

Waterways of Old Siam

7 DAYS / SMALL GROUP OR PRIVATE TOUR / SPECIAL INTEREST

Enjoy a magical opportunity to explore Thailand's rural heartland on board a converted teakwood rice barge. After experiencing the sights and sounds and the hustle and bustle of Bangkok city, this three-day cruise takes you out of Bangkok up the Chao Phraya River into the rich agricultural central plains. See firsthand the traditional way of life of Thailand's rural communities, which is far removed from the usual tourist trail.

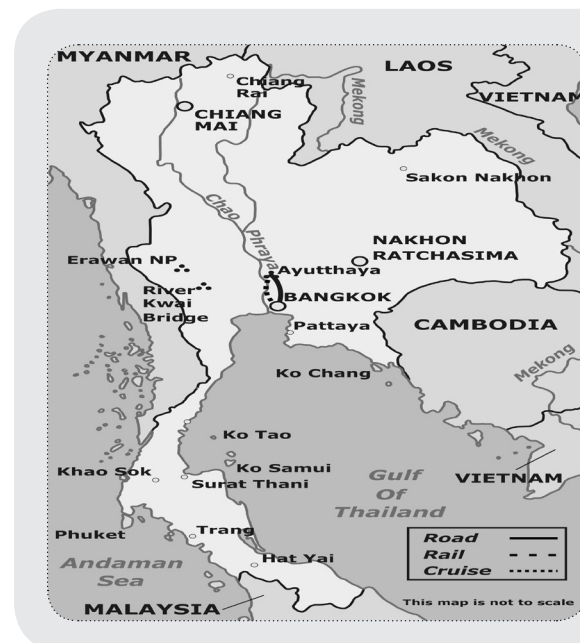
TOUR FACTS

Tour Code:	CRTHWS
Group Size & Age:	Min. - 2 Max. - 12 / Min. age - 7
Travel Idea:	Special Interest
Activity Level:	Moderate
Comfort Rating:	Standard
Accommodation:	4 nights in hotels, 2 nights on rice barge
Transport:	Rice barge cruise boat, private A/C minibus, cycling, boat trip

YOUR 7 DAY TOUR ITINERARY

- Day 1:** Arrive in Bangkok. Transfer from airport to hotel.
- Day 2:** Bangkok - Grand Palace & City canal tours.
- Day 3:** Board traditional rice barge, sail up the Chao Phraya River.
- Day 4:** Rice barge cruise. Various easy cycling tours and visits.
- Day 5:** Rice barge cruise - Markets & school tour, boat to Bangkok.
- Day 6:** Bangkok - Damnoen Saduak floating market, afternoon free.
- Day 7:** Bangkok - Free time. Transfer to airport for flight home.

"Would you like to extend this tour to take in Kanchanaburi & Ayutthaya? ...then check out our Rice Barge Experience tour"



We run this tour on private departures only. Call or check the website for dates and prices. Various tailor-made options are also available on request.

FLIGHT BOOKINGS AVAILABLE
See page 4 for details

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

Temples & Palaces of Bangkok, Rice Barge cruise & cycling tours, Damnoen Saduak Floating Market & Thai Cooking.

FLIGHTS INCLUDED:*	LOCAL PAYMENT:	ENTRANCE FEES:	AIRPORT TRANSFERS:
X	X	✓	✓

**To book visit: www.thailand-uncovered.com,
email: tours@thailand-uncovered.com or call us on: +44 (0) 845 130 48 49
Please quote Tour Code: CRTHWS when booking**

* SEE WEBSITE FOR FULL PRICE LIST, FLIGHT QUOTES AVAILABLE ON REQUEST. / LAST AMENDED 15/04/2012



Waterways of Old Siam continued...

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DETAILED ITINERARY

DAY 1 / ARRIVE IN BANGKOK

You arrive at Bangkok airport where we greet you and transfer you to your hotel. Your Thailand Uncovered rep welcomes you, helps you settle into the hotel, and provides you with some useful tips for exploring the area as well as outlining the schedule for the next few days.

Overnight at hotel in Bangkok.

DAY 1 EXTRA OPTIONS

Bangkok Introductory tour

See pages 3-4 for details

DAY 2 / BANGKOK, GRAND PALACE & CANALS TOURS

After a pre-tour briefing, we start today with a half day tour to the splendid Grand Palace complex and the Royal Temple of the Emerald Buddha, where varied styles of Thai architecture are delicately woven together to enchant the viewer.

In the afternoon we take a cruise along the canals of Bangkok's surprisingly rural western suburbs and enjoy the natural scenery and observe the daily lives of the people who live along the canals. We stop en-route for an opportunity to talk to some of the students attending the temple school or take a leisurely stroll through vegetable and herb gardens. Continuing by boat we visit an orchid farm and the boathouse where the Royal Barges are kept and maintained.

Overnight at hotel in Bangkok (B L).

DAY 3 / RICE BARGE CRUISE

This morning we board the "Thanatharee" at Pinklao Pier in Bangkok, and start sailing up the Chao Phraya river to Ko Kred, an isle in the middle of the River. Here, we explore the Mon pottery-making village on the isle before continuing to the lively Pathum Thani market where varieties of fresh meats, vegetables and various

local goods are sold.

Note: During some months, normally around September-November, it may not be possible to use the Maenam Noi in which case the itinerary will follow the main Chao Phraya River. The same concept will be well maintained.

Returning to the boat we continue up river, and have lunch on board, passing by Wat Pailom, well known as a winter nesting ground of the Asian Openbill Stork which migrates from Northern India and Siberia. We then head further upriver to the unspoilt Maenam Noi, a small branch of the main Chao Phraya River.

We'll arrive at Wat Singh at approximately 18:00, tie up for the night and enjoy a fine meal prepared by the crew and on-board chef.

Note: The itinerary of the barge portion of this tour is only a guideline and is subject to change without prior notice due to tide and local conditions, but the same concept is well maintained.

Overnight at on board rice barge (B L D).

DAY 4 / RICE BARGE CRUISE

This morning we have an opportunity to give food to the monks on their morning alms round, and to learn more about the importance of the Buddhist religion in Thailand.

After breakfast we take an easy cycle ride to explore the local villages before departing on the boat for the temple of Wat Taku. After lunch on board, we board our bicycles again for another tour through rural farmland and small villages along the river.

We rejoin the barge at Wat Kophai and continue to Bang Sadej where we cycle to visit its famous temple and a local orphanage where, mainly hilltribe children receive an education and vocational training. We'll continue on to the main village to meet the local people and see the cottage industries they engage in. Then we depart on the boat to Pamok for our second night on board.

Overnight at on board rice barge (B L D).

DAY 5 / RICE BARGE CRUISE. BOAT TO BANGKOK

Our morning visits today are to the lively morning market at Pamok, and a local school. We also visit a local family who make drums. Then we head on towards Ayutthaya before boarding a modern boat for a fast return journey downriver back to Bangkok.

Overnight at hotel in Bangkok (B L).

DAY 6 / BANGKOK FLOATING MARKET, AFTERNOON FREE

We depart early this morning to Ban Paew and a boat cruise along the Damnoen Saduak Canal. We enjoy the beautiful sights along the way and witness the day-to-day activities of the Thai people who live on the canals. The cruise ends at the wonderfully colourful floating market at Damnoen Suduak. The afternoon is free for you to enjoy more sightseeing or perhaps do some last minute shopping.

Overnight at hotel in Bangkok (B).

DAY 6 EXTRA OPTIONS

Afternoon Thai cookery

See page 3 for details

DAY 7 / TOUR ENDS

Your day is free to do some last minute sightseeing and shopping, until we transfer you to the airport in time for your flight home. (B).

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SMALL GROUP, PRIVATE AND TAILOR-MADE TOURS

SMALL GROUP DEPARTURES:

We do not generally offer regular small group departures on this tour. If you would like to put your own group together however, please do contact us and we will be able to offer you some discounted rates and to adjust the itinerary to fit your group's particular preferences and dates. You may join with other travellers on the rice barge.

PRIVATE DEPARTURES:

This tour is designed primarily to be run as a private tour, just for you, your family, or your own group of friends. It can be run on any dates, but please contact us or check our website for more information on ideal seasons and weather in different parts of the country. Prices on our website are based on 2 adults travelling in low season and sharing a room, and discounts are available on request if there would be more people travelling together. Prices in high season and peak periods will be slightly higher, and quoted on request.

TAILOR-MADE TOURS:

Finally, this tour can also be used as a base for a private tailor-made itinerary, to be run on any dates. You can make as many or as few adjustments to the itinerary as per your own requirements and we will provide suggestions, ideas and prices to fit your own personal interests and budget.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

OPTIONS:

Booking and paying for options:

Options can be booked when you make your reservation on our website, between confirming your booking and your departure,

and some can also be arranged during the tour itself, subject to availability at the time.

Credit cards, traveller's cheques or cash are accepted in Bangkok for payments for options arranged after you arrive (a fee will be added if you use a credit card). A receipt will be provided.

Single room supplement

If you want to guarantee yourself a single room throughout the tour, then we need to add a single supplement charge.

If you are a single traveller joining one of our Standard level group tours, then if you do not select the single supplement, you may share a twin or triple room with another traveller/s (same sex) in the group.

Note: *Couples will always be given a private double room where possible and triple/family rooms are available on request.*

Book in advance. Pay in advance.

Extra days

These are available on request in Bangkok before and after the tour starts and finishes. If you'd like to add extra days into the time elsewhere, then please request a tailor-made tour.

The price includes a night in the hotel, breakfast, all taxes and transfers (single supplements apply).

Book in advance. Pay in advance.

Bangkok Introductory tour

This introductory half day tour is done on foot and using a wide selection of different public transport to familiarise you with the city of Bangkok and its many different sites and features. We concentrate more on learning about the life of the city rather than visiting famous sites which you may see during the main part of your tour.

Book & Pay in advance or in Thailand.

Afternoon Thai cookery

For this option we transfer you to the pier for a cruise in a long-tailed motorboat and to witness the scenic life of people who live along Bangkok's waterways. You'll learn some of the secrets of Thai cooking at the house of a Thai family located on the banks of the canal. Upon arrival a Thai herbal drink is served as a welcoming to the house. Discover how fresh herbs and spices are blended into tasty dishes. You will have plenty of time for discussion and to test the tastes of all that is demonstrated.

Book & Pay in advance.

INCLUDED IN THE PRICE OF THE TOUR:

- All accommodation (see below)
- Meals as indicated on the itinerary
- Entrance fees to all sites mentioned in the itinerary
- All transfers, including 24-hour airport transfer service
- Tours & guides as indicated in the itinerary
- All transport

NOT INCLUDED IN THE PRICE OF THE TOUR:

- International airfares
- Visa costs
- Meals not indicated in the itinerary
- Drinks, snacks, tips, and other personal expenses
- Travel insurance - please see the policies available on our website
- Any other items not mentioned above

ACCOMMODATION:

Our standard rating is based on good quality, comfortable hotels around the 3 and 4-star level. Most will have swimming pools and more than one restaurant and bar. Our cultural adventure tours that feature jungle trekking around Chiang Mai will, by necessity, include some more basic accommodation. This level of tour is suitable

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for anyone interested in a good balance of comfort and value for money.

Sleeping facilities on the rice barge consist of an air-conditioned multi-share cabin with comfortable bunk beds sleeping a maximum 12 persons. The two sides are separated by a fabric curtain. One common bathroom and one toilet are located in the main deck, and there is another toilet on the upper deck. You should bring your own towel and personal toiletries (towel and soap are provided).

In a rare case that there are more than 12 joining persons, the sleeping area for additional persons will be at the barge's common area (on the upper deck, space is available for a maximum of 4 persons).

Mosquito nets, pillows and blankets are provided.

Note: Our website prices are based on a range of hotels, and we will let you know which are to be used a few weeks before departure. If you would like to finalise and guarantee specific hotels before you book, please request a tailor-made tour. Please see the Accommodation page on our website for more information about the hotels we use.

TRANSPORT:

This tour aims at bringing you as close to the real Thailand as possible and not cocooning you from it. Along with the traditional teakwood rice barge, we use private minibuses and vans for the transfers and sightseeing tours, a large modern cruising boat with a dining room for the Ayutthaya to Bangkok river journey, as well as jeeps or pick-up trucks in the National Park. Bicycles are carried on board the rice barge.

TRANSFERS:

The tour includes both your airport arrival and departure transfers (24-hour service), and all other transfers.

After customs and immigration formalities you will be met by our representative, and after introductions, they will take you straight to

your hotel (full details will be provided after booking).

INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS:

In order to keep our tours flexible, and to make them accessible to as many people as possible, we do not include your international flights in the set tour itinerary or price.

However, we do hold an ATOL (UK flight sales license) and are happy to book your flights for you. If you let us know your ideal dates and departure airport, then we will be happy to provide you with some flight options that we can arrange for you. You can then choose whether to book the flights through us, or make your own arrangements. Either way, your airport arrival & departure transfers are included.

TOUR LEADERS/GUIDES:

For this tour we provide fully trained, local English-speaking Thai guides for all the sightseeing tours. Our website prices are based on using different guides in different parts of Thailand (for example, you generally keep the same guide for all of the Bangkok/Kanchanaburi/Ayutthaya region, and then a different guide would be used in the north for Chiang Mai & Chiang Rai. We do not generally send our guides with you to the beach resorts, where most optional activities are arranged either through your hotel/resort, or our local reps. If you would like the same guide to escort you throughout the whole tour we can certainly arrange this, but there will be an extra cost.

Our local reps in all the towns and cities en-route are also at your service.

To help support the local people and economy, and also because we know it works best for you, our policy at Thailand Uncovered is to use only local guides and tour leaders. Please check our website for further details.

ENTRANCE FEES:

The tour price includes entrance fees to all the tourist sites and National Parks mentioned in the itinerary.

TIPPING:

Tipping is not part of Thai culture, but has become customary but not compulsory in the service & tourist industry. Tipping is always optional, and any amounts paid should reflect excellent service.

It is normal and accepted for people to tip differently, and you should not feel under any pressure to tip any particular amount.

We are often asked for advice on common amounts however, and suggest that up to 10% of the tour price would be a suitable budget for this tour.

COUNTRY GUIDE:

For an in-depth overview of Thailand, please check out the country guide pages on our website.

CLIMATE:

The weather in Thailand varies between the northern & southern halves of the country, and the time of year, and is controlled by several different monsoons. These monsoon rains start and finish at slightly different times every year.

In the northern & central regions (including Bangkok & Chiang Mai), the 'dry season' lasts from November/December to May, before getting steadily hotter in June and July. The most rain falls in August and September.

In the south (including Khao Sok & Krabi), the 'dry season' normally runs from November to April, with most rain falling from May to October, with less temperature difference between them than in the North.

In Koh Samui and Ko Tao, the 'cool dry season' runs from December

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to February, with the 'hot dry season' running from March to August, and the 'rainy season' starting sometime in September and finishing late November.

Each of the seasons has its own charms and its difficulties!

DATES & PRICES:

We do not generally offer regular small group departures on this tour. This tour will always start on Thursdays to fit with the rice barge departures from Bangkok and you may be sharing your time on the boat with other travellers.

You can also choose to do the tour privately and charter the whole barge. This can be done on any dates, subject to availability and existing bookings on the boat. Please contact us first to check availability and prices.

Please contact our knowledgeable sales staff for more help on creating the right tour for you.

HEALTH:

For up to the minute health information & vaccination requirements for Thailand we recommend that you contact your GP or a travel clinic (1st Contact have a travel clinic with free advice tel. 0800 0393073).

General vaccination recommendations for Thailand include Tetanus, Diphtheria, Hepatitis A, Polio and Typhoid.

VISAS:

British, European, and many other nationalities do not require a visa for travel to Thailand for stays of 30 days or less. If you are staying longer then visas are required. For further information on your visa requirements, please contact us or check out the visa pages on our website.

RESPONSIBLE TOURISM:

We take responsible travel seriously, and as well as taking this into consideration when we design our itineraries, and select the people and agents we work with, we also donate £2 for every person travelling on of our Thailand tours. One of the organisations we support is the Border Green Energy Team (BGET), who provide hands-on appropriate technology training and financial support to village innovators in ethnic minority areas on both sides of the Thai/Burma border. More examples of how we spend your money and full details of our responsible travel policy are given on our website.

PRE-DEPARTURE INFORMATION:

After booking, we will provide you with detailed information to help you prepare for the tour. This will include helpful advice on money, health, insurance, tipping, climate, clothing etc.

Further information is also available in the County & Travel guides on our website.

FACEBOOK & TWITTER:

Uncover the World recently joined the Facebook community; it would be great if you joined us and shared some of your travel photos and stories. It's also a great way to stay in touch with your fellow travellers, share photos, and also keep updated with special offers and news about new tours and destinations from us - click on www.facebook.com/UncoverTheWorld and 'Like' us.

You can also follow us on Twitter - www.twitter.com/utworld

We are fully bonded for your complete financial protection.



'Thailand Uncovered' is a trading name of Uncover the World Ltd.

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