

BAYON



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If You Find the Perfect Place....

There's an old saying (well I don't know how old it is, just saying I didn't make it up) that goes, If you find the perfect place, don't stay because it then won't be perfect anymore. Now there are a lot of people in a walkabout phase of their lives, you know, constant traveling, searching, discovering. Others like myself are looking to chill, relax, settle in so when we find a place we like we put away our walking boots and hang out for a while.

The things that attracted us to Kampot - small, uncrowded and uncongested, laid back, easy going, historic old town, reasonable rents - all are changed for the worse by our presence and the additional people who come in our wake. The only thing that doesn't change is the town's beautiful setting, though even there the growth of wealth in Cambodia has already started to bring massive traffic jams to Kampot on weekends and especially holidays from people wanting to access Bokor Park and our other scenic spots.

We'll also probably see the town irrevocably changed by high rise towers: though no formal announcement has been made, there are very strong rumors of a 42 story building being planned near the river. With that monster, if it should come to pass, will come others. Where's our peaceful little town then? Where will the longtimers go to try to replace Kampot's lost vibe? I have friends who prefer Koh Kong precisely because there are very few expats, it's a genuine Khmer town, and nothing is happening.

It seems like nothing but an economic crash, either in China or the wider world can slow down or bring to a halt, at least temporarily, the kind of development we disdain for our town. This isn't the place for a long winded essay on the world economy, but suffice to say that there are huge warning signs in inflated stock markets and massive debt in China and the industrial world. If a crash does happen, we'll definitely feel it. In 2008 I bought land near Kampot for \$4.60 per

square meter. Two years later after the big financial crash, it was worth only \$2 per meter. It's currently worth a lot more than I paid for it, I'm just letting people know that property values do go down.

As for myself, I'm stuck, I can't go anywhere. I've been in Kampot for 10 years and all that time in the same rental house. I've created a little Eden of exotic plants that would be extremely time consuming and/or a tremendous hassle and/or downright impossible to move. Also my rent never has and never will be raised so I'm now paying half or two thirds

what it would go for in today's market. And most of that rise has happened just in the last year or so. I guess if most of my friends left, I'd also be forced to pack up, but it would be a wrenching experience. I have friends here that go way back. Even if there was a better, more ideal place for me, it'd take years to build up the kind of friendships I have here. So in spite of the hordes of tourists and cheesy happy pizza places that follow them, I'm stuck.

High season is upon us and there are lots of people around. Hoping to capitalize on the influx, loads of new bars and restaurants have sprouted up like weeds, especially the ones who sprinkle weed on your pizza to give it a little pizzazz. They've practically doubled - we now have about fourteen - in the past year making for a lot of happy people in such a little town.

I hope for their sakes they clean up now because tourism takes a deep



diver after Khmer New Year and except for a minor uptick in July and August, it stays in the basement till December. Most offer fifty cent draft beers and low prices so it's hard to see them making any money, though being high season most have sufficient customers.

The Western eating establishments also keep coming; we now have Hungarian, Mexican, Korean and Israeli and a couple Indians well as the regular old Italian, French, Portuguese and Spanish and middle eastern that've been around for a while.

If you want to hang around, and lots of people seem to, and you're not a fogey with a pension or a moneybags with deep pockets, you've got to find something productive to do and lots of people choose bars and restaurants.



I don't keep up very well with the food about town, since I rarely eat out. I also would make a terrible reviewer since I couldn't bring myself to badmouth crappy food if it was coming from a friend's restaurant. At any rate it's nothing like the old times when there were a handful of western places to eat.

You see tourbuses of Chinese tourists around, but they mostly seem to come for the Bokor casino. A friend who went up to Bokor recently said he saw lots of tour buses in the parking lot. It was always nearly empty when I saw it and the couple times I went in (following a friend, I don't gamble) there were lots of staff waiting on no other customers except my friend. Now the old hotel has been refurbished and is open for occupancy with room rates ranging from

\$430 to \$700 per night.

Cambodia as well as a lot of developing countries is intent on attracting high rollers. Many in government have disdain for budget travelers: one was quoted as calling them rat tourists. And yet a survey done by Thailand quite a while ago showed that backpacker types actually spent more in the country than the big timers because they stayed so much longer. They also bring a big advantage to the country by frequenting and boosting local establishments instead of the big hotels and such who are often owned by multinational corporations.

The activity around town has been given a big boost by the arrival of a large number of Sihanoukville refugees driven out by the Chinese invasion there. Now I have no problem with the Chinese per se, in fact, I lived there in the mid-nineties and had a great time. I also think Cambodia's open policy towards immigration which we expats have greatly benefited from has been a very important part of the country's development and that welcoming everybody will help Cambodia become an international center of innovation and advancement.

There are somewhere between 700 and 1000 expats living in Kampot. The town as a whole has about 60,000 so we constitute more than 1% of the population.

Since our income averages 5 to 10 times the local average, we are about 10% of the economy and that's significant.

There are signs however that the government is tightening up on our laid back lifestyle. For instance, they are now getting serious about work permits requiring anybody under 55 who wants a 6 month or 1 year visa to get one. Yet there's no provision for people with lots of money who don't need to work. They've also now replaced a system where foreigners could get driver's licenses renewed at agencies with no hassle. Now you must go in person to Phnom Penh. It's cheaper but it's also a very big hassle if you don't live in PP.

However, back to the Chinese influx, when a large number of any one nationality come in a short time there are going to be problems of adjustment and compatibility. That's especially true of the Chinese who are isolated from the larger Cambodian culture, not to mention world culture, by language difficulties and inability to relate outside their own milieu. Their alienation is also prodded along by their previous lack of access to uncensored, unfiltered news and views from the outside world. The Chinese government doesn't allow them to use facebook because it can't control it.

So the ones with money have bid up the price of real estate in Sihanoukville by throwing their cash around, knocking on property owners' doors and offering more than the property's worth. This is great for the limited class of property owners and there is some trickle down to the average person since sellers will feel rich and spend more around town, but the vast majority of locals and expats will be negatively impacted. Many of Kampot's Sihanoukville refugees are here because they've seen their rents double overnight, or been told to leave on short notice. Besides, Chinese landlords prefer to rent to their own because of language and cultural differences. Many times they won't even serve us in their restaurants.

This will change in time with adaptation and acculturation, but meanwhile they bring a lot of tension, not to mention crime associated with the casinos, most of which are illegal, they're opening. The working classes are also prone to angry outbursts and fighting, so the Sihanoukville authorities have a challenge on their hands and they've already complained about that to the central government.

In other news: Phnom Penh will soon be inaugurating an airport light rail line. As some of you might remember, I ridiculed the idea some months ago when it was first announced. As I predicted, it'll be very slow: 22 to 30 minutes for the 10 kilometer distance between the train station and the airport.

However, in relative terms, compared to how long it often takes on the streets, that's not so bad. In a friend's case it took 90 minutes. It wasn't that long ago I marveled at how you could get to the airport in just 20

minutes almost anytime of day. Those times are long gone and the situation can only get worse. Once the traffic reaches a certain point there's no amount of infrastructure spending can fix the problem; it can help temporarily, but not fix it. Subways and skytrains can get passengers moving, but they are fabulously expensive. For instance, an overhead train to the airport is projected to cost \$180 million and that's in a place where the land is available and it would be relatively easy to build.

Freeways can get vehicles moving (until they too become so crowded vehicles move at a crawl) but they too come at enormous costs. Yet economically growing poor countries think it's great that their people can begin to own cars and they push the idea hard. Meanwhile, the richest, most advanced countries, discourage cars and promote bicycle use.

Back to the train. The problem is there's only one track so there's a lot of time lost in waiting while another train passes. Travel time could be cut to 10 minutes or less with double tracking. With the upcoming start of trains on the Battambang line that short 10km stretch of track will get very busy and even slower. The service will operate every 30 minutes in both directions.

It's fortunate that Phnom Penh has its airport so close to the heart of the city. In fact the authorities are planning on a new airport

south of town out past Takhmao. It'll require a big expenditure in infrastructure, including a new road and rail line, should that move happen. I think the country would be better off making do with the airport where it now is, just because it's so convenient.

Once again Cambodia came out almost scraping the bottom in Transparency International's Corruption Perception index: 160 out of 180 countries surveyed. In some ways, of course, we prefer the current system where you pay a cop up front for a driving infraction rather than deal with tickets. But it sometimes gets outrageous for the locals. A friend's wife lost her ID card and was told by the commune police it would take 3 to 4 months unless she paid \$100 to get it in a couple days. The opposition had promised to post a list of services with official prices and expected time for delivery in every commune it controlled. Now that there's no opposition the people are back to dealing with the same people they voted against and stewing and fuming over the corruption they have to deal with on a daily basis.

On the other hand, as was pointed out to me in an article in one of the lefty web sites I frequent, in many ways the US is far more corrupt in spite of its place at 18 on the index. A study done recently showed that the people's wishes had no correlation to what came through congress. Corporations own the government.

The case of Martin Shkreli, a young hedge fund asshole is a case in point. He became the country's most derided and despised individual last year when he bought a pharmaceutical company that produced a rare lifesaving drug and promptly raised the price from \$13.50 per dose to \$750, thus putting it out of reach of many people who needed it. He's now in prison for defrauding rich investors. Charging an exorbitant price for a lifesaving drug in the US is perfectly legal. In fact, he only got busted for fraud because he was such an abhorrent figure that prosecutors were looking for something to nail him with. But he's really small potatoes; the banksters who crashed the world economy in 2007 were bailed out when they should've been behind bars. They filled their pockets with bailout money and never paid for their transgressions in any fashion.

So yes, in many ways the US is at least as corrupt as Cambodia. Meanwhile, the big guy recently said he didn't think Cambodia needed to change. Now that opponents and dissidents are being detained and repressed, there's no-one willing to say otherwise.

Still, I'm stuck here and as long as we expats aren't harassed and are allowed to be ourselves we can't complain, it's not our country, no matter how much we have invested. (Though we could call it our country if we had the \$60,000 necessary to buy a Cambodian passport) We just have to deal with it and stay low key.



IN BAD TASTE

Do The Winter Olympics Suck Large Turds?

With the games over, the international enthusiasm for everyone's favorite team is starting to wane, which has our sports reporter asking this very important question: Do the winter Olympics suck a large steaming dog turd?

"I wouldn't like to say whether the Pyeong Chang Games are sucking an actual dog turd," said Ester MacDunghill, "but I will say that I get all ready for an evening of Olympic action in front of the tele, and before I know it, I'm waking up on the couch the next morning. So, it puts me to sleep every time! But that's a good thing. I have terrible insomnia from my leg gout."

Others say that while they were all revved up for The Games before they started, now they find they can only stand so much of it until they have to find something else to do. "I sat down to watch speed-skating on Sunday, but found myself painting the inside of the kitchen cupboards a half an hour later," admits Pete Schleppey. "I don't know how that happened? Intense boredom, I guess? It was just so monotonous. Around and around and around..."

Others we interviewed also said that they were getting household chores done at an alarming rate during The Games without explanation, too.

"Perhaps they need to make it a bit more entertaining?" suggested Ms. MacDunghill's husband, Morris, who'd finally got up on the roof to clean out the gutters. "Add some sharks or an alligator pit to the ski-jumping—and have the cross-country skiers shoot their riffles at each other instead, then you've got something!"

Mr. Schleppey was surprised at even how fast his 10-year-old daughter grew restless with the Olympics. "She couldn't wait to see those bobsleds blazing down the chute on opening night. She was sure that it was her future calling. Now she's begging for Doc McStuffins reruns. She even cried because there was no more chores left to be done around the house. So that's good, I guess?"

But we found one old salty geezer who just loves it when the boring old Olympics come around every four years. "The more boring the better, I say!" cackles Bill Smudgy, the crusty old coot who owns the local hardware shop. "Nothing brings in customers like an afternoon of Olympic curling on TV!"

Years of tedious bollocks definitely what we voted for, say Brexiters

BREXITERS love intricate trade negotiations and definitely did not vote in a mindless patriotic frenzy, they have confirmed.

As the UK agreed Brexit 'transition terms', Leavers said they had been fully expecting endless discussions about tedious things like fishing access and regulatory compliance.

Pensioner Roy Hobbs said: "When I voted to leave the EU I was hoping there'd be a good debate about airline regulations. It's hilarious to suggest it was anything to do with foreigners.

"I might have made the odd comment like 'This'll show those German bastards!' but that was just frustration at the lack of public discussion about British jam exports.

"None of the Brexiters I know cares about immigrants. It doesn't bother me in the slightest if there are millions of Poles on the bus all jabbering away like they're in bloody Stalingrad."

Hairdresser and Leave voter Nikki Hollis said: "Brexit is really complicated but that's great because I love learning new things like how EU meat tariffs work.

"Some of my Brexiter friends kept making references to World War 2 and Agincourt but they were clearly just having a laugh, apart from the ones who are in Britain First."

Mark Zuckerberg ignores friend request from Parliamentary Select Committee

A UK Parliamentary Select Committee has been left with a sense of crippling social embarrassment after a friend request sent to **Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg was allegedly ignored.**

With his social network under increasing scrutiny following revelations about data harvesting, Zuckerberg has become an alluringly aloof target for the committee's affections over the last 24 hours, with a friend request the latest attempt to get his attention.

A source close to the inquiry into fake news said the committee had been meeting over lunch, perhaps had one white wine spritzer too many, and recklessly sent an unsolicited friend request, only for panic, remorse and a feeling of overwhelming – but irredeemable – shame to strike when the request had not been accepted some thirty-nine seconds later.

However, as the hours passed and the sun began to fall, the friend request had still not been accepted, and the select committee began to realise the full extent of their mistake.

Meanwhile, the chairman of the committee, Damian Collins, cut an increasingly despondent figure in the corridors of Whitehall this afternoon, nervously glancing at his phone while visibly sweating.

"Maybe he's just not seen it yet?" he told our source, repeatedly refreshing the app to mitigate against an unlikely failure of its notification feature.

"Oh God. Oh God. Maybe I'll poke him. Can you still poke people? I'm sure that's OK. Yes, I'll poke him. Then he's sure to accept our friend request.

"Oh fucking hell – fuckety fucking hell. I've just liked his profile picture by mistake."

God suffering existential crisis after meeting Stephen Hawking

Following the passing of the late Professor Stephen Hawking reports from Heaven today indicate that God is suffering an existential crisis having been defeated by Hawking's logic.

God is understood to have personally popped down to say Hi and joke about the whole atheism thing, but following a brief private chat with the revered Professor, God appeared to wander away looking confused.

According to prominent angels God has since been wandering about muttering, "But I could swear I created it. Yes, there was a Big Bang from the kitchen around the same time but that was just coincidence – wasn't it?"

"Why does he keep claiming that we can't understand what came before it? It was probably my bloody cat. It usually is. But then I was drinking that night. Did I dream all that Creation stuff? I have to admit he does make a very compelling argument for his version of events at the start of the universe.

"I mean, it's more than possible he's completely correct. Oh no, does that mean I'm not even real?"

In a statement released to the press, God's less well known younger son Simon Williams confirmed, "Look, this is why we usually send all the scientists to Hell – so thank you, Professor Hawking. For nothing.

"Dad really liked that Theory of Everything film and insisted on bringing him up here for a chat – we said it was a bad idea but he wouldn't listen.

"Never mind. I'll try and get him to make Donald Trump do something stupid again. That usually cheers him up."

EU divided over how badly they will make Boris Johnson beg for help with Russia

As Boris Johnson appeals to the EU 27 for support following the Skripal poisoning, the united front maintained by European countries has shown signs of cracking when debating what kind of humiliation the Foreign Secretary should suffer out of penance.

The orthodox and majority position, led by Germany and the Netherlands, is that Mr Johnson should deliver an apologetic speech praising the virtue of a common European foreign policy and perhaps sit at a comically small table during summits.

However, a more hardline faction led by France is said to want more from the boisterous Foreign secretary. Sources inside Brussels claim Boris Johnson would be made to do the truffle shuffle and probably serve wine at a banquet while wearing an ill-fitting French maid costume from Ann Summers.

More troubling for the UK is the possibility of an Anglo-French press conference where President Macron uses the Cabinet minister to look youthful, clever and statesmanlike in comparison.

The Foreign Office claimed that it was prepared for most eventualities and that they would do what is necessary to keep Britain safe, as explained FCO spokesperson Simon Williams.

“The Foreign Secretary is willing to do his bit for the country. Boris has never backed down from looking like a tit for political gain, and he won’t start now.”

Mr Williams did admit there were worries about a wildcard last-minute imposition by Spain or Ireland.

‘The Irish situation poses some concerns. He’s really got them riled up and they might insist on something nasty involving wild animals and a sack.

“Possibly even ferrets.”

Phnom Penh Pub Page

Another month – another pub page – and this time I close enough to on time so have not received any nasty reminders from the Evil Publisher. Yay me.

General impression – bars have been pretty dead this month. Admittedly I have been a bit quieter myself so perhaps this is just further proof that our perceptions define our universe.

First off, a Sharky's update – Tuesday night Joker draw is on and they have decided to have one pot running for both draws each week. It was reasonably well attended on the night I dropped by. The bad news, from my perspective, is that they have decided to go to live music every night featuring a house band most nights. I thought they were better off with playing good tunes at reasonable level, but I guess Sharky's has again decided that there are more house band live music fans out there who have been holding back from hanging out at Sharky's until now. Funny but I seem to recall that the decision to go to all live music all the time was one of the harbingers of doom of the last iteration of Sharky's. The other was the CF that the kitchen became – my recent experience in trying to get a basic Indian dish out of an Indian kitchen was not a good sign, but hopefully more of a growing pain than a sign of what is to

come. Clearly the new regime is trying to figure things out and since I admittedly don't enjoy live music, I am clearly biased against this move, but credit to them for making an effort and hopefully this or the next plan will work out. BTW – I am still planning on dropping by (and even trying the food again). Golden Sorya Mall update – not really much of one – the signs are up for the new name PP Pub Street and it actually looks fairly nice inside. For some reason, they have removed one of the best features of the place, sitting in the central courtyard, by putting in what looks like what will be a fountain or the base for a statue. Deep sigh. Really not sure how all these little bars will work out, not looking forward to what I expect will be dueling sound systems and quite sceptical on how moving back to the revised courtyard will be for a couple of my preferred establishments. The rumours were that the place would be opening for new years, but I would be very surprised given how much work seem to be required.

Went on a short crawl with Shrek this month. It has been difficult to get him out and I had to agree to come down to the swamp. We started at a new bar on 51 st – Embassy – which is across from GSM. From what I was told, it was completely renovated by the owner who has done a pretty impressive job so far. Bar looks really nice and is quite spacious. There is a second floor that is only partially completed that will be a lounge and there will be a rooftop patio as well. Food is also

planned. Shrek and I both enjoyed the music – very lounge vibe. Local draft was USD 1.5 and Carlsberg was 2.5. Anchor and Angkor cans, \$1.5, Tuborg and Asahi, \$2 and imports \$2.5. Bottles of beer were USD 2 or 2.5. There was a pretty basic whiskey selection at \$3 or 3.5 for a shot and a range of vodkas from \$2.5 to 4. Overall, a nice chill work in progress that will likely be a good

change from the noisy mess that GSM is hoping to become. Hours seem to vary while the bar is working out its routine. BTW, it is NOT a hostess bar.

We dropped by Shanghai at the corner of 51 st and 172 st. It is on Shrek's usual route, but the Pub Page has not been back in a long while. Really has not changed much (actually the first floor probably needs a bit of a freshening up); although on the night we were there, it appears that there were a lot less staff than my previous visits. The roof patio is still a great looking place although noisier than one would hope. Anyone wanting to play pool still has a few steps to climb. The second floor "Blue Room" was completely empty when I wandered up, but it was mid week so perhaps it is busier on the weekend (Shrek later reported that it doubled as a dance floor for some lucky customers). Happy Hours are 3:30-7 p.m. with draft beer at USD

1 and house spirits with mixer at USD 1.5. Lady drinks are USD 3.5 with premiums drinks at a buck extra. Draft beers are USD 1.5 or 1.75 and there is a decent range of cans (from USD 1.5-3.25) and bottles (USD 2-4). Most spirits are USD 3 with the basic house pours at USD 2.5 and the higher end stuff a bit up from there. The bar area was fairly crowded with a bunch of guys who seemed to be enjoying themselves, chatting away, playing on their phones or playing games with the staff. Overall, on a mid week visit, the place felt like a local pub that had a lot of cute staff hanging about. There was even the PP version of your local pretentious ponce who was busy explaining to one of the staff how to properly drink whiskey.

Last on the mini crawl was the Thirsty Elephant at the corner of 51 st. and 174 st. There were no signs, but we cleverly worked out the name based on the menus. This is a brand-new place, we were there on its second night. It is a relatively small ground floor space with most seating outside, a small mezzanine with some couches and a very airconditioned second floor. Decent beer selection with drafts at USD 1.25 for regular and USD 1.75 for premium/craft beers. Local cans were USD 1.5 or 2 and bottles ranged from USD 2.5-3.50. Most spirits were available by glass or bottle and prices seemed very reasonable. This space has not been very good luck for the establishments who have briefly occupied it – hopefully the Elephant will have many thirsty friends dropping by to keep it company.



COCKROACH



CORNER

Kak Channthy R.I.P.

Cambodian singer Kak Channthy rose from poverty to perform in front of audiences worldwide.

Dubbed Cambodia's Amy Winehouse, she was the voice and face of a revival of the legendary 1960s rock scene that swept the country pre-genocide.

The band she sang with The Cambodian Space Project is certainly a big part of Cambodia's music and cultural revival. She was killed when a Tuk Tuk she was travelling in was hit by a car. It is a sad loss for the

music scene here.

It has to be noted that the Indian Tuk Tuks here appear to be very unstable and are made out of thin flimsy metal that collapses in the smallest accident. Thus providing little accident protection.

Is it closing?

The Phnom Penh Post seems to be in trouble with the tax Department just like the Daily. The CEO said they are "negotiating" with the tax authority.

Staying open or not probably depends on what they print in the runup to the election. But



they now know an axe is hovering over them.

Rumours?

An industry insider said the new \$1.5 billion airport authorized in Kandal province to serve P.P. is more likely to be a land price bubble as most of it is a lake at the moment.

If built it would be the world's ninth largest!

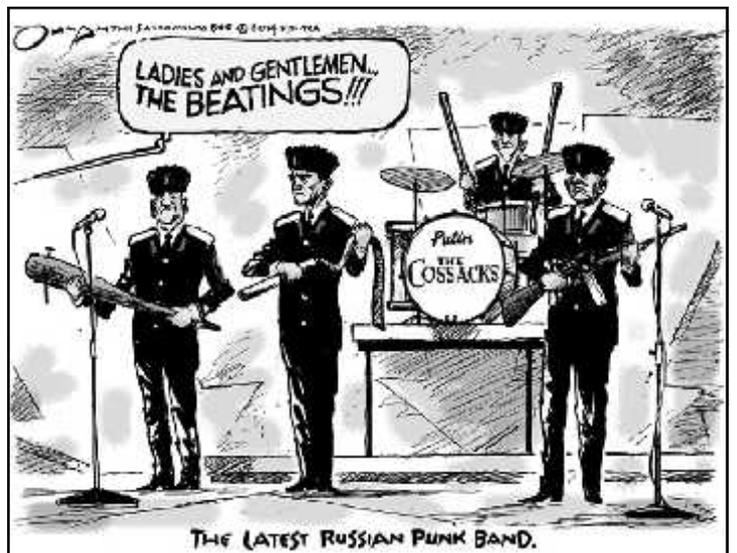
Why wouldn't the Kompong Chhanang runway be utilized thus saving a fortune in construction. Was a strong pointer he raised.

On the building front the \$2 billion 133 story Thai Boon Rong twin towers broke ground the other week.

It will be interesting to see how this massive erection goes up!

HOLIDAYS

Khmer New Year 14,15,16,
Visak Bochea 29th



FAUX NEWS

Theresa May to use female wiles on Putin to get confession re Skripal poisoning

In a daring follow-up to the recent poisoning of Skripal and his daughter, the Prime Minister of England will not rest on mere accusations.

Ms. May has asserted that either Russia is directly responsible for attacking the Skripals, or has somehow let the poison "get into the wrong hands."

Analogies on the internet for Ms. May's reasoning here include: A Rolls Royce in India running over somebody in New Delhi must be England's responsibility, including allowing a very poor driver onto the streets.

In a mood to buttress the case, the Prime Minister will now move on to a further system of investigation.

Mr. Putin will be invited into 10 Downing Street for a special and private "arrangement" with Ms. May.

"Oh, I have talents here," Ms. May has been overheard to exclaim as she prepares further for the arrival of Mr. Putin.

One of these talents, as well-known, is Ms. May's ability with short dress and cleavage of an unusually pale and firm white texture, according to experts.

Inner sanctums at 10 Downing are notorious for their sensuous décor and environmental seduction powers, particularly since Ms. May assumed the office of Prime Minister.

Mr. Putin will be whisked quickly into one of these nether regions where he will encounter the exotic British Leader.

As to specifics in Ms. May's precise behaviors in her mission, discretion is urged, although Mr. Putin's weakness for caressing fingers and tenderness is well-known.

Inebriates of some sort are likely.

The possibility of Ms. May's slipping onto Mr. Putin's lap has been a staple in centuries-old honey-trap interrogation techniques.

With recording equipment and private listeners in surrounding walls, Mr. Putin will fold over.

He will confirm that once again he has ordered a dastardly action invading another country.

If Mr. Putin is sufficiently overcome to be unable to leave 10 Downing on his own power, an ambulance convoy will usher him to his waiting presidential jet on the tarmac at Heathrow.

So far, there is NO evidence tying the crime to a Kremlin directive.

The usual falling back on "very likely" and "the accusation suits the current political climate," plus "it pleases the Americans" could possibly be strengthened.

Mr. Putin's confession in the arms of the Prime Minister should hold up very well as to support further punitive action and militarism on this matter.

Trump Loses Fight with a Lamb

Washington, DC - A young lamb wearing blue just showed up from a deeply red district in Pennsylvania, and President Donald Trump is running scared. He called the lamb a "sham" but the name would not stick. He said he was better looking than the lamb, but no one agreed. He said the lamb was loyal to Nancy Pelosi, but no one cared.

Instead, the lamb, with its strong jaw,

street smarts and high energy, is now feared by every House member of the Republican Party.

Republican members of the House of Representatives worry that yet another lamb can come from anywhere, from any district. And they are afraid.

Trump is so worried by the young lamb's appearance that he is looking to clean house. He fired his Secretary of

State with a simple tweet. He reprimanded several other cabinet members for their lavish expenditures paid by the U.S., including private jet excursions and a \$30,000 dining room table. Meanwhile, Trump's closest personal assistant was escorted from the White House, accused of engaging in a financial crime. Others close to him, including Ivanka and Jared and Hope Hicks, aware of that little lamb, are all in hiding.

Unable to slaughter the lamb, and already weakened by the Russia investigation, and still trying to weather Stormy Daniels, Trump promises more carnage from within.

Perhaps the lamb will help drain Trump's swamp. No one guessed that a little lamb, declared victorious on the Ides of March, would spell the beginning of the end for a presidency already in distress.

Squirrel Awarded Hand Gun To Protect Himself From Hawk

Rocky Squirrel celebrated a victory in a Portland, Maine court today by being awarded the right to not only obtain a handgun but, also, to get a concealed hand gun permit. After the verdict Rocky hugged his lawyer Jerry Meisterfibber as well as his long time cohort, Bullwinkle Moose.

The case was filed because Rocky Squirrel was denied a gun and a concealed weapons permit to protect himself from a hungry hawk who was threatening to kill and eat Rocky. He initially tried to get a restraining order against the hawk but was turned down with the judge citing "natural selection".

Rocky won the gun trial by his lawyer claiming that natural selection only pertains to animals on strictly vegan diets and not those that are carnivores or omnivores. He argued that "a hawk is a carnivore and a squirrel an omnivore due to the fact that squirrels have been known to eat meat. Thus, the linguistics tell us a squirrel is protected under the second and a half amendment. Now if a tomato kills a grape the linguistics of this argument tell us the grape deserved to die and is not protected by the second and a half amendment and by virtue of natural selection the tomato gets to eat the grape".

The defense argued that the real reason Rocky Squirrel wanted a gun is the kill his longtime nemesis Boris and Natasha. They argued that actual hawks cannot kill cartoon characters. They, also, wondered why Rocky Squirrel had rights seeing that he is com-



pletely animated.

The judge responded that a lot of animated people have a right to own a guns. He used his cousin Ned as an example saying: "Uncle Ned gets excited and animated whenever someone throws gasoline on the bar-b-que".

As of press time it has been learned that Rocky and Bullwinkle celebrated their victory by getting drunk and shooting up a brasiere factory.

Vladimir Putin accused of interfering in Russian elections

Vladimir Putin has been accused of 'undue influence' in Russian elections after they were won by his preferred candidate, himself.

The extent of Russian influence in Russia's election is already under scrutiny, with experts suggesting that a large proportion of the votes may have been cast by Russians.

"It's a concern that Russia keeps cropping up in elections; Brexit, Trump, now even in Russia itself. Everywhere you look Putin is involved," said election analyst Simon Williams.

"We're looking into the possibility that people close to the Kremlin, such as the population of Moscow, may have aided Putin in his attempts to swing the elections in his favour – largely by voting for him.

"We've even seen video footage of him walking into a polling station, bold as brass, and voting for himself. How he can get away with that in this day and age is a global disgrace."

Not everyone is sure that Putin was involved in the outcome, with veteran Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn calling for 'more evidence' before he's sure Putin was involved in his own victory.

"I think we need to wait until things are clearer," he said over footage of a smiling Vladimir Putin walking through the door of the Kremlin and sitting back down on his big gold-and-polonium throne.

However, Putin is unrepentant, insisting that he could have got a far higher proportion of the votes.

"I could easily have got millions more votes," he told us. "All I needed to do was ask Diane Abbott to count them."

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TECHNOLOGY PAGE

How to set up Android Auto in any car

Skip the expensive infotainment system. An Android phone and a few accessories will do just fine.

Android Auto will work in any car, even an older car. All you need is the right accessories—and a smartphone running Android 5.0 (Lollipop) or higher (Android 6.0 is better), with a decent-sized screen. Add a few handy apps and phone settings, and you can make your smartphone version of Android Auto

proceed to the next step. Otherwise, you'll need some extra hardware to add Bluetooth to your car.

For cars with an auxiliary 3.5mm audio input, Bluetooth receivers are available for cheap. Mpow sells its Bluetooth Receiver (currently \$14 on Amazon), though you may want to splurge for the Bluetooth 4.1 Receiver (\$18 on Amazon), which has a dedicated on-off switch. (The cheaper model requires you to press and hold a button to power it on, which is slightly less convenient.)

This \$18 receiver adds Bluetooth to any car with auxiliary input.



These receivers have built-in batteries, but you're better off keeping them connected to a car charger. RAVPower's tiny dual-USB car charger costs just \$8 on Amazon, and it allows you to charge the Bluetooth receiver via any micro-USB cable. Use the second slot to charge your phone on long trips. Mentioned in this article VicTsing Bluetooth FM transmitter \$17.99 on Amazon



just about as good as the dashboard version.

Android Auto wasn't always this easy. When it debuted in 2015, you needed either a new car or pricey aftermarket hardware to run Google's infotainment system of the future. Google brought a standalone Android Auto app to smartphones the following year, allowing anyone with an Android phone to use the simplified menu system for music, navigation, phone calls, and messages. More recently, Android Auto added support for Google Assistant and all the same voice commands you'd use with a Google Home speaker.

Step 1: Get a car phone mount

Using Android Auto on your phone makes sense only if you can glance at the screen without losing sight of the road. Car mounts for this purpose cost around \$20, and can attach to your phone's dashboard, windshield, CD player, or air vent.

In my case, I used an old Breffo Spiderpodium Tablet (currently \$16.95 on Amazon), whose bendable arms fit snugly into my Nissan Altima's air vents. The remaining four arms cradle my Pixel 2 XL securely when it's inserted from above.

Mounting your phone in landscape mode almost makes it seem like an in-car infotainment system.

Step 2: Add Bluetooth to your car

Unless your phone needs charging, you shouldn't have to mess around with cables every time you get in the car. Connecting your car to Bluetooth removes the extra bit of friction that might stop you from listening to music or asking for directions.

If your car already has Bluetooth built-in, you're in great shape. Just pair your phone through the car's infotainment system, and

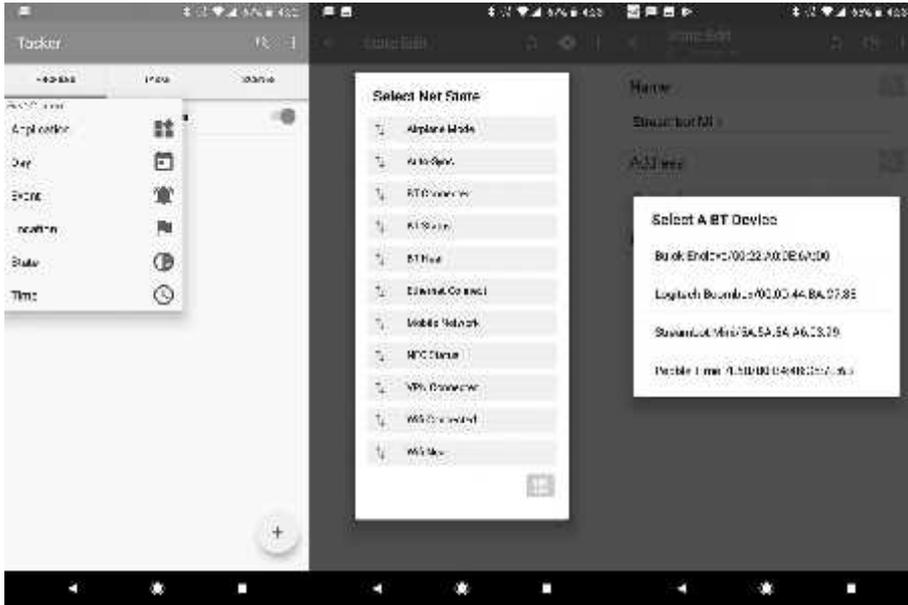
Don't have auxiliary input? You can still use a Bluetooth FM transmitter, which grabs audio from your phone and creates a short-range broadcast for your car radio. The most popular pick on Amazon is the Bluetooth Transmitter from VicTsing (\$18 on Amazon), which has a dial for quickly selecting an open radio frequency. The car charger also has a spare USB slot in case your phone needs a boost.

Step 3: Automate Android Auto

Once you've got a Bluetooth solution and paired it to your smartphone, install the Android Auto app from the Google Play Store. But don't stop here! The real magic happens when you create a rule to launch Android Auto when it connects to the car via Bluetooth.

Launch the Android Auto app, then press the menu button in the top-left corner and select Settings. Scroll down and select Auto-

launch, then flip on the toggles for Autolaunch and your car's When the connection terminates, it'll return to portrait-only mode and exit the Android Auto app.



Finally, you can prevent the phone from feeding audio to the car at low volumes with the free Bluetooth Volume Control app. After downloading the app, add your car's Bluetooth with the "+" button, and set the volume to 100%.

Step 4: Get comfy with Android Auto

Android Auto is essentially a special version of the Android interface, with larger buttons, simplified menu items, and fewer distractions. The headphone icon provides quick access to compatible music apps such as Pandora and Spotify, the navigation icon provides directions from Google Maps (or Waze, if you've installed it), and the phone button lets you place calls.

In many cases, though, it's easier to use voice commands. Hit the microphone icon or say "Hey Google," then ask for music, directions, a phone call, or a text message. This works

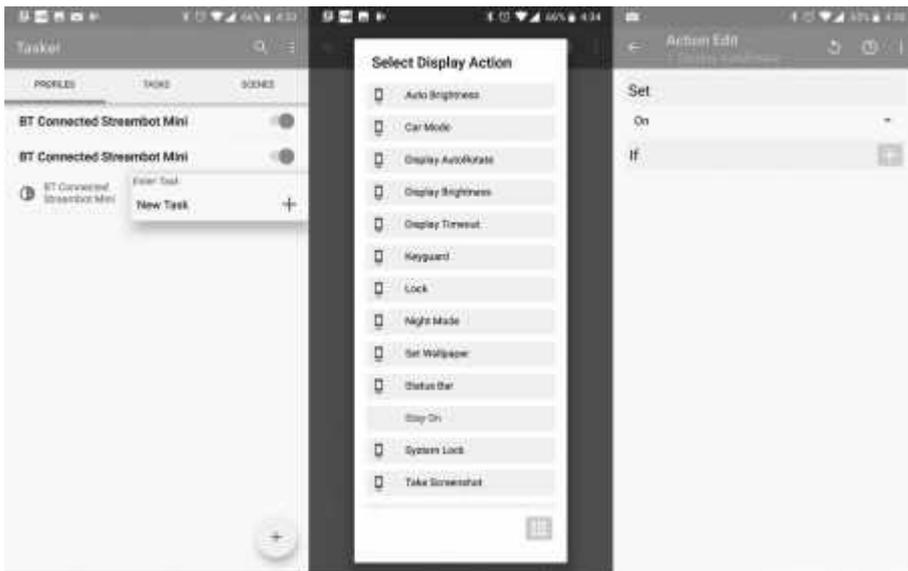
Bluetooth connection. You may also turn on pocket detection so the app doesn't launch prematurely.

To make your phone feel a bit more like an actual infotainment system, you can run Android Auto in landscape mode. Because I normally keep my phone locked in portrait mode, I used a popular \$3 app called Tasker to automate the screen orientation.

with all Google Assistant actions, so you can even dictate to-do list items, add calendar appointments, and turn down the thermostat at home.

Music, directions, and calls are just a "Hey Google" voice command away.

One more thing: To curb distracted driving, Android Auto hides



all notifications except phone calls and texts from supported messaging apps. For the latter, Google will only offer to speak the message instead of showing it onscreen. You can then respond by voice or with a canned message, created through the Settings menu. (By default, it's "I'm driving right now.")

When you're finished driving, Android Auto should recognize that the Bluetooth connection has terminated and will exit the app automatically. But if not, tap the circle icon, then press Exit to return to your regular phone interface. Finally, don't forget to take your phone with you!

Download the app, then follow these steps: Under Profiles, press +, then press State, then select Net, then select BT Connected. Under Name, press the magnifying glass, then select the name of your car's Bluetooth device. Under Address, press the magnifying glass, then choose your car's Bluetooth device again. Press the back button in the top-left corner, then press New Task. (Creating a name for the task isn't necessary.)

On the Task Edit screen, press +, then press Display. Next, select Display AutoRotate, then select On from the Set menu. Hit the back button in the top-left corner, then press the back button again on the next screen.

Your phone will now automatically disable rotation lock when it's connected to the car.



Bits from the Beach

Golden Lion Plaza, AKA Pub Street will be closing soon. The street owner called the tenants together and told them he had had an offer for the last 2 years on his lease over the land and each owner was to be paid \$6,000 compensation. Not all the bar owners are happy with this amount of compensation sine many have business' that actually make money and they live on the premises and they will now have to fund 2 years of living expenses out of that sum. As anyone who has looked for accommodation in Sinoukville recently knows, places are hard to find and rents are skyrocketing. Many are moving to Kampot and have bought into a subdivision which apparently is owned mostly by Sinoukville refugees.

The popular Quiz that is run at Banana Joes at Pub Street on a Thursday will likely move to the Glory Hole at the Sinoukville Square, this is the second time that that particular Quiz has been Chineseed and it may well be Chineseed again if the rumours that the Square has been sold are true. No one, especially the bar owners know what is going on as they hear it has definitely gone by one reliable source and hear that is has not been sold by another source. One very popular food business there is back on the market with business brokers for more than twice what the owner was asking on facebook last year and the advertisement says it will have a new lease from October 2018, good luck with that one.

Recently one Aussie expat on a trike beeped at a Chinese man who was walking in the middle of the road and apparently also said a few choice words. The offended man tracked the Aussie down to a bar in the Square and had an argument. It did not end well and the Chinese man came back with 15 friends, one armed with an iron bar. They confronted the Aussie and started to rough him up, until another drinker and the bar manager got a few punches in, when they offending gang ran away. The police were called and quickly apprehended two of them. There have been a few other group/gang fight incidents in town between the Chinese and the locals as well.

Utopia was sold to the Chinese at the end of last month and the shops fronting beach road were quickly demolished and a blue fence was erected. Rumour is that the entire block is in the sights on one large Chinese corporation and that they already have control of most of it including GBT. It is further rumoured that it was a donation from this entity, who wants to protect their views, to a high placed government official that caused the green fence around the Royal group land on Ochheateal Beach to be torn down at the orders of the Prime Minister who declared that no high building would be built there and that the business owners would be invited back to rebuild there now non existent businesses. So far only the fence removal has occurred. In related news the business' between Beach Road Hotel and Utopia, all sub leased from Beach Road Hotel, including Top Cat Cinema and Ana Travel, have been told that they will be able to stay past

the impending 1 May handover of Beach Road to the Chinese entity. No news (as usual) as to how long they will get or what the new rents will be

Meanwhile with no one to care for that part of Ochheateal beach it is littered with significant amounts of rubbish and has no one using that part of the beach. This is just as well as the large septic holding tank at the end of Serendipity Beach road at the pier overflowed recently. It is still leaking foul black untreated waste water into the sea water. This is not far from the new Vogue hotel and casino which has opened at the base of the road. It has no parking and they owners of this casino are apparently paying a pretty penny to use surrounding roads as parking.

As well as the Vogue, another casino has opened at the former Cambodiana Resort, next to Pub Street. In a sign of the times we note that that new casino only has the name in Khmer and Chinese script. The only English is the word casino. Apparently the reason Pub Street is being bought out is that it is to be used as carparking for this casino. These two new casinos bring the total number of Casinos in Sinoukville to 37 and many more are under construction. Meanwhile the one western run Casino, Lion

City recently closed down after not paying its workers. The doors were locked by officials. It caused the closure of a popular poker room. Apparently there are now 14 poker rooms in various casinos around town with the opening of River King poker room in the Bao Mai Casino. River King is a popular underground poker room in Phnom Penh that exists under high up protection, but is now legally operating in Sinoukville.

The swamp land just behind Pub Street and the new Casino is being rapidly filled in. It may very well cause some issues as most of the developments along that road run their entire waste water and sewage into this swamp. The filling of the swamp

is already causing flooding to the residential accommodation near the end of Pub Street that also backs this swamp. A few residents there that have just been Chineseed will probably not mind moving this time.

Lots of high rise buildings are under construction and many more are planned. Marriott group recently announced they are planning to open in Sinoukville in a yet to be built 58 level mixed use development which is planned to be places around the Hawaii Beach area near the bridge to snake island. Snake Island is rumoured to be the site of a significant development. So expect the construction and traffic chaos to continue for a while.

Behind Otres, the large development which has 11 cranes, is believed to be a Chinese retirement community. It looks huge and is occupying 27 hectares. However this is believed to be just stage one of a 200 hectare development. Already Otres village is becoming a dust covered pot holed truck clogged nightmare. Some hospitality business are being forced to close due to the constant billowing clouds of dust driving patrons away.



Septic tank at the boat pier overflowing AGAIN!