



Taste Travel Food Adventure Tours takes you on a 12-day food and hiking adventure through magical Laos where you will live like a local for a while. Visit the laid-back capital of Vientiane and get adventurous in the picturesque town of Vang Vieng. The adventure continues in northern Laos and the villages of Nong Khiaw, Muang Ngoi and Sopjam. Travelling along the stunning Nam Ou River in a long boat, visit remote villages, take some amazing treks through stunning forests, kayak along the river, visit beautiful waterfalls and have an amazing village homestay experience. In Luang Prabang, a Unesco World Heritage site, feast on some delicious Lao dishes, take a cooking class, trek to the beautiful turquoise Kuang Si Falls, and learn about rice production in a hands-on rice experience you will never forget. This tour will tantalise and surprise your taste buds with delicious street food, authentic cooking classes, local food market tours and the best food and cultural experiences Laos has to offer. And don't worry about your waistline, eat as much as you like. The easy walks, moderate treks and river kayaking through this stunning country will keep you fit and hungry for even more delicious Lao food.

**LENGTH**

12 Days/11 Nights

**GROUP SIZE**

Maximum 10

**PRICE (AUD)**

\$2400 p/p (twin share)  
Single supplement \$300

**DATES**

14th November 2019

**TRIP STYLE**

Culture, Walking, Food

**ITINERARY**

Starts - Vientiane  
Ends - Luang Prabang



## Day 1 - Welcome to Vientiane

There are no activities planned until the group meeting at 5pm today, so feel free to explore the capital of Laos at your leisure. Following the meeting, we will take an orientation walk before we partake in a delicious welcome dinner at a social enterprise restaurant. The restaurant trains local youth in all aspects of hospitality to provide them with a brighter future. Vientiane is easy to navigate on foot so you can take yourself on a walking tour of the many temples dotted around the city. You could make a visit to the interesting COPE Visitors Centre & Museum. The organisation has helped thousands of people with mobility-related disabilities, including UXO survivors, access prosthetic and orthotic services, allowing them to regain mobility and dignity. Make sure you check out Patuxai, a war monument built between 1957 and 1968. The Patuxai was dedicated to those who fought in the struggle for independence from France.

### Accommodation

- Hotel

### Meals Included

- Dinner

### Included Activities

- Dinner @ Social Enterprise Restaurant

### Optional Activities

- COPE Visitor Centre (free)
- Patuxai Monument (free)
- Walking Temple Tour (free)

## Day 2 - Vientiane

This morning we will eat a sensational breakfast at a local favourite, Kung's Café Lao. The specialty here is mango sticky rice pancake and they make a great coffee as well. After breakfast we embark on a cooking class to learn how to make some delicious Lao dishes and the best part is you get to eat what you have made for lunch. The rest of the afternoon is free for you to do with as you wish. A spot of shopping, visit some amazing temples or have a relaxing massage. The city centre is easily navigated on foot so why not take yourself on a walking tour of Vientiane. Be sure to be back at the hotel by 5.30 as we leave for sunset drinks and snacks, overlooking the Mekong River (includes snacks and 1 beer or soft drink). Once the sun sets, the evening is yours to find your own food adventure. Check out the night markets for a bit of shopping and some delicious street food.



### Accommodation

- Hotel

### Meals Included

- Breakfast
- Lunch
- Afternoon Snacks

### Included Activities

- Breakfast @ Kung's Cafe Lao
- Cooking Class
- Sunset Drinks & Snacks

### Optional Activities

- Massage
- Shopping





### Day 3 – Vientiane – Vang Vieng

This morning we say goodbye to Vientiane and make our way to Vang Vieng (approx 4 hours). After checking into the hotel, we have lunch at an organic restaurant in town. After lunch we head out of town and spend the afternoon on the Nam Song River. First, we go tubing in a water cave which is pitch black, but don't worry head torches are provided, it's a lot of fun. Then we take a leisurely paddle back to town in a kayak. The scenery here is absolutely spectacular and we may have time to stop off on the way for a cold beer or drink overlooking the river. We arrive back to the hotel late afternoon and for dinner tonight you get to take your pick from the many restaurants in town.

#### Accommodation

- Hotel

#### Meals Included

- Breakfast
- Lunch

#### Included Activities

- Organic Lunch
- Water Cave Tubing
- Kayaking

#### Optional Activities



### Day 4 – Vang Vieng – Luang Prabang

After breakfast, we hit the road to the jewel of Laos, Luang Prabang, where you will fall in love with this Unesco World Heritage Site. This charming town sits on the junction of the Mekong and Nam Khan Rivers. After checking into the hotel, we take a walking orientation tour before you get the chance to find some delicious food for lunch and explore the town. There are plenty of temples here to take a look at, or you might like to visit the Luang Prabang Palace Museum.

In the evening we take a food tour with a local guide to sample some of Luang Prabang's street food and some local dishes in a couple of restaurants. The guides are university students studying English and run these tours as a way to pay for their studies. Tonight, we feast on local dishes such as Lao coconut cakes, Orlam (a thick stew made with dried buffalo, pork or chicken and fresh herbs), Khao Soi (a kind of noodle soup with flat rice noodles), Lao sausage and more.



#### Accommodation

- Hotel

#### Meals Included

- Breakfast
- Dinner

#### Included Activities

- Street Food Tour

#### Optional Activities

- Temple Tour
- Luang Prabang Palace Museum (~\$5)





## Day 5 – Luang Prabang – Nong Khiaw

We leave for Nong Khiaw this morning, but don't worry we will be back to Luang Prabang in a few days to really explore this wonderful place. The rustic town of Nong Khiaw sits on the stunning Nam Ou river which meanders between some of the most fantastic limestone mountains in northern Laos. It truly is a breathtaking part of the world here. After checking into the hotel you are free to explore the area.



Grab some lunch and afterwards, there are many walks to take and if you feel like a steep climb there's the Nong Khiaw Viewpoint, with fabulous views from the top. For something a little less strenuous you can stroll out of town about 3 km and visit the Pathok Caves, which were used as hideouts during the 2nd Indochina War. Make sure you make it back to town before dark, or better to take a torch with you, which will come in handy in the caves. We meet again for a group dinner in the evening.

### Accommodation

- Hotel

### Meals Included

- Breakfast
- Dinner

### Included Activities

- Dinner

### Optional Activities

- Viewpoint Trek (small fee)
- Pho Tok Caves (~\$1.60)

## Day 6 – Nong Khiaw - Sopjam

After breakfast, we take a longboat upriver to the village of Muang Ngoi passing some absolutely stunning scenery. After arriving in this sleepy village, we take a 1-hour trek to the beautiful Tad Mork Waterfall. Here you will enjoy a delicious picnic lunch, relax, explore the area and take a swim before we return to the river and head further upstream to a weaving village called Sopjam.

This is where we will stay tonight as they have set up a village homestay here with double and twin rooms and western toilets. The rooms are comfortable here, however, be prepared for cold showers. For the rest of the afternoon you get to interact with the villagers and check out how they make their living weaving. You can also explore the area and even help to prepare dinner if you wish. Please keep in mind that the accommodation here is basic but clean and comfortable, however, the experience is special and one you'll remember forever.

Note that you will need to bring a day pack with you for this trip. We will be leaving our main luggage safe and sound in Nong Khiaw for our trip to Muang Ngoi and Sopjam.

### Accommodation

- Village Homestay

### Meals Included

- Breakfast
- Lunch
- Dinner

### Included Activities

- Longboat Trip
- Waterfall Trek
- Village Homestay

### Optional Activities

- Explore/Walk/Hike
- Interact with Villagers





## Day 7 - Sopjam to Luang Prabang

After breakfast we pack up and say goodbye to our new friends in the village and take an easy trek (approx 1 ½ hours) through the lush jungle. Arriving at a sandy patch of ground on the riverbank, take some time to relax and have a swim or explore the area. Our guide will prepare a delicious picnic lunch to enjoy before we hop back on our longboat and head back toward Nong Khiaw. For those who still have enough energy we can stop downriver and you can jump into kayaks and paddle the rest of the way to Nong Khiaw, taking in the beautiful scenery. Arriving back in town we collect our luggage and board the minivan. Get some rest after a busy few days as we head back to Luang Prabang.

### Accommodation

- Hotel

### Meals Included

- Breakfast
- Lunch

### Included Activities

- Trek
- Kayaking

### Optional Activities

- Swimming

## Day 8 – Luang Prabang

After a busy few days, it's time to have a sleep in and relaxing breakfast. The day is yours to explore Luang Prabang and its surrounds. Take a to visit the Pak Ou Caves, set in limestone peaks around 25 km from Luang Prabang. There are thousands of Buddha statues inside 2 different caves here. There are many different tours you can take, by boat, or road and boat. It's best to book this before we leave for Nong Khiaw if you are keen to go. Alternatively, you can do some shopping, or check out some of the many temples in town.

You just need to be ready by 4.30 for a sunset dinner cruise on The Mekong. The boat meanders downstream to moor near a traditional village where Lao dancers perform age-old sets that include interpretations of the royal ballet, rural life, folk tales and legends. The meal consists of delicious local Lao cuisine as we head back toward Luang Prabang, arriving at 7pm. The rest of the evening is yours to do as you wish.

### Accommodation

- Hotel

### Meals Included

- Breakfast
- Dinner

### Included Activities

- Sunset Dinner Cruise

### Optional Activities

- Pak Ou Caves (from \$30)
- Temples





## Day 9 – Luang Prabang

This morning we take off early for a trek through a lush forest trail, passing local villages along the way to the stunning Kuang Si Waterfalls. The trek takes 3 – 4 hours and you will be rewarded by a dip in the beautiful turquoise pools and a picnic lunch. The picturesque falls cascade over limestone, which gives it the amazing colour. While here you can visit the sun bear rescue centre nearby and learn about the plight of these gorgeous creatures. On the way back to Luang Prabang we will stop in at the Laos Buffalo Dairy and sample some buffalo cheese and ice cream. Returning to Luang Prabang in the late afternoon, the rest of the evening is free. Make your own food adventure or ask for recommendations for places to eat and drink.

### Accommodation

- Hotel

### Meals Included

- Breakfast
- Lunch

### Included Activities

- Trek
- Kuang Si Falls
- Sunbear Rescue Centre
- Laos Buffalo Dairy

### Optional Activities



## Day 10 – Luang Prabang

Have a light breakfast this morning so you can fit in a delicious banquet that you will prepare in a cooking class for lunch today. We start with an eye-opening local market tour where you see amazing fresh produce and all manner of different cuts of meat, fish and poultry. This market is full of locals buying fresh food and is particularly busy in the mornings. We then make our way to the cooking class which is held in a lovely pagoda, surrounded by lush green plants, a pond and stunning surrounds. You will learn the art of making Lao sticky rice and several dishes such as steamed fish and lemongrass chicken, before feasting on them for lunch. We return to town mid-afternoon where you are free for the rest of the day. Take a rest or walk up Mount Phou Si in the centre of town for a spectacular panoramic view of the sun setting over the Mekong River.



### Accommodation

- Hotel

### Meals Included

- Breakfast
- Lunch

### Included Activities

- Market Tour
- Cooking Class

### Optional Activities

- Mount Phou Si Sunset





## Day 11 – Luang Prabang

Eat a hearty breakfast today as we will be working in a rice farm this morning, learning how rice is produced, from seed to table. The rice experience is a hands-on activity where you get to have a go ploughing a rice paddy with a buffalo, plant and harvest rice, and see every step of rice production in Laos. The organic farm is a community project run by locals to help support the local village.

After this wonderful experience, and all your hard work we are rewarded with a delicious organic Lao lunch, with much of the produce grown right there on the farm. After lunch, return to town where the rest of the afternoon is yours to do as you wish. You could take a trip out to Tad Sae Waterfall or take a boat trip to visit Pha Tad Ke Botanical Gardens and take a walk around. Tonight, we will have a final group dinner together and reminisce about our favourite moments from the trip. If you are departing tomorrow and need some souvenirs don't forget to visit the night market which has a range of handmade and unique items for sale.



### Accommodation

- Hotel

### Meals Included

- Breakfast
- Lunch
- Dinner

### Included Activities

- Rice Farm Experience
- Organic Lunch
- Final Group Dinner

### Optional Activities

- Tad Sae Waterfall
- Pha Tad Ke Botanical Gardens (\$35)

## Day 12 – Luang Prabang

There are no activities planned for today and after breakfast you are free to explore the town even further. There is so much to see and do around the area. For those leaving Laos today, transport can be arranged to the airport. If you want to see a little more of Laos you might like to fly to Pakse, way down in southern Laos and then head to Si Phan Don (4000 islands) for a few days. Si Phan Don is a river archipelago on the Mekong River and is a perfect place to relax after our busy 12-day adventure.

**Meals Included** - Breakfast



**Taste Travel**