

AZERAI

LUANG PRABANG, LAOS

Built within a UNESCO world heritage site located in the heart of the old city of Luang Prabang, Azerai is a contemporary interpretation of a simple and elegant dwelling for today's urbane travellers.



Geography

As the only landlocked country in Southeast Asia, Laos shares its borders with China and Myanmar to the north, Vietnam to the east, Thailand to the west and Cambodia to the south. The majestic Mekong River forms a sizeable part of the western border. While Vientiane is Laos' national capital, Luang Prabang is the cultural jewel of this intriguing country, as well as the capital of Luang Prabang Province. This historic town lies in a green-hearted valley surrounded by steep mountainous countryside perched on a narrow peninsula at the joining of the Nam Khan and Mekong Rivers. The centerpiece of the town is Mount Phousi (Sacred Mountain), crowned by the spectacular golden stupa of Vat Chomsi.

History

Once the home of the 14th century Lan Xang Hom Khao (One Million Elephants Kingdom under the white parasol), Laos became a French protectorate in 1893. Independence was gained in 1953 and from 1960 onwards, a major shift occurred in Lao architecture as internationally inspired designs proved increasingly popular. At the time, Laos was reeling under the repercussions of the Vietnam War, political instability and insecurity reached a new high. These dramatic events led to a new and modern architecture appearing, marking a radical break from traditional construction methods. It drew inspiration from low, modulated and multi-roofed villas of California or modern commercial buildings with flat or terraced roofs.

This process, which could have destroyed the historical heart of Luang Prabang, came to a halt with the Revolution of 1975, when the town went into decline or even a paralysis of sorts, its heritage was then virtually frozen in time.

The significant growth of the economy and tourism in the early 1990s, sparked the renaissance of the town but also posed new threats to its heritage. It was in 1995 that the nomination of Luang Prabang as a World Heritage Site prompted the adoption of a comprehensive package of measures to conserve and restore this unique township. In December 2015, Luang Prabang marked its 20th UNESCO anniversary with a week of celebrations.

Luang Prabang

Luang Prabang, is one of the lesser known but beautifully preserved living heritage sites in the world. The peninsula town is located in the north of Laos, 388 kilometers from the capital Vientiane.

A spiritual township and a former capital of Laos, it is recognized as a cultural and religious centre for Theravada Buddhism. There are over 30 active temples scattered throughout the peninsula. Groups of saffron-robed monks and novices from age eight to 80 are a common sight at any time of day throughout the town.

The exceptional fusion of traditional architecture and urban structures influenced by 19th and 20th century European colonial settlers, provides a picturesque setting for residents and visitors. The Royal Palace Museum was built in 1904 and its notable architecture still holds much of the well-preserved treasures of the kingdom.

The 100 meter Mount Phousi is crowned by a 24 meter gilded stupa, and from its peak panoramic views of the town and surrounding mountains can be enjoyed.

Colourful local markets display an eclectic mix of vibrant hand-crafted textiles, home wares and jewellery alongside a wide variety of vegetables, fruits and local delicacies. Crafts vary from sturdy ironwork to delicate hand crafted paper lanterns.

Riverside cafés rest under vast trees lining the riverbanks and offer a peaceful vantage point from which to watch river life.

Azerai

On French National day in 1914, French bungalows opened. They were first used as French officer quarters and later used by the Laos Government. In 1961 the site opened as Phousi Hotel where it was the town's primary hotel for almost a decade. Phousi Hotel closed in 2014 and the following year construction on Azerai began.



Rooms Housed in a two-level, L-shaped structure, adjacent to the pool area, are 53 rooms varying in size from 35 to 85 square meters. The entry level Rooms are located facing south and west and Courtyard Rooms are facing the pool courtyard. The Azerai Rooms are larger, featuring either a spacious terrace or courtyard.

The room is designed as an open plan living experience. Although it draws elements of the location to inspire the aesthetics, the design approach is in response to the market's contemporary lifestyle – thoughtful simplicity that is practical and comfortable. Each room is equipped with a television, coffee and tea equipment, mini bar and wireless internet. An enclosed washroom, shower and twin vanities are within the room design as well as a king sized bed which can be divided into twin bed configuration if required. The living and bedroom area opens through louvered doors onto an outdoor balcony or terrace with lounges.

Rates

	1 Jan – 30 Sep 2017	1 Oct 2017 – 30 Sep 2018
Room	US\$ 250++	US\$ 300++
Courtyard Room	US\$ 300++	US\$ 360++
Azerai Room	US\$ 350++	US\$ 420++

*Rates are subject to 10% government tax and 10% service charge.
Rates and government tax are subject to change without prior notice.*

Massage Retreat The Massage Retreat offers foot and body massage therapies with a choice of private treatment rooms or a common area providing the opportunity to enjoy the treatments as a social occasion. The therapists are well trained in their craft and are individually inspired by traditional methods of this well-being practice that has been enjoyed for centuries. Yoga is also available.

Gymnasium The fully equipped gymnasium includes cardio equipment such as treadmills, exercise cycles and elliptical trainers. Strength equipment includes weight stations and free weights.

Azerai Bistro The Bistro has indoor and outdoor seating in a relaxed and social environment. Breakfast offers a continental buffet and a-la-carte menu. Freshly brewed coffee, teas and juices are also available. Lunch features classic Bistro and Lao dishes. Dinner offers French influenced western and Lao dishes served family style. And a wine list features a well-chosen small range of old and new world wines.

Azerai Bistro Bar The bar is a great gathering place for guests who want to start or finish an evening with an aperitif or digestive with snacks. There is a selection of International and Lao infused cocktails, sherries, ports, whiskies and brandies. The veranda area at the front of the bar provides a birds-eye view of the lively main street and night market.

Poolside Bar The hotel features a central garden and 25-metre pool flanked by elegant sunbeds and shaded by a banyan tree dating back more than 120 years. It is a relaxing oasis to enjoy shared platters and a variety of juices, smoothies and refreshing cocktails.

Azerai Lounges Adjacent to the pool courtyard is an open lounge area featuring a library. An indoor lounge is located above the Bistro and offers a terrace overlooking the lively main street.

The Pavilion The Pavilion is a multi-use enclosed area where children can play indoors. It can also be set up for meetings and private events.

Concierge The concierge team provides suggestions for the many scenic and cultural attractions in Luang Prabang and the surrounding region. The river experience is integral to a stay in Luang Prabang and these may include day trips to ancient caves and river villages. Other excursions may include trips to waterfalls, elephant rides, sunset climbs up Mount Phousi, biking, antique shopping, cooking classes, and tours to the town's temples, galleries and museums.

Travel Tips

Getting There Azerai is little under a ten minute drive from Luang Prabang International Airport, which is serviced by scheduled flights from the primary international gateways of Bangkok (95 minutes), Chiang Mai (55 minutes), Hanoi (55 minutes), Siem Reap (95 minutes), Jing Hong (60 minutes), Kunming (55 minutes), Kuala Lumpur (2 hours 55 minutes), Singapore (4 hours 30 minutes via Vientiane) and the capital of Laos, Vientiane (40 minutes).

Immigration Visas are required to enter, exit or transit through Laos. Visas on arrival are available at the airport and are payable in US dollars with the price based on nationality and subject to change without notice. A passport photo is required and can be arranged at immigration on arrival for an additional fee of US\$1. Passports must be valid for at least six months from the date of entry.

Climate Laos enjoys a warm, tropical climate year-round. The cooler, drier months of the year are from November to March and in the evening, temperatures can drop to 15°C but rarely drop below 25°C during the day. Humidity is highest during the green months from May to September, when sunbursts follow short tropical downpours and temperatures can climb to 35°C. However, the average year-round temperature is usually a pleasant 25°C.

Language The official language of Laos is Lao, which is similar to the north eastern dialect of Thai. French is still spoken by many of the older generation, while English is commonly spoken around the town.

Currency The national currency is the kip. Major credit cards are widely accepted in hotels, quality restaurants and shops. Most currencies are easy to cash but the recommended currency for the most favourable exchange rate is the US dollar. Thai Baht and Euros can also be used. A large range of ATM machines are available in town.

Health A doctor is available 24 hours a day. There are no particular immunisations required for entry into Laos unless the traveller is coming from a yellow fever-infected area. No vaccinations are required either, but it is advisable to check with your doctor for current information.

Electricity The standard electrical voltage in Luang Prabang is 220 volts AC, 50 Hz.

Time Zone Luang Prabang is located at GMT +07.00.

Dress During the cooler months of December and January, guests should pack warm clothes for early mornings and evenings, with lighter clothing for the rest of the day. During the summer months it is recommended that guests wear light yet conservative attire, especially on temple visits. Guests should, at all times, travel with comfortable walking shoes and a wide brimmed hat for protection from the tropical sun.



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Travel time estimate is contingent on aircraft and is for reference only.