

THE TUK TUK CLUB - 11 DAY ADVENTURE NORTHERN THAILAND

ITINERARY:

Day 1: ARRIVAL, MEET YOUR TUK TUK, EXPLORE REMOTE TEMPLES AND TINY 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 super local hotel which is your base for the next couple of nights and the 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 winding mountain roads but also to give extra comfort and views. There are Bluetooth speakers for you to play your road tip selections 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 on 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!

Then you're 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 adventures 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 traditional Thai dinner at a local 'country – pub'. Great food, live music and a very special place.

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

Inclusions:

- Transfer from Chiang Mai Gate Hotel to our 'base camp'
- 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 water throughout the day
- Twin / double accommodation in a lovely rural resort in Mae Wang – air-conditioning, en-suite rooms

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 Wat Doi Sapanyoo with great views of the surrounding mountains, giving you a glimpse of where you'll be heading tomorrow!

You're then head North up the valley in your Tuk Tuk as 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, what the team at the Elephant home are doing and then, after a great lunch at the home, it's time to enjoy the company of

these wonderful animals. You'll be able to feed them, get to know them and then walk with them (no riding allowed!) to the local river where you'll bathe with them.

In the late afternoon you'll have a change of pace as we float gently downstream on bamboo rafts before it's then time for a late afternoon convoy as we head back to the base camp to freshen up before heading out for dinner at a local family restaurant before getting ready for an adventurous day tomorrow.

- **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 water throughout the day
- Twin/ double accommodation in a lovely rural resort in Mae Wang – air-conditioning, en-suite rooms

Day 3: AND WE'RE OFF – DOI INTHANON HERE WE COME

After an early breakfast you're hitting the road and heading along small country 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 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 anything you need or simply chat to your fellow travellers!

The first 20-30km of the route is simple with gentle curving roads but we soon hit stunning switch back bends, incredible scenery and tiny Karen hill tribe villages as we make our way towards the National Park.

Enjoy the look of complete 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 have a look at different villages / views and of course to sample some of the great coffee and snacks in small villages. Lunch will be in a roadside snack bar – hearty Thai fare!

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

This evening it's time for a traditional Thai BBQ eaten over the rice fields as the sun sets over 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 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

Day 4: TREKKING

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 superb 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 trees.

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 – probably our favourite coffee shop anywhere in Northern Thailand.

NOTE – the trek / 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 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 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

Day 5: ON THE ROAD AGAIN....

Time to get back on the road and today you head out of Doi Inthanon National Park towards our destination of Mae Sariang, close to the Burmese / Myanmar border. Hopefully you've got your road trip playlist perfected (don't forget to charge those Bluetooth speakers) as today's route is simply perfect as we get deep into the heart of rural Northern Thailand (we spend much of the day in territory where Thai visitors are a rarity, let alone people from overseas!)

You route winds along through incredible scenery and some very quiet roads for the first section of the day and we then join the 'main road' for the last hour or two on the descent into Mae Sariang. Towering trees, steep hills and more than a few sharp curves are the order of the day and you'll, as always, have frequent stops to enjoy the area and let the Tuk Tuks cool down!

You'll arrive in Mae Sariang around late afternoon and check into your pleasant riverside accommodation for the night – complete with swimming pool by the river!

Mae Sariang is well worth exploring. With friendly people, a fascinating mix of Thai and Burmese culture (Mae Sariang is home to many Burmese Muslims), interesting Temples and more than one laid back, friendly bar to visit and meet the locals.

- **TUK TUK DRIVING TIME:** +/- 5-6 HOURS SPREAD OUT OVER THE DAY
- **DISTANCE COVERED:** +/- 160 km

Inclusions:

- Guide and support team (and driver – chauffeur driven option)
- Tuk Tuk and support vehicle
- Breakfast and water
- Twin / double riverside accommodation in Mae Sariang – air-conditioning, en-suite bathrooms and a riverside swimming pool

Day 6: MORE BENDS AND MOUNTAINS

After a good night's rest (or a late night enjoying the friendly bars of Mae Sariang!) you're back in the best seats in the house for the spectacular drive to Mae Hong Son, your overnight location.

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.

You'll stop for lunch at what we like to think is Northern Thailand's best road side restaurant – the perfect place to get seriously adventurous with your food (raw buffalo anyone?) before continuing on along these fantastic roads towards our overnight destination just outside Mae Hong Son town.

By late afternoon you'll arrive at the magnificent Fern Resort your base for the next two nights. 'Fern' is fast becoming a legend amongst Tuk Tuk Club travellers and with its lovely bungalows set around rice paddies, surrounded by forest and, in our view, the best sunset bar in the world (now with added infinity pool). The perfect place to rest up after a stunning day!

- **TUK TUK DRIVING TIME:** +/- 5-6 HOURS SPREAD OUT OVER THE DAY
- **DISTANCE COVERED:** +/- 165 km

Inclusions

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

Day 7: FREE DAY TO EXPLORE MAE HONG SON

Another day off for the Tuk Tuks today (they're wonderful machines but do need their beauty sleep) and a day off for you too – if you wish.

There are no activities planned for today – you can hang out by the infinity pool if you wish or alternatively there's a great 8km trek right from the resort (with added dogs who walk with you as guides – we're not joking!).

If swimming or trekking don't appeal then why not head into town to explore, visit Wat Doi Kong Mu the most important Temple in the area with amazing views over the town or even take a river boat trip and visit different Hill Tribe villages.

Let your guide team and drivers know and then will be able to sort everything out for you – but trust us, they won't judge you if you fancy a lazy day by the pool!

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

Inclusions:

- Guide and support team (and driver – chauffeur driven option)
- Optional activities which our team will help arrange if you wish
- Breakfast and water
- Twin/ double accommodation outside Mae Hong Son town – air-conditioning, en-suite, two swimming pools (!) and stunning location!

Day 8: 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.

Take in the spectacular views, fascinating communities and even the odd tasty mountain coffee along the way.

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

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 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 water
- Twin / double accommodation outside Pai – air-conditioning, en-suite, swimming pool and stunning location!

Day 9: ENJOY PAI AND THE SURROUNDING AREA

A final day of rest before the last push tomorrow when you head back to base. Enjoy the resort and pool, wander around the local village 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
- Twin / double accommodation outside Pai – air-conditioning, en-suite, swimming pool and stunning location!

Day 10: 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 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 see on the day!), today takes you off the map rather than off the beaten track.

Enjoy the ride 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 (where the adventure started) and there's time to freshen up before heading out to a village restaurant for one final superb group 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 water
- Twin / double – air-conditioned and en-suite rooms

Day 11: FAREWELL

Your adventure comes to an end today with a minivan transfer back to The Chiang Mai Gate Hotel arriving around late morning.

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

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 there is no 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.

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.

Mae Wang 'base camp' – nights 1,2 and 10 – 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'.

Doi Inthanon – 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 perched 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!

Mae Sariang – night 5 – 3-4*

River House Hotel or similar – very pleasant twin rooms located right on the river in Mae Sariang. Air-conditioning, en-suite, excellent food and a great location for relaxing beers after a hard day's driving

Mae Hong Son – nights 6 and 7 – 3-4*

Fern Resort (or similar) – a well-established 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!

Pai – nights 8 and 9 – 4*

Phu Pai Art Resort (or similar) – around 5km outside the town of Pai and set amongst rice fields and on the edge of a small village, this resort is the perfect location to unwind. All the rooms are individual villa style and a short walk to the restaurant and swimming pool. Laid back Northern Thailand doesn't get much better

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

The most important thing to pack is a 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 trekking / 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 trek 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
- Don't forget your swimmers! – there are great pools at 3 of our overnight stops (5 nights of the trip)!

Spending money

- This is always difficult to gauge but you do need to budget for 6 lunches and 5 dinners 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 (depending where you buy them – sometimes even 150THB for a small bottle)
- Whilst everybody's needs are different we'd suggest that you budget for around 5,000-7,000THB (£125 – £175) for food, snacks, drinks etc during your trip. Cash machines are available on most days

THE TUK TUK CLUB – 11 DAY ADVENTURE IN NORTHERN THAILAND

SELF DRIVE and CHAUFFUER DRIVEN OPTIONS AVAILABLE

A truly amazing 11 Day Adventure in Northern Thailand 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 adventure 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 – specially converted Tuk Tuk able to cope with the mountain roads with ease. Remote

Temples, off the beaten track Hill Tribe communities, elephants, bamboo rafting, trekking, stunning overnight locations, incredible food and, of course, your bright orange Tuk Tuk.

There simply is no better way to experience real Thailand!

Inclusions:

- Tuk Tuks – 2 travellers per Tuk Tuk (chauffeur), up to 3 travellers per Tuk Tuk (self-drive)
- 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 guides with you every step of the way (*and an experienced driver for those choosing the chauffeur driven option*)
- Visits to remote Temples and tiny rural communities, meeting elephants, bamboo rafting, trekking in the foothills of Doi Inthanon, the mountains of Mae Hong Son and much much more – in fact there are so many fantastic experiences we simply couldn't list them all here!
- 10 nights accommodation in superb locations
- 10 breakfasts, 4 lunches and 5 dinners and water throughout the adventure
- A support vehicle for your luggage
- Travel stories to beat everyone else's...