



Laos and Cambodia – ‘Indochina Adventure’ (14 day)
All year round; 14D/13N ex London or 13D/12N Luang Prabang to Siem Reap

A fascinating 2 week tour through the heart of Indochina; beginning in northern Laos in the ancient capital, now World Heritage Site of Luang Prabang, we'll explore the beautiful temples and colonial architecture of what is acknowledged to be *the* best preserved city in Southeast Asia, before crossing spectacular mountains to the remote and mysterious Plain of Jars. Our journey continues to the contrasting, contemporary capitals of laid-back Vientiane and bustling Phnom Penh from where we'll travel overland through picturesque countryside to the enigmatic and dramatic, jungle-clad temples of Angkor.

Day 1 Departure from UK.

Day 2 Arrival in [Luang Prabang](#), via Bangkok. Time to relax before an afternoon boat trip up the picturesque Mekong River. Visit the village of Ban Muang Keo for a short trek to reach the mysterious Pak Ou Caves, crammed with thousands of gold lacquered Buddha statues of various shapes and sizes left by pilgrims. Return to Luang Prabang for sunset at Phu Si Hill and a chance to sample some local specialities in a riverside restaurant.

Day 3 Nestled in the mountains, long isolated from the outside world, we'll discover World Heritage Site Luang Prabang's fabulous temples, French colonial architecture and taste Lao delicacies (and the famous Lao beer!) in riverside cafes. Morning walking tour of the town including the National Museum & former king's palace, Wat Xiengthong, Phu Si Hill Temple and the Fine Arts School to see how traditional Lao arts and handicrafts are being preserved. The afternoon is at leisure to allow you to wander the quiet, picturesque lanes or check out the hill-tribe handicraft market?

Day 4 Day trip through the surrounding hills to visit the spectacular Kuang Si Waterfalls and to discover the fascinating, traditional village life of some of the local peoples.

Day 5 Early departure for a drive along scenic mountain roads to Phonsavan Town in Xieng Khouang province – location of the famous and mysterious Plain of Jars. Stops on the way include Khmu and Hmong villages and a hidden cave temple that served as an army hospital during the Vietnam War - a reminder that this region played a major part in the conflict. Late afternoon arrival in Phonsavan and atmospheric dusk visit to one of the famous jar sites.

Day 6 Morning visit to the [Mines Action Group](#) to learn about the work they do in clearing land mines and unexploded ordnance in the area. We then drive out to the picturesque Jar Site 2, and begin our 1 hour trek along the ridge to the impressive Jar Site 3, consisting of around 150 jars located on top of a hill, offering great views over the surrounding countryside. Lunch in Phonsavan before a flight to the Lao capital of Vientiane, and time perhaps to stretch our legs with a stroll along the Mekong waterfront for sundowners in a riverbank cafe?

Day 7 Day tour of some of the city's fascinating sites including Si Saket Temple with its thousand Buddha images, the bustling morning market, Vientiane's most famous monument – the That Luang Stupa, as well as the unusual Buddha Park. Less cheerful, but we feel important and highly informative, a stop will also be made at the excellent [COPE](#) Visitors Centre. This was established to highlight a major problem many of the local people face daily in the form of unexploded ordnance as a result of the heavy bombing campaigns during the Vietnam War era.

Day 8 Morning flight to Phnom Penh and check-in to a small, comfortable, [downtown hotel](#) close to the historic riverbank quarter. Time to relax before stretching your legs with an introductory walking tour, taking in the historic French Quarter, Wat Phnom and the lively waterfront area as well as giving you a first-hand feel for the bustling street-life before finishing perhaps, with sundowners at the famous Foreign Correspondents Club?

Day 9 Day tour of some of the sites of Cambodia's fascinating capital city: the infamous Killing Fields site and the highly moving Khmer Rouge Genocide Museum at Tuol Sleng help to explain the country's recent tragic history. The picturesque Royal Palace and Silver Pagoda will provide plenty of photo opportunities whilst the [Russian Market](#) offers some 'retail therapy' and a chance for a local style lunch.

Day 10 Travel through Cambodia's scenic countryside to the small provincial town of Siem Reap in Western Cambodia – our base for the next few days while we visit the nearby Angkor Temple complex. Stops on the way include the famous 'spider village' of Skuon, (tasting not compulsory), the rarely visited but well preserved 10th century temple of Kuhananokor and lunch by a scenic lake. A dusk visit to the atmospheric ruins of [Banteay Kdei Temple](#) completes our day.

Day 11 Angkor – an unforgettable two-day tour of this fabulous site – its vast jungle clad temples and mysterious stone carvings. Our programme begins with dawn at Angkor Wat, followed by a comprehensive morning tour of the temple itself. Late morning return to Siem Reap to escape the midday heat and for some lunch, siesta or relaxation. Afternoon walking tour of Angkor Tom: Leper King Terrace, Preah Palilay, Royal Enclosure, Phimeanakas, Elephant Terrace, [Baphuon](#) and last but not least, (we'll wait until the crowds have gone), the dramatic Bayon Temple with its famous faces.

Day 12 We'll begin with a forest hike up Bahkeng Hill to visit the spectacular [Phnom Bahkeng Temple](#) and check out the views, before moving on to the huge jungle-clad ruin of [Preah Khan](#). Dense jungle, enormous roots and trees and screeching parakeets make this atmospheric temple one of everyone's favourites. After a midday break in Siem Reap Town, the afternoon programme continues with a short jungle walk to Ta Keo via the remote and rarely visited Ta Nei Temple. A visit to the famous Ta Prom ruins – the famous 'Tomb Raider' Temple continues our jungle theme and concludes our day's visit.

Day 13 Morning trip to one of the more remote and less visited temple sites, the truly spectacular [Beng Melea](#). A huge partially ruined temple complex, overgrown by jungle, lying to the west of Siem Reap, this is one of the most impressive Angkor monuments. Return to Siem Reap with an afternoon at leisure to relax by the pool, visit the National Museum, explore the markets or even take a [Khmer cookery lesson](#)?

Day 14 Morning transfer to Siem Reap airport for a return flight and evening arrival in the UK.

Highlights: Pak Ou Caves, temples and colonial architecture of World Heritage Luang Prabang, Plain of Jars, Vientiane, Phnom Penh, scenic Cambodian countryside, ruined Cities of Angkor, sunrise at Angkor Wat, Beng Melea, Siem Reap, local food

Fitness: easy

Accommodation: hotel

Transport: minibus, boat, tuk-tuk, flight

Meals; full board except lunch on days 3, 12 & 13 and dinner on days 4, 7 & 13

Note: this tour is offered with or without return flights from London. Persons not taking up the flight option should join the tour in Luang Prabang on day 2 of the itinerary and leave in Siem Reap on day 14.



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