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Cambodian Restaurant Week returns to Long Beach with traditional, modern flavors

Long Beach's Cambodian restaurants will offer specials from May 18-25.



A man waves a Cambodian flag atop a truck riding in the 16th annual Cambodia Town Parade and Culture Festival on Sunday, Apr. 7, 2024, in Long Beach. (Photo by Howard Freshman, Contributing Photographer)



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UPDATED: May 15, 2025 at 10:11 AM PDT

Long Beach's Cambodian food scene will be under the spotlight this coming week with the return of Cambodian Restaurant Week.

More than a dozen restaurants are participating in the third annual event that's [meant to highlight](#) traditional Cambodian cuisine as well as creative mash-ups of dishes that may be surprising to some.

The event takes place May 18-25 at various locations, including [restaurants](#) in the city's bustling Cambodia Town, a mile-long stretch of street along Anaheim Street roughly between Atlantic and Junipero avenues.

Diners can expect traditional dishes at different price points from places like [Sophy's Cambodian Food & Music](#), a popular spot with a menu that includes dishes like the beef tuk prahok, featuring a heap of thinly sliced rare meat served with a fish sauce for dipping, and the somlaw machu kreoung. This seafood soup includes mussels, lemongrass and chunks of pineapple.

Another traditional restaurant on the list is Phnom Penh Noodle Shack, which is known for the house specialty, the Phnom Penh noodles. It's a typical breakfast meal made with shrimp, pork meat and other meaty parts.

But one of the goals of Cambodian Restaurant Week [is also about celebrating](#) the future of Cambodian food with innovative chefs like Hawk Tea, the owner of Shlap Muan, which means chicken wings in Cambodian. So yes he focuses on chicken wings made with Cambodian-fusion flavors.

"I've always thought that we needed more representation in the Cambodian community when it comes to food and we always represent Cambodian wings and we're the first ones to do it," he said.

For Restaurant Week Tea will be creating a lemongrass dipping sauce to go along with his wings.

"It's going to be a little bit sweet, a little sour, a little salty, a little bit creamy," he said.

Another modern Cambodian fusion restaurant taking part in the event is the Long Beach pop-up Lemongrass Khmer Grill, which makes smash burgers with a Cambodian twist.

Lemongrass owner Rasmey Kom will be serving his burgers, which he makes using a paste that combines lemongrass with other Cambodian ingredients.



"I've taken that paste and created a smash burger out of it. It's very herby, you can taste the freshness and a little tanginess," Kom said.

"I don't know how to cook traditional cultural Cambodian food as well as my family does but I understand the flavors. So I wanted to introduce it to people and offer it inside a burger," he said.

"I feel like Cambodian Restaurant Week is a platform that enables me to show people who I am along with the flavors that I grew up with in our culture," Kom added.

For more information go to cambodianrestaurantweeklb.com

Originally Published: May 14, 2025 at 9:30 AM PDT

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