

Laos by Bicycle 2004

General:

The information in Lonely Planet Cycle South-East Asia is right, details the route.

Laos is a very nice country to cycle around, the traffic is light, though very poor, people are very friendly and smiley. Many guesthouses are quite familiar with cyclist-customers and will allow you to put bikes in the rooms.

Roads & Traffic

The roads in Laos are quite simple, not many choices. Road surface is very good from Vientiane to Luang Prabang. Further north is worse, but not too bad. Traffic is very light from Vientiane to Luang Prabang, most traffic are from tourists-vans. Vientiane is a little busy, though, compared to other South-East Asian capitals, Vientiane is a heaven for cyclists. However, with the increase of motorbikes, results in more car accidents, now school kids have safety problems on the roads. There are no trains in Laos, but buses may carry bikes.

The Asia haze can make air really terrible.

Expect kids' warm greeting, give them five if they ask for it!

Water

Bottled drinking water is available from any grocery shops. K2,000-3,000 per liter.

Food

There are plenty of tourists in Vientiane, Vang Vien and Luang Prabang, so a lot of tourist restaurants. Around Vientiane, there are a lot of sandwich shops, also a lot of French Bread Vendors. K3,000 a loaf. Further north or in smaller town, food is more basic. It seems that Laos don't eat out often like Chinese, so only bus stops and bigger towns have restaurants. Laos eat a lot of sticky rice, from breaky to dinner. Dried bananas are good energy food, you can get them in big cities. Imported goods are expensive.

Laos bear is very good and cheap. You can get cold drinks even in some more remote area.

Accommodation

Accommodation is cheap and clean. Simple accommodation is K15,000-30,000 pp. Usually mosquito nets provided. It's good to bring a sheet sleeping bag from home.

Extend Your Visa

You can extend your visa in Vientiane. Each extended day costs 2 US dollars, no need to go thru travel agency, instead, go directly to immigrant office, it takes 2 hours.

Services

Town / Place	Accommodation	Comments, Other features
Vientiane	Mixay, Cheap	Vientiane is a very nice Asian capital.
Thalat		Guesthouse.
Vang Vien	Phoudindaeng Organic Mulberry Farm, 4km north of the town, nice and quiet, English speaking.	Town itself is full of backpackers, restaurants with neon lights and TV on at night.
Kasi	Both southern and northern sides have a guesthouse. The northern one looks nicer.	Bus stop.
Phou Khoun		Food and guesthouse.
Kiu Kachan		Bus stop.
Luang Prabang	Pathoumphone Guesthouse K50,000 doubleroom Next to Nam Khan river, nice.	A lot of tourists. Nice wats.
Pak Mong	Few Chinese guesthouses, terrible. Laos guesthouse is better.	Junction to Vietnam. Bus stop.
Udom Xai	Phuthat Guesthouse Nice, on a quite street.	
Na Teuy	Some guesthouses in the restaurants. Basic.	Few kms to Laos-China boarder.

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