

## DISCOVER THAILAND & CAMBODIAN CIVILIZATION

*BANGKOK - KANCHANABURI - AYUTTHAYA - SUKHOTHAI -  
CHIANG RAI - CHIANG MAI - SIEM REAP - PHUKET*

16 Days / 15 Nights

### Day 01: Arrive Bangkok

(-)

Arrival at Bangkok International Airport. Welcome by our local English-speaking staff from Tour East and a private transfer to the hotel. Upon arriving at your hotel, check in to your room and spend the rest of the day at your leisure.

Overnight at your chosen hotel

### Day 02: Bangkok - Half-Day City and Temple Tour

(B)



Breakfast will be served at the hotel.

Pick up from your hotel and transfer to visit **Wat Trimit**, the Temple of the Golden Buddha, which houses an impressive and solid 3-meter-high golden Buddha, weighing 5 ½ tons, carved in a wonderful "Sukhothai" style. Then we continue to **Wat Pho**, the Reclining Buddha Temple, from which you will need an extensive list of superlatives to give honorable justice to this great work of art and religious worship. It is, of the temples in Bangkok, the oldest and largest; inside, you can admire the largest Reclining Buddha in the whole collection of Buddha images in Thailand. It is also well known for being the first public education center. Then we will go to the **Old Royal Palace**, the former residence of the Thai Kings, built by King Rama I in 1782. The site has several buildings, among which the renowned Temple of the Emerald Buddha, also known as **Wat Phra Kaew**, stands out. In it, you can contemplate the famous Sculpture of Buddha, of 48.3 centimeters, made in a single piece of jade of emerald color, of incalculable value, and of great artistic beauty. This image of the Buddha has three "garments" that are changed at different times during the year. As for its antiquity, it is estimated that it was sculpted in southern China around the 15th century. This believe that praying in front of this image brings good luck.

Other important visits within the enclosure are the 9 Towers and the Pantheon of the Kings; the proud golden domes; the inspired capitals; exotic murals on the walls; and impressive ceramic decorations. They are all simple words to describe the magnificence of the most prominent and important point of Bangkok—the great royal palace. It can also be interesting to visit some of the cameras and interior rooms, such as the throne room, the official reception hall, and the coronation hall (closed on Saturdays, Sundays, public holidays, and special occasions).

Overnight at your chosen hotel

Day 03: MaeKlong Railway Market - Damnoen Saduak Floating Market

(B/L)



Breakfast will be served at the hotel, with departure early in the morning following a drive from Bangkok to Ban Na Kwang Station. Take a train for the short journey to one of the most amazing attractions in Samut Songkram province, the MaeKlong Railway Market (Rom Hoop Market). Commonly called Siang Tai, or Life-Risking Market, it is situated besides, and on top of, the actual train tracks. Seconds before you cross the tracks about to pull into MaeKlong Station, the vendors have rushed to pull back their parasols and umbrellas and cleared their goods back to within inches of the passing train. Less than a minute after that, they have hurried to put everything back in place so they can get back to the job at hand, selling their seafood, fruits, meat, and vegetables to the local shoppers.

After a brief wander around the market, you will be driven to a pier. From here, you will take an exhilarating, narrow, long-tailed speedboat ride through the marshes and stilt houses to get to the world-famous Damnoen Saduak Floating Market. Watch the Thai-style canoes laden with colorful fruits, vegetables, sweets, and meats gently ply their way through the canal from the water's edge, or, for an additional cost payable directly at the market, get an even closer look by taking a paddle boat ride. Lunch is at a local restaurant. Afterward transfer back to your hotel

Overnight at your chosen hotel

Day 04: Bangkok – Kanchanaburi

(B/L/D)



Breakfast will be served at the hotel.

Check out your room and drive to the province of Kanchanaburi, known among other places for the famous bridge over the river Kwai and for being the scene of some events during the Second World War. We will visit the museum and war cemetery, where the prisoners who lost their lives during the construction of the bridge are located. We will take the famous train of Death to the Tamkrase station. During the railway journey, we will cross beautiful landscapes that testify to an important part of the history of the country. We will have lunch in the peculiar station of Tamkrase. We will also know about the unusual railway section known as "Hellfire Pass." This step was built by allied prisoners of war (mainly English and Australians) during World War II. Afterward, transfer to your hotel.

Dinner at the hotel.

Overnight at your chosen hotel

Day 05: Kanchanaburi – Ayutthaya – Sukhothai

(B/L)



Breakfast at the hotel.

Check out your room and drive to Ayutthaya, the ancient capital of the kingdom of Siam. We will visit its archaeological complex of great historical interest and declared World Heritage by UNESCO, including the Wat Mahathat, where the famous Buddha head is inside a tree. Wat Chai Wattanaram temple, Wat Yai Chai Mongkol, was the place where the patriarch stayed; the monastery was named Wat Chao Phya-thai, which means The Temple of the Supreme Patriarch; and Wat Pra Sri Sanphet, the three bell-shaped chedis of Wat Phra Si Sanphet, have practically become a symbol of Ayutthaya. Then continue to Lopburi and stop to visit the monkey temple, Wat Prang Sam Yod. Lunch will be served at a local restaurant. After that, we will reach Sukhothai and check in at the hotel. Lunch will be served at a local restaurant.

Overnight at your chosen hotel



Day 06: Sukhothai – Chiang Rai

(B/L)



Breakfast will be served at the hotel.

Check out of the hotel, and we will continue to the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Sukhothai Historical Park. The park receives thousands of visitors a year who marvel at the ancient Buddha figures, palace buildings, and temples. The park can be easily visited by bike or on foot. Visit within the walls of the Sukhothai Monument to King Ramkhamhaeng, right in the middle of the park, north of the palace. Lunch will be served at a local restaurant. Driving through Lampang, I briefly stopped to visit Wat Phra That Lampang Luang. On first glance, this walled citadel, sited on a man-made mound of earth, has a very fortress-like look to it. That's because the temple was built on the site of an eighth-century fortification called a wing that guarded the routes to Lampang. Then continue to Chiang Rai and check into the hotel.

Overnight at your chosen hotel

Day 07: Chiang Rai – Chiang Mai

(B/L)



Breakfast will be served at the hotel, and in the morning, before embarking on our way to Chiang Mai, we will visit the Blue Temple, Wat Rong Suea Ten, and then transfer to Wat Rong Khun Temple, also known as the White Temple. It is true that most of the areas visited and visited in Thailand have a historical and cultural relevance and importance that date back centuries; we want to incorporate to this visit a sample of how modernity and the present can still recover techniques and vestiges of the past; this temple has been built very recently and part of its construction has not finished, small details that are expected to end in 2008; nevertheless we understand that it is of some importance since it is the work of a great renowned Thai artist: Mr. Chalermchai Kositpipat, who has designed and directed the construction of this Temple, the great White Temple to which he has incorporated various statues and figures that they are based, of course, on Thai religious beliefs: Buddhism. We will continue with our destination, Chiang Mai (approximately 4 hours of journey that cannot be done otherwise), while enjoying the great scenic beauty of Northern Thailand.



Lunch for logistical reasons will be made at a local restaurant on the way. Arrive in Chiang Mai and visit the famous crafts district, the artisan village of Sankamphaeng, to see the northern handicrafts, including silk, silver, Saa paper, lacquerwares, etc. We will make a short stop on the way to visit the tribe of giraffe women. Then transfer to Chiang Mai.

Overnight at your chosen hotel

Day 08: Chiang Mai – Kanta Elephant Sanctuary

(B/L)



Breakfast will be served at the hotel.

07.00am: drive approximately 50 minutes north of Chiang Mai through beautiful countryside, forests, and local farming areas. Arrive at Kanta Elephant Sanctuary. Walk through and learn about the elephants, change into traditional clothing, and prepare fruits for our elephants. Meet the elephants, feed, interact, and play with them in a natural environment, and learn about their behavior and history. Take photos with the elephants and walk with them to a clean water pond where they will cool off themselves, and you will have the chance to observe them as well. You will get some tea, coffee, and seasonal fruit, then say goodbye to the elephants. We leave the elephant camp to go to the butterfly orchid nursery. After lunch, we will visit the temple of Doi Suthep, one of the most sacred temples in Chiang Mai. Located on the top of a hill in the north of the city, it is Thai-style and contains sacred relics of Buddha. We will enjoy a panoramic view of the whole city. Dinner on behalf of customers.

Overnight at your chosen hotel

Day 09: Chaing Mai – Siem Reap

(B)

Breakfast will be served at the hotel. At the indicated time, transfer to the Chiang Mai airport to take the flight to the next destination at Siem Reap (*flight not included*).

*Suggestion flight: FD xxxx 15:40–17:05; connecting flight: FD xxxx 20:05–21:10 (flight price in supplement)*

Upon arrival at the Siem Reap Angkor Airport, you will meet your guide and be transferred to the hotel for check-in.

Lunch and dinner are on your own account.

*Notice: Revealing clothes such as shorts and skirts above the knees and bare shoulders are prohibited in sacred places and temples. On religious Buddhist dates, the Top Tower (Level 3) of the Angkor Wat temple is closed.*

## SIEM REAP

Siem Reap is located in northwest Cambodia and is the closest city to the world-famous, must-see temples of Angkor. The provincial capital is also called Siem Reap and is located in the south of the province on the shores of Tonle Sap Lake, the greatest sweet water reserve in all of Southeast Asia. It's a laid-back, lovely place to stay while touring the temples and offers the best of both worlds between observing Cambodian life and enjoying the amenities of modern services and entertainment. Although the temples are the main 'draw' in this area, there is much more to experience by traveling a little further in this region.

Overnight at your chosen hotel

Day 10: Siem Reap

(B)



Breakfast at your hotel.

Visit **Wat Thmei**, one of the killing field memorials, a small memorial stupa that contains the skulls and bones of victims killed during the regime of the Khmer Rouge from 1975 to 1979.

We continue the tour at the **Apopo Visitor Center** to learn about the history of conflict in Cambodia and the impact the region's landmines have on the local communities. In place to make a difference are what's known as the "hero rats." Because of their light weight, the rats have been trained to sniff buried landmines, which is a huge help in de-mining the region. Watch the rats in action at the helm of their trainers.

The day ends with a visit to the **Angkor National Museum**, an archaeological museum dedicated to the collection, preservation, and presentation of Angkorian artifacts. The collections are mainly dated from the Khmer Empire's Angkor period, circa 9th to 14th centuries, with most of the artifacts discovered in and around the Angkor archaeological sites nearby.

Afternoon: visit three temples. **Bakong, Lolei, and Preah Ko**, 11 kilometers southeast of the Siem Reap Market, comprise the Roluos group of monuments; they are close together and extend over an area of three kilometers (1.9 miles) east of the Great Lake.

The Roluos group, dating from the late ninth century, is the earliest site of the 600-year Angkor Period that is open to visitors. The three temples belonging to this important group have similar characteristics of architecture, decoration, materials, and construction methods, which combine to reveal the beginning of the Classic Period of Khmer art.

Lunch and dinner are on your own account.

Overnight at your chosen hotel

Day 11: Siem Reap

(B)



After breakfast at your hotel, we will visit the ruin temple of Banteay Srei, which is one of Angkor’s most beautiful temples. Built largely of red sandstone, this gem of a temple boasts a pink color and some of the most exquisite depictions. Following Banteay Samre, built under Suryavarman II and Yasovarman II in the early 12th century, it is a Hindu temple in the Angkor Wat style.

As a special evening in Siem Reap, we will go to see a show of Cambodian traditional circus. More than just a circus, Phare performers use theater, music, dance, and modern circus arts to tell uniquely Cambodian stories—historical, folk, and modern. The young circus artists will astonish you with their energy, emotion, enthusiasm, and talent.

Lunch and dinner are on your own account.

Overnight at your chosen hotel

Day 12: Siem Reap

(B/D)



Breakfast at your hotel.



Today at 5:00 a.m., go to see the view of sunrise at the world heritage site of **Angkor Wat**, then continue to see inside the magnificent Angkor Wat Temple, Angkor Park's most revered temple and the largest religious monument in the world. Inside the temple, the walls are covered with stone carvings and bas-reliefs, which are absolutely breathtaking. Your guide will explain the stories in exquisite detail and provide you with ample time to explore the inner and outer grounds of the temple. Back to the hotel for breakfast and time to relax.

Lunch is at your own account.

In the afternoon, visit the **South Gate** with its huge statues depicting the churning of the ocean of milk and see the ancient capital of **Angkor Thom**, built in the late 12th century, before we head onwards to **Bayon Temple**, which is unique for its 54 towers decorated with over 200 smiling faces of Avolokitesvara. Baphuon is like an artificial mountain that recently re-opened after years of restoration. Following, you may visit the Royal Enclosure, the Elephants Terrace, and the Terrace of the Leper King. Then continue to the popular temple of **Ta Prohm**, which is the modern name of the temple at Angkor, built in the late 12th and early 13th centuries. However, it is probably more famous for being the location where they filmed the Tomb Raider movie. Enjoy a buffet dinner with the **Apsara Dance Show** before going back to the hotel.

Overnight at your chosen hotel

### Day 13: Siem Reap - Phuket

(B)

Enjoy your breakfast at the hotel. Take a walk or get some last-minute souvenirs before you check out at midday. **Your guide and driver** will meet you to assist with luggage and take you to the airport for your departure flight to Phuket (*flight not included*).

Upon arrival at Phuket Airport, a welcome by our local representative will assist you with a private transfer by air-conditioned vehicle to your hotel, check-in to your room, and the rest of the day at leisure.

Overnight at your chosen hotel

Day 14: Full day Phi Phi Island by Speedboat (Join-In)

(B/L)



Breakfast will be served at the hotel.

Today we will pick you up for a popular excursion to some of the most famous sightseeing, the Phi Phi Island Tour, transfer to the departure lounge at the Royal Phuket Marina, and then take a speedboat across the Andaman Sea to the six scenic Phi Phi Islands. The journey to Phi Phi takes around 45 minutes, passing by spectacular limestone karsts that jut out from the blue seas. Sit back and relax, enjoying the views as the boat cruises closer to paradise. Pass by Maya Bay, arguably one of Thailand's most beautiful places, just for sightseeing. The bay is so stunning, in fact, that it was used as the setting for the famous Hollywood movie 'The Beach'.

Continue around the islands, Phi Phi Lay Cove, and Monkey Beach. Each of these stretches of island boasts swaying palm trees and white sands. There are also calm, clear waters brimming with fish for those who wish to discover Thailand's underwater beauty. During the day, lunch will be served at Phi Phi Don. This southern stretch of Phi Phi Ley Island offers sweeping views of the surrounding sea. The afternoon is spent cruising to the Bamboo Islands and possibly other islands nearby for more chances to snorkel and swim in the Andaman Sea.

After a spectacular day cruising the Phi Phi Islands, it is time to return to Phuket Pier. Upon arrival on the Phuket mainland, transfer back to your hotel by air-conditioned vehicle, arriving at the hotel early this evening.

Overnight at your selected hotel

Day 15: Phuket

(B)

Breakfast at the hotel.

A free day is at your disposal to enjoy the wonderful beaches of the area or make an optional visit that will be offered locally.

Overnight at your selected hotel

Day 16: Depart Phuket

(B)

Breakfast will be served at the hotel.

At the indicated time, we will arrange a private transfer by air-conditioned vehicle with our local representative to the Phuket airport to take the flight to your next destination (*flight not included*).

End of Service.