

7 Days Laos' Impressive

Tour Code: VVH07/VATL160601433

The traditions of Luang Prabang are unique throughout Asia, the daily morning processions of the monks receiving alms from the population is an extraordinary experience. Lao culture is hugely indebted to Theravada Buddhism and despite global modernization Buddhist thinking still profoundly influences much of Lao culture. Learning about the beautiful culture and history is the most enriching aspect of your trip as we visit many different ethnic minority villages, explore enchanting caves, temples and many other places of interest.

Day1. Arrival – Vientiane

On arrival at Wattay International Airport you will be met and transferred to your centrally located hotel. Vientiane is a charming and fascinating capital, with an interesting mix of Lao, Thai, Chinese, Vietnamese, French, and American influences.

After check in and time to freshen up we head out on our afternoon city tour. 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 Phakeo**, 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)

Day2. Vientiane – Vang Vieng (Road)

After an early breakfast we depart the capital for our journey northbound. Our drive will take approximately 4 hours passing through spectacular countryside before climbing into the mountains. There will be photo opportunities along the way and a stop at a colourful local market where various hill tribes come to trade goods and buy provisions.

We will arrive in the midst of the stunningly beautiful scenery of Vang Vieng in time for lunch at the **Organic Farm** where you can eat traditional Lao food and sample some roasted goat cheese and mulberry wine.

After lunch we will visit the famous **Than Jang Cave**, once used by local people as a hideout from Chinese invaders. The rest of the afternoon is free to explore Vang Vieng by foot or bicycle, take a boat ride up river or just relax by the pool at your hotel. Overnight in Vang Vieng (B)

Day3. Vang Vieng - Lung Prabang (Road)

This morning we drive further into the mountains passing spectacular scenery and numerous hill tribe villages. We will lunch at an altitude of approximately 1,300 meters above sea level surrounded by the endless mountain peaks of this remote region.

After lunch we continue on along Route 13 stopping for photo opportunities and arriving in Luang Prabang late afternoon.

After check in at our hotel 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 market and sample some traditional Lao cuisine at one of the many restaurants the town has to offer. Overnight in Luang Prabang (B)

Day4. Luang Prabang – 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 back at your hotel 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.

Arriving back in Luang Prabang mid afternoon you are free to treat yourself to a spa treatment or massage, relax at the hotel or head to the **Night Market** to do some shopping. Overnight in Luang Prabang (B)

Day5. Luang Prabang – Pak Ou Cave – Nong Khiaw (River+Road)

Today, we enjoy a short, guided tour of the city's oldest temples, **Wat Sene** and the magnificent **Wat Xieng Thong** where you can see the impressive "tree of life" mosaic pattern set in coloured glass. Its exterior architecture is remarkable with its roofs sweeping low to the ground, representing classical Lao architecture.

We then embark on a cruise upstream on the Mekong River giving us stunning views of the tranquil countryside. Along the way we visit the mysterious **Pak Ou Caves**, these caves are an ancient pilgrimage site and contain thousands of gold lacquered Buddha images left there over hundreds of years.

Heading up the Nam Ou River we continue our journey to Nong Khiaw visiting the **Thai Lue** village **Ban Pak Jak** and the weaving villages of Ban Nongkham and **Ban Muang Souen** before arriving in Nong Khiaw by the late afternoon.

Nong Khiaw is a remote village perched on narrow banks of the Nam Ou, the surrounding mountainous scenery is awe inspiring.

Your evening is free to explore the town and enjoy a few drinks watching the sunset over the mountains. Overnight in Nong Khiaw (B)

Day6. Nong Khiaw – Oudomxay – Pakbeng (Road)

This morning we swap the river for road transport driving towards Oudomxay, the most mountainous area in Laos. The road conditions are can be rough depending on the season, so it may be a bumpy journey. However many villages dot the hillsides and the undulating terrain makes this an interesting journey.

Oudomxay Province is home to a mixture of 23 ethnic minority groups. We make a few rest stops along the way, giving you the opportunity to see the ethnic minority groups such as Hmong, Khmu, Black Thai and Lue. The hill tribe people are unfailingly friendly, welcoming you with waving hands and smiling faces.

Passing through Oudomxay city we continue to Pakbeng on the banks of the Mekong River arriving late afternoon we check in to our hotel and your evening is free to explore or relax at the hotel. Overnight in Pakbeng (B)

Day7. Pakbeng – Houeixai (Boat)

This morning we board our traditional slow boat for the journey upstream to Houeixai on the Thai border. This portion of the Mekong River is narrow but both banks of the river are bordered with beautiful mountain ranges and lush forests. Along the way, we observe river life and visit an ethnic Hmong village at Ban Houay Lampen.

On arrival at Houeixai we board a small local boat crossing the Mekong River to Chiang Khong in Thailand where the tour finishes (B)

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	1786	1374	1100	954	830	797	749	717	362
4-Star Hotel	1938	1525	1252	1106	981	949	901	869	513
5-Star Hotel	2187	1784	1501	1355	1229	1200	1149	1117	761
Alms Giving	Additional charge US\$30.00/person								

Cities	3-Star Hotel	4-Star Hotel	5-Star Hotel
Vientiane	Season Riverside Standard	Lao Plaza Regular	Settha Palace Deluxe
Vang Vieng	Vieng Tara Bungalow Riverview	Silver Nagas Deluxe	Riverside Boutique Deluxe
Luang Prabang	Sada Hotel Deluxe	Vangthong Hotel Deluxe	Luang Prabang View Superior
Nong Khiaw	Pha Xang Resort Standard	Nong Khiaw Riverside Standard	Nong Khiaw Riverside Standard
Pakbeng	Phetsokxai Standard	Sanctuary Pakbeng Superior	Sanctuary Pakbeng 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 airticket
- 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)