



Celebrations International Travel, Inc.



## *The Flavor of Thailand*

### **Day 1 Arrival in Bangkok**

On arrival you will be met by our local guide and transferred to your hotel.

Over the last few decades, Thailand's capital city, Bangkok, has changed into a modern, exciting and sophisticated city. It offers to visitors not only the cosmopolitan amenities they would expect from other big cities, but also a unique treasure trove of cultural attractions. Thailand, in the heart of Southeast Asia, was never colonized and thus kept its unique culture and heritage intact. Bangkok offers visitors the opportunity to experience fascinating glimpse of Thailand's gentle culture amidst the bustle of a great and dynamic metropolis. This great city has had astounding success in combining the ancient and modern world.

**Accommodation: The Tawana Bangkok \*\*\*+ Superior Room (3 nights)**

### **Day 2 Bangkok**

**BLD**

#### **Morning: Thai Cooking Class at Blue Elephant Cooking School**

Located in the heart of Bangkok opposite the Surasak Sky train station, the Blue Elephant Cooking School welcomes you to a dazzling century-old mansion where you will discover and experience the culinary wonders of Royal Thai Cuisine. The Blue Elephant Cooking School has fully- equipped facilities offering you the chance to try your hand at preparing Thai cuisine.



**Class Schedule:**

- 08:30 Upon arrival at the Blue Elephant Cooking School, you will be welcomed with a fresh Thai herbal drink and discuss with the chef the 4 course meal the class will be preparing.
- 09:00 The group will take a ride by Sky Train (Saphan Taksin) to the Bang Rak morning market. The instructor will advise and guide you in discovering the usage of Thai fruits and vegetables, not to mention the multicolored spices!
- 10:00 Time to take a ride back by Sky Train to the Cooking School. Upon arrival, a refreshing drink awaits you.
- 10:15 Theory Class: Here the instructor will present a cooking demonstration of the dishes that you will be preparing. Each student will receive a booklet with the recipes of the day.
- 11:15 Time for some hands-on cooking in the Practice Room! Each student will have his or her own workstation. Assisted by our instructor, you will learn the culinary techniques of Thai cuisine. You will have the opportunity to prepare four dishes.
- 12:30 Lunchtime! Enjoy your own culinary creations in a convivial Thai setting at the Blue Elephant Restaurant.

**Afternoon: Grand Palace & Temple Sightseeing**

After the class, visit the famous Grand Palace and glorious temples including the Reclining Buddha.

**Bangkok City, the Grand Palace and Wat Phra Kaew (the Temple of the Emerald Buddha)**

Together, these two sites form what many consider the greatest spectacle for visitors to Bangkok. Dating back to 1782 (when Bangkok was founded), the entire compound consists of over 100 brightly colored buildings, golden spires and glittering mosaics. Because of its popularity, this destination is often extremely crowded, but still an essential part of any trip to Bangkok. Presently, the Grand Palace is used for the occasional ceremony and is no longer the royal home (the present King Bhumibol lives in Chitralada Palace, located in Bangkok's nearby Dusit district). The interiors of most of the buildings in the Grand Palace are closed to the public. Wat Phra Kaew adjoins the Grand Palace in a common compound and is the home of the country's most famous Buddha statue (also known as the Emerald Buddha). This important figure has a long and interesting history that is tied to the royal family and once resided in nearby Wat Arun. It is relatively small (about 66 centimeters) and is situated in a high position in the Wat to signify its important status in the Thai kingdom.



**Wat Po (Temple of the Reclining Buddha)** - Bangkok's largest temple is most famous as the home of a giant reclining Buddha statue (45 meters long), but there is also much more to see here. Four large Chedis (and 73 small ones) 394 Buddha statues, and a Bodhi tree are situated throughout the compound and about 300 monks live in the monastery.



### Evening: Thai Dinner & Classical Dance at Silom Village Restaurant

This evening experience an authentic Thai dinner, cultural performances and classical dances in a beautifully decorated Thai style house. During dinner, feast your eyes on the grace and beauty of the dancers, elegantly performing stories from classical Thai literature and folk-tales. The exquisitely crafted traditional costumes bedecked with jewels must be captured on camera!



### Day 3 Bangkok

BLD

After breakfast, depart for a full-day tour to the Damnoen Saduak Floating Market & Rose Garden.

#### Damnoen Saduak Floating Market & Rose Garden

This most interesting full-day tour takes you to the rural floating market of Damnoen Saduak situated 110 kms west of Bangkok. The tour includes a visit to Nakorn Pathom to see Phra Pathom Chedi, the largest pagoda in Southeast Asia. Lunch will be served at the picturesque Rose Garden Country Resort, where you will also see the Thai Village Show, giving you an introduction into Thai culture. You will witness an ordination into monkhood, the fingernail dance, Thai boxing, hill tribe dance, sword fighting, elephants at work, and folk dancing.



This evening, return to the hotel for a traditional Thai dinner.

### Day 4 Bangkok-Kanchanaburi

BLD

Drive to Kanchanaburi. Visit Bridge on the River Kwai and Tiger Temples.

After breakfast, check out of the hotel and depart Bangkok via Nakorn Pathom for Kanchanaburi. Arrive at Kanchanaburi and visit Museum and Cemetery of the Allied Prisoners of World War II. Then continue to the Bridge over the River Kwai. Board the original Death Railway train to Wang Po, passing over the original wooden viaduct. Lunch is at Wang Po Restaurant, serving buffet of Thai and international foods.



After lunch, visit Tiger Temple (Wat Pa Luang Ta Bua Yanasampanno Forest Monastery) in the Saiyoke District. It was built in 1994 as a forest monastery focusing on the practice of meditation, in an area surrounded by mountain ranges and natural forest. Upon arrival at the temple, you will walk along Tiger Valley, where the tigers are taken for their afternoon exercise. At other times the tigers are in cages. *Note: Visitors enter temple grounds at their own risk!*



**Accommodation: River Kwai Village \*\*\*+ River Wing Room (1 Night)**

This evening, enjoy dinner with traditional Thai specialties at the hotel.

**Day 5 Kanchanaburi-Ayuthaya-Lopburi-Phitsanulok**

**BLD**

After breakfast at hotel, you will depart for the Ancient Capital City of Ayuthaya to visit Wat Yai Chai Mongkhon and one of Ayuthaya's most beautiful temples at Wat Chai Watthanaram. Continue to Lopburi province (approx. 98 kilometers from Ayutthaya) to visit Phra Prang Sam Yod. This former Hindu shrine is some 200 metres from the railway station and is Lob Buri's best-known landmark. The laterite and sandstone structure was constructed in the Lop Buri style and decorated with stucco. Adjoining towers signify the Hindu Trinity of Brahma the creator, Vishnu the preserver, and Shiva the destroyer. During the reign of King Narai, the shrine was converted to a Buddhist Temple.



A buffet lunch of Thai and international foods will be served at the Lopburi Inn Hotel. Afterward, continue the drive further north to Phitsanulok province (approx. 305 kilometers from Lopburi), a major regional commercial center spread along the banks of the Nan River. Visit the much-venerated shrine of Wat Mahathat, which is home to Thailand's most beautiful Buddha image.

This evening, enjoy a traditional Thai dinner at your hotel.

**Accommodation: Topland Hotel, Phitsanulok \*\*\* Superior Room (1 Night)**

**Day 6 Phitsanulok-Sukhothai-Chiang Mai**

**BLD**

After breakfast, proceed to Sukhothai, the first capital (13th century) of the Thai Kingdom. Old Sukhothai is one of Asia's most important historical sites and is therefore under the supervision of UNESCO. After a visit of the temples Wat Sra Sri and Wat Sri Chum, continue to Sri Satchanalai, the former sister town of Sukhothai for lunch and a visit to interesting temples and ruins. Lunch will be at Kaeng Luang Restaurant, which serves a Thai buffet.



Later, continue the drive north to Chiang Mai and check in to your hotel, where you will enjoy a traditional Thai dinner this evening.

**Accommodation: The Empress Hotel \*\*\*\*+ Superior Room (3 Nights)**

## Day 7 Chiang Mai

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Enjoy breakfast at the hotel before heading to cooking class!

### Full-Day Cooking Class at Chiang Mai Thai Cookery School

The Chiang Mai Thai Cookery School was established in 1993 and is a family business run by Sompon and Elizabeth Nabnian. They offer daily courses taught by Sompon who is an experienced Thai chef and who speaks excellent English. They will teach you the secrets of Thai cooking in a relaxed, home-style atmosphere.

The Chiang Mai Thai Cookery School offers you a choice of 5 different courses. Each course has been designed as a one day course so that you will learn the main techniques for cooking Thai food whichever course you attend. The courses offer a complete hands-on experience. The teachers have an extensive knowledge of Thai ingredients and cooking methods which they take pleasure in sharing with their students every day, and they all speak excellent English.



### Sample Course Plan & Menu (subject to change):

The group will be taken to visit the local market and they will be taught on how to identify the various vegetables, fruits and numerous other amazing items for sale at the market.

- ◇ Thai hot and sour prawn soup: tom yam goong
- ◇ Green curry with chicken: gaeng khiew waan
- ◇ Thai fried noodles: phad thai
- ◇ Spring rolls: por pia tord
- ◇ Papaya salad: som tam
- ◇ Black sticky rice pudding: khao neow dum piek (dessert)



Once the dishes are complete you will sit down to enjoy the dishes you have created.

After the meal, you will be transferred back to the hotel for some leisure time. Dinner is on your own this evening, and you may wish to participate in the optional excursion.

### Optional Excursion: (at an additional cost)

This evening, you will have a chance to explore the Night Bazaar. With its wide range of goods at competitive prices, this easily rivals Bangkok's Chatuchak Market [weekend market]. Inside are endless stalls of hill-tribe crafts, leather goods and clothing. The Night Bazaar also offers some of the best street food you're likely to come across!

## Day 8 Chiang Mai

BLD



### **Morning: Elephants at Work & Orchid Farm**

After breakfast, you will have the opportunity to observe Thai elephants at work. A pleasant morning spent in the company of these magnificent gentle giants which, in earlier times, were a vital part of the King's army and played a very important role in Thai history. You will bear witness to the traditional techniques still used in the training process. The majesty and precision of such gigantic creatures is amazing.

**Optional Activity – Elephant Ride (at an additional cost)** For a small fee, the adventuresome can enjoy a short but unforgettable elephant ride!

Afterwards, stop at one of the region's orchid farms displaying a full variety of Thailand's exquisite blooms. Lunch is at local restaurant. This is the perfect time to test your knowledge of Thai food!

### **Afternoon: Local Handicrafts**

Chiang Mai is Thailand's main handicraft centre and is ringed by small cottage factories and workshops. This afternoon's tour will introduce you to a variety of local handicrafts. Visit the San Kamphaeng district, heart of the silk and cotton home industries, to witness the fascinating process of making and weaving these popular fabrics. Continue on to Bor Sang, the umbrella village, where the delicate Thai paper umbrellas are produced and hand-painted. Then proceed onwards to Thai Celadon, about 6kms north of Chiang Mai, where ceramics are produced. These are modeled on the Sawankhalok pottery that was made hundreds of years ago in Sukhothai and exported all over the region. Last but not least, stop to observe the intricacies of both lacquerware and silverware craftsmanship. Well worth the visit!

Tonight, you will enjoy a farewell dinner at The House Restaurant, one of Chiang Mai's most exciting places. Set in a beautiful property from the 30's right in the center of Chiang Mai, you will find gourmet food, fine wines, and cool cocktails: A lush tropical adventure full of exotic rhythm.



**Day 9 Fly to Bangkok for your onward trip.**

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*Tour Offered Exclusively By:*



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