



"Your expert ground handler in Laos"

## **Down the Mekong in depth (10days/9nights) Chiang Rai-Pakbeng-Luang Prabang- Vientiane-Pakse-4000 Islands**

*Explore the mighty Mekong River in depth tracing its route from northern Laos all the way down to the 4000 Islands in the south, including two luxurious cruises.*

### **Day1. Arrival – Chiang Rai**

Upon arrival you will be transferred to your hotel where you have the rest of the day at leisure. Overnight in Chiang Rai

Meals: \_/\_/\_

### **Day2. Chiang Rai – Chiang Khong - Huay Xai – Pakbeng (Luang Say Cruise)**

We transfer early this morning to the border town of Huay Xay (*the road journey takes approximately 2hours*).

*Note; it is recommended for arriving at Huay Xai border early around 8.00am-9.30am.*

Arrive in Huay Xai pier, you will meet with the Luang Say representative. Following your completion of border formalities and travel to Luang Say Cruise, **The Luang Say Cruise** boat leaves Huay Xai pier at 09:00 hrs for a cruise down the Mekong to Pakbeng. En route one stop is made to observe rural life along the Mekong and visit minority ethnic groups; then, a buffet lunch on board. Arrive Pakbeng before sunset and check-in at LuangSay Lodge. You can then enjoy dinner on the terrace overlooking the Mekong River.

Overnight in Pakbeng

Meals: Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner

*Note: Luang Say cruise downstream programme departs every Monday, Thursday and Friday. Every Sunday, the cruise departs with Pak Ou I (by a white steel boat). For Green season (May-September) the cruise departs every Monday and Friday.*

*\*No operation in June*

*Due to level of River decrease in dry season and the steps to the lodge are quite steep, this is advisable all boat passengers to leave the large suitcases in the storage room on the boat overnight in Pakbeng and only take a small daypack with a change of clothes to the Lodge.*

### **Day3. Pakbeng – Pak Ou Caves – Luang Prabang (Luang Say Cruise)**

Full breakfast at lodge, (Optional: walk to Pakbeng market, where people from the surrounding minority villages exchange their goods). At 08:30 board the boat for the second leg of the cruise. A short stop to discover a Hmong village before having a buffet lunch on board. Continue to Pak-Ou village at the mouth of the Nam Ou River, and then visit **Pak Ou Caves** "Cave of a thousand Buddha's". On the way to Luang Prabang a brief stop is made to observe the traditional process of manufacturing local rice alcohol. Arrive at Luang Prabang before sunset.

Overnight in Luang Prabang.

Meals: Breakfast/Lunch/\_

### **Day4. Luang Prabang – half day city tour**

An optional early start gives you the fantastic opportunity to participate in the daily morning ritual of saffron-clad monks **collecting offerings of Alms** from the faithful residents. This procession is very unique in Laos, being the only Buddhist nation still preserving the tradition. Afterwards, we have the option of visiting the local morning market, before returning to the hotel for breakfast.

After breakfast we visit the **Royal Palace Museum** which hosts a range of interesting artifacts and a guided audio tour (*closed on Tuesday*). We then begin our temple tour taking in some of the city's most beautiful, including the nearby **Wat Mai**, next the magnificent **Wat Xiengthong**, with its roofs sweeping low to the ground, representing the classical Luang Prabang style, as well as **Wat Visoun**, known as 'The Water Melon Stupa' due to its shape. Then we visit the excellent **Arts and Ethnology Centre** which gives us a further insight into the ethnic mix and culture of Laos (*closed on Monday*).

Overnight in Luang Prabang.

Meals: Breakfast/\_/\_

#### **Day5. Luang Prabang – Hmong Experience and Kuang Si Waterfall**

After breakfast, we visit the local **Phosi Market**, this is the place where all the locals shop and your guide will show you the diverse offerings on display. We also stop at **Ock Pop Tock**, a silk weaving centre. Here you will be given a guided tour and the silk weaving process will be explained. Next we drive to **Ban Thinkeo**, a Hmong village and start trekking with the villagers. Your guide will explain to you the common use of the plants for the Hmong people. You will go to the garden and cut some vegetables and herbs with the local people. We then continue to **Kuang Si Waterfall**, where you will enjoy a picnic lunch overlooking the beautiful multi-tiered falls. You also have the opportunity to cool off in the turquoise blue pools. Afterwards you return to Luang Prabang in time to catch the sun setting over the Mekong.

Late this afternoon stretching your legs climb **Mount Phousi**, which offers a spectacular sunset and a panoramic view over Luang Prabang and the Mekong River. Afterwards, strolling through the night market (open between 5pm-10pm) setting in downtown selling a large variety of local textiles and ethnic handicrafts.

Overnight in Luang Prabang.

Meals: Breakfast/Lunch/\_

*Note: during rainy season (May-September) the itinerary is subject to change due to the weather conditions, an alternative programme is available.*

#### **Day6. Luang Prabang – Vientiane - half day city tour (Flight)**

You will be transferred to the airport for your flight to Vientiane.

Upon arrival you will be checked into your hotel and following lunch we 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. You have the option to visit 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. A spectacular view of the Mekong River at sunset is a perfect way to finish the day.

Overnight in Vientiane.

Meals: Breakfast/\_/\_

#### **Day7. Vientiane – Pakse – Vat Phou Cruise (Flight)**

You will be transferred to the airport early this morning for the flight to Pakse.

Flight from Vientiane to Pakse with Lao airlines on QV512 departs at 06:30, arrives at 07:45.

*(Note: the flight schedules are subject to change without prior notice from the airlines)*

On arrival you will be met and transferred to the **Vat Phou Cruise**. After meeting at Sinouk Coffee House in the centre of Pakse at 9.30a.m. you will be transferred to a long-tail boat for a two and half hours journey to Champasak. You are welcomed on board with a drink and a set lunch menu is served. The highlight of the trip in the afternoon is to take some local transportation and visit Vat Phou ruins and museum; the majestic pre-Angkorian 10<sup>th</sup> century temple complex. You are transferred back to the boat to enjoy the tropical sunset on the deck. A set menu dinner is served on board and the boat docks for the night at Ban Muang.

Overnight on board Vat Phou Cruise.

Meals: Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner

*Note: Vat Phou Cruise downstream programme 3days/2nights and upstream programme (reverse) departs every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. For Green season (May-September) the cruise departs every Saturday for cruise down and every Tuesday for cruise up.  
\*No operation in June*

**Day 8: Vat Phou Cruise**

The boat leaves at 6a.m. and a continental breakfast is served on board from 7a.m. The first stop is at Huei Thamo village in order to visit some rural life and a mysterious hidden forest temple called 'Oum Muong'. After you are back on board, the boat starts to cruise southwards passing by the wilderness paradise of '4,000 Islands'. A set menu lunch is served on board. By late afternoon the second stop is at Ban Deua Tia where you can walk through this small Laotian village to observe a traditional way of life. A set menu dinner is served on board and the boat docks for a night at Ban Deua Tia.

Overnight on board Vat Phou Cruise.

*Meals: Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner*

**Day 9: Vat Phou Cruise – Pakse**

The boat leaves at 6a.m. and a continental breakfast is served on board from 7a.m. The boat stops at Ban Veuthong where you are transferred by a small boat to Khone Island. You will visit the old French railway and walk across a bridge which links Khone Island and Det Island. After that, you are transferred to the mainland by a small boat to Xieng Di fishing village for a buffet lunch at a local restaurant. A bus transfers you to Pha Pheng waterfall also known as 'The Niagara of The East' and we return to Pakse for "civilization", which is a two-hour journey by road, arriving in Pakse around 4p.m.

Overnight in Pakse.

*Meals: Breakfast/Lunch/\_*

**Day 10: Pakse – Departure**

After breakfast; you will be transferred to the airport for your departure.

*Meals: Breakfast/\_/\_*

**END OF SERVICES**

**Hotels quoted in above package**

<b>Location</b>	<b>3Star</b>	<b>4Star</b>	<b>5Star</b>
<b>Chiang Rai</b>	Wiang Inn (Superior Room)	The Legend Chiangrai Resort (Superior Studio Room)	The Legend Chiangrai Resort (Pool Villa)
<b>Pakbeng</b>	Luang Say Lodge (Bungalow)	Luang Say Lodge (Bungalow)	Luang Say Lodge (Bungalow)
<b>Luang Prabang</b>	Mekong River Side Hotel (Superior Room)	Villa Maly (Superior Room)	Satri House (Deluxe Room)
<b>Vientiane</b>	City Inn Vientiane (Deluxe Room)	Green Park Boutique (Deluxe Room)	Settha Palace (Deluxe Room)
<b>4000 Islands</b>	Vat Phou Cruise (Cabin)	Vat Phou Cruise (Cabin)	Vat Phou Cruise (Cabin)
<b>Pakse</b>	Pakse Hotel (Deluxe Room)	Champasak Grand Hotel (Premier Suite)	Champasak Grand Hotel (Premier Suite)

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