

How much did our trip to Laos cost

## Description

The visa that most of the tourists that come to Laos get is for one month. In principle it is possible to extend it, but most people and us among them don't do that and limit their visit to the time frame of the standard visa period. So it happened that we have been to Laos for about two weeks during March and April 2015.

The costs in Laos are quite similar to its bigger neighbors – Vietnam and Thailand. On one hand you could expect to have lower costs in a country that is significantly less developed. On the other hand, before entering Laos some rumors reached us saying that Laos is quite expensive to visit as a tourist. Eventually we found out ourselves that if we keep our expenses on a leash there is no problem to manage with the same budget we had in Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam.

So what were our costs in two weeks in Laos?

Food 470\$

Accommodations 335\$ (average of 23\$ a night)

Local transportation 0\$ (it turned out that we didn't use it)

Miscellaneous (laundry, cigarettes, clothing etc) 57\$

**Total 862\$ which are 1725\$ on a monthly calculation, about 6% more than our budget**

Indeed a small deviation but not something unpredictable or too big. It's been a while since we got to the conclusion that period with frequent transitions and more trips are more expensive. There are many reasons for that. The reasons are many.

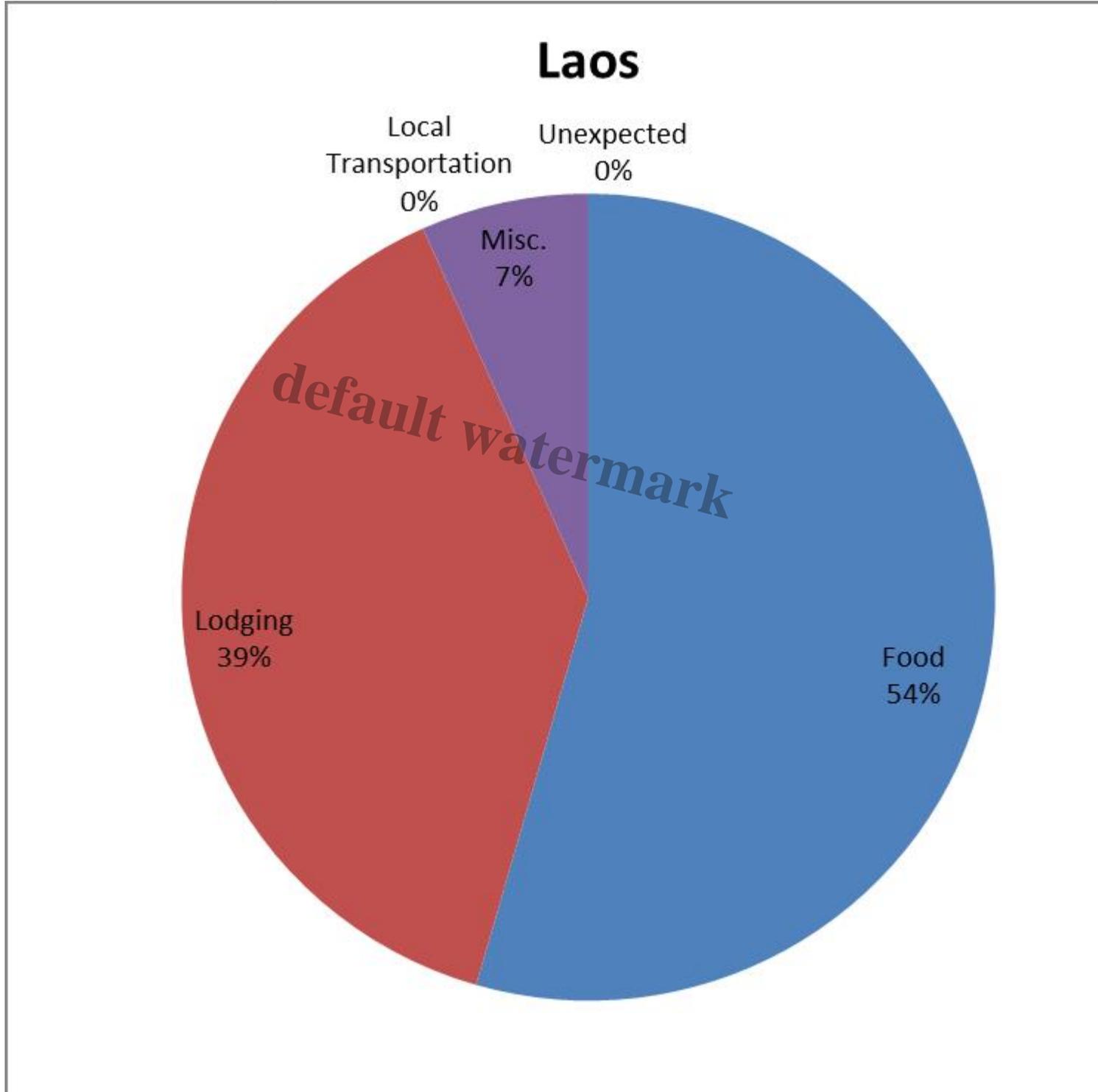
– We stay in various types accommodations for short term, usually a couple of nights. This way costs more than staying in one place where we can commit for a longer period like a full week or a month reducing the price per night.

– We eat in restaurants. Restaurants in SEA are cheap, no doubt. But the market is cheaper, and only when staying in one place for a long period we can use this advantage.

– It takes time to study a place. Finding the best place for laundry, the place with the fruits which is within a walking distance, what's a reasonable price for a tuktuk to downtown. Until we adjust to a new place there is a lot of a trial and error. It takes time and cost money – the price of learning. The longer we stay in one place the more we learn how to cut our costs. When we are on the move there is not enough time to make these adjustments.

– There is no routine. For instance, while on the move we are not always certain when and where we

are going to eat next and whether there is a nice restaurant with reasonable prices. We can't necessarily tell how long will be the bus ride so we load ourselves with food quantities that sometime turn out to be unnecessary.



I ignore here, perhaps unjustly, from another hidden cost that in Laos was not negligible – the cash withdrawal commission. We use ATMs. We didn't bring with us any traveler checks or American dollars in cash and we don't exchange it with money changers. We never opened a local bank account because of our frequent movement between countries. The highest commission we have is the

cash withdrawal from the street ATM. In most countries it costs 4\$ added to another 4\$ charged by the credit card operator. The most annoying part is the limited amount for withdrawal. It exists in Thailand and Vietnam but in Laos it seems to be the worst. The max withdrawal amount for a foreign credit card in Laos is 1,000,000 kip (the Lao currency) which is about 120\$. This amount is usually enough for two days. It implies that every two days we spend 8\$ from our budget on cash withdrawal commission which is 8% of our daily budget. Quite a lot!

**Some examples of prices in Laos:**

- Tuna sandwich â€“ 1.25\$
- Meal in an Indian restaurant â€“ 4\$ per person
- Banana pineapple fruit shake â€“ 0.5-1\$
- Small carton of milk (200cc) â€“ 0.5\$
- Cigarettes Winston Light â€“ 2\$
- Meal in a local restaurant â€“ 1.5\$
- 6 pairs of underwear in the markets â€“ 1.5\$

- Some expenses that are not included in our living costs:
- Boat from Muang Khua to Nong Kiew â€“ 16\$ per person
  - Bus from Nong Kiew to Luang Prahbang â€“ 4\$ per person
  - Tuk tuk from Luang Prahbang to Kuang Si waterfalls â€“ 10\$ for us all
  - Kuang Si waterfalls entrance fee â€“ 5\$ for us all



## Tickets prices in Vang Vieng

\* Important! The expenses listed above are not all of the expenses we have during our journey. In addition to those there are all kinds of expenses like many types of insurances (travel, life, healthâ€¦), website maintenance, house maintenance etc. All of these were not mentioned here since they are not related to the destination where we have been to.

### Category

1. Laos
2. Money

### Tags

1. cost of trip in laos
2. costs in laos
3. family trip in laos

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