

THAILAND ENCOUNTERS – 12 DAYS

JOIN US ON THIS 12 DAY TOUR THROUGH THAILAND AS WE EXPLORE THE CAPITAL BANGKOK, DISCOVER THE HISTORICAL SITES OF KANCHANABURI AND AYUTTHAYA BEFORE



THAILAND
uncovered

HEADING TO THE MOUNTAINS TO ENJOY A 3 DAY TREK, ELEPHANT RIDE AND BAMBOO RAFTING TRIP THROUGH THE LOCAL HILL TRIBE VILLAGES.

HIGHLIGHTS

Floating markets in Bangkok, the Famous Death Railway, Erawan Falls National Park, UNESCO World Heritage Ayutthaya; trekking, bamboo rafting and elephant rides of Chiang Mai.

Detail:	Itinerary:
Day 1: Sun	Arrive into Bangkok Upon arrival our staff will meet you at the airport and transfer you to your hotel in Bangkok for the start of your trip. Overnight: Bangkok hotel. Extras: N/A Meals: N/A
Day 2: Mon	Bangkok. City tour Our tour begins with a fun way to discover Bangkok's unmistakable 'Kwam-Pen-Thai' (Thai-ness) as we take to tuk tuks and long-tailed boats for tours of the Grand Palace, Buddhist temples including Wat Po, the old canals of Thonburi and the iconic temple of dawn, Wat Arun. Local legend has it that the shards of pottery decorating its 79m tall spire came from a nearby shipwreck 100 years ago. Overall we aim to make sure the true Bangkok is uncovered. Overnight: Bangkok hotel. Extras: N/A Meals: Breakfast
Day 3: Tue	Bangkok to Kanchanaburi Leaving Bangkok this morning we travel to the historic town of Kanchanaburi. Originally founded to protect Thailand from the Burmese the area is known today for being the site of the famous Bridge Over the River Kwai. Occupied by Japanese troops during WWII the bridge and subsequent railway line was built by allied prisoners of war. Travelling by train along the bridge we will also visit the Allied War Cemetery and the local museum. Then we take to the river to our overnight floating raft-house accommodation. Overnight: Homestay Extras: N/A Meals: Breakfast & Dinner
Day 4: Wed	Kanchanaburi. Visit to Erawan National Park. After breakfast we head for the beautiful Erawan Falls National Park. This huge park is home to ancient caves and the spectacular waterfalls named after the 3 headed white elephant found in Hindu mythology. Overnight: Kanchanaburi hotel Extras: N/A. Meals: Breakfast
Day 5: Thu	Kanchanaburi. Tour to Ayutthaya. Overnight train to Chiang Mai. We depart Kanchanaburi this morning for the short trip to the former Siam capital of Ayutthaya. Now a UNESCO world heritage site the city flourished between the 14th and 18th centuries and is home to many ancient temples and Palaces. This evening we board the overnight train to Chiang Mai. Overnight: Overnight train to Chiang Mai. Extras: N/A Meals: Breakfast.
Day 6: Fri	Arrive Chiang Mai. Free day. We arrive into Chiang Mai this morning where the rest of the day is free to explore the city. Nestled amongst some of the highest mountains in Thailand, Chiang Mai retains a relaxed feel to it. Head to the impressive local zoo or visit one of the nearby Buddhist temples before dining out in one of the city's many restaurants. Overnight: Chiang Mai hotel. Extras: N/A Meals: Breakfast

Day 7: Sat	Chiang Mai. Begin trekking. Leaving Chiang Mai this morning we travel to the colourful market at Mae Malai before carrying on to the lush Pang Lan Waterfalls. After lunch we begin our trek into the Huay Nam Dang National Park and walk on to the traditional Karen village of Baan Mae Jok where we stop for the night in order to learn more about the culture of the local hill-tribes. Overnight: Village Huts Extras: N/A Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner
Day 8: Sun	Trekking and Elephant ride. Awakening to cool mountain breezes we enjoy breakfast this morning before we trek on through the tropical jungle to the village of Baan Pa Khao Lam. Climbing aboard Thai elephants we experience these majestic creatures up close as we continue our journey through the landscape until arriving later today at the rafting camp. Overnight: Village huts Extras: N/A Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner
Day 9: Mon	Trekking and Bamboo rafting. On our final day in the jungle we experience bamboo rafting along the Mae Tang river. Cruising along the tropical riverbanks in our bamboo rafts we make stops at small tribal settlements before finally arriving into Shan village where we transfer back to Chiang Mai. Overnight: Chiang Mai Hotel Extras: N/A Meals: Breakfast, lunch
Day 10: Tue	Chiang Mai. Free day. Overnight train to Bangkok. Today is kept free to relax after the trek. You could take in a local Thai cooking course, explore the markets and alleyways of Chiang Mai on foot or relieve any tired muscles with a relaxing local massage. Transfer to the train station for the overnight train to Bangkok. Overnight: Overnight train. Extras: N/A Meals: Breakfast.
Day 11: Wed	Arrive in Bangkok. Free day. We arrive back into the Thai capital this morning and transfer to the hotel. The rest of the day is free to explore Bangkok at your leisure. Visit the lively area around Patpong, drop in on a snake farm or browse round Bangkok's many modern shopping centres. Overnight: Bangkok hotel Extras: N/A Meals: Breakfast.
Day 12: Thu	Bangkok departure day Free day. Transfer to the airport for departure flight. Overnight: N/A Extras: N/A Meals: Breakfast.

INCLUSIONS

- ✓ All accommodation as stated in the itinerary
- ✓ All transport and transfers
- ✓ 24-hour airport arrival & departure transfer service
- ✓ Services of a local tour guide during sightseeing and activities
- ✓ Admission fees, rucksack, water canteen and lifejacket are supplied for trekking.
- ✓ Meals as indicated in the itinerary

EXCLUSIONS

- ✗ International Flights
- ✗ Visa fees
- ✗ Travel Insurance (compulsory)
- ✗ Meals not indicated in the itinerary
- ✗ Drinks, snacks and other personal expenses (e.g. laundry)
- ✗ Tips for tour leader, rafting guide and park guide
- ✗ Any other items not mentioned above

THAILAND NOTES:

WHY CHOOSE THAILAND UNCOVERED IN THAILAND?

- ✓ Guaranteed small groups (max 18)
- ✓ Guaranteed departures (min 4)
- ✓ The best locally trained guides
- ✓ 24/7 airport transfers
- ✓ All entrance fees included
- ✓ Hill-tribe trek, elephant ride and bamboo rafting adventure
- ✓ Exciting accommodation unique to Thailand including floating raft-houses
- ✓ Fun, exploratory tour of Bangkok
- ✓ Smiles guaranteed

EXTRAS

To go with our set tour itineraries, we therefore offer a range of extras that you can add on if you wish. All accommodation based options (e.g. Single supplement, extra nights) should be booked and paid for in advance so that we can make the appropriate arrangements. Other options may be arranged while you are in Thailand. Full details of current prices are given on our website.

Single room supplement

This option guarantees you a single room in hotels throughout the tour. If you are a single traveller who would like to share, let us know and we will see if we can pair you up. If we don't have anyone to pair you up with when you book, we'll add this option on, but remove it or refund you when we can pair you up later. Check with us for guaranteed no single supplement offers on some tours and departures.

Extra days - Price: subject to hotel & party make-up

These are available on request in Bangkok before and after the main tour. We will aim to use the same hotel as the rest of the tour, but this will be subject to availability in the hotel. If you wish, you may book a hotel at a higher or lower level than that used on the tour. In this case, we can offer a transfer to/from the group hotel for a small charge (paid locally). Prices include a night in the hotel, breakfast, all taxes and your airport transfer. Single room supplements apply.

CHIANG MAI JUNGLE ADVENTURE

Jungle trek:

In general the trekking on this tour will not be too hard for anybody who is reasonably physically fit. We walk for around 1 ½ hours on the first day, mainly downhill, and for around 3-4 hours on the second day with some climbing and descending. The precise itinerary of the trekking may have to be changed from time to time to take into account the weather and local conditions, but the same concept is well maintained.

While trekking we sleep in villagers' huts. As the huts consist of a single all-purpose room, in which the villagers live and sleep, you will sleep on the covered balcony or a bamboo bed inside the hut. A thin mattress, sheet and a blanket will be provided but for additional comfort you may wish to bring a sleeping bag as in mountain areas it can be quite cool at night, especially in December/January.

Additional equipment such as a rucksack, water canteen, life-jacket is available from our office in Chiang Mai. Sleeping bags may also be hired from here.

As you are required to carry your own kit, unnecessary items should be avoided and left in secure storage in your hotel in Chiang Mai (a private porter can also be provided upon request for an additional charge).

Simple meals will be prepared by the porter by a stream, in a hill-tribe village or at some other suitable spot, during the day, and in one of the village huts in the evening & for breakfast.

Your guide has long experience of the country through which you will travel and is very familiar with the tribes' people and their customs. His advice on these subjects should be followed.

Elephant rides:

Elephant-back riding is great fun and should not be missed. However, please bear in mind that we encourage you not to ride the elephant on its neck. Though some might feel it is challenging it can also be dangerous. Clients wanting to do so must take full responsibility themselves as we cannot guarantee their safety and will accept no responsibility in the event of an accident.

Rafting:

The rafts are of the basic bamboo-pole variety and can carry approximately from 4 to 8 people. The rafting can take from 4 to 6 hours depending on the season, and the water level & current. Along some parts of the river there are a lot of snags (dead trees, big rocks, broken wood, etc.), which can sometimes be dangerous. A life jacket (provided) is essential as it will not only keep you afloat, if by

chance you should fall off the raft, but also help to prevent injury if hitting any of these snags. During the rainy season (or the dry season following heavy rainfall) the current will be quite strong and the guide will decide if the rafting should proceed or not. His advice on this matter should be strictly followed.

ACCOMMODATION

We use good quality hotels rated at the Thai 3-star level on this tour, together with village huts and a homestay. Hotel rooms all have air-conditioning and en-suite bathrooms.

All couples will be given a private double room. If you are a single traveller who would like to share, let us know and we will see if we can pair you up. If we don't have anyone to pair you up with when you book, we'll add this option on, but remove it or refund you when we can pair you up later. Check with us for guaranteed no single supplement offers on some tours and departures.

Village huts:

Accommodation whilst trekking is in traditional bamboo huts, and a thin mattress, sheet and blanket is provided. Please note that for the trekking you may wish to bring a light sleeping bag or extra blanket with you. These may be hired in Chiang Mai if required.

TRANSPORT

Our trips feature a mix of different transport options. We want you to feel like you're really experiencing the country you're travelling through, but at the same time we want you to finish journeys refreshed enough to enjoy the next stage of the tour. With this in mind we use public transport where we think it offers a good local experience – this may include 2nd class overnight sleeper trains, local buses and local ferries. We also use private transportation including jeeps, song- thaews or pickup trucks, and mini buses for sightseeing tours where required.

Sleeper trains:

The sleeper trains in Thailand are of a good standard and are popular with tourists. Each carriage has its own steward who ensures the train is kept clean and tidy, and from whom meals and drinks can be ordered to your seat. There is also a separate restaurant car. Each carriage will sleep approximately 40 people. On either side of the carriage there are 2 seats facing each other, with a window and small table. In the evening, the steward will convert these seats into beds for you, with a pillow, sheets and a blanket as well as a curtain for privacy.

TRANSFERS

The tour includes a 24-hour arrival and departure airport-hotel transfers service in Bangkok airport and all other transfers.

INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS

We want to give you as much flexibility as possible when it comes to booking your holiday with us. So, to take account of people with varying travel plans, we don't include your international flights in the main tour price. We are however very happy to book your flights for you, and our ATOL (UK flight sales license) covers all holidays booked together with a flight from the UK.

Please contact us with your preferred dates and departure airport and we'll give you a selection of airlines, times and fares to choose from. Your airport arrival & departure transfers are included whether you book your flights independently or through us.

GROUP SIZE/TOUR LEADERS/GUIDES

We are committed to being a small group operator, as we feel this gives everyone in the group the best chance to get to know their fellow travellers and to hear and make the most of their guide. There's no point in us providing great guides if you've got to peer over 30-40 shoulders to see them! So, we won't ever put you in a 50-seater coach with 49 other people and just one guide. Instead, we set our Thailand group departures to have a maximum of 18 travellers.

At Thailand Uncovered we aim to only use local Thai guides and reps. We feel this gives you the best experience of the country and the sites you are seeing. Please check our website for more details and profiles of some of our most famous guides.

ENTRANCE FEES

The tour price includes entrance fees to all the tourist sites mentioned in the itinerary. You will need to cover the cost of entrance to any other extra sites that you may wish to visit.

TIPPING

Tipping is not part of Thai culture but has become customary but not compulsory in the tourist and service industry. Tipping is always optional, and any amounts paid should reflect excellent service. You may therefore wish to tip your guide and driver at the end of the

tour. You should not feel obliged to tip any particular amount, and should consider your personal budget. We are often asked to provide a guide however, and can suggest that approx. £5 per person per day would be appropriate.

DATES & PRICES

We run regular small-group departures on this tour starting on Sundays throughout the year. All departures are guaranteed to run with a minimum of 2 people. Departure dates and prices are listed on our website and on a dates & prices sheet available on request.

HEALTH

For up to date health information & vaccination requirements for Israel we recommend that you contact your GP or a travel clinic (1st Contact travel clinic gives free advice tel. 0800 0393073).

General vaccination recommendations for Thailand include Diphtheria, Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, Japanese B Encephalitis, Malaria, Polio, TB, Tetanus & Typhoid. Malaria exists all year round in rural (particularly forest and hilly) areas throughout the country mainly toward the international borders. There is no risk in cities and the main tourist resorts (eg Bangkok, Chiang Mai, Pattaya, Phuket, Koh Samui).

VISAS

Many nationalities (including UK, European, Australian, New Zealand, South African) do not need to obtain a visa to enter Thailand as a period as long as your stay is for less than 3 months. Other nationalities should check with their local consulate. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the appropriate visa to enter Israel if one is required.

HOW TO BOOK

If you would like to book a place on this tour, please complete the online reservation form on our website. We will then contact you with more details about how to complete your booking and payment. You can also contact us on 0800 088 6002 or by email at: tours@uncovertheworld.com

FINANCIAL SECURITY

We are a UK registered company and you can be confident when booking with us that your money is safe and protected.

If you book a flight departing from the UK from us with your tour then your entire package is ATOL protected by the Civil Aviation Authority. Our ATOL number is 10467.

Additional financial protection is also provided through International Passenger Protection for passengers not booking flights.

Please see our website or booking conditions for more information.

RESPONSIBLE TOURISM

It is impossible not to have an impact on the local environment, cultures and eco-systems when you travel. However, it is very possible to try and ensure that these impacts are as limited, or positive as possible. We are committed to ensuring that we try to leave our host countries in a better state than we found them and encourage and assist our travellers to help us with this.

In Egypt this includes using support boats with toilets on felucca cruises instead of burying waste on land, and teaching our travellers local customs so you don't give offence accidentally. We also make a small contribution from every booking to local projects such as orphanages, environmental NGOs and charities.

FOLLOW US ONLINE

You can stay in touch with us online by following us on Facebook and Twitter. We post updates on relevant travel news in our destination countries, special offers and discounts and other interesting travel related news and information.

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