in dollars, buyers sending dollars avoid one currency conversion. Keep records of every payment, both for the title transfer and for your own tax affairs.

Cash and crypto

Some sellers and developers accept cash, and some accept crypto such as USDT. Since December 2024, the National Bank of Cambodia has allowed licensed providers, with its approval, to deal in asset-backed stablecoins, while unbacked cryptoassets remain off-limits for banks. In practice, "licensed channels" means a regulated exchange or payment provider that converts the crypto into US dollars before the funds reach the seller's or developer's account. That gives a clear audit trail for the title transfer and for any later repatriation. Whatever the method, the purchase should still go through a proper sale agreement and title transfer, and the source of funds should be documented.

Financing

Bank mortgages for foreigners are limited in Cambodia. In practice, most foreign buyers pay with their own funds or use developer payment plans, which act as interest-free installments during construction. Some developers allow a significant share of the price to be paid at handover.

Getting your money out when you sell

Cambodia has no foreign exchange controls on transfers through authorized banks, and sale proceeds are received in US dollars. When you sell, banks usually ask for the sale agreement, proof of the original payment into Cambodia and, from 2027, evidence that capital gains tax has been settled. Keeping a clean paper trail from the purchase onward makes repatriation straightforward.

On resale, your likely buyers are Cambodians, who make up a growing share of demand, and other foreigners. A building that stays within its 70% foreign quota lets you sell to both groups.

> *Never pay into a personal account that is not named in your contract, and be cautious of any request to pay large sums before you have seen the full agreement.*

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Investors:** a documented payment trail makes the title transfer and later repatriation straightforward.
- **Crypto holders:** use a regulated provider that converts to dollars before payment.
- **Home buyers:** developer payment plans are the most common alternative to a mortgage.

8. Living in Cambodia

Visas

Most nationalities arrive on a $35 E-class (Ordinary) visa, on arrival or online. Ask for the Ordinary visa rather than the Tourist visa, because only the Ordinary visa can be extended long term.

Extension	For	Length
EB (business)	Employees, business owners, freelancers, remote workers	1, 3, 6 or 12 months, renewable
ER (retirement)	Non-working retirees aged 55 and over	1, 3, 6 or 12 months, renewable
EG (job seeking)	People looking for work	Up to 6 months
ES (student)	Students at registered institutions	1, 3, 6 or 12 months

A 12-month extension through an agent typically costs around $275 to $300. Longer business extensions now require a valid work permit, issued through the Ministry of Labour's online system and renewed yearly. Landlords must register foreign residents, and missing registration can delay renewals.

Remote workers without a Cambodian employer should not assume an EB extension is automatic. A work permit usually requires either registering as self-employed with the tax authorities or using a local agency or employer of record, so budget time and cost for this before you move.

Banking

Major banks such as ABA and ACLEDA open accounts for foreigners with a passport, a valid visa or extension and proof of address. US dollar accounts, mobile banking and QR payments are standard.

Healthcare

Phnom Penh has several good private hospitals and international clinics for routine care. Serious or complex treatment often means traveling to Bangkok or Singapore, so international health insurance with medical evacuation cover is essential, particularly for retirees.

Who is moving

- **Relocating expats**, including long-stayers rethinking life in Thailand.
- **Remote workers**, who value the simple business extension, dollar pricing and lower costs.
- **Retirees**, attracted by the renewable retirement extension and affordable modern condos.
- **Families**, drawn by international schools and larger homes in districts such as Toul Kork and Chroy Changvar.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Retirees:** the ER extension has no published minimum deposit, but health insurance with evacuation cover is essential.
- **Remote workers:** plan for the work permit route before relying on a long EB extension.
- **Families:** Toul Kork and Chroy Changvar offer more space near international schools.

9. Where to Buy

Phnom Penh

District	Character	Suits
BKK1	Central expat district, embassies, cafes, serviced condo towers	Home buyers, renters, investors
BKK3 and Toul Tom Poung	Quieter streets near the Russian Market	Long-stayers, first-time buyers
Toul Kork	Residential, larger homes and newer projects	Families, home buyers
Daun Penh and Riverside	Historic center, river views, walkable	Retirees, lifestyle buyers
Koh Pich and Chroy Changvar	Newer riverside districts with planned communities	Buyers wanting space and views

In central districts, the quality of the building and its management matters more than the exact street. Well-run buildings rent faster, hold their value better and are easier to resell.

The coast

Sihanoukville is the main coastal city and the simplest way to own a strata-titled sea view condo. After a period of rapid building and a sharp correction, it is now the focus of a provincial tourism development plan for 2026 to 2030, and foreign visitor numbers to the province rose by about 30% in 2025.

Koh Rong, a short ferry ride offshore, ranked ninth in The World's 50 Best Beaches 2026 and has an international airport under construction. Ownership on the island works mainly through long-term leases rather than strata titles, and large areas are under a long-term concession, so it suits patient buyers who accept early-stage risk.

Siem Reap

Siem Reap, gateway to Angkor, is a different market. Planning controls around the archaeological zone keep most buildings to three to five stories, so there are few strata-titled condos and the market is mainly villas and land, which foreigners hold through long-term leases. It suits lifestyle buyers and long-stay residents more than condo investors, which is why this guide and Riel Property focus mainly on Phnom Penh and the coast.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Home buyers and investors:** in central Phnom Penh, building quality and management matter more than the exact street.
- **Coastal buyers:** Sihanoukville offers strata-titled sea views; Koh Rong and Siem Reap are mainly leasehold.
- **Investors:** treat the islands as long-term, early-stage holdings.

10. Renting Out and Returns

Many owners live in their condo for part of the year and rent it out for the rest, or let it full time until they move. Returns depend far more on the building, the unit and the management than on headline market figures.

- **Gross yield** is annual rent divided by the price. **Net yield** deducts management fees, rental tax, repairs and empty periods. To estimate a realistic net yield, deduct roughly 2 to 3 percentage points from a brochure's gross figure to allow for rental tax, management fees and vacancy.
- **Property managers** typically charge 5% to 10% of the rent to find tenants, collect rent and handle repairs.
- **Furnished one and two-bedroom units** in central districts are the easiest to let to expat and professional tenants.
- **Guaranteed rental schemes** can be useful, but the cost of the guarantee is sometimes built into the price.

Market benchmarks

Measure	Typical range
Prime central condos (strongest projects)	Above about $2,800 per square meter
Gross rental yield, Phnom Penh condos	About 5% to 7.5%
Net yield after costs and vacancy	About 3% to 4%
Vacancy, well-managed central buildings	About 8% to 15% a year
Building management fees	About $1 to $2 per square meter per month
Property management	5% to 10% of rent

> *Indicative ranges based on late 2025 market tracking and Riel Property's rental analysis. Prices vary widely by building, age and district, and our team can provide current price per square meter and rental evidence for specific projects.*

Building management and sinking funds

Every co-owned building is governed by its internal co-ownership regulations, required under Sub-Decree No. 126 on the management and use of co-owned buildings. They set out how common areas are run, how costs are shared and how the building is managed, either by an owners' management board or a professional manager appointed on their behalf. Many buildings also collect a sinking fund at handover, a reserve for major repairs such as lifts, roofs and facades.

Before buying, ask to see the regulations, the management agreement and the size of the sinking fund. These documents decide how well the building is maintained once the developer steps back, which in turn drives rents and resale values.

Rental tax

Rental income tax is 10% of gross rent, and foreign owners are typically taxed at 14%. Where the tenant is a company, it usually withholds the tax and pays it to the General Department of Taxation. Where the tenant is an individual, the owner is responsible for declaring and paying, which most overseas owners handle through their property manager or a local tax agent. Tax residency generally depends on having your main home in Cambodia or spending more than 182 days there in a year.

Ask for real rental evidence and occupancy figures for the specific building, not just the developer's projections.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Investors:** plan on net yields of about 3% to 4%, not brochure gross figures.
- **Part-year residents:** a good manager and clear tax arrangements make renting out the rest of the year simple.
- **Everyone:** check the building's regulations and sinking fund before you buy.

11. Risks and How to Manage Them

Risk	How to manage it
Construction delays	Choose developers with a record of on-time handovers; use construction-linked payments; insist on delay compensation in the contract.
Title problems	Buy strata or hard title only; have an independent lawyer search the registry before paying more than a deposit.
Foreign quota reached	Confirm in writing that the building has foreign capacity before signing.
Oversupply	Focus on prime, well-managed buildings; avoid generic stock in secondary locations.
Resale liquidity	Buy units with broad appeal; plan to hold for the medium to long term.
Rule changes	Check current visa, tax and incentive rules at the time of purchase.
Payment fraud	Pay only into accounts named in your contract; never pay large sums before seeing the full agreement.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Home buyers:** a clean title, a firm completion date and payments only into accounts named in your contract cover the biggest risks.
- **Investors:** prime, well-managed buildings with foreign quota remaining are the best protection against oversupply and weak resale.
- **Everyone:** check current visa, tax and incentive rules at the time you buy, as they change regularly.

12. Checklists

Before you reserve

- ☐ Budget includes stamp duty, legal fees and running costs.
- ☐ Developer track record and site progress checked.
- ☐ Building approved for strata titles, with foreign capacity available.
- ☐ Unit is above ground level, whatever the floor numbering.
- ☐ Real rents and occupancy checked if you plan to let it.

Your sale and purchase agreement

- ☐ Exact unit, floor, size and specifications.
- ☐ Firm completion date and delay compensation.
- ☐ Payment schedule, ideally linked to construction stages.
- ☐ Developer's obligation to issue a strata title in your name, with a timeframe.
- ☐ Cancellation, refund and resale (assignment) terms.
- ☐ Who pays stamp duty and any title fees.

At handover

- ☐ Walls, floors and ceilings free of cracks, stains and uneven finishes.
- ☐ Doors, windows and seals working and watertight.
- ☐ Electrics, air conditioning, water pressure and drainage tested.
- ☐ Fittings and appliances match the contract.
- ☐ Defects listed in writing with an agreed repair date before the final payment.

13. Frequently Asked Questions

Can foreigners buy property in Cambodia?

Yes. Foreigners can own condo units freehold on strata title on any floor above ground level, as long as foreign ownership in the building stays within 70% of its private units. Foreigners cannot own land directly.

Do I need to live in Cambodia to buy?

No. Many buyers reserve and review contracts remotely through a lawyer and visit once to sign or inspect.

How long does the purchase take?

For a ready unit, around 12 weeks from signing to receiving the strata title, if the paperwork is complete. Off-plan titles are issued after the building is completed and registered.

Can I pay with crypto?

Some sellers and developers accept crypto through a regulated exchange or payment provider, which converts it to US dollars before payment. The purchase still goes through a proper sale agreement and title transfer.

Can I get a mortgage as a foreigner?

Bank lending to foreigners is limited. Most buyers use their own funds or developer payment plans.

How much capital gains tax will I pay when I sell?

None on gains before 1 January 2027. After that, 20% of the gain, with a lump-sum option that caps the effective rate at 4% of the sale price.

Can my children inherit my condo?

Yes. A strata title can be inherited. Make a will that covers your Cambodian property and take local legal advice on the transfer process.

About Riel Property

Riel Property is a Cambodia property portal and agency helping home buyers, first-time buyers and international investors find and buy condos in Phnom Penh, Sihanoukville and beyond. We list both off-plan and ready projects, share payment plans and construction progress, and support buyers from the first enquiry to handover and title transfer.

Our experienced agents on the ground in Cambodia have years of local market expertise and hundreds of completed sales, and we also manage properties on behalf of owners. We work by chat, phone and video call, so you can view, compare and buy from anywhere, and our agents arrange in-person viewings whenever you are in Cambodia.

Our guides on buying, costs, titles, off-plan purchases, relocation and retirement are published at www.rielproperty.com, and our team can prepare a cost breakdown, rental evidence and a developer track record for any unit you are considering.

Website: www.rielproperty.com

Enquiries: www.rielproperty.com/contact-us/

WhatsApp: +855 76 821 6915

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