



"Your expert ground handler in Laos"

Grand Tour of Laos (15days/14nights) Chaing Rai- Pakbeng-Luang Prabang-Xiengkhuang-Vang Vieng- Vientiane-Pakse-Tadlo-Khong Island-Done Daeng

This is the big tour of Laos, demonstrating the huge variety of sights and activities the country has to offer, and showing you just how to spend two unforgettable weeks in this enchanting country. From a luxury Mekong Cruise, to Hmong villages, mysterious archaeological sites, ornate temples and stunning waterfalls this tour has it all!

Day1. Arrival – Chaing 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 Border – 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

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 – Xiengkhuang (Road)

We start early this morning, around 8am for the drive to Xiengkhuang, famous for the 'Plain of Jars'. The road follows a twisty mountain route, and we make our first stop at **Houi Hei**, which offers great views of the surrounding mountains. We then continue **Ban Kiu Maknao 2, a Khmu village** to explore, before arriving in **Phou Khoun** for lunch. We continue on the road into Xiengkhuang province, reaching our highest altitude of the day 1500m above sea level, just after Phou Khoun. We have time to make a stop at **Ban Son Boom, a Hmong village**. Our final stops of the day are a reminder that this region played a major part during the Vietnam War – as we visit **a hidden Buddha Cave**, that served as an army hospital during the war and our final stop of the day, We arrive at your hotel by early evening. (*The road journey today takes approximately 7-8 hours including stops on the way*)

Overnight in Xiengkhuang.

Meals: Breakfast/_/_

Day7. Xieng Khuang - Plain of Jars and Muang Khoun

You have the option to start early this morning, visiting the interesting Central Market. We will also visit the Mines Action Group or **MAG** office to learn about the work they do in clearing land mines and unexploded ordnance in the area. We then transfer out to the picturesque **Jar Site 2**, and begin our 1 hour trek along the ridge to the impressive **Jar Site 3**, consisting of over 150 jars located on top of a hill, offering great views over the surrounding countryside. Then driving out to the ancient town of **Muang Khoun**, the former provincial capital, where you can explore the ruins of a number of ancient pagodas in the Lanna style **That Fun stupa** and **Wat Phiawat**, a ruined temple containing a huge sitting Buddha. Return to Phonsavan on the way stop to visit **Jars site 1**, the largest site and biggest site left over more than 300 jars.

Overnight in Xiengkhuang.

Meals: Breakfast/_/_

Day8. Xiengkhuang – Vang Vieng (Road)

We travel by road to Vang Vieng, stopping Ban Nam chat for short coffee break. Then continue drive and make a stop at Phoukoun Phiengfa for Lunch, Following lunch we stop at Ban Hin Ngon, a picturesque Hmong village. We also have an optional stop at **Pha hom**, which boasts a local forest market, offering edible snakes, rats and assorted reptiles! Our final stop of the day is a short photo stop of the stunning limestone karst scenery at Phatang Mountain view point. We then arrive in Vang Vieng by late afternoon where you have the rest of the day at leisure. *(The road journey today takes approximately 7-8hours including stops on the way)*

Overnight in Vang Vieng.

Meals: Breakfast/_/_

Day9. Vang Vieng –Vientiane (Road)

This morning we visit the picturesque **Tham Jang** cave, that offers stunning views of over the Nam Song River and surrounding karst scenery. We then set out on the road towards Vientiane. En route we stop at **Tha Heua**, a small village that specializes in dried fish, which you will see hanging in front of the houses. We then continue to **Nam Ngum**, a picturesque lake created by damming the Nam Ngum River. Following lunch overlooking the lake, we stop over at **Ban Keun**, which is famous for its salt mine. Here you can learn about the daily working life of the local people. Just outside of Vientiane we make a final stop at the interesting **Don Makai Market**, an insect market, where, the adventurous can try some of the tasty snacks on offer! Return to Vientiane by early evening. *(The road journey today takes approximately 4-5hours including stops on the way)*

Overnight in Vientiane.

Meals: Breakfast/_/_

Day10. Vientiane - half day city tour

Your half day city tour, begin with 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.

Overnight in Vientiane.

Meals: Breakfast/_/_

Day11. Vientiane – Pakse – TadLo (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 QV301 departs at 08:35, arrives at 09:50.

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

Upon arrival you will be met and transferred 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 (Kilometre19), 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, **Kok Puong** Katu minority, that boasts a sacrificial alter. We arrive at the beautiful Tadlo Waterfall in the late 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 at TadLo.

Meals: Breakfast/_/_

Day12. Tadlo – Pakse – Wat Phou –Khong Island

After breakfast, we head out of the plateau, stopping first at the attractive Paxuam Waterfall. We then transfer to Champassak and onto Wat Phou, another World Heritage Site in Laos, which

became recognized by UNESCO in 2002. Wat Phou is the site of ruins which were once part of a temple built some time before Angkor Wat in Siem Reap. It contains some of the most Ancient Khmer architectures which date back to between the 7-11th centuries. In the late afternoon you will drive to Don Khong, an area of the 4000 islands which is the widest point of the Mekong River during the rainy season, although during the dry months the river recedes, leaving behind thousands of islands and islets. Arrive at Khong Island via ferry early evening.

Overnight on Khong Islands.

Meals: Breakfast/_/_

Day13. Khong Island – Khone Island – Don Daeng Island

Following breakfast, we enjoy a visit to the surrounding countryside, and embark on a long tail boat tour to Don Khone, where we disembark and have the option of exploring the island by Tuk-tuk or bicycle, which takes you to visit the remains of the French period and Lphi Waterfall or "the Corridor of the Devil". We return to the mainland at the fishing village of Ban Nakasang and drive further south to visit Khone Phapheng Waterfall. Khone Phapheng is considered the largest waterfall by volume in South East Asia; this is a really impressive site near the Lao-Cambodian border, set within an area which is teeming with wildlife, making this area one of the most breathtaking destinations in Laos. Then we drive back North and you will take the boat across the Mekong to the island of Don Daeng, where you have the rest of the day at leisure to relax, or explore this peaceful island.

Overnight on Don Daeng Island.

Meals: Breakfast/_/_

Day14. Don Daeng Island

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 Don Daeng Island.

Meals: Breakfast/_/_

Day15. 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 departing flight.

(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	3Star	4Star	5Star
Chiang Rai	Wiang Inn (Superior Room)	The Legend Chiangrai Resort (Superior Studio Room)	The Legend Chiangrai Resort (Pool Villa)
Pakbeng	Luang Say Lodge (Bungalow)	LLuang Say Lodge (Bungalow)	Luang Say Lodge (Bungalow)
Luang Prabang	Mekong River Side Hotel (Superior Room)	Villa Maly (Superior Room)	Satri House (Deluxe Room)
Xiengkhoung	Auberge Plain des Jarres (Standard Bungalow)	Auberge Plain des Jarres (Standard Bungalow)	Auberge Plain des Jarres (Standard Bungalow)
VangVieng	Thavonesouk Resort (Riverfront Suite)	Villa Namsong (Superior Room)	Villa Namsong (Superior Room)
Vientiane	City Inn Vientiane (Deluxe Room)	Green Park Boutique (Deluxe Room)	Settha Palace (Deluxe Room)
Tadlo Saravanh	Tadlo Lodge (Standard Bungalow)	Tadlo Lodge (Standard Bungalow)	Tadlo Lodge (Suite Bungalow)
4000 Islands	Senesothxuene Hotel	Senesothxuene Hotel	Senesothxuene Hotel

	(Superior Mekong View)	(Superior Mekong View)	(Suite Room)
Done Daeng Islands	La Folie Lodge (Bungalow)	La Folie Lodge (Bungalow)	La Folie Lodge (Bungalow)

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