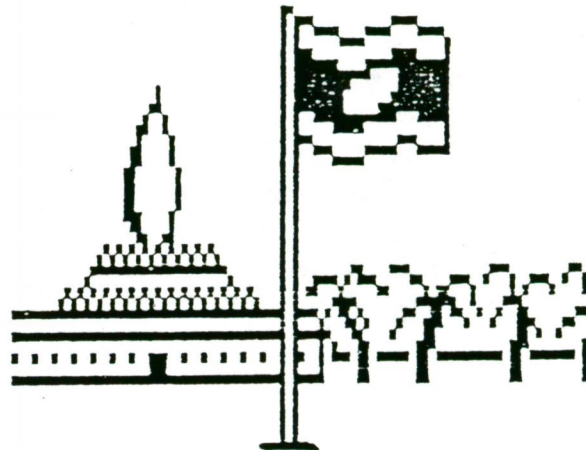


VIENTIANE

GUIDE



1989

THANKYOU TO THE MANY MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY
WHO HELPED IN THE COMPILING OF THIS GUIDE.

LAO PDR IN BRIEF

Lao PDR is a land-locked country sandwiched between Thailand and Vietnam, both of whose borders with Lao PDR are over 1,000 kilometres in length. To the south is Kampuchea with some 200 kilometres of border, to the north-west is a border of some 150 kilometres with Burma, and to the north the border with China is about 200 kilometers long. Seventy per cent of the territory is mountain ranges, highlands and plateaux. A mountain range with average height of 1,200 metres stretches north-south, and cuts off Lao PDR from Vietnam, while a far less formidable barrier - the River Mekong - forms a large part of the border with Thailand. The Mekong, and the tributaries which flow in from the mountains to the east, have dictated a way of life to the people of Lao PDR, most of whom live close to the waterways. In the mountain areas nomadic hill tribes live a spartan and perilous life. Vientiane, the capital city is situated on the left bank of the Mekong River on the fertile Vientiane Plain.

HISTORY

Laos first appeared in historical records as an independent state in the thirteenth century and recorded history dates from the time of King Fa Ngum. Legend has it that he descended from Khoum Borom, a King who came out of the sky from South China, and that there were some 22 kings before Fa Ngum. He named Laos the Kingdom of Lane Xang (Land of the million elephants). Vientiane was declared the capital in 1563 by King Settathirath. In the fifteenth century the kingdom expanded to cover much of north-eastern Thailand and then survived cultural invasions from Cambodia and military incursions from Burma, Thailand and Vietnam, until in the 18th Century when it split into three separate Lao kingdoms centred on Vientiane, Luang Prabang and Champassak. In 1893, following the French expansion in Vietnam, Laos became a French protectorate with the capital based in Luang Prabang. In 1900, the capital changed to Vientiane.

There was a brief Japanese occupation in 1945 culminating in King Sisavang Vong declaring Laos independent of France on 8 April. This led to a very confused state and Laos again reverted to the status of a French Protectorate until independence from France was gained in 1953. This was followed by the emergence of the Lao Issara movement which sought independence for Laos. A second resistance movement also developed from members of the Indochina Communist Party who later became known as the Pathet Lao. Despite a number of attempts to form a coalition government based on representation from all political groups and the assistance of French and American forces, intermittent civil war continued from the 1950's until a cease-fire was established in 1973, when a coalition government under Prince Souvanna-Phoumma was formed. In December 1975 this government collapsed, the monarchy was abolished and the Kingdom of Laos became the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR).

ADMINISTRATION

Lao PDR is divided into sixteen provinces, each with a provincial capital plus Vientiane Prefecture. See Map A. p.3.

The present administration is modelled on Marxist-Leninist lines and is under the direction of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party. The first elections since 1975 were held in June 1988 for the District Assemblies, for Provincial Assemblies in November 1988. National Assembly elections are also planned. The Party Congress lays down the principal policy guidelines. The Secretary-General

of the Party is Kaysone Phomvihane, a position he has now held for some 33 years. He is also Chairman of the Council of Ministers. The Head of State is President Souphanovong with Phoumi Vongvichit as Acting President.

The Flag of Lao P.D.R. is Blue/Red/Blue striped with a white circle in the centre of the Red Band.

THE SOCIETY

The population of Lao PDR, of whom approximately 10% live in Vientiane, was officially stated in 1987 as 3.83 million. Eighty-five per cent of the population are farmers. A large proportion is children, and the Government is encouraging repopulation following the big exodus of those politically opposed to the Regime. The population is roughly divided into three main groups, the Lao Loum (the lowlanders) who are Buddhist; the Lao Theung who are semi-nomadic and live mainly on the mountain slopes; and the Lao Soung, who include most of the hill tribes and minority elements. It is they who are readily distinguishable by their colourful dress. The two latter groups are animist. The hill tribes live a spartan and difficult life.

The Lao are a gentle, courteous, easy-going people who respond quickly and positively to a friendly smile.

ECONOMY

The Lao PDR is endowed with considerable natural resources potential in agriculture, timber, hydroelectric power, precious stones and minerals. It is a least-developed country with one of the lowest per capita incomes in the world. It is a predominantly agricultural country in which agriculture still represents more than seventy-five percent of the Lao PDR Gross National Product (GNP).

The country also inherited an economic system lacking a significant industrial base. Major development constraints are:

- shortage of skilled people and capital
- poorly developed transport and communication
- poor educational and health resources
- difficult terrain, and
- one of the lowest population densities in Asia (only 17 persons per square kilometer).

Farming occupies 3% of the total land area of the country of 23.7 million hectares. It is still the main occupation of the majority of the population, taking the form of smallholder production aimed at self-subsistence. Rice is the principal crop, but there has been a recent increase in maize and cassava. Fisheries and livestock resources are being developed.

CLIMATE

The climate is monsoonal and has three distinct seasons. The COOL DRY SEASON with cooler weather and reduced humidity - November through to January when temperatures may drop to 14 or 15 degrees centigrade. The cool weather can continue until February when the HOT DRY SEASON occurs, with temperatures up to 38 degrees centigrade, only broken by the odd "mango-shower" of rain. A build-up of storm activity in April-May with increasing humidity heralds the WET (RAINY)

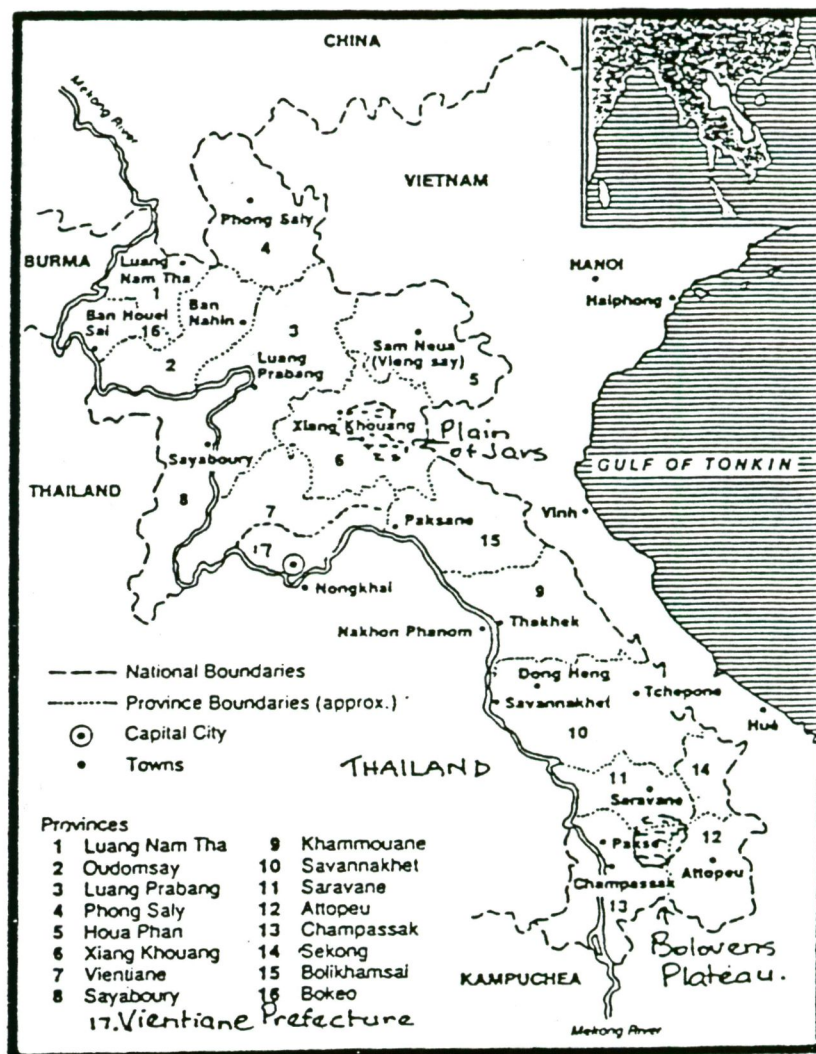
SEASON from June to October, typified by a more consistent pattern of rain and cloudy days through June, July and August. Temperatures average 29 degrees centigrade and during this time the level of the Mekong River rises and flooding of the surrounding area is not uncommon.

LANGUAGE

English, French, Russian and obviously Lao are fairly widely spoken by senior government officials and staff employed by foreign families and organisations. Many shop-keepers and market sellers have a basic understanding of French or English, but it is much appreciated and helpful if you try to develop some knowledge and use of the Lao language.

The Lao language spoken in Vientiane is based on an ingenious script that communicates the sounds and the pitch or tone at which they should be spoken. There are six tones, 33 consonants and 28 vowels which appears daunting - but the grammatical structure is quite simple. It is closely related to the Esan language spoken in North-East Thailand. Lessons can be arranged but the only books available in Vientiane on the language are those used by the Lao school children themselves. "Basic Spoken Lao in Sixteen Lessons" is available from The Library Club. "Lao for Beginners" by Hoshimo & Marcus (Tuttle Company, 1981) would be a useful purchase before arrival.

LAO PDR



LOCAL CULTURE

DO'S AND DON'TS

DO

- Observe, and when in doubt do what the Lao do.
- Smile and greet strangers with "Sa bai dee".
- Be courteous and considerate.
- Remove shoes when entering a Wat or a Lao home.
- Take care when driving. Traffic is undisciplined. At night cyclists use no lights. Be vigilant at traffic lights. Vehicles, cyclists in particular, often stop in the right lane to turn left and vice versa and will do so directly in front of you without looking.
- Attempt to learn some Lao.
- Take care that your feet, the least respected part of one's body, are not at rest on a table in the company of Lao. This is considered insulting.
- If you display a Buddha image for decorative purposes (and it is better if you do not) do so at a lofty height and certainly not in a stairwell.
- Cultivate patience. Remember to reinforce requests if required on a routine basis - otherwise the assumption is that you wanted it once only.
- Women should keep shoulders covered and make sure clothes have at least small sleeves if meeting Lao people or going to the market.
- Kneel when putting money into "donations" box in the wat.

DON'T

- Shout and rage at a Lao. You lose "face".
- Reprimand a Lao in front of others. He loses "face".
- Indicate with your foot. When seated on the floor in company of Lao, keep feet tucked below or behind you. Try not to have the sole of your foot directed towards anyone. Take care when sitting cross-legged.
- Pat a child on the head or abuse the head of a Lao in any way. The head is the most sacred part of the body.
- Wear (scanty) clothing in public. No matter how hot the weather, shorts of any kind are inappropriate office attire.
- Be irritated by giggles when you consider the occasion to be anything but a laughing matter. They often hide embarrassment or shyness.
- Ladies - do not attempt to shake the hand of a monk, hand anything to him directly or sit beside him. Monks are not allowed to touch women. If you wish to hand something to a monk, do so through a male, offer it on a tray or place it on a table or on the ground in front of him.
- Take photographs inside the "sim" when visiting a wat without asking. Always ask permission before photographing anyone or anything within temple grounds.

UP-COUNTRY TRAVEL

Travelling outside Vientiane is both fascinating and challenging. Travellers to larger towns (Luang Prabang and Savannakhet, for example) will find hotels and restaurants. Otherwise, travellers will be lodged in guesthouses in smaller provincial capitals and district centres, and, in village houses on occasion. Travel is sometimes slow and unpredictable, especially during the rainy season (by road and air), the dry season (by boat), and the hot season (by air while the highland fields are being burned). Bring books, report preparation materials, stationary, or your knitting, and cultivate your patience. Occasionally you will be offered clear water to drink. Don't! It almost certainly hasn't been boiled. The water added to "lao lai" (fermented rice drink drunk from clay jug with long straws) is never boiled. However, cold or hot Lao tea (very weak) is generally safe to drink.

If the weather will be cold in the area you are travelling to (e.g. the northern mountains in January), bring blankets for your travelling party and a jacket for yourself. Otherwise bring only sturdy, easily handwashed clothing and good walking shoes that can get wet. Other travel items that may be useful include:- mosquito net and repellent, hat and sunscreen, bathing sarong and flip-flops, basic first aid kit, antacid tablets and aspirin for too much lao-lao, Pepto Bismal, elastoplast, antibiotic ointment, chloroquine, 1 litre water bottle and fast-acting water purification tablets such as Puri-Tab (available in Bangkok and other parts of Asia). A more extensive supply of first aid items may be desirable if you will be travelling to remote areas. Read Health Considerations, page 14 of the guide.

Take many pictures and have a great time! You are seeing the "real" Lao PDR!

ACCOMMODATION

The Lane Xang Hotel (map 4) Ph: 3672 or Ph: 4781 on Thanon Fa Ngum is the largest hotel in Vientiane and the one used by most foreigners. Under Government control, its 78 rooms with ensuites are air-conditioned and usually have hot water. There is a Dining Room, Bar and Lounge, and swimming pool. Rates start from US\$ 18 per day, but substantial reductions are offered (up to 50%) for stays longer than one month. Small suites are available on the top (third) floor at US\$ 34 a day. There is no lift.

The Swedish Guest House (map 3) Ph: 2297 on Thanon Sokpaluang also offers nice accommodation, with reduced rates for long-term stays. Meal service is available and the location is very pleasant with tennis, basketball & badminton courts available on the premises.

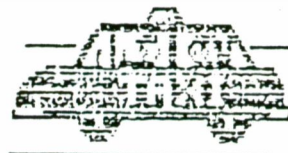
Santipharb Hotel (map 2) Ph: 3305, 69A Thanon Luang Prabang also offers clean and air-conditioned accommodation in a large hotel. Rates are from US\$ 18 day with discounts negotiable for long-term stays - suites are available. Dining room with live music every night.

Lao-Chaleune Hotel (map 4), on corner of Thanon Chou Anou & Fa Ngum has large air-conditioned rooms from US\$ 10 per night.

Muang-Lao Hotel (map 3) - on Thanon Thadeua Km 4, has cheap clean air-conditioned rooms. Located near the Australian Club.

Taxis, Samlors, Tuk-Tuks & Trishaws

These may be hired from outside the markets and the price negotiated (first!) with the driver. To travel from the Morning Market to Km 3 Thanon Thadeua will cost about 150 kip per person (sharing in a taxi), 200 kip by samlor, 400 kip by motorcycle or 500-600 kip for taxi by private charter.



Car Hire

The cost to hire a local taxi for a full day for business travel or sightseeing in and around Vientiane is approximately US\$ 10-15. There may be a surcharge for petrol for longer journeys but negotiate initially. Car Hire with driver is also available from the Lane Xang Hotel from US\$ 20 per day.

Bicycles



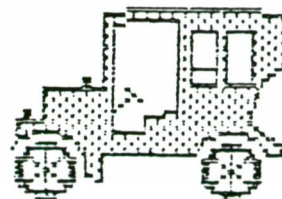
Bicycles are useful and popular chiefly because Vientiane is so flat. A locking device is recommended if you leave your bicycle unattended but the markets have an enclosed bicycle park, where for 10 kip you may leave your bicycle in the care of an attendant. A locally assembled bicycle sells for approximately US\$ 70.

Motorcycles

Common method of travel in Vientiane where distances are small and traffic is light. Safety helmets are not available, and in view of poor medical facilities and high accident rate, they should be brought with you.

Private Cars

Most diplomats and experts are entitled to import or purchase locally from other foreigners, a private car duty-free. There is a steady market of second-hand cars usually advertised on Club notice-boards.



Servicing facilities are limited in Vientiane, and although common spare parts are available you will experience time-consuming and expensive difficulties with unusual model cars. Many spouses drive their own cars. Children's car seats should be brought with you.

Licenses & Insurance

You must have a valid license from home and photographs to hand in to obtain a Lao driving license. (An international license is valid for this purpose) Car licensing is effected at the Municipality Transport Office on the corner of Thanon Settathirath and Thanon Sakarindh. Car insurance can be arranged with Manley Enterprises International, 85/1 Nokeo Khoummane Road. Ph: 3256.

Petrol

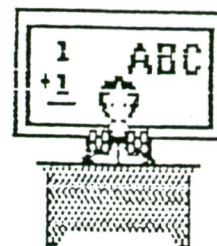
Petrol imported from Thailand is sold at GASME station on Thanon Thadeua and purchased with coupons. Permission to purchase coupons (limit of 200 litres per month) is officially required from Department of Foreign Affairs (counter-signed by MEPME) - but it is also possible to purchase directly at GASME Private petrol stations have recently re-opened and there seem to be no restrictions on purchase.



EDUCATION

SCHOOLING

The International Children's Learning Centre (map 2) offers English language instruction for children of the International community starting at age 3. Because the students come from many different language backgrounds, the main purpose of the Centre is to teach English. It does not, therefore, offer a full school programme for English speaking children. The Centre is run by a Parent's Committee and is not associated with any embassy nor subsidized by any organization. The day-to-day operations are taken care of by a Head Teacher and an Administrator who are appointed from the foreign community with other teachers, and are responsible to the Parents Committee.



The Curriculum is varied, but the Centre cannot guarantee that the classwork will be appropriate for the child's age, and recommends that every child over 6 years of age follow a correspondence course in addition to attending classes at the Centre.

Depending on the availability of teachers, the Centre tries to offer: English Grammar, Conversation, Comprehension, Writing, Spelling and Reading, Science and Health, Social Studies and Geography, Arts and Craft, Sports and Swimming, Music.

The centre is housed in a small and agreeable compound in a small soi off Thanon Samsenthai, at the southern end just past the fork in the roads and before the statue of King Sisavang Vong. Hours: Monday to Friday 8 a.m. - 12 noon. Ph: 3367.

The Swedish School (map 2) is housed in the same compound and integrated with the ICLC for some lessons. This school is run by a full-time teacher appointed by the Swedish Embassy and open only to children of Swedish nationality.

The French Embassy School (4) is open to children of French nationals and other members of the international community. There is a kindergarten for children 2 and 1/2 - 5 years from 9.00 - 12.30 every weekday. Children from 6 to 12 years old have a full-time teacher, who also supervises correspondence for older children. The school is housed in the French Embassy compound and is open from 8.30 - 1.00p.m. every weekday. Instruction is in French.



PLAYGROUP

A playgroup for children aged 0-3 has been active for the past year. This group meets at a different home every Thursday afternoon from 3-5 p.m. See the AERC (Australian Embassy Recreation Club) newsletter for details. Mothers also attend if possible.

CORRESPONDENCE AND SELF EDUCATION

Many spouses study external courses and these and children's courses should be arranged before your arrival. Educational library facilities are very limited so arrangements should be made for postage or hand carry of library books, videos and cassettes.

WINING & DINING

Listed below are some of the more popular restaurants used by foreigners in Vientiane. They are marked on the maps with an R but not individually named. All sell spirits and beers. Some restaurants may have wine for sale. Some charge a small corkage fee for opening your own bottles. One or two government run restaurants will provide satisfying and inexpensive meals but poor ambiance. Some pavement restaurants and noodle shops serve inexpensive and tasty meals after dark - a cheery rough and tumble experience. Go with someone who "knows the ropes" (and the menu!)

Ban Tavanh (map 2)

27 Khoun Boulom Road.
Ph: 2737

European and Thai menu, pleasant atmosphere. Open for lunch and dinner.

Ban Thidarath (Mickey Mouse) (map 4)

26 Thanon Heng Boun
Ph: 4261.

Coffee shop style restaurant, with Chinese & Lao dishes and a selection of European meals.

Dao Vieng (map 4)

40 Thanon Heng Boun
Ph: 3009.

Chinese style cuisine is the speciality of this Government run restaurant, and discotheque. Poor appointments.

Kaonhot (Snooker Club) (map 2)

Thanon Sakarindh Ph: 3432

Restaurant/bar and discotheque specializing in grills, features a billiard room with three tables. Can be booked for private parties.

La Pagode (Santisuk) (map 4)

Thanon Nokeo Khoummane.
Ph: 3926

Restaurant and coffee shop with European menu. Bakery has a good reputation for croissants!



Arawan Restaurant

474 Samsenthai (map 2)
Ph: 3977.

Bar/Restaurant with French cuisine in agreeable atmosphere. Will cater for parties with semi-private room available.

Australian Embassy Recreation Club - (AERC) (map 3)

Thanon Thadeua - Km3.

Offers lunches/dinners to members only. Open every day. Special lunch on Sundays.

Ban Phim (map 1)

Luang Prabang Road, opposite Wat Tai Noy approx. 1.5 km west of the Three Elephants.

Lao and European cuisine, the restaurant and large bar. Can cater for large groups.

DISCOTHEQUES AND DANCING

Many hotels and restaurants in town also have discotheques and dancing, usually beginning around 9.00p.m. and finishing at midnight. Some feature a live band, and some have a cover charge. Most have only recently opened and are still establishing their opening nights!

Kaonhot Disco (Snooker Club) (map 2)
Thanon Sakarindh
Taped music every Saturday & Sunday.

Vienglaty Mai (map 4)

Lane Xang Avenue (orange & white striped building)
Live band every night with meals available. Newest scene in town.

Dao Viang (map 4)

40 Thanon Heng Boun
Disco above the restaurant every night. 100 kip entry.

Santipharb Hotel (map 2)

69A Luang Prabang Road,
Live band with "dancing" (said to be for older people!)

Muang-Lao Hotel (map 3)

Thanon Thadeua approx. Km 4
Live band every night except Mon, Tues.

Lane Xang Hotel (map 3)

Thanon Fa Ngum
Live band by the swimming pool on Friday, Saturday & Sundays.
Entrance charge except for guests.

Anou Hotel (map 3)

Thanon Heng Boun
Disco every night- for eccentrics!

Saysena Hotel (map 3)

Thanon Chou Anou
Disco every night - crowded on weekends. Cover charge - first drink.

Hanle Discotheque (map 3)

2 Thanon Khoun Boulom. Ph: 3009
Disco and restaurant open most nights on 2nd floor. No entry charge.

Sukiyaki (map 3)

Opp. Lane Xang in Thanon Fa Ngum
Live band for Lanvong, taped western music.

Feeling Well Disco (map 2)

Dong Palane opp. junction with Dong Pai Na.

Offers Lao Vietnamese Thai and French cooking, breakfast, lunch, dinner.



SHOPS AND SHOPPING

The listing of establishments in this guide is not to be taken as a recommendation. It is hoped that the reader will make his own judgments. It is claimed that anything that can be bought in an average market in Thailand may be bought here. This may be so but there will be less selection, a higher price and poorer quality.

TALATS OR MARKETS

Talat Sao - Morning Market (map 4)

The morning market does not have fresh produce (except the vendors squatting on the street outside) but caters more for hardware, ready made wearing apparel, groceries, material, shoes, silver-smiths, pharmaceuticals, tobacconists, Lao style shirts & skirts. The central hall has recently been renovated with space for a supermarket and department-store type counters for electrical, kitchen, sports goods etc. A range of lacquer ware from Vietnam is also sold here along with other handicraft products of Lao PDR. Payment in kip or dollars.

Several smaller markets are located around Vientiane, each with a central Government shop surrounded by meat, fish and produce stalls. They are:

Talat Khua-Din (map 4)

Located on the corner of Thanon Khou-Viang and Nong Bone Road (opposite the back of the Morning Market) this market has also been re-established after a fire in 1986. Large range of meat, fish and produce, there are also grocery and hardware stalls. Many florist and fruit stalls front the road. Popular because of its central location, it is also very muddy when wet! You can park down the left hand side.

Talat Thong Thum-The Main Produce Market (map 2)

Also called Talat Tong Khoun Khum or the Evening Market, this is the largest market in town and located on the corner of Thanon Khoun Khum and Thanon Dong Miang. It was recently established to replace the burnt out Evening Market in Nong Douang, and is still sometimes referred to as the Evening Market even though it is best visited in the morning!

The temporary stalls sell meat, fish, vegetables, fruit, eggs, rice, groceries, flowers etc. Go early (less meat sold on Mondays) and during the rainy season wear gum-boots or high soled shoes to thwart the mud. Small boys can be hired to carry your purchases for 50 or 100 kip.

Talat Simuang (map 2) on the river road Thanon Fa Ngum at the junction with Thanon Simuang.

Talat That Luang (map 2) on the road leading out of town to the east, on the southern aspects of the parade ground. Go here to find exotic foods or forest animals. e.g. snake, deer.

Talat Dong Palane (map 2) is located on Thanon Dong Palane near the movie cinema. It is a night market with stalls selling precooked foods and a popular local eating spot. Small range of fresh produce.

Talat Lang at Nong Douang (The old Evening Market) (map 2)

This market was destroyed by fire in late 1987. Some of the hardware shops still operate but the produce and meat stalls have moved to Talat Thong Thoum or Talat Khua-Din.

Talat Souan Mone (map 3) on Thanon Thadeua, at approximately 5 km mark.

FRESH AND FROZEN FOOD

Fresh Food Shop, (map 2) Thanon Samsenthai (near junction with Thanon Sihom) Run by the Ministry of Agriculture, State Agro Processing enterprise, this is an air-conditioned shop with freezers offering packaged meats, milk, butter, eggs, cottage cheese and live fish. You can place orders for special cuts of meats, or if you wish for the meat not to be frozen. Pay in dollars or kip.

Arawan Charcuterie, (map 2) 472 Thanon Samsenthai

This clean delicatessen offers a good range of smoked meats, fish, pate, cheese, yoghurt, sausages and pickles.

Yoghurt Shop (map 4) (Nam Nom Som)

Thanon Heng Boun (next to Bor Sawan Theatre). Makes fresh yoghurt daily, in returnable glass jars.

Magasin d'Etat or MEPMK. (map 4)

(Ground Floor, Right Hand Side). The fresh food section on ground floor, right hand side sells beef, pork and chickens (frozen) brought in from Thailand, as well as bacon, sausages, cheese, butter, ice-cream, yoghurt and long-life sterilized milk.

Soviet Flats Shop (map 2)

Located in left-hand end block of flats on Luang Prabang Road. Often has fresh unfrozen chickens as well as frozen meats. Recommended for fresh green coffee beans from Pakse. Payment in kip or dollars.

BREAD & BAKERIES

French style bread and rolls plus light, sweet, white sandwich loaves are obtainable at various small stalls around town and at the markets. The two stalls on Thanon Heng Boun (by Bousavanh Theatre) also sell a variety of loaves and dinner rolls. There is no wholemeal flour available in Vientiane.

La Pagode Bakery (map 4)

Thanon Nokeo Khoummane - known for its croissants - best to order in advance. will make and decorate birthday cakes.



Sweet Home Bakery (map 4)

109 Thanon Chou Anou - has excellent range of decorated small and large cakes. Cake decoration a specialty.



Vinhloi Bakery (map 4)

111 Thanon Chou Anou - Specialises in ice-creams, cakes, croissants and a good sandwich loaf. Can make and decorate birthday cakes.

GROCERIES/SUPERMARKETS

Magasin D'Etat (MEPME) (map 4)

A mini department store of four floors on Thanon Samsenthai, government owned and operated. Accepts dollars, bank cheque vouchers and Baht only. The ground floor has a range of imported groceries and household needs. The second and third floors have a limited range of imported commodities - shoes, electrical goods, cosmetics and sportswear, but there is quite a good range of materials, linen and cigarettes. The fourth floor is devoted to the sale of local handicrafts, some imported wood-ware and wall paper, and plastic goods from Thailand.

Intershop - Vientiane Commercial Company (map 4)

132 Thanon Samsenthai. Sometimes has a selection of imported foodstuffs, beer, lacquer ware and household goods.

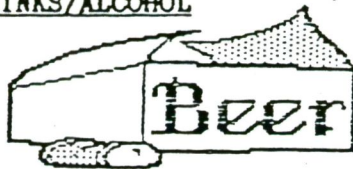
Morning Market Supermarket (map 4)

Inside the central hall, this is a newly established government supermarket offering some groceries and cleaning needs and a good selection of local materials and handicrafts. Kip or dollars.

Supermarket - Dong Palane (map 2)

Thanon Dong Palane. Government run grocery and clothing store with fluctuating stock.

SOFT DRINKS/ALCOHOL



Many shops around Vientiane sell bottled Coke/Sprite/Mirinda and Soda, but they can be purchased cheaper by the crate provided you have empty bottles for exchange.

Supplies often run out so keep a good supply on hand. Local bottled beer is available as well as canned Tiger Beer from Singapore, Heineken Beer from Holland and Australian Beers. Spirits are readily available at a reasonable price but wine supplies vary. Most experts are entitled to import wine and many use this privilege to place an order with overseas distributors e.g.. Australian Wine & Brandy Corp. Expect 3 - 5 months for delivery and clearance paper-work.

Government Distribution Outlet (map 4)

17 Manh Thathourath (pay in kip)

The Intershop (map 4)

43 Manh Thathourath (pay in dollars).

The MEPME Outlet (map 2)

453 Thanon Settathirath sells cartons of canned soft drinks (when available) as well as cartons of Heineken or Tiger beer.

Magasin d'Etat (map 4)

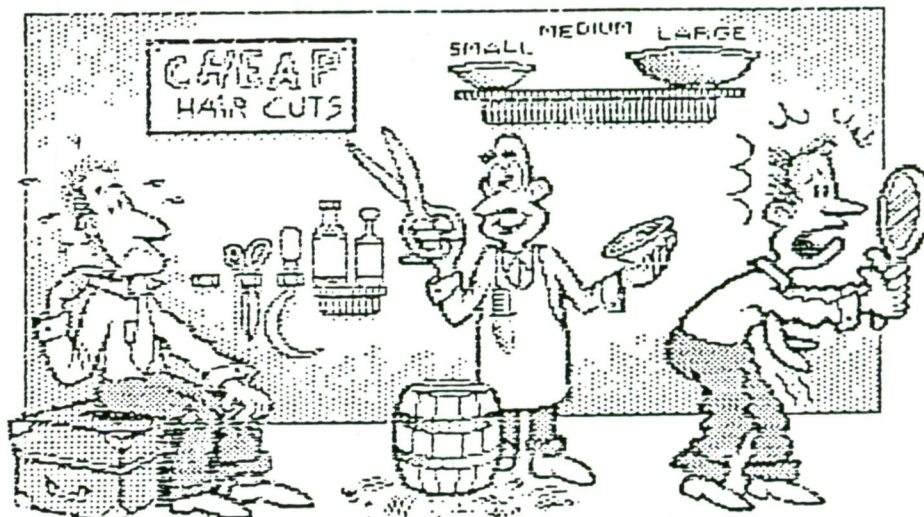
Samsenthai Rd. near the corner of Sakarindh Rd. Ground floor left, sells a wide range of imported spirits and liqueurs at very reasonable prices. Check the age of the wine/champagne - it does not seem to travel well!

The Duty-Free Shop (map 2)

Thanon Sakarindh sells wine, spirits, tobacco and a few other items. Check at your embassy for the current procedures required in order to shop here.

HAIRDRESSERS and BARBERS

Salons are not very sophisticated and rarely have hot water. Often there is only one washing bowl so service can be slow. Standards of cleanliness are well below those in the West. Most beauty salons offer manicure & pedicures as well. Some recommended salons are:



Janine's (map 4) 24 Thanon Setthathirath (Ph: 2808) for cutting and styling. Efficient service and hot water. Also does facials.

Mrs. Chalio (map 4) - Thai stylist on corner of Lang Xang Ave and Thanon Talat Sao for cutting and styling.

Madame Bua Khan (map 4) - Thanon Phnom Penh. Turn left after La Pagode Restaurant, and park in courtyard of first house on the left for styling and cutting. Hot water.

Miss Duan (map 2) - 12 Thanon Dong Miang (opposite Talat Tong Thoum) for cutting and styling.

Mr. Lee Barber Shop (map 4) - 318 Samsenthai.

DRESSMAKERS, TAILORS and KNITTERS



Queen's Beauty Tailor (map 4) 21 Thanon Pang Kham (actually in Nam Phou Square) - Ph: 3117. Reasonably careful work and moderate prices. Allow 2 - 3 weeks.

Nova (map 4) 364 Thanon Samsenthai. Ph: 3329. Workmanship is careful and prices are reasonable. Tailoring for men and women in approximately one week.

Dooley Tailors (map 4) 314 Thanon Samsenthai. Dressmaker and Tailor. Can copy a pattern well. One week delivery.

La Fantasie (map 4) 55 Thanon Pang Kham. Vietnamese husband and wife team, who speak some French. Madame reads but does not speak English. Tailors for men and women.



Adam Tailors (map 4) 58-60 Thanon Pang Kham. Reasonable materials and tailoring for men and boys.

T.V. Chuong (map 4) 395 Thanon Samsenthai. Vietnamese tailor who speaks English. Well recommended especially for jackets and suits.

There are several tailor shops in Thanon Pang Kham. The tailors in the Morning Market are cheap and adequate for sins and children's clothes and minor repairs. Note that denim purchased in the morning market should be preshrunk before tailoring!

KNITTING - Madame Villavong (map 2) Thanon Saphan Tong Neua Ph: 5474. White shophouse with blue blinds (with hairdressing salon as well), this business machine knits acrylic and cotton yarns to any design.

DRY CLEANING AND LAUNDRY

Be explicit otherwise an item for dry-cleaning may be washed. It is advisable to take precious items to Bangkok.

Bob's Dry Cleaning and Steam Laundry, 267 Samsenthai, Ph: 3957. Dry cleaning takes two to three days. To have a man's suit cleaned costs about 350 kip.



COBBLER AND LEATHER REPAIRS

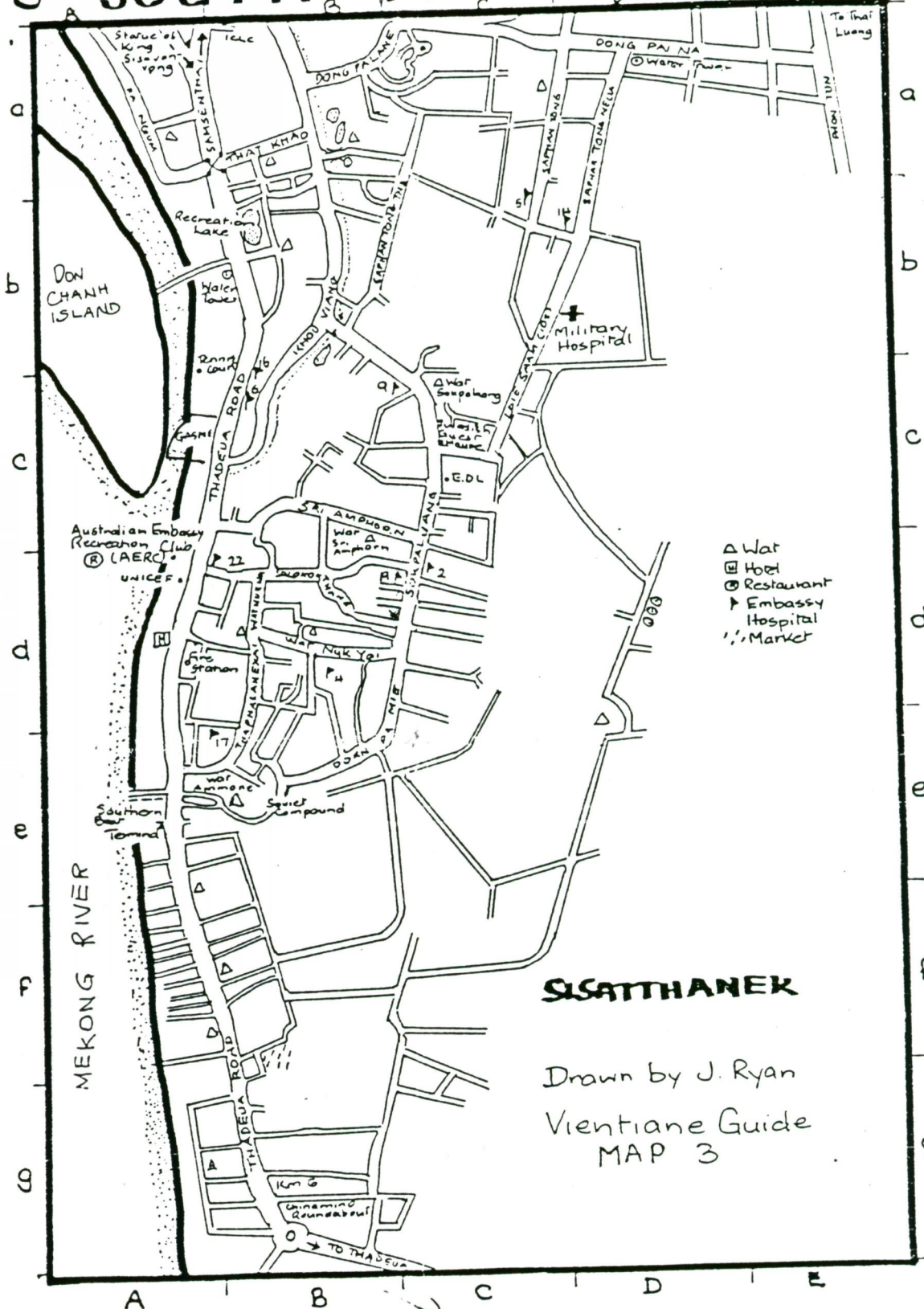
Sun Sae Un Cobbler - Wake Brand (map 4) - 51 Thanon Pang Kham. Makes men's and children's shoes, plus repairs shoes, handbags, suitcases. Satisfactory workmanship and reasonably priced.

Society Import/Export - Skyway Brand (map 4) - 228-232 Thanon Samsenthai can make reasonable children's shoes and thongs. Has last for female shoes but will not make high heels. Showrooms next door.

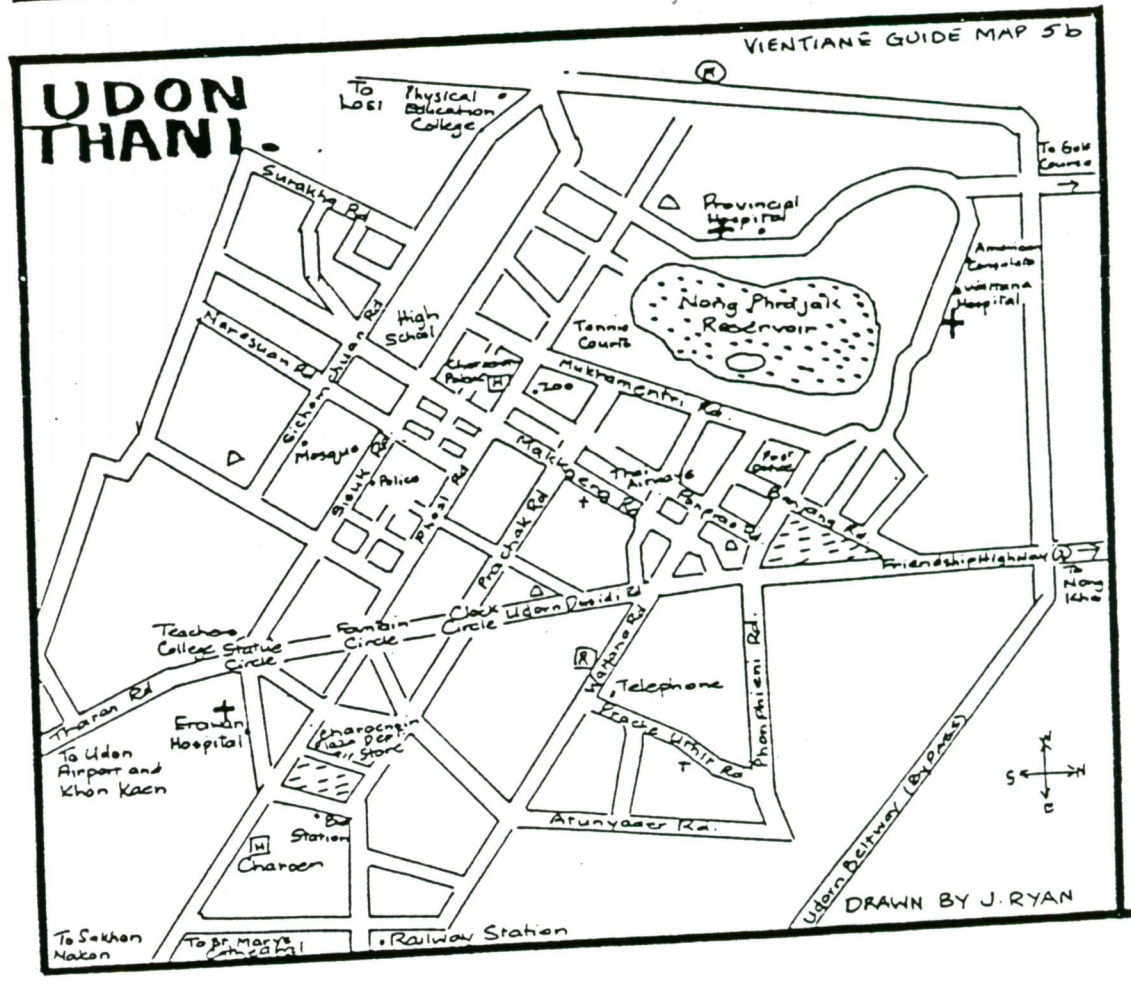
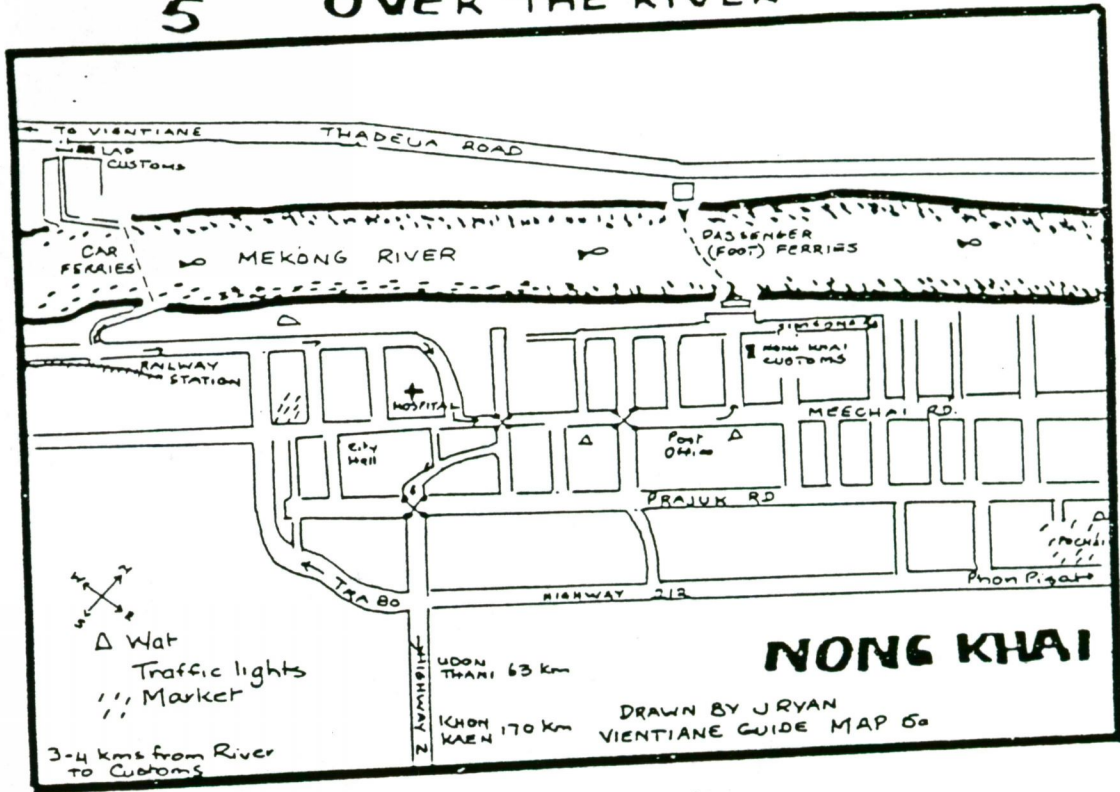
The cobblers' stalls in the Morning Market are also satisfactory.



3 SOUTH VIENTIANE



to 555 Garden



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Nang Sourì Noodle Shop (Green Hole in The Wall) (map 4)

12-14 Thanon Heng Boun

Chinese/Thai food in open shophouse restaurant. Menu written in Lao but known for its "Tom Yum Gung".

Nam Phou (map 4)

9 Nam Phou Place. Ph: 4723

Popular bar restaurant, with attractive appointments and good ambiance. French cuisine with private salon available for parties. Expensive.

Sabaidi (map 2)

67 Thanon That Luang Tai
Ph: 5760

Bar/Restaurant attractively appointed and featuring a Grand Piano (BYO - Bring Your Own - Pianist). European cuisine with good barbecued shrimps. Always order in advance of arrival.



Souriya (map 4)

31/2 Thanon Pang Kham Ph: 4411
Bar/Restaurant attractively appointed with International cuisine. Good ambiance. Very slow service.

Vienglaty Mai (map 4)

Lang Xang Ave.
Orange & white striped building after morning market on way to Monument Anousavari. Restaurant and supper club run by the Vientiane Tourism & Restaurant Enterprise. Live band!

Svensua Gasthuset Ph: 2297 (map 3)

Swedish Guest House Ph: 4949

Sokpalouang Road 34/36

Bar restaurant European/Lao food
Lunches/Dinners available members only. Attractively appointed.

The Food Garden (map 2)

Recommended

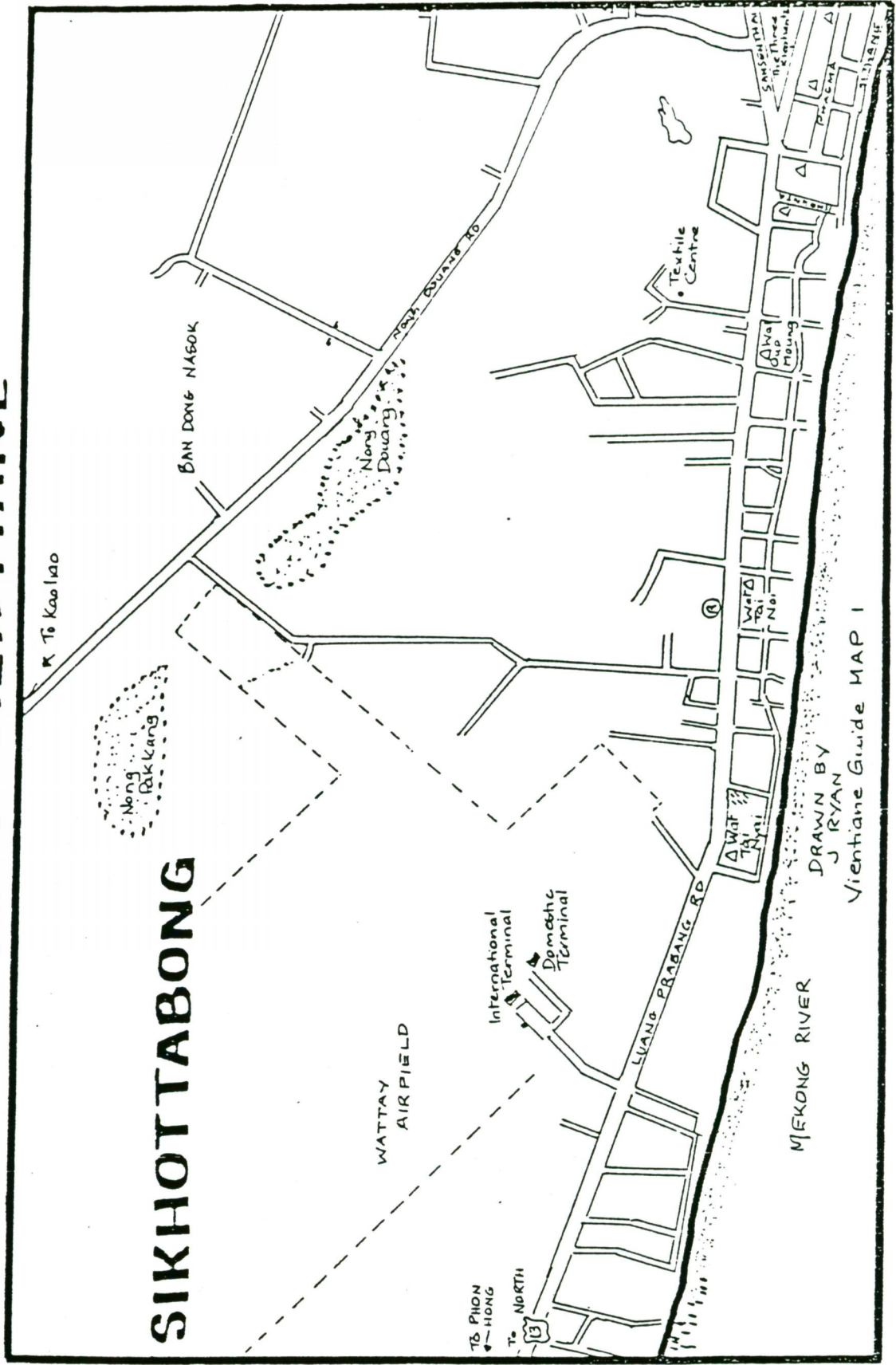
Luang Prabang Road approx. 40 metres from Mittapharb Construction Co.

Thai food restaurant with Lao/English menu. Features mainly sea food dishes. Recommended for those who like spicy food.

If you try a restaurant not listed here and enjoy it, please ring Jill Beilby (2982) with a report for the next year's Guide.

I WEST VIENTIANE

SIKHOTTABONG



DRAWN BY
J RYAN
Vientiane Guide MAP 1