



Friday Times Travel

48 hours in peaceful

Vientiane



Crouched low over the Mekong within almost a stone's throw of Thailand, Vientiane has finally shaken off its cobwebs and earnestly joined the 21st century. The city is still one of the most relaxed small capitals on the planet, and while it can't rival sibling city Luang Prabang for good looks, it has a raffish charm all of its own. As you wander the cracked streets and riverfront in Vientiane, you're walking past the ghosts of Siamese invasions, wartime spies and madcap Ravens (American pilots) who were all here at one time or another. Vientiane urbanites are friendly, and in no time you'll be chatting with a monk, stall-holder or expat, all happy to help you on your way. With just two days in Laos' languid capital, make the most of your time through a couple of Vientiane's excellent local tours, enjoying croissant breakfasts, night markets, temples and foot rubs in between.