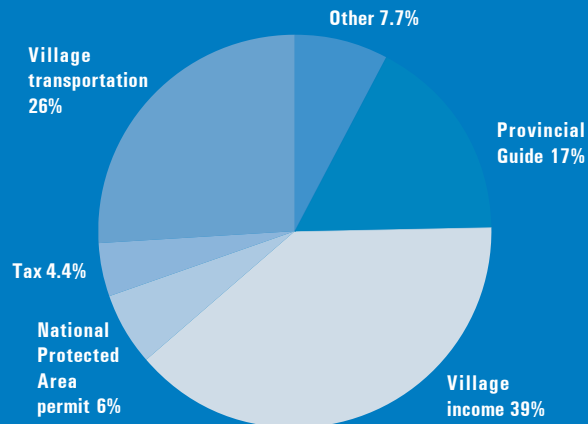


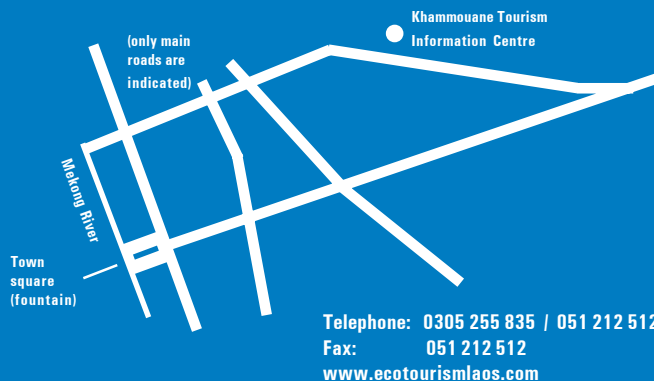
## Where does your money go?



Please note that exact percentages vary for each trek

## Where to book

Book your trek or obtain further information at the Khammouane Tourism Information Centre in Thakhek (note that this is in a separate location from the Provincial Tourism Office).



## Community-based tourism

This trek is operated by Khammouane Ecoguide Unit, an initiative of the Khammouane Provincial Tourism Office. It has been developed using the principles of community-based tourism, the goals of which are to contribute to poverty reduction and nature conservation.

The trek has been established with the consent and involvement of all stakeholders, including villagers and tourism officials, and is designed to allow communities to maximise the socio-cultural, environmental and economic benefits of tourism whilst managing its negative impacts. Village development and conservation funds are used to ensure fair distribution of the income generated by the treks.

Trained and certified guides will lead you through the forest and explain about the lives, beliefs and traditions of local people. Be sure to make the most of their knowledge, and consult with them about cultural protocols.

## What is included?

- |                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Village guides                      | Life jacket for boat trips   |
| English-speaking guide from Thakhek | All entrance fees  |
| All transportation                  | Hotel pickup   |
| All meals and drinking water        | Contribution to village development fund                               |
| Baci ceremony in host village       | National park permit fee (to support forest and wildlife conservation) |
| Torch / flashlight for caving       |  |

## What to bring

**GOOD SHOES:** trainers, hiking boots or sandals with straps are recommended (flip-flops are not suitable).

**TORCH/FLASHLIGHT:** For overnight homestays.

**FIRST AID KIT AND MOSQUITO REPELLENT:** Bring your own. Guides also bring a basic first aid kit.

**RAINCOAT:** recommended, especially in the rainy season.

**WEAR:** A hat to protect from sunburn and sunstroke, trousers to protect your legs and a shirt that covers your shoulders (tank tops and vests are not considered polite in Laos).

**BATHING/SWIMMING:** Women must wear a sarong for bathing or swimming, whilst men should wear shorts. Bring a towel.

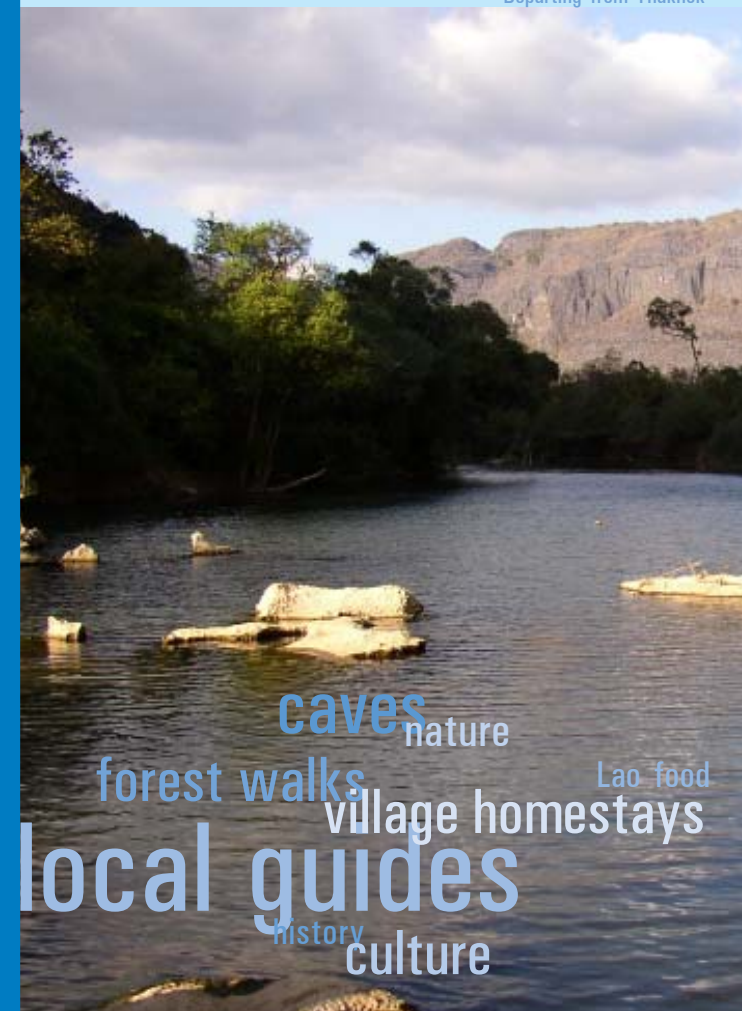
**SLEEPING BAG:** This is optional - there are blankets in the homestays.

**WATER BOTTLE:** Use your own water bottle if you wish to cut down on unnecessary waste.

**TRAVEL LIGHT:** Do not bring too much. Bring one change of clothes for the evening. Use a small backpack.


# Community-based trekking in Khammouane Province

Departing from Thakhek



**SNV**





## Nong Paa Fa (Buddha cave)

One day programme

Visit one of the most important religious sites in Khammouane province, a cave containing over 200 ancient Buddha images that lay forgotten for hundreds of years. Your provincial ecoguides will take you to the village of Ban Na Khang Xang where village guides join you for a forest walk. You will learn about forest foods and products, and discover how important they are to villagers. A rest stop is taken at Nong Tao (Turtle Lake) where you can swim into Tham Nong Paseum cave; the more adventurous can explore further. Following lunch at the Buddha cave market, you will enter the Buddha cave shrine and can make a wish. You now return to Ban Na Khang Xang village for a traditional baci ceremony with the villagers wishing you a safe journey home!

## Caves, cool breezes and culture

One day programme

This full day programme combines some of the most interesting caves in the area with some natural attractions and an insight into Lao culture. Firstly your guide will bring you to Tham Xang (elephant cave), well known for its elephant head “miraculously” formed by stalagmites, then to Tham Xiangliab, where you will hear the story of a monk in love with a local girl! From here you continue on for a swim at Tha Falang, a beautiful shady spot on the Nam Don River. Next is Tham Pha Inh cave, a cave containing a Buddhist shrine and a small lake said to have magical powers. Lunch is eaten at Tham Nang Aen, where cool breezes blowing from the 1.5km long cave produce a sense of natural air conditioning! In the afternoon enjoy a traditional baci ceremony with the villagers of Song Khon village and a visit to Khammouane’s “Great Wall” (actually a natural sandstone formation).



## Mighty Konglor cave and village homestay

Three days / two nights

Visit the famous seven kilometre-long Konglor cave, located inside the Phou Hin Poun National Protected Area. Your journey starts with a walk through the spectacular Provincial Conservation Forest with your provincial ecoguide, who will take you to the 70-metre high Nam Sanam Waterfall. Your second day’s journey takes you to Konglor village homestay, your base for exploring the cave. Traveling through the entire length of the cave by local boat, you will make short stops to visit spectacular stalactites and other rock formations. That evening the villagers will perform a baci ceremony to wish you luck; you can try local food and trade stories with your hosts. On day three you will travel back to Na Hin or Thakhek.



## Pristine Phou Hin Poun

Two days / one night

Explore the incredible beauty of the Phou Hin Poun National Protected Area and get a taste of real village life on this trek. The limestone-studded landscape offers pristine monsoon lakes, spectacular caves and traditional villages. Village guides will accompany you to the village of Phontong where you will spend the night at a tourist ecolodge, and be looked after by a local family. That evening the villagers will perform a Baci ceremony to welcome you and provide you with traditional Lao food. The second days’ walk is challenging, taking you through bamboo forests to the village of Ban Nakeu then on to Kuhn Kong Leng Lake - the highlight of your trip. This stunning lake is bright turquoise in colour, and said to be 20 meters deep. After swimming, your journey continues by Tok Tok (‘red iron buffalo’) to Kon Keo rapids where a pick up will return you to Thakhek in the late afternoon.