



Smiling Albino's Chiang Rai Northern Exposure



Mountain hideaway, hip northern digs,
activities du jour and chill-out vistas

Validity: February 2017 - March 2018,
except December 20, 2017 - January 10, 2018



Background



This creative six-day adventure brings us in touch with some of the most unique and memorable venues in northern Thailand. Chiang Rai, Thailand's northernmost province, borders Burma (Myanmar) on the west and Laos on the east to create the infamous 'Golden Triangle' – a perfect venue to gain a taste of northern Thai life. We'll use bicycles, foot, kayaks, boats and more for this exhilarating jaunt through the far north.

This adventure features luxurious and quaint accommodations, outstanding food, seamless transitions, and the opportunity to meet fascinating local characters along the way. Activity level is tailor-suited each day so that you get the adventure you're looking for.

It will be an honour to host you here.

Day 1: Fly to the Far North



Upon arrival in Chiang Rai, your host will meet you in the arrivals hall and privately transfer you to the gorgeous 'Legend Resort & Spa', set on the banks of the Mae Kok River. Check in and enjoy the rest of the day at your leisure.

Flight: Schedule is subject to change

1. Thai Smile Airways, WE 134 Bangkok - Chiang Rai 14:50 - 16:10
2. Bangkok Airways, PG 235 Bangkok - Chiang Rai 17:10 - 18:30

Meals: N/A

Accommodation: The Legend Resort & Spa, Superior Studio

Day 2: Bikes, Boats and Villages



After a great breakfast in Chiang Rai we'll head out to a cave temple on the outskirts of town where we'll find our mountain bikes waiting patiently for us. After checking out the temple inside the cave, we'll cycle up the Kok river through fertile farmland and creaking bamboo stands to a riverside hilltribe settlement. This Karen village is surrounded by limestone mountains, a light lunch and we'll continue an epic day in the saddle. If you're up for more cycling, we'll navigate small back roads leading out of the village, up and over some medium-grade mountains, passing by Ahka and Lisu villages. When we've had enough biking, we'll place our bikes on a private longtail boat and head back down river to Chiang Rai town and our resort.

After some afternoon R'n'R at the resort, we'll head out for a northern feast and explore the vibrant night markets.

Riding: approximately 20-50 kilometers (flexible, paved/dirt roads), manageable hills

Note: non-cyclists can enjoy all of today's activities by private van transport

Meals: B, L, D

Accommodation: [The Legend Resort & Spa](#), Superior Studio

Day 3: Chiang Rai to the Mae Salak Mountains



In our comfortable van, we'll leave the city and take a picturesque drive west to the riverside town of Mae Salak. Either jump in kayaks for a grand waterborne entrance or continue by van to the rustic Huai Khum Resort made up of bamboo mountain chalets overlooking the Mae Kok River. Rooms are designed using all natural materials and symbolize a traditional northern Thai cottage.

After lunch you can either chill-out at the massive pool or embark on a river kayaking expedition down the Mae Kok River, passing Lahu villages and lush forest. Tonight we'll have an incredible Thai feast in the resort's riverside bamboo restaurant.

Driving: 70 km, paved roads

Paddling: 1-2 hrs, low-grade river currents most of the year and stronger currents during August - October

Meals: B, L, D

Accommodation: [Huai Khum Lahu Resort](#), Deluxe Bungalow

Day 4: To Mae Salong and Chinatown



Today we'll drive up to one of the Kingdom's most stunning destinations – Doi Mae Salong. This dramatic mountain region was settled first by indigenous hilltribe groups such as the Ahka and Lahu peoples, and more recently by Chinese settlers who fled the Communist Revolution in China in 1949. We'll drive roughly 75 kilometers up and over spectacular jungle-covered mountains enroute to this highland retreat. Once opium country, Doi Mae Salong is now home to Thailand's premier Oolong tea production. Let's try some!

Hiking Anyone? We'll arrive early enough for a nice nature hike through terraced tea and rice plantations, taking in hilltribe villages and rolling mountains around the Doi Mae Salong area.

This evening we'll have a special opportunity to stay at the renowned Thai mountain resort, the Phu Chaisai.

Driving: 75 km, paved roads

Hiking: Between 1.5 - 2.5 hours depending on energy levels

Meals: B, L, D

Accommodation: [Phu Chaisai Mountain Resort & Spa](#), Deluxe Mountain View Cottage

Day 5: From the Mountains to the Mighty Mekong



We'll get started today with a drive to Doi Tung Royal Gardens for a strong morning Arabica-style coffee and a visit to this renowned development center for hilltribe groups in northern Thailand. Next we'll head to the top of Doi Chang Mub, one of the province's highest mountains and along a spectacular road that straddles the Thai-Myanmar border.

After lunch we'll travel past the Golden Triangle into the open farmland of eastern Chiang Rai province to Mekong River. Our final night in northern Thailand is a treat... we'll stay at a new concept resort in cabins overlooking the Mekong River and beyond into Laos.

Driving: 100 km, thrilling descents, exhilarating mountain passes

Meals: B, L, D

Accommodation: Rai Saeng Arun

Day 6: The Golden Triangle



This morning we'll visit the scenic spot where the Mekong and Ruak rivers converge, as do the borders of Thailand, Myanmar and Laos – the Golden Triangle. A trip here wouldn't be complete without a Mekong river boat ride down to a Laotian trading port. From here we'll head upstream to the impressive Hall of Opium. This is a fascinating center recounting the 5,000-year trade of one of the world's most illicit crops, and well worth the visit to round out the northern Thai experience.

From here we'll shuttle to Chiang Rai and catch an afternoon flight to Bangkok, arriving approximately 17:30.

Pope kan mai na (until we meet again)!

Meals: B, L

Flight: Schedule is subject to change

1. Bangkok Airways, PG 234 Chiang Rai - Bangkok 15:35 - 16:55
2. Thai Smile Airways, WE 135 Chiang Rai - Bangkok 16:55 - 18:15

PRICES:

- Group of 2-3 people: \$2,125 US / pax (Double / Twin Sharing)
- Group of 4 people: \$1,620 US / pax (Double / Twin Sharing)
- Single Supplement: \$425 US / pax

INCLUDING

- English Speaking hosts
- All transportation and logistics
- 5 nights accommodation with daily breakfast
- Internal air tickets (Bangkok- Chiang Rai - Bangkok)
- Personalized 'Adventure Kit'
- Most meals (as indicated), Drinks and Snacks
- Airport transfers
- Admissions and executive care
- The only surprises are good ones. We've got you covered

About Accommodation

The Legend Resort & Spa, Chiang Rai

The Legend is a charming boutique property in Chiang Rai, designed in Thai-Lanna style and set in a garden amidst flower ponds and brick walking paths. Spacious, white, minimalist architecture gives the rooms a comfy, luxurious appeal. The property backs onto the Mae Kok River and provides a glimpse of riverside life each morning.



Huai Khum Lahu Resort, Chiang Rai

The Huai Khum Lahu Resort is an enchanting riverside hideaway. All private bungalows are handcrafted with bamboo, stone and natural materials from the area. It features a stunning backdrop onto the Mae Kok River and has its own riverside swimming pool, pier and restaurant. Created from the owner's architectural passion, Huai Khum is a treasured retreat in the hills of northern Thailand.



Phu Chaisai Mountain Resort, Chiang Rai

The Phu Chaisai is an oasis of spirituality. Noted designer ML Sudavadee Kriangkrai built Phu Chaisai as a labour of love. Each villa is made of bamboo, clay and natural materials. In the warm embrace of Mother Nature, one can find peace with their inner selves during a stay here. AI fresco dining and a natural spa make the Phu Chaisai an integral part of the essential Thai experience



Rai Saeng Arun, Chiang Rai

Rai Saeng Arun is a charming property nestled on a hill overlooking the Mekong. Accessible by a dramatic wooden footbridge above rice paddies, the rooms are stylish and refreshing, offering unbeatable river views and stunning sunsets. Featuring classic Thai architecture, tropical outdoor showers and natural materials, the rooms are as enchanting as the views are inspiring.



The Smiling Albino Service Difference



We understand implicitly that a perfect adventure is much more than nice hotels, great meals and hassle-free logistics. For a travel experience to be perfect, all pieces must work together like a symphony. It is the fine details which our guests appreciate most, like cold face towels after a hike, electrolyte beverages for your day cycling, and wine uncorked when the moment is right. From local maps to bottled water and colorful anecdotes on the areas we visit, a Smiling Albino adventure is a thorough, intimately hosted experience. You'll be treated with executive care during your Smiling Albino adventure.

We look forward to hosting you!

The Team at Smiling Albino

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"See a different part of the world, differently"