

Saturday 18th and Sunday 19th January, 2025.

Saturday 18th January

Today is our second year anniversary of coming to Cambodia.

As usual, we walked to the supermarket where a few things were not available (our favourite coffee and Vegemite) but the spray oil was (so we bought two cans).

As the weather is colder, we also bought some meat for the slow cooker (pork... it goes nicely with taka taka marinade from Beerenberg).

The rest of the day was filled with language homework (even David had homework as he started classes again on Friday), a bit of cleaning and tidying, some tv watching and sewing. I did some exercising and had a swim. Yes, the water is still cold, a shock when you first get in.

In the late afternoon we dressed up, well, dressed up for here and ordered a Tuktuk to take us to the Tell Steak House. It's in Wat Bo Road and we have ridden past it many times. The building is set back from the road with tables in front and more tables inside (we sat inside).

The waitresses wore pink and white pinafore dresses and the back of house staff were in black. The tables were nicely set and had clean white table cloths. As well as a variety of steaks, there were schnitzels and sausages on the menu (perhaps a European chef?)



By the time we were finished all the inside tables and all the outside tables we could see were full. The reserved table (about 18 seats long?) next to us had been fussed over by a young man, but no one had arrived for it yet.

Yes, it is pricey, even for western food in Siem Reap, but the steaks were cooked well, the servings were big and the service was good. It is a restaurant to save for a special occasion, though.

Sunday 19th January, 2025.

Sunday morning was cool and quiet (after the music and dogs over night) and after breakfast we walked down the river. It is very dry here and the grass under the trees is brown and brittle. The little garden lizards (*Calotes versicolor*) were difficult to photograph but easy to see and hear amongst the grass and bushes.



There are many trees deliberately planted along the river, some with beautiful flowers.



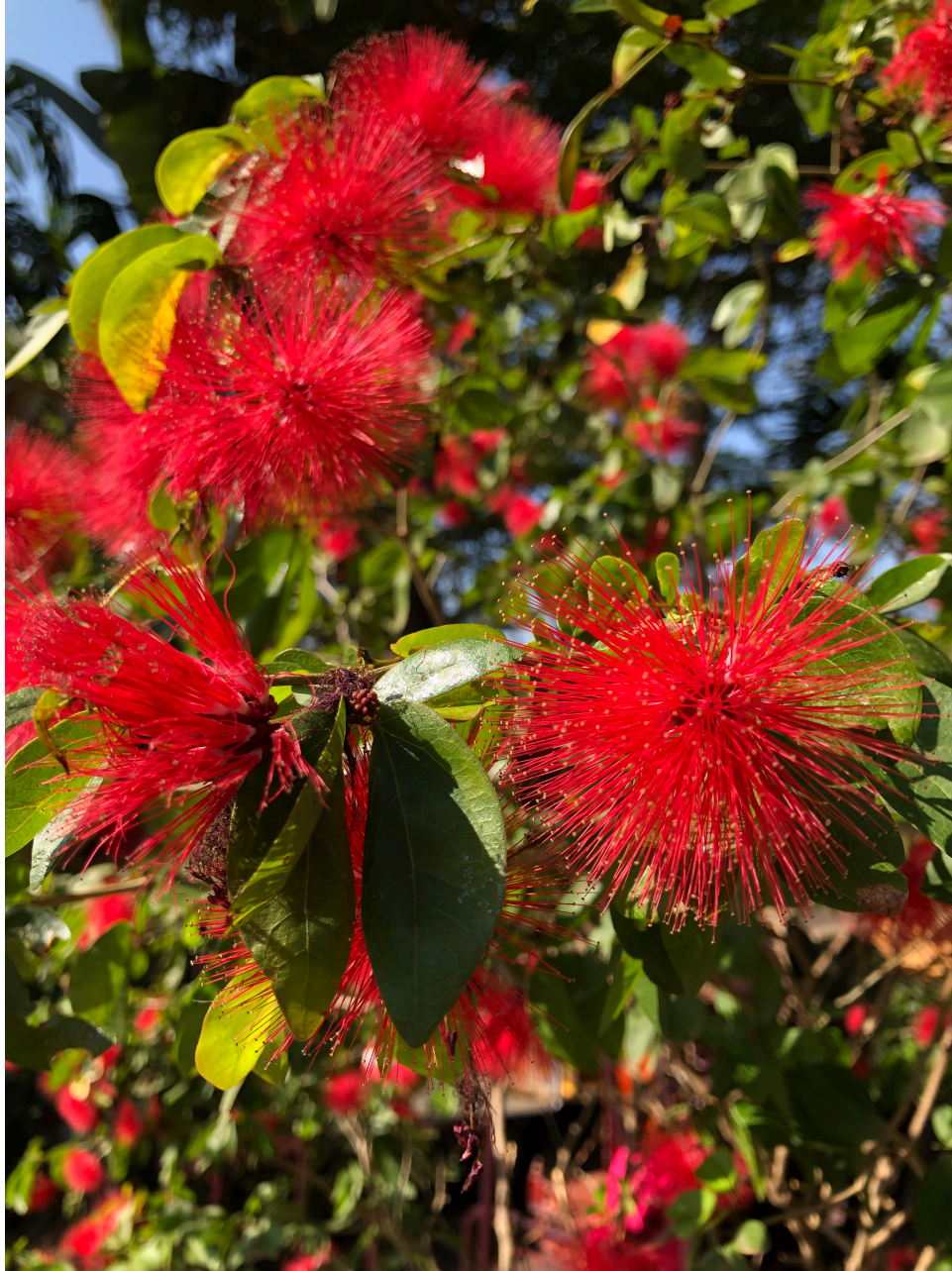
We see many of these flowers, fallen on the paths near the temples. It is not easy to find one so low, to be easily photographed. They have strange flower buds.



We thought the ants were tending aphids, but the green bumps are just some kind of blemish on the flower bud.



Not sure of this (small) tree, but the flowers are attractive.



After our walk, we had a quiet day at home.

When I write these diary / blog entries, I seem to write about our quiet days at home nearly every day. As it has been two years now, I will fill you in on what a quiet day means to us.

It's not as if we had nothing to do.

It is our routine to go out early, even in this cooler weather (the day time temperatures rise to 30 to 34C, so “cool” is a relative term). We get home any time from about 10:00 am. That leaves us the late morning and all afternoon with time for our “hobbies”.

These activities include :

Sewing ... I now have quite a selection of hand sewing equipment and I have a lot of ideas. I am trying not to have too many projects on the go at any one time. (I have cut my old shirts up, cutting them into rectangles which I hem and then Kantha onto another piece of shirt material... I am making another bag for exercise books etc). I generally sew while watching tv, but I can sew and read or practice my vocabulary).

Blogging ... this involves making a quick diary of the days, then going through the photos and deciding which bits of our trips and our routines would make for interesting (hmmm.... you will have to judge that) reading.

Researching... the temples, the plants (very difficult to find information) and animals (insects etc are relatively easy to find information on) for the blog (or just for our own interest) takes time... and sometimes I end up “down the rabbit hole” reading about something irrelevant but interesting to me!

Language work... one of my weekly homework tasks is to make flash cards of my words. Then there are short audio

conversations to listen to, sentences to read and write, questions to write (I start each speaking and listening lesson with questions to my teacher), and I can always read on (the next lesson). Add to that some revision and I could spend two hours a day (but my brain gets fuzzy after about an hour).

David has his Anjali lessons to prepare, two lessons for the two classes he takes. He prepares thoroughly, taking his teaching seriously.

Reading... I have several new downloaded books (but I am re-reading The Lord of the Rings).

Television... we often put a movie on or the next episode of a series in the afternoon.

Bananagrams... yes, (thanks to Elizabeth) we play bananagrams most days, a game like scrabble, but with no board. It hasn't ended in tears... yet.

Exercise... I have my regular set of exercises, push ups and sit ups and squats etc. This takes me 15 minutes and then about 5 (lazy) minutes to stretch. Then I go down to the pool for a swim (30 laps one day, 20 the next), 20 to 30 minutes. Then a shower and I dress for the evening. David usually makes me a coffee and this is when we play some bananagrams.

Then we have the “difficult” decisions about what or where to eat for tea. David has the food well organised. He shops with meals in mind and we do not overload the fridge, nor buy food too far in advance. We have had some bad experiences with meat (it just doesn't keep and you have to be careful freezing it, because some of it has already been frozen and thawed). We often get vegetables (Bok choy, cabbages, cauliflowers, cooked sweet corn) or fruit from our landlords too which adds some variety and guaranteed freshness to our eating. Often, we choose to walk or ride into town (and spend \$7 or \$8) for tea.

Add to these daily activities, little cleaning tasks (sweeping, some dusting and general tidying) and washing (washing is easy, but the drying takes a little organising as there is not much drying space) and even ironing (our shirts look better ironed), dish washing (we wash up directly after eating, but our coffee cups and water glasses tend to accumulate in the sink) and tidying our school books, pens and pencils, shoes, phone chargers etc etc.

All these tasks means our days are quite full.

Retirement does mean time for our chosen activities, but there is still only 24 hours a day (which is not quite enough time to do everything we want to!)