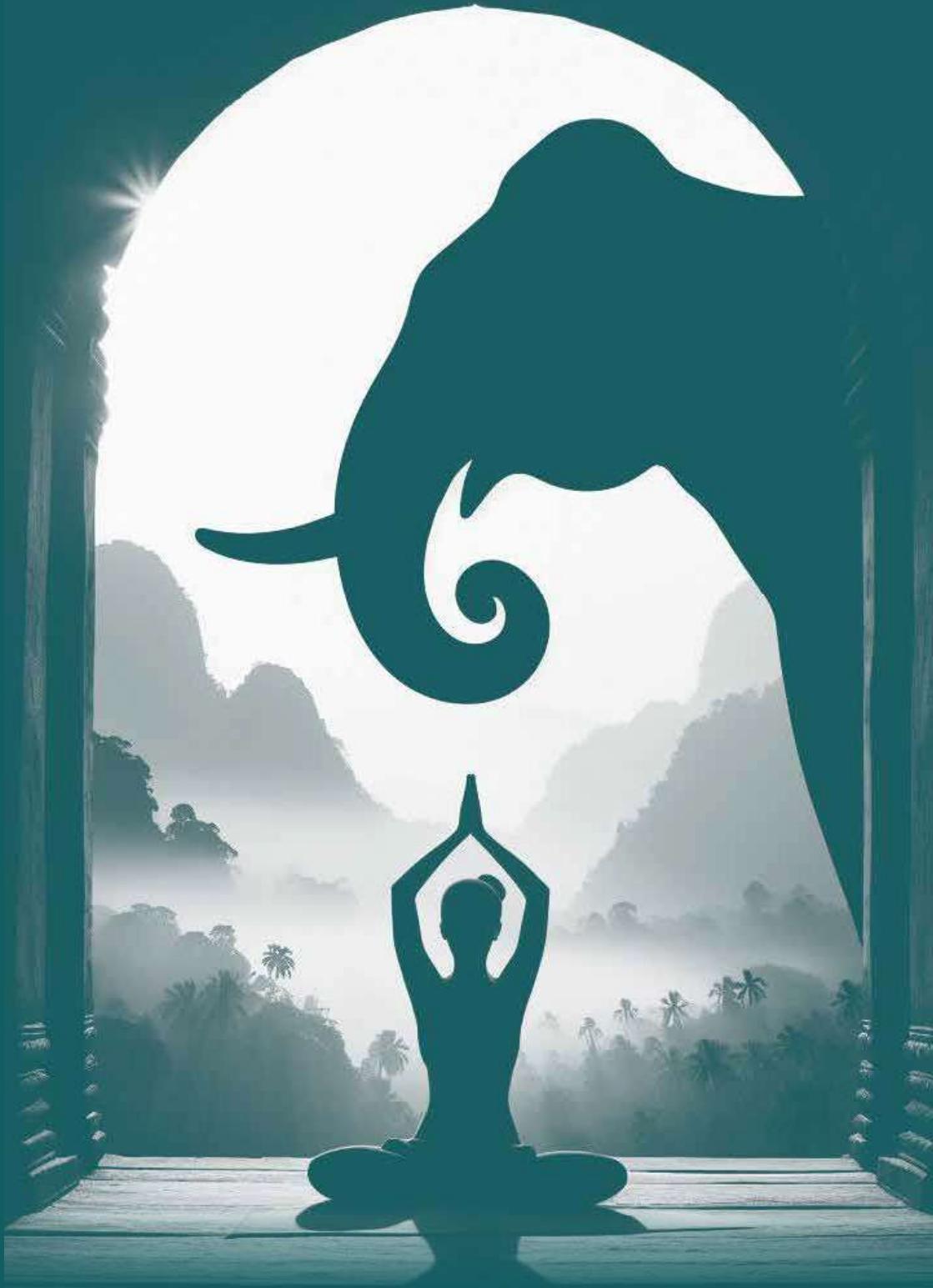


Yoga for Elephants

Wellness & Conservation: a Combination of Nature
and Yoga Exploration at the
Elephant Conservation Center, Laos



Who Are We?

The Elephant Conservation Center (ECC est. 2010) in Sayaboury, Laos, is a pioneering sanctuary dedicated to the protection and rehabilitation of Asian elephants. The ECC takes care of **28 elephants** on a **530 Ha protected area**.

Nestled in a pristine natural habitat, ECC offers a safe haven for elephants rescued from logging and tourism industries, providing them with medical care, social enrichment, and the freedom to roam.

The center also engages in vital conservation research, promotes sustainable practices, and educates visitors on the importance of preserving these majestic creatures.

By combining hands-on care with community involvement and scientific research, the ECC is at the forefront of efforts to ensure a future where elephants thrive in the wild. In 2019, the ECC became the first conservation project in Lao history to **successfully release four captive raised elephants back into the wild**.



- Rescue
- Rehabilitate
- Reproduce
- Re-herd
- Rewild
- Respect

- No Riding
- No Bathing
- No Touching

We have received the Asian Captive Elephant Standard's "Gold Conservation Award" for our excellence in animal welfare for the 4th consecutive year.

ECC has been named as the 4th best place to observe elephants worldwide by Wanderlust in 2023.



Why This Retreat



Imagine a sanctuary where your personal wellbeing journey directly supports the wellbeing of endangered elephants. The Elephant Conservation Center's 5-day Yoga for Elephants retreat offers exactly that – a transformative blend of mindful practice and meaningful conservation.

Daily yoga and meditation sessions in the heart of the Lao jungle go hand-in-hand with ethical wildlife encounters, creating an experience that nourishes your soul while giving back to nature.

Unlike a typical getaway, this retreat is co-created by the ECC and Luang Prabang Yoga to align inner growth with positive impact: retreat proceeds directly fund elephant research, veterinary care, and a pioneering breeding program to help birth a new generation of elephants in Laos.

With fewer than 800 elephants remaining in the country, each participant becomes part of the solution – supporting a sanctuary that leads in science-driven, welfare-first conservation.

In essence, Yoga for Elephants is more than a wellness vacation; it's a journey of connection and purpose.

Guided by the philosophy of non-dual yoga that emphasizes unity, the retreat invites you to reconnect – with yourself, with others, and with the natural world.

You'll practice mindfulness in the presence of majestic elephants, learning humility, compassion, and balance from these gentle giants. All interactions are respectful and observation-only, upholding the ECC's strict hands-off policy to ensure the elephants' freedom and comfort.

If you've been seeking a high-end retreat that inspires inner peace and a sense of purpose, you've found it.



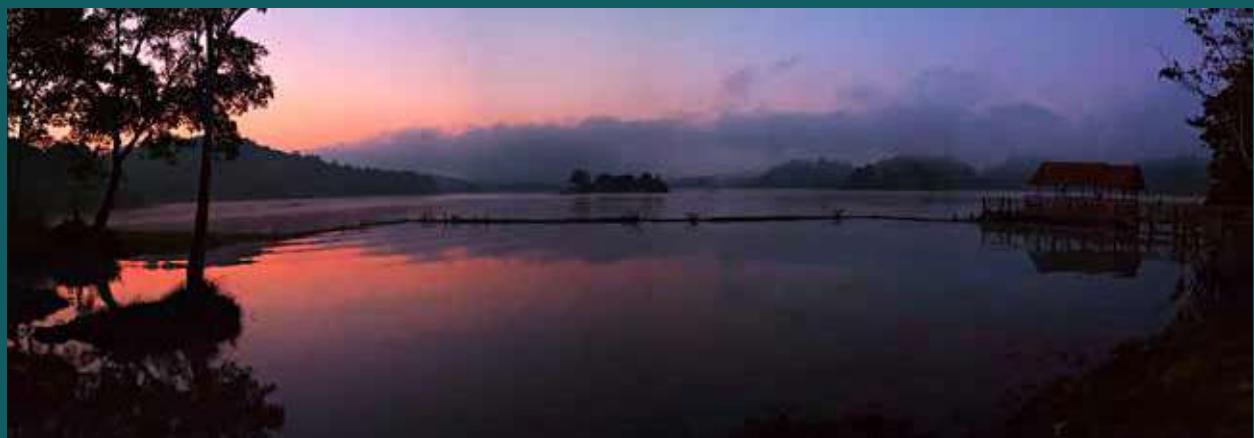
Where You'll Be

Nam Tien Lake, Sayaboury – a hidden jewel in the jungles of Laos – is the backdrop to your retreat.

Here, the Elephant Conservation Center sits on 530 hectares of protected forest along a pristine lakeshore, under the watch of the misty Phou Xang mountains (aptly nicknamed "Elephant Mountain Range").

The atmosphere is one of serenity and exclusivity: wake to the soft calls of birds and distant rumble of elephants, and fall asleep to a chorus of jungle sounds under a canopy of stars.

Your accommodation in ECC's new dormitory is both simple and comfortable.



- Capacity: 16
- Roofed
- Secured Acces Ramp
- Panoramic 360°
- Facing Nam Tien Lake and «Phu Xang» Mountain Range

You have **a choice of options** if you are seeking more comfort: private lakeside bungalows built from local wood offer comfort, charm, and panoramic views of the calm water. For those seeking additional luxury, Forest Houses and Deluxe Lodges with upgraded amenities are available – all options provide a comfortable stay immersed in nature.

Each space is thoughtfully designed for rest and reflection, whether you're journaling on your porch as the sun sets or enjoying the gentle breeze off the lake.

Modern conveniences (like hot showers and quality linens) are paired with eco-friendly touches, ensuring you feel pampered yet connected to the earth.

The Center's communal areas – a restaurant, open-air lounges, and lakefront decks – further cultivate a sense of community and tranquility. Here, you can sip handmade smoothies while overlooking the quiet waters of Nam Tien, or gather around a fire after dark.

Nam Tien's untouched beauty and the ECC's peaceful grounds create an ambiance of deep calm; many guests say **the lush views and secluded setting are a restorative retreat in themselves.**

What you'll experience

This retreat harmonizes yoga, nature immersion, and ethical elephant encounters into a single, life-enriching experience.

Each day balances invigorating practice with intimate exposure to the ECC's conservation work.

In the mornings, you'll awaken with **gentle sunrise yoga** – perhaps a Vinyasa flow or guided meditation by the lake – setting a tone of mindfulness for the day ahead. As the mist lifts off the water, you'll feel truly present and connected.

After breakfast, you'll venture into the forest with ECC guides to meet the elephants on their own terms.

Walk beside elephants in the forest as they forage among ancient trees, observing their **social interactions** and listening to their low rumbles of communication.

- 5 Days / 4 Night + Options
- 3 Lodging Categories
- All-Inclusive (Transfers, Meals, Visits, teaching, Accommodation)

If you're lucky, you might hear a trumpet blast of excitement echo through the trees!

From a respectful distance, you'll watch them **bathe in the lake**, playfully spraying water and mud – elephants love water, and you'll see how bath time lets them socialize and just be elephants. You'll also visit the **nursery** to observe mothers and their calves bonding and playing in a protected natural habitat.

It's a rare joy to watch baby elephants learn from their herd, and to witness the tender care that the adult females provide. Throughout these encounters, ECC experts are by your side to share stories and insights, enriching what you see with context about elephant behavior and family dynamics.

Importantly, all elephant experiences are hands-off and observation-led in line with **ECC's welfare-first philosophy** – you'll form genuine connections through presence rather than touch, knowing the elephants are free to roam and interact as they please.

Beyond elephant observation, expect to delve into the conservation and culture that underpin this sanctuary. You'll go behind the scenes at the ECC's acclaimed facilities: tour the country's only Elephant Hospital and meet the veterinarians and biologists who care for these giants. The vet team will introduce you to their work – from treating injuries to positive reinforcement training techniques used during health checkups.

At the **Socialization Area**, a large natural pen, you'll observe a whole herd interacting freely. Here, young and old elephants mingle, forge friendships, and even work out their pecking order, just as they would in the wild. Watching their complex social rituals – trumpeting





greetings, playful trunk wrestling, or standing close for comfort – is both educational and deeply moving.

And of course, **yoga and meditation** remain a constant thread: expect a mix of revitalizing morning flows, meditative nature walks, and calming evening practices to help you process each day's insights.

The retreat's **yoga instructor** will integrate themes of nature's elements, animal wisdom, compassion, and unity into the sessions – enhancing the spiritual dimension of your adventure.

By the end of five days, you'll have experienced the full spectrum of what ECC offers: from the quiet awe of watching a giant creature enjoy a mud bath, to the inner stillness of meditation under towering jungle trees, to the inspiration of seeing conservation in action. It's a harmonious journey that elevates both inner well-being and global awareness.



(All interactions with the elephants are strictly observation-only and guided by professionals. The ECC's no-riding, no-bathing policy means the elephants' welfare is always put first – you watch them on their terms, which makes every encounter more authentic and respectful.)

Who This Is For

- **Yoga & Nature Lovers:** Anyone who wants to deepen their practice in a unique setting, surrounded by forest and wildlife.
- **Conservation-Minded Travelers:** People who care about ethical tourism and want to support real science-driven work.
- **Students and Animal Enthusiasts:** ECC notes that their programs appeal to curious learners and animal-care buffs; if you've always dreamt of studying elephants or helping a sanctuary, this is ideal.
- **Adventurous, Open-Hearted Souls:** Whether you're young or simply young at heart, a well-traveled yogi or first-timer, this retreat is designed to be inclusive and respectful. (Moderate fitness and willingness to walk on uneven trails is needed; the heat and humidity can be intense but rewarding.)

Your Guides

- **Yoga Instructors:** Certified teachers from Luang Prabang Yoga (the retreat partner) lead each session, blending gentle asana, breathwork, and non-dual meditation practices. They ensure the classes are accessible to all levels and spiritually nourishing.
- **ECC Conservation Team:** All elephant encounters and field activities are overseen by the Elephant Conservation Center's experts – from veterinarians and biologists to veteran mahouts. These guides share stories and elephant lore at every stop, answer your questions, and teach you how to read elephant body language safely. Together, the team guarantees a depth of learning you won't get elsewhere.

How to Join

- Space is limited to keep the group small and intimate. Retreats run a few times each year (check <https://www.luangprabangyoga.org/> for exact dates). To reserve your spot or ask questions, email us. The all-inclusive fee covers accommodation, meals, round-trip transfers from Luang Prabang, and all activities and equipment. We recommend booking early – this unique retreat fills quickly among eco-travel and yoga communities.

Pricing:

The 5-Day/4-Night Yoga for Elephants retreat is a premium, all-inclusive experience.

Pricing starts at approximately \$775 USD per person for the standard package (Dormitory).

Upgrades to Lakeside Bungalows, Forest House or Deluxe Lodge accommodation are available at an additional cost for those desiring extra privacy or amenities.

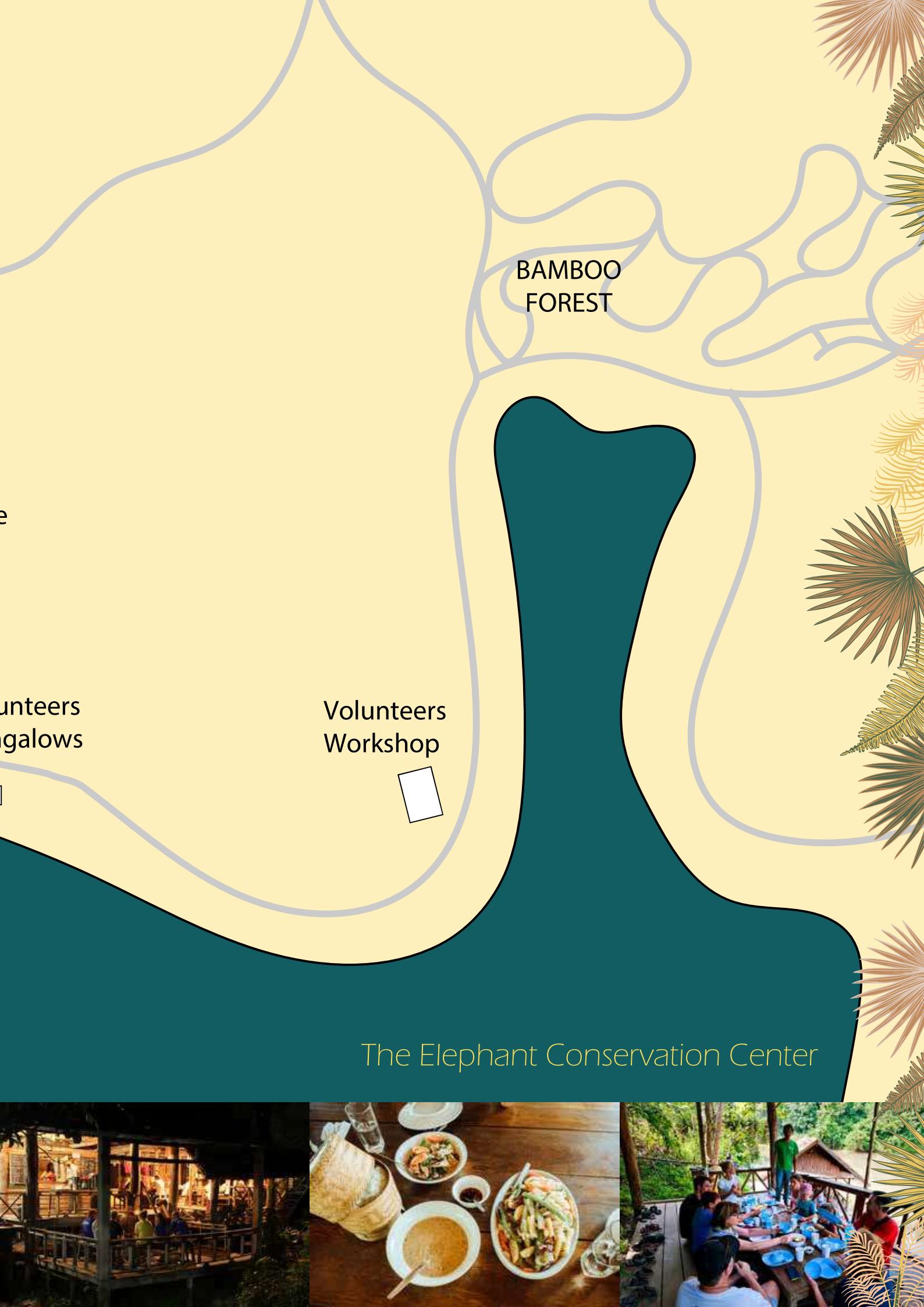
Your retreat fee not only covers all the inclusions mentioned above, but also makes a direct contribution to the ECC's conservation fund – supporting the care of the elephants and the jobs of their caretakers.





Luang Prabang (110km)
Sayaboury Town (3.5km)





BAMBOO
FOREST

Volunteers
Workshop

Volunteers
gallows

The Elephant Conservation Center





Access Map



How to get there?

FROM/TO LUANG PRABANG

From Luang Prabang ECC minivan departs from the post office on the main street daily at 7:30am and arrives at the ECC at 11:00am. It returns daily to Luang Prabang at 2:00pm, arriving approximately at 5:00pm. The journey takes approximately 3 hours.

FROM/TO VIENTIANE

In Vientiane: Sakura Minivans (Sikhay station, pass the airport).

Departures at 7:00am, 8:00am and 10:00am.

In Sayaboury: Sakura Bus Station.

Departures at 7:00am, 8:00am and 10:00am.

The journey takes approximately 7 hours.

Or fly to Luang Prabang, Lao Airlines and Lao Skyway have several departures daily, and board the ECC minivan the next morning.

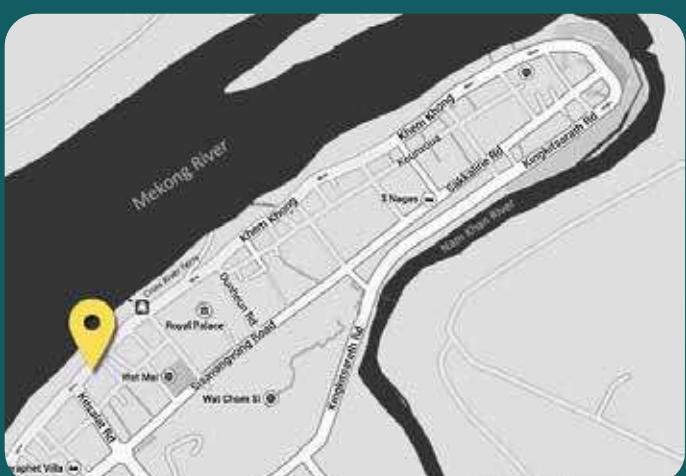
FROM/TO VANGVIENG

In Sayaboury: Public Buses from the Bus Station.

Departures at 3:00pm.

In Vangvieng: Minivan from Vangvieng bus station.

Departures at 10:30am (reservation required).



Luang Prabang Office

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Yoga for Elephants



elephant
conservation
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World's 10 Best Places

Wanderlust®
TRAVEL MAGAZINE
Nº4
to See Elephants

Tripadvisor
Travelers'
Choice Awards



10 of the Best Places

lonely planet
2024
to Visit in Laos



PROFESSIONAL PHOTOS AT: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/elephant-conservation-center/>