

About the country...

Name: Laos or Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR)

Capital: Vientiane Capital

Total population: 6.8 million (2014)

Total area: 236,800 sq. km

GDP: 11.24 billion USD (2014)

Tourism sector generated 641 million USD income to the country.

About the destination...

4 provinces: Champasak, Salavan, Sekong, Attapeu

Total population: approx. 1,150,000 inhabitants

Total area: 44,091 sq. km

Ethnic groups: Lao, Katou, Ngae, Laven, Lavae, Alak, Brao, Nyajeung, Kaleum, Pako, Katang, Suay, Ta-oy

Religion: Buddhism, Animism, Christianity

Visitor Arrivals

In **2013**, we received **493,180 visitors**.

47.7% (235,247) - Domestic tourists (Visiting family & friends and Business people)

36.6% (180,553) - Thai tourists (Weekenders)

15.7% (77,380) - Other international tourists: Approximately 30% of this group are backpackers. The remainders are visitors from Europe, North America, Australia, Cambodia, Korea and Japan.

In **2014**, we received **535,413 visitors**.

Top 10 markets in Laos (2014)

- | | |
|-------------|--------------|
| 1) Thailand | 6) France |
| 2) Vietnam | 7) Australia |
| 3) China | 8) Japan |
| 4) Korea | 9) UK |
| 5) USA | 10) Germany |

Our target market

- Experiential independent traveler
- Nature lovers
- Passion for culture

Seasonality and climate

Peak season: from October to March

Green season: from May to September

Every season has something special to offer, so Southern Laos is a year around destination.

March and April are the hottest months of the year so travelling can become difficult.

Activities in Southern Laos

Nature: Mekong, 4,000 islands, coffee and tea plantations, waterfalls, rice fields, mountains, ...

Culture: Vat Phou temple, ethnic groups, festivals, temples, ...

Soft adventure: ziplining, kayaking, trekking, cycling, ...

Handicraft: silk and cotton weaving, rattan and bamboo basketry, wood and stone carving, pottery, ...

Food: discover local delicacies

Relaxation: massage, spa, relaxation in the 4,000 islands, Don Daeng, ...

Accommodation

Accommodation choices range from low-budget guesthouses to up-market resorts, although in the more remote areas choices are limited to guesthouses or homestays. See factsheet on accommodation

Food

The highest concentration of restaurants and hotels can be found in Pakse, Champasak, Paksong, on the Four Thousand Islands and in Tad Lo. Cuisine options in Pakse include food from Laos, Vietnam, Thailand, China, Korea, India, and Europe.

Lao cuisine places a strong emphasis on seasonal and regional fresh vegetables and herbs. Southern Laos, thanks to its fertile soils on the Bolaven Plateau, offers a wide variety of fruits, vegetables and herbs such as chili, coriander, galangal, ginger, basil, mint, dill and garlic, throughout the year. The Mekong in Southern Laos is the largest river fish supplier of the country. Therefore, Southern Laos food specialties are commonly fish-based dishes.

Currency

Lao Kip (LAK) but US dollars (USD) and Thai Baht (THB) are also commonly used, although the policy is to promote the local currency Lao Kip.

Kips are issued in denominations of 500, 1000, 2000, 5000, 10.000, 20.000, 50.000 and 100.000 Kip notes.

Exchange rate as of October 2015:	1 USD = 8,150 LAK	1 SGD = 5,900 LAK
	1 THB = 231 LAK	1 CNY = 1,287 LAK
	1 EUR = 9,350 LAK	1 JPY = 68 LAK
	1 AUD = 5,980 LAK	1 GBP = 12,600 LAK

Safety

There is no mass tourism in Southern Laos. Therefore, the destination remains very much a family place, with very low criminality.

Significant numbers of Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) – bombs, artillery and mortar shells that did not explode - remain in Laos forty years after the end of the last Indochina war and continue to pose a threat to peoples' lives and livelihoods. Areas frequently visited by tourists have been cleared of UXO.

Health

No special vaccination is required but recommended vaccines include hepatitis, malaria, yellow fever, Japanese encephalitis, rabies etc. Please consult your doctor before your trip.

Please be aware that healthcare in Laos is still basic. Precautionary measures to stay well include eating only well cooked food, drinking bottled water, staying hydrated, using sun protection, and avoiding mosquito bites.