

5 Days Down the Mekong

Tour Code: HLV05

The Mekong River is a sleepy, undeveloped river waiting to be explored. It is Southeast Asia's longest river and is perfect for leaving your busy life behind to immerse yourself in the beautiful and exotic riverscape. On this mythical journey you will hear many legends about the river, which is hollowed out of massive limestone cliffs along both sides of its river. We make a stop at Pakou to admire the fascinating gilded Buddha cave on the bank of the Mekong River.

Day1. Chiang Rai – Houeixai – Pakbeng

This morning you will have an early morning transfer from Chiang Rai to Chiang Khong, the exit point from Thailand on the banks of the Mekong River. After passing through immigration, you will cross the river to Houeixai in Laos where your guide will be waiting for you at the immigration point.

After completing immigration formalities, you board a traditional slow boat for the trip down the Mekong River. The scenery along this part of the Mekong is arguably at its most beautiful. As your journey downriver you will stop at some Hmong, Yao and Khmu ethnic minority villages and have the opportunity to observe their traditional lifestyle.

Upon arrival in Pakbeng, we visit local market where you can hear the banter colorful hill tribe traders exchanges their goods. Overnight in Pakbeng (B)

Day2. Pakbeng – Pak Ou Cave – Luang Prabang

This morning we continue downstream pass areas of un-spoilt forest with little villages along the riverbanks and perhaps the odd elephant or two with his mahout. You will visit a fishing village and a rice winemaking village and perhaps even taste some of the infamous beverage known locally as Lao Lao.

We will pull over for a visit to **Pak-Ou Caves**, an ancient pilgrimage site and containing thousands of gold lacquered Buddha images left there over hundreds of years.

Arriving in Luang Prabang around sunset we will transfer to your hotel. Your evening is free to explore the town or relax at your hotel. Overnight in Luang Prabang (B)

Day3. Luang Prabang – City Tours– Khouangsi Waterfall

This morning you have the option and opportunity to rise early and participate in the daily morning ritual of **Alms Giving**, you will experience saffron-clad monks collecting offerings or 'Alms' from faithful local residents. This tradition is unique to Laos, being the only Buddhist nation still preserving the daily procession.

After breakfast we will head out to see the city's oldest temples, the magnificent **Wat Xiengthong** with its roof sweeping low to the ground representing classical Lao architecture, the impressive stupa of **Wat Visoun** and the shrine of **Wat Aham**.

From here we drive to **Khouangsi Waterfall** stopping along the way to visit the morning **Phousi Market**, this where all locals of Luang Prabang come to do their daily shopping. You will see a variety of local foodstuffs and products including dried buffalo skin, local tea and saltpeter among the chickens, fish, vegetables and fruit, everything needed for daily life in Laos.

On arrival at the **Khouangsi Waterfall** you will have the opportunity to cool off with a refreshing swim in the topaz pools below the falls, walk along the forest trails and visit the Bear Sanctuary.

Returning to town late afternoon we climb to the top of **Mount Phousi** to explore the sacred gilded stupa and to enjoy the panoramic view of the city and the sun setting over the Mekong River.

Descending the mountain you will find yourself in the midst of the famous Luang Prabang **Night Market**, where you can find a unique selection of handmade textiles and handicrafts locally made by both ethnic Lao and hilltribe people surrounding Luang Prabang.

Your evening is free to explore the **Night Market** and sample some local cuisine at one of the many restaurants the town has to offer. Overnight in Luang Prabang (B)

Day4. Luang Prabang – Vientiane (Flight)

This morning we visit the **Arts and Ethnology Centre** to learn about Laos' many ethnic cultures. You can enjoy a coffee at the centre's café if you chose before we transfer to the airport for your flight to Vientiane.

On arrival you will be met and transferred to your centrally located hotel. You are seeing the major temples of Vientiane including the oldest, **Wat Sisaket**, with its thousands of miniature Buddha statues, and the former royal temple of **Wat Prakeo**, which housed the famous Emerald Buddha Image. We also visit the national icon of Laos, **That Luang Stupa**, stopping along the way to take some pictures of the imposing **Patuxay Monument**, which is Vientiane's own Arc de Triumph, from there you visit **COPE Center**. The COPE was created in response to the need to provide **UXO** survivors with the care and support they required, namely by way of orthotic and prosthetic devices. This museum was set after in 1997 to help covering the victim during Indochina war.

Heading for the waterfront your evening is free to enjoy a few drinks watching the sunset over the Mekong River, explore the **Night Market** and take in some of the city's nightlife. Overnight in Vientiane (B)

Day5. Vientiane – Departure

You are free this morning until transfer to the airport for your departure flight.

Prices below are quoted in USD per person, valid till September 2020									
Group of:	2-2	3-4	5-8	9-12	13-16	17-20	21-24	25-29	Single suppl.
3-Star Hotel	1105	856	673	534	502	469	460	443	246
4-Star Hotel	1225	977	794	655	623	590	580	564	367
5-Star Hotel	1413	1166	983	844	811	778	769	753	556
Alms Giving	Additional charge US\$30.00/person								

Cities	3-Star Hotel	4-Star Hotel	5-Star Hotel
Pakbeng	Phetsokxai Standard	Sanctuary Pakbeng Superior	Sanctuary Pakbeng Deluxe
Luang Prabang	Sada Hotel Deluxe	Vangthong Hotel Deluxe	Luang Prabang View Superior
Vientiane	Season Riverside Standard	Lao Plaza Regular	Settha Palace Deluxe

Included in above prices:

- Accommodation in twin shared basis
- Private, Airconditioned Transport
- Boat trips as stated in the itinerary
- English speaking guide
- Admission fees to sites stated in the itinerary
- Meals: daily breakfast at hotel
- Gov't taxes and service charges
- Luggage handling
- Drinking water

Exclusive of above prices:

- Visas and Immigration fees on arrival
- Domestic air ticket
- Int'l air tickets to/from Laos
- Travel and/or Medical Insurance
- Lunch or dinner unless stated in the itinerary
- Single room accommodation (quoted separately)
- Child or adult in triple share accommodation
- Foreign language guides other than English
- Peak Season or Special Events Surcharges
- Tip, drinks and other personal expenses

Additional Remarks:

- Itinerary is subject to change depending on flight availability, road and/or weather conditions

and room availability.

- Group of 10 persons and above will use separate vehicle in Luang Prabang due to UNESCO restrictions on large coaches entering downtown Luang Prabang.
 - Hotels listed above may not meet international star rating standards, especially in the remote areas where accommodation options are limited.
 - Room rates quoted above do not include compulsory fees for special events, peak season such as Christmas and New Year or Gala Dinners etc.
 - Prices are subject to change at any time as a result of VAT, Fuel Excise or other tax increases and USD currency fluctuations.
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(LHV - 11/12/2019)