



"Your expert ground handler in Laos"

Centre and South (13days/12nights) Vientiane-Kong Lor-Thakek-Pakse-Tadlo-Xe Pian-4000 Islands-Don Daeng

Day1. Arrival - Vientiane

Upon arrival you will be met and transferred to your hotel. You have the rest of the day to relax. Overnight in Vientiane.

Meals: _/_/_

Day2. Vientiane – full day city tour

An optional early start enables you to visit the fascinating local market of **Thongkhankham** which is where the locals shop and a wide variety of weird and wonderful foods are on offer. We continue to explore Vientiane capital by visiting the major sights of the capital; including the oldest **Wat Sisaket** with thousands of miniature Buddha statues and the former royal temple of **Wat Prakeo**, which previously housed the famous Emerald Buddha Image. Enroute to Lao's national precious heritage, the famous and sacred structure of **That Luang Stupa**, you will have the opportunity to take some pictures of the imposing **Patuxay** Monument, which is well known as Vientiane's own Arc de Triumph. **Wat Si Muang**, site of the lak meuang (pillar-stone) of Vientiane, Si Muang temple is home to the guardian spirit of the statues. The final visit of the morning will be the excellent **COPE** exhibition centre, highlighting a much overlooked aspect of Laos and a major problem many of the local people face on a day to day basis in the form of unexploded ordnance as a result of heavy bombing campaigns during the Vietnam War era. An optional lunch can be taken at the excellent Mak Phet Restaurant, which helps to train disadvantaged youth for a career in the hospitality industry. This afternoon we visit the quirky yet impressive **Buddha Park**, an enchanting collection of Buddhist and Hindu sculptures on the Mekong Riverside meadow. They were created by a mysterious monk spreading his philosophy on life and revealing his ideas about the universe. Upon returning to Vientiane we have the optional of stopping at the **Lao Disabled Womens Centre**, which provides valuable training and schooling for disabled women in Laos. A spectacular view of the Mekong River at sunset is a perfect way to finish the day.

Overnight in Vientiane.

Meals: Breakfast/_/_

Day3. Vientiane – Hin Boun (Road)

You will be picked up this morning from your hotel and transferred south along route 13 to the central Lao province of Khammoune. En route we stop at **Prabaht Ponsan**, a stupa dating back to the 15th Century. It is also home to the Buddha's footprint, discovered in 1933, and now an important religious site in Laos. Following lunch we make a stop at the interesting **Ban Ton Na Mae Hmong Market**, then continue onwards into Khammoune province and into the mountainous area, where a stop at a **view point near Khoun Kham** offers a breathtaking view over the surrounding area. Our last stop of the day is **Ban Thabuk**, the 'bomb boat village' where they use old bomb casings from the Vietnam War as boats. We eventually reach Hin Boun area by mid afternoon, where you have the rest of the day at leisure. *(The road journey today takes approximately 5-6hours including stops on the way)*

Overnight in Hin Boun Khammouane.

Meals: Breakfast/_/_

Day4. Hin Boun – Kong Lor – Thakek

After breakfast your lodge, we drive to Kong Lor village and board a small local boat into the famous **Kong Lor Cave**. We navigate through the cave, which is over 7km long and includes a spectacular cavern over 100m high, as well as a breathtaking stalagmite gallery which you can explore on foot. On the other side of the cave, we take a short walk past some tobacco drying huts to **Ban Pon Ngam**, a remote village, where you can enjoy your picnic lunch. Following lunch, we return through the cave by boat, and transfer directly by car to Thakek, arriving there by late afternoon, in time for a stroll along the riverfront to enjoy a sunset over the Mekong. *(The road journey today takes approximately 3-4hours including stops on the way)*

Overnight in Thakek.

Meals: Breakfast/Lunch/_



Kong Lor Cave and Hin Boun River scenery

Day5. Thakek – Buddha Cave and trekking

We depart Thakek by **Tuk-tuk**, and follow the old French railway track that was destined for Vietnam but was never finished. Continuing through impressive scenery, you arrive in the village of Ban Nakhang Xang and meet the village guides who will escort you on your trek. Passing through secondary forest your guide will point out forest products that form an important part of local people's food resources. Going through a cave, you enter a striking valley with towering cliffs and forest. The trail follows the shoreline of **Nong Thao Lake** where you can see local fishermen at work. On arrival at Tham Nong Paseum cave more adventurous swimmers can explore the cave. The cave is 400 metres long and contains dramatic stalactites and stalagmites. Back in daylight, the trip continues onto Khammouane's famous Buddha cave for a traditional Lao lunch of Mekong fish, sticky rice and spicy papaya salad. After lunch we visit **Tham Pa Fa or Buddha cave**, which was rediscovered in April 2004. The cave contains 229 bronze Buddhas that are said to be over 300 years old! Time permitting you will also be able to travel by local canoe into the water cave below. Your guide will now escort you back to the village following a different route through the forest, and you will return to Thakek in the late afternoon.

Overnight in Thakek.

Meals: Breakfast/Lunch/_

Note: Moderate trekking, a good standard of fitness is required. During rainy season (May-September) the programme may be changed without prior warning to accommodate the local conditions.

Day6. Thakek – Pakse (Road)

This morning we leave Thakek on south road to Pakse, on the way we stop to visit Savannakhet we have time to admire the old **French Quarter** of Savannakhet as well as the sacred **That Inhang** stupa, before heading out of the town to visit **Soundra Salt Factory**, to learn about the local working conditions. We then continue by road to Pakse, stopping to visit **Don Khor**, a village specializing in Buddha carvings for temples. We arrive in Pakse by early evening. *(The road journey today takes approximately 5-6hours including stops on the way)*

Overnight in Pakse

Meals: Breakfast/_/_

Day7. Pakse – Bolaven Tadlo

Today you will be taken by road east into the **Bolaven Plateau**. The Bolaven Plateau is known for its cooler temperature being located high above the Mekong Valley. Our first stop is to visit Ban Lak Sipkao (Kilometre 19), a **Laven village** specializing in knife-making. We then stop tea plantation, followed by a stop at **Tad Fan** Waterfall, a picturesque twin chute waterfall. We then make a stop at a coffee plantation, en route to Tha Teng Market, a colourful ethnic minority food market. Next we explore another interesting minority village, **Ban Bong Neua**, an Alak village, that boasts a sacrificial alter. We arrive at the beautiful Tadlo Waterfall in the afternoon, where you have the rest of the day at leisure. You also have the option of a short elephant ride (not included) to take in the beautiful scenery.

Overnight in TadLo Saravan.

Meals: Breakfast/_/_

Day8. Tadlo – King fisher

After an early breakfast, we continue our tour of the Bolevan Plateau and visit head **Pha Suam** waterfall and to explore the ethnic minority **villages of Lao Teung**. We continue to travel by road to Xe Pian National Park or Kingfisher Ecolodge where you have the rest of the afternoon at leisure.

Overnight at Kingfisher Eco Lodge.

Meals: Breakfast/_/_

Day9. Kingfisher – Elephant Safari

Today you experience a full day **Adventure Safari** in the jungle by elephant, like the first foreign explorers of this country often did during their voyages.

You will start in the morning from the village of Khat Ngong and, through paddy fields and wetlands, you will be led inside the jungle that surrounds the area.

From the top of your elephant you will have a particular point of view of the dry dipterocarp forest that characterize Xe Pian protected area, you will experience the jungle environment while cicadas and birds sounds will accompany you along the way. After two to three hours of ride (depending on trail and weather conditions you will step down from your elephant and, after let them be free to feed in the forest, our guide and mahouts will serve you a delicious picnic lunch. After resting and watching the elephants roaming around in search for food, you will continue your jungle safari on the way back to the village; arrival is expected at around 16:00.

Overnight at Kingfisher Eco Lodge.

Meals: Breakfast/Lunch/_

Day10. Kingfisher – Khone Island - Khong Island

After breakfast, we drive south to Ban Hatsaikhone, where we board a local private boat for a boat tour of the 4000 Islands. We reach the picturesque island of **Don Khone** by lunchtime, and in the afternoon explore the island by Tuk-tuk or bicycle admiring some of the old French Colonial buildings and the beautiful Lphi Waterfall. We then return to our boat and head back to the mainland, and drive to Don Khong, arriving there by late afternoon.

Overnight on Khong Island.

Meals: Breakfast/_/_



Khong Island and Wat Phou

Day11. Khong Island – Khone Phapeng – Wat Phou- Don Daeng Island

This morning we drive to the famous waterfall of **Khone Phapeng** - the largest waterfall in South East Asia, also known as the 'Niagara of the east'. We then head north by road and across the

Mekong by ferry to visit the fascinating pre-Angkorian ruins of **Wat Phu**, one of Southeast Asia's most dramatically situated temples. To end the day, we travel by boat to the island of Don Daeng where you will overnight.

Overnight on Done Daeng Island.

Meals: Breakfast/_/_

Day12. Don Daeng Island – free day

You have a free day at leisure today, to relax by the pool or hire bicycles to explore the island and its enchanting little villages.

Overnight on Done Daeng Island.

Meals: Breakfast/_/_

Day13. Don Daeng Island - Pakse – Departure

After breakfast, you will take a long-tail boat to the mainland and transfer on road to Pakse and onto the airport for your departure.

(Boat from Done Daeng Island to the mainland of Ban Muang approximately 25minutes and drive to Pakse airport approximately 1hour)

Meals: Breakfast/_/_

END OF SERVICES

Hotels quoted in above package

Location	Boutique
Vientiane	Green Park Boutique (Deluxe Room)
Hin Boun Khammouane	Sala Hin Boun (Riverview residence)
Thakek	Inthira Hotel (Deluxe Room)
Pakse	Pakse Hotel (Deluxe Room)
Tadlo Saravan	Tadlo Lodge (Standard Bungalow)
Xe Pian	Kingfisher Eco Lodge (Comfort Bungalow)
Khong Island	Senesothxeuen Hotel (Superior Room)
Don Daeng	La Folie Lodge (Bungalow)

**** Prices please contact directly sales@viengchampatour.com ****