



## Lost Civilizations: Lao



Much of the beauty of Laos lies in its fragility. The country's history is both long and rich. The Plain of Jars testifies to activity here before the Christian Era.

A country touched by a range of different influences, both Hindu and Buddhist cultures have left their mark here.

The country's history really began in around the 12<sup>th</sup> century, when Tai populations arrived from Southern China.

In 1353 the « Country of a million elephants » was founded by Fa Ngum, the first King of the Lao Kingdom.

The many wars which have taken place in and around the country over the last 100 years have significantly slowed its development, but it has retained its natural beauty and its rich cultural heritage.

The Khmers played a very important role in the country's development. They were also responsible for some of the regions most beautiful monuments.

Vientiane has many unusual characteristics for a capital city.

Calm, and peaceful, Laos' capital has not yet been touched by the massive architectural transformations that have transfigured so many South East Asian cities.

On the other side of the Mekong is Luang Prabang, the capital of tourism.

This ancient capital harbours a wealth of magnificent temples, and the great Golden Buddha. With its pretty low story wooden houses, Luang Prabang is full of charm.

Wat Si Muang is the most frequently visited temple in the country. It is believed to be the seat of the city's guardian spirit.

The Wat Si Saket temple is a magnificent sanctuary, and a national museum. It is the oldest temple in Vientiane, built within an internal courtyard in 1919.

**Directed by Jacques VICHET**

*French Version*  
*English Version*

A documentary of 52'

High Definition

HD Cam & Digital Betacam 16/9

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