

_xplore the Siphandon (4,000) Islands) area, and discover more of southern Champasak Province's natural, cultural, and historical attractions. See and feel the rumble of the rocky rapids that obstructed riverboat traffic heading up the Mekong. Examine the relics of colonial France's infrastructure and

antique steam locomotives and

railway, which traversed Don

Khone and Don Det Islands.

Stay on Don Khone, Don Det or Don Khong Islands to base your Siphandon exploration. Take a long-tail boat to observe endangered Irrawaddy river dolphins, and experience Asia's largest waterfall by volume, Khone Phapheng. You can learn about Siphandon's culture and history at the Don Khong District Museum, before sightseeing around the largest of the 4,000 Islands



10 Highlights of Siphandon

Explore the Mekong's 4,000 Islands



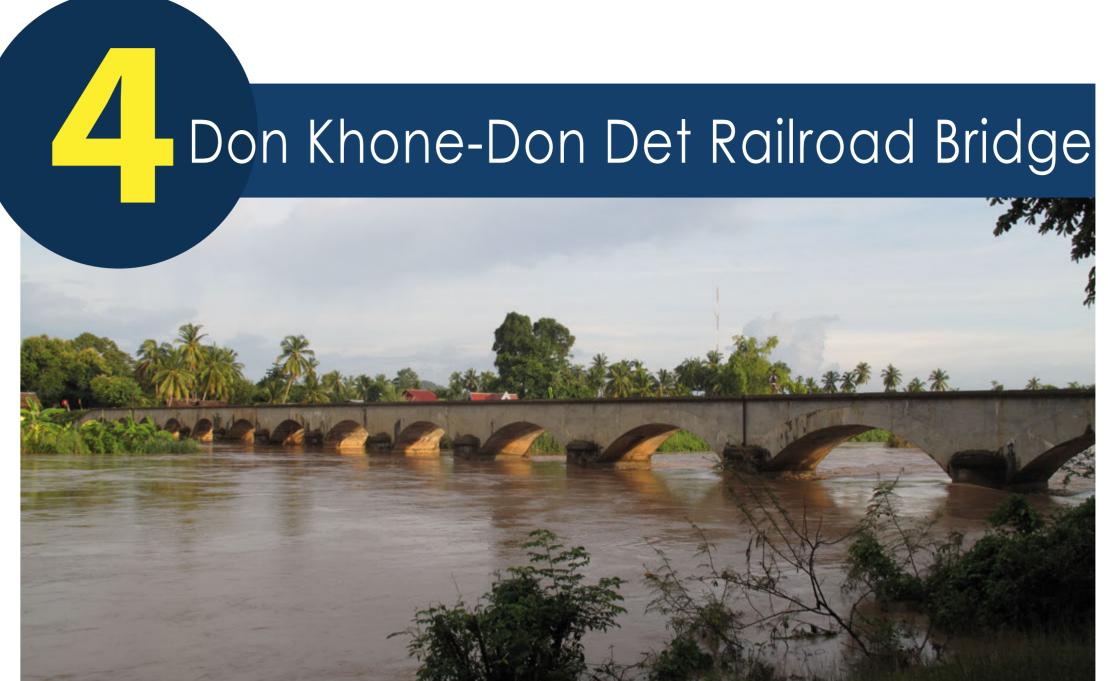
Putter in a long-tail boat to observe the Mekong's Examine the remains of this 100-year-old port for Marvel at the colonial infrastructure built in Ban and 16:00.



the calm, shallow, fish-rich waters south of Don waters. Villagers say the train engine, housed in a gunboats above Khone Falls to protect their claim. Khone near Don Sadam. The dolphins are easy to pavilion, was originally a French model refurbished. This kicked off a project to build a trans-island spot from a non-encroaching 100-200 meters, by the Japanese during WWII. The structure above railway, piers, offices, and homes that were when they lazily come up for air. Look first for the the pier's skeleton housed an engine that drew followed by their slate blue-gray backs. The best the low-water ramp. Cranes on rails lifted cargo pavilion in Ban Khone Tai, where transported dawn until about 10:00, and again between 14:00 its position can still be seen, as can the reservoir on

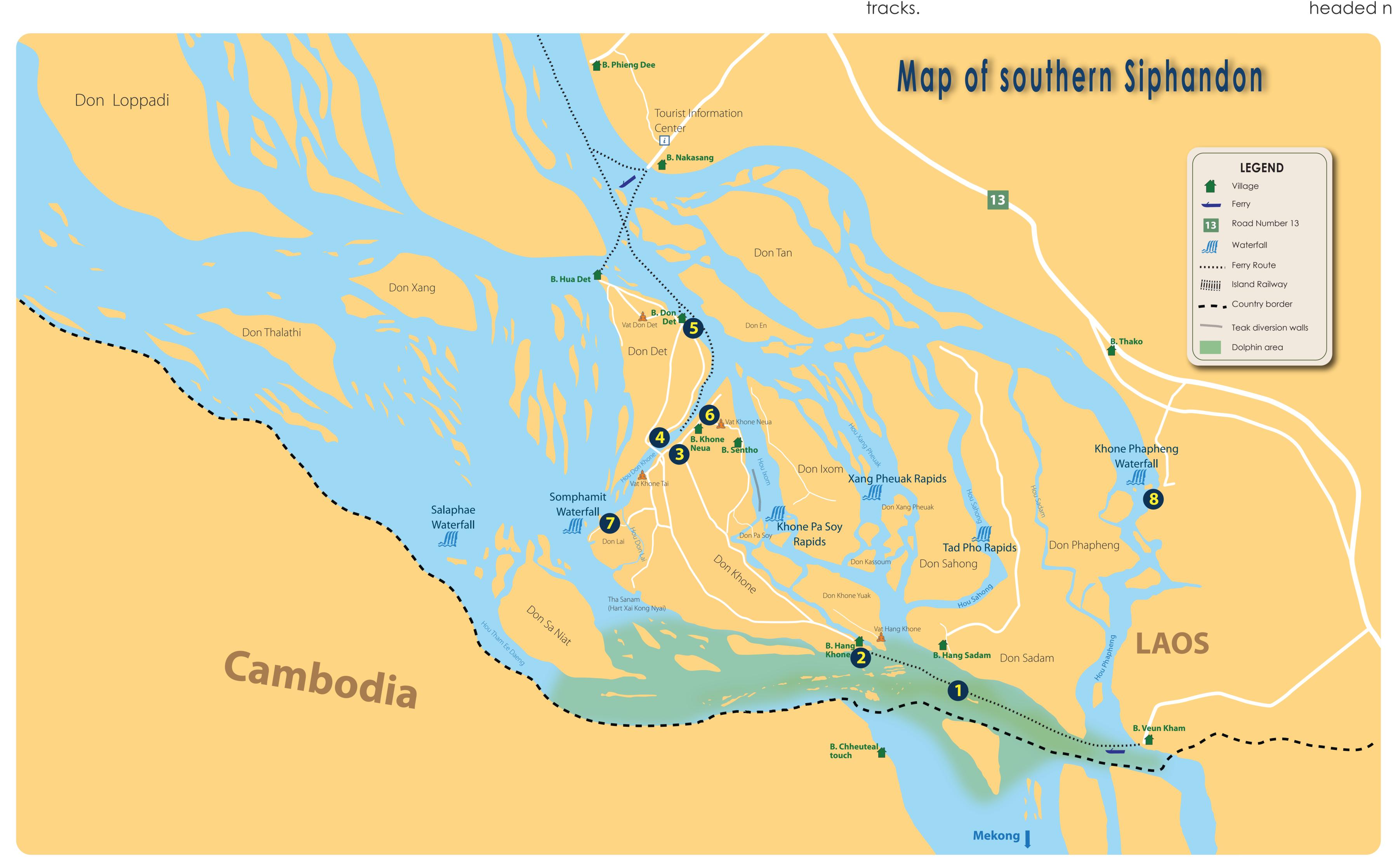


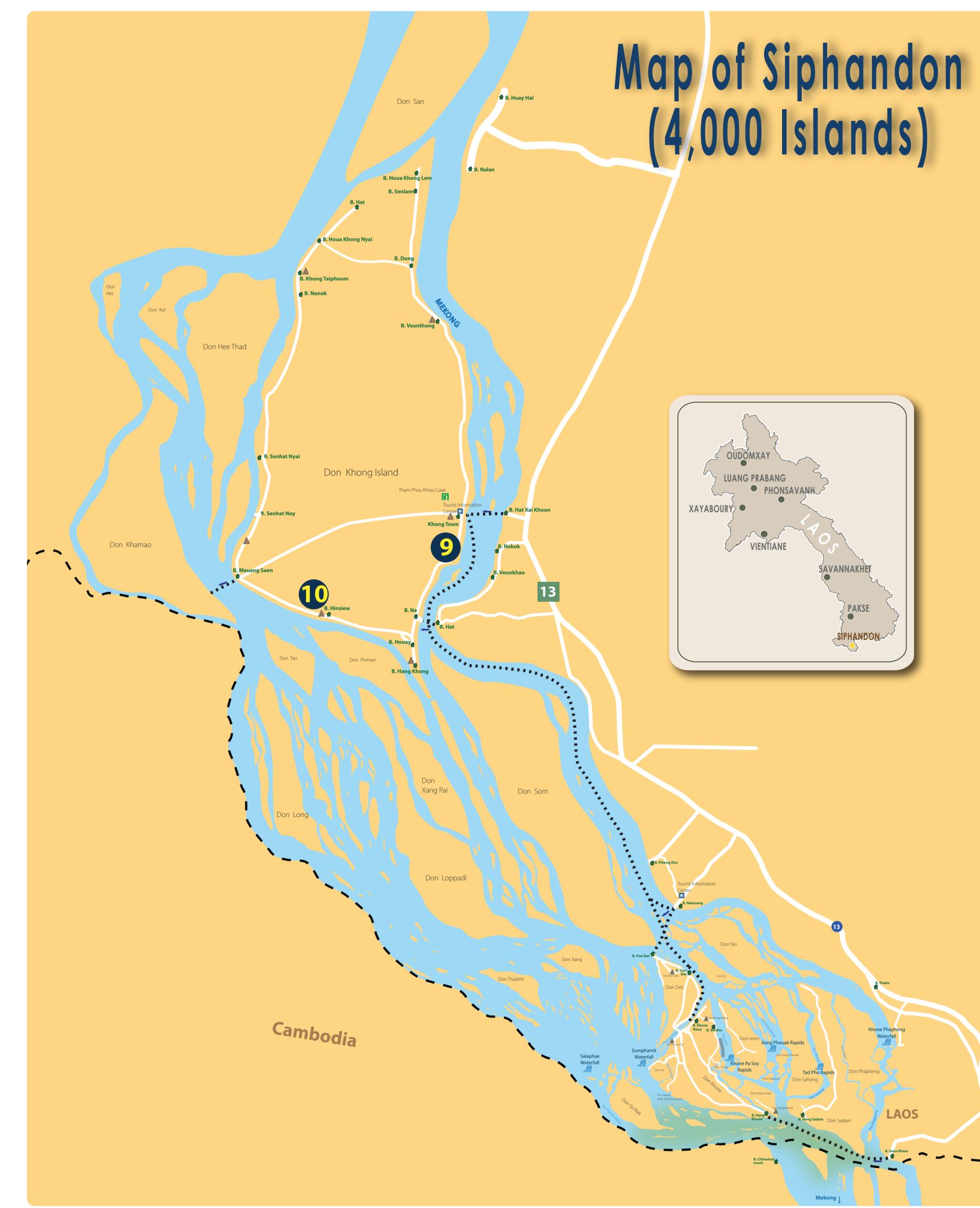
Irrawaddy dolphins, as they peek out of the river transporting boats, cargo, and passengers by train Khone, France's center on strategic Don Khone off Hang Khone's shores. A small group of critically across Don Khone and Don Det Islands to bypass Island. In 1893, France gained control from Siam of endangered freshwater "snub-fin dolphins" inhabit Somphamit Waterfalls and reach calmer upriver the Mekong's Lao bank, and urgently needed abandoned during WWII. Today, a rusty steam dolphin's bulging foreheads to break the surface, underground cables through still-visible pulleys up locomotive that powered the train rests in a time to watch Hang Khone's population is just after during high waters, and though the track is gone, boats, freight, and passengers originally reentered the Mekong. You can also view colonial houses and buildings, and see sections of the old rail

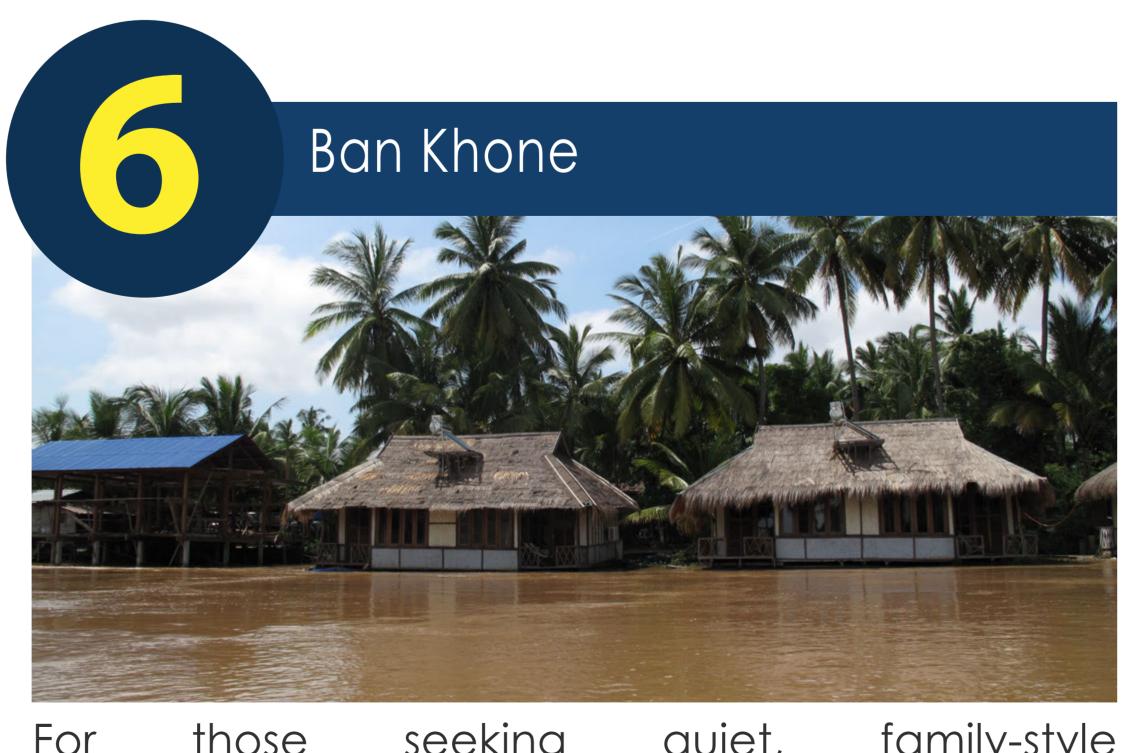


Stroll or ride over the 13-arch, 158-meter-long Stay in Hua Don Det, the northern tip of Don Det bridge, built in 1910 to extend the railway 2 km Island, and inspect relics of the nearby Ban Don across Hou Béhanzin Channel from Ban Khone Tai Det 100-year-old port's piers, docking facilities, to Ban Don Det. French company, Messageries storage depots, and gantry cranes. During the day, Fluviales, which owned the concession for Don you can swim and lounge around Hua Don Det's Khone's railway, built the reinforced concrete beach with great views of northern Siphandon, bridge to lessen congestion at the Ban Khone while at night, the scene turns livelier. Those terminal due to growing numbers of passengers choosing to overnight in Hua Don Det, will find a and the rise in trade. Lao cardamom, hides, ivory, choice of clean, simple guesthouses, many of precious wood, and benzoin gold crossed the which are new. Restaurants perched along the bridge to reach downriver steamers, while Mekong serve simple Western fare and local Cambodian and European fabric as well as favorites including loads of fish dishes. Western household utensils, tools, and glassware headed north.

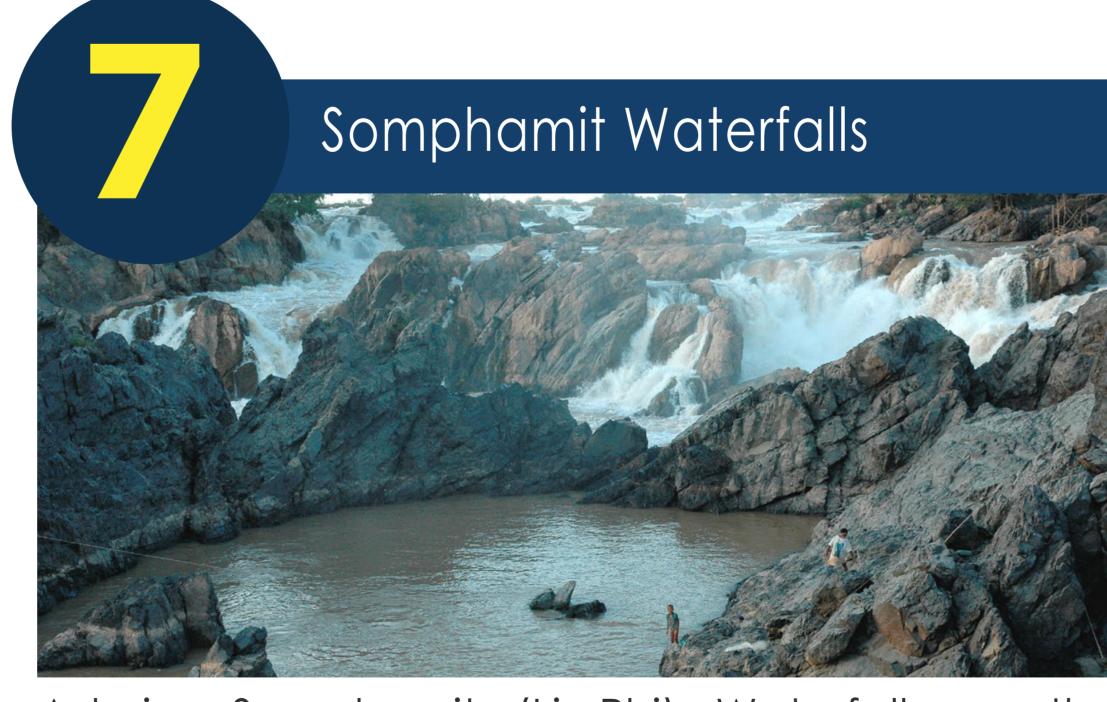








renowned fish salad.



of shady vantage points to view the foaming falls. calmer passage.



accommodation, spend your nights in Ban Khone, Mekong crashes through a maze of rocky flumes in natural highlight, Khone Phapheng Waterfalls, colonial base, and view the district museum's according to local lore, sugar palm trees bring which blends a small tourist enclave into village a cacophony of rushing water and mist. The where the Mekong races over a rock-filled fault exhibits of Siphandon's history, Buddhist culture, good luck. Mr Ounheuan, a village elder, tells of life. Ban Khone's guesthouses are more upscale Somphamit rapids along Don Khone's line before entering Cambodia. Located about 10 and heritage in a well-preserved, two-story French testing Ban Hinsiew's land and water, and instantly than at Hua Don Det, with the best rooms easy-to-access western bank once presented an km south of Nakasang on Route 13, Asia's largest colonial structure. The pier to Ban Don Khong sits knowing the village was perfect for growing sugar commanding views of Hou Béhanzin Channel. You unsurpassable obstacle for steamboat traffic. You waterfall by volume, also known as the Niagara just 14 km north of Nakasang, and a short ferry ride palm trees. Turning a sugar palm tree's can walk along the main street and see colonial can visit Marguerite Bay, where in 1893, the French Falls of the East, is not a giant drop-off, but some of (bridge under construction in 2011) leads to Ban tube-shaped fruit into candy is no easy task. In Ban buildings, rent bicycles or motorbikes, or stop at first tried to land gunboats and the museum, originally built in 1935 to Hinsiew, you can watch a farmer climb a shops. Several restaurants overlook the channel original railway, which was then moved to Ban a mishmash of narrow, boulder-filled chutes that house the governor, Kou Aphai. You can learn precarious bamboo ladder to the palm tree's leafy and offer Western and local dishes including "Pa Hang Khone. Just upriver, you can leave your crisscross this wide stretch of the Mekong. about Siphandon's Buddhist temples, sacred top (Nov-Feb). He then slices the fruits' tips for their Phone" – a popular local trout – and the area's transportation and Khmer ruins, before embarking on a juice, which he steams in a rotating pan until sticky. to the "Somphamit Waterfalls" village, with plenty Khone Phapheng forced riverboat traffic to seek self-guided tour to inspect Don Khong's sites.





family-style Admire Somphamit (Li Phi) Waterfalls as the Discover southern Champasak Province's premier Visit Don Khong, once Laos' southernmost French While on Don Khong, travel to Ban Hinsiew, where The liquid is poured into palm-leaf rings, where they harden into a sugar cake called nam oy kon.