



Experience Thailand.

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THAILAND | 6DAYS / 5NIGHTS

Route: Bangkok to Chiang Mai

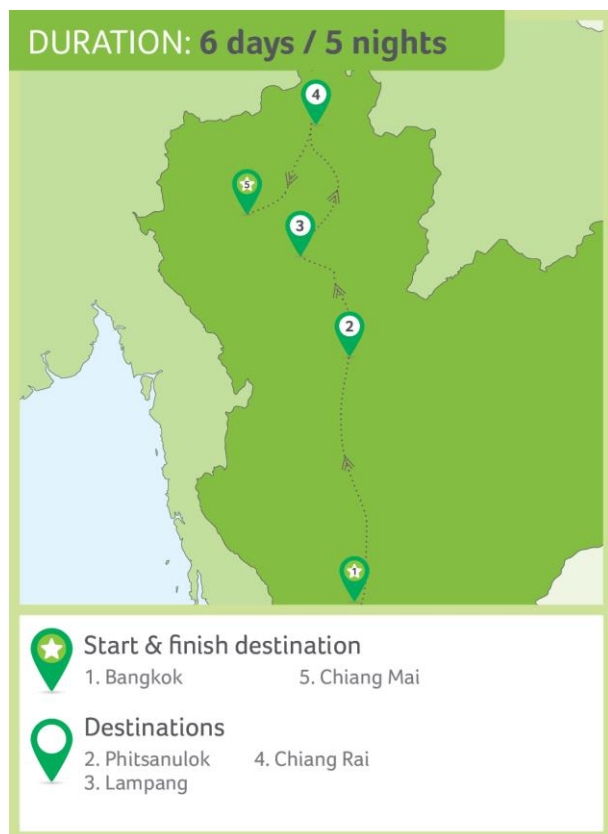
Type of tour: Culture

Departure days: Monday and Thursday

TOUR OVERVIEW

Discover the historical and natural wonders of Thailand with this six-day tour from Bangkok in the centre to Chiang Mai in the north. Visit the country's main heritage sites such as the Ayutthaya and Phitsanulok, meet the real king of the jungle at an elephant camp in Chiang Mai and explore the infamous Golden Triangle, one of the world's leading opium-producing areas.

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS



Ayutthaya: Ancient capital of Siam and the location of a haunting UNESCO World Heritage Site

Sukhothai: A historic former capital with well-preserved ruins of temples and palaces

Golden Triangle: See three countries from one spot in Sop Ruak at the confluence of the Ruak and the Mekong rivers

Chiang Rai: Stroll through the local morning market and see the bridge crossing to Myanmar

Chiang Mai: Visit a tribal village, cruise a river on a longtail boat, take in the views from the hilltop Wat Doi Suthep temple, enjoy an unforgettable encounter with Thai elephants and much more

DON'T MISS

Chiang Mai: Mingle with locals as they scour the bustling night bazaar for bargains and something tasty to munch on while browsing the myriad stalls

Chiang Rai: Learn about the region's 20 hill tribes and how they have retained their cultures, languages, traditions and beliefs

Golden Triangle: Located just across from the Big Buddha viewing point is a small, private museum dedicated to the opium trade in this once lawless area

DAY BY DAY

DAY 1 | BANGKOK – AYUTTHAYA – PHITSANULOK (405km – 6hrs)

Palaces, ancient ruins, temples and monkeys are on the menu as this epic six-day tour from the capital to northern Thailand kicks off in style. After pick-up from your hotel, head to Bang Pa-In to visit the sumptuous **Summer Palace of Rama V**. Continue to the former capital of Ayutthaya and contemplate the ancient temples of Wat Yai Chaimongkhon, Wat Mahathat and Wat Phanan Choeng in the Ayutthaya Historical Park. Enjoy lunch at a restaurant in Chai Nat then continue to **Phitsanulok** for a brief orientation tour of the city before checking in at the hotel.

- **Overnight in Phitsanulok. Lunch included.**

DAY 2 | PHITSANULOK – SUKHOTHAI – LAMPANG (410km – 5.5hrs)

After breakfast at the hotel, head to **Wat Phra Si Rattana Mahathat** to join the locals in their morning prayers and offerings in this historic temple, which houses one of Thailand's most revered Buddha statues. Depart for **Sukhothai** to explore this ancient city packed with historical landmarks, the most impressive being the **Sukhothai Historical Park**, a

UNESCO World Heritage Site. Admire the ruined temples and palaces as well as the Buddha statues of all sizes. Lunch en route at a local restaurant. A short drive away is **Si Satchanalai**, which boasts the evocative ruins of half a dozen temples, including **Wat Phra Si Rattana Mahathat** – which is reached by crossing a wooden suspension bridge – as well as countless statues of Buddha and elephants. This usually quiet location offers a special spiritual interlude to the tour before arriving in Lampang for the evening.

- **Overnight in Lampang. Breakfast and lunch included.**

DAY 3 | LAMPANG – PHAYAO – GOLDEN TRIANGLE – CHIANG RAI (470km – 5.5hrs)

Explore the wonderful **Wat Phra That Lampang Luang**, just a brief drive from Lampang, and marvel at the elaborate decorations and beautiful Buddha statues. Continue north, stopping briefly at **Phayao Lake** for a coffee break, continuing to the southern outskirts of Chiang Rai to visit **Wat Rong Khun**, a dazzling temple built in the 1990s. Its ornate all-white exterior, with embedded pieces of mirror, gives it a resplendent appearance, which makes it one of the most beautiful temples in Thailand. Continue to Chaing Rai for lunch. Afterwards, head to the **Golden Triangle**, where Thailand, Laos and Myanmar meet. This natural wilderness gained an unwanted notoriety in the Sixties because of the abundant opium cultivation in the area. Visit the **212 House of Opium** and stroll around its rare collection of opium paraphernalia such as weights, scales and pipes. Learn the history of this drug and about the devastating effect its trade had on local communities.

- **Overnight in Chiang Rai. Breakfast and lunch included.**



DAY 4 | CHIANG RAI – CHIANG MAI (220km – 8.5hrs)

Enjoy a lively start to the day's activities at the fragrant and vibrant Chiang Rai **morning market** and then a brief stop at **Wat Phra Kaew**. The journey out of town is on a long-tail boat with a **scenic Mae Kok River cruise** of about three-and-a-half hours to **Pha Tai**, where there's a visit to hill tribe village. Continue by road to **Tha Ton** and enjoy a tasty lunch before heading to the ancient city of **Chiang Mai**. On arrival, visit **Wat Phra That Doi Suthep**, one of the most revered temples in the country. This sacred location is at the top of a mountain from where you can appreciate stunning panoramic views over the city. To reach the temple requires a climb up a 309-step naga staircase. Alternatively, a cable car (included) takes you to the temple.

- **Overnight in Chiang Mai. Breakfast and lunch included.**

DAY 5 | CHIANG MAI

After all that culture and history, it is time for a day of wildlife and nature in the jungles near Chiang Mai. Get up close and personal with the animal kingdom at an **Thai Elephant Care Center**, that was set up to provide care for elderly elephants retired from logging and camps. Appreciate these gentle giants, learn more about their nature, their individual traits, their lifestyles, their talents and their charms. If time is right watch the bath-time.

Pause for a tasty lunch in a local restaurant. In the afternoon, visit of the day is to the Colour Factory, where can admire a selection of full size Elephant Parade statues from cities around the world and choose your favourite from a collection of replicas. You can also learn about Asian elephants and the work the Asian Elephant Foundation is doing to save these magnificent but endangered animals. Visit also the Lanna handicraft centre on **San Kamphaeng Road**. Learn how they make Chiang Mai's most famous products such as colourful parasols, silk, silverware and teakwood carvings. An optional khantoke dinner is available in the evening.

- **Overnight in Chiang Mai. Breakfast and lunch included.**

DAY 6 | CHIANG MAI

Relax over breakfast at the hotel and then enjoy the freedom of **Chiang Mai**. Explore the city at your own pace and leisure and catch the sights and attractions of this city teeming with green spaces and popularly known as the 'Rose of the North'. The day is yours to do as you wish. Departure transfer to Chiang Mai Airport included (if required).

- **Breakfast included.**

INCLUDED

TOUR GUIDE:

- Operated with English/Italian/French/German or Spanish-speaking guide*

ACCOMMODATION:

- Five nights in air-conditioned room with bath/shower on a half-board basis

MEALS:

- Five breakfasts and five lunches

TRANSPORT:

- Air-conditioned transportation, transfers as stated in the programme

ENTRANCE FEES AND ACTIVITIES:

- All entrance fees as indicated: Bang Pa-In Summer Palace, Ayutthaya Historical Park and Wat Phra Si Rattana Mahathat in Ayutthaya; Sukhothai Historical Park and Si Satchanalai Historical Park in Sukhothai; Wat Phra That Lampang Luang in Lampang; pineapple plantation in Phayao; 212 House of Opium, Wat Phra Kaew and Mae Kok River cruise in Chiang Rai; Wat Rong Khun, Wat Doi Suthep, cable car, elephant care center, orchid plantation, Colour Factory and San Kamphaeng Road in Chiang Mai

*Note Tours in different languages can be combined in our vehicles for seat-in-coach itineraries. There will be a guide for each language

NOT INCLUDED

- Expenditures of a personal nature, drinks and meals if not stated explicitly in the programme
- Gratuity for driver and guide
- Optional tours
- Compulsory festival/peak season surcharges if stated separately
- International or domestic flight tickets and airport taxes or visa fees
- Supplement charge for pick-up from outer Bangkok hotels

RECOMMENDATIONS

Comfortable and light clothing is the most suitable for travelling in Thailand. Visitors should not wear sleeveless shirts, shorts, short skirts or skimpy clothing when visiting temples, religious or official buildings. Shoes should be removed before entering a temple or private house. Sun protection, sunglasses, a hat and mosquito repellent can be very useful during your stay.