



## THE TUK TUK CLUB – 5 DAY ADVENTURE IN NORTHERN THAILAND

### SELF DRIVE and CHAUFFEUR DRIVEN ITINERARY

An incredible 5 day adventure taking you high into the mountains of Northern Thailand all enjoyed from Thailand's most iconic vehicle – the Tuk Tuk. There is no better way to get under the skin of this stunning part of the world and get an insight into the 'real' Thailand that most travellers miss completely.

An action packed adventure putting you right into the heart of the most beautiful part of Thailand. Enjoy the sights, sounds and smells of the mountains with the best view possible – our specially converted Tuk Tuks able to cope with the mountain roads with ease. Remote Temples, off the beaten track Hill Tribe communities, elephants, bamboo rafting, trekking, incredible food and of course, your very own Tuk Tuk. Adventures don't come any better.



*NOTE: The 5-day adventure runs in conjunction with the first 5 days of the 11-day adventure so when you end your trip on day 5, you'll be saying goodbye to your Tuk Tuk and other adventurers as they head onwards on their trip.*

#### Inclusions:

- Tuk Tuks – 2 travellers per Tuk Tuk (up to 3 for the self-drive option)
- Transfers from and back to Chiang Mai city (the meeting point and drop off point is The Chiang Mai Gate Hotel) at the start and the end of the adventure
- Experienced and passionate adventure guide and support team with you every step of the way (*and an experienced driver for the chauffeur driven option*)
- Visits to remote Temples and tiny rural communities, meeting wonderful elephants, bamboo rafting and trekking in the foothills of Doi Inthanon
- 4 nights accommodation in superb locations
- All meals (4 breakfasts, 4 lunches and 4 dinners) and water throughout the adventure
- A support vehicle for your luggage
- The best travel stories, after all who else has travelled through the mountains of Thailand by Tuk Tuk...



## PRICES:

- £575 per person (£650 per person for November – February start dates)
- Aged 17 and under – £295 per person / £335 per person (November – February start dates)
- Private room for solo travellers (if required) - £95 (£145 for November – February start dates)

## ITINERARY:

### Day 1: ARRIVAL, MEET YOUR TUK TUK, EXPLORE REMOTE TEMPLES AND SMALL RURAL COMMUNITIES

You'll be picked up at 10:00am from the CHIANG MAI GATE HOTEL in Chiang Mai city and our team will transfer you by private minivan to The Tuk Tuk Club HQ in Mae Wang, around 45-60 minutes South West of the city.

On arrival you'll check into the lovely local hotel which is your base for the next couple of nights and then immediately get to meet your Tuk Tuk (you'll become very fond of this wonderful machine over the next few days!) and of course meet your guide and support team.



*Note – our Tuk Tuks are specially modified to not only cope perfectly with the twisty and sometimes steep mountain roads but also to give extra comfort and views. There are Bluetooth speakers for you to play your favourite road trip tunes and you can even roll back the roof if you fancy catching some sun!*

You'll then head for a delicious lunch at a 'laid back' local restaurant where your guide will run through all of the adventures ahead.



**NOTE:**

For those choosing the self-drive option there will be a detailed, in-depth driver training session followed by a test that all drivers must pass before heading out onto the road. For those who've chosen the chauffeur option this is a great experience to learn more about the Tuk Tuks, how they work and, if you'd like, the opportunity to have a quick go yourself on our off road training area.

Once your training is complete, you're then off exploring tiny winding rural lanes, passing through rarely visited communities and fascinating Temples with stunning views. At one of the Temples you'll receive a blessing for the adventure ahead giving you a real insight into how communities interact with Monks and their local Temple.



You'll arrive back at base in the late afternoon in time to freshen up and head out for a delicious Thai dinner at a local 'country – pub'. Great food, live music, brilliant views across the fields and a great way to end the day.

- **TUK TUK DRIVING TIME:** +/- 3 HOURS INCLUDING DRIVER TRAINING
- **DISTANCE COVERED:** +/- 45 km

**Inclusions:**

- Transfer from The Chiang Mai Gate Hotel to our 'base camp' in Mae Wang
- Guide and support team
- Full Tuk Tuk orientation / driver training (for those on with the self-drive option)
- Exploration of remote Temples, rural communities and off the beaten track locations

- Lunch, dinner and drinking water throughout the day
- Twin / double accommodation in a very pleasant rural resort in Mae Wang – air-conditioning, en-suite facilities, wi-fi.

## **Day 2: WATERFALLS, HILL TRIBE VILLAGES, ELEPHANTS AND BAMBOO RAFTING**

After breakfast you're back into your Tuk Tuk (we guarantee you'll already be possessive about which Tuk Tuk is 'yours'!) and you'll head through the countryside and small communities to a fantastic pagoda at a hill top Temple with great views of the surrounding mountains, giving you a glimpse of where you'll be heading tomorrow!



You're then heading North up the valley in your Tuk Tuk to a fantastic small 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!

On arrival you'll learn about the history of the elephants and what the team at the Elephant home have been doing to continually improve the lives of the elephants. Then, after a simple but filling lunch at the home (right next to the elephants), it's time to enjoy the company of these wonderful animals. You'll be able to help their mahouts feed them and then walk with them (no riding allowed!) to the local river where they take their daily bath.



After the elephants are clean you'll have a change of pace as you float gently downstream on bamboo rafts before it's then time for a late afternoon Tuk Tuk convoy as you head back to the base camp to freshen up before heading out for another great dinner at a local family restaurant.



- **TUK TUK DRIVING TIME:** +/- 3.5 HOURS SPREAD OUT OVER THE COURSE OF THE DAY
- **DISTANCE COVERED:** +/- 70 km

**Inclusions:**

- Guide and support team
- Tuk Tuk and driver (chauffeur option)
- Visits to Temples, Pagoda's, elephant home experience and bamboo rafting
- Breakfast, lunch, dinner and drinking water throughout the day
- Twin / double accommodation in a very pleasant rural resort in Mae Wang – air-conditioning, en-suite facilities, wi-fi.

**Day 3: AND WE'RE OFF – THAILAND'S HIGHEST MOUNTAIN HERE WE COME**

After an early breakfast you're back in the Tuk Tuk convoy and heading along some of the most spectacular roads towards Thailand's highest mountain, Doi Inthanon.

Your guide will be in the lead Tuk Tuk and everyone travels in convoy with the support vehicle at the rear (the support vehicle takes all your luggage, spare parts for the Tuk Tuks – always best to be prepared! – and huge amounts of water!). And do note that each Tuk Tuk has a walkie talkie so not only can your guide let you know all sorts of information but you can also ask any questions or simply chat to your fellow travellers!



The first 20-30km of the route is simple with gentle curving roads but you soon hit stunning switch back bends, breath-taking scenery and small Karen Hill Tribe communities as you make our way towards Doi Inthanon National Park.



Enjoy the look of real 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 you'll stop frequently to explore different locations, take in the views and course to sample some of the great coffee that grows in this area. Lunch will be in a roadside snack bar – more tasty Thai fare!



You'll arrive at our accommodation in the village of Mae Khlang Luang by early / mid afternoon before then jumping into another classic Thai mode of transport - a 'Songtaew'. A taxi adapted from a pick-up truck which will take you to the summit of Doi Inthanon (over 2,500 metres) where you'll explore some of the trails and take in the spectacular views.

This evening it's time for a traditional Thai BBQ eaten over the rice fields as the sun sets behind the mountains. Another great end to a superb day



- **TUK TUK DRIVING TIME:** +/- 4 HOURS SPREAD OUT OVER THE DAY
- **DISTANCE COVERED:** +/- 85 km

Inclusions:

- Guide and support team
- Tuk Tuks, support vehicle and driver (chauffeur driven option)
- Breakfast, lunch, dinner and drinking water throughout the day
- Visit to Doi Inthanon and National Park entry fees
- Twin / double accommodation near Doi Inthanon – this is the most 'basic' of the accommodation but it's the best available and by staying here we can ensure that you're

located in a stunning location and perfectly located for the trek tomorrow. Fan cooled, en-suite bathrooms, wi-fi available

#### Day 4: HIKING

The Tuk Tuks have a well-earned rest today as you head to explore the foothills of Doi Inthanon on foot.

Starting with a quick transfer by truck you then walk up into the forest led by a charming local guide (who knows everything about every tree and plant – and can spot a snake from miles away!) and then hike past stunning waterfalls, rivers and towering forest.



There are a number of spots where you can cool off with a dip in the pools under the waterfalls and you'll have a packed lunch (wrapped in leaves) in a clearing in the forest.

The hike ends with a walk back down into the village where you stayed last night and there's the chance to enjoy the freshest coffee around at a local old-style mountain coffee shop – one of our favourite coffee shops anywhere in Northern Thailand.



NOTE – the hike is suitable for all. The total distance is around 5-6km, we take it at a gentle pace and after the initial uphill section, the majority of the hike is flat or downhill

This evening it's time for another superb Thai feast – again overlooking the rice terraces – and perhaps one or two well deserved cold beers!



- **TUK TUK DRIVING TIME:** NA – no Tuk Tuk driving today
- **DISTANCE COVERED:** NA

Inclusions:

- Guide and support team
- Trek and trekking guide
- Breakfast, lunch, dinner and drinking water throughout the day
- Twin / double accommodation near Doi Inthanon – this is the most ‘basic’ of the accommodation but it’s the best available and by staying here we can ensure that you’re located in a stunning location and perfectly located for the trek tomorrow. Fan cooled, en-suite bathrooms, wi-fi available

**Day 5: TIME TO SAY GOODBYE**

The 5 day adventure comes to an end this morning as you say goodbye to your Tuk Tuk and transfer back to Chiang Mai City by private minivan.

The transfer will take place in the morning and you will arrive in Chiang Mai (The Chiang Mai Gate Hotel) before midday.

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, when It's wet....it's wet and when it's cold....it's cold (and it can get cold in the mountains between November and February with overnight temperatures sometimes dropping to 10C or even a bit less). And, as with any trip of this nature, there is some inherent risk which must be accepted by all travellers....but without a small amount of risk where is the adventure!

However, all routes and roads have been extensively researched (in Tuk Tuks of course), and our driving team always follow a gentle pace and adapt to the weather and road conditions at any given time.

#### **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.

### Can I book my own Tuk Tuk?

- This experience is perfect for solo travellers, couples or groups of friends (or even adventurous families). If you're travelling on your own you'll be teamed up with a fellow solo traveller to enjoy your time travelling in these wonderful vehicles
- For those booking the chauffeur driven option each Tuk Tuk can take a maximum of 2 people, for those booking the self-drive option each Tuk Tuk can take a maximum of 3 people.

### NOTES ON THE SELF-DRIVE OPTION

- 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 as you will receive in-depth training on Day 1 but please note that if you don't usually drive a manual / stick shift car then we strongly recommend you choose the chauffeur driven option
- At the end of training session all drivers must pass a test. If the guide / training team believe you have not reached the standard to pass the test then unfortunately you will not be able to drive on the roads (although of course more time and training will be given to help you as is possible). The decision of the training team is final.

### Group size

- The maximum group size for each trip is 12.



- Each trip will consist of up to 6 Tuk Tuks and a support vehicle carrying bags, spare parts, water, snacks.

### The Tuk Tuks

- All the Tuk Tuks are original, classic 'Bangkok style' Tuk Tuks but specially designed and built for the trips we run. This means more legroom and head room, BlueTooth speakers and a roll back roof should you be looking for a bit more sun!

### Accommodation

The accommodation is intentionally of a high standard throughout the trip to allow you to 'adventure' during the day but relax and enjoy great surroundings in the evenings. After all, who said that an adventure has to be uncomfortable....

#### Mae Wang 'base camp' – nights 1 and 2 – 3-4\*

*Khum Khun Wang Resort (or similar), Mae Wang.* A lovely rural Northern Thailand hotel in peaceful grounds with a laid back small outdoor meeting area. Run by a very friendly team and perfect for our 'base camp'. Twin, double and family rooms available.



#### Mae Khlang Luang – nights 3 and 4 – 2\*

You'll stay in the Karen Hill Tribe village of Mae Khlang Luang. Whilst this is the 'simplest' accommodation of the adventure the rooms are spacious, clean and, being situated overlooking the rice terraces, in a superb location. All the rooms have en-suite facilities, hot water and are fan-cooled – there's no need for air-conditioning this high in the mountains.

The fantastic location and the experience of staying in the village far outweighs the simple nature of the rooms!





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

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

#### **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.

#### ***Clothing:***

- Obviously this is up to you but we recommend trainers (or similar) for hiking / exploring and flip flops / sandals for relaxing in your Tuk Tuk and the evenings 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 November 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 packing.
- The hike doesn't require walking boots although its paths can be muddy and slippery in the rainy season (approximately July through to late October)
- Hat / sunglasses / sunscreen

#### ***Spending money***

- This is always difficult to gauge. All meals are included on the adventure but you may wish to buy the odd snack en route, sample the mountain coffee and of course enjoy a cold beer from time to time!
- 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 £50 (+/- 2,000THB) or so for snacks, drinks and so on during your trip. This should be more than enough for even the thirstiest of travellers.