



# Art of Monks

## Laos

Join us for 7 nights in one of the most treasured photographic destinations in South-East Asia. We explore the journey of the monks, follow the path of the Mekong and immerse in a photographic workshop filled with landscapes and light. It will be an intensive week of instruction and inspiration from dawn till dusk, with private rooms in the traditional heart of Luang Prabang.

Jan 18-25, 2019

Maximum group size of 8.

\$4,388



**PHOTOGRAPHY**  
by Ewen Bell

# The Schedule

- Day 1 / Jan 18      Midday flight into Luang Prabang  
Briefing session and lunch  
Orientation of Luang Prabang finishing with Mekong Sunset
- Day 2 / Jan 19      Tak Bak with the Monks  
Meet local photography students  
Processing Session  
Sunset walk with the River Boats
- Day 3 / Jan 20      Tak Bak with the Monks  
Morning Market Shoot with the Chef  
Temple walk with our guides  
Afternoon walk through Ban Xieng Man
- Day 4 / Jan 21      Road trip to the cotton villages  
Landscapes of Rice and Markets of Kaipaen  
Last light at Nongkhiaw Bridge
- Day 5 / Jan 22      Visit to Hmong village in the mountains  
Drive back to Luang Prabang  
Monk School
- Day 6 / Jan 23      Early morning with the elephants  
Mekong river boat and sunset
- Day 7 / Jan 24      Tak Bak with the Monks  
Phousi market and cooking school shoot  
Farewell dinner and Slideshow
- Day 8 / Jan 25      Morning flight out of Luang Prabang or extend your stay



# The Highlights

## The Monks

Our program will get you wonderful opportunities to shoot monks in Laos as they go about their daily lives. Aside from the ritual of Tak Bak, we spend time to help you engage with monks at other hours of the day. The quiet lives of monks is what we're most interested in.

## The Mekong

We show you lots of perspectives on the Mekong, sometimes from the river bank and sometimes from the water itself. We take private boats and ferries and explore some of the smaller rivers that feed the Mekong as well.

## The Markets

Ewen's intimate knowledge and passion for the local food will be obvious, with a fine selection of places to eat, dishes to explore and chefs to meet. We take time to explore a couple of the best markets in Laos as well, with the help of a local expert.

## The Villages

A major feature of this workshop is a chance to get into the forests and meet some ethnic tribes living a traditional lifestyle. The simple beauty and elegance of the Tailu and Hmong people will be an inspiration to all.

## The Techniques

Your photographic instructors will spend time with you to work through practical techniques, plus we have time set aside for running processing sessions to help you make the most of the RAW files right from the start of the workshop.





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## Fully Included

Accommodation, food, transport and inspiration are all included, with the tour starting and finishing in Luang Prabang. We have some fabulous treats in store, including great Laos cuisine, remote villages, stunning landscapes and some quiet moments with charming Laotian monks.



## Monks Not Models

Please note that this workshop does NOT in any way arrange monks to perform modelling. All the photos you see in this brochure are real monks and genuine moments. Nothing has been manufactured or contrived.

We offer a genuine travel photography experience to show you how to capture genuine culture in Laos. We discourage the practice of paying monks to “perform” or “model”, out of respect for Buddhism and respect for the art of photo journalism.





## Landscape Moments

This photographic adventure wouldn't be complete without some beautiful landscapes. Ewen and Ian want to share with you some of their favourite and most picturesque landscapes in the region of Luang Prabang.

Expect to be walking through fallow rice fields, stepping down the banks of the Mekong or standing high on a bridge waiting for the last light to trickle across the hills.

The mornings are typically very misty in Luang Prabang, but the evenings can offer amazing clear skies and brilliant light. You don't need a lot of luck to get great landscape photos on this adventure.

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## Something Special

Luang Prabang is Ewen's favourite place in South-East Asia. He's been visiting here since 2007 and has carefully sampled almost every restaurant in the township. He loves the food here, and loves the photography too.

Ewen and Ian have prepared this workshop together, and can show you an unparalleled insight into the charms and character in this amazing part of Laos. We want you to enjoy the experience and be inspired to capture it all on camera.

Our schedule is designed to let you enjoy the experience, and learn at the same time.



# Mekong Sunsets

Every night the sun heads down the Mekong and gets lost among the distant mountains. We have a couple of gorgeous places by the river to watch this spectacle, but we'll also take you out onto the Mekong to enjoy the last light from the water.

The reason you get such vivid orange and pink hues when shooting sunset here are the dry winter skies and the heavy drift of wood smoke every afternoon. All through the hills there are communities lighting fires for cooking, or warmth, which fill the late afternoon sky with golden hues.

What you see in this brochure is what you will experience in Luang Prabang.



# Elephant Ethics

On this tour we will not be participating in elephant treks or rides. Laos is still developing a national framework for protecting the welfare of elephants, and has moved forward a long way in the past decade.

Ultimately we would like to see the elephants returned to the wild, but in the meantime we recognise the need for proper care and income for existing domesticated animals.

Ewen has written several articles on the ethics of elephants and tourism in South-East Asia, the latest of which you can read here: [www.ewenbell.com/gtaef](http://www.ewenbell.com/gtaef)













## Your Gear

You will need a good wide angle lens such as a 24mm prime or 16-35mm wide angle zoom, a fast 50mm lens for portrait work, and it will be handy to bring a 70-200mm telephoto to make the most of our river journeys and sunsets.

Your laptop will be an essential asset so we can spend time sharing images each day and talking about how to process them to perfection. Expect to shoot up to 500G of photos before the end of this workshop, so bring plenty of external storage for backups.

Tripods are NOT required for this workshop.

Please be sure to email or chat with Ian or Ewen in advance of the workshop to finalise what you need for your photographic goals.



## Smile Laos

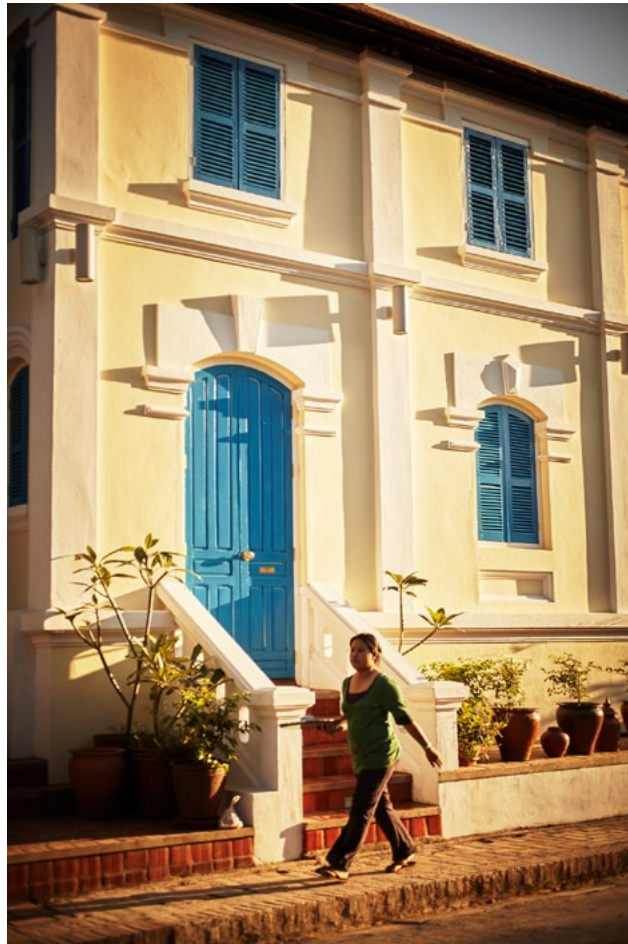
One of the great joys when spending time in Laos is generosity of the locals. Expect to see a lot of smiles. When you walk into a market or chat to a Tuk Tuk driver, you will find the people of Laos are incredibly responsive to your happiness.

No smile goes unreturned.

This is wonderful for photography of course. Even in the morning markets, where locals go for their daily shopping, the stall holders will reward your smiles with a warmth of their own.

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# Masterclass Escort Ian Rolfe

Ian has travelled extensively in Australia, New Zealand, Great Britain, Scandinavia, The Himalayas, South-East Asia, North America and much of the Pacific regions, where he has built up an extensive photo library, which is used by various media outlets world-wide and in his photographic writing.

His travel and landscape photography became well known over fifteen years ago when his column started to appear in the Photo-master and Total Image magazines. Since then his work has been published in countless books, Photography magazines and travel brochures and his images are currently represented by the world's largest photo Libraries. Ian also conducts up to nine Photographic workshops each year both locally and internationally.

He also gives lectures and presentations at Clubs and Societies to help members who are passionate about developing further in their photographic knowledge and skills. Ian is a Grand Master of Photography APS, an Associate of the AIPP and currently serves as President of the Victorian Association of Photographic Societies.

[www.ianrolfelightsapes.com](http://www.ianrolfelightsapes.com)  
[www.ianrolfephotography.net](http://www.ianrolfephotography.net)



# Masterclass Escort Ewen Bell

Travel photographer and journalist, Ewen has been shooting in Laos for over 7 years. His photography of the landscapes and people in around Luang Prabang has been published internationally, most recently in National Geographic Photography and Lonely Planet Traveller. Ewen's work also appears in photographic magazines, National Geographic Traveller, Food & Travel UK, Vacation & Travel, and many other outlets.

Ewen describes photography as a lifestyle, and enjoys sharing his love of the art with a select few travellers every year. Ewen is always happy to share his knowledge on photographic matters of technical, creative and career inspiration. His website "Photography for Travellers" is dedicated to offering advice on practical approaches to changing your creative perspective.

[www.ewenbell.com](http://www.ewenbell.com)  
[www.photographyfortravellers.com](http://www.photographyfortravellers.com)



# Tak Bak

Tak Bak (Giving of alms) is a sacred yet daily event in Laos, where monks walk the streets in the pre-dawn light collecting alms from the residents. The entire community feeds and supports the monks, and Tak Bak is the name the Laos people use for collecting alms (food) in a special bowl each morning.

There are many rules around Tak Bak, all of which focus on the respect that must be shown to the monks, be they wise masters or young novices. It is the monks who serve the community with prayer and thought.

The spectacle attracts a lot of tourists now, which is not good for the tradition or our photography. On this workshop we leave lots of time for quietly pursuing a photographic study of Tak Bak, but in a way that does not interfere with the monks. We must show respect at all times, even when other tourists do not.

Tak Bak is beautiful and amazing, but this workshop and our experience of Luang Prabang is so much more than just this one ritual.











# The Fine Print

## Dates

January 18 to 25, 2019  
7 nights/8 days

## Price

AUD\$4,388

## Group Size

This workshop is limited to 8 participants

## Inclusions

- All meals are included and will be delicious
- Accommodation with a single room as standard
- Airport transfer on arrival in Luang Prabang
- All entrance fees, transportation and guide fees
- Expert tuition from Ian and Ewen

## Exclusions

- Flights into and out of Laos
- Visa on Arrival in Laos
- Your camera gear
- Drinks and alcohol
- Items of a personal nature

## Accommodation Standard

In Luang Prabang we have a beautiful guest house of a luxurious standard and the best possible location. All rooms have air-conditioning, free wi-fi and private en suite. The first to book will receive the best views :) This workshop offers a single room as standard at no extra charge, and couples are offered extra large rooms for their comfort. Our overnight in Nongkhiaw will be a very basic but well maintained guest house with private bathroom. It will not be luxurious, but it will be a good nights sleep in between visiting remote villages.

The itinerary information may vary slightly for your specific departure, as we continuously research and develop each trip. Inclement weather or other factors outside our control may also necessitate minor alterations.

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# How to Book

To secure your place in the group of eight for a unique adventure and inspiration please visit the booking form below, register your details and we'll be in touch to arrange a deposit.

[www.ewenbell.com/booklaos](http://www.ewenbell.com/booklaos)

**PHOTOGRAPHY**  
by Ewen Bell

Ian Rolfe  
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