

Spend More Locally

During your visit to Laos, spending your money on local products is a great way to support Lao producers, artisans and retailers. Throughout the country you can eat delicious home-grown foods, dress in stylish handmade cottons and silks and buy unique souvenirs giving lasting memories of the people you meet, and inspiring your friends and family to visit Laos. To find the best regional goods all around Laos, look out for the label 'Made in Laos' in markets and galleries, and for Lao language packaging.



The secrets of Lao cuisine

Why not take a cooking class as great way to learn about local ingredients, and take some home as a gift.



Put Fair Trade on your shopping list

- Inspire meaningful change with your purchase. All you need is a little awareness, and a desire to make a difference to those who are disadvantaged. In Laos you will find companies and organisations who practice the principles of fair trade, going that step further by providing education and training for producers and managers, and working to enhance the craft heritage and cultural traditions of the country.
- Some businesses have been trading fairly for years but are outside the categories for which fair trade labels have been developed. To ensure you judge fairly, ask questions about who made the product, where it came from, and who benefits from your purchase.
- Don't barter too hard - give that small benefit directly to the community.
- A good place to start using your purchasing power is to shop with organisations highlighted in this booklet.

*Take a memory of Laos home with you
and support the local economy*



Drink world class coffee from the Bolaven Plateau, and don't forget fresh fruit shakes, Lao beer and rice wine. Pack it all into a big sticky rice container or a woven basket, buy a rattan mat to sit on, find a shady spot – and enjoy!

Fabrics to dye for

You can't turn a corner in Laos without spotting magnificent woven textiles in gleaming silks or natural, plant-dyed cottons. Just look at the *sinh* worn by the lady on the next passing motorbike. It can be hard to choose from the marvellous selection. With clothes, cushion covers, bags, table settings and bedlinen, all individually handmade, there is something for every member of the family, and of course yourself. Why not browse market stalls in even the smallest village and then discover the story behind your favourite weaving motif.

Pack a fusion picnic

Laos was creating 'fusion' food before the word was even thought of. Make a picnic of local foods - a delicious variety inspired by many cuisines. Feast on freshly baked baguettes with paté and cured meats, barbecued fish, spicy salads, fruit dipped in chilli and creamy fruit yoghurt.

Make up your own tasty platter of spring roll wrappers filled with aromatic herbs, and look out for sticks of bamboo filled with "khao lam" sticky rice with coconut and beans – ideal for travelling.

