

MUANG NGOI TREK



Ngoi Kao is situated on the banks of the Ou River in the north of Luang Prabang Province. This two day trek from Ngoi Kao follows trails through dramatic landscapes and includes an overnight stay in a Khmu village.

Day 1

The trek starts from **Ngoi Kao** and heads along a trail for about 2 kilometers, arriving at **Tam Gang**, a large network of caves and waterfalls which was used by villagers as a shelter during the Indochina War.

The trek continues through fields and forests and past the high limestone cliffs that typify the landscape in this part of Luang Prabang Province. After 4 - 5 hours, hikers end the first day, arriving at **Kiew Kan**

The village is home to a friendly **Khmu** community who welcome visitors with a traditional baci ceremony and a meal. They are happy for people to take photographs and bathe in the springs near the village. Guests stay overnight in one of the simple Khmu style community lodges.

Day 2

After breakfast the trek leaves Ban Kiew Kan, climbing briefly, then descending through a forest to a stream before arriving at **Hadsapeuy**, a village on the **Ou River**. After a break, hikers make the final leg of the trip by boat along a beautiful stretch of the river, back to Muang Ngoi.

This trek can be arranged by the Luang Prabang Provincial Tourism Department. For more information please contact staff at the Tourist Information Center, opposite the Ethnic Handicraft Market or call 071 212 487.

The Khmu in Ban Kiew Kan



The Khmu are the largest ethnic minority in Luang Prabang province. Part of the Mon-Khmer group of people found throughout Cambodia and Laos, the Khmu have several sub-groups and language dialects. Nowadays very few Khmu communities wear traditional clothes; they have adopted the 'sinh' (skirt) and western-style clothing of the Lao.

However, the Khmu are famed for their bamboo and rattan basketry. Other ethnic groups, will specially buy woven products from Khmu villages, including Kiew Kan and Hadsapeuy. The Khmu are upland rice farmers. Unlike the irrigated paddy rice fields, upland rice is 'dry' cultivated, and harvested after the rainy season. The Khmu are very skilled at utilizing the forest for subsistence by hunting and gathering wild food and medicine. In recent years, more Khmu villages have been resettled in lowland areas, where the people can also grow vegetables and fish and have access to better roads and services.