



Product Catalogue

saoban
VILLAGE HANDCRAFTS FROM
THE HEART OF LAOS



Welcome to Saoban

Saoban is a social business working with traditional artisans to preserve and promote Lao village crafts. Guided by the principles of fair trade, we work to create employment opportunities for villagers, especially women, and to reduce poverty. Saoban means 'villagers' in Lao, and our village producers are at the heart of our business and work.

Saoban was launched in 2005, when PADETC, a Lao non-government organization, began working with village-based weavers, providing them with guidance and micro-loans to improve and expand production. Soon other villagers approached PADETC with requests for start-up capital, marketing assistance, and business development, and Saoban was created to address these needs. Eleven years later, Saoban has evolved into a dynamic social business. When you purchase a product from Saoban, you provide income for the artisan and you empower rural women.

Our design and production teams work closely with artisan groups to create items that fit modern, natural lifestyles while still retaining the spirit of traditional craftsmanship. Each product is made and finished in the village, and income generated from sales goes directly to the producers.

About Our Catalogue

Natural, beautiful, handcrafted, eco-friendly ... our products are rooted in ancient craftsmanship, and ideally suited to modern, conscientious lifestyles.

Our product catalogue represents a selection of cotton, silk, bamboo and recycled bomb products currently available at the Saoban retail shop in Vientiane.

Saoban products are handmade, so while our products are made using the highest quality control standards, there may be slight variations in the finishing details of each product. Additionally, we use natural, plant-based dyes, which may cause slight color variations.

All products are available for wholesale and can be customized to fit your specifications.



Retail

Our retail shop is located in Vientiane, Laos.

We will soon launch an online shop on Etsy, with capability to ship worldwide. Please contact us for additional information.

Wholesale

Saoban is happy to discuss our capabilities to fill wholesale and custom orders. All products can be modified to your design specifications.

Contact Us

General enquiries:

saobancrafts@gmail.com
+856 21 241 835

Wholesale Enquiries:

Contact Managing Director Ms. Shui-Meng Ng
shuimeng@gmail.com
+856 20 9634 5586

Mailing Address & Store Location:

97/1 Ban Wat Chan
Chao Anou Road
Chanthabouly District
Vientiane, Lao PDR





Raw silk yarn

Natural Dyes

Ethereal, earthy colors

Plant-based, natural dyes

Saoban cottons and silks are dyed using natural plants and herbs, collected locally by villagers. Natural dyes, in particular indigo, have been used in Laos for centuries. Natural dyes adhere well to cottons, while silk takes a bit more coaxing. Master dyers develop their skill over a lifetime, drawing out rich hues that reflect the colors of nature.

Indigo: made from the leaves and shoots of the ‘kham’ plant, found widely in the Lao countryside. The plant is left to ferment in clay vats at specific temperatures to achieve the right colorways. Deep indigo requires dyeing the fabric several times.

Orange: made from boiled onion skins and other local fruit. Vibrant or flame orange requires dyeing several times.

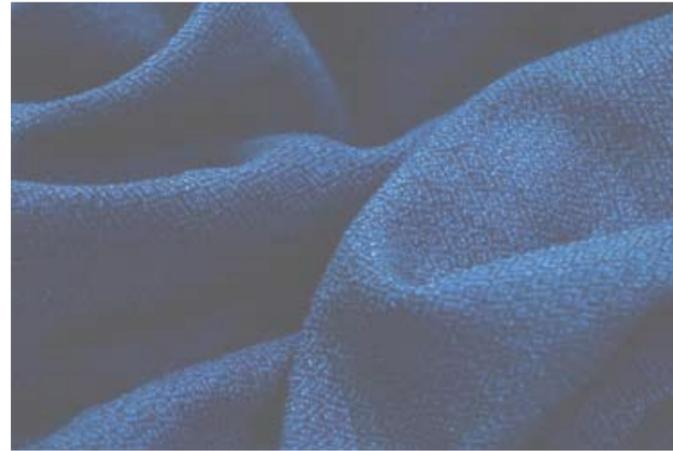
Red and pink: made from an insect resin known locally as ‘stick lac’. A complicated process, red and pink dyes require fibers to be soaked in gypsum before dyeing. Ash and tamarind water are added to the dye mixture to fix the color.

Yellow: made from bark of jackfruit tree.

Grey: made from soaking fibers in ‘mak gua’, a Lao fruit. Fibers are dyed several times in cold dye baths to achieve the right hue.



Artisan Products



Cotton fabric sold by the meter



Cotton indigo pillow cases, blanket

Cotton

Naturally grown, hand spun and hand woven on traditional wooden looms, Lao cotton is soft, beautiful and durable. For centuries, Phu-Tai, Tai-Leu, and Tai Dam ethnic communities have cultivated a native variety of short-fiber cotton and used natural plant-based dyes. Saoban works with these ethnic communities in Savannakhet, Sayaboury, Oudomxai, and Luang Prabang Province. Saoban continues this tradition by using cotton for our gorgeous collection of cotton scarves, bags, household linens and fabric by the meter.



Top: Mixed tight weave cotton scarves Bottom: Indigo cotton tote bag



Indigo tight weave cotton scarves



Village-made



Left: Rustic cotton scarves single color Above: Rustic cotton shawl
Below: Bokeo embroidered cotton coasters



Rustic cotton scarf pictured with bamboo and silk clutch on bamboo tray





Top: Sulabol scarves Bottom: Loom 7 scarves



Sulabol silk scarf

Silk

Soft, beautiful luster and iridescence is the hallmark of Lao silk. Our village artisans raise silkworms and collect, spin, dye and weave the yarn by hand. A versatile fiber, silk is cool in summer and adds warmth in the winter. Lao silk is woven using ikat, supplementary weft and tapestry weave - each with its own specific patterns, motifs and texture. Most Lao women learn to weave at a young age, gradually cultivating the skills of a master weaver. Saoban works with village artisans to continue these long-held traditions.

Sulabol silk scarf



Traditional pattern silk scarf



Thick silk yarn scarves and traditional pattern silk scarves

Natural



Diamond pattern cotton wall hanging or table runner

Bamboo

Beauty and utility come together in Saoban's line of handsome bamboo wares. Long strips of the outer bamboo "skin" are soaked in water, rendering them pliable and ready for weaving. Saoban's collection takes cues from traditional patterns that are timeless and long-lasting.

Nesting bamboo bowls



Bamboo basket



Bamboo and silk handbag



Bamboo and hemp glasses case





Loom 7 single color silk scarves

Hand-crafted



Sa mulberry fiber table runner, cotton blanket and pillow cases

Recycled bomb spoon on cotton napkin, bamboo and hemp placemat and coaster



Hmong cotton pillowcase



Bamboo tea strainer with sa mulberry fiber coaster



Left top: Recycled bomb fork and spoon on indigo cotton placemat
 Left bottom: Recycled bomb chopsticks on bamboo placemat
 Above: Recycled bomb spoons on sa mulberry fiber placemat, bamboo tray

Recycled Bomb Products

The generous spirit and ingenuity of Lao artisans is evident in Saoban's collection of recycled bomb products. War and persistent air raids in the 1960s left the countryside littered with bomb and metal shrapnel. The remnants of this legacy have been transformed into emblems of peace. Saoban supports the efforts of professional unexploded ordnance clearing teams and works with villagers on proper health and safety measures for gathering and forging the recycled metals.



Left: Recycled bomb necklaces
 Below: Recycled bomb gauge earrings or pendants



Eco-friendly



A mulberry fiber clutch and journal on indigo cotton tablecloth



Loom 7 rainbow scarf and bamboo bowls



Cotton pillow cases on cotton blanket

Multicolor cotton scarves



Thick yarn silk scarf



Indigo ikat weave table runners and wall hangings



Wholesale Information

Wholesale Prices

20% discount on orders more than USD 1,500 on one invoice
10% discount on orders more than USD 500 - USD 1,500 on one invoice
Prices subject to change without notice.
Please confirm prices at the time of ordering.

Samples

Samples are sold at retail price with payment due before delivery.
If Saoban is designing a new item to your specification, the price of the prototype will be higher. Please confirm pricing prior to submitting a request for a sample or sample design.

Colors, Quality and Finishing

Saoban products are handmade, and as a result, there may be variations in the color and finishes of products. We believe handmade items are unique, and it is in the subtle differences between each product that you can see the hand of the maker. Saoban promotes the use of natural, plant-based dyes, which produce colors that vary slightly from batch to batch, and often from season to season. Ikat designs are woven using tie-dyed thread, producing different results every time. Please contact us for more information.

Custom Designs

All products displayed can be modified to your design specifications. Custom designs require consistent communication with the artisans to see what is possible. When sending your ideas, drawings are useful, however exact samples or prototypes are the best way to communicate your idea to the artisans. We can sew-in your own fabric label with your branding. We require that you acknowledge the item was Handmade in Laos, and we prefer that Saoban is referenced. For example, "Handmade in Laos, in collaboration with Saoban."



Production Time & Quantities

Silk Scarves

Production time for straight weave: 10-12 weeks for an order of 100 pieces
Production time for supplementary weave: 12-16 weeks for an order of 50-80 pieces

Minimum order: 20 pieces of the same design, using the same colors
Handmade products are never identical, but we can get close. The closest likeness is achieved when a weaver works on the same loom with the same warp yarn. Please contact us for further information.

Cotton Scarves

Production time: 6 weeks for an order of 30 pieces
Minimum order: 30 pieces of the same design, using the same color

NOTE: Production times must be confirmed prior to finalizing an order. Timing varies by the season and the location of the artisan's home village. Almost all artisans are involved in growing and harvesting their own rice. Production times vary during planting months (4 weeks between May and October) and harvest months (usually November). Please contact us for specific production time frames.

Bamboo and hemp purse with cotton scarf



Lao silk heritage pattern placemat on bamboo tray

Shipping

We can ship products regionally and internationally by DHL or by Lao Air Post. Please contact us for shipping, pricing and delivery options.

Payment

Terms: Payment is required before shipment
We accept payment by wire transfer and require that the buyer pays all bank charges, including charges by the Intermediary bank and Lao Bank for all incoming transfers.



Traditional Lao silk scarves

Contact Us

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Also find us on Etsy and TripAdvisor

