

The Mekong Tourism Develop in Champasak

Who are we and what do we do?

The LNTA-ADB Mekong Tourism Development Project (MTDP) assists local communities to develop their capacity to participate in and benefit from tourism. The project provides training to communities on guiding, hospitality, cooking, tourism management and marketing. The project also assists communities to build tourism-related infrastructure such as guesthouses, rest areas and trail improvements. MTDP is implemented by the Lao National Tourism Administration (LNTA) with funding from the Asian Development Bank (ADB). Partners include the EU, GTZ, SNV, UNESCO, and the Wildlife Conservation Society.

Community partners benefit from the project through the following areas:

Guiding: The project trains village guides who are employed by tour companies as cultural and natural interpreters.

Food: Villagers are taught how to prepare local food for tourists, which is included on all tours.

Accommodation: Communities are assisted in setting up homestays and building community lodges from which income is earned through sleeping fees.

Handicrafts: Producers are provided with information on how to improve their handicrafts for sale to tourists.

Cultural Performance: The project supports performance and traditional arts and encourages villages to protect their authentic traditions.

Community Funds and Permits: MTDP has helped all of its target communities to create village development funds, which receive a portion of the revenues generated on every tour. The project also promotes the introduction of national protected area entrance fees to support the conservation of Laos' rich biodiversity.



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What can you experience?

The MTDP has four project sites in Champasak Province.

Don Daeng Island: On this 8 km-long island inside the UNESCO Vat Phou-Champasak Heritage Landscape, you can stay overnight in the Don Daeng community guesthouse, situated on the Mekong River bank, ideal for swimming and relaxing. Explore the island's nearby ancient Khmer ruins and its many interesting cultural and natural sites by bicycle, boat or foot.

Ta Ong Trail: Take a 2-day journey through the remote jungles of the Xe Pian National Protected Area, where local guides will teach you about medicinal plants and the park's wild inhabitants. Stay overnight with families in Ban Ta Ong, an ethnic Brau village, from where you can visit nearby forests to do bird watching and to listen to the song-like calls of the endangered yellow-cheeked gibbons.

Kiet Ngong – Phou Asa Elephant Rides: From Kiet Ngong Village, located inside the Xe Pian National Protected Area, one can ride elephants to Vat Phou Asa or take a one-day nature walk with village guides. Overnight accommodation and local food is available at the community-managed bungalows overlooking the magnificent Pha Pho wetland, or at the higher-end Kingfisher Ecolodge.

Khong Mountain and Don Kho Island: Take a locally-guided tour of the Phou Xieng Thong National Protected Area, located in the remote northern corner of Champasak Province. Here you will see a wide variety of wild orchids, enjoy spectacular views of volcanic rock formations and cliff landscapes, and discover ancient Khmer ruins. Upon your return, visit Don Kho Island, well known for its traditional silk and cotton weaving.

For more information contact the Champasak Provincial Tourism Office in Pakse or the District Tourism Office in Champasak.

