



# Backpacker.

## South East Asia

EVENTS +  
PARTY HOTSPOTS  
DIRTY HABITS!

FALLING IN  
LOVE ON  
THE ROAD



DESTINATION SPOTLIGHT: CAMBODIA / LAOS / SUMATRA / UZBEKISTAN

[www.southeastasiabackpacker.com](http://www.southeastasiabackpacker.com)



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# Asian Cityscapes



Singapore, Marina Sands taken from the Hippo Ferry



Bangkok, Asok: Business District from 42nd Floor Skyscraper



Threading your way through the crowded chaos of Asia's largest cities can be an overwhelming experience, no matter how many times you've been there before. It charges through your senses, all of it: the mouth-watering aroma of chicken pad thai rising from one stall mixed with the fried banana from another, your moist skin in the humid air, music blaring and intermingling with the revving of mopeds, shouts of "taxi? You want taxi?!" - and the people. Always lots and lots of people.

Far above all of this, however - and sometimes as high as the 500th floor - is where I like to escape. It's maybe not a typical backpacker thing to do, but hanging out on the top of skyscrapers watching the sunset is not much different from doing it at the beach. That emotional feeling you get? It's just the same. Asian cities may still conjure up more images of tuk-tuks and hawker stalls than the panoramic views

HCMC: View to Ben Tanh Market from Bitexo Tower 56th Floor



Singapore: East Coast Business District



you get from its tower buildings, but some - the megacities, I call them - are quickly becoming so much more modern, more urban, more economically developed. They're growing in height now just as much as in space. I say I venture skyward to escape the city, but of course this is impossible – you are always a part of it. In fact, my personal experience is that there's even more limited space up here than there is on the ground – but of course, that doesn't bother me. I'm always transfixed!

I took these photographs in Vietnam, Singapore and Bangkok during a month-long trip at the tail-end of 2011. I started off in Ho Chi Minh City, travelled through the Mekong Delta to Cambodia, then flew to Bangkok to head for the Similian Islands via Khao Lak for a short diving break. After that, I took a plane ride from Phuket to stay in Singapore for 28 hours, before touching back down again in Bangkok for my last week. Through the lens of my camera, I looked out onto neon metropolises from the top of the Centec and Bitexo Tower in Ho Chi Minh City, the Flyer in Singapore, and the Vertigo Skybar in Bangkok, to name just four.

Thanks to the organisation of some local photographers I got in touch with before my trip, as well as the cooperation of the buildings' owners, I also managed to gain access to places that require special permission first, such as the 56th floor rooftop in Bangkok just as the sun was setting - straight into the luminescent skyline. That's still one of my favourite memories, along with hanging out at District Two in HCMC to do the shots from the other side of the river. Perfect spot with good people and amazing colours!

If colours are what you're after, then of course nighttime is best. The experience of shooting cities in the day compared to doing it after dark is something completely different. If you use your camera with a long exposure, you'll get to capture things the eye cannot catch in detail.

Cities change their scape at night. Concrete walls turn coloured by traffic; and the traffic itself looks like endless light that leads you through streets like blood vessels. When the sounds of them reach you, they are quieter, distorted, more like a pulse. You know what I call it? I call it the 'cityscape' sound.

And the view and the feeling you get when you're up there looking down at it all...well. It's just the bomb.

*Timo would like to extend special thanks to Hang, Chuoi, Ha and Thu; Kevin, Sharon and Eric; Roy, Suweena and Naam.*

#### **ABOUT THE PHOTOGRAPHER:**



*Timo Klein was born in 1980. His love for photography and his interest in communication is one of the major floating factors for his expression and his inspiration for photography. He believes that architecture is a unique way to communicate with people and the environment around us.*

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*Bangkok, Asok: Business District from 42nd Floor Skyscraper*



*Bangkok, Lumpini Park from Banyan Tree Vertigo Sky Bar*



*HCMC, view to Saigon Trade Center and Saigon Pearl at the back, from Centec Building, 23rd floor*

