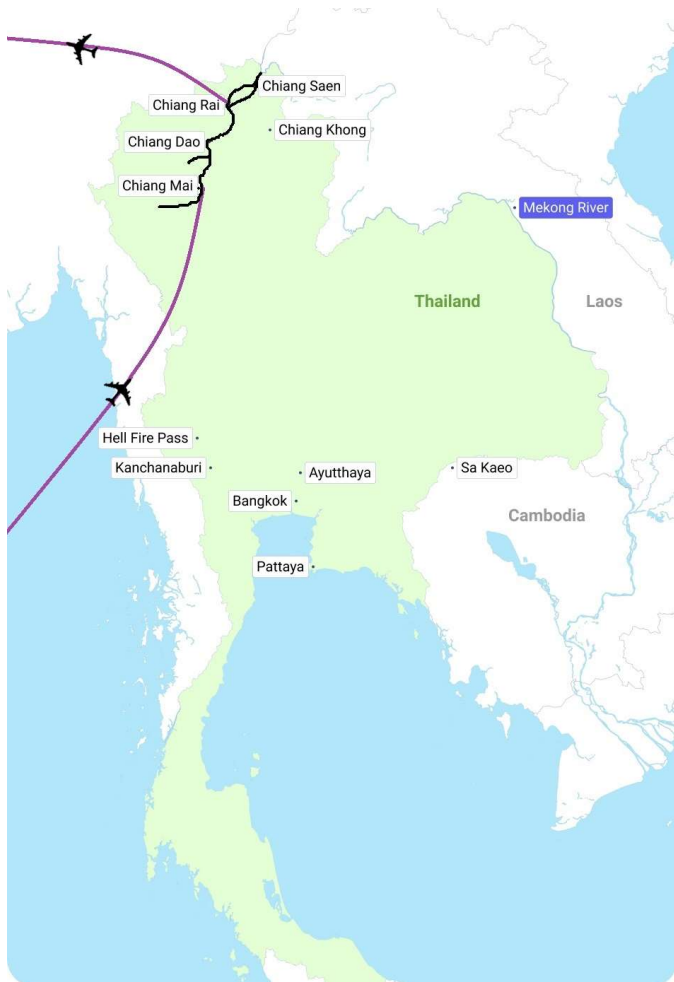


Discover Northern Thailand (8 days)

Thailand



This 8-day tour showcases the best of Northern Thailand, promising to captivate even the most seasoned traveller. Designed for those with a passion for rich cultures, this journey offers a deeper understanding of Thailand—past and present, rural and urban. The itinerary is packed with action, adventure, and cultural immersion, taking you to remote villages and lesser-known regions of the country.

The tour begins in Chiang Mai, followed by visits to the Mae Taeng Valley and Chiang Dao, areas known for their traditional villages and ethnic minority communities. Continuing north, we explore the vibrant town of Chiang Rai before concluding at the Golden Triangle, once a pivotal hub in the global opium trade and a meeting point of three countries.

Highlights of this unforgettable journey include tuk-tuk rides to ancient ruins, white-water rafting, a hands-on Thai cooking class, and an exhilarating zipline adventure through treetop

canopies. We'll take a speedboat ride across Mae Ngat Lake, enjoy kayaking, and visit Akha and Palong tribal villages to gain insight into life in the mountainous regions. The tour concludes with visits to the stunning White Temple and the Golden Triangle's impressive Opium Museum, offering a perfect blend of cultural discovery and adventure.

Day 1

Arrive Chiang Mai (Thailand)



Upon our arrival in Chiang Mai this morning, we are warmly welcomed by our tour leader, who escorts us to our hotel. Along the way, we receive a detailed briefing on the itinerary and essential tips for travelling in Thailand.

Our first introduction to Chiang Mai reveals a city that, despite its size, retains a charming rural atmosphere—more akin to a sleepy country town than a bustling urban centre. Travelling by tuk-tuk, we explore some of Chiang Mai's most significant landmarks, including the 700-year-old brick moat and Wat Chedi Luang, home to an ancient reclining Buddha and a

working monastery. Here, we gain insight into the central role of Buddhism in Thai culture and daily life. (meals: lunch, dinner)

Day 2

Chiang Mai (Doi Su Thep lookout, eco-village & cooking class)



This morning, we visit Chiang Mai's iconic Doi Suthep Temple, perched on a hill overlooking the city. Here, we delve into the temple's rich history and local traditions, including the custom of ringing bells for good luck. After exploring the site, we descend the striking double dragon staircase.

Lunch is at an orchid farm, where we dine amidst vibrant flowers and fluttering butterflies.

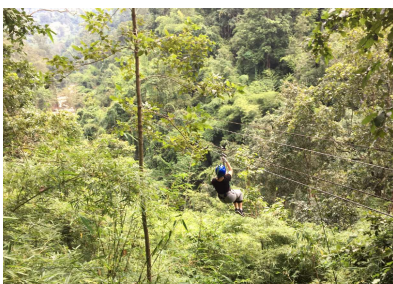
In the afternoon, we visit a scenic valley that is home to various ethnic minority groups, including the Long Neck Karen hill tribe. Originally from Myanmar, the Long Neck Karen, also known as the Kayan, are renowned for their unique cultural practices. This eco-village offers a fascinating

glimpse into the region's ethnic diversity, showcasing traditional costumes, jewellery, and farming techniques from ten different minority groups.

Later, we participate in a hands-on cooking class at a local farm, discovering the secrets of Thai cuisine. Known for its bold blend of spicy, sour, sweet, and salty flavours, Thai food is both complex and delicious. Guided by a skilled local chef, we begin with a tour of the farm's gardens to learn about the fresh produce, herbs, and spices essential to Thai cooking. Working in pairs, we prepare a variety of traditional dishes, which we then enjoy for dinner. (meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner)

Day 3

Chiang Mai – Mae Taeng (rafting, zipline & Muay Thai boxing)



We head north to the Mae Taeng Valley for an exciting day of adventure. Our first activity is white-water rafting, the perfect way to take in the beauty of the Thai rainforest and surrounding mountains. Guided by expert river guides, we navigate a series of grade 2 and 3 rapids along the Mae Taeng River in inflatable rafts. Along the way, we may spot elephants grazing peacefully by the water's edge, adding a magical touch to the experience.

After our rafting adventure, we ascend into the treetops for a zipline experience across the Mae Taeng River. This activity features a series of zig-zagging ziplines, suspended pathways, and rope slides, offering breathtaking views as we traverse the canopy and tackle various tree-height obstacles.

Returning to Chiang Mai, the evening offers optional activities, including attending a Muay Thai boxing match (as a spectator) or enjoying a traditional dance show. There's also time to explore the lively Night Bazaar, perfect for browsing local crafts and soaking up the vibrant atmosphere. (meals: breakfast, lunch)

Day 4

Chiang Mai – Mae Ngat Lake (Sri Lanna National Park) – Chiang Dao



We check out of our hotel and set off for Sri Lanna National Park and Mae Ngat Lake. This man-made lake, known for its pristine waters, plays a vital role as a key water source for the Chiang Mai province. Boarding a speedboat, we cruise halfway across the lake to a floating recreational area. Here, we spend a relaxing afternoon swimming, kayaking, and enjoying the amenities of a comfortable lakeside restaurant. The serene surroundings showcase the natural beauty of the region and the warm hospitality of the local communities living along the lake's edge.

Afterwards, we return to the mainland by longboat and continue our journey to Chiang Dao, which translates to "City of Stars." In the evening, we explore the local market, where street vendors offer a variety of tempting snacks, including coconut milk and corn fritters.

Note: The Mae Ngat floating recreational area is well-equipped with changing rooms, showers, kayaks with lifejackets, and a small restaurant serving delicious local dishes. (meals: breakfast, dinner)

Days 5 & 6

Chiang Dao (ethnic minority village & rural excursion) – Chiang Rai



Chiang Dao boasts stunning natural attractions, from rugged mountains to intricate cave systems and diverse ethnic minority communities scattered across the district. Our first stop is Chiang Dao Cave, a well-lit cavern adorned with Buddhist statues, nestled among rural farming villages. From there, we hop into long-tailed trucks and journey along bumpy mountain roads to the starting point of a light trek. We visit villages belonging to the Akha, Lisu, or Palong tribes, where our expert local guide shares insights into their unique traditions, farming practices, cultural identity, and sustainability challenges. In the evening, our village hosts

treat us to a traditional dinner before we return to our hotel.

On day six, we continue exploring more villages and enjoy a leisurely bamboo raft ride along a calm river. We then visit Buatong Waterfall, where we can swim and relax in a picturesque setting. In the mid-afternoon, we embark on a three-hour drive to Chiang Rai, traversing mountain passes. Once infamous as a hub of the global opium trade, Chiang Rai's fertile hinterland was a key region for opium cultivation, linking Thailand with Myanmar and Laos.

This evening, we dine near another bustling Night Market, often frequented by Akha women selling their handcrafted goods. (meals: breakfast, lunch)

Optional Community Project: Extend your stay in Chiang Dao by 2 or 3 days to participate in a meaningful community project. Activities may include renovating a local school, constructing a water reservoir and piping system, or building a brick home for a family in need. Fundraising is typically required to cover material costs. Accommodation is available in a local homestay, with capacity for up to 30 people. Please contact us for further details.

Day 7

Chiang Rai – Golden Triangle



This morning, we visit the renowned White Temple, an architectural masterpiece that blends artistic innovation with Buddhist devotion. As we explore its intricate design, our tour leader provides insight into the temple's symbolism and the passion behind its creation.

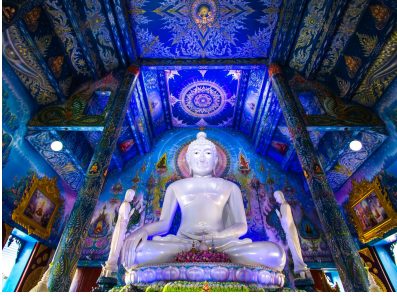
Next, we head to Thailand's famed "Golden Triangle" border region, once the world's largest opium-producing area. From a hilltop vantage point, we take in panoramic views of the meeting point between Thailand, Myanmar, and Laos.

A key highlight of this visit is the Opium Museum, an impressive facility funded by the Royal Project. Through engaging displays and multimedia storytelling, the museum chronicles

the history of opium, the devastating impact of narcotics, and the efforts led by the Thai government and the King's mother to eliminate this destructive trade. We return to Chiang Rai in the late afternoon. (meals: breakfast, lunch)

Day 8

Depart Chiang Rai



We visit the intriguing Black House Museum, a collection of around 40 unique buildings. More akin to an evolving art studio, this unconventional museum features an eclectic mix of artwork, ancient relics, quirky furniture, and striking statues.

Depending on time, we may also visit other notable sites such as the Blue Temple, the Hill Tribe Museum, Khun Korn Waterfalls, or Mae Fah Luang Cultural Park. For the remainder of the morning, you are free to explore independently, with the assistance of our tour leader if needed.

Later, our tour leader and local guide accompany us to Chiang Rai airport for our departing flight. (meals: breakfast)

Summary

Grading

Moderate; To get the most out of this trip, you need to be in good health. However, anyone with a good level of fitness will be able to take part. Some outdoor activities include physical exertion, and there may be long periods of exposure to the elements. You will be expected to walk every day and carry your luggage for short distances. The itinerary may include bike riding, climbing steps and trekking. If your itinerary includes community service work of any description, you will be expected to work diligently during this component. Conditions here may be basic with simple accommodation and bathroom facilities. Suitable packing lists will be provided to match the content of the itinerary.

Accommodation

Private tours/family tours: Accommodation is based on a double/twin share arrangement. If you are travelling alone, you will be paired up with someone of the same gender. If you choose not to share or are the odd numbered person on tour, a single supplement is payable. For children under 12 years of age, it may be possible for one child to share with parents (depending on hotel regulations and availability of extra beds/rollaway beds)

Transport

Depending on the tour, modes of transport may include modern air-conditioned private coach and boat.

Your Tour Leader

A tour leader accompanies all group tours. Your tour leader is the person who most influences the success of your trip. They have been meticulously trained and are very experienced in running tours. Every tour leader is locally employed, therefore they are the best person to showcase their country and culture. Their expertise and knowledge creates an insightful and authentic experience of the region. They are with you throughout your trip from breakfast time until the group returns to the hotel in the evening. They are contactable 24/7.

For more information on the role of the tour leader, local guides and accompanying teachers, please refer to our website.

Group Size

Private tours/family tours: Minimum group size is 12. There are no maximum participant numbers on any tour.

Trip Cost and Details

Cost per traveller from A\$ 1,450

Based on a minimum of: 12 travellers

**Smaller or larger group sizes priced on application*

Inclusions

- All accommodation, transport, activities, entrance costs and other programs as described in the itinerary
- Professional Edventure Travel tour leader throughout the trip & additional specialist guides
- Meals (and drinking water) as listed in the itinerary
- 24-hour **IN COUNTRY** support
- Pre-departure support, briefings and planning
- Tips for tour leaders, local guides & drivers

Exclusions

- International flights to/from Thailand
- Travel Visa costs (if required)
- Spending money
- Travel insurance
- Pre/post accommodation

Contact details

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