



THE TUK TUK CLUB

THE BEST TRAVEL EXPERIENCE IN NORTHERN THAILAND?

The perfect trip for anyone wanting to combine unique adventure with stunning locations and a real exploration of the magic of Northern Thailand over 11 days.

Ever wanted to drive your own Tuk Tuk? Want to join the very exclusive Tuk Tuk Club and get back to the days when travel was a real 'adventure'? Then join us on this awesome 11 day experience of the best of Northern Thailand including stunning locations, off the beaten track trekking and fantastic accommodation.



Inclusions:

- Your very own Tuk Tuk (up to 3 travellers per vehicle)
- All Tuk Tuk fuel costs
- Transfers to and from Chiang Mai city (meeting point and drop off point is the Chiang Mai Gate Hotel)
- Driver training
- 10 breakfasts, 3 lunches and 5 dinners
- Trekking, visit to an elephant home, bamboo rafting
- 2 guides with you every step of the way
- 10 nights accommodation in stunning locations
- National Park entry fees
- A support vehicle for your luggage
- Travel stories to beat everyone else's...



ITINERARY:

Day 1: ARRIVAL, DRIVER TRAINING AND TEMPLE BLESSING

We'll pick you up at 10:00am from the CHIANG MAI GATE HOTEL in Chiang Mai city and transfer you to our training base for the adventure ahead.

On arrival at our 'base camp' in Mae Wang at around 11:30 we'll check you in to your accommodation, have lunch together and then begin your driver training. Once everyone has got to grips with the basics we'll head on your first test drive to a local Temple where we can 'make merit' for the journey ahead!

In the evening it's time to spend more time getting to know your Tuk Tuk and enjoying a great Thai feast.



Inclusions:

- Transfer from Chiang Mai Gate Hotel to our 'base camp'
- Full Tuk Tuk orientation and training
- 'Making merit' at the local temple
- Lunch and dinner
- Twin / triple share accommodation in a beautiful resort in Mae Wang – air-conditioning, en-suite rooms (single rooms can be requested but a surcharge applies)

Day 2: MORE TRAINING AND ELEPHANTS

After breakfast we'll go through more driver training, building on what you learned yesterday, and run through all the nitty-gritty of the trip ahead.

Then it's time to venture a little further afield with a test drive through small country roads to a fantastic elephant home that is leading the way in taking elephants away from a life of trekking and instead creating an environment where people can learn about and spend time with elephants on their terms, not ours!

We'll head slowly in convoy to the elephant home giving all the opportunity to get some 'road time' and confidence. On arrival, you'll learn about the history of the elephants, what the team at the Elephant home are doing and then, after a great lunch at the home, it's time to enjoy the company

of these wonderful animals. You'll be able to feed them, get to know them and then walk with them (no riding allowed!) to the local river where you'll bathe with them.

In the late afternoon we'll have a change of pace as we float gently downstream on bamboo rafts before it's then time for a little more driving practice as we head back to the base camp for dinner and getting ready for an adventurous day tomorrow.



Inclusions:

- Tuk Tuk driver training
- Visit to the elephant home and all associated activities
- Breakfast, lunch and dinner
- Twin / triple share accommodation in a beautiful resort in Mae Wang – air-conditioning, en-suite rooms (single rooms can be requested but a surcharge applies)

Day 3: AND WE'RE OFF – DOI INTHANON HERE WE COME

After an early breakfast we're hitting the road and heading along small country roads towards Thailand's highest mountain, Doi Inthanon. Your guide will be in the lead Tuk Tuk and we'll travel in convoy with the support vehicle at the rear. The first 20-30km of the route is simple with gentle curving roads but we soon hit stunning switch back bends, incredible scenery and tiny Karen hill tribe villages as we make our way towards the National Park.

Enjoy the look of complete surprise from everyone as they see Tuk Tuks this far up in the mountains – trust us, novelty doesn't not even begin to cover it – and we'll stop frequently to have a look at different villages / views and of course to sample some of the great coffee and snacks in small villages. Lunch will be in a roadside snack bar – real Northern Thai style.



We arrive at our accommodation mid-afternoon before jumping in another classic Thai mode of transport - a 'Songtaew' - a shared taxi adapted from a pick up truck, which drives us to the summit of the mountain.



Inclusions:

- Tuk Tuks and support vehicle
- Breakfast and dinner (lunch at own expense – (+/- 50THB)
- National Park entry fees
- Twin / triple / quad shared accommodation in Doi Inthanon – this is the most basic of the accommodation but intentionally so to ensure you're located in the most stunning area and perfectly located for the trek tomorrow. Fan cooled, en-suite bathrooms

Day 4: TREKKING

We're giving the Tuk Tuks a well deserved rest today and exploring the National Park on foot. Accompanied by an expert trekking guide we'll explore the stunning forest around the area on a trek of around 6km which takes in great vista's and the obligatory waterfall.

Lunch is provided on the trek and your trekking guide is a mine of information on both the people and wildlife inhabiting the area all around you.

NOTE: This trek is suitable for all as long as you're able to walk 4-5KM. The pace is gentle but there are some up and downhill sections as you'd expect in the mountains.

We'll arrive back at the accommodation around mid – late afternoon, just in time to rest up, relax and then enjoy a great countryside Thai feast.



Inclusions:

- Trek and trekking guide
- Breakfast, lunch and dinner
- Twin / triple / quad shared accommodation in Doi Inthanon – this is the most basic of the accommodation but intentionally so to ensure you're located in the most stunning area and perfectly located for the trek tomorrow. Fan cooled, en-suite bathrooms

Day 5: ON THE ROAD AGAIN....

Time to get back on the road and today we head out of Doi Inthanon National Park towards our destination of Mae Sariang, close to the Burmese / Myanmar border.

Our route winds through incredible scenery and some very quiet roads for the first section of the day and we then join the main road for the last hour or two into Mae Sariang. Towering trees, steep hills and more than a few sharp curves are the order of the day and we'll, as always, take frequent stops to enjoy the area, let the Tuk Tuk cool down and to allow traffic to pass (and see all taking photos of you as yet again everyone is stunned by the site to Tuk Tuks up here).

We'll arrive in Mae Sariang around mid-late afternoon and check into our superb riverside accommodation for the night.

Mae Sariang is well worth exploring with friendly people, a fascinating mix of Thai and Burmese culture (Mae Sariang is home to many Burmese Muslims) and some interesting temples. Alternatively, cool off in the pool, have a cold beer on the terrace over the river watching the sun go down, or all of the above!



Inclusions:

- Tuk Tuks and support vehicle
- Breakfast
- Twin share riverside accommodation in Mae Sariang – air-conditioning and en-suite bathrooms

Day 6: MORE BENDS AND MOUNTAINS

Mae Hong Son is our destination today and we'll head up, over and around the mountains on one of Thailand's most stunning roads to reach our accommodation. With plenty of stops to change drivers, go 'wow' at the scenery and chat to all and sundry wondering how on earth you're driving a Tuk Tuk this is most definitely a day for your camera (and Go Pro!).

We'll arrive at your accommodation around mid-afternoon giving you enough time to check in, have a quick swim in the resort's lovely pool and to settle into the amazing sunset bar nestled right amongst the rice fields. Cold beer has never tasted so good!



Inclusions

- Tuk Tuks and support vehicle
- Breakfast
- Twin share accommodation outside Mae Hong Song town – air-conditioning, en-suite, swimming pool and stunning location!

Day 7: FREE DAY TO EXPLORE

A day off for your Tuk Tuks and some time to do as you please. There's a fantastic 8km trek through the forest right from the resort grounds, a swimming pool to hang out by or you can head into Mae Hong Son town to explore (around 10-15 mins by minivan).

Re-charge your batteries, re-cover from the sunset bar last night or stretch your legs in the forest, it's up to you.



Inclusions:

- Optional trek – one of our team will accompany you
- Breakfast
- Twin share accommodation outside Mae Hong Song town – air-conditioning, en-suite, swimming pool and stunning location!

Day 8: MOUNTAIN ROADS TO PAI

Pai, one of the most famous of all mountain towns in Thailand, is our destination today but before we get there we need to negotiate several hundred bends and some of the steepest roads on the trip. With great forest and incredible views this is a great day and towards mid / late afternoon we'll drop down into the valley where Pai sits.

Your accommodation is 4-5km outside the town sitting amongst rice fields and great views wherever you look. There's also a lovely swimming pool to relax, enjoy the stunning scenery and reflect on the incredible journey so far.





Inclusions

- Tuk Tuks and support vehicle
- Breakfast
- Twin share accommodation outside Pai – air-conditioning, en-suite, swimming pool and stunning location!

Day 9: ENJOY PAI AND THE SURROUNDING AREA

Another day to let the Tuk Tuks rest and give you the opportunity to do some exploring on your own. From hot springs and temples, to hanging out by the pool or exploring the local villages, our guides are on hand to help arrange all sorts of activities. Alternatively, why not sit back and take in the great views from this fantastic resort.



Inclusions:

- Breakfast
- Twin share accommodation outside Pai – air-conditioning, en-suite, swimming pool and stunning location!

Day 10: THE FINAL LEG

Setting off in the early morning we negotiate the final few hundred bends as we drop back down towards Chiang Mai and then to our initial base camp of days 1 and 2. You'll notice a huge change in the villages, people and temperature (!) as we head lower and lower and then through a number of small villages and towns on our route.

With plenty of opportunities to stop and explore we take today pretty easy and will arrive back in Mae Wang late afternoon/early evening. Then it's time to freshen up before we have a group final dinner, sharing the adventures of the last 10 days and enjoying your last moments with your very own Tuk Tuk.



Inclusions:

- Tuk Tuk and support vehicle
- Breakfast and dinner
- Twin / triple shared accommodation – air-conditioned and en-suite

Day 11: FAREWELL

After a lie in – it will have been a late night last night! – we'll transfer back to Chiang Mai Gate Hotel arriving around 12:30pm. You are now a fully-fledged member of The Tuk Tuk Club!



Inclusions:

- Breakfast
- Transfer to the Chiang Mai Gate Hotel



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

By its very nature this trip is an 'adventure' – when it's hot....it's hot and when it's cold....it's cold (and it does get cold in the mountains between November and February). And as with any trip of this nature there is some inherent risk which must be accepted by all travellers – without a small amount of risk there is no adventure! However, all routes and roads have been extensively researched (in Tuk Tuks of course), there is plenty of training and practice of driving before we hit the winding roads heading up into the mountains and your guides will always set a sensible pace for the conditions for each different day.

ARRIVAL INFORMATION:

We will pick you up at **10:00am** at the CHIANG MAI GATE HOTEL in Chiang Mai City. If you're not staying there the night before your tour starts please make your own way to the hotel which is just outside the South side of the old city walls. The address is: **Chiang Mai Gate Hotel, 10/11 Suriyawong Road, Haiya, Chiang Mai, 50100**. Telephone number: +66(0) 53 203 895 9



It's easy to find and very well- known so any hotel you are staying at will be able to help you get a taxi there.



What driving experience do I need?

- All travellers who wish to drive a Tuk Tuk **MUST** have a driving license from their own country (manual gear) and an International Driving Permit - IDP
- No previous Tuk Tuk driving experience is necessary!

Can I book on my own / can I take a whole Tuk Tuk?

- This experience is perfect for solo travellers, couples or groups of friends (or even adventurous families).
- Each Tuk Tuk can seat a maximum of 3 adults or 2 adults and 2 children (11 and older)
- If you are keen on having your own Tuk Tuk then please book with 2 other friends and get a 10% discount on your trip!

Group size

- The maximum group size for each trip is 15 – 3 adventurers per Tuk Tuk.
- Each trip will consist of up to 6 Tuk Tuks - the lead vehicle driven by one of your guides – and a support vehicle, driven by an additional guide, carrying bags, spare parts, water, snacks etc.

The Tuk Tuks

- All the Tuk Tuks are original, classic 'Bangkok style' Tuk Tuks with the relevant registrations to allow them to be driven by the group on all the roads taken during the tour
- Whilst Tuk Tuks are relatively simple to drive, training and experience is provided in the driver training sessions on Days 1 and 2 of the trip
- All fuel is provided as part of the adventure
- No-one is forced to drive! There is space for 2 people comfortably on the back seats
- All travellers must ensure that they obey local traffic laws and agree to abide by the driving rules of The Tuk Tuk Club – this is for everyone's safety.

Accommodation

The accommodation is intentionally of a very high standard throughout the trip to allow you to 'adventure' during the day but relax and enjoy great surroundings in the evenings and free days.

Mae Wang 'base camp' – nights 1,2 and 10 – 3-4*

Khum Khun Wang Resort (or similar), Mae Wang. A stylish Northern Thailand hotel in peaceful grounds with a laid back small dining area. Perfect for our 'base camp'.



Doi Inthanon – nights 3 and 4 – 2*

Forest ‘huts’ – simple rural rooms (fan cooled) with twin / triple / quad rooms. Basic facilities but ideally located for a real rural experience and the trekking on day 4



Mae Sariang – night 5 – 3-4*

River House Hotel (or River House resort depending on season) – fantastic twin rooms located right on the river in Mae Sariang. Air-conditioning, en-suite, excellent food and a great location for relaxing beers after a hard day’s driving



Mae Hong Son – nights 6 and 7– 3-4*

Fern Resort (or similar) – a well established country resort located in the heart of the forest and surrounded by rice fields. If it was good enough for Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie then it’s good enough for us! Twin share rooms, air-conditioning, en-suite bathrooms, swimming pool and stunning sunset bar!



Pai – nights 8 and 9 – 4*

Phu Pai Art Resort (or similar) – around 5km outside the town of Pai and set amongst rice fields and on the edge of a small village, this resort is the perfect location to unwind. All the rooms are individual villa style and a short walk to the restaurant and swimming pool. Northern Thailand doesn’t get much better!





What do I need to bring? How much will I spend?

The most important thing to pack is a sense of **adventure** and a sense of **humour!** However, there are of course a few other essentials:

IMPORTANT - Your driving license and an International Driving Permit (IDP):

If you are planning to drive one of the Tuk Tuks it's essential that you bring your home driving license with you and an International Driving Permit (IDP)

International Driving Permits are little 'grey' books recognized around the world that back up your regular driving license and they are usually obtainable quickly and easily and for a nominal fee.

How and where you apply to get an IDP of course varies by country but a quick Google will turn up the best way to sort things out.

- In the UK you can apply through designated Post Office's or The AA
- In the US you can apply through the American Automobile Touring Alliance
- In Australia you can apply through the RACV or the AAA

Please try not to forget either your drivers license or your IDP and without them you won't be able to drive your Tuk Tuk.

Travel Insurance - IMPORTANT

Travel insurance is **compulsory** for all of our trips but is not included and it is your responsibility to ensure that you have appropriate cover for all aspects of your trip. Whilst we can't judge or know every single insurance provider out there, we do know that the very good people at Campbell Irvine (www.campbellirvinedirect.com) DO cover the use of Tuk Tuks for recreational purposes so they are the perfect place to start.

Clothing:

- Obviously this is up to you but we recommend trainers (or similar) for driving days (not flip flops / sandals) and comfortable shorts / t-shirts / long sleeved t-shirt for driving days (that you don't mind getting dirty and grimy!)
- If you're travelling between late October and February please don't forget some warm clothes for the evenings – it can get quite chilly from time to time at night in the mountains and a warm jumper / fleece is well worth bringing.
- The trek doesn't require walking boots although it paths can be muddy and slippery in the rainy season (approximately July through to late October)
- Sunglasses



Spending money

- This is always difficult to gauge but you do need to budget for 7 lunches and 5 dinners during the trip. Lunches on the road will be between 50 and 100THB and dinners can vary widely depending where you eat but would usually range between 100 and 300THB per person.
- Of course you also need to budget for drinks throughout the trip. Beers range from 60THB up to 150THB for a large bottle (depending where you buy them – sometimes even 150THB for a small bottle)
- Whilst everyone's needs are different we'd suggest that you budget for around 7,500 to 10,000THB for food, snacks, drinks etc during your trip. ATM's machines are widely available on most days