

THAILAND

Travel by steam train from Bangkok



Four times a year, the State Railway of Thailand - TRS (the Thai railways) offers to travel by steam train. Lovers of this mythical means of transport have four opportunities to enjoy themselves. These tours take place on March 26th (anniversary of the opening of the first public railway), on August 12th (anniversary of her Majesty the Queen and mother's day), on October 23rd (anniversary of the death of King Chulalongkorn) and on December 5th (anniversary of his Majesty the King and father's day). Each date corresponds to a different destination.

This year, the first trip by steam train will leave the station Hua Lamphong in Bangkok on Saturday, March 26th at 8: 00 in the morning to reach the ancient capital Ayutthaya, where is scheduled to arrive at 10:30. The return ticket costs 250 baht (about 6.40 Euros) or 999 baht (approximately 25.50 Euros) if you enjoy the excursion offered by coach. Places are limited. For more information or to book, please call the hotline 1690, however the ticket can be paid and removed to the Railways station.

The release of turtles Festival in Phuket



Turtle Release Festival gives rise to a ceremony included in that of Songkran (Buddhist New Year), on April 13th. This day is declared national day of fishing. Baby turtles are released into the sea on Phuket's beaches. Sea turtles have become an endangered species, is the only reason for which the Government, sponsor of the Festival, hopes to increase their number and educate the public on the importance of the protection of this species.

Songkran (New Year Buddhist or water festival)



The Buddhist New Year, from April 13th to 15th 2016, is one of the largest holidays in Thailand because it marks the beginning of the year according to the lunar calendar. The eve of Songkran, April 12th, is one of the hottest days of the year in Thailand. Thais spray the Buddhas of water with reverence but also their friends, the belief that water away bad luck and purifies. There are real battles with water in the streets. Also pouring water flavored on the hands of seniors. Songkran is celebrated throughout the country and particularly in Chiang Mai and Phra Praokong, on the outskirts of Bangkok.

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Award-winning Getaways along Andaman coast



The Andaman coast is not stingy with surprises which are out of the ordinary. Off the coast of Satun, you can join by long tail boat a small sandbank of only 2 m wide that appears at low tide. While you walk on and the waves relentlessly splash it on both sides, it grows in a few minutes and extends further. Looking under your feet, you will realize that it's not sand but a billion pieces of shells which emerge daily during low tide. Named Dragon Backbone by the locals, this ephemeral beach of 5 km long connects the two islets of Koh Hua Man and Koh Sam. Satun VIP travel agency proposes to explore Satun and this mysterious beach at the southern tip of the Andaman coast of Thailand. Its excursions program won a Thailand Tourism Award in 2015.

Created by the National Tourism Office of Thailand (TAT) to encourage the development of quality, the Thailand Tourism Awards are the guarantee of a high level of excellence for destinations, accommodation or excursions programs. Multiple award-winning and yet little known destinations are worthy to be discovered along the Andaman coast. Stegodon Cave, also in Satun, is one of them. 4 km long, this cave explores kayaking and reveals its wonders when the water level allows.

A little more to the North in the district Sikao of Trang, Bo Hin Farmstay is another interesting stop. This fishing village engulfed by a vast mangrove forest is a beautiful sanctuary for marine life. Here, people attach to replant the algae on which the sea was deprived by the practice of irresponsible fishing. Students participate in workshops on the ecosystem while sea grass born in the nursery are transported by boat to be replanted in the nearby bay. By participating in the activities, you find yourself walking in the sea, water up to your knees, in the middle of a field of submerged algae and you may be enough lucky to see some dugongs because algae preserving is profitable for it. Excursions to explore the mangroves or the unspoilt beaches of Sikao are also proposed. Bo Hin Farmstay has won a Thailand Tourism Award in 2013.

From the Bay, navigating through the mangrove forest you can join the channel Sikao. Hundreds of fiddler crabs scurry into their holes when you jump on the Bank. Steps from their 'homes', crabs bathe happily in a hot salt water source with crystal clear water flows directly into the channel. Better to avoid the bathroom in the company of crabs at the risk of getting pinched. Fortunately, a little further to the North in the neighboring province of Krabi, the Wareerak Hot Spring Spa has its own source of hot water (42 ° C) well hidden in a huge tropical garden. Customers plunge with delight into the pools before enjoying a good massage.

A short drive in the Ao Luk of Krabi district, is located Ban Tham Sua, a village of fishermen who practice community tourism and got two Thailand Tourism Awards in 2013 and 2015. A stay at the Rai Preda Homestay allows to discover the rural way of life. Program: picking fruit in the orchard, kitchen course, batik workshops, visits to farms and sea caves by long tail boat and pretty moments of exchange and sharing with the villagers. All of these steps are all experiences to live to enjoy the seaside differently.

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MYANMAR

Thingyan Festival (water Festival)



All years from April 12th to 16th, during *thingyan* month (1st month of the Burmese calendar year), all the country celebrate the Festival of water, i.e. the Buddhist New Year. People throw water on each other and place flowers and palm leaves to their homes. The streets are cleaned on this occasion. Water is considered to be an instrument of purification; this element allows to keep away the evil spirits that is sprayed, and is supposed to bring peace, prosperity and happiness for the coming year.

According to legend, the year begins when Thagyamin, King of *nat* (spirits), visit the Earth to bless the people, mounted on a gold winged horse and bearing a jar of water, symbolizing peace and prosperity. He has also two books including one cover of gold that contains the names of children who have been good during the past year and the other covered with skins of dog for the poor buggers. Everyone sprinkles him! People place flowers and leaves of Palm on the threshold of their house. In cities, youth play with water lance and in the train-stations, the people on the dockside swing from large buckets on travelers in the train.

Long processions to the Shwedagon give the opportunity to pour lustral water on Buddha images and monks. It also honors the elderly: the children bring flowers to the grandparents. Without wishing to spoil the party, this is one of the few popular moments during which it's authorized to gather. But the Organization permits are generally sold by relatives of power which then collect an entrance fee to attend the celebration, often high for the average income of a Burmese...

Everything is closed in the country during these few days.

Implementation of the ban to rise on the temples of Bagan



For many travelers, the temples of Bagan are the highlight of their visit to Myanmar. From the month of March, it will be totally prohibited to rise on monuments.

The former Royal city of Bagan is one of the main tourist attractions of Myanmar. There are many travelers who book a flight for Burma to discover the ancient Burmese city and its 2 500 temples and Buddhist pagodas. Due to the climbing popularity of this historic site among tourists,

the Ministry of Culture of Myanmar announced this week that visitors would be more entitled to climb on monuments from March.

The Department wishes to protect the national cultural heritage, and stressed that tourists had often disrespectful attitudes towards the pagodas which are sacred monuments (including "inappropriate clothing" and people who 'dance or lie' on buildings).

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LAOS

Discovery of five statuettes of Buddha in Sanark



Mr. Hong, an inhabitant of Sanark, in the district of Hinboun, Khammouane province, has discovered five statues of Buddha in the Phakouaneyouak cave located about two kilometers from the village. The size of these pieces ranges from 14.5 centimeters for the smallest to 44 centimeters for the largest. The Buddha statuettes were filed in the residence of the head of the village until it was decided to a more suitable place to keep. Local authorities were alerted provincial heritage district services as well as the relevant services of the Ministry of Information, culture and tourism with which shall be applied to the registration of these antique pieces and their sealing before deciding on their fate.

Pii may or Songkran (Buddhist New Year)



Buddhist New Year, the largest festival in the country, gives rise to many celebrations. It's the most interesting time of year to visit Laos. Although there is officially only 3 successive nonworking days (the last day of the year which ends, the 1st of the next year, and 1 day between the two), the holiday lasts nearly a week, roughly from April 13th to 18th of each year (the date being fixed because based on the solar calendar), and extends throughout the country.

We clean the House to ward off the evil spirits. Many activities in the country are concentrated around the pagodas. The day of Song Kan, we pray and sprinkle the Buddha statues of lustral water consecrated by the monks, we dress in the traditional clothes and have feast around the temples. We fun to splash water, as in the South of China. It's also an opportunity for birds, frogs and other creatures to be released from their cages. Finally, the first day of the New Year, in addition to be sprayed each other, we pronounced wishes. For example we can attend this feast in Luang Prabang.

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VIETNAM

Feast of the Thay pagoda (province of Ha Tay)



Built in the 11th century under the reign of King Ly Nhân Tông in the Sài Sơn village Thay pagoda (the pagoda of the master) also named Thiên Phúc (the pagoda of the heavenly blessing) consists of a set of three magnificent temples. This Buddhist event commemorating the death of mother-goddesses Lieu Hanh, to whom the temple is dedicated, is the opportunity to attend a procession of palanquins, a literary contest, a competition of songs, and artistic activities at the pagoda of Pho Linh (in the old village of Tay Ho) from April 9th to 13th 2016.



Feast of Tết Han Thuc cold foods

We eat *bánh trôi* and *bánh trôi*, kinds of sweet sticky rice on April 9th 2016. It's remembrance of a mandarin who was killed in a forest in flames that we eat cold foods, to not wake up the bruised souls. Some people also visit the tombs of their ancestors.

Feast of Bach Dang (Quang Ninh province)



It's one of the biggest celebrations of Vietnam. Many leaders of the country are also attending this event on April 14th 2016. Representation of the exercises of the soldiers of the Tran dynasty, rituals of sacrifice, procession of the statue Tran Hung Dao, traditional festival of swimming, traditional wrestling or still part of chess with human pawns are on the program. The feast takes place in the Tran Hung Dao temple and Vua Ba temple.

Khmer New Year in Vietnam



The khmer New Year takes place every year in mid-April. The party then is in full swing around the Khmer pagodas from April 14th to 16th 2016. It's the most interesting time to visit the khmer Icha Borei Angkor Vat (in the area of Vinh Long, at the centre of the Mekong delta), then celebrate, or Chùa Dõi to Sóc Trăng Khmer pagoda, at the southern tip of Vietnam.

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Truong Yen Festival (Ninh Binh province)



16th 2016.

These celebrations in the Hoa Lu district, Ninh Binh province, constitute one of the most important events in the area and are known across the country. The ceremonies are given in honor of the Kings Dinh Tien Hoang and Lê Dai Hanh, who liberated the country at the end of the 10th century. They are accompanied by traditional wrestling matches, the Dragon and unicorn dances, boat races and folk songs from April 15th to

Celebration of the launch of Ba Giang kites (province of Ha Tay)



macerate in banana juice - and not any variety, caution!, for better durability.

In the village of Ba Giang, Hông Hà commune, Dan Phuong district, in the suburbs of the city of Hanoi, is dedicated to the kite a true passion. More than a game, it's here an art practice from 7 to 77 years and even beyond. Every year, the village organizes a feast of the kite, which drains enthusiasts from throughout the northern region. Ba Giang, it manufactures the kite Twine is 'old-fashioned', i.e. from strands of bamboo that we pull threads which are then let soak to

On every kite is fixed a flute which, according to the faiths, allows hunting the harmful spirits and the epidemics. The villagers have such a passion for this beautiful object that they have a temple dedicated to the genius of the kite. Here, the members of the local deer-volistes club meet. The Kite Festival is held the third lunar month. But the preparations begin several months before: choice of bamboo, paper purchase, manufacture of strings and flutes... nothing is left to chance. Prior to the competition, the kites are exposed to the temple. Traditional competitions such as the kites launch or rice cooking brightens up this annual event April 21st 2016.

Pagoda Vinh Nghiem classified special national heritage



The Vinh Nghiem pagoda in Bac Giang province (North) received on January the special national heritage certificate, in the presence of Nguyen Xuan Phuc, Prime Minister Deputy.

Despite countless restorations, the pagoda has preserved its traditional architecture marked by the imprint of Le and Nguyen dynasties. Another treasure of Vinh Nghiem: its 3,050 woodcuts used to print the sutras of the Buddhist Truc Lâm sect. These engravings woodcut helped researchers lift the veil on some of the mysteries of the past, as the history of Vietnamese Buddhism, science and technology, philosophy, sociology and Linguistics.

In 2012, the pagoda has received the UNESCO certificate recognizing its liturgical woodblocks as the documentary heritage of humanity.

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CAMBODIA

Khmer New Year (Bon Chaul Chhnam)



This religious festival, one of the most important feasts of Cambodia, begins on April 13th and ending on April 16th. It marks the end of the dry season. The days preceding the New Year, all Cambodian families begin to do the cleaning in their house, clean the walls, floor, so that everything is clean and "like new". The first day of the New Year, we prepare a well-stocked table and well decorated with different fruits, sacred objects and fresh flowers. In the morning, most Cambodians go to pagodas to pray, to light incense sticks to convey the thanks and their vows to Buddha. The faithful also cleanse Buddha statues with scented water. The fact of bathing the Buddha statues in the water symbolizes the idea that water is essential to all kinds of lives. According to Buddhist thought, it's a way to acquire the longevity, luck, happiness and prosperity. The second day is devoted to the family. It offers gifts to parents, grandparents, elders and spent a good time with family around a hearty meal. That day, Cambodians are also many works of charity: they offer food or gifts to people in difficulty, to the homeless, etc. The third day, according to tradition, Cambodians go to temples or pagodas, praying for blessings in the New Year. Children assault the streets by projecting water on passers-by. Sprayed people take it with good spirit and good humor.

Cambodians playing traditional games like Boh Angkunh, Chaol Chhoung, Leak Kansaeng and the tug of war. It's the most important Festival of the year in Cambodia.

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The Agenda:

Here is a sample of the holidays don't miss through Southeast Asia

THAILAND

Full moon festivals (Full Moon Parties) on the island of Koh Phangan
In 2016, the Full Moon Parties are held on January 24th, February 23rd, March 23rd, April 22nd, May 22nd, June 20th, July 20th, August 18th, September 17th, October 16th, November 14th, December 14th 2016.

Chakri dynasty Day: April 6th 2016
The release of turtles in Phuket festival: April 13th 2016
Songkran (Buddhist New Year or water festival): from April 13th to 15th 2016
Cricket Week in Phuket : April 2016
Day of the coronation in Thailand: May 5th 2016
Visakha Puja: May 2016 (full moon)
Rune Paradise, Phuket international marathon: June 4th – 5th 2016
Asalha Puja: July (full moon) 2016
Khao Phansa (Festival of the candles): end of July 2016
Wan Mea Feast of the mothers and the Queen Sirikit's anniversary: August 12th 2016
International festival of dance and music in Bangkok: September / October 2016
Festival of the Sakon Nakhon wax castles: October 2016
Ok Pansa in Thailand: October 2016
Chulalongkorn day: October 2016
Phimai festival: from November 10th to 13th 2016
World Film Festival in Bangkok: November 2016
Loy Krathong, lantern festival: from November 14th to 15th 2016
Bangkok marathon: November 15th 2016
Lopburi monkeys Feast: November 27th 2016
Yi Peng Festival in Chiang Mai: November 2016
Laguna Phuket Triathlon in Phuket: November 2016
Silk and Phuk Seow Festival in Khon Kaen: November / December 2016
Constitution Day: December 10th 2016
King's Anniversary: on December 5th 2016
Thailand International Balloon Festival in Chiang Mai: December 2016
New Year in Thailand: by December 31st 2015 to January 1st 2017
Pimex, Phuket International Boat Show in Phuket: January 2017
Chiang Mai flower festival: February 2017
Chinese New Year in Thailand: February 2017
Magha Puja: February 2017
Thailand International Balloon Festival in Chiang Mai: March 2017
Earth Hour: on March 19th 2017

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CAMBODIA

Cambodia is one of the most spoiled countries in number of bank holidays... Twenty-six annual holidays, sometimes given in series of three consecutive days - New Year, the King's birthday, the day of the local dead and the Festival of the waters, allowing most city dwellers to join their village and their families for a well-deserved rest.

These days are marked by a sharp slowdown of the commercial activities of the Kingdom because they are all cities that began to turn at idle...

- Khmer New Year (Bon Chaul Chhnam) in Cambodia: from April 13th to 16th 2016
- Labor Day: May 1st 2016
- Birthday of the Buddha to the Vietnam and Cambodia: May 4th 2016
- Day of royal plowing - feast of the sacred furrow: May 6th 2016
- Day of genocide: May 9th 2016
- King Sihanoni's Anniversary: May 14th 2016
- Visak Bochea day: May 2016
- Cambodian and international children's day: June 1st 2016
- Queen Mother Monique Birthday's: June 18th 2016
- Constitution Day: September 24th 2016
- Pchum Ben Celebration, day of the dead: mid-October 2016
- Day of commemoration of the Norodom Sihanouk King Father: October 15th 2016
- Day of the Paris agreements: October 23rd 2016
- Crowning of the King: October 29th 2016
- Norodom Sihanouk King's Anniversary: October 3rd 2016
- Independence day: November 9th 2016
- Water (Bon Om took) Festival: mid November 2016
- Human rights day: December 10th 2016
- National holiday in Cambodia: on January 7th 2017
- Marion Bochea, Buddhist celebration day: February 2017
- Festival of Tet (New Year Vietnamese or Chinese) in Cambodia and Laos: February 2017
- Festival KaZantip in Sihanoukville: February 2017
- International women's day: March 8th 2017
- Earth Hour: on March 19th 2017

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MYANMAR

Thingyan Festival (water Festival): from April 12th to 16th 2016
New Year Birman: April 17th 2016
Labor Day: May 1st 2016
Kason: May 20th 2016
Full moon of waso: July 18th 2016
Day of martyrs: July 19th 2016
Nat Taungbyon (Mandalay) Festival: August 2016
Celebration of the Phaung Daw Oo to Lake Inle: October 2016
At Mandalay Kyaukdawgyi pagoda festival: October 2016
Thidingyut Festival (Festival of lights): October 2016
The Kyaukse (to Mandalay) elephants dance festival: October 2016
Kyaik Hti Yo Pagoda (to the Golden Rock): October 2016
Shan New Year: November 22nd 2016
Hot Air Balloon Festival in Taunggyi: November 2016
Tasaungmone Festival: November 6th 2016
National day: November 16th 2016
Karen New Year: December 21st 2016
Pyatha (Independence Day): January 4th 2017
Kayin (Karen New Year): January 2017
Naga New Year Festival (Kaing Bi): January 2017
Kachin Manaw Festival in Myikyina: January 2017
Ananda Pagoda festival in Bagan (Pagan): January 2017
Feast of the Union: on February 12th 2017
Mahamuni pagoda festival In Mandalay: February 2017
Earth Hour: on March 19th 2017
Baw - gyo Festival to Thipaw: March 2017
Feasts of peasants: March 2017
Full moon of Tabaung: March 2017
Armed forces day: March 27th 2017

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Calendar of market in the region of Inle in 2016

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUGUST	SEVEN	OCT	NOV	DEC
1	A	B	A	B	B	C	C	D			A	A
2	B	C	B	C	C	D	D	EA	A	A	B	B
3	C	D	C	D	D	E	EA		B	B	C	C
4	D	E	D	E	E	AB		B	C	C	D	D
5	E	A	E	A	AB		B	C	D	D	E	E
6	A	B	A	BC		C	C	D	E	E	A	A
7	B	CD	BC		C	D	D	E	A	A	B	B
8	CD			D	D	E	E	A	B	B	C	C
9		E	D	E	E	A	A	B	C	C	D	D
10	E	A	E	A	A	B	B	C	D	D	E	E
11	A	B	A	B	B	C	C	D	E	E	A	A
12	B	C	B	C	C	D	D	E	A	A	B	B
13	C	D	C	D	D	E	E	A	B	B	CD	CD
14	D	E	D	E	E	A	A	B	C	C		
15	E	A	E	A	A	B	B	C	FROM	FROM	E	E
16	A	B	A	B	B	C	C	D			A	A
17	B	C	B	C	C	D	D	EA	A	A	B	B
18	C	D	C	D	D	E	EA		B	B	C	C
19	D	E	D	E	E	AB		B	C	C	D	D
20	E	A	E	A	AB		B	C	D	D	E	E
21	A	B	A	BC		C	C	D	E	E	A	A
22	B	CD	BC		C	D	D	E	A	A	B	B
23	CD			D	D	E	E	A	B	B	C	C
24		0	D	E	E	A	A	B	C	C	D	D
25	E	A	E	A	A	B	B	C	D	D	E	E
26	A	B	A	B	B	C	C	D	E	E	A	A
27	B	C	B	C	C	D	D	E	A	A	B	BC
28	C	D	C	D	D	E	E	A	B	B	CD	
29	D	E	D	E	E	A	A	B	C	CD		D
30	E	XXX	E	A	A	B	B	C	FROM		E	E
31	A	XXX	A	XXX	B	XXX	C	FROM	XXX	E	XXX	A

A = Heho, Than Taung, Kyone, Taungto (Sagar road), Nar Baung (Kakku road), Loikaw

B = Taunggyi, Aungban, floating market (Inle)

C = Pwe Hla, Mine Thauth, Phaung Daw Oo, Kyauk Tine (Sagar road), Pin Long

D = Shwe Nyaung, Kalaw, Khaung Dine, Indein, Maw Bi (Sagar road), Phe Khone

E = Nyaug Shwe, Pindaya, Nampan (Sagar road), Ham See (Kakku road), Sagar

Every Sunday and Wednesday, market day in De Maw So beside Act Kaw.

The market of Indein Pagoda on the shores of the Lake is very authentic but more and more frequent. Therefore, come very early in the morning. For every day of full moon (yellow) and dead Moon (green), markets are forward one day.

You have therefore 2 steps on the eve of the day of full moon and dead moon.

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VIETNAM

Festival of Tet Han Thuc cold foods: April 9th 2016
Pagoda Thay (province of Ha Tay): from April 9th to 13th 2016
Feast of Bach Dang (Quang Ninh province): April 14th 2016
Khmer New Year in Vietnam: from April 14th to 16th 2016
Day of Truong Yen (Ninh Binh province): April 15th – 16th 2016
Feast of the village of Van Vi (province of Ha Tay): April 15th – 16th 2016
Celebration of the launch of Ba Giang kites (province of Ha Tay): April 21st 2016
Anniversary of the capture of Saigon: April 30th 2016
Anniversary of the Buddha to Vietnam and Cambodia: May 13th – 14th 2016
Ba Chua Xu Festival to Chau Doc: from May 28th to June 1st 2016
Festival of Quang Lan (Bac Ninh province): from July 13th to 23rd 2016
That-Tich (the obscure seven or the double seven days): August 8th – 9th 2016
Vietnam National holiday: September 2nd 2016
Do Son Buffalo fighting Festival: September 9th 2016
Festival of Double-nine to Trung Cuu: September 9th 2016
Temple Tran Festival to Nam Dinh: from September 15th to 20th 2016
Mid-Autumn Festival (Children festival): September 15th 2016
Autumn festival Keo pagoda in Thai Binh: from October 13th to 15th 2016
Waters Festival (Or Om Boc) in Sóc Trang: November 2016
Anniversary of the Vietnamese Communist Party founding: on February 3rd 2017
Quan Dam procession feast to Dong Ky (province of Bac Ninh): February 11th 2017
Chua Huong (perfume Pagoda Festival) at Huong Son: From February 13th to April 2017
Festival of Tet, Vietnamese New Year (Tet Nguyen Dán): February 2017
Lim Festival or Festival of Hội in Lim (Bac Ninh province): February 2017
Trang-Nguyen Feast (first winner): February 2017
Earth Hour: on March 19th 2017
Festival of the fishermen in Hoi An: March 2017

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LAOS

Pii may or Songkran (Buddhist New Year): from April 13th to 16th 2016
Boun Khao Padabdin (day of the dead): Beginning of September 2016
Boun Ok Phansa and Boun Xouang Heua in Laos: October 2016
Boun Ok Phansa boat on the banks of the Mekong River races: October 2016
Pha That Luang Festival in Vientiane: November 2016
National holiday (Vanh Saad): December 2nd 2016
That Inhang Festival in the vicinity of Savannakhet: from December 1st to 31st 2016
Hmong New Year: December 2016
Festival of Tet (Vietnamese or Chinese New Year) in Cambodia and Laos: February 2017
Borhani Phavet (feast of monasteries) in Laos: February - April 2017
Lao Elephant Festival in Sayabouri: February 2017
Makha Bucha (Magha Puja) in Luang Prabang: February 2017
Earth Hour: on March 19th 2017

All the mentioned dates are subject to change.

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