

Taste of Thailand



Discover the sights and sounds of Thailand on this delectable tour with Tell Tale Travel, the specialists in authentic holidays. Perfect if you only want to take a week rather than a whole fortnight. You'll take in Bangkok, the rural Central Plains not usually visited by tourists as well as Chiang Mai in the north of Thailand. And best of all, you'll even return with some new skills as you'll have a cooking lesson in each area, learning from the real experts in Thai cooking. Don't worry if you think your cooking skills aren't up to par, you'll be well catered for! Highlights will include boat trips along the river, picking your own at an organic farm and simply relaxing with a Thai massage by the pool.



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Day 1 – Saturday

An overnight flight from London Heathrow with Eva Air or Thai Airways. *It is possible to start this tour on another day of the week (depending on our other bookings) and it also possible to join the tour in Bangkok.*

Day 2 - Sunday

Welcome to Bangkok! One of our drivers will meet you at the airport and drive you to a boutique inn, a converted colonial-style mansion which is centrally located. Settle in and have a dip in the small pool. You will have the evening free, there are restaurants within walking distance, although you can also hop on the visitor-friendly ‘Sky Train’ as there is a station very close by, it’s an easy ride to Bangkok’s famous shopping centres (which are air conditioned!).



Day 3 – Monday

Feel free to have a lie in this morning, or enjoy the pool or go for a walk, as you wish.



In the afternoon you will have a cooking lesson at the world-famous Blue Elephant restaurant. You’ll start the lesson by being introduced to the many vegetables, herbs, spices and fruit used in Thai cuisine and learn five classic dishes to get you started, including *Kaeng Kua Kai Sub Pa Rod* chicken curry with pineapple and *Tom Yam Koong* spicy hot and sour soup with king prawns before you feast on your efforts.

Evening at leisure.

Day 4 – Tuesday

You’ll be picked up this morning by one of our guides who will take you on a boat trip along Bangkok’s Chao Praya river, you’ll see Wat Arun (Temple of Dawn), which is covered in pieces of porcelain, before crossing the river and visiting the Grand Palace with its grand ceremonial gardens as well as the Temple of the Emerald Buddha. The Chao Praya river is a hive of activity and the klongs (side canals) give a glimpse into people’s lives.



Then you’ll have a 1.5. hour drive to the Central Plains, the rich and fertile agricultural heartland of Thailand. Rice is the staple food here, but you will also enjoy fresh vegetables like bok choy, snow peas and straw mushrooms, along with fish caught in the waters of the Chao Praya river which heads north through this area.



You will arrive at a sleepy, canal-side village, surrounded by paddyfields where the way of life has been relatively unspoilt by modern ways. You will meet some stalwarts of the community, including the village headman, Prachim and his wife Pao, who is an expert cook. Time to enjoy the quieter pace of life by the canal. Later on, you’ll be taken out on a traditional wooden boat. As you drift down the canal, you will see everyone from fishermen to housewives and visit the local temple.

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9am – 9pm, 7 days a week

After a traditional Thai rural dinner, you will have a quick culinary lesson, Pao will show you how to make Thai desserts. These are extremely sweet and the perfect end to a spicy meal. Real Thai desserts contain only three main ingredients, flour, sugar and coconut which are mixed, cooked and decorated in different ways. It would be a lifetime's journey to learn the thousands of mouth-watering combinations but tonight Pao will show you some of her secret family recipes.

Then it's time to bed down for the night, the headman's house is beautiful, spacious and lined with teak, airy from being by the canal. *Please note whilst this village would be considered fairly prosperous for rural Thailand, people in this area follow the traditional forms of living and you will have to sleep on Thai-style mattresses and share a bathroom with the family. This will be the most basic of your accommodation during the trip and is only for one night.*

Day 5 – Wednesday

An early start this morning, Pao will take you to the local market to pick up some fresh ingredients. The market is just a short distance away but if you want the best of the seasonal produce, you have to get there early and jostle with the locals! When you get back to the village, you will have a cooking lesson with Pao and enjoy your efforts for lunch. You'll then be taken to nearby where you can have a look around the ancient temples of the UNESCO rated site with a guide, or relax at a local 'spa'.



We'll arrange a room where you can shower and change and have dinner by the river before taking an overnight sleeper train to the north of the country.

Day 6 – Thursday

This morning, you'll arrive in Chiang Mai, the 'Rose of the North'.



Lanna is the name for the ancient kingdom of 'a million ricefields' which is now northern Thailand and the food has Burmese, Lao and Chinese influences in its modern-day Thai cooking. As well as the rice, herbs and vegetables grown by Thai people who are traditionally lowland farmers, Chiang Mai is surrounded by hills inhabited by tribes from other countries who now grow crops as exotic as asparagus and strawberries

You will be picked up at the train station and driven into the countryside surrounding the city to a large and luxurious private home, set in beautiful gardens with a swimming pool. Settle into your room have a dip in the pool. You'll have lunch with your gracious hostess. Spend the afternoon relaxing, we will also arrange a traditional Thai massage for you in the garden. In the late afternoon, your hostess will take you for a walk around the local village.

Day 7 – Friday

Today, you will visit an organic farm where you can pick your own before being taught how to make northern Thai dishes, you'll all have your own workspaces. From lemons to Kaffir lime leaves, you will find plenty of ingredients on the farm for traditional Lanna dishes like *Phad Ka Prao* a type of stir fried dish made with chilli and holy basil.



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Late afternoon free.

This evening, you will be taken into the centre of Chiang Mai where you can have a look around the city or the famous night bazaar. We recommend having dinner at a restaurant by the river, have a look in your Tell Tale guest pack for a map and tips.

Day 8 – Saturday

Last day of your holiday. Free day to relax and enjoy the pool. *If you are feeling more active and would like to go into Chiang Mai, just ask your hostess who can arrange it for you.*

In the early evening, if you would like to, you are welcome to have a (very informal) Thai cookery lesson with your hostess's aunt to help make dinner.

Day 9 – Sunday

This morning, you will be driven to Chiang Mai airport to take an hour's connecting flight to Bangkok where you will take your international flight. Approximate arrival time at London Heathrow is 7pm UK time (same day).

This 9-day private tour costs £1,500 per person based on two adults sharing a private tour (*this price applies all year, subject to flight availability, except Easter, July, August and December when there will be a surcharge due to peak pricing on flights).*

Inclusions:

Direct flights between London Heathrow and Bangkok with Eva Air or Thai Airways*
Accommodation
Most meals
Activities including sightseeing and cooking lessons
Transport in private chauffeur-driven cars, sleeper train and internal flight with Thai Airways

Exclusions:

Entrance fees for temples
Expenses of a personal nature such as laundry, internet access and alcoholic drinks
Tips for guides and drivers
Some meals

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