

## THE HISTORY OF THE CELEBRATIONS

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### The Water Festival (Bonn Omtouk)

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According to some scriptures and treaties, in the 12th century King Jayavarman VII's rule of the Khmer's Angkor Empire and up to the Lung Vek era in 1528 A.D., Cambodia had a strong Navy force with strong combat training skills. The festival is still to this day celebrated each and every year and fondly loved by all the Cambodian people.

Other legends have it related to the history of Buddha which stated that the ceremony is the offering of gratitude to "Preah Kung Kea" (Water) and to "Preah Thoranee" (Earth) for resurrecting the planet earth after its destruction.

Therefore, the Water Festival is always celebrated for three consecutive days on the 14th and 15th days of the full moon and the 1st day of the black moon (October-November) along the river Tonle Sap in front of the royal palace.

### Lantern Floating (Bandet Prateep)

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On the full moon nights of October, people celebrate and give offerings to the "Crystal Fang of the Dragon World" by floating lanterns down the rivers with the belief that it will bring joy and prosperity to themselves, to the people and to the nation.

### Moon Veneration (Sompeah Prah Ker)

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When Buddha took the form of the wise rabbit and outsmarted the Indra, there appeared an image of a white rabbit on the moon.

During the full moon night of October or November, people bring offerings and pray to the moon. Afterwards the family gather together to celebrate the ceremony by eating pounded rice with ripe bananas and young coconut juice.