

Textile Tour to Laos and China

Oct/Nov 2015



For all enquiries phone
TOUCAN TOURS & TRAVEL LTD
P.O. Box 22 Kaukapakapa
09 420 3311

selection of handmade textiles made by the local and hill tribe people surrounding Luang Prabang. Dinner at a local restaurant and overnight in Luang Prabang.

Sat 24 Oct Luang Prabang-Kuang Si waterfalls (B, L,D)

After breakfast drive (28 km South) to visit Kuangsi Waterfall, National park. We stop en-route, to visit a fresh produce market called Talad Phosy, and visit Ban Na Oune, a small village of a hill-tribe group "Hmong", probably the best-known minority group in Laos and Ban Tha Pane. We will enjoy a picnic lunch at the waterfall, returning to Luang Prabang in the late afternoon. Visit the Traditional Arts & Ethnology Centre, a museum



dedicated to exploring the rich diversity of Laos' ethnic minorities. Traditional costumes, tools, and artifacts are on display alongside in-depth descriptions and written histories. It is a great opportunity to gain insight in to the Lao people (note: closed on Monday)

**Sun 25 Oct . Luang Prabang–Ock Pop Tok 's Living Crafts Centre
Natural Dyes Class (B, L, D)**

After breakfast your guide and driver will collect you from your hotel for a private transfer to Ock Pop Tock's Living Crafts Centre. Here you can undertake a one and a half hour silk seminar with the Centre's co director. The venue is in a beautiful setting, slightly out of town on the banks of the Mekong River. Your guide will then leave you in the capable hands of the staff at the Living Crafts Centre, where the activities are shared with other visitors. Textiles are very important to the Lao people as they are used in many aspects of daily life, from annual ceremonies to daily household uses. From Buddhist scarves and prayer flags to dowry gifts and long traditional skirts, textiles are deeply embedded in the Lao culture. Several villages throughout the country are known for their unique patterns and the women can be observed working under their stilted house on their looms. Enjoy a range of delicious Lao dishes for lunch in Ock Pop Tock's Silk Road Café, taking in views of the mighty Mekong River.



After lunch attend a half day Natural Dyes Class and you will be assigned your very own traditional loom! One of the expert weavers will be your personal tutor to help you master the impressive art of natural dyeing. You will be taught the secrets of natural dye preparation and try mixing them yourself, with many of the ingredients coming from the surrounding gardens. By the end of the evening you will have a dyed skein of silk to take home as souvenirs. Your guide and driver will return you to your hotel in the late afternoon until dinner time at a local restaurant.

Mon 26 Oct Luang Prabang –Thai Lue Weaving village at Ban Na Yang with home - stay (137km/3hrs drives) (B, I, D)

You have the option to wake up before dawn to witness and participate in offering alms to hundreds of saffron-robed monks – an awe-inspiring sight. Please tell your guide a day in advance if you wish to make an offering so he/she can prepare some food for you to hand over to the monks. This early morning ritual dates back generations in Laos. Watch the town come to life in the morning then return to the hotel for breakfast. *(If you do not wish to make an offering, please keep an appropriate distance and observe the ritual in silence. Dress appropriately – shoulders, chest and legs should be covered).*



After breakfast, we head north and visit some peaceful villages called Thai Lue, Khmu. Stop for lunch at a local restaurant in Nongkiau then continue to Ban Na Yang, home to the Tai Lu minority people, who migrated from Yunnan, China in the late 18th century. On arrival, walk a short distance to the village which is home to about 500 Tai Lu tribal people. The villagers grow their own cotton and each

household has two or three weaving looms beneath their living quarters. Your experienced guide will take you on a village orientation to meet with village head-man, after this you will have the first glimpse of village life. Here pigs, chickens, ducks and children are roaming freely as villagers go about their daily life of weaving, gardening, planting rice in their rice fields and child-rearing under the houses. Observe the distinct weaving style of the villagers, who produce table cloths, wall decorations and scarves. Although shy by nature, the villagers are open to talk about their activities and you are invited to talk with the local people. Learn more about their efforts to preserve their traditional working methods and crafts. Late afternoon transfer to Nong Kiau for dinner and overnight at the Nong Kiau Bungalows.

Tues 27 Oct Luang Prabang – Ban Na Yang - Luang Prabang (137km/3 hours drives) (Breakfast, lunch, Dinner)

After breakfast drive back to Bang Na Yang. Today is a unique opportunity to work hand-in hand with local villagers to preserve their traditional working methods and crafts and our guide will be with you throughout as you learn how to weave and take home a sample of your work. Lunch is cooked by the villagers and served in a local home. Enjoy the afternoon mingling with the locals and exploring the area to learn more about daily life in the village before returning to Luang Prabang town in the late afternoon. Time to freshen up before going out to a local restaurant for dinner.

Wed 28 Oct Luang Prabang - Vientiane by flight / Weaving lecture with Carol Cassidy and Cocktails (Breakfast, lunch, Dinner)

After breakfast, we drive to the outskirts of town to visit Ban Xangkhong a well-known village for its paper making and Laos silk weavings using natural dye. Transfer to the Luang Prabang airport for your flight from Luang Prabang to Vientiane by **QV 102, 1310-1350**, subject to change. On arrival in Vientiane, enjoy a guided tour to discover the hidden charms of Vientiane, whose name means 'the city of sandal wood'. Vientiane is one of



the quietest capitals in the world, far away from the hustle and bustle of other Asian capitals. Your tour begins at the weaving home-studio of Carol Cassidy with an hour's weaving lecture by Carol Cassidy giving you an insight into her project of promoting weaving. Carol is an American textiles expert who arrived in Vientiane in 1989 as part of a United Nations project to promote

traditional weaving. Carol was so impressed by the quality and diversity of weaving throughout Laos that she set up the Lao Textiles Studio in Vientiane. Today the studio employs over 40 local weavers who create naturally dyed and woven silk pieces reflecting traditional Lao designs. Carol will personally escort you on a tour through her studio where she will explain the process of producing silk as well as sharing her life experiences and memories of living in Laos. The visit takes about one hour and finishes with cocktails in her beautiful garden. There is also an option to support the cause through purchasing at the gift shop attached to the studio. Transfer back to hotel then to a local restaurant for dinner.

Thurs 29 Oct Vientiane - Full day weaving and dyeing class at Houey Hong Vocational Training Center. (Breakfast, lunch, Dinner)

After breakfast, transfer to the Houey Hong Vocational Training Center for women. This center provides training and employment for Lao women from disadvantaged backgrounds in the areas of natural dyeing, traditional Lao weaving, tailoring and small business administration. This center is located 7 kilometers east of Vientiane's city center at Houey Hong village.



Your guide will then leave you in the capable hands of the staff at the Houey Hong Vocational Training Center who will brief you about the weaving and dyeing. Textiles are very important to the Lao people as they are used in many aspects of daily life, textiles are deeply embedded in the Lao culture. Take a local style lunch at the Houey Hong Vocational Training Center.

After lunch, you will be focusing on weaving and you will be assigned your very own traditional loom! One of the expert weavers will be your personal tutor to help you master the impressive art of weaving & dyeing. You will be taught the secrets of natural dye preparation and try mixing them yourself, with many of the ingredients coming from the surrounding gardens. By the end of the evening you will have made your own tie dye scarf to take home as a souvenir. Your guide and driver will return you to your hotel in the late afternoon to relax until dinner time at a local restaurant.

**Fri 30 Oct Vientiane (Laos) – Kunming (China) - Kunming
Stone Forest Boyitan Minority Culture Museum. (B, L)**

Transfer to the airport for your flight to Kunming China. Arrival in Kunming, transfer to hotel. The Stone Forest 90km from Kunming is a fantastic natural phenomena located 90 km southeast of Kunming. The various shapes of karst landscape were formed due to millions of years' movement of the Earth. The Stone Forest area is the home of the Sani people, their folk customs are spectacular, the colorful embroidery and minority dances combine with the beautiful scenery leaving a lasting impression.



Boyitang minority culture museum was established by Yunnan artists and collectors who have collected old furniture, embroidery, silver wear and clothes from the remote areas of Yunnan. The exhibition is free and profits from products sold are used to help improve the living conditions of minority people.

Overnight Kunming New Era Hotel – 4 star

Sat 31 Oct Kunming to Dali (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Depart Kunming to travel north to Dali. The Three Pagodas between the Cangshan Mountain and Erhai Lake are considered the landmark of Dali. Towering aloft in a triangle shape, the Three Pagodas were built more than 1,000 years ago. Stored in the pagodas are valued Buddhist scripts and scriptures.

The ancient city of Dali is 13 kilometers away from Xiaguan, it has been kept pedestrianised and is located at the foot of Cangshan Mountain. It was built in the Ming Dynasty (1382 AD). It ranks in the first list of Famous Historic and Cultural Cities in China. Here run clear springs, and live simple and unsophisticated local Bai people. The local people grow beautiful flowers in their gardens and have finely decorated the traditional houses, a city well worth visiting.

Dali Landscape Hotel – 4 star

Sun 1st Nov Houses of Bai People in Xizhou, Cruise on the Erhai Lake, Zhoucheng, elaborate batik crafts (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

The Houses of Bai people in Xizhou are located in the Xizhou Town which is 16 kilometers away from the Ancient City of Dali. Xizhou is not only a famous historic city, but also a typical commercial town of Bai people. You will see typical Bai traditions and dresses there along with ancient architecture local houses.

On the outside walls of each house, there are numerous exquisite paintings.



The area around Lake Erhai is blessed with a mild climate and fertile land with forests containing valuable stocks of timber, medicinal herbs and rare animals. A cruise around the lake and its islands is an excellent way to explore the area and visit a working fishing village.

Nearby is the town of Zhoucheng, a town where Bai minority people live and is famous for its elaborate batik crafts. Here you can see the traditional way of making the exquisite crafts of the Bai Minority people, their delicate skills and methods of making crafts. There are also tie-dye workshops open to the public.

Dali Landscape Hotel – 4 star

Mon 2 Nov Dali to Lijiang, Visit to a Woolen Mill Factory, Lijiang Ancient Town, The Black Dragon Pool, Dongba Museum. (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Lijiang Ancient Town is situated more than 2400 meters high above sea level. It is a famous city with a long history and splendid culture; it is very rare in China that such a well-preserved minority ancient city still exists. The Black Dragon Pool 1.5 hours drive is listed in the Collections of Famous Pools of China because of its beauty while Dongba Museum 30 minutes drive, preserves the ancient culture of the Naxi people and their "wood and stone prints" of pictographic characters.

Lijiang Wangfu Hotel – 4 star

Tues 3 Nov Jade Dragon Mountain Cable Car, Shuhe ancient town and Baisha Cultural Exchange Centre (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Baisha Murals at Baisha Village were painted over a thousand years ago, the murals combine the cultures of Han, Tibetan and Naxi people displaying the life stories of the Tibet Buddhism, Confucian and Taoism. Drop by Dr. Ho's clinic, an experienced traditional Chinese medicine doctor in Lijiang. Visitors will see how Dr. Ho and his apprentices diagnose and treat patients, and get to know about the local clinic and herb culture. The Jade Dragon Mountain cable car is noted as the highest tourist cable in China, the large cable goes way up to Shanzidou (Shanzi Peak) the main peak of the snow mountain. Shuhe ancient town also known as Longquan Village, is home to another of the ethnic groups, it is like a village forgotten by time. Featuring a temple complex, this village is extremely peaceful. It is a well preserved important town on the ancient tea and horse route. The Peony Garden Cultural Exchange Center is located in the Black Dragon Pool Park. It's a silk-embroidery workshop as well as a store with many collections of embroidery handicrafts.

Lijiang Wangfu Hotel – 4 star

Wed 4 Nov Lijiang flight to Guiyang then drive to KaiLi. (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Hotel to airport Transfer, Flight No. JD5533 Dep 15:35 - Arr 16:55 (Economy class)

Our guide and driver will escort you from Guiyang to KaiLi

Heaven Sent Dragon Hotel – 4 star

Thurs 5 Nov – Kali - Qingman Miao Village plus welcome ceremony, Matang Ge Ancestral Home, Shiqiao Miao Village. (Breakfast, Dinner)

You will be greeted into the Qingman Miao village by drinking the black-way wine. The welcome ceremony is held when guests come to the village. The local people



will be dressed in traditional Miao dress and line the entrance to the village. A visit to a family will be arranged to see their wooden stilt house and to see their traditional way of dying fabric with Indigo dye.

Visit a Shiqiao Miao village to see its traditional way of making paper from the bark of the mulberry tree. This method of making paper has a history of over a thousand years, local people still use the old methods but have extended it by making color paper using different plants.

The Matang Ge Stronghold is located in Longchang Town, 21 kilometers north of Kaili. In Matang, the most attractive thing is wax printing with bright colors and exquisite designs. The local women begin to study "dotting flower", a skill of wax printing, from the age of eight or nine years old. When they are 15 or 16 years old, they have become experts. Women's coats and dresses, suspenders, girdles, curtains, quilt covers and tablecloths, are decorated.

Heaven Sent Dragon Hotel – 4 star

Fri 6 Nov - Jidao Miao Village, Datang short skirt Miao village. (Breakfast, Dinner)

Jidao Miao Village is located 1 hour's drive and in China's poor southwestern province of Guizhou, **Jidao long-skirt Miao village** is set in idyllic surroundings and populated by ethnic Miao people. Village life is simple and children play as their parents tend fields of lush, organically grown vegetables surrounded by towering pine forests. Elderly women stoke



fires in traditional wooden houses, some hundreds of years old. You will be greeted by its friendly villagers and drink the block way wine before entering the village. You will have a chance to see their traditional way of spinning and weaving.



Sat 7 Nov KaiLi to Guiyang - Kaili Ethnic Minorities Museum, to Kunming (Breakfast, Lunch)

Kaili Ethnic Minorities Museum 1 hour away has a detailed introduction to human culture, geography, and the national minorities' customs of the southeastern areas of Guizhou Province. Datang short skirt Miao village a further 40 minutes away is situated at the foot of Leigong Mountain, the main attractions of Datang Village include local customs, Miao women's short skirts, and their waterproof granaries. Transfer to Guiyang airport for flight to Kunming No. 8L9884 Dep 15:50 - Arr 16:55 (Economy class)

Transfer to hotel

Sun 8 Nov Kunming airport transfer. (Breakfast)

Our journey home will be via Bangkok where we will connect with our Thai Airways flight to Auckland.

Price NZ\$8995.00

Inclusive:

- Airfares flying Thai Airways in economy
- Accommodation in quality 4 star hotels with ensuites. Lodge in Nong Kuai Laos is simple lodge style. All include breakfast
- All meals as stated
- New Zealand tour leader travelling with the group from NZ
- Experienced English speaking guide in each area
- Private transportation in air-conditioned vehicles
- Payments at weaving villages
- Bottle drinking water during sightseeing days
- Domestic flights within Laos and China
- All sightseeing and entrance fees

Exclusive:

- Visa
- Travel Insurance. We highly recommend purchasing travel insurance from home.
- Personal expenditure (telephone, laundry, shopping and so on...)
- Tips for guide, driver, porters. We recommend 3 USD/person/day for guide, 2 USD/person/day for driver and 2 USD/person/hotel when you check in/out.
- Meals other than those specified in the itinerary.
- Beverage and alcoholic drinks.
- Any other services not clearly mentioned on itinerary and trip inclusive portion.

The tour package price is calculated using fares and exchange rates which are available in August 2014 and are based on a minimum number of 15 passengers. We have endeavored to be as accurate as possible with this quote but it is subject to change due to exchange rate and fare fluctuation

BOOKINGS:

To secure a place on this tour, please return a completed application form with deposit of \$1000 per person to Toucan Tours & Travel Ltd, as soon as possible. An Interim payment of \$5,500 pp is due by 1st May 2015 and balance is due by 5th Sept 2015.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Conditions of Travel

Toucan Tours & Travel Limited ("Toucan") co-ordinates travel arrangements and undertakes to perform these services with reasonable care and skill. Toucan takes care to ensure that services arranged are of a high standard but will only be responsible for any loss or damage which results from the act or omission of Toucan, its employees or agents.

Deposit

A booking will be accepted when Toucan has received your deposit of \$1000 per person and your completed booking form. Interim payment of \$5,500 due by 1st May 2015 and the balance of the Tour price will be due by 5th Sept 2015

Documentation and Insurance

Toucan is happy to assist with passport and visa arrangements, but you must ensure that you have the correct passport and visa documentation before you depart overseas. Many countries require that your passport is valid for not less than 6 months after your proposed departure from that country. Please note that visas may be required to visit certain countries and visa requirements change frequently.

We strongly recommend that you insure yourself against cancellation, loss of personal property and medical expenses as a minimum, for the full duration of your travel.

Cancellation

If you cancel your booking in writing, all monies will be refunded less a cancellation fee. For cancellation 76 days or more prior to departure, cancellation fee is \$250.00; for cancellation 76-45 days prior to departure, the cancellation fee is 50% of the tour price; for cancellation less than 30 days prior to departure, full tour price may be charged.

Itinerary

All prices quoted are subject to change due to currency fluctuations, airfares and unforeseen circumstances. Toucan has made tour plans with care and in good faith but may, when circumstances require it, alter those plans. Any changes made to tour itinerary or cost will be notified to tour members accordingly.

Tour Conduct

Toucan reserves the right, in the last resort, to require any person to withdraw from the tour if Toucan deems that persons conduct to be offensive or incompatible with the comfort of other tour members, and Toucan shall be under no further obligation to that person.

Accommodation

The tour price includes accommodation on a twin share basis (unless otherwise stated). For clients travelling alone, a single supplement is payable, however we may be able to assist with sharing arrangements.

Tour Cancellation

In the event of insufficient bookings before commencement of the tour, Toucan reserves the right to cancel the tour with a full refund. However Toucan may provide an amended cost for the tour to proceed with fewer numbers, subject to the tour members' agreement.

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BOOKING FORM

Title_____Full Name(as per passport)_____

Address_____

Email _____Phone_____ Mobile _____

Passport No._____ Nationality_____ Expiry _____

Birth Date_____

Frequent Flyer Membership No._____ Airline _____

Single Room / Twin Share / Double Room (Please circle)

I would like to share a room
with_____

Do you have any special requirements? (Meals, Medical Condition – special dietary requirements can only be requested for flights, hotels are not able to guarantee special meals)

Smoker / Non-smoker (Please circle)

Would you like a quote for flying Business Class? Yes / No

Would you like to add individual travel plans to the end of this tour? Yes / No

This information is collected for the purpose of making travel arrangements and enabling us to contact you. The information held about you can be accessed by you and corrected at any time.

Please register my interest in the Textile Tour to Laos and China, Oct/Nov 2015. I advise that I am happy to make a deposit of \$1000 at time of booking. Interim payment of \$5,500 due by 1st May 2015 and balance of payment of by 5th Sept 2015

Signature _____ Date _____

Please return with deposit made payable to Toucan Tours & Travel, to:
Toucan Tours & Travel, P.O. Box 22, Kaukapakapa, Auckland or e-mail
pauline@toucantours.co.nz