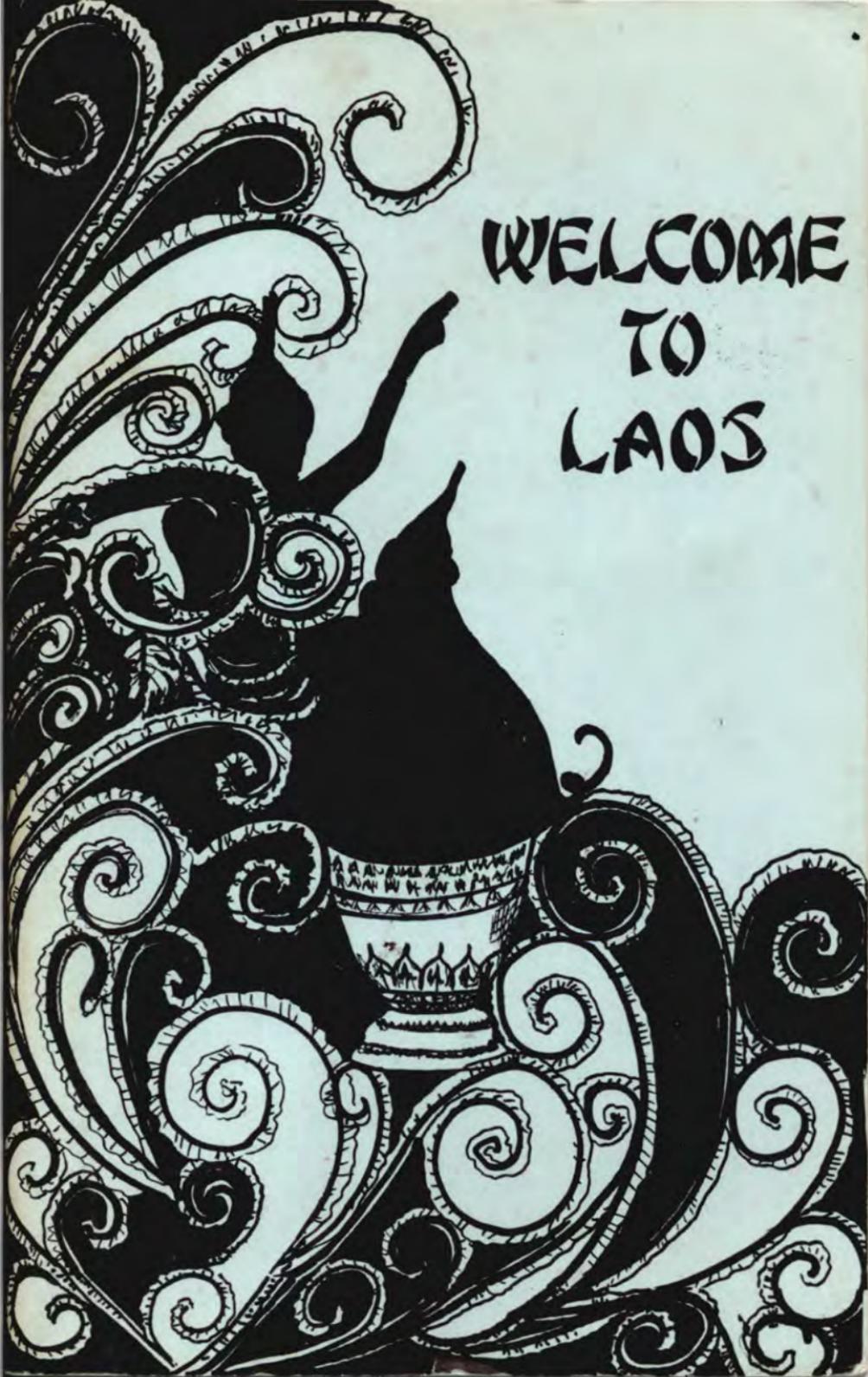


WELCOME
TO
LAOS



WELCOME TO LAOS

A Practical Guide



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PREFACE

Members of the American Women's Club of Laos decided to pool their information and experience gained from living in Laos so it could be shared with visitors, tourists and newcomers. The result is this small book which all of us hope will help you to enjoy Laos and make your stay comfortable.

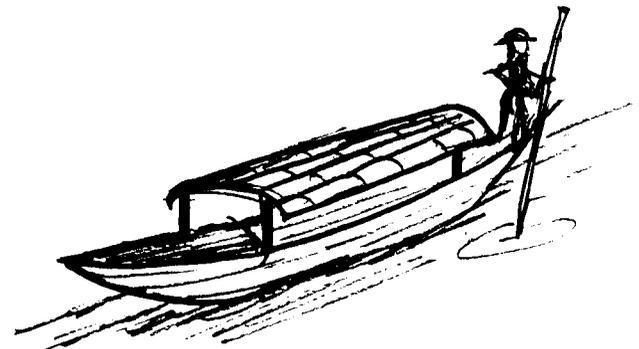
No remuneration of any kind has been paid by the shops or services included in the classified directory listings. Those named are known by us to give satisfactory service, but we realize some may be omitted that are equally good.

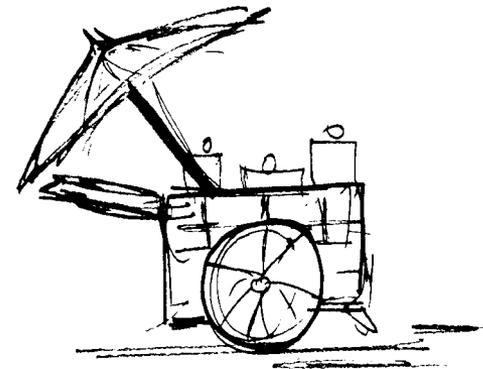
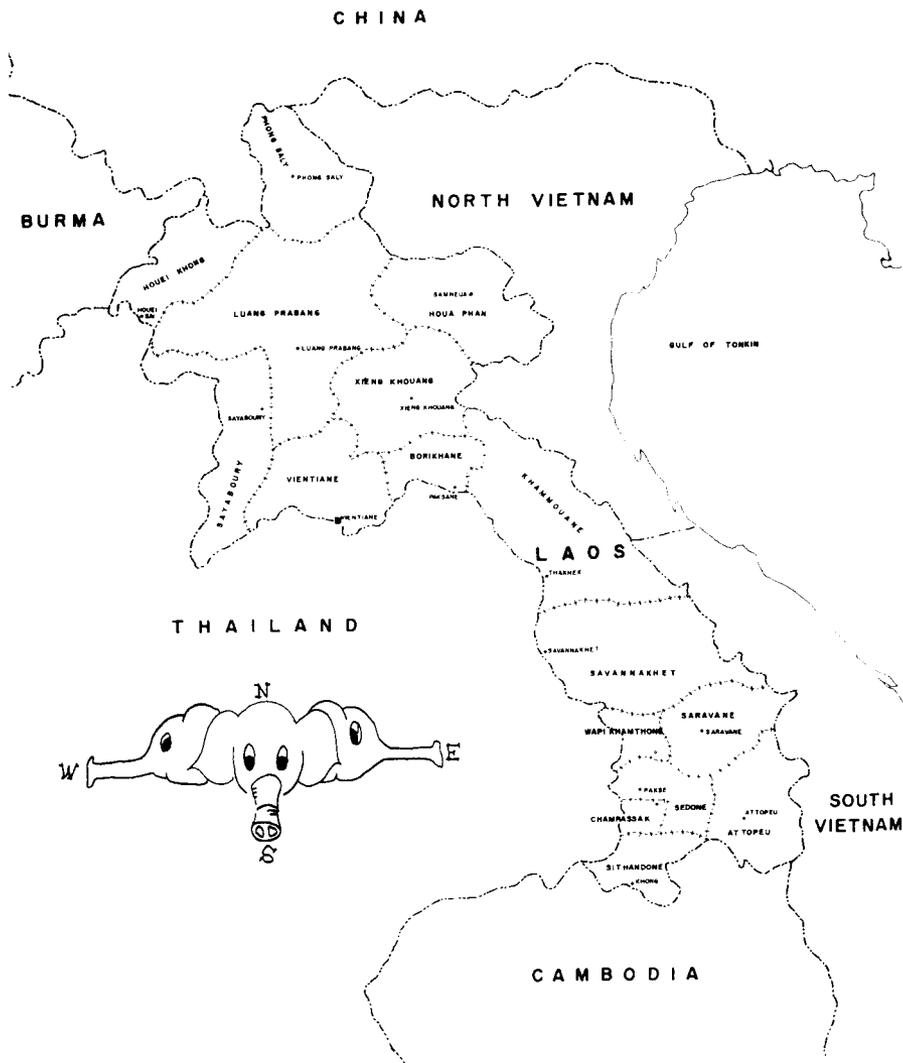
A wide variance exists in the spelling of Lao names, but we have chosen those spellings which are most phonetic and are most commonly used.

May we extend a warm welcome for your stay in Laos, whether it is a brief visit or a lengthy tour. We hope this guide helps to give you increased enjoyment while you are here.

THE EDITORS

Summer, 1969





THIS IS LAOS

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

In total area (91,000 square miles) Laos is slightly larger than Idaho or Great Britain. In shape it is long and narrow like Italy. Its longest borders are with Thailand to the west and north, and South Vietnam to the east. To the north Laos also borders Burma and China and to the south, Cambodia. Geographically the Kingdom's greatest disadvantages are that it is landlocked and must import and export through neighboring countries. It is sparsely populated with an estimated population of only 2.8 million people, most of whom are concentrated in the Mekong Valley. Laos has the poorest communications, the lowest life expectancy at birth (30-35 years), and the lowest literacy rate (estimated 20%) of all the countries of Southeast Asia. Politically Laos continues to suffer from external aggression which has denied the government control of half its territory, has required the maintenance of an army of over 80,000 men at a cost which the country can ill afford, and has withdrawn from the land young farmers badly needed for agricultural development.

Laos gained its independence from France in an agreement signed in 1949. Since then the Kingdom has suffered intense growing pains in its efforts to establish a stable government, to develop the infrastructure needed for efficient public administration, and to create a better sense of unity and national identity while in the midst of war. Under present circumstances the the Kingdom has not been able to achieve the economic stability it needs to lessen dependence on foreign aid, balance its budget, stabilize the currency, and carry out various development projects.

POPULATION

The population of Laos is diverse. Approximately one-half the people are ethnically Lao, a people of Thai stock who are believed to have migrated originally from Southwest China, principally during the 13th century. The vast majority of the Lao are lowland, wet-rice subsistence farmers. They speak Laotian Thai, a language of the Southwest Thai branch of peoples of Sino-Tibetan stock. Vientiane, the political and economic capital, has an estimated population of 132,253. The four principal "cities" (Luang Prabang, Khammouane, Savannakhet, and Pakse) are, in fact, no more than large towns with populations between 12,000 and 35,000 people. All these municipalities are situated on the Mekong or one of its tributaries. The non-Lao population in the towns consists mostly of Chinese, Vietnamese and Indian shopkeepers and several thousand people of European origin, the majority of whom are members of foreign missions on short-term assignments. At least half of the total population of Laos consists of upland peoples, such as the Meo and Yao (Sinitic stock), Yao, Black Thai and the Lu (Thai stock), and the Kha (Indonesian descent). They are dry-rice farmers leading a semi-nomadic life based on slash-and-burn cultivation. Poor communications in the rugged mountains and dense jungles of the hill areas and the lack of common origins, customs, traditions and beliefs among the various minorities pose serious difficulties for the political unification of the Kingdom.

LANGUAGE

The official language of the Kingdom is Lao. French, the second official language, is still the medium of instruction in secondary schools and is commonly used in government and commerce. More and more Lao are learning English as a second language, but the number of Lao fluent in English is still small and consequently opportunities for Lao students to study abroad and for government officials to attend international conferences are limited.

RELIGION

Buddhism, the state religion, is more or less confined to the lowlands. The dominant faith is Theravada (Hinayana) Buddhism, common also in Cambodia, Thailand, Burma and Ceylon. Under the King, who is protector of the faith, there is a Supreme Patriarch, who resides in the Royal Capital of Luang Prabang, and a religious council of five elder monks who serve as advisers to the Ministry of Religious Affairs. There are approximately 6,000 monks and 11,000 novices residing in 2,000 wats in the Kingdom. Before the establishment of French colonial rule and the introduction of lay schools, most village children received their primary education in wat (monastery) schools. This is still true in many rural areas. All boys

Buddhist families are expected to spend some time as novices during their formative years.

The principal religion among the hill tribes is animism, or spirit worship. Spirit worship is, in fact, so deeply ingrained in the life of the Lao people that one finds it at the core of many nominal Buddhist practices and beliefs.

CLIMATE

The climate of Laos is monsoonal with three seasons. There are five months of heavy rains from May through September. When the rain starts tapering off in October, a cool season begins that lasts through January. February through April is hot and humid. In April, the warmest month, the temperature sometimes reaches as high as 100 degrees Fahrenheit; and in January, the coolest month, it ranges from 57 to 83 degrees.

GOVERNMENT

The government is a constitutional monarchy. The bicameral legislature is composed of a National Assembly of 59 members, which wields the greater part of the legislative power of the country, and a less active King's Council of twelve elder statesmen, all of whom are appointed directly by the King, six upon recommendation of the National Assembly. According to the Constitution the Prime Minister is designated by the King in consultation with political leaders. The Prime Minister submits his proposed cabinet to the National Assembly for approval, a favorable two-thirds majority of deputies present being required for investiture. A cabinet member need not be a member of the National Assembly. Since 1963 Pathet Lao members have refused to serve in the cabinet although four positions are still reserved for them, nor have the Pathet Lao recognized the legitimacy of the last two legislatures.

ECONOMY

Economically Laos is heavily dependent on foreign assistance. The official Lao currency is the kip. The prevailing free rate, which is about 500 kip to the US dollar, is kept stable by the Foreign Exchange Operations Fund (FEOF) whose foreign contributors include the United States, France, Japan, United Kingdom and Australia. Laos depends heavily on imports, most of which are subsidized by foreign contributors. Exports are extremely limited. The important crops grown include rice, coffee, corn, rubber, cotton, tobacco and spices. Forestry exploitation, mostly teak, is hindered by lack of transport. Industries are limited to light consumer goods. Tin and copper mining have been important but are relatively small scale.

ENTRY

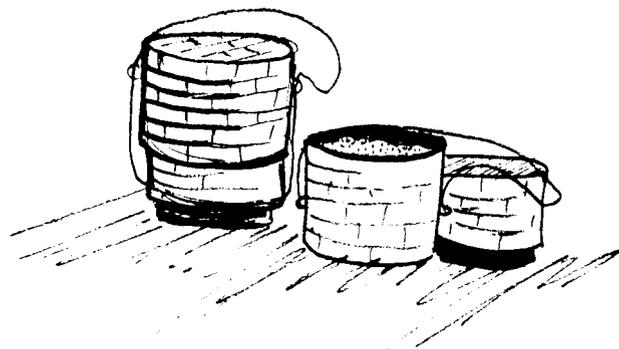
If you are coming to Thailand and Laos for the first time and are not in a hurry, you may want to drive from Bangkok to Nongkhai and cross the river to Vientiane. The drive can be made in a day without pushing. The route along the well-paved Friendship Highway offers few tourist attractions and little scenic variation, but it is of interest to those wishing to have a more balanced view of social and economic conditions in Thailand. The immigration office in Nongkhai closes at 6:00 p.m. so you should plan to arrive before then. We recommend that you leave your car in Nongkhai, take the passenger ferry to Thadeua on the Lao side and a taxi for the twenty-two kilometer ride into Vientiane. (See Classified Directory for hotel listings.)

If you wish to experience Thai trains and save money, we recommend the overnight trip from Bangkok to Nongkhai. Have something to eat before you start or bring sandwiches or snacks with you. If you want privacy, reserve a compartment. If not, we recommend a second-class lower berth.

There are roads into southern Laos from Saigon and Phnom Penh, but for obvious reasons they are not well traveled. Unless you wish to end up as a statistic, we don't advise you to try them until the security improves!

Plane service to Laos is good. There are four flights weekly to Vientiane from Saigon and seven flights weekly from Bangkok. There are additional flights from Phnom Penh and Hong Kong. The trip to Saigon takes approximately four hours, and to Bangkok less than two hours.

You will need an entry visa which can be obtained from Lao consular authorities (or French where no Lao representation exists). You will also need valid smallpox vaccination and cholera certificates.



VIENTIANE - PLACE OF SANDALWOOD

A BRIEF HISTORY

Vientiane is the present-day economic and administrative capital of the Kingdom of Laos. The name is a French version of the Lao "Vieng Chan" which was once the ancient capital of a rich and powerful Kingdom called Muong Lan Xang Hom Khao -- Land of the Million Elephants and the White Parasol.

In the last years of the 13th century, the Siamese Kingdom of Sukhot'ai extended its sovereignty as far as Vieng Chan, then a part of the Khmer Empire. Prince Fa Ngum, the son of an exiled Laotian chief who took refuge in Cambodia, set out to wage war against his grandfather and other Princes to regain his father's principalities in the Upper Mekong. This expedition of the "Ten Thousand" captured Vieng Chan, and in 1353 Fa Ngum was proclaimed King of the territories he named Lan Xang.

Fa Ngum and subsequent sovereigns ruled from Luang Prabang. The next two hundred years were a period of territorial and economic development with occasional wars against the Vietnamese and Siamese invaders.

King Phothisirath ascended the throne in 1520 and left Luang Prabang to settle in Vieng Chan, which was better suited for commerce. His eldest son was crowned King of Chieng Mai in 1548, but had to return to assert his rights of secession when his father died an accidental death in 1559. After the son became King under the name of Thao Sai-Sethathirath, he went to Vieng Chan where he built a magnificent palace with fortifications of sandalwood. The Royal Palace was guarded on one side by moats and extremely high walls of sandalwood. On the other side was the Mekong for additional

protection against enemy attacks. The palace walls were decorated inside and out with bas-reliefs, delicately gilded with gold leaf. Thao Sai-Setthathirath built a temple within the palace grounds to receive the famous Pra Keo or Emerald Buddha. In 1563 Vieng Chan was declared the capital of the Kingdom. The King erected the That Luang, or "Royal That," in 1566 east of the town. It was built over a small stupa of the 13th century, traditionally believed to contain a hair of the Buddha.

The first of several Burmese invasions began in 1563 and continued for many years. Vieng Chan was occupied; but when it was recaptured in 1571, King Setthathirath had disappeared mysteriously during a campaign in the South.

VIENTIANE TODAY

Vientiane is now a bustling town of over 100,000 people. You will see open-front shops of Chinese, Indian and Vietnamese merchants. The population is a potpourri of Thai, Japanese, French, British, Australians, Burmese, Italians, Belgians, Americans, Indonesians, Russians, Germans, Swiss, Filipinos, Czechs, Canadians, Polish, Danes, Scots and Cambodians.

Like any other city with extreme "growing pains," Vientiane suffers from traffic disorders, a constant power shortage, poor telephone service and a major lack of municipal facilities. Building, however, proceeds at an accelerated speed as Vientiane races in its own haphazard fashion to catch up with the 20th century.

What to Do: The Lao, especially those from the country, rely mainly on the many activities centered around the family, the village and the wat. Births, marriages and religious holidays are just a few that call for a celebration.

The visitor to Laos, away from what is familiar to him, must sometimes generate his own leisure time activities. Although not abundant, there are enough diversions to keep an interested guest occupied. Knowing the Lao and sharing with him his holidays and celebrations is not always possible for the short-time visitor, but for the foreign resident this is one of the great pleasures of living in Laos.

Here we will devote space to the tourist who will soon move on. He may attend a performance of the Little Theatre of Vientiane. This group holds performances for the public every three of four months. At present, performances are held at the American Community Association Auditorium.

These are usually adequately publicized but can be checked at the ACA office in the USAID compound.

The Vientiane Golf Club, a private club with nine holes located at KM-9, may be used on Saturday afternoons and Sundays by the visitor for a nominal greens fee.

For the bridge player, each Sunday evening there is a duplicate group playing at the ACA in the USAID compound. Newcomers are always welcome.

For the swimmer, the Lane Xang Hotel has a swimming pool on spacious grounds in back of the hotel. It is open to members who pay a monthly fee but it is free to hotel guests; for other visitors there is an entrance fee.

The nautical type can make arrangements for boating and water skiing on the Mekong by going to the shore front behind the Salakoktane Restaurant on Thadeua Road during the lunch hours.

For those who don't want the rigors of traditional golf, there are two miniature golf courses. They are both illuminated for evening playing. One is located on the Luang Prabang Road (road to Wattay) and the other at the junction of Rue Circulaire and Thadeua Road.

Vientiane offers entertainment and recreation for the spectator as well as the participant. Usually on the weekend there are soccer, boxing or tennis matches at the National Stadium. On Sunday afternoons at three o'clock there are generally softball games at the athletic field in the USAID housing compound at Kilometer 6. From time to time there are also go-kart races at Air America in Wattay.

For the movie-goer, Vientiane offers films every day. At the theatres in the Chao Anou area there are usually two afternoon and two evening films. These theatres tend to feature the spectacular and the tough westerns; if you want real action, this is the spot. The Lane Xang shows the more understated, even artistic movies. From time to time the French Cultural Centre has films in French and the Lao-American Association has films of a documentary type, usually to do with the United States or Laos. Both places are open to members and sometimes guests, but not to the general public.

Where to Go: The real swinger in Vientiane can find plenty of activity after sundown even though there is at present a twelve o'clock curfew sporadically in effect. Though night clubs in Vientiane come and go, there are those which seem to go on with some persistence.

The most famous of the night club areas is "the strip" in the Dong Palane area on Bang-Fay Road, southeast from the city. In the daytime it is a prosaic country road, busy with samlors and people going about their business. There is an afternoon market and some simple dwellings. The road is dusty or muddy, depending on the season. But at night, it comes into its own. The shuttered buildings open and light up; traffic is reduced to a crawl, and rock music bellows forth from every doorway. Tell the taxi to take you to Dong Palane and then pick your spot; there are many. The most "in" places at the moment are listed in the alphabetical listing under night clubs.

For the photographer and the sightseer, Vientiane has endless possibilities. An evening walk along the Mekong, a stroll in the early bustle of the morning market, a visit to the 555 Tobacco Factory at Kilometer 7 on Thadeua Road, especially when the dozens of bougainvillia are in bloom, all are satisfying activities which can be done at leisure.

The foreigner remaining in Vientiane may want to become involved with organizations of his special interest. Certainly these groups can provide the newcomer with social contacts. There is the Toastmasters Club for men, the KM-6 Riding Club and several Women's Clubs. The Lao-International Women's Friendship Association (AFALI) sponsors Conversation Coffees on the first Friday of each month, each time at a different home in the international community. Mrs. Irene Holden conducts ballet classes for girls in the afternoons at the ACA and there is the very popular Little Theatre of Vientiane.

What to See: Visiting the Wats of Vientiane is an interesting and enlightening experience. It will enable you to understand and appreciate the importance of Buddhism to the Lao.

Wats are open on weekends and Buddhists holidays. Visits, other than very informal ones by individuals and small groups, should be arranged beforehand with the abbot of the Wat in question. A modest donation of 100-150 kip per person is appropriate. Photography is permitted, and flash equipment is helpful. Courtesy requires that shoes be removed before entering any enclosed building in the Wat.

The Ministry of Religious Affairs suggests that the following three Wats in Vientiane may be the most interesting to the visitor:

WAT PHRA KEO, in the Palace grounds opposite the Mahosot Hospital, was originally built in 1565 by King Seththathirath and restored in 1936. It

is now a national museum. The Erawan, the god Indra's three-headed elephant, is carved above the main doors. Phra Keo (the Green God) refers to the Emerald Buddha which is now in the Wat Phra Keo in Bangkok. The museum contains Buddha images of many different periods. Khmer inscriptions, Pali manuscripts on palm leaf strips, and an interesting statue of the elephant-god Ganesa.

Arrangements for visits outside the normal hours of 0800 to 1130 and 1400 to 1700 hours, seven days per week, should be made through Mr. Chai, the Director of Religious Instruction in the Religious Affairs Ministry. It might be well to contact him in any case if a large group is planning a visit, or if guide services are desired.

WAT SISAKET, opposite the Palace at Lane Xang and Seththathirath, was built from 1818 to 1825 by Chao Anou. It is a complete Wat ensemble, with pagoda, cloister, dormitory, thats, and library. Interior murals show scenes from the life of Buddha and a few of the million elephants of Laos. The multitude of small Buddhas set in niches in the cloister represent the Miracle of the Lotus, which Buddha caused to grow from his body with a Buddha sitting on each blossom.

Special importance is attached to each pose of these Buddha images:

Seated, right hand pointed earthward: When Mara, who symbolizes desire, the cardinal evil for Buddhism, challenged Buddha's claim to Enlightenment, Buddha called upon the earth to witness, and all manner of fearsome beasts spewed forth from the bowels of the earth to put Mara to flight.

Standing, arms earthward: Buddha stands entranced, contemplating the place of his Enlightenment, the Bodhi Tree, whose fan-shaped leaf plays a major part in Buddhist decoration and architecture.

Standing, hands raised to shoulder height with palms forward: Calming strife (sometimes among his own disciples).

Standing, right hand raised: Preaching.

Seated, hands in lap palms up: Meditation. Buddhas in this position, but with the thumb and forefinger of each hand forming tangent circles, are not likely to be of Lao origin."

Arrangements to have Wat Sisaket or Wat That Luang opened for a group of visitors should be made beforehand with Mr. Khamheng Dengmanivanh, Chief Curator of Sites, at the Religious Affairs Ministry.

WAT THAT LUANG contains the most impressive That in Vientiane. That Luang was built in 1566 by King Sethathirath, whose statue is in front of the That. The present structure was rebuilt in 1935 by the French School of the Far East.

A That (stupa) is a funerary monument which contains a relic of the Buddha. The form of all Thats was fixed by Buddha by placing on the ground his folded cloak, atop his cloak his begging bowl, and standing upright on the bowl, his staff.

A shrine, alleged to contain a hair of the Buddha, can be seen inside the walls. It occupies the side of a legendary That built by the Indian Emperor Asoka, who is especially remembered in Laos for fostering Buddhism in his great empire.

That Luang, the most revered such monument in Laos, is central in the annual celebration of That Luang, in which the King, members of the royal family, and major government officials reaffirm national ties with Buddhism and honor King Sethathirath as a symbol of national unity. The That Luang Fair, which appears to dominate the celebration, is actually incidental to the religious ceremony.

It is impossible to give an accurate historical account of happenings in Lan Xang from the latter part of the 16th century until early 18th century. Events are inadequately documented and dates become more uncertain than ever.

By 1712 the Kingdom of Lan Xang had been split into three separate Kingdoms: the Kingdom of Vientiane, the Kingdom of Luang Prabang, and the Kingdom of Champassak. This division marked the beginning of the decay of Lan Xang.

In the 18th and 19th centuries constant warfare raged among the rival Princes, and the three Kingdoms were frequently attacked by their neighbors, Siam, Annam and Burma. During the reign of Chao Anou, Vientiane was sacked by the Siamese army. With the city in ruins and emptied of its inhabitants, the Kingdom of Vientiane ceased to exist after 1829.

The French evicted the Siamese in 1886 and further extended their influence in Indochina to include Laos. In 1889 Vientiane was made the ad-

ministrative capital of French Laos. From Vientiane the French Senior Resident exercised control over Luang Prabang and the other provinces.

The beginning of the end of French domination came during World War II when France proved unable to protect Laos from Japanese invasion. Lao leaders raised glimmers of hope that they might govern their country in independence when the war ended.

Laos obtained independence by degrees between 1949 and 1954. A constitution proclaimed the unity of the Lao provinces in a constitutional parliamentary monarchy. The National Assembly, elected directly by the people, meets in Vientiane. His Majesty the King presides in the Royal Capital of Luang Prabang and rules through the Prime Minister, the Council of Ministers and the King's Council who serve in Vientiane, the administrative capital.

THAT DAM, near the American Embassy, is also said to contain relics of the Buddha. The Legend of the Seven Dragons is attached to the That Dam (Black Stupa). That Dam was built during the time of the nineteenth century Thai invasions.

Legend of the Seven Dragons

Hundreds and hundreds of years ago, a very wise holy man lived on an island in the Mekong. He was loved and obeyed by all the animals on the island, including seven dragons. As the years passed, the holy man grew tired of his island and decided to move to the lovely green bank across the river. So he gathered his people and all moved to what is now Vientiane. They settled down peaceably and happily. All the animals were happy too. The people were so happy that the neighboring towns grew jealous and attacked them. But every attack was foiled by the seven dragons.

There came a time when the holy man approached death. He gathered his people around him for his farewell, and bequeathed to them his large drum. This drum was to be used to summon the dragons from their cave whenever the town was threatened by attack.

Years later a man came to live among the townspeople; he lived in disguise, for he was a spy come to destroy their defenses. For fifty years he lived among them undetected, and gradually he convinced them that their drum was a symbol of distrust and should be given away. So, in trust, they gave their drum to this stranger who had lived among them for fifty years.

Soon after, the Thais attacked Vientiane. With no drum, the people could not summon the dragons to defend them, and they were conquered.

The victorious Thais then built a stupa over the cave's entrance, the stupa of the That Dam, so that the dragons could never escape. People say that occasionally at night rumblings can be heard from under the stupa as the dragons try to escape. The ancient drum, incidentally, can now be seen in a Wat in Nongkhai.

The following are major Wats in Vientiane which you will also find interesting to visit:

WAT ONG TU, on Setthathirath between Chao Anou and Francois Nginn, is the home of the Buddhist Institute and is the major pagoda of the capital city. Religious aspects of governmental affairs, such as the government's assumption of its duties, take place here. Boun Bang Fay is one of the festivals of national significance which begins here in early Spring. At that time, newly promoted monks are honored with gifts, colorful rockets are shot off, and fantastic parades and street dances are held.

WAT SIMOUNG, between Sam Sen Thai and Setthathirath just before they join toward Thadeua, is of special importance to Vientiane. It is here that the legendary Sai Si died by self-immolation to ensure the auspicious beginning and favorable future of the city. She is regarded by citizens of Vientiane as their guardian spirit.

WAT PHIAWAT, on the river near the American Ambassador's Residence, is patronized by National Assembly President, H. E. Phoui Sananikone.

WAT SOKPALOUANG, on the road to Fa Ngum School, is a well-known meditation center.

WAT PHONE PHRA NAO, on the road to KM-6, at approximately KM-4, is a center of publishing activity.

WAT CHAN, is on the river near the International Hotel, between Chao Anou and Wat Chanh.

WAT INPENG is between Chao Anou and Khoum Bourom on Setthathirath.

Further information is available at the USIS Library, the USAID Technical Library, and the Library of the School of Fine Arts.

How to Get There: There are no railroads in Laos, but all major areas are linked by air if not by road. To travel in Vientiane itself one only needs to stop a taxi or a samlor and then attempt communication with the driver.

Habitual riders learn two or three key Lao phrases or just use their hands. Each system has its merits. With the hand system, one taps the driver on the shoulder and silently indicates direction by pointing; if one chooses to use his limited Lao, he just hopes it comes out properly. In any event, there is general hilarity all around and a feeling of rapport usually envelopes the whole transaction.

The taxis have red license plates, and it is well to remember that one passenger is not considered a fare. The driver will pick up passengers all along the route until he has five, unless the initial passenger is willing to pay a larger fare. The tariff should always be negotiated first as the taxis have no meters.

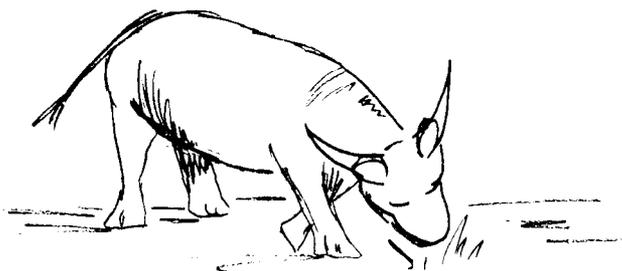
The samlor is good for short trips, but here, too, it is best to discuss the fare first. In heavy traffic, riding in a samlor can offer a thrill or two; but it still appears to be quite safe and is widely used.

The more adventurous and leisurely traveler may use the city bus system. One can ride virtually all day for 20 kip. The bus route goes completely through the city on all the major roads. Get on the bus in Wattay and ride through the city to Kilometer 6 or go from the city several kilometers out on the Thadeua Road.

For trips outside the city into the countryside, small open buses follow these routes at very reasonable fares. For the enterprising this could be an interesting experience, but be prepared to share your seat with a brace of live chickens or a sack of rice. These buses mainly serve the farmers who bring produce to sell in Vientiane and return home with other purchases. The buses make up in various depots within the city, the ones for each area starting at a specified point. For example, the buses which originate near That Luang travel to Paksane and Paksong.

At present about the only river travel that visitors may experience is crossing to Thailand at one of the embarkation points on the Lao side. At Thadeua one can ride a ferry to Nongkhai, Thailand, and then take a train to Bangkok. The passenger ferries are small motorized boats which carry about 15 people and leave frequently.

When the security was better, it was possible to travel down river from Ban Houie Sai to Luang Prabang as well as up river from Vientiane. These trips took several days and one had to bring his own supplies, but those who have done this in times past recall it with great nostalgia. Hopefully this way of seeing Laos will soon again be possible, and the experienced traveler will be able to visit this charming land in this fascinating way.



OUTSIDE VIENTIANE

Due to the current security situation, travel by road outside Vientiane is very limited and subject to strict controls. When considering road travel, please check with your Embassy or with other appropriate authority.

LUANG PRABANG

Luang Prabang, about 160 Km north of Vientiane, is the Royal Capital of Laos; and for most Lao, merely being there evokes a sense of awe. It is not only the place of residence of the sovereign, but in a real sense it is the historical center of Laos or Lane Xang. Buddhism as a state religion had its beginnings in this city, which is named for the Pra Bang, a sacred Buddha image that, according to legend, had been cast by the pious folk of Ceylon from "gold bracelets, diamond rings, silver, copper, iron objects, precious stones and pewter." Centuries ago as the Buddhist doctrine spread eastward from Ceylon, this statue was brought to Ankor in Cambodia. At that time, Fa Ngum, the young son of a Lao Chieftain, was living as an exile in Ankor under the care and tutelage of a scholarly monk. When the prince was sixteen, the King of the Khmers gave him his daughter in marriage and provided him with a large army in order to regain his position in the Lao state. Fa Ngum succeeded in reconquering his father's former territories and in 1353 set himself upon the throne which he called Lane Xang, Land of the Million Elephants, in what is now Luang Prabang. He introduced his wife's religion to Laos by having a Buddhist mission headed by his old master brought from Ankor. The mission brought with it the famous image of the Buddha from which the capital took its name. It may be viewed at Wat Mai, where each year at the New Year's festival it is taken to the courtyard and placed on a dias so that the faithful may pour lustral waters upon it in worship.

How to Get There: There is daily air service from Vientiane by Royal Air Lao or one of the other local lines. The flight takes about one hour, passing over beautiful, raw mountainous country. Bookings are easily made at the

airline offices in Vientiane; the round-trip fare is currently about \$19.00 (U.S.). There is an all-weather road between Vientiane and Luang Prabang, but driving is not advisable at this time.

Where to Stay: The Phousi-Akhane Hotel, commonly called the Bungalow, provides the best accommodations. It is not air-conditioned, but the climate is cooler and drier than in Vientiane, and ceiling fans are sufficient for comfort.

Restaurants: The Bungalow serves Chinese, Vietnamese, and French food. The Chinese and Vietnamese food seems consistently better than the French. Across from the market there are also two or three open-front restaurants which serve Chinese and Vietnamese food. A good rule of thumb is to select the most prosperous looking restaurant. You will find that the French bread and the watercress are particularly good in Luang Prabang.

Transportation: Samlors and taxis are available in limited numbers, but they will not go outside the city. As Luang Prabang is not very large, you can easily cover it by walking.

Sightseeing: In Luang Prabang the Wats have a slightly different design than those in Vientiane. They are considered more handsome and are much more ornate with an extensive use of gold leaf on the outer walls as well as on the pillars and roof carvings. Many of the temple doors are well worth photographing. Several wats to see in addition to Wat Mai are Wat Aram, Wat Xieng Thong, Wat Sen, Wat Sangalok, Wat Phon Xai, Wat Pa Heuak, Wat Chum Kong, Wat Xieng Moung, and Wat Visoun. Wat Visoun is totally different and can be seen near the bridge over the Nam Khan River on the airport road. When visiting temples, there are no particular rules to follow except that of removing one's shoes at the entrance and, if you are a woman, take special care that you do not in any way touch a Buddhist monk. At the Wats a small kip donation is always appreciated.

The Royal Residence is located in the heart of the city and may be easily viewed from the palace gate. If you wish to photograph it, ask permission of the guard before taking any pictures. King Savang Vatthana and his Queen Consort are in residence most of the time except when there are occasional government functions in Vientiane.

The market in Luang Prabang is small but busy early in the morning. An early riser will see many of the hill tribes in their colorful dress, selling their wares.

Arts and Crafts: Silversmithing here is the most highly developed in Laos. Because it is the religious capital, the artisans of Luang Prabang have specialized for many years in silver vessels used for offerings at the temples. The silver shops are not generally where you would expect them to be, but rather in private houses off the main street where both the manufacture and retailing is done. Ask at your hotel for the location of these shops. Weaving stoles with silver and gold thread is another important craft. These too are woven in the home, but the weavers will often bring their wares to the hotel.

Festival: Festivals in Laos are sometimes called Bouns. Two of the country's Bouns can be seen at their best in Luang Prabang. Every Lao longs to be here during these periods. Pi Mai, which commemorates the ending of the old year and the beginning of the new, takes place in April. It is the gayest Boun of all and is celebrated here, as in other parts of Laos, by the good-natured throwing of water on one and all to symbolize the bestowing of blessing and good wishes. During this three-day festival, the Lao visit the temples to pour scented and sanctified water on the Buddha image. This is also the time for gift-giving among friends and family. In Luang Prabang the celebration is particularly spectacular because of the procession of the Royal Ceremonial Elephants. A baci is given at the palace, and the King pays traditional visits to the important wats. As he proceeds on his way, the crowd sprinkles him and his entourage with perfumed water. Preceding the King's visit to Wat Xieng Thong, the traditional dance of the Pou Gneu Gna Gneu is performed. These are gay, red-lacquer-faced gods wearing straw-like coats who represent the first Lao male and female. After their dance they bow to the King, giving him the best wishes of all the Lao, present, past, and future.

The other most important festival of Luang Prabang is part of the Buddhist Lenten Festival which comes between the eighth and eleventh month. Near the end of August, when the Nam Khan River is full, there is a spirited and competitive boat race between the neighboring villages. The costumes of the oarsmen and their brightly painted boats provide a brilliant scene for the dignitaries and country folk who watch from the river bank. It is considered a great honor to win this race. Food and flowers are brought to the temples, where most of the village men spend the nights before and after the race. This is also a time of traditional dances, shadow plays, and general merriment before the country people return to their fields and rice harvest.

BAN HOUIE SAI

The new capital of Hua Khong Province is Ban Houie Sai, which lies on the Mekong close to the Burmese border and across the river from Northern Thailand. Ban Houie Sai is a beautiful place and because it is close to the mountains, the weather is quite pleasant. It is primarily a market town with a wide variety of the northern hill tribes, all in their unique and colorful native dress. Presently, the town is filled with vast numbers of refugees from the north and east.

How to Get There: Royal Air Lao and other local airlines have frequent flights from Vientiane and Luang Prabang. Flights from Bangkok and other points in Thailand terminate in Chieng Rai which has regular bus service to Chieng Khong, thence by boat across the Mekong to Ban Houie Sai.

Hotels: If you are adventurous, plan to stay overnight. The one and only hotel is Chinese, which is clean but by no means luxurious. Prices are reasonable, but there is no restaurant or air-conditioning. Rooms have private bathrooms without tubs or showers. To take a bath you use the available bucket and water storage jar.

Restaurants: Next to the hotel is a clean, Chinese restaurant which serves good fried rice, chicken, and Chinese soup.

Transportation: Local service depends on the one existing taxi. If you cannot find it, try walking; the town is not very large.

Sightseeing: People-watching is the main entertainment for the visitor. In no other town are there so many different tribes.

What to Buy: There are both precious and semi-precious stones for sale in the market. Finely engraved and well-finished walking sticks, handwoven fabrics, and hill tribe hats are other items of interest.

SAVANNAKHET

Savannakhet is 250 kilometers south of Vientiane on the Mekong River. It is the second largest city in Laos, with a population of almost 36,000.

How to Get There: There are frequent flights by domestic airlines from Vientiane. Flying time is little more than an hour. You can cross by ferry from Mukdaharn, Thailand to Savannakhet, and there are also air connections from Bangkok to Nakhon Phanom, where you can cross the river to Thakhek and then travel south by road to Savannakhet.

Hotels: Hotels Sensabaay #1 and #2 have minimal comforts. There is no dining room or air-conditioning, and cars are parked in the hotel lobby. Hotel Sensabaay #3, now under construction, should be an improvement.

Restaurants: Bao Bao serve Chinese food. Chez Paul Caravelle offers a good French provincial menu. Near the market square are many open-front Chinese and Vietnamese food shops which sell a hearty noodle soup and fried rice. In the evening, the main market turns into a very pleasant open-air restaurant with many stalls serving Chinese food.

Transportation: Motorized 3-wheeled vehicles ("samlores") and taxis are used in the city. Taxis are available for out-of-city travel.

Sightseeing: That Inhang is an interesting sight outside the town. It is a pleasant hour's drive through the countryside. Several wats in the city are worth a visit if you have time.

PAKSE

This city of 35,000 is in Sedone Province in Southern Laos. Its rural atmosphere is charming, but the town is of no great historic importance. However, it does serve as a home base for visits to nearby points of interest.

How to Get There: Royal Air Lao and Lao Air Lines have frequent flights from Vientiane. Thai Airways has service to Ubon, Thailand. From Ubon it is about 108 kilometers by bus or taxi to the river where you can cross by ferry to Pakse.

Hotels: There are two hotels - one is Chinese, south of the main bridge into town; the other is the government "bungalow", adjacent to the main market. Neither is a place where you would wish to spend your honeymoon.

Restaurant: Kien Ky (also known as "Henri's")
Nam Thanh - French food
Lao Military Circle - American, French, and Chinese food
Pension Famille - French and Chinese food
Tchao Kang - Chinese food

Transportation: There are communal bus-taxis and motorized samlores in the town. Private taxis can be hired for trips outside of town.

Sightseeing: Wat Phu is the ruin of an ancient Khmer temple complex that pre-dates Angkor Wat in Cambodia. It is about an hour's drive south of Pakse across the Mekong River. The Wat Phu Festival, held in the early part of the year, is attended by the Diplomatic Corps and important government officials. One of the main attractions is an elephant race.

Khong Island is a scenic spot in southernmost Laos near the Cambodian border. It is famous for its spectacular waterfalls.

Paksong is an old French center with pineapple plantations and strawberry farms located in the mountainous area of the Bolovens Plateau (altitude 1200 meters). A stop for lunch at the local French restaurant is recommended.

Ban Houei Khong is in a rich Bolovens forest area which can be reached from Paksong by road. The two principal ethnic groups in this area are the Lao Thung and the Loven.

What to Buy: Unusual carrying baskets are made in Ban Houei Khong. Woven cloth produced by the local tribes differs from that of other areas.





LIVING IN LAOS

HEALTH

The most prevalent problem facing you in Laos is the variety of intestinal diseases. These diseases are a result of poor sanitation; thus, you should exercise particular care with food and drink. Although Vientiane has a modern city water system and a Japanese-built purification plant, there is still no sewage system. Many places still use wells. Outside Vientiane there is no piped water at all.

To be safe, all drinking water should be boiled for a full twenty minutes. If you are remaining in Laos, you should purchase a porcelain water filter, filter the water first and then boil it. The filter should be cleaned weekly by removing the candles and washing them well with soap and water, rinsing with clear water and boiling for twenty minutes.

In addition to the possibility of being served unboiled water when dining in restaurants, there is also the possibility that ice served in drinks may have been made from unboiled water. Sometimes it is wiser to drink bottled beer or carbonated drinks.

All fruits and vegetables which are to be eaten uncooked should be washed thoroughly to remove dirt and then treated by soaking for at least ten minutes in a commercial chlorine solution of one ounce to two gallons of water. Although not available at all times in all places, both Clorox and L'Eau Javel may be purchased in the grocery stores across from the Constellation Hotel on Sam Sen Thai. Halizone tablets are to be found occasionally at the Union Pharmacy on the corner of Sam Sen Thai and Pang Kham. Some people choose to use potassium permanganate crystals dissolved in water as a soaking solution for fresh fruits and vegetables.

Eating fruits that can be peeled is preferable. Do not buy "ready to eat" fruits in the local markets - fruits which the vendors have cut into individually sized portions. These pieces of fruit are exposed to dust and flies, and the personal cleanliness of the vendor and his fruit knife may be questionable. In fact, utensils of all sorts in restaurants may not be properly washed. Hot water and soap are not commonly used in the smaller restaurants.

The other main health hazard that you should be aware of is malaria. Although there is not much incidence in Vientiane, it is still not under control in the country. To be on the safe side, it is suggested that you take Aralen weekly as a preventative. It should be taken on entering the country and for two weeks after leaving. The prophylactic dose for adults is 500 mgm per week. If possible, sleep in a screened room or under a mosquito net. An insect repellent is also useful.

If these precautions, and the requirements on the international vaccination certificate, are followed you should have a healthy and pleasant stay in Laos.

All dogs brought to Laos as pets should have current rabies immunization, and this should be kept current. If possible, the dog should also be vaccinated for distemper.



THE MARKETS

The markets in Laos, particularly in Vientiane, have something for everyone. They are filled with such glorious confusion (even the shopkeepers lose track of what wares they stock) that with a bit of time anything may be found there.

The largest market in Vientiane is the Morning Market. It is on the main street, Lane Xang Avenue, and opens at daybreak. The New Evening Market is an afternoon market, as its name implies, and may be found on your map. It has rabbit meat and venison that the Morning Market does not carry. There are many other smaller, neighborhood markets scattered throughout the town; some open for business at 4:00 PM, others at other times. Your servants will know.

Very few items are marked with a fixed price. The Lao love to bargain; in fact, they are really disappointed if you pay their first price. A rule of thumb is to carry a pencil and paper. After picking up or pointing out an object that you want to buy, indicate that you would like them to write down the price. Then make a terrible face, shake your head, and write down about one-half their price. They in turn will laugh and say "no." This can go on and on, but they enjoy it and expect it.

When dishes or material have a price tag on them, there is little bargaining possible, unless you are buying in quantity. Many times you can get a baker's dozen if you want a large amount. If you have the time, compare the goods in the different stalls. There can be some variation in price and quality. The Indians in the yard goods section speak excellent English and hate to miss a sale. They will pull down every bolt on their shelves to tempt you.

Children love to wander through the markets too. Many times they spot the toys and plastic pool-floaters which you just ordered by mail from home! Don't forget, small children can see many things that taller people overlook.

In season there are unlimited fruits and vegetables: spinach, squash, Lao sweet potatoes, white potatoes, tomatoes, Chinese cabbage that is like an iceberg lettuce, leeks, cauliflower, cucumbers, Chinese snowpeas, onions, and many others. The fruits would make your head spin: mangoes, mangosteens, lichi nuts, papaya, pineapple, breadfruit, guava, watermelon, rambutans, limes, tapioca, and even more.

The markets in other towns are not as extensive in their offerings, but they will still carry an enchanting variety of goods. They are always the main shopping centers of each town.



GARDENING

If you are a gardener or would-be gardener and are living in Laos, consider yourself fortunate. In this tropical climate, gardening is a year-round activity. Almost anything known to the gardener will grow here, from the common vegetables to exotic flowers, shrubs, and trees. With very little effort you can grow bananas, papaya, guava, mango, and limes right in your own garden. Gardenias bloom in profusion nine months of the year. The Flamboyante trees glow in the spring. Hundreds of species of orchids can be yours for the price of a day in the jungle to gather them. The subject is too extensive to treat in this limited volume. Several references are mentioned below which give detailed information about gardening in the tropics.

T.M. Greensill's book, Gardening in the Tropics, is available in Bangkok at the Donald Moore Gallery or can be borrowed from the Library Club of Laos. It is highly readable as well as practical. You will also find it an excellent book for plant identification.

Several years ago, the now-defunct gardening club issued several papers on various aspects of gardening in Vientiane. These papers are on file at the American Women's Club House. Also on file are gardening articles published in the "Bangkok World" newspaper. Among the articles is a series on how to make an instant jungle - very useful when your time in which to produce a finished garden is limited.

Gardeners: There are a few exceptional gardeners for hire in Vientiane, and they command relatively high salaries. For the most part, gardeners are more likely to be yard boys. If you wish to have an attractive garden, you must either hire a more expensive and experienced gardener or supervise closely the work of the yard boy. If you are willing to pay the price of a taxi and a few hundred extra kip, the gardener can be sent off for a day in the country to gather orchids, ferns, and other jungle plants. Most gardeners will happily spend a day-off going to Nongkhai to purchase special items for you. The cost to you depends upon the items needed, plus bus and ferry fare.

Plants and Seeds: Both are available in the Morning Market. Plants are available there in greater quantity on the weekends. The Chicken Farm near Fa Ngum School has a limited selection of plants. Mixay Garden Vuan-Hoa, located on the back road to Km-6 behind the Kim Sua Warehouse, has a wide variety of plants, shrubs, and some trees. Sala Kularb (House of Roses) is on Thadeua Road next door to the Thadeua Market Place, just before the boat crossing to Nongkhai. Sawadis Nursery on Mahosot behind the Morning Market has plants, orchids, seeds, grass seed, pots, fertilizer, and garden decorations.

Tools, Lawn Mowers, Hoses: These are available at most hardware stores. They are not of high quality, but have the merit of being familiar to local gardeners and are inexpensive.

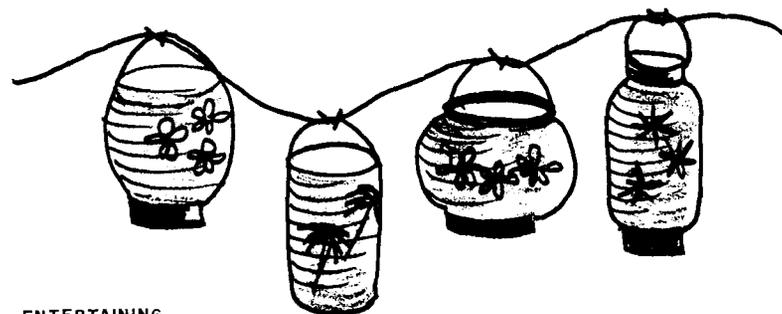
Insecticides and Fungicides: These can be purchased at the Khambay Philaphandeth Store on Sethathirath near the intersection with Khoum Bourom, and at some hardware stores. Fungicides are not generally available in Vientiane, but can be purchased in Bangkok at one of the garden shops on Phya Thai Road across the street from the Asia Hotel.

Fertilizer: Chemical fertilizers are for sale at the Khambay Philaphandeth Store on Sethathirath. Pellet chemical fertilizer can be purchased in Nongkhai and Bangkok. Organic fertilizer is more difficult to purchase. Gardeners can sometimes get it for you. Horse manure is sometimes available at the Km-6 Riding Stables.

Soil and Sand: These can be obtained only in the dry season. The sand is silt taken from the bed of the Mekong River when the water is low. Any of the several general contractors can sometimes furnish it. For potting soil, send your gardener out to the country for a sackful.

Pots: A variety of ordinary and decorative pots are available at the Morning and Evening Markets. You can also buy them at 319 Sam Sen Thai.

Orchids: Special mention must be made of orchid growing, for there is hardly a person in Laos, resident or transient, who does not have at least a few hanging about the garden or porch. Over two-thousand species of orchids grow in Laos. Except for hybrids, almost no orchid plants need be purchased. Your gardener can be sent to outlying areas to collect them; friends who travel to the hinterlands are often willing to bring back a few; or you can be venturesome and collect your own. The best way to do this is to talk about orchids with everyone you meet until you find a fancier willing to conduct you on a tour of the orchid-growing areas near Vientiane. Orchid growing is probably the most carefree of all forms of gardening. Articles and a list of reference books about growing and identifying orchids are on file at the American Women's Club House.



ENTERTAINING

Giving parties in Vientiane can be fun but frustrating at times. When the electricity goes off, everyone sympathizes with you, brings ice, holds your hand, and understands; but power is improving.

Tips for Making Your Party Memorable: First of all, let your imagination run riot. There have been successful scavenger hunts, formal dances, costume parties, picnics, "Let's gaze at the moon while cruising down the Mekong," and of course no one can resist charades.

Next, make your guests feel expected - use extra flowers, a candle at the door, name/place cards, favors if you like, card tables scattered throughout the house or garden, plenty of ashtrays and cigarettes. The servants love parties and many will do a flower arrangement that would take a blue ribbon at the Boston Horticultural Society!

Children love parties too. They even enjoy a pot luck party if you are short of a cook. It's often amusing to see what they come up with.

Everyday someone "finds" another place to buy party extras. There are birthday candles here, only not by that name. Tiny, thin candles are used by the Buddhists at their Wats and may be bought at the Morning Market or at a Wat entrance. Most often you will find that showing your servants a magazine or newspaper picture of what you want will save hours of trying to tell them what you are looking for. Remember the old Chinese proverb: "A picture is worth a thousand words."

Music: You can set any mood with music, but for your guests' sake, not too loud. Tapes nowadays give you a wide range; and for something very special, there is nothing like a live band. Don't overlook the Lao groups that sit in the shadows and lend magical atmosphere with their native instruments. They sound like something you would expect to find in Kipling's writings. Learn their Lamvong!

Balloons: Many roving vendors throughout town sell balloons; but if you want hundreds, there are two men that sit in the noodle shop opposite the USAID Compound entrance, who for a reasonable fee (take someone to translate, they do not speak English or French) will come to your house two hours before a party and fill balloons with gas. Caution, it is inflammable!

Bartenders and Waiters: Many people just "borrow" their friends' servants. It is also possible to hire professionals from the local hotels, restaurants, and from some embassies.

Catering: The ACA (American Community Association) services are available to members only. The ACA has many menus and suggestions, and is always ready to help you with your party. Plan ahead as they are popular and often booked up long in advance. Many restaurants and hotels will prepare food for you to pick up; the ACA will deliver to your house. The Lane Xang Hotel, The Sea Witch, Settha Palace, Tan Dao Vien, and some of the French restaurants have different varieties of food for catering.

Flowers: Neighbors (if invited) will almost always contribute; otherwise, try the Morning Market. Go early, the selection is better and the flowers will last longer if put in water at home out of the sun. The flower vendors, too, love and expect to bargain with you.

Glassware and Dishes: The American Women's Club of Vientiane has a complete set of dishes for forty-eight, a silver service, flatware, and some glasses. The fee is very low. The large hotels in town will rent supplies, as will the ACA.

Tables, Chairs, Bars: Check with the ACA or the large hotels in town for rental.

Linens: The ACA is the only one at this time that has linens for hire. They have white damask napkins and three sizes of tablecloths for a very nominal fee. Many people love to use color. Chieng Mai cotton may be bought at Paitoon's, on the road to the USAID Compound. This can be fringed and used on card tables, with napkins of contrasting bright colors. These cottons will certainly enhance an informal table or card tables.

Lights and Torches: The ACA rents these items also. If you want to buy your own spotlights, many electrical shops downtown have them for sale. The torches can be made for you by any local metalworking shop. It is best to take a sketch or a photograph for them to copy. You should also establish the price on paper and leave a small deposit.

Spraying: There is no local spraying service. If you have ants in your garden, you must take care of them yourself. There is an effective mosquito repellent available which is a Japanese product. It is a slow-burning punk spiral that is named "Obat Njamock Exterminator." It comes in a colorful box with a picture of a rooster on the top. Your servants can buy this at the "corner store" or at the market. Light these coils and place them generously throughout your garden an hour or two before your party - around 6:00 PM, just as mosquitoes start to think of biting.

Icecubes: Most people make their own ice ahead of time. Also you can ask neighbors to bring some along. Local ice is available in block form on Rue Nehru, but it is best used only for icing down canned or bottled drinks in large wash tubs. It is not to be used in beverages served to your guests.

Invitations: Here your imagination can run as wild as your party's theme. A little prior planning and a clever invitation, with or without a simple design, can have your friends really looking forward to your fling.

Party Photography: Mr. Woo at the desk of the Lane Xang Hotel will come to your house. His work is good, but not inexpensive. Contact him early in your planning.





CLASSIFIED DIRECTORY OF SHOPPING IN VIENTIANE

You may find shopping in Vientiane quite different from in your own country. But once acquainted with the Morning and Evening Markets and the various stores listed herein, you will find almost every necessity and many luxuries are available if you know where to look.

It would be advisable to walk first along Sam Sen Thai from near the Constellation Hotel west to Khoum Bourom, crossing Chao Anou (Chinese Street), and another time walk from Khoum Bourom east along Setthathirath to the fountain and back along Pang Kham (Indian Street) to Sam Sen Thai. This is the central shopping area. The kinds of goods available in certain shops can vary from month to month, and it is impossible to tell what a shop stocks by just seeing the name as you drive by.

AIRLINE COMPANIES

- Air France, 2 Pang Kham.
- Air Vietnam, 9 Pang Kham.
- Lao Airlines, 9-11 Setthathirath.
- Laos Air Charter, 16-24 Khoum Bourom.
- Lao United Airlines, 25-27 Luang Prabang.
- Northwest Orient, 377 Sam Sen Thai, next to the Constellation Hotel.

Pan American, That Luang, (Manley Enterprises) opposite the Ministry of Finance.
 Royal Air Laos, 2 Pang Kham, same building as Air France.
 Thai Airways, 38-40 Setthathirath.
 TWA, 262 Sam Sen Thai.

- AMBULANCE SERVICE** - See HOSPITALS
- ANTIQUES** - See HANDICRAFTS
- ART GALLERIES** - The Orient D'Art, 4 Thadeua, is the only permanent art gallery. Many novelty shops on Chao Anou and Sam Sen Thai carry a limited number of paintings and art works. Art shows are often held at the Lane Xang Hotel.
- ARTIFICIAL FLOWERS** - 60 Setthathirath. There are other other small stores in the central shopping area that have paper flowers which are used in different ceremonies. These shops have a good variety of crepe paper suitable for making artificial flowers.



- ART SUPPLIES** - L'Amitie, off Chao Anou between Sam Sen Thai and Setthathirath.
 Somboun Souvannavong, corner of Setthathirath and Mantha Thourat.
 Tai Fa, 56 Setthathirath.
 Vieng Lao Sports, 66 Chao Anou.
 Most stationery stores carry a limited amount of art supplies.

- ASSOCIATIONS - See CLUBS
- AUTOMOBILE DEALERS - There are so many dealers that we can list only a few:
 Auto Lao, 114 Thadeua (Ford, Willys Jeep).
 Compagnie "La Generale De Commerce Lao",
 262 Sam Sen Thai, (Simca and Rootes Motors).
 Esso Service Center, corner Thadeua and Rue
 Circulaire (Volkswagen).
 Suzuki Motors, Thadeua.
 Toyota, 266 Thadeua.
- AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE - Compagnie "La Generale De Commerce Lao",
 262 Sam Sen Thai.
 Denis Freres, 203 Setthathirath.
 Manley Enterprises, That Luang.
- AUTOMOBILE RENTALS - Garage Sidam Doune, Nahaidiao Compound, oppo-
 site U.S. Commissary.
 Loupy's 154 Setthathirath, at Sam Sen Thai, Si-
 muang area.
 Vilayphone, 346 Sam Sen Thai.
 Cars may be rented for \$4.00 - \$5.00 daily or
 \$120 - \$150 a month, depending on the car.
 (U.S. dollars)
- AUTOMOBILE REPAIRS - Auto Lao, 114 Thadeua.
 Citroen Garage, Luang Prabang, next to the Mi-
 niature Golf Course.
 Esso Service Center, Thadeua, near Rue Circu-
 laire.
 Garage Sidam Doune, Nahaidiao Compound, op-
 posite U.S. Commissary.
 Loupy's, 154 Setthathirath at Sam Sen Thai, Si-
 muang area.
 These are just a few of the many repair shops.
 In addition, there are many stores in the central
 shopping area which sell spare parts and tires for
 most cars.

- AVIATION CLUB - See CLUBS
- BAKERIES - See FOOD
- BALLET INSTRUCTION - Mrs. William Holden (Irene) teaches ballet at
 the American Community Association Monday
 through Friday, from September to May. These
 classes are held in the afternoon and are avail-
 able for all interested.
- BAMBOO - Art's House, 28 Lane Xang Avenue, will order.
 Simuang Road near Mekong River.
 Zunblind-Thadvanh, 25 That Luang, has small
 quantities.
 39 Luang Prabang Road, opposite Athene Tailors,
 has poles and bamboo fending.
- BANKS - Banque de l'Indochine, 1 Pang Kham,
 Monday through Friday, 8:30-11:30, 2:45-4:00.
 Banque de Tokyo, 22 Mantha Thourat,
 Monday through Friday, 8:30-11:30, 3:00-4:00.
 Banque Lao Vieng, 39 Pang Kham,
 Monday through Friday, 8:30-12:00, 3:00-5:00.
 Banque National du Laos, across from Lao-Amer-
 ican Center, no street name or number.
 This is a government bank used by businesses
 for letters of credit, etc. Large quantities of
 kip can be purchased there.
 Monday through Friday, 8:00-11:30, 3:00-4:00.
 The Laos Commercial Development Bank, 17 Nokeo
 Koummane, Monday through Friday,
 8:30-12:00, 2:00-4:30.
- BARBER SHOPS - Elysee, 73 Fa Ngum Embankment.
 Le Figaro, 382 Sam Sen Thai.
 Mirado, 279 Sam Sen Thai.
 Mister Ti, 39 Pang Kham, upstairs over Lao
 Vieng Bank.
 Manicures, razor cuts, scalp massage and shaves
 are available. Prices moderate.

- BASKETS** - Local and imported baskets may be found in the Morning and Evening Markets, and on Mahosot, directly behind the Morning Market.
- BEAUTY SALONS** - Bona Coiffure, 11 Pang Kham.
Elysee, 73 Fa Ngum Embankment.
Coiffure d'Art, 13 Mantha Thourat.
Maniphone, 18 Pang Kham (Old Market Square).
- There are numerous beauty salons in Vientiane; some have air-conditioning and hot water, others have fans and cold water only. Manicures and pedicures are available but are given rather inexpertly. Most beauty products are French. It is best to discover your own favorite shop.
- BEVERAGES** - See **SOFT DRINKS**
- BICYCLES** - There are many bicycle shops to be found in the central shopping area as well as on Lane Xang Avenue and Luang Prabang. Most of the shops do repairs also.
Heuang Seng Phaneth, 105 Setthathirath.
Nam Heng, 118 Sam Sen Thai.
Sao Phout, 296-298 Sam Sen Thai.
- BLINDS** - See **BAMBOO**
- BOAT RENTALS** - Boats may be rented below the Salakoktane Restaurant on Thadeua, Km 3.
- BOOKSTORES** - **KATS** (Kaye Ando Technical Service), the main store is on Setthathirath at Sakarinh.
KATS Book Center, 318 Sam Sen Thai.
Books, magazines, and newspapers in English. Gift wrapping paper, greeting cards, bridge tables, stationery, scotch tape, recording tape, paper cups and napkins. **KATS** also handles subscriptions for some magazines and newspapers.
Casa Lao, 371 Sam Sen Thai, French books and magazines.

- BOTTLED GAS** - See **FUEL**
- BOWLING ALLEYS** - A bowling alley is under construction on Thadeua at Km 4.
- BROADCASTING STATIONS** - There are four radio stations in Vientiane broadcasting on standard AM frequencies:
- | | |
|--|----------|
| Chinaimo Station
(5th Military Region,
General Kouprasith) | 1095 Kcs |
| Lao National Radio | 640 Kcs |
| Nong Douang
Signal Corps Station | 950 Kcs |
| Phone Kheng
Central Army Station | 1500 Kcs |
- Three of these stations also broadcast on short wave:
- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| Chinaimo | 6865 Kcs - 43.7 m |
| Lao National Radio | 6130 Kcs - 49 m |
| Phone Kheng | 7600 Kcs - 39.47 m |
- CABLE SERVICE** - Cables may be sent from the Post and Telegraph Office opposite the Morning Market. Overseas calls may also be made from the Post and Telegraph Office, or from your own private telephone.
- CAKES** - See **FOOD**
- CANDLES** - Tang Kim Pheo, 60 Nong Douang.
Most Chinese shops have candles for sale.
- CARPENTRY** - See **FURNITURE**
- CARS** - See **AUTOMOBILES**
- CATERERS** - Concorde, 63-67 Francois Ngin.
Hotel Lane Xang, 77-78 Fa Ngum Embankment.
La Pagode, 79 Nokeo Koummene.
Sea Witch, 68-69 Fa Ngum Embankment.
Settha Palace Hotel, Pang Kham near Khoum Bourom.
Tan Dao Vien, 273 Sam Sen Thai.

- CHAIRS (RENTAL) - See narrative section on Entertaining.
- CHILDREN'S WEAR - The Morning Market has a good variety of children's wear. There are also many shops in the central shopping area that have children's clothes.
- CHURCHES
- Cathedral of the Sacred Heart: Roman Catholic, on Rue de la Mission between Gallieni and Sakarinh. Masses in Vietnamese are at 6:15 and 7:30 AM and 4:45 PM. Masses in French are at 10:00 AM and 6:00 PM. Chappelle Protestant: 36 Phnom Penh. Sunday services in Vietnamese at 8:00 AM and in French at 3:00 PM.
 - Church of the Holy Spirit: Anglican/Episcopal, at the International Protestant Church every second Sunday evening at 6:00 PM, starting on the first Sunday of the month. Services in English.
 - Evangelical Church: Protestant, on Luang Prabang about 2 km from center of town. Services in Chinese at 10:00 AM and 3:00 PM.
 - Immaculata Catholic Church: Roman Catholic, on Thadeua at km 3. Sunday Mass at 9:30 AM in English.
 - International Protestant Church: Interdenominational protestant. Proceed west on Nong Bone past Wat Phone Xay and military camp to the Y in the road; take the right to first right at the rubber shoe factory and proceed to end of road. Sunday School for all ages at 9:45 AM. Sunday worship at 11:00 AM.
 - Notre Dame Church: Roman Catholic, on Nong Bone just beyond Lao Police Building. Masses in Lao at 6:00 and 7:45 AM. Masses in Meo at 9:00 AM. Interesting Meo music. Mass in English at 6:00 PM.
- CLEANING ITEMS - Available in the Morning Market and most hardware stores. Nguam Chang Stores, 336-338 Sam Sen Thai.

- CLOCKS AND WATCHES - Daiwa, 369 Sam Sen Thai, carries Jaeger, Le Coultre, Longines, Tissot. Kiwa, 252 Sam Sen Thai, carries Bulova. Nhut-Tan, 264 Sam Sen Thai, carries Zeiss Rolex. Omega Tissot, 262 Sam Sen Thai Technos-Sandoz, 212 Sam Sen Thai.

There are many other shops in the central shopping area which sell clocks and watches. Daiwa, 369 Sam Sen Thai, is recommended for repairs. Nhut Tan, 264 Sam Sen Thai, has a 6 month guarantee on watch repairs.

CLOTHING
(LADIES AND MEN)

- The Morning Market has a good variety of clothes, as do many shops in the central shopping area.

CLUBS

- Aero Club du Laos, Wattay. For further information leave letter of inquiry at Hotel Lane Xang reception desk c/o Aero Club du Laos.
- AFALI (Lao International Women's Friendship Association).
- Alliance Francaise, Setthathirath, across from Lao-American building. Entrance on Mantha Thourat and Sam Sen Thai at corner.
- American Women's Club of Laos, USAID Compound, House #4.
- French Women's Association.
- Lao-American Association, Setthathirath, across from Air-Booking Center, 38-40 Setthathirath.
- Lao-Australian Association.
- Lao-British Association.
- Lao Red Cross.
- Lao-Vietnamese Association.
- Lao-Women's Association.
- Little Theatre of Vientiane, inquire at the office of the American Community Association in the USAID Compound.
- Masonic Lodge Lane Xang No. 1632. On the rolls of the Grand Lodge of Scotland. Meetings at 7:30 PM on the first Tuesday of the month at the Lane Xang Hotel.

- Riding Club; provides stables, feed and care to members' horses at a nominal fee. It is located at the American Housing Compound at Km-6. Membership is open. See the ACA bulletin Board for information.
- Rotary Club, meetings held at the Lane Xang Hotel each Monday at 6:00 PM.
- Teen Club, open to American teenagers, at Compound House #8 in the USAID Compound.
- Toastmasters Club International; dinner meetings every other Monday at the ACA, 7:00 PM, USAID Compound.
- Vietnamese Women's Association.
- Vientiane Golf Club, on the grounds of the Teacher Training College at Km 9. Can be used only when school is not in session, Saturday afternoons and Sundays. Short-time visitors pay a greens fee and play; residents join as members. Drive out there on Sunday morning and contact a player, who is likely to be a member, and arrange to play.
- COINS - Le Trong Hoang, 332 Sam Sen Thai. Many of the open-front gold shops throughout the city carry coins. They are usually displayed in the cases.
- COMMERCIAL ART, SIGNS - ID'Art Decoration, 300 Sam Sen Thai. Viti Advertising, 21 Thong Toum, off Khoum Bourom.
- COSMETICS - Phenix, 207 Setthathirath, carries Elizabeth Arden, Revlon, Harriet Hubbard Ayer, Nivea, Orlane.) Printemps, 193 Setthathirath, carries Harriet Hubbard Ayer, Orlane, Max Factor, Lubin. Tang Suy Yeh, 224 Sam Sen Thai, carries Elizabeth Arden. Elle, 351 Sam Sen Thai. Most Beauty Shops have a small supply of cosmetics. Perfume can be purchased at many of the shops in the central shopping area.

- CURTAINS & CUSHIONS - See HOUSEHOLD FURNISHINGS.
- DANCING SCHOOL - Mrs. William Holden's School of Ballet, at the American Community Association. Natasinh School of Music and Dance, 60 Khoum Bourom, Lao Classical Dancing.
- DENTISTS & DOCTORS - See HOSPITALS.
- DRESSMAKERS & TAILORS - There are many to be found. The best recommendation is from a friend whose clothes you think well-made.
- DRIVER'S LICENSES - If you have a valid license from another country, a Lao driver's license can be obtained through the Ministry of Public Works, near the Monument to the Dead. Payment of a small fee and four passport-size photos are necessary. International Driver's Licenses are obtained through the same procedure; however, the fee is \$10.00 (US) plus stamp duties.
- DRUGSTORES - See PHARMACIES.
- DRYCLEANING - Bob's, 267 Sam Sen Thai. Hong Kong, 289 Sam Sen Thai. Vientiane, 385 Sam Sen Thai. There are no bona fide "dry cleaners" in Vientiane at the present time. Steam cleaning is the process used. All garments are cleaned at your own risk.
- EGGS - See FOOD.
- ELECTRICAL SUPPLIES AND APPLIANCES, SALES - Nang Kham Sene Luang Amath, 380 Sam Sen Thai. Vientiane Electrical Supplies, 261 Sam Sen Thai. Seng Savang, 53-57 Lane Xang Avenue. Many stores in the central shopping area may carry the item you need.

Consulates:

Belgium, 1 Pang Kham (Banque de L'Indochine).
Denmark, 262 Sam Sen Thai.
Netherlands, 1 Pang Kham (Banque de P'Indo-
chine).

Dooley Foundation, Thadeua Road, Km 3.

Embassies:

Australia, 37 Nehru.
Cambodia, juncture of That Luang Road and road
to Km 6.
China (People's Republic), going west on Khoum
Bourom, on a small road to the right, nearly
opposite Le Ky Huong.
Czechoslovakia, Phagna Si, next to #11, across
the street from #6.
France, Setthathirath, between Mahosot and
Gallieni.
Great Britain, 35 Nehru.
India, Pang Kham, between Sam Sen Thai and
Khoum Bourom.
Indonesia, road to Km. 6, on right going north.
Japan, That Luang Road, just before crossing
Nong Bone at top of hill.
Philippines, Republic of, 112 Thadeua.
Thailand, road to Km 6, on left going north.
United States of America, Bartoloni, near That
Dam.
Union of Soviet Socialistic Republic, Thadeua
Road, 2-1/2 km.
Vietnam, People's Republic, go west at the junc-
ture of Sam Sen Thai and Setthathirath where
Luang Prabang begins, take the road to the
right.
Vietnam, Republic of, 302 Nong Bone.
French Cultural Center, Pang Kham and Sam Sen
Thai.
French Military Mission, Luang Prabang Rd, 3 Km.
International Control Commission:
Canadian Delegation, road to Km 6, on left go-
ing north.
Indian Delegation, That Luang Road, take road
right at the Japanese Embassy.
Polish Delegation, Thadeua Road, 2 km. on left.

International Red Cross, Dr. Baer,
representative, Lane Xang Hotel.

Japanese Overseas Volunteers, road from That
Luang Road at the Ministry of Finance to Nong
Bone.

Operation Brotherhood, Philippine Organization
for Medical Service, at Vientiane Hospital.
United Nations, road to Km 6, just beyond the Thai
Embassy.

United States Agency for International Development
(USAID), Nahaidiao area, go northeast on Lane
Xang, around the monument to the west, enter
street beside the National Assembly, then turn
right around to entrance gate of the compound.
United States Information Service (USIS), go south
on Lane Xang Avenue, after passing monument
and Lycee, it is on the far end of multistoried
building on the right.

World Vision, Protestant service agency, interna-
tional in scope. Concerned mainly with children,
health and education. On lane beside the Lido Ho-
tel, straight ahead at the end.

FUEL (BOTTLED GAS,
BUTANE)

- Ets Quan Heng, 272 Sam Sen Thai
Kim Tsin, 189 Sam Sen Thai
Vientiane Electric Supplier, 177 Sam Sen Thai

FURNITURE

- Mui Heng, 288-290 Sam Sen Thai. Has local fur-
niture, baskets, grass rugs.
Seng Tong, 276 Sam Sen Thai
Societe Menuiserie Lao, Luang Prabang, Km-2
Tada, Lane Xang Avenue, (owner Tada Arunkit).
Good custom-made furniture of European design
using kiln dried teak.
Many more small furniture shops not listed; try
one!

GARAGES

- See AUTOMOBILES

GARDENING

- See Narrative Section

- GLASS CUTTING - Sam Sen Thai, between Bob's Dry Cleaners & Tan Dao Vien Restaurant (273 Sam Sen Thai). If you want a mirror, glass, or a bottle cut, he can help you.
Tada, Lane Xang Avenue, mirrors made to order.
- GLASS RENTALS - See Narrative Section on Entertaining
- GOLF COURSES - See CLUBS
- GOLF COURSES (MINIATURE) - There are two miniature golf courses to be found in Vientiane. One is located on Luang Prabang on the way to Wattay Airport, while the other is on the corner of Thadeua and Rue Circulaire.
- GREETING CARDS - See BOOKSTORES
- HAIRGOODS - See BEAUTY SALONS
- HANDICRAFTS - Lao Handicrafts Center, Luang Prabang and Sam Sen Thai. This government-operated shop sells arts and crafts from all parts of the Kingdom. The adjacent workshops are open to the public for a view of the artisans at work weaving, wood sculpting, making pottery and doing silver work. Shop hours: 9 - 12, 3 - 5:30 Monday thru Friday.
9 - 12 Saturday
Closed Sunday
Narimans, Luang Prabang, across from Chez Marcelle.
Selecta, Pang Kham, across from Settha Palace.
Curios and antiques from India, Nepal and Tibet.
Vientiane Souvenirs, on street in front of new evening market near Nong Daung Road. Antiques and curios from Thailand and Laos.
- HARDWARE - There are many hardware stores in the central shopping areas and so we shall list just a few.
Chareun Phong, 42-44 Sam Sen Thai.
Kim Sua, 237-239 Sam Sen Thai (corner Chao Anou)
Seng Savang, 53-57 Lane Xang Avenue, opposite Morning Market.
Sivathana, 27-29 Lane Xane Avenue, opposite the Morning Market.

HI FI EQUIPMENT

- See RADIOS

HOSPITALS, DOCTORS, DENTISTS

- Mahosot, Rue Mahosot, just off the river.
General hospital, government run with French doctors and French trained Lao doctors. Has outpatient facilities and ambulance service. Developing with the help of WHO advisors. Schools of nursing. French and Lao spoken. Some of the doctors also have private offices in town.
Vientiane Hospital, Nong Bone between Road to Km. 6 and That Luang. Formerly Operation Brotherhood (Philippine) project, now Lao government. General hospital with outpatient department and ambulance service. Newer building, more modern equipment than Mahosot. English and Lao spoken. Supervisory staff is still Filipino. Mostly qualified Filipino physicians on duty daily in the hospital to see patients. They do not have private offices. Dental clinic, usually two or three Filipino dentists in attendance.
Dr. Caroli at the dental school on Mahosot near Sam Sen Thai, upstairs. French speaking, practices general dentistry and occasional orthodontia. Is advisor to the Lao School of Dentistry.
In Vientiane there are a number of small proprietary hospitals as well as the two government hospitals mentioned but most of them are obstetrical hospitals. Throughout Laos there are general hospitals in the larger towns and in many areas there are outpatient facilities and dispensaries. Some facilities are run by various foreign missions; others are Lao government operated, either civil or military. Still others are cooperative operations between USAID and the Lao government.
Most foreigners having elective surgery or extensive laboratory studies and observation tend to go to Bangkok or Manila, or return to their native countries.
The large French and American missions in Laos have their own facilities for medical care of their personnel.

- Most foreigners go to Bangkok where there are specialists for extensive dental work. Many also go for routine checks, as preventive dentistry in Laos is not highly developed.
- HOTELS**
- Anou, 9-11 Rue Du Boun. Air-conditioned rooms, private bath, T.V. and refrigerators. Good value.
 - Bis, 61-63 Chao Anou. Some rooms air-conditioned and some with private bath. No dining room.
 - Constellation, 379 Sam Sen Thai. Some rooms with air conditioning and some with private bath. Bar and snacks.
 - International Hotel and Restaurant, 1 Chao Anou. Air-conditioned rooms with bath.
 - Lane Xang, 77-78 Quai Fa Ngum. Air-conditioned rooms with private baths, facing the river with dining room and banquet room. There is a swimming pool which is a private club but hotel guests may use it. Expensive.
 - Settha Palace, Pang Kham near Khoum Bourom. A few air-conditioned rooms with private bath. Generally fully booked. Restaurant.
- HOUSEHOLD FURNISHINGS**
- Curtains and cushions made to order by most yard goods shops in the central shopping area.
 - Paitoon, on the road from the Monument to the USAID compound also makes them, along with slipcovers.
 - Lao bedding and mattresses may be found in some of the shops on Sam Sen Thai.
 - Lampshades: See listing
 - Cleaning Items: See listing
 - See listing for individual items needed.
- ICE (BLOCK & CRUSHED)**
- Chuya Yuan, 227 Sam Sen Thai
80 Nehru (Pepsi sign)
- ICE CREAM**
- This is sometimes available in the grocery stores.
- INSURANCE**
- Compagnie "La Generale De Commerce Lao,"
262 Sam Sen Thai
Denis Freres, 203 Setthathirath
Manley Enterprises, That Luang
- IRONWORK**
- Lao Metal, That Luang, opposite Cambodian Embassy
45 Luang Prabang
Vientiane Kame Sang, " Nang Seng, " 74 Sam Sen Thai. Wrought-iron candlesticks, furniture, screen and window guards.
- JEWELRY**
- There are many jewelry stores to be found in Vientiane and so we shall list only a few.
Bijouterie Mondia, 355 Sam Sen Thai.
Hanoi Bijoux, 62 Pang Kham.
Saigon Bijoux, 367 Sam Sen Thai
Vilayphone, 346 Sam Sen Thai.
In addition to these, there are many small stores dealing in gold and silver.
- KEYS**
- Keys may be made at 45 Sam Sen Thai.
- KINDERGARTENS**
- Alliance Francaise, Setthathirath, across the street from the Lao-American Association. Ages 3-5. French spoken. open morning and/or afternoon. Tuition.
Chinese Catholic Center, 29 Inpeng.
Ages 3-5. Chinese spoken. Open mornings. Tuition.
International School, Luang Prabang, Km-2.
Ages 4-5. English spoken. Open mornings. Transportation. Tuition.
Vientiane Pre-School, USAID housing compound at Km-6.
Ages 3-5. English spoken. Open mornings. Tuition.
- LAMP SHADES**
- Objects D'Art, Mahosot, behind the Morning Market Paitoon, right hand side of the road on the way to USAID compound; less than a block from the Monument. Slipcovers and lampshades made to order.
Tada, Lane Xang Avenue
- LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION**
- Alliance Francaise on Setthathirath at Mantha Thourat has classes in French.
British Information Service, Sam Sen Thai, has English classes.

Lao-American Association has classes in English and Lao. It is located on Yonnet near the fountain on Pang Kham.

LAUNDRIES

- Bob's, 267 Sam Sen Thai
 - Hong Kong, 289 Sam Sen Thai
 - Vientiane, 385 Sam Sen Thai
- Most laundry is done in the home by laundry girls or wash "amahs." Laundries in Laos do not have special soaps, bleaches, or detergents. Scorching can be frequent because charcoal irons are used.

LAWNMOWERS

- These may be found in some of the hardware stores. They may be sharpened at Lao Metal, That Luang, opposite the Cambodia Embassy.

LIBRARIES

- American (USIS) Library. USIS Building on Lane Xang Avenue. Books in English, French, Thai, Lao, and Vietnamese. This collection also includes children's books as well as English-language newspapers and magazines.
Hours: Monday-Friday 7:30-12 noon, 2:30-6 PM
Saturday 9-12 noon, 2:30-6 PM
Sunday Closed

Bibliotheque Nationale. Palais du Gouvernement, across from the National Assembly on the Place du Monument. Over 10,000 books in French and Lao.

Hours during school season:

Tuesday-Sunday 9-6 PM

Monday Closed

Closed one month during the school vacation.

British Information Service Library. On Sam Sen Thai between Lane Xang Avenue and Tiane Thakoumane. British books, magazines, newspapers.

Hours: Monday 3-6 PM

Tuesday-Saturday 9-12 noon, 3-6 PM

Sunday Closed

Centre Culturel Francais Bibliotheque. Old market square.

French books and magazines.

Hours: Monday 3-7 PM

Tuesday-Saturday 9-12 noon, 3-7 PM

Sunday 10-12 noon

(Books can only be borrowed from 10-12 noon and 3-6:30 PM.)

Library Club of Laos. Compound House No. 4, USAID Compound. Membership available to anyone for \$10 a year per family.

Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Friday 5-6 PM

Tuesday, Thursday 10-11 AM

Saturday 10-12 noon

LICENSE PLATES

- Buy applications at the Ministry of Public Works, near the Monument to the Dead. Both size of plates and fee charged depend on category of the vehicle. Automobile licenses must be renewed each year.

LIQUOR & WINES

- Cases of liquor, wine and beer may be arranged for at Sogiemex, 131 Chao Anou. Most grocery stores also sell liquor and soft drinks.

LIVERY STABLES

- See CLUBS

LUGGAGE

- Inexpensive luggage may be purchased throughout the markets. However, for better luggage, including some famous name-brands, the stores on Chao Anou, near the theater and going towards Sam Sen Thai, carry the most consistent supply.

LUMBER

- Lumber companies are found on:
Lane Xang Avenue beyond the Monument on the way out of town.
That Luang
Luang Prabang on the way to the airport
Thadeua
Plywood and masonite may be found at most hardware stores.

MAGAZINES

- See BOOKSTORES & NEWSPAPERS

- MATTRESSES - See HOUSEHOLD FURNISHINGS
- MIRRORS - See GLASS CUTTING
- MOTORCYCLES - There are many shops which sell a variety of motorcycles and so we shall list just a few.
Ets Chip Xeng, 3A Luang Prabang (Honda)
Nang Iem, 153 Setthathirath
Suzuki Motors, Thadeua
Suzuki Motors, 62 Setthathirath
Yamaha, 44 Setthathirath. May also order pianos here.
- MOVING & STORAGE - See PACKERS
- MUSEUMS - Ethnic and Traditional Arts of Laos, Lao Handicrafts Center, Luang Prabang and Sam Sen Thai.
Hours: 7:30-12 noon, 2:30-5 PM Mon. thru Fri.
7:30-12 noon Saturday
Closed : Sunday
Wat Pra Keo, Mahosot at Setthathirath
Hours: 8-11:30 AM, 2-5 PM. Open every day.
- MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS - There is a very limited supply of musical instruments available.
L'Amitie , off Chao Anou between Sam Sen Thai and Setthathirath.
Nang Iem, 153 Setthathirath
Vieng Lao Sports, 66 Chao Anou
In addition, the novelty shops on Pang Kham and Chao Anou carry an occasional instrument.
- NEWSPAPERS - The Bangkok Post - home delivery available from Suchinda Book Center, 42 Sihom Street.
The Bangkok World - home delivery available from KATS (Kaye Ando Technical Service), Setthathirath and Zakarine.
Lao Presse - This is the official government newspaper and is in French. Available at the Ministry of Information, Setthathirath and Pang Kham, across from Old Market Square.
Le Monde - available only by subscription at Casa Lao, 371 Sam Sen Thai.

NIGHTCLUBS

- English-language magazines and The Bangkok Post, The Bangkok World, and the International Herald Tribune can be purchased at bookstores and shops downtown. Kaye Ando also handles subscriptions for certain magazines.
- Concorde, 63-67 Francois Nginn. Nice atmosphere, small dance floor, bar. Good Filipino band with vocalist. Occasionally special flook show. Dining. Air-conditioned.
El Morocco, Bang-Fay, far end. Live music, rock. Dance floor, generally busy. Hostesses. Bar.
Lido, Chantha Koummane, just at corner of Sam Sen Thai. Floor shows, orchestra, some dancing. Bar. Hostesses.
Pakaban, Bang-Fay. Before El Morocco on opposite side of the street. Small, canned music. Bar. Hostesses.
Third Eye, Bang-Fay, first part of the strip, left side. Small, bar, food. Psychedelic atmosphere. Taped music, occasional live music. Guitar, folk music.
Vieng Ratry, Rue Circulaire, short way off Nong Bone on the right side. Live music, floor shows. Air-conditioned. Bar and Hostesses.
There are many nightspots throughout the city. A few have floor shows from time to time; most have at least taped music. Many are not more than bars with hostesses. The liveliest ones seem to be where there is a good band. The bands are generally Filipino and if they change location, the crowd goes with them.
- NOTARIES PUBLIC - See your own Embassy.
- NOTIONS & TRIMMINGS - The best supplied shop in Vientiane is located on the east side of the Morning Market. They carry almost all necessary needs for the sewer, including a large variety of zippers and trims. In addition, nearly every dressmaker and tailor carry some notions.

- NURSERY - See GARDENING
- OFFICE SUPPLIES - The following stores carry a large variety of office supplies, most of which are a good buy in Vientiane.
L'Amitie, off Chao Anou, between Sam Sen Thai and Setthathirath.
Somboun Souvannavong, corner Setthathirath and Mantha Thourat (also typewriter service)
Tai Fa, 56 Setthathirath
Vieng Lao Sports, 66 Chao Anou (poster paper)
"Y" Service, Luang Prabang (machine repairs)
- OPTOMETRISTS - See EYEGLASSES
- ORGANIZATIONS - See CLUBS
- OVERSEAS CALLS - See CABLE SERVICE
- PACKERS - American Transpack Lao, 1 Old Market Square
Vanpac, Nong Bone near Vientiane (OB) Hospital
Packing and shipping of household effects.
- PAINTS - A large variety of household and spray paints can be found at the hardware stores. (For location see Hardware Stores) In addition, spray paints can be found at automotive supply stores, of which there are a large number in the general shopping area.
- PEST CONTROL - Mr. Meyrand, 531 Sam Sen Thai (near Simuang)
Termite service available on monthly basis.
- PETS - Rabbits, goats, birds, etc. are to be found at the Morning Market. Fish and birds at Art's House, 28 Lane Xang Ave. Dogs and cats are usually advertised for sale or give-away.
- PHARMACIES - Comptoir Pharmaceutique du Laos, 350 Sam Sen Thai
Nakornvieng Medical Supply, 84 Khom Bourom, open Sundays.
Pang Kham Osoth, 23 Place Ancien Marche, open Sundays.

- Pharmacie Francaise, 88 Khom Bourom, open Sundays.
Pharmacie du Laos, 57-59 Nokeo Koummane.
Union Pharmacie, 57 Pang Kham at Sam Sen Thai.
There are many more stores selling drugs than these listed but the listed ones seem to have a generally better supply. There are no "drug stores" or "chemists" in Laos; however, most drugs are available at one time or another (often with no prescription necessary). It is wise to check expiration dates on drugs before buying. There are also Chinese shops which sell various roots and herbs used in medicines.
- PHILATELIC SUPPLIES - Hua Bon Lap, 68 Khom Bourom (upstairs).
Sells stamps on approval. Has a fairly complete stock.
Hong Senh Duang, 22 Sam Sen Thai.
Sells stamps, albums, first-day covers, hinges, etc.
Le Trong Huang, 332 Sam Sen Thai
Specializes in Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia.
Post Office, Lane Xang Avenue, next to the Morning Market. For Philatelic Department enter by the side door and turn right. Go there for new issues, sheets and first-day covers (Lao stamps). Go as early as possible after issue, as they sell out quickly.
There are several variety stores on Pang Kham and Sam Sen Thai which carry stamps. They usually have signs outside their stores indicating this.
At the Morning Market some of the dealers outside the main market building selling stones, Tibetan and Nepali souvenirs have stamps to sell. Ask.
- PHOTOGRAPHERS - King Photo, intersection of Sam Sen Thai, Setthathirath and Thadeua.
Kings Studio Photo, 168 Khom Bourom
Lane Xang Photo, 94-96 Rue du Roi Anou
Robert Hu, contact at reception desk, Lane Xang Hotel. Special events, parties, style shows, etc.

- PHOTOGRAPHIC SUPPLIES & DEVELOPING - Photo Nghe Ank, 149 Setthathirath and 206 Sam Sen Thai
Luxe Photo-Canon, 87 Khoum Bourom (across from Natasinh School)
Smart Photo, 246 Sam Sen Thai
- PICTURE FRAMING - Objects D'Art, 7 Mahosot, behind the Morning Market
Tada, Lane Xang Avenue
- PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT - Laothong Furniture, 15-17 That Luang
- PLUMBER - Le Van Ninh, Nong Bone opposite Police Headquarters.
- POSTAGE STAMPS - These may be obtained at the Post & Telegraph office, opposite the Morning Market.
- PRINTERS - Imprimerie Khoua Luang, 2-4-6 Khoua Luang (near Evening Market)
Imprimerie Nationale (Lao Photo Press), Sam Sen Thai
Laovathana Printing, 102 Chao Anou
Service Geographique, near USAID Compound
Calling cards and invitation cards. Other types of general printing. Engraving is not done.
- RADIO SALES & REPAIRS - Hi Fi Lao, 74 Pang Kham. This shop is able to repair most radios, photographs, tape recorders, etc.
Records are available at many of the radio shops.
New Sing Radio, 53 Pang Kham
Seng Huong, 102 Khoum Bourom
Seng Tsiang Radio, 37 Pang Kham
Siangxay Radio, 44 Setthathirath
- REFRIGERATORS - See ELECTRICAL SUPPLIES
- RENTALS - See AUTOMOBILES, ELECTRICAL SUPPLIES & ENTERTAINING

RESTAURANTS

- Ancel, 48 Nokeo Koummane. Vietnamese food.
Chez Marcelle, 40-42 Luang Prabang. European food, mainly French.
Concorde, 63-67 Francois Nginn. European with emphasis on French food. Air-conditioned. Live music at night.
Lien Nghi, 38-40-42 Du Boun. Chinese and Vietnamese food.
Novelty, 5 Pang Kham. European food. Steaks and spaghetti.
Pizzeria, 32 Nokeo Koummane. Small, many kinds of pizza. Open late.
Rosemarie, 15 Pang Kham. Onion soup a specialty.
Rathskeller, Settha Palace Hotel on Pang Kham near Khoum Bourom. American food. Air-conditioned. Taped music, occasionally live organ or piano music.
Salakoktane, Thadeua, about KM-2. European, Japanese and Chinese food. Outdoor dining on the river.
Sea Witch, 68-69 Quai Fa Ngum. American food, small and air-conditioned.
Ta Ka Ra, 135 Luang Prabang. Korean and Japanese food.
Tan Dao Vien, 273 Sam Sen Thai. Chinese.
Separated dining areas upstairs. Air-conditioned. Large.

RUBBER STAMPS

- Vieng Lao Sports, 66 Chao Anou

SAND

- Dell & Company, opposite exit to USAID Compound
Dolorofino Company, take Bang-Fay, turn left before Leeville at El Morocco. Follow road to the bridge. The Dolorofino Co. is in a walled-in compound on the right side, just before the bridge.

SCHOOLS

- American School of Vientiane. Kindergarten through grade 10. Located at KM-6 in the USAID housing compound. American system. English spoken. Open to English-speaking children. Tuition.

Chinese School. There are two large Chinese schools in Vientiane. The older one is on the corner of Khoum Bourom at No. 1 Rue du Boun; the newer, larger one is found by going north on Chao Anou, crossing Khoum Bourom, to the first crossroad where a right turn is made. The school is only a few meters just off the road on the left.

Darasamouth College. Nine years of school. Going north the first road right at the Monument. Catholic school. French system. French spoken. Tuition.

International School of Laos. Six years of school. About 2 kilometers on Luang Prabang. British system. English spoken. Tuition. Tutoring for the higher grades.

Lycee de Vientiane. Lao government school, staffed by French teachers. Lane Xang Avenue just south of the Monument. 13 years of school. French system. French language. Open to Lao citizens and children whose parents are associated with foreign missions. Nominal fee.

Military Mission School of France. Off Luang Prabang Road in the French Military Mission Compound. French system. French spoken. Six years of schooling. Currently there are classes for non-French speaking children. Tuition.

Philippine School of Laos. Six years of school. Going north on Chao Anou, after crossing Khoum Bourom, turn right at the first crossroad and proceed for about one kilometer; the school is on the left. Philippine-American system. English spoken. Special remedial English classes in the summer. Tuition.

Lycees are also in Sayaboury, Vang Vieng, Luang Prabang, Thakhek, Savannakhet, and Pakse. French is spoken.

Throughout Laos there are government primary schools where Lao is spoken. In addition there are technical schools in both Savannakhet and Vientiane; the one in Vientiane has German technicians. There are other specialized schools at the same level where Lao is spoken.

The Lao Government has Teacher Training Colleges in Pakse, Luang Prabang, Savannakhet, Sam Thong, Vang Vieng, Bankoun and Vientiane. The Vientiane College has three streams according to the language of instruction -- Lao, French or English.

- SEEDS - See GARDENING
- SEWING EQUIPMENT - See NOTIONS & TRIMMINGS
- SEWING MACHINES - Ets Chip Xeng, 3A Luang Prabang
Nang Iem, 153 Setthathirath
Vang Say Pha Nith, 185-187 Setthathirath
- SHOES - These may be found in the central shopping areas and in the Morning Market.
- SHOE REPAIRS - Nangaray Sakankhon, 51 Pang Kham
This shop also repairs handbags and other leather goods. Some riding equipment like saddles and bridles are sometimes to be found.
- SOFT DRINKS - The following locations are outlets which sell cases of soft drinks and beer. Most grocery stores carry a variety of soft drinks and beer. (See Food)
- Green Spot, 278 Sam Sen Thai
Pepsi Cola, 32 Rue Sihom
Cosco Bottling Co., 43 New Market Road
Societe Dai Dong, 80A Luang Prabang (soda water)
Tonic water can sometimes be found in the grocery stores.
- SPORTING GOODS - Chantra, 89 Setthathirath
Som Chay, 359 Sam Sen Thai
Vieng Lao Sports, 66 Chao Anou
- STAMPS - See PHILATELIC SUPPLIES & POSTAGE
- STATIONERY - See BOOKSTORES

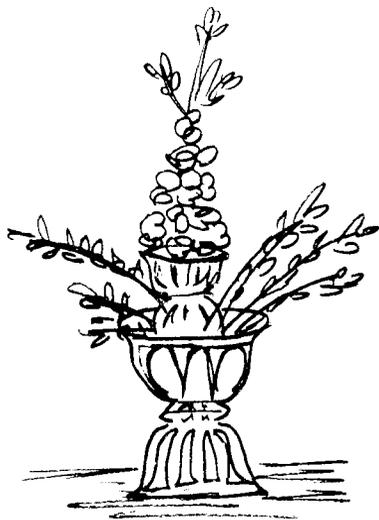
- SWIMMING POOLS - The only swimming pool open to the general public, but on a membership basis, is at the Hotel Lane Nang, 77-78 Quai Fa Ngum.
- TAILORS - See DRESSMAKERS
- TEXTILES - See YARD GOODS
- THEATRES - Bua Savanh, Rue Du Boun on the corner of Khoum Bourom, American, Thai, Indian and Chinese films. Lao sound track or subtitles. Fans.
Lane Nang, Lane Nang Avenue, next to the Lycee in the same building as the USIS Library. Generally French, English or American films. Subtitles in Chinese, Lao, Vietnamese and Thai. Most comfortable theatre, best seats.
Seng Lao, 48 Chao Anou, generally Thai movies, sometimes American and Chinese movies, Lao dubbed in except at the late show. Air-conditioned.
Vieng Savang, next to the Seng Lao, programs about the same. Fans.
- THRIFT SHOP - This is located at Building I-1, USAM Compound, Na Hai Diao. New and used clothing, books, records and appliances. Sponsored by the American Women's Club of Laos.
- TILE - Cement tiles are to be found at 14 Rue Thongtoun, off Khoum Bourom. There are also places on Luang Prabang which sell them, but they are not numbered.
- TINSMITHS - 120-75 Sam Sen Thai
- TIRES - See AUTOMOBILES
- TOYS - Ginza, 50 Chao Anou
Kong Kam, 46 Chao Anou
Ngo-Tong, 353 Sam Sen Thai
Nguam Cheng Store, 336-338 Sam Sen Thai
Princesse, 344 Sam Sen Thai
Vinh An, 55 Pang Kham
Vinh Loi, 111 Chao Anou (remodelling)

- TRAVEL AGENCIES - Air Booking Center, 38-40 Setthathirath
Denis Freres, 203 Setthathirath
Manley Enterprises, That Luang, opposite Ministry of Finance
Sino-British (Laos), 377 Sam Sen Thai

- VETERINARIANS - Lao Veterinary Service. At present the only identifying sign is written in Lao but it is on Si Thane near the Asia Foundation office. Vaccinations and treatment for sick animals. Occasionally French or English understood.
The service is not advanced enough to adequately treat all sick domestic animals so it is best for the visitor to insure his animals health by preventive measures. The people working there are mainly technicians and not equipped to diagnose. The veterinarian seems to be out in the field a great deal. Although prevalent, distemper is not treated by vaccination and the vaccine does not seem to be available. Rabies vaccination is done but often the center does not have the vaccine. It has to be purchased outside (Union Pharmacy, when available) and brought to the center where they will give it. Before bringing in the animal it is best to go to the center first to determine the time of day the treatment can be given and if the vaccine needed is available there. Be sure to ask specifically each question. The fees for service are reasonable and the personnel courteous.

- WATCHES - See CLOCKS

- YARD GOODS - Many fabrics suitable for dressmaking, tailoring and household furnishings, are to be found at shops in the main shopping areas, and also in the Morning Market.



LAO CUSTOMS, HOLIDAYS, AND FESTIVALS

THE BACI

One of the most charming of all Lao customs is "the baci". This ceremony of prayers and good wishes is uniquely Lao and is celebrated nowhere else. If you have the good fortune to be invited to a baci while you are in Laos, the following account will give a good idea of what you can expect. This information has been obtained through the kind services of Operation Brotherhood International.

At arm's length in front of you is a phakuan, an elaborate bouquet of champa and other flowers sticking out from a cone made of banana leaves, whose base rests on a silver, intricately carved urn (a khan), which in turn rests on a broad, tin tray surrounded with bottles of Lao-Lao (rice wine), boiled chicken, kunom (cakes), bananas, hard-boiled eggs, kaotom (steamed rice with a slice of banana all wrapped in small packages of banana leaves). It is the loving handiwork of the host's mother, or his wife, assisted by other elderly female neighbors.

You will note that there are thin white cotton strings dangling limply from the flowers. There are also quite a number of people sitting around you and the phakuan. You, the celebrant, are in the center of things. There is murmur of small talk, perhaps about how such a good-looking person can be so young, or perhaps about that lost look in your eyes.

The mohpohn arrives, an elderly man with a white silk-like scarf worn like a sash across his front. He sits on the opposite side of the phakuan, facing you. The mohpohn is no ordinary man of the village; he has spent quite a number of his years as a monk and is therefore highly respected for his piety, his wisdom, his unblemished reputation. He lights the finger-thin candles peeking among the champa blossoms, clears his throat, joins his hands in prayer, and in a fast, solemn monologue, addresses the gods in a mixture of Pali and Lao:

"Sakké who dwells in the paradise of the 16 regions;
 Kamé who dwells in the Kamaphob,
 Charoupé who dwells in the Roupaphob and in the
 divine spheres,
 Khirisi who dwells in inanimate things, the mountains
 and the rivers.
 You, divinities of the mountains and the rivers, be
 favorable to us;
 Listen all of you;
 Silent ones, lend a kindly ear to the invitation
 which I send to you;
 Come and gather the gifts offered to you on this day."

As celebrant, you touch three or four fingers of one extended hand to the rim of the khan as the prayers are chanted, while the others join their hands in prayer. The invitation is now extended to your soul or souls, for you have thirtytwo of them (one each for every part of your body) which are "vagabond in nature," ever eager to break away and roam the fields:

"Come back, oh soul, come along the path which has been
 cleaned and is open to you;
 Come home;
 Wade through the river if it only comes up to your chest;
 Swim if the river is deep;
 When you arrive at the ray, don't hide in the huts;
 When you come up to the tree stump, do not rest your
 head on it.
 Do not fear when you come near.
 Have no fear of ghosts or geniuses.
 Come, oh soul, if you have eaten with the evil spirits,
 vomit it,
 If you have been chewing with the evil spirits, spit
 it out.
 You must come back on an empty stomach, and eat rice with
 your uncle, and eat fish with your ancestors."

If the prayers don't beckon them back, the flowers and the food are present to tempt them right back into your innards. When these souls are now safely tucked in, the blessings of the mohpohn are pronounced over you for the specific occasion for which the baci is being performed. Thus, if you are a newcomer, there is a wish that no calamity befall you while in Lao. If you have just recovered from sickness, the wish is that you "be as strong as the antlers of a stag, as the jaws of a wild boar, as the tasks of an elephant." If the occasion is marriage, "may you have a dozen children, an obedient wife," The crowd agrees with a distinct "Sa!" (So be it.)

Join your hands in thanks. Then raise your left hand as if to shield your left cheek and extend your right, upon which an egg or a chicken leg and a flower or a piece of cake are placed. The mohpohn reaches to tie the white strings around your wrists, while murmuring more blessings and wishes. You will feel the touch of many fingers on your elbow, your thigh, back, arm, leg, as those sitting closest to you partake of the blessings by touch. The touch is also the gesture with which they invoke the same blessings on you. If you look back, you will note that everybody is touching each other in the same manner, so that the blessings are infused into one and all.

The host now takes your wrists, twines his strings around it, says his blessings, knots the string, pushes and rubs it into your pulse to imbue the blessings with more efficacy and strength, and finally blows onto your wrists to signify he is through. Soon everybody is tying the white strings around both your wrists. There may be giggles because some of the wishes are so exaggerated. Jiggers of the Lao-Lao are being passed around, most of them coming your way. Lunch follows.

Although performed by Buddhists, the baci is not a Buddhist religious ceremony: it predates Buddhism's arrival in the Kingdom and is the Lao's most unique way of expressing his good will. It is sincere in its simplicity, warm in its blessings, and generous in its gifts. It is the all-purpose ceremony which greets the newborn baby, sets him off on a journey, welcomes his return, honors his achievements, weds him to his wife, bids him goodbye, celebrates his escape from injury, his triumph over sickness.

It is traditional to keep the strings around your wrists for three days. They serve as your protection against the hordes of evil spirits that lurk in the forests and along the pathways, not only of Laos, but of life itself. The cotton thread, although fragile and soft and common, is a symbol of continuity and permanence because centuries of Lao ancestors have been spinning it, and it is still being spun under many village homes where time has not moved much through the seasons. It is white, the Lao color for warmth and honesty and peace.



HOLIDAYS

Traditional Lao holidays and festivals do not fall on the same date each year. They are determined by the Lao calendar which is essentially different from the Gregorian. Although the Lao calendar, like the Gregorian, counts years, months, weeks, and days, it is based on the luni-solar system. The sun's apparent movement around the earth determines the year, while the month is lunar and coincides with each new lunar cycle.

The time element between each new moon is about 29-1/4 days. To avoid confusion, the ancients decided that all even-numbered months (the second, fourth, sixth, eighth, tenth, and twelfth) should consist of thirty days and that all remaining months (the odd-numbered ones) should be of twenty-nine days' length. Twelve lunar months such as these only add up to a year of 354 days. Consequently, a series of complicated astronomical calculations were employed to create a supplementary month that ensures the year's correspondence with seasons.

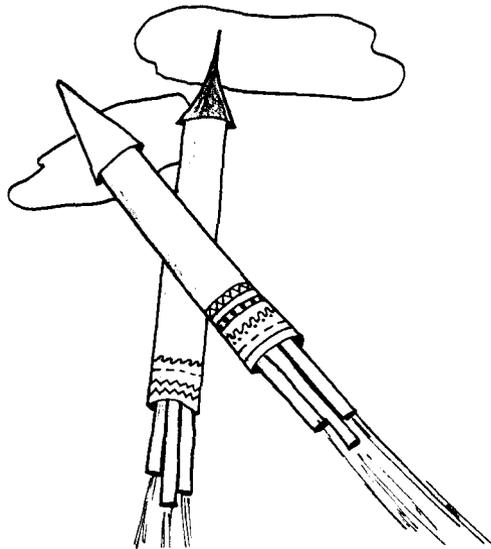
Thus the system of the calendar, a solar one as a whole and a lunar one in its details, requires long computations to determine whether the year is to be one of twelve ordinary months, one of twelve months with an extra month of thirty days, or one of thirteen months and a leap year.

The first month of the lunar year corresponds to December in the Gregorian calendar. However, the Lao New Year begins in the fifth month because astrologists chose to place it under the most favorable auspices. It is thought that a year beginning in the fifth month, April, offers the best prospects for happiness and prosperity.

Both religious and profane holidays are calculated by mathematical formula. Modern holidays are observed on fixed dates.

The following are approximate times for Lao holidays and festivals:

Mid-April	Lao New Year (Pi Mai)
May 1	Day of Birth, Enlightenment, and Death of Buddha (Visakhabouxa)
May 11	Lao Constitution Day
July 13	Beginning of Buddhist Lent (Khaovatsa)
July 19	Lao National Day (Independence)
September	Lao Rice Growing Day (Hokhao Padap-Din)
September	Lao Rice Donation Day (Hokhao Salak)
October	End of Buddhist Lent (Aukvatsa)
October	Vientiane Boat Racing Day
October	Late King Sisavang Vong Memorial Day
November	Wat Simoung Festival (Vientiane)
	Day of Allegiance "
	That Luang Festival "
	Wat Ong Tu Festival "
	Wat Inpeng Festival "
February	Wat Phu Festival (Champassak)
	Buddhist All Saints' Day (Makha Bouxa)
March 23	Lao National Army Day



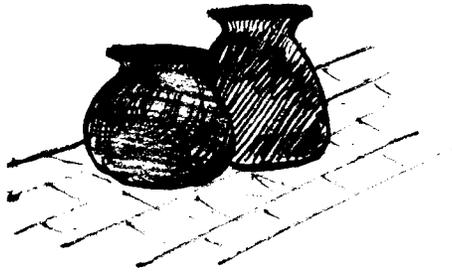
FESTIVALS

The Lao love the entertainment and rejoicing that accompany the festivities which celebrate seasonal changes, important dates in the life of Buddha, and loyalty to the King. The more popular festivals are enjoyed with greater abandon in the villages and smaller towns.

The Royal Capital of Luang Prabang is the place to go for Pi Mai. There the New Year's celebrations last for more than a week. Although many of the ceremonies marking the coming of the New Year are essentially religious, there is also an atmosphere of funmaking and merriment during the ritual water sprinkling. Modern-day revelers arm themselves with toy water pistols, bamboo bazookas, and plastic bags filled with water so that everyone is simply awash with wishes of good health, wealth, and happiness.

The Rocket Festival (Bang Fay), which occurs during the full moon of May, heralds the beginning of the rainy season. It is a time of carnival before the fields must be plowed and the rice planted. There is a spirit of Mardi Gras with singing, dancing, games, puppet shows, and then the greatest show of all - the firing of the rockets which have been lovingly constructed by villagers in and around Vientiane. A bamboo launching pad is erected on the dry river bed of the Mekong, and from there the colorful missiles either soar into graceful arcs over the water, sputter embarrassingly short distances, or sometimes explode in noisy backfires before lift-off. Prizes are awarded for the best rockets and for the individual and group costumes and musical performances. In Vientiane the entire population turns out and always enjoys itself immensely.

The That Luang Festival in November is preceded by Wat Simoung Festival and Wat Ong Tu and Wat Inpeng Festivals, which are primarily Buddhist celebrations. On the Day of Allegiance all civil servants, notables and high-ranking military men take the oath of loyalty to the King. For the public, That Luang Festival offers horse racing, football, judo exhibitions, band concerts, films and exhibits set up by the foreign missions and the Royal Lao Government. One highlight of the festival is the yearly performance of the traditional game of "ti-khi". There is the home team and the invaders, but any number can play - and do. The players use a curved stick, wielded as a weapon sometimes, to hit the bamboo-root ball. Since there are no rules and no referee, almost anything goes. Ti-khi is enjoyed more as an entertainment than as a sport.



LAO ARTS AND HANDICRAFTS

Ninety-five percent of the population of Laos are subsistence-level farmers. Handicrafts as a home industry has always played a large role in the economy, for it enables the people to meet their needs. Until recent years, currency was not in general use outside the cities. Instead, barter trade was the prevalent method of payment. A basket, a bit of weaving or embroidery would be exchanged for such necessary items as salt, a new water jar, or sleeping mats.

In the past, the handicrafts most indigenous to Laos were weaving, pottery, wood carving, and silver work. Bamboo work was considered a utilitarian art, and only those articles needed in the home were made. Weaving was and still is, an indispensable domestic chore. From earliest childhood little girls help dye, spin the thread, and learn to weave the sarongs, sampots, scarves, skirts and borders for the family wardrobe.

The women of Sam Neua are recognized as perhaps the best weavers in Laos and are particularly famous for their pictorial, animal designs. With Sam Neua in enemy hands today, the women have continued their skillful art in various refugee villages and sell their unique designs through outlets in Vientiane. Thakhek women also do expert weaving, specializing in the multi-colored borders which Lao women stitch to the hems of their sinhs but which Westerners use with great imagination to make pillow covers, wall hangings, and bedspreads. Luang Prabang is well-known for its beautifully woven gossamer scarves and stoles, some with gold and silver threads.

Until recently, vegetable dyes were used for dyeing thread in silk and cotton weaving throughout Laos, but improved dyeing techniques and chemical dyes promoted by the Lao Handicrafts Center soon will guarantee fast colors for hand-woven Laotian fabrics.

The finest silver work is done in Luang Prabang. Ornate bowls, knives, and swords are the best examples of this art.

The pagodas in Laos are characteristic examples of wood carving as a decorative art, but because of a lack of craftsmen this skill is not highly practiced today. The new Lao Handicrafts Center promises a revival of this art when the wood sculpture workshop and its training program have had time to show results.

Excavations in Laos have turned up 300 and 400 year-old pot shards which prove the existence in former times of a most prosperous pottery industry. In the modern era only a minimum of pottery for daily use has been made and none at all that is strictly ornamental or decorative. However, Laos is rich in clays of all colors, ranging from white to black through red, yellow, green, and blue. Today most earthenware for home use is imported from Thailand, but Laos could easily supply its own needs, adding to its economy at the same time. The pilot pottery project at the Lao Handicrafts Center is expected to develop a small industries scheme which would make pottery imports from Thailand unnecessary.

The numerous hill tribes people of Laos have individual and regional handicrafts. Silver necklaces, rings and bracelets, embroidery, special weaving motifs, unusual rattan-work, fish traps, rice baskets, walking sticks, handmade guns and opium pipes are but a few of their representative artistic products. However, some of these are increasingly difficult to find today.

In 1959, the Royal Lao Government, conscious of the need to renew and to develop Lao handicrafts (both artistic and utilitarian), began to take successive steps toward a program of development of indigenous handicrafts and preservation of the arts. A School of Fine Arts was opened in 1959 to train young artisans. The establishment in 1964 of the Handicrafts and Industry Service under the Ministry of the National Economy provided further impetus to the development program. The International Labor Organization for the United Nations Development Program in Laos recruited an expert to advise on small-scale industries, organize exhibitions, and be a dynamic force for realizing the rebirth of Lao handicrafts.

On May 29, 1969, the new and attractive Lao Handicrafts Center was opened in Vientiane with great ceremony. It is located in the triangle formed by Nong Duang, Luang Prabang, and Sam Sen Thai. The Center consists of administrative offices, a research design center, a small museum, pilot workshops for dyeing, for silk and cotton weaving, rug weaving, wood sculpture, silver work and pottery (all are open to visitors), and a retail shop

which sells products from the workshops as well as artifacts and handicrafts from every part of the Kingdom. (Check the Classified Directory for hours when the museum and shop are open.)

In Vientiane there are several souvenir shops, but most of the items are imported from Thailand or are of Vietnamese design. The Morning Market and the shops adjoining the new Evening Market can often reward the unhurried shopper in search of unique mementos of Laos. If you travel outside Vientiane, you may find an opportunity to discover real treasures in the villages.

Laos is the only country in Asia where gold may be traded freely. Until recently the Royal Lao Government depended on the gold bullion tax for more than one-third of its tax income. Although outside events have caused a tremendous drop in this revenue, gold still comes in legally, is taxed, and afterwards no questions are asked. Gold continues to be a "good buy" in Laos, and the profusion of goldsmiths attest to the fact. There are several good jewelry shops in Vientiane which specialize in fine gold work and custom designs. Choose your carat and pay according to weight.



GLOSSARY: USEFUL WORDS AND PHRASES

The following words and phrases are not meant to teach the Lao language, but to assist the newcomer or tourist in typical situations.

All pronunciations will be approximate because (1) there are sounds in Lao not found in English and, (2) Lao is a tonal language, that is, a rising and falling inflection or a low or high tone can alter the meaning of a word. Do not let this keep you from the attempt, as you will be understood in context.

Polite Phrases

- Greeting - "Sah-bie-dee" (rhymes with "awry knee")
Parting - If someone leaves you, say "Sehrn pie dee." If you depart first, say "Lah pie kun nehr."
Pardon me, excuse me, I'm sorry - "Khaw tawt" is an extremely useful expression. It is used in all the ways common in English and in addition introduces "put it there," "give me one" type sentences as "please" would be used in English.
Please - (see above) To ask for assistance with a task, such as "Please change this tire", say "Kah-ruh-nah....." To invite, "Please come to my house", say "Sehrn" ("Sehrn" rhymes with "earn" as pronounced in Boston).
Thank you - "Kawp jie", or "Kawp jie lie" for "thank you very much."

Numbers

1	nung ("u" as in "put")	11	sip et
2	sawng (rhymes with "song")	12	sip sawng
3	sahm (rhymes with "palm")	13	sip sahm
4	see	20	sahw
5	hah	21	sahw et
6	hohk (rhymes with "joke")	22	sahw sawng
7	jet	30	sahm sip
8	bet	31	sahm sip et
9	gahw (rhymes with "cow")	32	sahm sip sawng
10	sip	100	hawy or lawy (rhymes with "boy")
200	sawng lawy	1000	phahn
		2000	sawng phahn

Pronouns

In Lao there are several sets of pronouns; those used with superiors, inferiors, monks and royalty. The ones given are used among equals. As a newcomer, you may use them freely with anyone but royalty without being considered too rude.

Singular		Rhymes with:	Plural	
I, me	Khawy	"boy"	We, us	Pwak-hahw
You	Jahw	"cow"	You	Pwak-jahw
He, she, him, her	Lahw	"cow"	They, them	Kha-jahw

The above pronouns are also used without change as possessives in which case they follow the noun. For example: "Book I" is "My book;" "Car you" is "Your car."

Verbs

		Rhymes with:		Rhymes with:
Can, be able	die	"sigh"	Need	Tawng-kan "long-on"
Come	mah		Say	vahw "cow"
Do, make	het		Tell	hawk "talk"
Drink	kin		Think (that)	kit (vah)
Eat	kin		Want (to go, to be)	yahk "sock"
Go	pie	"sigh"	Want (a thing)	yahk die
Know	huu	"you"		

The English verbs "bring," "take," "give," and "put" are all variants of the one Lao verb "ahw" which rhymes with "cow." Suppose, for example, the object is "box".

Bring the box.	Ahw BOX mah.
Take the box.	Ahw BOX pie.
Give (me) the box.	Ahw BOX hie.
Put the box (somewhere).	Ahw BOX sie.

Perhaps the most useful Lao verb to know is "mee" which means "have," "there is," and "there are." (See the Shopping Vocabulary for useful phrases.)

To make a verb negative the word "baw" (rhymes with "law") is put just before the verb. For example: "I know" is "Khawy huu;" "I don't know" is "Khawy baw huu."

Lao verbs are unchanging. The same word is used for singular, plural, past, present and future. Tense can be indicated by time phrases, e.g., yesterday, tomorrow. A common way to make a verb past tense is to add the word "already," "leh-aw." "I go already" is "I want." "He eat already" is "He ate" or "He has eaten."

Adjectives and Adverbs

In Lao the adjective and adverb are the same word, that is, "quick" is also "quickly" and "good" is also "well." The adjective always follows the noun and the adverb follows the adjective. For example, the word order in Lao would be "You have car large very" for the English "You have a very large car." The negative "baw" is used with adjectives also, as in English. "Not big" means "small."

Beautiful, pretty	ngahm	More	cek
Big	nyahy	Much, many	lie
Clever	keng	New	mie
Cold	nahw	Old (people)	tahw
Different	tahn-kan	Old (thing)	gahw
Difficult	nyahk	Over there	yuu pun
Enough	paw	Same	khu kan
Fast	vie	Slow	sah
Good, well	dee	Small	nawy
Happy	dee chie	There	hahn
Heavy	nahk	Too much, many	lie poh
Here	yuu nee	Very	lie
Hot	hawn	That	nan
Light (weight)	bahw	This	nee

Colors

In Lao you must say "color red," "color black." The Lao word for "color" is "see."

Black	see dahm	Red	see deng
White	see khahw	Green	see khæe -ahw
Blue	see fah	Yellow	see lu-ahng
	Multi-colored	see lahy	

Prepositions

With	nahm
From	dey
In front of	yuu doh nah
In back of	tahng lahng
Inside	nie

Time Words

Day	muh
2 o'clock	sawng mong
3 o'clock	sahm mong
Hour	mong
Evening	leng
Month	duh-ahn
Morning	sahw

Question Words

How many ——?	jahk ——?
How much	tahw die (refers to price, see "Shopping Vocabulary")
What	nyahng (never used as subject, always: "you want what?")
When	veelah die
Where	yuu sie (always at end, as, "He went where?")
Who	pie (may be the subject or object of preposition)
Why	pen nyahng

SPECIALIZED VOCABULARY

In general a Lao sentence is put together in the same way as an English sentence, that is, subject-verb-object. The principal exceptions such as the position of certain interrogatives, and the fact that adjectives always follow nouns, have already been mentioned. A declarative sentence is made into a question with NO CHANGE IN THE WORDORDER by adding the word "baw" at the end. Thus, "You want car 'baw' " means "Do you want a car?"

To answer a question affirmatively, say "jahw" or repeat the verb. "Do you have?" is answered affirmatively by saying, "Have." A negative response is "baw" or "baw" + verb.

Health

To be ill	baw sah-bie
To feel ill	huu-suk baw sah-bie
I do not feel well	khawy huu-suk baw sah-bie
Pain	jep
Headache	jep huu-a
I have a headache.	khawy jep huu-a
Stomach ache	jep tong
I have a stomach ache.	khawy jep tong
Medicine	yah
Aspirin	yah jep huu-a
Drug store (pharmacy)	han khahy yah
Do you sell aspirin?	jahw khahy yah jep huu-a baw
Where is there a drug store?	han khahy yah yuu sie
Doctor	tan maw
I need a doctor.	khawy tawng-kan tan maw
Call a doctor for me, would you?	ehrn tan maw mah hie khawy, dey die baw

Gardening

Garden	suan
To garden	het suan
Gardener	khon het suan
Sprinkle water	hot
Water the garden	hot suan
Flower	dawk-mie
Water this flower (bush)	hot dawk-mie

Cut	taht
Don't cut (prune) this flower	yah taht dawk-mie nee
Grass	nyah
Water the grass	hot nyah
Cut the grass	taht nyah
Do not water this flower	yah hot dawk-mie nee
Dig	khut

To weed - Experienced gardeners in Laos say that the way to be certain weeding is done to one's satisfaction is to point to the undesirable growth and say, "Take this out" - "Ahw an nee awk jahk nee."

Shopping

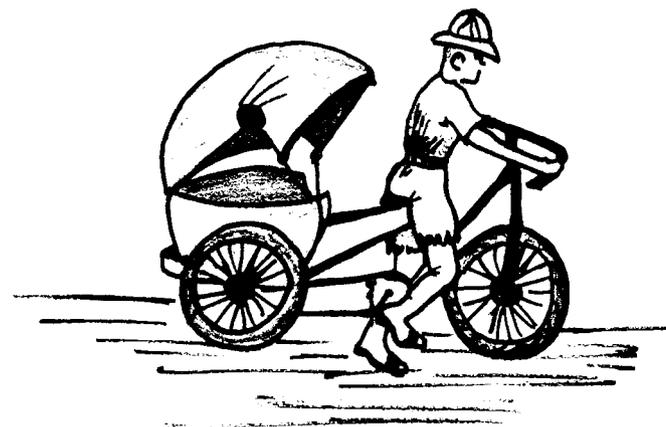
Shopkeepers in Vientiane include many Vietnamese, Indians and Chinese. In addition to their native languages, they often speak French or English. They all speak and understand sufficient Lao to conduct their business. You should have no trouble shopping if you follow these steps:

1. Before seeking out a specific item, ask a friend, desk clerk or servant what it is called.
2. When browsing in shops or the market say, "An-nee, ehrn vah nyahng?" ("What is this called?")
3. Use the following phrases:

Do you have _____?	jahw mee _____ baw?
Do you have more?	jahw mee eek, baw?
Smaller	nawy gwa
Larger	nyahy gwa
Smallest	nawy tee sut
Largest	nyahy tee sut
I don't have (it, them)	khawy baw mee
There is none.	baw mee
There are none.	baw mee
Price	lah kah
How much?	tahw-die
What is the price?	lah-kah tahw-die
How much is this one?	an-lah tahw-die
I want (number).	khawy yahk-die
This one	an-nee
That one	an-nan
Very expensive	peng lie

Getting About

I want to go to _____	khawy yahk pie
Turn (go) right	lee-oh kwah
Turn (go) left	lee-oh sie
There	han
Here	yuu nee
Over there	yuu pun
Stop	yut
Slow	sah sah
Fast	vie vie
Road, street	tah-non
Taxi	tak-see
Airport	don hu-ah bin
Embassy	sah-tan-tut
Hotel	hong hem
Restaurant	hahn-ah-han
Barber shop	hahn-tat-pom





SELECTED
READING LIST

Most of the books on this list are available at local libraries. The libraries which have these books are indicated by the following initials: BIS - British Information Service Library, BN - Bibliotheque Nationale, and USIS - American Library.

Books on Laos can also be ordered through the local bookstores. Kingdom of Laos can be bought at Auto Lao, Km 4 Thadeua Road.

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|---|-------------|---|-------------|
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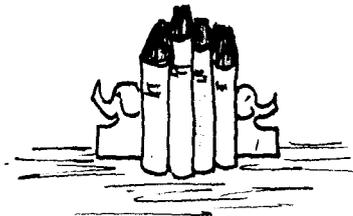
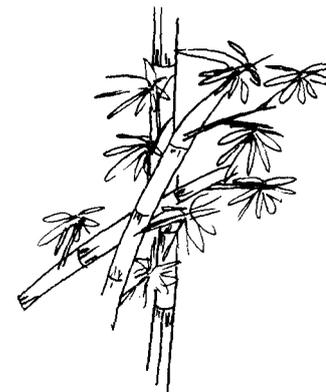
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Any inquiries or suggestions for future editions may be sent to:

The American Women's Club of Laos
c/o The American Embassy
Vientiane, Laos

