



3. Ban Pak Ou

Pak Ou village is well known as the starting point for tourists to catch the boat across to Tham Ting cave, while also there are many great restaurants there for tourists. In addition, various types of whiskey, textile products and local souvenirs are also available. Pak Ou village is about 5 kms on from Xang Hai village.

4. Pak Ou Temple

Pak Ou Temple is an ancient and important temple in the Pak Ou district and was built by King Sethathirath in 1547. The prominent feature of the temple is a small porch at the rear in typical Lao (Mook) decoration . In the time of King Sisavangvong, the temple was renovated and the terrace was extended to make more space and to be more convenient for throwing water over the Buddha images during Lao New Year festival which is held annually after the first day of the Lao New Year.



5. Tham Ting (Pak Ou Cave)

Tham Ting cave is a combination of nature and history and not to be missed as a tourist destination! Known by tourists as Pak Ou Cave due to its proximity to Pak Ou village, there are actually two separate caverns at this location: the upper cave and lower cave. Ever since Buddhism was introduced to the area, local people have been bringing Buddha statues and placing them inside this cave as a way of making merit. There are thousands of Buddha statues here and they make for quite a spectacle. During Lao New Year, the Royal Family used to travel to the cave, along with many monks and local devotees, to pour water over a sacred Buddha statue as part of Pi Mai celebrations.

There are daily boat trips on the Mekong River to Tham Ting, often stopping at other sites along the way. The boat trip takes about 1.5 hours, heading upstream from Luang Prabang, and this is a great way to get a glimpse of life along the river. It's also possible to travel most of this distance by vehicle and make a short boat crossing at Pak Ou. It takes about 40 minutes to reach the village by road and the cave is open every day from 08:00am to 5:00pm.



6. Pha Ane Cliff

Pha Ane (Swallow Cliff) is known in the Pak Ou District as a popular attraction amongst tourists in the region. It is located to the west, opposite to Ban Pak Ou. A long time before it was called Pha Ane, it was also called Pha Baen, (Baen Pom or Bear Pao). Pha Ane got its name from the millions of swallows that live here. Close to Pha Ane, there are also other historic and natural tourist attractions such as the Huu Muu Waterfall. A painting of a giant fish was found in Pha Ane, with its head down and tail up. The local villagers assume that the painting was drawn by prehistoric inhabitants but how they managed to leave it there has not been confirmed. Pha Ane is very steep and difficult to climb, and according to local legends, Pha Ane was a place for archery in ancient times. Every year on the half-moon days of May, the villagers look for some sacrificial offerings to worship the Kajae Buddha and put the Buddhist flag in the ground to worship the guardian spirits.

Pha Ane has a very important place in local history as well as its amazing natural beauty that impresses those who visit. Due to the steepness of the cliff, there is no way to climb it, but sailing along the Ou River or kayaking are a great way for tourists to see it.



7. Ban Muang Keo

This village located on the banks of the Mekong River, can only be accessed by boat. Farming is the main occupation here and weaving products are also for sale to tourists. In addition, the village is famous for its unique way of making Lao Lao (Lao whisky) and it's a great opportunity for tourists to sample some Lao whisky.



8. Donkhoun Island

For many years King Soukhaseum, who reigned from 1838 to 1851, used Donkhoun Island as a rest stop on his way back from making merit at Tham Ting Caves. Soukhaseum and his family grew vegetables and fruit on the island – and had a few dwellings where they could relax whilst enjoying the views of the Mekong. The island, which now is home to a small temple, is not used for anything much today but it remains a sacred place for Lao people and is worth stopping to have a walk around on your way up the river.



8. Ban Muang Kham

Ban Muang Kham is also located on the banks of the Mekong River. Most tourists who come to Luang Prabang have tried one of the foods it's famous for- Khai Phane (Mekong river weed) which is produced by this village. If you visit here, you can see the villagers drying Khai Phane at sunrise and you can even give it a try yourself!



9. Wat Kok Pab

Wat Kok Pab was built after Wat Had Siew, by King Anouloath Nanthatoulath and the construction was financed by the relatives of the King in Luang Prabang's royal court. In 1957, Wat Kok Pab was abandoned. Recently this temple has been restored and there are monks and novices now living in the temple again. Wat Kok Pab consists of a sanctuary hall (Aham) with a low, sweeping roof, two dormitories (Khouti), a refectory (Sala), an altar (Ho Way), a drum hall (Ho Kong), and a stupa (Phatthajedi). The roofs of the sanctuary hall and the refectory are decorated with sculptures of the Naga heads. On the front façade of the sanctuary there is an intricate decoration of honeycomb carvings by Luang Prabang local craftsmen. This temple is very important to the local communities, and rituals and ceremonies are held here every month as part of the unique culture and tradition of Luang Prabang. It also has beautiful gardens where you can relax and enjoy the view.



10. Wat Tham Sakkarin (Sakkarin Cave)

Did you know that Lao people believe that if water drips onto your head inside a cave it will bring you good luck?

The temple was built in 1902 during the reign of King Khamsouk Sakkarin, the father of King Sisavangvong. The temple is also located in the Chomphet district across the Mekong from Luang Prabang city. Above the temple grounds, there is a beautiful natural cave called Sakkarin cave. The stairway inside has about 87 steps. After King Khamsouk Sakkarin died, relatives and the local people brought his bones to the cave and buried them inside and changed the name to Tham Sakkarin and it has remained till now. Inside the cave there is a beautiful stone wall, Buddha statues and limestone formations. The cave was used as a place of meditation for the royal family and local people.



11. Wat Long Khoun

Be sure to give yourself plenty of time to enjoy this temple, which is located on a shady patch of land by the Mekong River. The temple, was built by Chao Anouloath in the 18th century, and became the sleeping quarters for Chinese soldiers when they came to do battle in Luang Prabang at the end of that century. You will also find magnificent paintings on the walls inside the temple depicting the 10 lives of Lord Buddha.

During the reign of King Sisavangvatthana, a son of King Vongsavang, Wat Long Khoun was historically significant as the place where several Lao princes came to meditate before taking the throne. During Lao New Year, the local people have a ceremony there before going to Wat Tham Sakkarine and then make a sand stupa at Donsay Mounghkoun.



12. Wat Chomphet

Wat Chomphet is the most outstanding and well known temple in the Chomphet District. It's a bit of a hike to Wat Chomphet but climbing the 123 steps is well worth it. This might not be a very well maintained temple, but it has the best views around – offering a stunning panorama of the surrounding hills, the Mekong River and Luang Prabang city. At the top of the staircase are two stupas that house the bones of the wives of one of the former kings of Laos. The temple was decorated by craftsman from Luang Prabang and Thailand.



13. Sunset

If you are looking to view an amazing sunset, welcome to Luang Prabang which is the most wonderful place to watch this in the evening ... Cruises on the Mekong River are a great choice to watch the slow pace of local lifestyle, with the fishermen doing their routine of fishing in the sunset shadows reflected onto the river. Standing in a high spot, such as Phou Si Mountain will give you the chance to have a 360-degree view of the stunning landscape surrounding Luang Prabang plus watch the sunset over the mighty Mekong.

