

*Jason's Travel Blog***New Year in Luang Prabang, Laos**

Nobody should miss Lao New Year. There is activity wherever you look, especially in the shops, and the streets are full of crowds and processions. It represents a lot of things-a commercial opportunity, a time to be with family, and above all, a time to have fun.

When I went, I had not done my homework (I had a busy semester) and did not even know it was New Year! I had reserved a hotel at the last minute, but that was about it. Where I am from, the December/January period is our New Year, and I had always thought it was the same everywhere else. But it starts on April 14 (or around then, it can move by a day or two). There is a national holiday lasting three days, although many people treat the whole week as a holiday.

The hotel manager told me to keep my camera covered. "I thought this is a safe city," I said to him, frowning. "It depends," he said, and explained that rather than looking out for thieves, I would need to watch out for the buckets of water people throw at each other every New Year! It might be a great photo opportunity but getting covered in water is not good for camera, and I did not want to buy a new one..

The water fight on the street was great fun for everybody, both kids and adults. None of the participants minded getting water thrown at them, myself included, as tourists are not an exception! An hour would have been enough for me, but I was surprised how it went on- and on! It was great to see it was all done in fun though and that people were happy.

The next day was what is known as 'day of no day', according to the hotel manager. I did not understand him at first and thought he was translating something from Lao into less-than-perfect-English. But I have checked online, and sure enough, it is true! The previous day had been the end of the last year, and the next year did not start until the following day.

After a week enjoying stunning buildings and lovey, spicy street food eaten with chopsticks, I guess the best thing has got to be the warm mood the place had, with people just loving life. I cannot wait to go back!

Grade 11 Advanced	English Language
Reading Comprehension	Final Exam Practice

TEXT A

Read the text then choose the correct answers

1. For Jason, Lao New Year is mostly a time

For shops to put their prices up	To stay at home with your family
To keep away from crowded streets	To fully enjoy yourself

2. What does Jason mean when he says he had not done his homework?

He was behind with his studies	He was not aware of the celebrations
He had not found anywhere to stay	He was worried about school

3. In Laos, the New Year period

Can change slightly from year to year.	Is the same as most places
Officially lasts one week	Is on December and January

4. The hotel manager advised Jason to

Try to avoid criminals	Take lots of photographs
Buy a new camera in Laos	Protect his camera

5. What surprised Jason about the water fight?

How everyone was in a good mood	That tourists were involved too
How long it lasted	That people of all ages enjoyed it.

6. The 'day of no day'

Is a day when no-one works	Doesn't actually have an official name
Is the day between the old year and the new one	Is a bad translation of a phrase in Lao