

# CHIANG MAI – MAE HONG SORN – PAI DISCOVERY TOUR

**(4 Days/ 3 Nights)**

This tour programme is a must-see for nature lovers, and visitors keen to know more about the lifestyle of the local people and hilltribes. It also encompasses some beautiful off-road perspectives of the countryside and mountain areas.

The highlights include a memorable ride through the rain forest on elephant back; navigating white water rapids by rubber raft on the scenic Mae Tang River, and mountain biking along remote village roads. For those who do not wish the elephant ride (in the same group), a visit to the impressive Chiang Dao Cave provides an interesting alternative option.

This itinerary includes the two small but quite different towns of Mae Hong Son and Pai. Both are blessed with lovely mountain scenery, both have numerous places of interest to visit, and are enhanced by the colourful costumes of various hill tribes. The difference lies in the type of visitors. In Mae Hong Sorn, most travellers stay for one or two nights, interested in the culture of a place close to Myanmar. The majority here are perhaps mostly middle-aged. By contrast, Pai is home to large numbers of young western people, mostly so-called “Millenials” with a sprinkling also of white –bearded expatriate retirees. If Kathmandu was Nirvana to the flower folks of the 60’s, Pai is a modern equivalent, over half a century later. Since many of the foreign residents are artists, writers, musicians and ‘digital nomads’ this gives the little town a pleasantly vibrant and cosmopolitan ambiance.

## **ITINERARY :**

### **DAY 1**

**(\_/L/D)**

Pickup from hotels, airport, railway station or bus terminal and depart Chiang Mai in an off-road vehicle. Visit the hilltribe museum (closed on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays) to learn about the hill people in Thailand and the fascinating origins of the seven ethnic groups. They consist of the Hmong, the Yao, the Lisu, the Akha, the black and red Musers and the Karen. Proceed to the local market of Mae Malai, a colourful rendezvous for local village selling their produce. Continue to Ban Mae Taman to trek through the rain forest on elephant back for about an hour. In a pleasant contrast, conclude with a leisurely ride on an ox-cart for 15-20 minutes.

As an alternative to the elephant and ox-cart rides, continue from Mae Malai market to the Doi Chiang Dao Cave, located 70 kilometres north of Chiang Mai city, en route to

Fang. Mount Chiang Dao is Thailand's third highest peak, rising to 2,175 metres. This huge limestone mountain is penetrated by a 14-kilometre network of pitch dark caverns and underground passages. It is lit for one kilometre to allow safe and enjoyable exploration by visitors. The remainder is only accessible and safe with a licensed guide.

Lunch at the local restaurant before boarding an inflatable rubber raft to shoot the white water rapids. Depending on the season the exciting journey lasts about one hour. This ride combines very enjoyable soft adventure with some spectacular views and lovely riverine vistas.

Continue by four-wheel drive to Ban Pang Hai, a simple Thai village 850 metres above sea level. Check in at Hmong Hilltribe Lodge for one night. During dinner in the cool mountain air, enjoy barbecued meats, different Thai dishes, salad, pasta, fruits and desserts. To follow, a number of Hmong cultural presentations provide an entertaining and interesting finale to the evening.

## **DAY 2**

**(B/L/D)**

After breakfast, depart on a full day excursion to Mae Hong Sorn via Kalaya Watana (Wat Chan). The scenic journey takes you through rolling terrain and countless steep hills. In some areas the road cuts through forests, passing simple local people and several hilltribe villages. A brief stop made at the Luang Mae Saab Cave.

On arrival at Wat Chan, enjoy lunch at a local restaurant. Proceed to Ban Huay Tong and Ban Huay Pu Loei where the majority of inhabitants are Karen hilltribe. They still live simply here, doing most things by hand, including pounding rice and weaving beautiful fabrics.

On arrival at Mae Hong Sorn if time permits, visit Wat Phra Thart Doi Kong Moo for a panoramic view of the city and the surrounding landscape. Proceed to Wat Jong Kham and Wat Jong Klang, two of the most beautiful old Burmese-style temples. Check in at Imperial Hotel for overnight, and enjoy dinner at the long-established Bai Fern Restaurant to sample the tastes of Thai and local dishes.

## **DAY 3**

**(B/L/D)**

Visit the early morning market to watch local people making merit by offering alms to the monks. See farmers and hilltribe folk bringing in their produce to sell. Some live very far away and have to leave their farm before dawn for the long walk to town. Return to the hotel and relish a hearty breakfast.

After breakfast, check out from the hotel and enjoy a morning river trip by local boat. After about 45 minutes, reach Ban Nam Pieng Din home to the Kayan Lahwi (Padaung) people, best known for the 'long neck' women with their extraordinary brass coils.

Continue to Ban Ruk Thai, where the villages are descendants of Kuomintang's Nationalist Army (KTM) defeated by Mao Tse Tung in 1949. Most of the KMT escaped the communists to Taiwan, but the 93rd Division retreated from Yunnan into Myanmar, and finally here to Thailand. This typically Chinese settlement is famous for its teas and tasty Yunnan dishes. A brief stop is made at the interesting Phu Klou Country club, known for the healing qualities of its hot springs and mineral-rich mud which form the base of beauty treatments and therapies. Lunch at Ban Ruk Thai and continue to visit the impressive 1.7 km long Lod Cave. This is traversed end-to-end by the Nam Lang River, and filled with stalactites and stalagmites. Check in at Pai Hot Springs Spa Resort for dinner and overnight. For those who wish to explore the lively nightlife of Pai, there is a walking street nearby.

#### **DAY 4**

**(B/L/\_)**

After breakfast, tour the small town of Pai. Visit the sacred temple of Wat Nam Hoo where water accumulates in the hollow head of the principal Buddha image, Luang Por Oon Mueng. This water is widely believed to be sacred, and capable of curing many illnesses. Continue to the picturesque temple of Wat Hua Na, and the refreshingly cool Mor Pang Waterfall. End the morning tour at the Tha Pai Hot Springs, and close by, see the famous Iron Bridge said to have been constructed by Japanese troops during World War II. Enjoy lunch in a local restaurant. After lunch, check out from hotel and depart for Chiang Mai.

**Daily departure with English speaking guide and full board**

**SELLING PRICE: (JOINT PACKAGE TOUR) Minimum 2 pax (Net per person)**

<b>TYPE OF ROOM</b>	<b>Rate for Adults</b>	<b>Rate for Child (3-12 years) (no bed)</b>
Hmong House	27,750.-THB	20,850.-THB
Hmong Superior	30,000.-THB	22,500.-THB
Hmong Deluxe	31,875.-THB	23,900.-THB
<b>Single Surcharge</b>	3,000.-THB	-

**Note : rate for child (3-12 years old) without bed, if bed request, adult rate will apply**

**INCLUSION:**

- Transfer and tours by an off-road vehicle or similar
- English speaking guide
- Entrance fee
- Elephant Riding, Ox-cart riding and White Water Rafting
- Meals as specified in the program
- 3 nights accommodation
- Service charge and VAT
- Boat trip on Pai River and Bamboo Rafting at Lod Cave

**EXCLUSION:**

- Other meals not mentioned in the program
- Expenditure of a personal nature

**(Validity: November 01, 2018 - October 31, 2019)**