

DO'S & DON'TS

To make your travel experience more enjoyable in Laos, There are some simple but important Do's and Don'ts you should remember throughout your stay.

By respecting Laos customs and culture you will get so much more from your experience in Laos, earning the respect from the local people makes for far more interesting and successful local interactions, and best of all, it will aid you getting those good prices in the local markets!

Take a look at the list below and read the cartoon (see link), which should help you remember what you should/should not do in Laos.

Respect local customs. Observe how locals behave and take cues from your tour guide on what's appropriate. Remember, you are a guest in someone else's home. Here is more info on cultural **Do's and Don'ts in Laos.**

Be mindful of Laos' conservative culture. Dress conservatively – tank tops and bikinis are not appropriate attire to wear in villages or in town. Avoid overt public displays of affection and foul language.

Respect local people when taking their photographs, especially of children. Generally, locals are happy to be in your photos if you respect their space. If possible, ask permission first. Don't follow people around and try to avoid snapping photos of them doing personal things like bathing. Show the photo to them after you've taken it.

Protect the environment and respect cultural resources. Be mindful of where you walk to avoid disturbing the natural ecosystem – stay on trekking paths or in designated areas. Help preserve Laos' centuries-old architecture and archeological treasures by avoiding, climbing on or touching them.

Purchase local handicrafts and products to support the local economy. Plus, they make unique souvenirs! We don't discourage bargaining but urge you to remember that a person's livelihood depends on your purchase.

Do not engage in child sex exploitation, or exploitation of any kind.

Respect human rights in Laos just as you would at home.

Do's and Don'ts in Lao

Tips for travelling in Laos

Foreigners can sometimes find it difficult to navigate the cultural norms of Lao culture, especially first time visitors. Knowing what might be considered offensive to the Lao people can help avoiding embarrassment and possible trouble.

Laotians are hospitable, friendly and soft people. They have a very relaxed attitude to life. You should have no troubles navigating Lao culture and interacting with locals as long as you use your head, eyes and your common sense.

Compiled here are some tips I think might be useful. Some might be similar to those available elsewhere on the internet, and some are my own suggestions.

- A formal greeting for most Lao people is the “Nop” (joining one’s hands together in a praying gesture at chin level). Handshakes are also commonly used among male friends and with foreign visitors.
- The Lao word for “hello” is “sabai dee”, say it with smile and you’ll be well received. [Click here to learn more Lao words or phrases](#)
- The head is considered high. It is not acceptable to touch Lao people’s heads, so bear that in mind.
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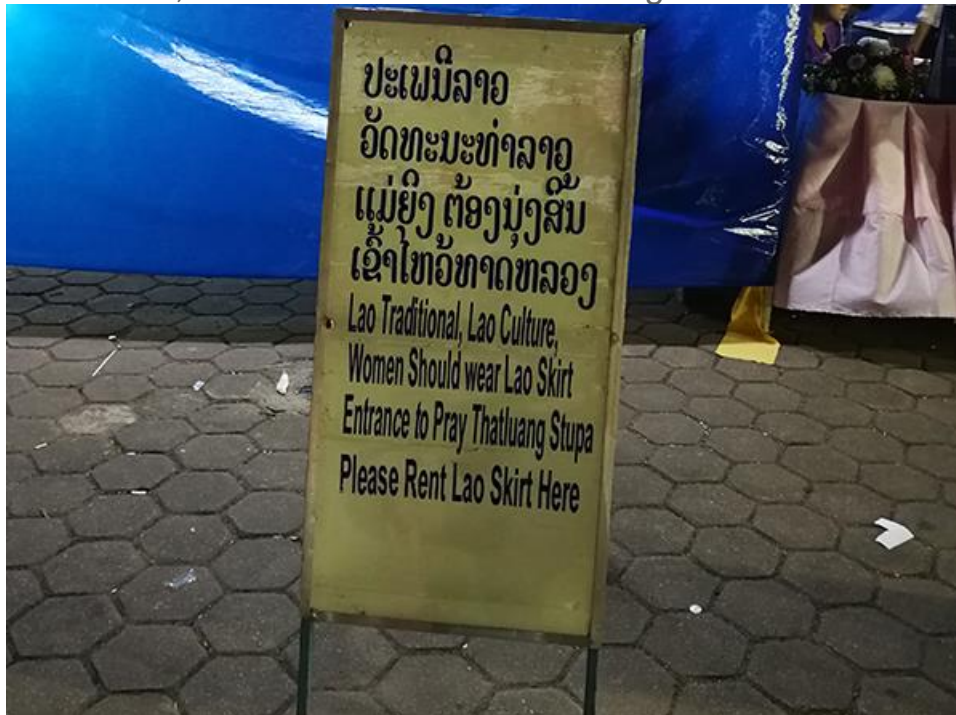
Feet up on furniture is a No No!!

- Feet are low. Placing them on furniture or pointing at things or people with your feet is not acceptable.
- In offices, never place your feet on a desk while sitting on a chair, that's very impolite. Some foreign specialists/advisors have been thrown out doing this, so be especially careful if you come to work here.
- Personal cleanliness is valued highly in Laos. Anyone who has strong body odour tends to get disgusting looks.
- Before entering a Lao person's home, take your shoes off and leave them outside the house or on stairs.



- In Lao homes, if the host (especially elderly person) sits on the floor you should sit there as well, don't sit anywhere higher if you want to be seen as a respectful person.
- It is polite to gently crouch down when walking past someone who is seated, especially older people
- Stepping over someone on your path is very impolite, similarly stepping over food is disgusting and some Lao won't eat the food that has been stepped over.
- Lao people usually serve water to guests arriving at their home, it is polite to accept it even if you don't want to drink (you don't have to drink it).
- In a Lao gathering, keep a low profile and you'll maximise your chances of social success in Laos.
- Dress neatly when visiting religious shrines or temples
- It is OK to wear shoes if you just walk around a temple compound, but don't forget to remove them before entering the chapel.
- At some temples, women in shorts or short skirts are required to put on a Lao skirt as a top layer before entering the place. Lao skirts are available for rent or lend on spot.

- Despite the heat, Lao/Laotians dress conservatively. If you don't want to be a "black sheep" dress neatly and moderately (don't show too much skin) or you'll get strange looks from the locals.
- Most Lao people swim in rivers or waterfalls with at least shorts and a T-shirt. It is more polite to do this rather than walk around in swimsuits or bikinis. Also if you are in the country and have to bathe in the river, women should wear a sarong.



- You might find it hard to communicate with locals if you don't speak Lao especially in the countryside where not many people speak English. If things don't quite work the way you expect, remember to keep cool, don't lose your temper or raise your voice. It won't help, it will only make you look bad.
- Learn some basic Lao phrases and practice them with the locals you meet, they will be impressed and you will be well received.

These are just some basic tips, but they should be sufficient to help ease your stay in Laos.

Whatever you do, observing the locals and following suit is the key to keeping yourself from troubles and/or embarrassment.

Do's



and



Don'ts

DO'S & DON'TS IN LAOS



The Lao word for hello is "Sa Bai Dee", usually said with a smile. Touching or showing affection in public will embarrass your hosts.

"ສະບາຍດີ" ແມ່ນປະໂຫຍກທີ່ໃຊ້ເມື່ອພົບກັນ ຄວນສະບາຍດີ ກັບຄວາມສະຫງົບ ແລະ ສະແດງຄວາມຮັກກັນ ມີມສະຫງົບສາດສະນະຈະເປັນສິ່ງທີ່ບໍ່ສຸພາບ ສຳລັບຄົນລາວ



Lao people traditionally greet each other by pressing their palms together to "Nop", although it is acceptable for men to shake hands.

ອາໄສການສະແດງຄວາມເຄົາລົບກັນໂດຍການປະທັບມືກັນ ແລະ ກັບສາມ
ປະເພນີລາວ - ການຈັບມືກັນອາດເປັນທີ່ຖືກສັບພາຍໃນ.



In Laos your head is "high", your feet 'Low'. Using your feet for anything other than walking or playing sport is generally considered rude.

ຄົນລາວຈະຖືຫົວຂອງຕົນເປັນສິ່ງທີ່ສູງ ແລະ ຖືສົມເປັນສິ່ງທີ່ຕໍ່າສຸດ.
ການື່ງສົມ ເພື່ອຊື່ນ ເຊັ່ນ ເອົາສິ່ງຂອງ ເພື່ອສະແດງໃຫ້ຄົນອື່ນ
ຈະເປັນສິ່ງທີ່ຮັບບໍ່ໄດ້



Touching someone's head is very, very impolite

ການຈັບຫົວຄົນອື່ນ ກົມຫມັ້ນ ແລະ ຫົວເລກລາວ: ບາດຢູ່ສຸດ.



Lao people appreciate clean and neatly dressed visitors.

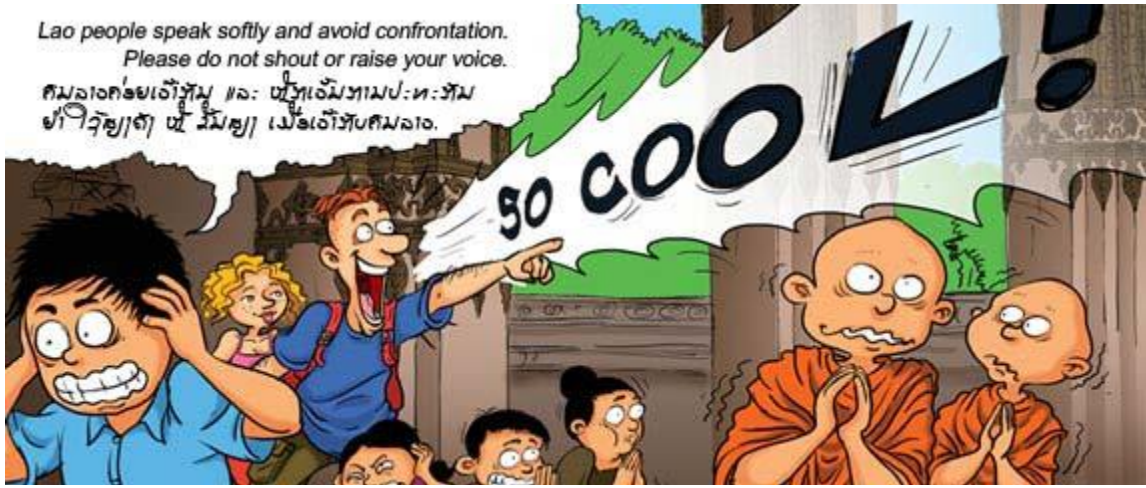
ປະຊາຊົນລາວຢາກເຫັນຄົນທີ່ປະເດມຸ່ງເຄື່ອງສະອາດ ແລະ ສະພາບ.





Lao people speak softly and avoid confrontation.
Please do not shout or raise your voice.

ສົມລຳຄ່ອຍເວົ້າກັນ ແລະ ບໍ່ໃຫ້ເຈັ້ມກາມປະທັບ
ຢ່າງຊັບຊ້ອນ ຫຼື ມີມື້ງ ເມື່ອເວົ້າກັບສົມລຳ.



Before you take a photo of someone ask if it is ok.

ກ່ອນຈະກຳລັງຮູບຜູ້ອື່ນຕ້ອງຖາມວ່າ: ມີບາດມາເພີ່ມກ່ອມ.



Please do not distribute gifts to children as it encourages begging, but give to an established organization or village elders instead

ກະລຸນາຢ່າຈັດສັນສິ່ງຂອງ ຫຼື ຂະຫນົນ ຫຼື ໂຮງຮຽນຂອງພວກເຮົາ ເພາະ ຫຼື ໂຮງຮຽນຂອງພວກເຮົາ ມີຄວາມສຳຄັນຫຼາຍ ຫຼື ຫຼື ໂຮງຮຽນຂອງພວກເຮົາ ມີຄວາມສຳຄັນຫຼາຍ



Try eating delicious Lao food whenever you can
it helps local business
and Lao farmers.

ເວົ້າກັບສົມລຳ ເມື່ອທ່ານມີເວລາເພື່ອນຳກັນ ມັນຈະເປັນການ
ສົ່ງເສີມທຸລະກິດຂອງພວກເຂົາ ແລະ ຈາກນັ້ນມັນຈະຊ່ວຍເຫຼືອພວກເຂົາ.



Please show respect and dress neatly while in temples and when taking photos.

ພະພຸດທະຮູບແມ່ນສິ່ງສັກກາລະບູຊາ, ທ່ານລູກມາສະແກງຄວາມເຄົາລົບ
ຄວບຄຸມມຸ່ງຫົວສຸພາບ ມີມືເຈລະຫຼ່ວງຊຸມວັດວາອາຄາມ
ແລະ ທຳຢູ່ຮູບ.



There are many other sacred items and sites in Laos. Please don't touch or enter these places without permission.

ປະເທດລາວມີສິ່ງ ສັກກາລະບູຊາ ມາສະຫຼາມທີ່ຕ່າງໆ ເປັນອາ
ມອມຫຼວງຫຼາຍໆ ລູກມາສະແກງ ຕ້ອງ ບໍ່ ເຂົ້າໄປ ມາສະ
ຫຼາມທີ່ກ່ອມໄດ້ຮັບອາມອາຄາມ.



ພະສົງສາມະເນມເປັນບຸກຄົນທີ່ປະຊາຊົນເຄົາລົບມັບກໍ່
ຫ້າມເພດຍິງ ກະຕ້ອງພະສົງ ແລະ ສາມະເນມ.

Monks are revered and respected in Laos, however women should not touch a monk or a monk's robes.



Please help to keep Laos clean and beautiful by not leaving litter. Picking up rubbish sets a good example for Lao youth.

ທ່ານລູກມາຊ່ວຍຮັກສາຄວາມສະອາດ ແລະ ຄວາມສວຍງາມ
ມີປະເທດລາວ, ບໍ່ມີສິ່ງຂອງຊະເຈຍ ແລະ ເກັບສິ່ງຂອງ
ທີ່ບໍ່ມີປະໂຫຍດເພື່ອເປັນປະຕິບັດໃຫ້ເຂົາເຈົ້າຊຸມລາວ.



The illegal sale of wildlife and wildlife products endangers many species native to Laos. Help protect Lao wildlife by refusing to buy wildlife products.

ທ່ານບໍ່ມີ, ບໍ່ຈື່ສັດປ່າ ແລະ ຜະລິດສະພາມາຈາກສັດປ່າ ເພື່ອຊ່ວຍປະເທດລາວປ້ອງກັນຊີວາລາສັດປ່າ.

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Please help prevent of forest fires.
ជួយការពារកម្រិតឆេះឆេះឆេះឆេះឆេះឆេះ

Laos Loses a little of its heritage every time an antique is taken out of the country. Please do not buy antique buddhas or other sacred items. Instead. Support Local craftsmen by purchasing new, quality handicrafts.

ທ່ານບໍ່ຖືກຊື້ວັດຖຸບູຮານອັນເກົ່າແກ່ ແລະ ສິ່ງຂອງທີ່ເປັນມູນວຸດ
ຊຸກຮຸ້ນທີ່ອາດຖືກຂາດ ແລະ ຂາດປະຊາຊົນລາວ. ກະລຸນາ
ຖືກຊື້ວັດຖຸບູຮານທີ່ມີຄວາມສຳຄັນ ແລະ ມີຄຸນຄ່າ
ຈະຊ່ວຍສົ່ງເສີມ ແລະ ອະນຸລັກສິ່ງທີ່ເປັນທຸກປະຊາຊົນລາວ.

Sex tourism is illegal in Lao PDR and child-sex tourism is a serious crime. Please help protect children in Laos from sexual abuse and exploitation by reporting suspicious behavior.

ພ້ອມກັນ ປົກປ້ອງເດັກນ້ອຍໃນ ສປປລາວ ຈາກການຂາລຸມ ແລະ ການກົດຂີ່ອຸດສິດ ກະລຸນາ ລາຍງານພຶດຕິກຳໜ້າສົງໄສ (ເປັນໄຫລະສັບເກີດຕໍ່ຂ້າງລຸ່ມນີ້) ການມີເພດສຳພັນກັບເດັກນ້ອຍແມ່ນຜິດກົດໝາຍ

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ພວກ
GUEST HOUSE