

## FOOD & DRINK

*Laotian cuisine draws on culinary traditions from its neighbours but Lao food lacks the variety that many of the cuisines from surrounding countries offer. Dishes are a blend of Thai, Vietnamese and Chinese in flavour and presentation. Traditionally, Lao food is very spicy – Lao people will often add chillies by the fistful and use heavy seasoning. Fish sauce is often used to flavour dishes.*

Things to try in Laos:

### LARB



This spicy meat salad is considered the national dish of Laos. The delicious combination of minced beef, chicken or pork seasoned with chilli, lime and mint, served with vegetables and sticky rice is a firm favourite with locals and travellers.

### KHAO POON (RICE VERMICELLI SOUP)



Lao noodle soup, made with long-simmered chili-and-meat-based soup (e.g. fish, pork, chicken). This soup is ladled on the cooked rice vermicelli and a bed of chopped up vegetables such as shallots, spring onion, coriander, mint leaves and string beans.

### STICKY RICE



The staple of Lao meals is rice - a common choice for breakfast or as a snack. Most meals are enjoyed with sticky rice which is served in a lidded wicker basket and best eaten with fingers by simply rolling it up to the size of a golf ball and pop in your mouth.

### TAM MAK HOONG (PAPAYA SALAD)



This Lao creation is similar to Thai som tam, but it has fermented fish sauce and shrimp paste as the key ingredients, along with garlic, tomatoes, chili, palm sugar, lime juice, fish sauce and brined crabs. Although it can be extremely spicy, eating it with sticky rice will make it more enjoyable.