



Northern Thailand & Laos Adventure

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16 Days

Fully Inclusive from the UK

This is the ideal tour for those who wish to combine the wonders of Thailand in Bangkok, Chiang Mai and Chiang Rai with the landlocked treasures of Laos. Laos is a peaceful country dominated by incredible mountains, stunning scenery and thundering waterfalls, whereas Thailand is known for its temples, palaces and floating markets.

Fully Inclusive price includes:

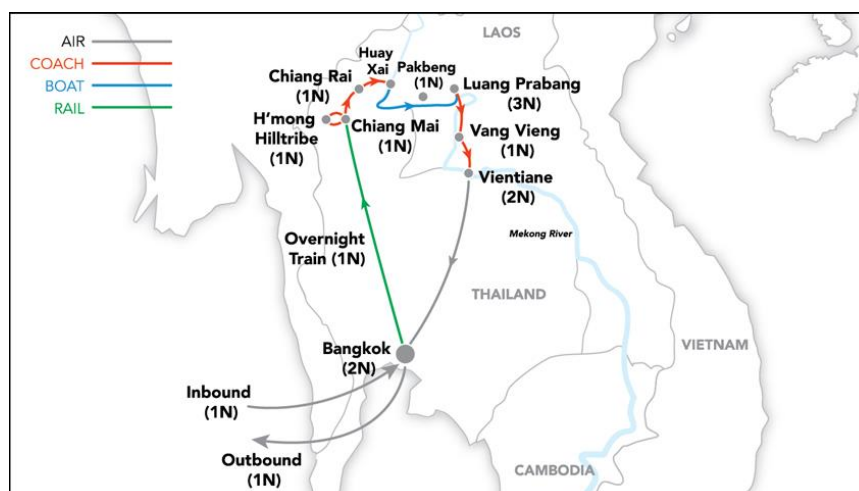
- International flights and current taxes
- Domestic transportation
- Accommodation
- All meals (excluding drinks)
- Touring with Guides and entrance fees

Your Tour Dossier

This document is designed to be read in conjunction with the other pre-departure information provided by Wendy Wu Tours including the tour itinerary as described in our brochure and/or website. It aims to provide a straightforward description of the physical activities involved in sightseeing or travelling during the tour.

If there are any particular challenges, from the length of time spent on your feet, the length of drives and flights, to the standard of remote accommodation; they will be explained here.

All passengers must read this document to ensure the itinerary is suitable for their interests and physical capabilities. This is not your final itinerary and therefore does not mention all the sites visited.



Welcome to Wendy Wu Tours

Thailand and Laos continue to amaze, fascinate and thrill our passengers, many of whom have travelled to one country in Asia with us, then another, year after year. We urge you to keep in mind all the rewards, as well as challenges of travelling in countries with a history, culture and attitude so unlike your own.

A typical day's sightseeing may include the bustle and noise of a city street, sights and smells of a local market and interacting with the locals. Travelling in Thailand and Laos requires patience and potential delays are to be expected due to standards of service. There is a low level of English spoken throughout Thailand and Laos, so your local guides or National Escort will be indispensable during your trip.

Almost everything will be different to what you may be used to. We have found that our passengers who embark with a sense of humour and adventure, who accept that things do not always go to plan, are those who find their experience most rewarding. It is essential that all passengers recognize the demands of factors such as basic facilities and cultural differences they may encounter in some areas.

Thailand & Laos Adventures - Medium Paced Tour

These tours are not strenuous but do require higher levels of fitness. A typical tour may include longer periods of sightseeing on foot, climbing of stairs and getting on and off boats will be necessary. These tours may involve longer periods of driving; sometimes on poorly maintained roads, and overnight train journeys; as well as some easy hiking.

It is essential that all passengers recognise the demands of factors such as basic facilities and cultural differences they are likely to encounter in some areas.

Anyone with a good level of fitness should be able to complete this itinerary. Of course our local guides always endeavour to provide the highest level of service and assistance, but they cannot be expected to cater for customers who are unfit to complete the itinerary. If you do have mobility difficulties, please contact us for our range of private tours which are more flexible and can better cater for individual needs.

N.B Please note that times and distances listed in the tour dossier are approximate.

Days 1-2: UK/Bangkok

On Day 2, you will be met in the arrival hall at Bangkok's International airport by your Local Guide and/or National Escort from Wendy Wu Tours. Together with all other group members who may be arriving at a similar time, you will transfer 45 minutes-1 hour, depending on traffic conditions (35km) to your hotel.

Day 3: Bangkok

Sightseeing in downtown Bangkok involves approx. 5 hours on foot over the whole day; broken up by 3 hours in the morning and 2 hours in the afternoon. Watch your valuables while in the market area. This afternoon, a tour introduction will be held in the hotel. There will not be food or drinks served at this meeting; it is simply an opportunity for your group to meet and learn more about travelling in Laos and Thailand.

Day 4: Bangkok touring/train to Chiang Mai

Early morning rise to drive 1.5 hours to the Damnoen Saduak floating market. You will travel by motorised, wooden boats between the islands and perhaps smaller, paddle boats in the canals. Sightseeing involves hopping on and off the boats, often on unsteady and slippery surfaces, sometimes without handrails or assistance, and up to 30 minutes on foot. Travel

30 minutes to the unique Railway Track Market in Samut Songkram.

A late check-out from the hotel has been arranged for your group so you will be able to have some time to freshen up, pack and check-out of the hotel before dinner. Transfer to the station to board your overnight train from Bangkok to Chiang Mai station. You will sleep in a Second Class sleeper cabin with four berths. This journey usually takes 12 hours (700km). Wear comfortable clothes on-board to sleep in and take snacks as they may not be readily available on-board the train.

Day 5: Chiang Mai

Morning is at leisure. After lunch there is easy sightseeing around Chiang Mai with around 2 hours on foot including a visit to the Kingkaew orphanage and a handicraft village.. Enjoy sunset from Wat Doi Suthep where you have the option of climbing 300 even steps to the top or catching the cable car. A panoramic view of the city can be seen at 3,500ft above sea level inside the temple. This evening watch your valuables while in and around the market areas.

Day 6: Chiang Mai to H'mong Hilltribe

Travel approx. 1 hour (70km) by minivan to the H'mong Hilltribe Lodge. H'mong Hilltribe Lodge is made up of ten

individual houses, each comprising of four separate rooms with private bathrooms, arranged around a central communal area. Optional activities this afternoon include a short hike to the village, hire a bike, have a massage or relax by the pool. This evening enjoy a barbecue and a cultural show.

Day 7: H'mong Hilltribe to Chiang Rai

Travel 1.5 hours (70km) to an elephant camp. Here you will enjoy a 1 hour elephant ride into the forest surrounding the camp, before watching the elephants taking their morning bath in the running stream. Afterwards the trainers and elephants will demonstrate a number of their skills! The elephant ride does not require any level of fitness, as it is quite leisurely. There will be 2 passengers riding on one elephant.

In the afternoon drive 2.5 hours to Thaton and board long tail motor boat ride for 1.5 hours to Baan Pha. Continue to Chiang Rai by road for 2 hours.

Day 8: Chiang Rai to Pakbeng

This morning transfer to Chiang Khong/Huay Xai border and complete custom formalities. Meet your Laos guide at the border and take a tuk tuk to the pier. Board a traditional boat to Pakbeng which will take approx. 6–7 hours depending on the water level. The boat is a local wooden slow boat with a roof and toilet. Check into your hotel on arrival.

Day 9: Pakbeng to Luang Prabang via Pak Ou

Continue travelling downstream by traditional boat to Luang Prabang via Pak Ou for approx. 7–8 hours. You will stop along the way at local villages for around 1 hour. Sightseeing at Pak Ou involves climbing steps from the base of the dock to the first cave and another 10 minutes on foot over uneven surfaces that includes walking up the hill to the second cave where you will need a torch.

Day 10: Luang Prabang

There will be morning sightseeing around Luang Prabang city by mini van for approx. 2-3 hours. Sightseeing at Phousi Hill involves 1 hour on foot – the hill is 100m high and this area is fairly steep (with 328 steps) but the view is worth the climb.

Day 11: Kuangsi Waterfall day trip

Drive 1 hour (32km) on a fairly good sealed road to Kuangsi Waterfall. Sightseeing here will involve around 1 hour of light walking. On the way up to the waterfall you follow a bush walking track which has a slight upward gradient.

[N.B: It is possible to take a swim in the river near the falls and if you wish to do this, please remember to bring along your swimsuit and a towel. Changing rooms are available on site.]

Day 12: Luang Prabang to Vang Vieng

Drive 7 hours (240km) to Vang Vieng over mountainous roads with photo stops along the way. Here there will be easy sightseeing en route at Pathang Village involving 1 hour on foot.

Day 13: Vang Vieng to Vientiane

Sightseeing this morning at Tham Chang cave involves approx. 1 hour on foot over uneven surfaces, and climbing steps to get up to the cave. Drive 3.5 hours (160km) to Vientiane.

Day 14: Vientiane

Sightseeing is easy today and involves 1-2 hours on foot. In the morning visit the morning markets; Wat Si Saket and Wat Phra Keo. IN the afternoon, visit Luang Stupa, Patuxai Victory Monument and later explore Buddha Park. This evening watch a Laos music and dance performance.

Day 15-16: Vientiane/UK

After a late check-out, you will be transferred from the hotel to the airport, according to the departure time of your international flight to the UK.

Land Only

If you are travelling on a land only basis, then you will need to make your own way to the starting hotel in Bangkok on Day 2. On Day 15, you will checkout from your Vientiane hotel, and continue as per your own arrangements.

Please refer to the Wendy Wu Tours brochure and/or website for details on departure dates, prices, itineraries, inclusions and tour extensions available as well as full booking conditions.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Before You Leave

Itinerary Changes - The order of events and sightseeing may vary according to local conditions or for operational purposes. The schedules of the domestic airlines in Thailand and Laos are subject to frequent changes. For this reason, we have indicated approximate times only. Your Local Guide or National Escort will inform you of any schedule changes as they are

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informed of them. Roads in Thailand and Laos have generally been improved over recent years, but some road construction and/or weather conditions may still lengthen the driving times. Our intention is to adhere to the day-to-day itinerary as printed; however order of events and sightseeing may vary according to local conditions:

Visas - No visa is required for Thailand for any stay up to 30 days.

A visa is required for entry into Laos. The cost of a Laos visa is not included as there is no Laos consulate in the UK. However, visas are very easy and inexpensive to obtain upon arrival in Laos. Your guide will assist you with this process.

Vaccinations and Your Health - We recommend that you contact either your local GP or a travel doctor for advice on vaccinations and travel health. www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk is a comprehensive website that you may also find useful.

Climate - Please refer to our website or brochure for detailed temperature charts.

Insurance - It is a condition of booking with us that you take out suitable travel insurance. You must provide us with the name of your insurer, policy number and their 24 hour emergency contact number when you book with us or as soon as possible thereafter. Wendy Wu Tours will not be liable for any costs incurred by you due to your failure to take out suitable travel insurance from the date of booking.

Luggage- All clients are limited to two items of luggage each; a suitcase with a maximum weight of 20kg and one piece of hand luggage with a maximum weight of 5kg. It is essential that your luggage is lockable. Please note that authorities will only allow bottles onto the aircraft if they have been checked in as main baggage. Bottles in hand luggage may be confiscated.

What to Expect on Tour

Development - Although Thailand and Laos are developing quickly, they still lack international standards of civil infrastructure and therefore tourist facilities. For example, you may see a hole in the road without a warning sign or safety barricade; concepts of personal responsibility are different to those in the UK. Consequently, tourist and public facilities may not uphold the same safety standards as in the UK. However, all of our suppliers meet local safety standards as a minimum. We want you to have an enjoyable holiday so we ask that you take extra care, use your common sense as well as refer to notices and follow advice from your National Escort/Local Guides.

Seatbelts- Please note that seatbelts are not compulsory by law in Thailand and Laos, and therefore the local people largely choose not to wear them. For this reason some vehicles may not be fitted with seatbelts or they may be hidden underneath protective seat covers. It is recommended that where seatbelts are available customers must use them and remain seated at all times whilst the vehicle is moving. If you have any concerns, please notify your National Escort or Local Guide.

Traffic in Thailand and Laos- Roads in Thailand and Laos have generally been improved over recent years, but traffic and/or weather conditions may extend driving times. Road construction work usually covers an enormous section of road – not just one or two kilometres as you may be used to. For this reason, the timings listed in the sections above are approximations only.

Safety and Security- All travellers should maintain a high level of personal security. Although this region is generally safe for travellers, please ensure that your valuables are always safe and inconspicuous. There have been recent incidents of theft at the border region of Huay Xai so please be extra vigilant on Day 8.

Group Size – All our group tours are guaranteed to run subject to a minimum number of 8 travellers and a National Escort will accompany each group of over 10. The maximum group size varies depending on the tour, but is usually no more than 20 passengers.

Accommodation - Your accommodation is selected for convenience of location, comfort or character, and can range from a business hotel in one city to a family run guesthouse in a smaller town. In more remote areas, accommodation may be of a lower standard and may not have all western amenities. Hotels are generally rated as local three star standard, but please note that there is no international classification system for hotels and differences in facilities and quality do exist between

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the UK and Thailand/Laos. Rest assured that all hotels used by Wendy Wu Tours are regularly inspected by our staff and our partners to ensure that standards meet your needs.

Meals - All meals (excluding drinks) are included in our fully inclusive group tours from the groups' arrival until the day of departure. Our schedule of meals is designed so that you can experience the local dishes, their individual flavours as well as the different ways they are prepared and cooked throughout Thailand and Laos.

Rail Journeys - This tour involves one overnight train journey which is in first class soft sleeper compartments where each cabin consists of four berths (sharing).

Tipping - As with most countries, tipping is a way of life in Thailand and Laos. For our passengers' convenience we ask for a compulsory amount to be paid at the beginning of our group tours to cover tipping for guides, drivers, restaurant staff etc. Approximate tipping amounts can be found in our brochure and/or website; however exact tipping amounts will be stated on your invoice.

Exchanging Cash – British Sterling can be easily exchanged in Thailand and Laos, provided notes are new and undamaged. We suggest exchanging your money before travelling to remote areas and smaller towns, as exchange facilities can be limited. Your National Escort will remind you to do this before departure.

Personal Expenses- You will need to take some extra money to cover drinks, laundry and souvenirs, plus any additional sightseeing that may be offered to you. Based on the advice of previous customers an approximate amount of £150 per week should be sufficient; however for those that can't resist a bargain, consider allocating a higher amount.

Optional Extras - Our tours are planned to be as fully inclusive as possible. However, from time-to-time your National Escort or Local Guide may suggest optional tours/sightseeing in addition to the standard sightseeing planned for that city. Such options are at an additional cost, with prices ranging from US\$20-US\$50 per person (payable in local currency). If you do not wish to take part in any optional extras, you will have the option of enjoying some free time at leisure or to return to the hotel.

Safety and Security - All travellers should maintain a high level of personal security. Although this region is generally safe for travellers, please ensure that your valuables are always safe and inconspicuous. There have been recent incidents of theft at the border region of Huay Xai so please be extra vigilant on Day 8.

After Your Booking

Once you have booked with Wendy Wu Tours, you will receive a confirmation invoice followed by deposit documentation, which includes a visa application form and a help sheet. Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approx. 2 weeks prior to departure, and will include a travel wallet, badge, lanyard, suggested packing list and a phrase book, along with your final itinerary and international e-tickets.