

Indochina: Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos

Images Left Behind

Luang Prabang, Laos

December 4, 2017

After three days in Siem Reap, Cambodia, we left the sanctuary of the Angkor Century Hotel and said goodbye our Lao guide, Kim Thay. His stories of his life at age 8 under dictator Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge Communist regime, the killing fields and his separation from his family to work in the rice fields of Cambodia give a new definition of survival. There was no hidden agenda to Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge Communist Reform: kill all educated people and all political rivals without compassion and with deliberation. Indiscriminate killing was Pol Pot's method to demonstrate the futility of resistance. Before all mass killings, the Khmer Rouge military would play loud music at the massacre site to muffle the cries of the women and children and the drone of automatic gunfire. At age 12, Kim Thay was informed that his group would be the next group scheduled for execution. He ran into the bamboo forest, only to be chased down by the Khmer Rouge Army. As Kim Thay re-counts this traumatic event in his life, he prayed to his ancestors for support, his only option after being cornered in the bamboo forest. His appeal was answered with machine gun fire from an unexpected ally, the Vietnamese Army that drove the Khmer Rouge out of the forest and out of Cambodia in 1979. It was years later that he was able to reunite with the surviving members of his family, never to returning to his village of birth.

Luang Prabang is the spiritual capital of Laos. It was 5:30am in Luang Prabang as the fog lifted, bathing the city in sunlight and saturating the streets with the aroma of fresh-baked French bread.

The townspeople have emerged from their nightly hibernation, lining the streets with anticipation of their morning obligation: giving Alms to the Temple Monks. It's an event that happens at 5:30 every morning, but over the centuries has become a morning ritual to the monks who pray for the town and its well-being.

Watching the long procession of monks exiting their respective temples, each carrying his stainless steel food bowl, is an event not to be missed. Observing this ceremonial morning ritual from Cafe 99 on Night Market Street with a chocolate croissant and a mocha latte was my remuneration for an early morning wakeup call.

Faces of Laos & their Temples







Sandwich with Cheese + Egg
Sandwich with Cheese + Ham

Sandwich with Cheese
Sandwich with Lao style











































