

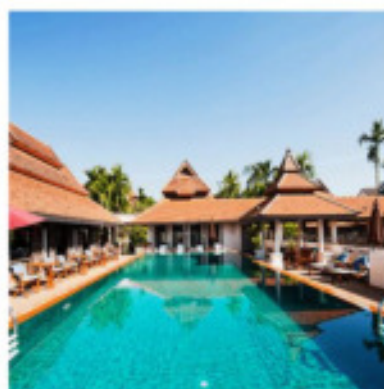
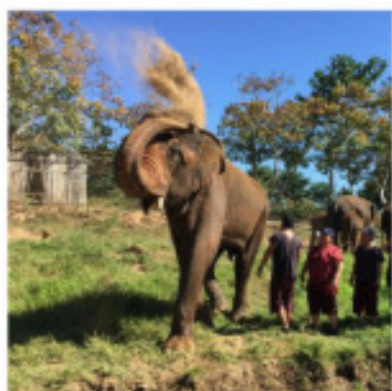


Signature Journeys

12 Day Northern Thailand Tuk Tuk Adventure

With The Tuk Tuk Club

13-24 August 2022





LOW SEASON TRAVELLER – 12 DAY ADVENTURE IN NORTHERN THAILAND

SELF DRIVE or CHAUFFEUR DRIVEN

A truly amazing 12 Day Adventure in Northern Thailand in the heart of the 'low season' and the very best way to experience this stunning part of the world which many say is the 'real' Thailand. Get ready for a superb adventure from your seat in Thailand's most iconic vehicle – the Tuk Tuk.

This action-packed trip gets you right off the beaten track and into the heart of Thailand. Enjoy the sights, sounds and smells of the mountains with the best view possible in our specially built Tuk Tuks able to cope with the mountain roads with ease.

Remote Temples, fascinating Hill Tribe communities, elephants, bamboo rafting, hiking, superb overnight locations, delicious food and, of course, your bright orange Tuk Tuk.



Inclusions:

- Tuk Tuks – 2 travellers per Tuk Tuk
- Airport transfers from and back to Chiang Mai International Airport
- 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 elephants, bamboo rafting, a river trip in remote regions, the mountains of Mae Hong Son and much much more. There are so many fantastic experiences we simply couldn't list them all here!
- 11 nights accommodation in superb locations
- 11 breakfasts, 5 lunches and 7 dinners and drinking 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:

Self drive and chauffeur drive adventures:

- **£1,299 per person**

DATES:

- **13th August – 24th August 2022**

ITINERARY:

Day 1: Arrival into Chiang Mai city

You'll be met at Chiang Mai International Airport and transfer to your lovely laid back city hotel (the Bodhi Serene), the base for the next two nights.

Relax and enjoy the lovely surroundings of the hotel and pool or head out and explore the old city of Chiang Mai which is right on your doorstep



Inclusions:

- Meet and greet at Chiang Mai airport
- Private transfer to the hotel
- Twin / double room at Bodhi Serene hotel

Day 2: Free day in Chiang Mai, Welcome Dinner and Team Briefing

Enjoy a leisurely day getting ready for the adventure ahead or head out to explore some of Chiang Mai city's highlights right on your doorstep. The hotel is ideally located for exploring the old city of Chiang Mai and some of the most important historical sites such as Wat Phra Singh. Or even head a little further afield to take in the views from the stunning Wat Doi Suthep on a mountain peak overlooking the city. Our team will be on hand to help arrange any activities you'd like to do.



We will have a welcome dinner this evening introducing you to the delights of Northern Thai cuisine and running through all the of excitement and adventure to come over the next 10 days!

Inclusions:

- Breakfast and welcome dinner
- Twin / double room at the Bodhi Serene Hotel

Day 3: Meet your Tuk Tuk, explore remote Temples and small rural communities

We'll leave the Bodhi Serene at 10:00am and transfer by private minivan to the Tuk Tuk Club's training base around 60 minutes South West of the city in the beautiful Mae Wang valley.

On arrival in Mae Wang 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 Bodhi Serene 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

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- 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 4: 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 5: Up into the high mountains and remote backroads

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.

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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 mid afternoon giving you time to relax and explore the stunning village of Mae Khlang Luang where you're staying tonight. Overlooking rice fields and surrounded by forested mountains, this is a wonderful location to soak up the atmosphere of Thai mountain life.

This evening it's time for a traditional Thai BBQ eaten over the rice fields as the sun sets behind the mountains. A 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
- 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 6: A stunning day travelling through some of the most remote parts of the country

A truly stunning day's drive awaits as we head from Doi Inthanon National Park through spectacular roads and villages to our overnight location of Khun Yuam.

We start the day with an incredible descent down the side of Thailand's highest mountain before then taking roads rarely used by Thai people, let alone travellers. Heading up and down a series of mountain ridges we see Northern Thailand at it's very best. Small Karen Hill Tribe communities, never ending views rolling into the distance and genuine surprise from locals as they see your convoy of Tuk Tuk navigating the back roads.



We'll stop for lunch at a small roadside restaurant before yet more climbs as we head deeper and deeper into the hills. Words can't really describe just how beautiful this region is as we pass through villages where people still wear traditional dress, not for tourists but because life has barely changed over the last 50 years .

Not only a great adventurous day but also a real privilege to be able to experience a part of Thailand barely touched by tourism over the years.



By late afternoon we'll arrive in Khun Yuam, a small town acting very much as a market place for the surrounding villages and stay in a simple, but clean and friendly hotel, right in the centre of the town. In the evening head out to sample some of the fantastic food and perhaps even a well earned cold beer.



- **TUK TUK DRIVING TIME:** +/- 5-6 HOURS SPREAD OUT OVER THE DAY
- **DISTANCE COVERED:** +/- 140 km

Inclusions:

- Guide and support team (and driver – chauffeur driven option)
- Tuk Tuk and support vehicle
- Breakfast, lunch, dinner and drinking water
- Twin / double riverside accommodation in Khun Yuam – air-conditioning, en-suite bathrooms, w-fi

Day 7: Villages, views and one of Thailand's best kept secrets!

After a good night's rest (or a late night enjoying the friendly bars of Khun Yuam!) you're back in the best seats in the house for the fantastic drive to Fern Resort, just outside the town of Mae Hong Son and one of Thailand's best kept secrets!

The route starts out pretty gently but it's not long before you're heading up and over mountains and along fantastic winding roads with mountains stretching off into the distance across the Myanmar border.



We'll stop for lunch along the route – more simple but wonderful authentic Thai food – and also take in one of the most scenic coffee shop views anywhere in Thailand before arriving in the early afternoon at Fern Resort, our base for the next two nights.

Fern is a wonderful laid back hideaway with rooms dotted around rice fields set on the edge of a forest and about as relaxing as it gets. With the best sunset bar and a stunning infinity pool – and a previous hideaway of Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie – this really is the perfect Northern Thailand location



- **TUK TUK DRIVING TIME:** +/- 3 HOURS SPREAD OUT OVER THE DAY
- **DISTANCE COVERED:** +/- 75 km

Inclusions

- Guide and support team (and driver – chauffeur driven option)
- Tuk Tuk and support vehicle
- Breakfast, lunch and drinking water
- Twin / double accommodation outside Mae Hong Song town – air-conditioning, en-suite, wi-fi, two swimming pools and a stunning location.

Day 8: Remote Hill Tribe villages, a boat trip, mountain top Temples and a street food experience

A day off for the Tuk Tuks today as we head out to explore Mae Hong Son. In the morning we'll travel down river by small boat to explore a remote Karen Hill Tribe community and then in the late afternoon we'll head into Mae Hong Son town to enjoy sunset from the mountain top Wat Doi Kong Mu (the most important Temple in the town with stunning views) and then enjoy some of the best street food from the stalls surrounding the town centre lake (don't worry – your guide team will be with you to ensure you get the very best and tastiest food on offer!).



A superb Northern Thailand day showing off some of the very best of Mae Hong Son



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

Inclusions:

- Guide and support team (and driver – chauffeur driven option)
- River trip to remote Karen village, visit to Wat Doi Kong Mu, street food experience
- Breakfast, dinner and drinking water
- Twin/ double accommodation outside Mae Hong Son town – air-conditioning, en-suite, wi-fi, two swimming pools (!) and stunning location

Day 9: MOUNTAIN ROADS TO PAI

Pai, one of the most famous of all mountain towns in Thailand, is your destination today but before you get there you need to negotiate several hundred bends and some of the steepest roads on the trip.

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Take in the spectacular views, fascinating communities and yet more delicious mountain coffee along the way.



You'll stop for lunch at the spectacular Lod Caves and then explore the huge cave system with a local guide – don't worry, you're not scrambling through tiny potholes, rather enjoying a raft along the river than runs through the caves themselves

By late afternoon you'll drop down into the valley where Pai sits but not before a couple of awesome pit stops – try your hand at the Hill Tribe swing, we dare you! – and arrive at your laid back resort, the base for the next couple of nights.

Time to freshen up and either enjoy a relaxing evening surrounded by rice fields and mountains (and another relaxing infinity pool) or head into town to explore. The choice is yours.



- **TUK TUK DRIVING TIME:** +/- 4-5 HOURS SPREAD OUT OVER THE DAY
- **DISTANCE COVERED:** +/- 120 km

Inclusions

- Guide and support team (and driver – chauffeur driven option)
- Tuk Tuks and support vehicle
- Breakfast and drinking water
- Twin / double accommodation outside Pai – air-conditioning, en-suite, wi-fi, swimming pool and fantastic relaxing location

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Day 10: ENJOY PAI AND THE SURROUNDING AREA

A day of rest before the last push tomorrow when you head back to the Tuk Tuk Club base. Enjoy the resort and pool, wander around the local area or why not head further afield and explore hot springs, a giant land split (!) and Pai Canyon.



Your guide team can help organise everything and even go along with you if you'd like (whilst the support team do their final checks on your Tuk Tuk ready for the last days adventure tomorrow)

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

Inclusions:

- Guide and support team (and driver – chauffeur driven option)
- Breakfast and drinking water
- Twin / double accommodation outside Pai – air-conditioning, en-suite, wi-fi, swimming pool and stunning location

Day 11: THE FINAL LEG

Today's drive is simply stunning. We've saved the best for last for sure.

Leaving Pai behind you're immediately deep into the countryside heading along tiny mountain roads on our journey back South to where the adventure all started, Mae Wang.

It's 180 km of pure magic – random hot springs (and boiled eggs if you'd like), Hill Tribe villages with teak Temples, giant Buddha heads appearing out of the forest and even Thailand's very own Rio de Janeiro (we'll leave that one for you to work out on the day), today takes you off the map rather than just off the beaten track.



Enjoy the drive and make the most of your last day of adventure in your trusty bright orange Tuk Tuk!



You'll arrive back in Mae Wang by late afternoon and there's time to freshen up before heading out to a village restaurant for one final superb Thai feast.

- **TUK TUK DRIVING TIME:** +/- 6.5 HOURS SPREAD OUT OVER THE DAY
- **DISTANCE COVERED:** +/- 180 km

Inclusions:

- Guide and support team (and driver – chauffeur driven option)
- Tuk Tuk and support vehicle
- Breakfast, dinner and drinking water
- Twin / double accommodation in a very pleasant rural resort in Mae Wang – air-conditioning, en-suite facilities, wi-fi.

Day 12: FAREWELL

Your adventure comes to an end today with transfers back to Chiang Mai airport to catch your onward flights.

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Say your farewells to you fellow travellers and team and know that you're now a fully-fledged member of The Tuk Tuk Club.

NOTE: our location is around 60 minutes from the airport so please don't book your flights to depart Chiang Mai earlier than 10:00am if possible (otherwise it's a very early start after what might have been a late night toasting the completion of your Tuk Tuk Adventure!)



Inclusions:

- Breakfast
- Transfer to Chiang Mai airport



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. These trips run during Northern Thailand's low season which to those in the know is one of the most enjoyable times to travel. You can expect some rain (Northern Thailand wouldn't be as beautiful without the rain!) from time to time and maybe the odd dramatic storm and day time temperatures of around 33-35C (cooler when we're at higher elevations) and very pleasant evening temperatures of around 20C or so. The reason why this time of year is so enjoyable is that the onset of the 'rainy season' brings life back to the mountains after the lengthy dry winter and very hot summer. The rice is planted, the waterfalls are filling up again and there's a real sense of activity as the farming communities are busy in their fields making sure the future rice harvest delivers the food they need for the year ahead. And whilst it does rain from time to time, it's always lovely to cool down and somehow everyone just has so much more energy at this time of year!

ARRIVAL INFORMATION:

You'll be met at Chiang Mai International Airport on your arrival n Day 1 - please make sure to let us know your flight details! – and transferred to the Bodhi Serene Hotel to settle into Northern Thailand life.

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
- There is a maximum of 2 travellers per Tuk Tuk whether you're choosing the self-drive or the chauffeur driven option making sure you have plenty of room to have the most comfortable journey.

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 3 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 minimum group size for this adventure is 6 and the maximum is 10 travellers
- Each trip will consist of up to 6 Tuk Tuks and a support vehicle carrying bags, spare parts, water, snacks.

The Tuk Tuks

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- 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, BluTooth 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 surrounding in the evenings and free days.

Chiang Mai City - nights 1 and 2

Bodhi Serene – a very pleasant 3* hotel in the heart of the old city of Chiang Mai. With well appointed rooms (with all standard facilities) and a lovely pool this is the perfect place to relax after arriving into Thailand. The location is also excellent for wandering out and exploring with all the old city sights within a short stroll!

Mae Wang 'base camp' – nights 3, 4 and 11 – 3*

Khum Khun Wang Resort, 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 – night 5 - 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!



Khun Yuam – night 6 – 3*

Yoont Hotel or similar – a simple but clean and friendly hotel in the heart of the small town of Khun Yuam. With all standard facilities (en-suite, air-conditioning, wi-fi etc) it's a great base for the night and perfectly located to enjoy the food and small, friendly bars of the town.



Mae Hong Son – nights 7 and 8– 3-4*

Fern Resort – a superb rural 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 pools and stunning sunset bar

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Pai – nights 9 and 10 – 3*

Belle Villa Resort (or similar) – located just outside the mountain town of Pai, this resort is a great place to unwind and relax. With lovely ‘cottages’ dotted around the grounds, a real sense of peace and a pleasant swimming pool and bar area, it is a great base to rest up and then explore Pai and the surrounding area.



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!)



- As you're travelling during the low season you might want to bring a light rain jacket and also a long sleeved t-shirt / hoodie for the odd time in the evening when the temperatures drop a little!
- Hat / sunglasses / sunscreen
- Don't forget your swimmers – there are great pools at 3 hotels and it would be a shame not to take advantage of the opportunity for a nice swim!

Spending money

- This is always difficult to gauge but you do need to budget for a handful of meals 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 (for a real splurge).
- Of course (!) you also need to budget for drinks throughout the trip. Beers range from 60THB up to 150THB for a large bottle of beer (depending where you buy them – sometimes even 150THB for a small bottle). Basic spirits are available in most locations (don't expect any fancy cocktails!) – whisky and soda is Thailand's staple drink – and wine is available in a few places (although it's vastly overpriced in Thailand due to our import taxes)
- Whilst everybody has different needs we'd suggest that you budget for around 5,000-7,000THB (£125 - £175) for food, snacks, drinks and so on during your trip. Cash machines are available on most days