



EXPERIENCE
CHIANG KHAN

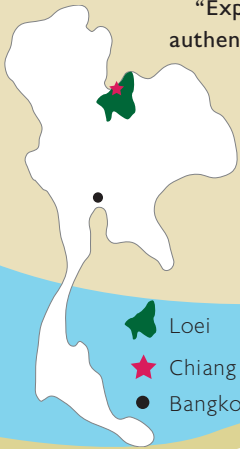
WITH YOUR HEART



Experience Chiang Khan with Your Heart

“Experience Chiang Khan with Your Heart” will take you to explore the authenticity of Chiang Khan by introducing the history, cultural heritage, and belief of the locals.

Come, and discover for yourself if the charm of this classic, small town is like what you have in mind.



-  Loei
-  Chiang Khan
-  Bangkok





Chiang Khan Map



- Pier:**
1. Boat trips along the Mekong River
 2. Boat trips to Thai-Lao Border (Sanakham District)



1. Chiang Khan District Office
2. Chiang Khan Municipality Office



Tourist Information Centre



Chiang Khan Provincial Police Station

 ROUTE 1

 ROUTE 2




 ROUTE 3



An ancient city with an interesting history, Chiang Khan had been relocated three times. Originally, it was an outpost town of the Vientiane Kingdom of Lao PDR., but after the Haw, a Chinese group from Yunnan, destroyed Chiang Khan, Vientiane and Luang Prabang, they moved to Pak Hueang. This new but strategically weak location led them to move to Ban Tha Na Chan, near Chiang Khan's present location. During the reign of King Rama V the Great, Thailand lost territory on the left bank of the Mekong River to the French colonial power, and the Thais who resided on the Lao side, all migrated to the Thai territory and built the current Chiang Khan.

For this reason, it is no wonder that the belief, culture, and language of the people of Chiang Khan is similar to those of Lao PDR., and that the relationship between the two countries has remained intact until today.

Get ready to explore the 3 routes that will introduce you to the fascinating history and way of life, as well as the astonishing scenery that will make you fall in love with Chiang Khan.

-  **Route 1:** Learn Chiang Khan's culture through temple visits.
-  **Route 2:** Experience Chiang Khan's traditional way of life.
-  **Route 3:** Travel along the Mekong River from Chiang Khan to Pak Chom.



Getting to Chiang Khan

By Car:

From Bangkok, take Highway No.1 passing Saraburi and turn onto Highway No. 21 via Phetchabun. Then take Highway No. 203 passing Amphoe Lom Sak into Amphoe Dan Sai and Amphoe Phu Ruea and onto Amphoe Mueang Loei, a total distance of 536 kilometres. From Amphoe Mueang Loei, continue on Highway No. 203 for another 48 kilometres to Chiang Khan.

By Bus:

Bangkok-Chiang Khan buses depart from the Northeastern Bus Terminal (Mo Chit) daily, with the journey taking around 9 hours. For more information, contact Tel.: +66 2936 2852-66 or visit www.transport.co.th.



Travel Agent



Special Journey



www.specialjourney.com



Exotissimo



www.exotissimo.com



ROUTE

I

Learn Chiang Khan's culture through temple visits.



Mekong River

Sticky Rice Almsgiving

Chai Khong Rd.

Wat Si Khun Mueang



Soi 0

Soi 1

Soi 2

Soi 3

Soi 4

Soi 5

Soi 6

Soi 7

Soi 8

Soi 9

Soi 10

Soi 11

Si Chiang Khan Rd.

(211)



Wat Phon Chai

To Amphoe Mueang Loei

(201)



Market



Walk



Ride



Sanakham District
LAO PDR.

Mekong River



Chai Khong Rd.



Garden /
Viewpoint

100-year-old
teak tree



Route 1: Learn Chiang Khan's culture through temple visits.



“Learn to respect elders” and “preserve Buddhist practices” are some significant teachings that have been passed on from generation to generation in Chiang Khan. In this route, visitors are invited to observe how the locals always show great respect to elders and experience their day-to-day customs that are based on Buddhism.

Information on Almsgiving

● Giving alms is the first activity of the day and is a Buddhist ritual that has been practiced for centuries. It allows the almsgivers to make merit by offering food to the monks.

● The ritual is done in silence and the whole process is very quick.

● It is important to dress appropriately by keeping your shoulders and legs covered. Please remove your shoes, and kneel when giving alms.

Remember not to touch the monks or their bowls.



Point 1: Tak Bat Khao Niao or Sticky Rice Almsgiving.

The locals wake up early to prepare sticky rice, or buy it from the morning market. Once the procession of monks start walking down the street, the almsgiver then uses his/her hands to scoop a small portion of sticky rice from the bamboo basket and place it into the monk's bowl. This ritual involves offering of only sticky rice, not any other kinds of food or money.

Point 2: Chang Han or Pha Khao (A meal or set of food).

“Chang Han” or “Pha Khao” is the local phrase, which means “a meal or set of food”. Once the sticky rice almsgiving ceremony is finished, the monks will head back to the temple, where the locals will follow, bringing other kinds of food to accompany the sticky rice to offer to the monks. The Chang Han process is usually completed by listening to sermons.

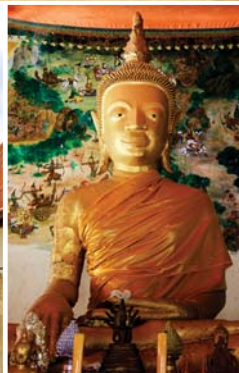
Point 3: Discover the intriguing history of Chiang Khan through temple visits.

After participating in the sticky rice almsgiving and Chang Han offering activities, take some time to visit the temples and observe the exquisite architecture and learn more about Chiang Khan's history and culture through the Buddhist art.

❖ Wat Maha That

Start the historical journey by visiting Wat Maha That, the oldest temple that was built in 1654, which is around the same time as Chiang Khan's establishment. Apart from the ancient mural paintings, the temple houses Luangpho

Yai, a Buddha image highly revered by the locals. Wat Maha That annually holds the biggest religious ceremony of Chiang Khan in the 6th lunar month in which it is believed that several holy spirits gather within the temple during the ceremony.



❖ Wat Si Khun Mueang

Built in 1656, Wat Si Khun Mueang is the second oldest temple of Chiang Khan with the ubosot that illustrates the delicate Lan Xang architecture. Guarding the front of the ubosot

are 2 Yakshas (giant demons) from the Ramakian, Thailand's version of the Ramayana Epic; one is Thotsakan and the other is Sahatsadecha. The front door of the ubosot is adorned with elegant 7-tiered arch whereas inside the ubosot features a wooden channel shaped like Naga, which is used in the Buddha image bathing ceremony during the Songkran Festival. The ubosot houses an old principal Buddha image shaded by a 9-headed Naga.



◆◆◆ Wat Tha Khok

Wat Tha Khok, built in 1852, illustrates a unique combination of Vietnamese, French, and local architecture. The stairs leading up to the door of the ubosot and



the adjoining pillars display the splendid skills of the Vietnamese craftsmen whereas the floor of the ubosot is covered with tiles in a French-style graphic pattern. The interesting point of this temple is that the ubosot is facing west, opposing the course of the Mekong River. During the time of the construction, it is believed that wars came along the current of the river, and building the ubosot against the current will counteract the wars.



Major Festivals

- ◆ **Songkran Festival by the Mekong River**
13-15 April
- ◆ **Phi Khon Nam Festival**
1st-3rd days of the waning moon of the 6th lunar month, after Visakha Puja Day
- ◆ **Bun Phra Wet Festival**
(Chiang Khan's biggest religious ceremony)
13th-15th days of the waxing moon of the 6th lunar month
- ◆ **Salakkaphat Festival** (Merit-making ritual dedicated to deceased ancestors)
Full moon day of the 10th lunar month
- ◆ **Illuminated Boat Procession and Pha Sat Loi Khro Festival**
Full moon day of the 11th lunar month (End of Buddhist Lent Day)
- ◆ **Wax Castle Procession**
11th day of the waxing moon of the 11th lunar month



Pha Sat Loi Khro Festival



Phi Ta Khon and Phi Khon Nam

Phi Ta Khon and Phi Khon Nam are different in that **'Phi Ta Khon'** is a re-enactment of the tale of the Lord Buddha, held annually in the 7th lunar month at Amphoe Dan Sai in Loei province. **'Phi Ta Khon'** is a story of a prince, who returned to town after being sent away to the forest, and the ghosts and animals joined the procession. This parade is called **'Phi Tam Khon'**, meaning 'ghost follows human', and over time it became **'Phi Ta Khon'**.



On the other hand, **'Phi Khon Nam'** is held in Chiang Khan to ask for plentiful rain before the farming season. More information on **'Phi Khon Nam'** is presented in Route 2: Experience Chiang Khan's traditional way of life.

ROUTE

2

Experience Chiang Khan's traditional way of life.



Mekong River



Sticky rice in bamboo tubes



Soi 0

Soi 1

Soi 2

Soi 3

Soi 4

Soi 5

Soi 6

Soi 7

Soi 8

Soi 9

Soi 10

Soi 11

Chai Khong Rd.



Wat Si Khun Mueang

● Chum Nua Yai Phat

Si Chiang Khan Rd.

211



Wat Phon Chai



Suwan Rama (Old Theatre)



Market

To Amphoe Mueang Loei

201



Walk



Ride



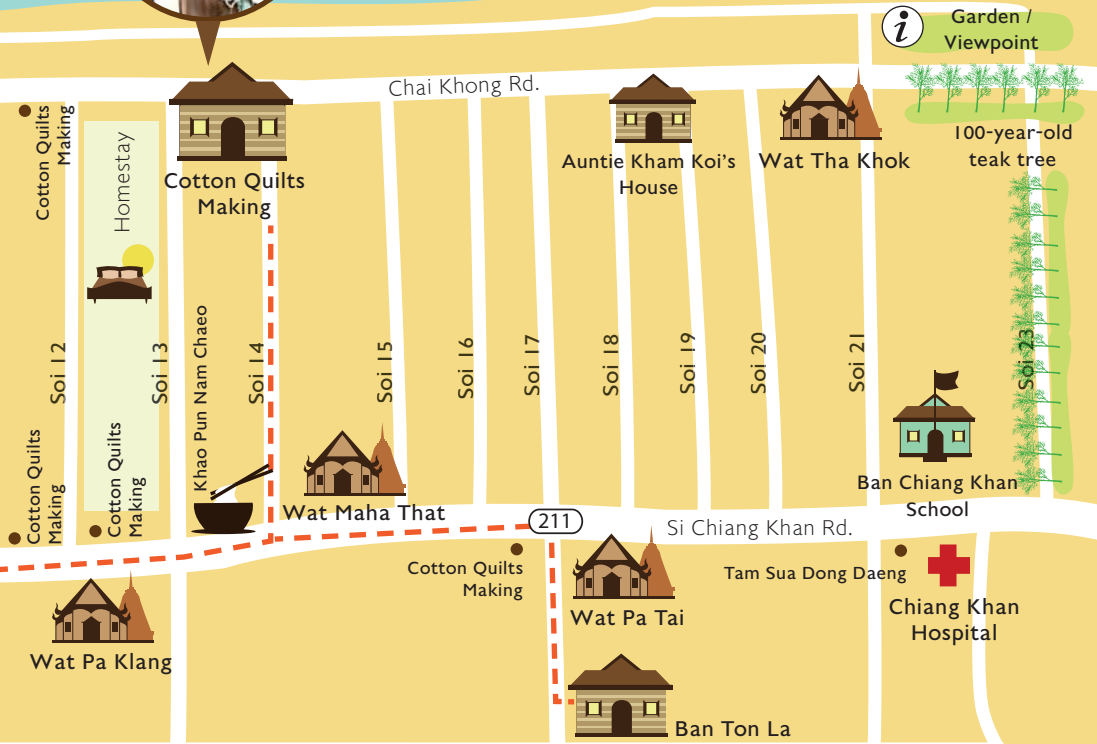
Drive



Sanakham District
LAO PDR.



Mekong River





Route 2: Experience Chiang Khan's traditional way of life.

This route enables visitors to learn about Chiang Khan's cultural heritage and experience the slow-paced riverside lifestyle.

◆◆ Point 1: Sticky rice in bamboo tubes at Soi 0.

The locals normally take sticky rice in bamboo tubes as gifts when visiting other people. Visitors can taste and observe the cooking of sticky rice, which is done early in the morning everyday, at Chai Khong Road Soi 0.



◆◆ Point 2: Classic wooden houses by the river.

Perched on the bank of the Mekong River, Chiang Khan was historically a major trading port of northeastern Thailand. Both sides of the main road, which are running parallel with the river, are lined with century-old wooden houses facing each other. Therefore, it created an opportunity for the community to conveniently interact and trade in the olden days, and intuitively led to building a strong relationship among the townsfolk today.



Visitors can relive the olden days of Chiang Khan and experience the lifestyle by staying with the locals through homestay accommodation, which can be found at Soi 13 and along Chai Khong Road.

Classic wooden houses can be found at:

- ◆ Grandpa Sing Kham's 200-year-old wooden house in Soi 19.
- ◆ Auntie Kham Koi's 90-year-old wooden house near Soi 19.
- ◆ Granddad Aup's 100-year-old house made from wood and clay at Soi 14.
- ◆ Niyomthai Quilt Shop's 90-year-old house on Chai Khong Road between Soi 13 and Soi 14.



❖ Point 3: Eat their food and learn their culture.

Chiang Khan has an intriguing variety of local food and these delicious items can easily be found at the morning and night markets. Sticky rice is the staple diet and is accompanied by curry dishes, grilled dishes, steamed dishes, spicy dips, salads, soups, and their famous “Tam Sua Dong Daeng” (papaya salad with Dong Daeng noodles). Dinner is the most important meal, as it is when the family members spend time together, and it is the time that elders share their lifelong story and experiences with the children.



❖ Point 4: Indigenous handcraft – cotton quilt making.

Apart from local food, the local handcraft provides a great insight of the Chiang Khan’s way of life to visitors. The hilly topography is great for growing cotton and the locals produce cotton quilts during summer to be used during winter. Making hand-sewn quilts is a unique local wisdom that has been practiced in Chiang Khan for many generations, and visitors can observe the making of this indigenous handcraft in order to learn more about their lifestyle.

❖ Point 5: Phi Khon Nam Mask.

Around 7 kilometres from Chiang Khan is Ban Na Sao, a small village where people have enjoyed the “Phi Khon Nam” Festival for hundreds of years. The Phi Khon Nam Festival is held to worship the village’s guardian spirits and ask for plentiful rain for the farming season. The mask is made from wood with a pair of horns like those of buffaloes. Paper strips symbolise the rain. The most important item on the mask is the coloured glass that represents the third eye of the god that enables the god to see that the Festival is taking place so that the wish for the rain can be granted. Visitors can learn to make the mask at Ban Ton La by contacting Tel.: +66 9 0354 1795 and +66 8 9574 5814.



❖ Point 6: Interesting culture at the Thai Dam Community.

The interesting cultural heritage of the Thai Dam community at Ban Na Pa Nat has been carefully preserved and handed down through many generations. A visit to this community enables visitors to see “Tum Nok Tum Nu”, the Thai Dam flowers that are used when conducting a ceremony to worship their guardian spirit to bring them luck and happiness. This community is also renowned for its distinctive hand-woven cloth of which visitors can observe the weaving process.



Thai Dam’s important traditions.

🏠 ‘Tum Hom Thai Dam’ is the tradition of the Thai Dam community in which all the Thai Dam people come back home to visit their families on the 6th April of every year.

🏠 ‘Sae Pang Ritual’ is held on the first day of the waxing moon of the 3rd and 6th lunar months of every year to worship the spirits of their ancestors. The ceremony is presided over by the shaman who leads the prayers to invite the spirits to bless the community with happiness and prosperity.





◆ Point 7: Twilight stroll along the river.

A pathway that runs along the river is where visitors can enjoy taking a stroll or cycling to view the picturesque Mekong River, which is especially beautiful during sunset. Around the end of the rainy season to winter, Chiang Khan is also home to several migratory birds. Visitors can watch these beautiful waterfowls around 5 p.m.

◆ Bike Rental Shops

• Bikes can be rented from almost every guesthouse at 50 Baht a day, and there is a bike repair shop on Si Chiang Khan Road Soi 16.

◆ Accommodation in Chiang Khan

- Chiangkhan River Mountain Resort
Tel.: +66 4282 2191 / +66 8 5220 0459
www.chiangkhanrivermountain.com
- Riverside Chiangkhan Resort
Tel.: +66 4282 1477 / +66 8 4336 7525
www.riverside-chiangkhan.com
- Husband and Wife Guesthouse and Handicraft
Tel.: +66 4282 1492 / +66 8 5464 8008
www.facebook.com/HusbandandWifeGroup
- Sri Chiang Khan Hotel
Tel.: +66 4282 1000 / +66 8 1808 2826 /
+66 9 0973 2465
www.srichiangkhan.com
- Norn Nab Dao
Tel.: +66 8 9883 2516 / +66 8 6792 0215
www.norn-nab-dao.com

◆ Restaurants in Chiang Khan

- Rabiang Khong Rim Khong
Tel.: +66 4282 1532
- Heon Luang Prabang Homestay and Restaurant
Tel.: +66 4282 1046 / +66 8 9009 4345
- Huean Fai Khum
Tel.: +66 4282 2109 / +66 8 1808 2826
- Khrua Nucha
Tel.: +66 4282 1414 / +66 4282 1285
- Look Pochana
Tel.: +66 4282 1251

ROUTE

3

Travel along the Mekong River from Chiang Khan to Pak Chom.

Sanakham District
LAO PDR.

Mekong River



Kaeng Khutkhu



Wat Tha Khaek



Maphrao Kaeo or
Glazed Coconut



211

To Amphoe
Pak Chom

To Amphoe
Chiang Khan



Phu Thok



Walk



Drive



Cruise



Vientiane District
LAO PDR.

Mekong River



Ban Hat Bia



Ban Khok Lao Tai School



Flea Market at
Amphoe Pak Chom

To Nong Khai
Province →

Pak Chom
Municipal District
Office

To Amphoe
Pak Chom

Wat Phra Phutthabat
Phu Khwai Ngoen





Route 3: Travel along the Mekong River from Chiang Khan to Pak Chom.

Chiang Khan not only provides visitors with an opportunity to learn about its unique culture and lifestyle, but also a chance to get a glimpse of its beautiful natural resources. This route takes visitors to indulge in the charming natural beauty on the journey along the Mekong River.

◆◆ Point 1: Dazzling sea of fog at Phu Thok.

Located 3 kilometres from Chiang Khan, Phu Thok provides a breathtaking sight of the sea of fog swirling over the city of Chiang Khan and the Mekong River. The best time to visit Phu Thok is 5.30-7.30 a.m. from August to the beginning of February, depending on weather conditions.



◆◆ Point 2: Wat Tha Khaek.

Not far from Phu Thok is Wat Tha Khaek, an ancient temple situated on the bank of the Mekong River. A fascinating legend has it that Wat Tha Khaek was built in 1666 by the men on the Thai territory in a competition against the women who built Wat Pha Hot on the Lao territory. The condition was that the winner had to finish building the temple before the morning star rose. The men got tricked by the women and

having thought they lost, stopped building Wat Tha Khaek and went to help the women to finish building Wat Pha Hot. Another legend has it that Phraya Suwan Banlang built Wat Pha Hot to store his late father's relics whereas the name of Wat Tha Khaek comes from Tha Khae (crocodile pier) as there were many crocodiles in the area.

◆◆ Point 3: Maphrao Kaeo or Glazed Coconut.

The road to Kaeng Khutkhu is lined with shops producing and selling Maphrao Kaeo or glazed coconut. In the past, the abundance of coconuts led the locals to find a way to preserve them, one of which is this delicious glazed coconut. Visitors can observe the process from cutting coconut flesh into small strips, simmering it in syrup until it is almost dry, and tossing the leftover sugar out from the coconut strips.





❖ Point 4: Kaeng Khutkhu.

From the glazed coconut stalls, the road leads visitor to Kaeng Khutkhu, one of the most famous landmarks of Chiang Khan. Kaeng Khutkhu has a very interesting legend involving a gargantuan hunter who chased a water buffalo with silver horns. The event caused a mountain to collapse and formed a cliff known today as Pha Baen, and the hunter built a dam with tree trunks and rocks in order to find the runaway buffalo, but the buffalo got away and became Phu Khwai Ngoen (Silver-horned Buffalo Mountain). The dam then became Kaeng Khutkhu, the remarkable cataract consisting of rocks of different sizes and shapes in the middle of the Mekong River. Visitors are welcome to rent a boat at Kaeng Khutkhu's pier and take a boat trip along the river to view the peaceful river-based way of life.



❖ Point 5: Wat Phra Phutthabat Phu Khwai Ngoen.

Situated at Wat Phra Phutthabat Phu Khwai Ngoen is a whetstone upon which is enshrined the highly revered Buddha's footprint. The folklore has it that there was a beautiful human-eating ogress who lured men as her prey. One day the Lord Buddha passed by and gave the ogress a sermon that enabled her to repent her wrongdoing. She promised not to eat humans ever again and asked the Lord Buddha to make a footprint on the stone to serve as a symbol to worship.

❖ Point 6: Learn gold panning technique at Ban Khok Lao Tai School.

Started in 1912, gold panning was the main occupation of the locals even though it could be done only once a year in April, when the water level was low. The sands were scooped from the whirlpool area of the Mekong River into the pan and the mercury was added when swaying the pan in the water to help extract the gold from the sand. There are only about 3-5 people who still practice gold panning technique in Chiang Khan today, and visitors can learn from them at Ban Khok Lao Tai School, which is located on the way to Ban Hat Bia.



❖ Point 7: Mekong River stones at Ban Hat Bia.

Ban Hat Bia is endowed with natural resources, especially countless beautiful stones of different sizes and shapes. During the dry season, when the villagers are not occupied with their agricultural activities, they would collect these stones to sell for decoration purposes. Visitors are invited to marvel at the natural beauty of the Mekong River basin here before continuing the journey to Amphoe Pak Chom.



❖ Point 8: Flea Market at Amphoe Pak Chom.

A journey of around 11 kilometres from Ban Hat Bia to Amphoe Pak Chom provides visitors with picturesque scenery of the Mekong River and the mountain ranges of the Lao PDR. Every Thursday evening, the locals gather together at the flea market in Amphoe Pak Chom where local food, fresh vegetables, and fish from the Mekong River are sold.



❖ Boat trips along the Mekong River.

There are 2 places where visitors can take a water-based journey to explore Chiang Khan:

1. The pier on Chai Khong Road between Soi 6 and Soi 7 (opposite Wat Si Khun Mueang) provides a boat trip that can take around 15-20 people. This one-hour trip takes visitors to Phu Hong viewpoint and return through the Thai-Lao Border (Sanakham District), which allows visitors to view Phu Thok and Phu Khwai Ngoen. The best time for this boat trip is between 4.00-5.00 p.m.

2. The pier at Kaeng Khutkhu provides two routes of boat excursion, both of which are a one-hour trip and can take around 15-20 people. The first route takes visitors to observe the river-based way of life from Kaeng Khutkhu to Chiang Khan whereas the second route takes visitors from Kaeng Khutkhu to see the stunning natural beauty of Phu Thok and Phu Khwai Ngoen to Pha Baen. The best time for this boat trip is between 4.00-5.00 p.m.



❖ Kayak Excursion along the Mekong River.

From November to April, visitors can enjoy kayaking along the Mekong River. For more information, please contact Mekong Culture & Nature Resort at Tel.: +66 4282 1457, +66 8 9569 3470 or We Love Chiang Khan at Tel.: +66 2931 2323, +66 8 5223 3030.

❖ Useful Telephone Numbers:

- Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) Loei Office
- Loei Provincial Public Relations
- Chiang Khan Hospital
- Provincial Police Station, Amphoe Chiang Khan
- Immigration Checkpoint
- Marine Police
- Chiang Khan District Office
- Chiang Khan Municipality Office
- Fire Station

- Tel.: +66 4281 2812, +66 4281 1405
- Tel.: +66 4281 1258
- Tel.: +66 4282 2181, +66 4282 2182, 1669
- Tel.: +66 4282 1181
- Tel.: +66 4282 1911, +66 4282 1284
- Tel.: +66 4282 1010
- Tel.: +66 4282 1597
- Tel.: +66 4282 1141
- Tel.: 199





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TOURIST HOTLINE

Tourism Authority of Thailand Head Office

1600 Phetchaburi Road, Makkasan, Ratchathewi,
Bangkok 10400

Tel.: +66 2250 5500 (120 automatic lines)

Fax: +66 2250 5511 (2 automatic lines)

Email: center@tat.or.th

Website: www.tourismthailand.org

Tourism Authority of Thailand, Loei Office

Charoen Rat Rd., Tambon Kut Pong, Amphoe Mueang,
Loei Province 42000

Tel.: +66 4281 2812 / +66 4281 1405

Fax: +66 4281 1480

Email: tatloei@tat.or.th

Website: www.tourismthailand.org/Loei