

THAILAND HIGHLIGHTS

SOLOS ONLY 45 Years and Over



12 DAYS / 11 NIGHTS

Thailand is an exotic landscape rich in culture and history. It offers a plethora of options for the curious traveller; lush, thick jungles of the north, the crystal clear, warm waters of the coast, the famously delicious Thai cuisine and of course the inviting hospitality of the local people. The earliest recorded Thai Kingdom dates back to the 13th century, and on this tour, escorted by a national guide, you will discover the country's remarkable heritage.

Starting in Bangkok, you will uncover the highlights; from bustling river markets to spectacular palaces. Next, there's a unique overnight stay at a jungle raft hotel. After, we start to make our way north with our first stop at the world heritage site, Ayutthaya and then, a stay in Sukhothai, an ancient kingdom of Thailand, and the first capital of Siam.

We make our way to Chiang Mai, to discover the rich culture of the northern part of Thailand in this bustling city. As our northern discovery comes to an end, we fast track our travel to the beach with a flight from Chiang Mai to Phuket, for a beautiful and relaxing two night resort stay

SIGHTSEEING HIGHLIGHTS

- Visit the famous floating markets of Damnoen Saduak
- Bangkok sightseeing tour of the important cultural and historical sites
- Visit the Hellfire Pass Memorial Museum
- Stay overnight on a river raft (lodge)
- Visit to Sukhothai Historical Park including a bicycle ride to take in the ruins.
- Experience Chiang Mai's lively night market
- Visit the Elephant Nature Park, Chiang Mai's elephant rescue and rehabilitation centre
- Relax in Phuket for two nights, at a beautiful beach resort

TRIP PAGE - 3 OUT OF 5

This is a moderately paced, small group tour. There are some full days of touring, while other days are more relaxed with time at leisure. The resort stay of two nights at the end of the tour offers a relaxed experience after your discovery of Thailand's highlights.

FELLOW TRAVELLERS

You will enjoy this small group experience with a maximum group size of 16 travellers. This tour is exclusively for single-solo travellers.



TOUR INCLUSIONS

- 11 breakfasts
- 1 lunch
- 5 dinners including two highlight dinners
- All sightseeing tours as specified by the itinerary
- English speaking national guide, days 1-12
- One way economy airfare Chiang Mai to Phuket
- Private air-conditioned coach transport
- Admission fees to places visited
- Gratuities for your national guide & driver
- Gratuities for wait staff for included meals
- Maximum group size 16 travellers
- Arrival transfer; airport to hotel, day 1 #
- Departure transfer, hotel to airport, final day #

included when you book airfare with us, meets all flights on day 1 and final day of tour.

Travel insurance is a mandatory requirement for joining this tour and is in addition to the package price.

note: airport transfers are by your own arrangement

Travel insurance is a mandatory requirement for joining this tour and is an additional expense.

- Airfares if booking a tour only package
- Airport Transfers if booking a tour only package
- Travel insurance
- Excess baggage & visa fees
- Any tips or portorage at airports, hotels, drivers & local staff
- Meals and beverages not specified on itinerary
- Items of a personal nature

IS THIS TRIP RIGHT FOR YOU?

You want to get it right, and find a trip that matches your travel style. These pointers will help you decide if this trip is right for you.

- This is a small group experience with a maximum of 18 solo travellers.
- Catering for travellers who are 45 years and over.
- Most of the hotels are superior standard, 4 or 4.5 star
- Spend 1 night on a river raft, with no electricity, but rather utilizes traditional kerosene lamps at night maintaining a true eco hideaway in nature.
- The visit to Sukhothai Heritage Park includes a leisurely bicycle as it offers one of the better ways to see the park.
- You support 'not riding elephants for tourist entertainment' and will not participate in riding an elephant.
- Weather in Thailand can be hot and sticky, it's best to dress in light clothing.
- You enjoy learning new things such as the history and culture of another country.
- You enjoy the benefits of travelling as a small group, including dining together and sharing the journey.

TOP 5 REASONS TO JOIN

1. Age-matched holiday groups
2. Travel with like-minded solo travellers
3. Small groups
4. Early bird savings with many tours
5. Roommate matching option

ABOUT US

At *Encounter Travel* we offer holiday groups for solo travellers. All trips are age-matched so there's more chance you'll share your journey with like minded travellers.

Visiting destinations across Australia and around the globe, choose from short escapes to adventure trips and leisurely touring.

CONTACT US

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THAILAND HIGHLIGHTS SOLOS ONLY

Our website has full trip details and content in this flyer is only a part of the information. For full details please refer to our website.

TRAVEL DATES:

30 DEC 2019 - 10 JAN 2020
ex Bangkok

TOUR PRICE:

30DEC19 \$4949 with your own room

SHARE & SAVE:

Ask us about our share and save option with our roommate matching option.

ITINERARY

DAY 1 Arrive Bangkok

Arrive to Bangkok. You will be met at the airport by our representative and provided a transfer to our group hotel*. While enjoying your stay in Bangkok, you can indulge in some world-class shopping at the famous Siam Paragon shopping mall, savour the sights and smells of Bangkok's street markets, or perhaps simply take advantage of the hotel's swimming pool, gym and spa.

Meals: N/A

* Transfers provided on day 1 of tour for all flights, given you book your flights with us as part of your package.

DAY 2 Bangkok

After breakfast at the hotel, we head to Bangkok's famous floating markets at Damnoen Saduak including a short longtail boat ride. Here, hundreds of longtail boat owners gather to sell a vast array of produce, from tropical fruits and vegetables, to steaming plates of ready-to-eat food prepared in mini kitchens on the boats themselves. Enjoy the rest of the day at your own leisure, perhaps purchasing some of the local food sold at the floating markets for lunch. In the evening we visit Asiatique The Riverfront,



Bangkok's first large-scale riverside community mall combining shopping, dining, sightseeing, activities and events under one roof. There will be time for shopping and our group welcome dinner will be here.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 3 Bangkok

Dine on a hearty buffet breakfast at the hotel before meeting your tour guide and setting out for a day of sightseeing in Bangkok. Among other things, you'll see the Grand Palace, the Emerald Buddha Temple and the klongs (canals) of Bangkok. The klongs are major arteries for a colourful, often-bewildering variety of huge barges, express passenger

boats, cross-river ferries, and thundering "longtails". We will then enter one of the smaller side canals to enjoy an intimate view of Thai riverine life.

Lunch is at your leisure before re-joining the group to take in some more of Bangkok's fascinating sights.

Royal Grand Palace & Wat Pra Kaew

Wat Pra Kaew, home to the centuries-old, gold-clad figurine, "The Emerald Buddha" and the wonderfully impressive Royal Grand Palace, more stunning in real life than photography can convey. The Emerald Buddha is so sacred that only the Thai King may touch it.

We finish the day with a relaxed dinner at a local restaurant.



THAILAND HIGHLIGHTS SOLOS ONLY

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 4 Bangkok - Kanchanaburi

After breakfast we depart from the hotel in Bangkok and head up in to the scenic, riverside town of Kanchanaburi. Located in the west of Thailand, Kanchanaburi has a slightly cooler climate than Bangkok owing to its location on the edge of a mountain range. Famed for its stunning waterways, Kanchanaburi boasts countless waterfalls, caves and lakes. The largest and most renowned of these being the River Kwai, an increasingly popular tourist destination and the site of our unique 'raft' hotel for the evening.

During the day we will tour the fascinating historical sites that Kanchanaburi has to offer, including the Bridge on the River Kwai, the War Cemetery and Hellfire Pass. The remote "Hellfire Pass" the deepest cutting on the unfinished Death Railway line was built by Australian, British, Dutch and other allied prisoners during the Second World War. There is a cruel history to the conditions the prisoners of war endured at the hands of the Japanese. As you walk through the pass, it is hard to imagine the horrors that took place in this tranquil forest just a few decades ago. There are harrowing exhibits in the Hellfire Pass Memorial Museum, located on the site.

You have the remainder of the afternoon to explore Kanchanaburi, have lunch and relax in your jungle raft lodging. Dinner will be served atop the floating, open-air deck of the hotel restaurant where you can take in the uninterrupted, lush jungle surrounds as you dine.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 5 Kanchanaburi - Ayutthaya

Enjoy breakfast at the hotel before we say farewell to Kanchanaburi and head to Ayutthaya, a world heritage site. You will visit the Royal Palace at Bang Pa-In, the summer palace for the King and Queen of Thailand. There will also be time to visit a local market in Ayutthaya.

Meals: Breakfast

DAY 6 Ayutthaya - Sukhothai

Have breakfast at the hotel before we visit the World Heritage listed ruins of

Ayutthaya. Impressively jam-packed with ancient relics and ruins, Ayutthaya is a must-see for history buffs visiting Thailand. Founded in 1350 by King U Thong, there are countless temples and museums where visitors can get an insight into ancient Siam. Spend the afternoon travelling onto to Sukhothai. This evening, you will travel by bicycle visiting the ruins of Sukhothai which are located in the highly regarded Sukhothai Historical Park. Within these protected grounds lie 193 ruins on 70 square kilometres of land.

Meals: Breakfast

DAY 7 Sukhothai - Chiang Mai

After breakfast, the next stop, Chiang Mai, is the largest city in Thailand, and although culturally significant, boasts an increasingly modern city. Founded in 1296, Chiang Mai is now the unofficial capital of northern Thailand. Many Thai festivals are held in Chiang Mai, such as Loi Krathong, Songkran and Chiang Mai Flower Festival, and celebrations so large and impressive that people living all over Thailand turn on their TVs to watch the spectacles unfold.

We arrive in Chiang Mai in the afternoon. For dinner you're in for a real treat, as we will be dining at a traditional Khantoke restaurant. This northern-style dinner is followed by folk dances and a hill tribe show.

Meals: Breakfast, Highlight Dinner

DAY 8 Chiang Mai

Today we will visit Baan Tawai Handicraft Village, that boasts being the largest handicraft market in Thailand.

A wide range of handicrafts and artisanal creations are offered here. They are not only teak carpentry but also bamboo and rattan furniture as well as ceramics, silk, hemp, silver, cotton, plastic and glass. They are made from rough country style to meticulously crafted objets d'art, and from antiques to modern designer products.

Enjoy lunch and explore the town for the afternoon and evening at your own leisure. Perhaps check out the historical sites, shopping and Thai massage parlours that Chiang Mai has to offer.

Meals: Breakfast

DAY 9 Chiang Mai

Enjoy a full day visit to Elephant Nature Park; a natural home and sanctuary for elephants, buffalos, dogs, cats, birds and many other rescued animals.

Your visit starts with a picturesque drive through rural countryside to Elephant Nature Park. You will hear the personal stories of rescued and orphaned elephants. See how they became a proud herd and free from abuse for the first time in their lives.

Many find their visit to Elephant Nature Park rewarding and very relaxing. Observe free roaming elephants (no riding), and other rescued animals enjoying the natural surroundings of our sanctuary.

Your visit helps support regional projects and offers an invaluable opportunity of helping elephant conservation.

After an action-packed day at the Elephant Nature Park, we take you back to the hotel to enjoy your evening at leisure.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 10 Chiang Mai - Phuket

Have breakfast at the hotel before transferring to the airport for your flight to Phuket. Fly from Chiang Mai to Phuket for two nights at a beautiful resort to relax and enjoy some beach time, and get to know Phuket.

Tonight enjoy dinner at a local restaurant.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 11 Phuket

Take advantage of the hotel's buffet breakfast. before we begin the day by exploring Phuket.

Visit Phuket town and see the Sino-Portuguese architecture. Visit Khao Rang, a small hill near Phuket town, to see a beautiful panoramic view of the town and nearly the whole island. Visit an old Buddhist temple, Wat Chalong, where images of the two most venerated monks are enshrined. See Patong Beach, Kata Beach and Karon Beach. Enjoy a visit to

THAILAND HIGHLIGHTS SOLOS ONLY

Phomthep cape which is well known for its most beautiful panoramic views.

Afternoon at leisure.

Meals: Breakfast

DAY 12 Phuket

Have breakfast at the hotel and then enjoy your final hours in Thailand before transferring to Phuket airport to catch your departing flight home.*

This is the end of the tour so for now we say goodbye, but we hope to see you again on another Encounter in the future!

Meals: Breakfast

* Transfers provided for all flights on the final day of the tour, given you book your flights with us as part of your package.

Itineraries may be subject to change, due to circumstances outside of our control. If there is any itinerary change prior to departure of significance we aim to inform you prior to travel. Itinerary changes while on tour will be informed by your tour leader/guide while on tour.

ABOUT THE MEALS

It's regular that our trips include welcome dinners and farewell dinners for our groups. In addition, we include other group dining experiences to ensure that everyone can enjoy the benefit of travelling and dining as a group. There's nothing better than to share a meal with new friends and discuss the day's adventures.

The Local Cuisine

The lunch and dinner meals included with the itinerary are Thai cuisine.

Thai cooking is influenced by many flavours and spices and often has a spicy edge to the dish. However, not all dishes contain chilli. If you are not a fan of chilli you should always check with your waiter or restaurant server if dishes include chilli, as some chillis are very hot and may not be easily detected by just looking at the dish.

The breakfasts will offer a variety including Asian style breakfast options and some western options.

We advise travellers against street food and that you only dine at places that are recommended by your guide or tour leader. By following best advice it's far less likely that you will become unwell with any stomach complaints.

About the Water in Thailand

Due to poor quality of drinking water in Thailand we advise travellers to drink bottled water and only bottled water from reliable sources. Also, use bottled water for brushing teeth.

DISCLAIMER

Any content in this publication maybe subject to change or correction, and without notice. We have taken great care to prepare and publish the trip information and in good faith we believe it to be accurate at the time we published the information. However, as is the nature of travel, plans may need to change from time to time and often unexpectedly. If trip details need to change, in most cases your final documentation issued prior to your departure will be updated. However, it's also possible that an itinerary change may be necessary while on the trip. It could be related to unexpected weather or road conditions or another example could be an announcement of a closure of a facility we planned to use. In these cases, we will make all best endeavours to provide an alternative, of equivalent or similar standard. Information in this publication is in part, and for full trip details please refer to our website.

Full terms and conditions are available on our website and provided when a quote is issued.