



Thailand & Laos: Exploring Culture, Elephants, and Beaches

DURATION | 10 Days

TRIP LEVEL | Active

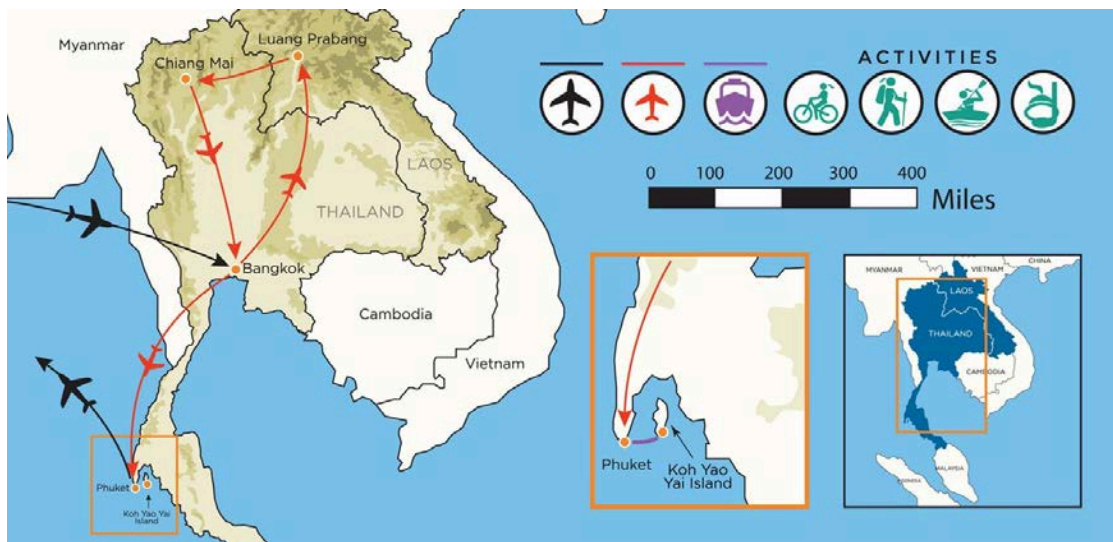
Trip Overview

Begin your enchanting journey in Bangkok, Thailand, where you'll uncover the city's wonders by cruising to the radiant Wat Arun and exploring communities along the river. Then, travel to Laos to delve into historic Luang Prabang by tuk-tuk, visit the stunning Kuang Si Falls, and partake in a traditional Baci ceremony. Return to Thailand to visit temples, shop for traditional crafts, and experience the heartwarming Elephant Nature Park in Chiang Mai. Savor a traditional Lanna dinner, connect with textile expert Patricia, and immerse yourself in a hands-on dyeing class. Wander through the vibrant White Market, hike to Wat Phu Lat, and engage with Chiang Mai's artist community. Finally, escape to Phuket for snorkeling and kayaking, and join a Krathong Ceremony to reflect on this extraordinary adventure with your fellow travelers.

Trip Highlights

- Explore Thailand and Laos by kayak, long-tail boat, and tuk-tuk, visiting remote islands in the Andaman Sea near Phuket, Thailand, and experiencing the city of Luang Prabang, Laos.
- Meet local Laotian artisans and entrepreneurs at the Traditional Arts and Ethnology Center, and participate in spiritual ceremonies in Luang Prabang.
- Spend the day caring for elephants at the Elephant Nature Park in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

Map View



Trip Itinerary



Day 1

Discover Bangkok's Cultural Treasures

Welcome to colorful, exotic, and endlessly fascinating Thailand! Your adventure begins in Bangkok, a city rich in cultural delights and traditions. Meet your AdventureWomen group and take the sky train and a local ferry across the Chao Phraya River to the stunning Wat Arun, the Temple of Dawn, adorned with colored glass and Chinese porcelain. Enjoy a breathtaking sunset at the temple before returning to the hotel. Cap off the evening with a welcome drink and dinner, where you'll have the chance to connect with your fellow travelers and share your excitement for exploring the diverse regions and unique traditions of Thailand and Laos.

Meals: dinner | Overnight: Pranakorn Heritage Hotel



Pranakorn Heritage Hotel

Welcome to this new hotel, where luxury meets modernity in the heart of bustling Bangkok! The inviting outdoor pool area serves as an oasis, providing a tranquil retreat where you can unwind and soak up the tropical ambiance. Conveniently located near the renowned Khaosan Road, Pranakorn Heritage Hotel places the guests at the epicenter of Bangkok's cultural and entertainment offerings. Numerous restaurants are within walking distance.

Amenities: complimentary toiletries, hair dryer, tea/coffee, mini fridge, air conditioning, free Wi-Fi.



Trip Itinerary



Day 2

The Rich Heritage of Luang Prabang

Board a flight to Luang Prabang, bidding farewell to your Thai guide until you reunite in Chiang Mai. Enjoy lunch at Bourang Restaurant in Luang Prabang before embarking on a tuk-tuk ride to explore the city. Witness the Royal Palace, housing the revered “Prabang” sacred golden statue, from which the town takes its name. Explore Vat Mai, a former royal temple, and visit the Heuan Chan Heritage House to gain insight into Lao traditional architecture and culture, showcasing how families lived in long houses until around 1960. Conclude your exploration with a visit to Vat Xieng Thong, Laos’ most iconic temple, adorned with golden paint and mosaic glass embedded with mirrors. Cap off the day with a group dinner in the evening.

Meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner | Overnight: Maydou



Maydou

Villa Maydou is at the heart of the historic center of Luang Prabang, the former royal capital of Laos, which is a UNESCO World Heritage site. It sits near the Pagoda “Wat Meuna” and near the Nam Khan river old bridge. The hotel is composed of five beautifully appointed and comfortable Lao traditional houses within a large tropical garden which includes a salt pool. Two of the houses are registered in the UNESCO World Heritage Program after having been restored under the authority of “La Maison du Patrimoine,” the UNESCO program responsible for the preservation of the traditional architecture of Luang Prabang.

Amenities: complimentary toiletries, hair dryer, Wi-Fi

Trip Itinerary



Day 3

Kuang Si Falls and a Traditional Baci Ceremony

Immerse yourself in a hands-on culinary adventure, crafting your own lunch featuring traditional Laotian cuisine. Afterwards, we'll drive to Kuang Si Falls, one of Southeast Asia's most picturesque waterfalls, with a stop in a rural village along the way. Participate in a Baci ceremony, a traditional ritual where the Lao people recall the protective souls, or khuan, back to the body to strengthen bonds and bring peace, good luck, and prosperity. At a local home, tie cotton bracelets on each other's wrists to symbolically bind the souls back to the body. Savor dinner at your leisure this evening, exploring the local night market for additional culinary delights.

Meals: breakfast, lunch | Overnight: Maydou



Trip Itinerary



Day 4

From Dawn Rituals to Chiang Mai's Cultural Delights

Embark on an early morning journey exploring Luang Prabang on foot and witnessing the awe-inspiring sight of hundreds of orange-clad, barefoot monks gathering alms in a timeless daily ceremony. Continue by tuk-tuk to the local market, gaining insights into how locals procure their fresh food. Meet a founder of the Traditional Arts and Ethnology Center to learn about ethnic crafts and the challenges faced by women in Laos today. Fly from Luang Prabang to Chiang Mai, where you'll be greeted by your Bangkok guide and savor a late lunch of Cao Soi, a rich and nutty curry. Stroll through the village near your hotel, visit the Ganesh shrine, explore boutiques in Kalm Village, and see the Chedi Luang temple. Relax at the hotel before enjoying dinner at a nearby restaurant.

Meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner | Overnight: Aksara Heritage Hotel



Aksara Heritage Hotel

Located in the heart of historical Chiang Mai, the Aksara Heritage Hotel is a charming and peaceful property surrounded by ancient temples. Take a dip in the saltwater pool or enjoy a drink from the poolside bar.

Amenities: complimentary toiletries, Bathrobes, hair dryer, minibar, coffee / tea maker, bottled water, flatscreen TV, cable / satellite TV, Wi-Fi, air conditioning



Trip Itinerary



Day 5

Experience the Elephant Nature Park

Dedicate an entire day to the Elephant Nature Park, located about an hour's drive from Chiang Mai. Engage in various activities such as preparing food, observing, and learning about Asian elephants, and spend the afternoon forming connections with these gentle giants. Enjoy a simple lunch at the park, and in the evening, savor a traditional dinner featuring family-style Lanna, or northern Thai dishes, such as roasted green chili dip, fresh vegetables, and thicker nutty curries.

Meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner | Overnight: Aksara Heritage Hotel



Trip Itinerary



Day 6

Traditional Dyeing and Chiang Mai's Vibrant White Market

Immerse yourself in a three-hour traditional dyeing workshop at Studio Naenna, founded in 1988 by Patricia Cheesman, a distinguished textile expert. With decades dedicated to refining textile art in Laos and northern Thailand, Patricia's expertise spans pre-curing natural dyes and mastering traditional weaving techniques of various ethnic groups. In this workshop, craft your own indigo tie-dye piece, a cherished tradition in northern Thailand. After a short 20-minute drive, explore the White Market at Neiman One, a vibrant community offering culinary delights, cultural experiences, and diverse shopping options showcasing the talents of Chiang Mai's local designers. Conclude your day with a farm-to-table dinner at Ginger Farm, nestled in the heart of the White Market, surrounded by its unique and lively atmosphere.

Meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner | Overnight: Aksara Heritage Hotel



Trip Itinerary



Day 7

Hike Through Doi Suthep National Park

Embark on a leisurely hike through Doi Suthep National Park, aptly named the “mountain of the open heart,” leading to the jungle wat of Phu Lat. This hour-and-a-half hike, with minimal elevation gain, meanders along a stream through gardens adorned with statues, flowers, and jungle elements. Closed-toed shoes are recommended for this exploration. Next, discover Chiang Mai’s emerging artist community, where you can explore a unique collection of shops featuring diverse artisans including metal craftsmen, painters, ceramic artists, weavers, and gelato creators — all within the same creative hub. Enjoy lunch and an afternoon at your leisure, perhaps indulging in a hotel massage or visiting the Hmong market for traditional attire materials. For dinner, choose your preferred dining option, and if interested, consider visiting the renowned Saturday Market at the South Gate of the Moat for its famous silver jewelry, with transportation assistance available from our guide.

Meals: breakfast, lunch | Overnight: Aksara Heritage Hotel



Trip Itinerary



Day 8

Flight to Phuket and Island Snorkeling

Rise early for your flight to Phuket, with a stop in Bangkok en route. Upon arrival, drive to the pier and take in the stunning turquoise ocean views — make sure your bathing suit is ready! Board a longtail boat and spend the afternoon snorkeling at the off-the-beaten-path Lao Lading and Phakbia islands. Return to the hotel for a brief rest before heading out to a local restaurant for a group dinner.

Meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner | Overnight: Thavorn Beach Village Resort



Thavorn Beach Village Resort

Overlooking the Andaman Sea, the Thavorn Beach Village Resort offers private beach bungalows nestled amidst lush tropical greenery.

Amenities: complimentary toiletries, hair dryer, minibar, coffee / tea maker, electric kettle, bottled water, safe, flatscreen TV, cable / satellite TV, Wi-Fi, air conditioning

Trip Itinerary



Day 9

Snorkeling, Kayaking, and a Farewell Krathong Ceremony

Embark on a one-hour longtail boat ride to Hong Island, where you'll snorkel along the coast before kayaking to explore Koh Bon. Enjoy a picnic lunch on the beach, and then set out on the longtail boat for your return to the hotel. Conclude your adventure with a farewell dinner alongside your new AdventureWomen friends, featuring a Krathong ceremony where you'll float a leaf basket with a candle and prayers. Reminisce over the unforgettable memories and celebrate the end of a truly spectacular journey through this incredible country.

Meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner | Overnight: Thavorn Beach Village Resort



Trip Itinerary



Day 10

Farewell Phuket

Say goodbye to your new AdventureWomen friends as you transfer to the airport after breakfast. Please schedule your departure from Phuket, Thailand (HKT) for any time after 12:00 PM. A group transfer to the airport will be provided at 9:00 AM. If your flight is very late and you would like to book a day room in Phuket town, let us know, and we can assist with those arrangements.



What's Included

What's Included

- Accommodations as per itinerary based on double occupancy
- All meals as listed in the itinerary
- All ground transportation
- One group transfer on arrival and departure
- Guided sightseeing and activities as indicated in the itinerary
- English-speaking guide(s) throughout the trip
- Gratuities for drivers, hotel staff, boat staff, and waitstaff

Not Included

- International airfare to and from Thailand
- Optional activities
- Meals not specified in the itinerary
- Alcoholic beverages and soft drinks (unless otherwise indicated in the itinerary)
- Fees for passport, visas, immunizations, or travel insurance
- Cost of hospitalization or evacuation
- Items of a personal nature
- Gratuities for guides

Please note: AdventureWomen will attempt to adhere to the itinerary as much as possible. However, certain conditions (political, climatic, environmental, and cultural) may necessitate changes in the itinerary. AdventureWomen reserves the right to alter any itinerary at any time if necessary. We will attempt to notify participants of changes as far in advance as possible. Costs incurred by such changes will be the responsibility of the participants.

