



Grand Tour of Laos (15days/14nights)

Tour code: GTL15

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.

Day2. Huay Xai – Pakbeng (B,L,D)

We transfer early this morning to the border town of **Huay Xay**. The **Luang Say Cruise** boat leaves Huay Xay 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 Luang Say Lodge. You can then enjoy dinner on the terrace overlooking the Mekong River. Overnight in Pakbeng

Day3. Pakbeng – Pak Ou Caves – Luang Prabang (B,L)

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

Day4. Vientiane – Luang Prabang – half day city tour (B)

This morning we begin our walking tour taking in some of the cities most beautiful temples. Depending on the rest of your programme this may include the magnificent **Wat Xiengthong**, with its roofs sweeping low to the ground, representing the classical Luang Prabang style, as well as **Wat Mai** and **Wat Sene**, the oldest temple in Luang Prabang. We also stop by at Kinnaly Gallery, where your guide will show you the different ethnic minorities that live in Laos. We end the tour with a climb up **Mount Phousi**, which offers a spectacular panoramic view over Luang Prabang and the Mekong River. Overnight in Luang Prabang.

Day5. Luang Prabang – Hmong Experience and Kuang Si Waterfall (B,L)

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 Tok**, 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 Thinko**, 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. When you arrive at the village, learn to cook some local dishes in a traditional house. Lunch will be your collective efforts! Then, the villagers will show you a demonstration of Hmong Khene and local games. In the afternoon, drive to **Kuang Si** and relax at this magnificent multi tiered waterfall. We then return by road to Luang Prabang at the end of the day. Overnight in Luang Prabang.

Note: during rainy season the itinerary is subject to change due to the weather conditions, an alternative programme is available.

Day6. Luang Prabang – Xiengkhuang (B)

Today, we make the days drive through wonderful natural scenery to Xiengkhuang. The journey will give you plenty of opportunities for photos and visiting **hill tribe villages**. Upon arrival, we transfer out to visit **Site 1 of the Plain of Jars**, an impressive archaeological site where hundreds of large stone jars are scattered all over the plateau. Overnight in Xiengkhuang (B)

Day7 Xieng Khuang - Plain of Jars and Muang Khoun (B)

This morning we have time to visit the interesting **Central Market** in Phonsavan, and the MAG UXO information centre showing the fantastic work they do in clearing unexploded ordnance in the area before transferring to jar **site 2**, then walk to **site 3** via the Pathet Lao camp. We then arrive in Ban Xieng Di village to watch broom making and then walk to jar site 3. In the afternoon we drive out to **Muang Khoun**, the former capital of the Phuan Kingdom where we can walk around the remains of the stupas and temples. We then return to the hotel by late afternoon.

Day8. Xiengkhuang -Vang Vieng (B)

After breakfast, we visit **Mulberries Silk Farm**, a Lao Sericulture company specializing in fair trade silk production. We then get back on the road again for our journey to Vang Vieng. In the afternoon we arrive in **Vang Vieng**, a small and tranquil town, which is nestled on a bend of the Nam Song River. Its stunning scenery with a mixture of quiet water and limestone outcrops remains unspoiled, despite recent developments with the advent of tourism. On arrival we check into your hotel. Overnight in Vang Vieng

Day9. Vang Vieng –Vientiane (B)

This morning We then have time for a short walk and a visit to the impressive **Tham Jang** caves as well as a boat ride on the Nam Song River to admire the impressive limestone karst scenery. This afternoon we drive south to the Lao capital of Vientiane. En route we stop off at the **salt mines of Ban Kheun**, for a fascinating tour to see how the salt is produced. We arrive in Vientiane by late afternoon where you have the rest of the day at leisure.

Day10. Vientiane - half day city tour (B)

Your half day city tour enables us 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. The final visit of the day is an optional trip to 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. The remainder of the day is at leisure. Overnight in Vientiane.

Day11. Vientiane – Pakse – Tadlo (B)

You will be transferred to the airport early this morning for your flight to Pakse On arrival at Pakse, you will be met and taken by road east into the **Bolaven Plateau**. The Bolaven Plateau is known for its cooler temperature being located high above the Mekong Valley. The area is famous for its many waterfalls, and the most beautiful of these falls, **Tad Fan**, we visit. Tad Fan waterfall is spectacular with twin falls plummeting into a deep gorge surrounded by flourishing vegetation. A trip to the plateau provides a refreshing break from the heat and allows you to observe the cultivation of rich coffee, tea, cardamom, bananas, and other crops that can be seen en route. This trip gives visitors the chance to venture off the beaten track and to discover some of the lesser-known areas of Laos, exploring the wild beauty of this southern region. In the afternoon we arrive at **Tad Lo**, home to another scenic waterfall and numerous ethnic minority groups including the Alak, Nge, and Katu. We overnight at Tad Lo Lodge, located uniquely right next to the beautiful waterfall itself.

Day12. Tadlo – Pakse – Wat Phou –Khong Island (B)

After an early breakfast, we head out towards Khong Island. On the way we make a short detour to visit Pha Suam waterfall and to explore the ethnic minority villages of Lao Teung. We continue to travel by road via Pakse town crossing the Mekong by ferry to visit the fascinating pre-Angkorian ruins of Wat Phu, one of Southeast Asia's most dramatically situated temples. Wat Phu is one of the Lao World Heritage sites recognized by UNESCO in 2001, this wonderful archeological site of Khmer civilization dates back to the 5th century, predating the famous Angkor Wat in Cambodia. We continue our journey by car and then ferry to **Don Khong**, the largest island in the South Mekong river region known as the 4000 islands, one of the most scenic areas in Laos. Overnight on Khong Island.

Day13. Khong Island – Khone Island – Don Daeng (B)

Following breakfast, we enjoy a visit to the surrounding countryside, and embark on a long tail boat tour of the **Don Khone** area, which takes you to visit the remains of the French period and **Liphi** 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**. Khone Phapheng is considered the largest waterfall by volume in South East Asia; this is a really impressive 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. Afterwards we drive back north, then take a boat to the delightful island of Don Daeng. Overnight on Don Daeng.

Day14. Don Daeng – free day (B)

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.

Day15. Don Daeng - Pakse – Departure (B)

After breakfast, you will be transferred back to Pakse and onto the airport for your departing flight.

END OF SERVICES

Tour price per person in US\$:

Price valid from 01-Oct-09 to 30-Sep-2010

Hotel	1	2	3-4	5-9	Single Supplement
3 Star	3275	1955	1651	1501	390
4 Star	3595	2131	1824	1673	539
5 Star	3900	2284	1976	1825	691

Inclusive of above prices:	Exclusive of above prices:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation in private vehicle • Accommodation in twin shared room • Domestic air ticket as stated only • Private Boat trip as stated in above sights • English speaking guide • Admission fee to indicated sights • Meals: daily breakfast at hotel, lunch/dinner where stated only • Gov't tax and service charge • Luggage handling and drinking water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visa stamping fee on arrival • Int'l air tickets to/from Laos • Travel Insurance in all kinds • Single room (quoted separately) • Other foreign language guide • Peak tourist season or special event rates • Child or adult in triple sharing room • Tip, drinks and other personal expenses

Hotels quoted in above package

Location	3 Star	4 Star	5 Star
Chiang Rai	Wiang Inn (SUP)	The Legend (SUP)	The Legend (SUP)
Pakbeng	Luang Say Lodge	Luang Say Lodge	Luang Say Lodge
Luang Prabang	Mekong riverside hotel (SUP)	Villa Santi Hotel (DLX)	Villa Maly (SUP)
Xiengkhuang	Auberge Plain des Jarres (DLX)	Auberge Plain des Jarres (DLX)	Auberge Plain des Jarres (DLX)
Vang Vieng	Thavonsouk (Riverfront)	Villa Namsong (SUP)	Villa Namsong (SUP)
Vientiane	City Inn (DLX)	Green Park (DLX)	Settha Palace (DLX)
Tadlo	Tad Lo Lodge	Tad Lo Lodge	Tad Lo Lodge

Khong Island	Senesothxuene (Superior Mekong View)	Senesothxuene (Superior Mekong View)	Senesothxuene (Superior Mekong View)
Don Daeng	La Folie Lodge (SUP)	La Folie Lodge (SUP)	La Folie Lodge (SUP)