

Muang Sing

I explored Muang Sing for a day on this fine piece of biking equipment, rented for 2 dollars a day. The shock on the front fork is for cosmetic purposes only. I was pleasantly surprised it held together on me despite taking it down some trails I don't think too many bikes have gone down. I had to check my enthusiasm for downhill mountain biking and walk a couple parts, since I was carrying a couple thousand dollars in camera equipment. Not to mention I did not want to find out what the medical care is like here.



A little of what the scenery around Muang Sing is like.

I biked to an Akha village where they were in the process of building a new house. This guy to the right was cutting boards from a log. Even though this area receives a lot more tourist, people were still very friendly and I was invited in for tea. The one difference instead of kids yelling “Sab-buy-dee” (hello in Lao) they also make the sign for candy or try to get some other thing. I'm sure the people who give out candy and pens to kids mean well but turning kids in to beggars is not the way to help.



The Market

The morning market at Muang Sing draws in patrons from the surrounding villages wearing their distinctive tribal attire.



I'm not sure if this Akha boy has to go to the bathroom or if his hands are just cold. And as if the Akha headdresses were not colorful enough the women often add flowers as well.



A kid hangs out the back of a songthaw eating an apple as he leaves the market.



Markets are always good places to find a cheap meal
this girl is barbequing fish.



A few more from Muang Long

Kids right after a swim in the river.



The region around Muang Long was a large opium producing area as little as two years ago. The Lao government with the backing of the EU has cracked down on the opium. This is a “don’t do drugs” sign in Muang Long showing the opium poppies over a dying man. Apparently there is still some around since I was offered it while walking around the Muang Sing market.

All the haze from the dust and smoke (from villagers burning fields and clearing forest) in the air makes for poor views but the sunsets can be pretty nice.

