



Smiling Albino's
South East Asia Family Epic

Bangkok, Ayutthaya, Chiang Rai & Angkor's Temples

A fun approach to big city life, Khmer stone ruins,
northern mountains & activities du jour...



Background



This customized adventure starts with a few days of insider ins' and outs' in bustling Bangkok, enjoying everything from boat rides to world famous sites such as the Grand Palace, wonderful meals and staggering sites outside the capital. Next it's off to the incredible ancient capital and UNESCO World Heritage Site of Ayutthaya for a look at stone palaces. Then it's to the kingdom's northernmost province, Chiang Rai, where you'll enjoy an intimate and highly-original experience exploring its farthest reaches atop elephants, mountain bike, van, kayak, boats and of course foot power. Next it's off to Siem Reap, Cambodia to explore the amazing temples of Angkor. This epic, multi-activity outing was designed to create a smooth, exciting and total-quality experience.

Prepare to be hosted!

Day 1:
Welcome to Bangkok!



Meals: -
[Ariyasom Villa](#)

We'll be waiting when your plane touches down, brush off the airline peanut shells and welcome you to 'The Land of Smiles'. Upon arrival into the main terminal don't walk too far and look for a representative with your name on a sign. You'll be whisked to your home away from home and introduced to your surroundings. Upon check-in you'll receive your personalized 'Adventure Kit', containing a custom-designed 'Adventure Handbook', lots of neat tidbits and your complimentary mobile phone. The phone is yours for your entire journey. Sit back, relax, enjoy a swim and get ready for the adventure of a lifetime.



About the Ariyasom Villa

A true gem in the city, Ariyasom is a lovingly converted and expanded house dating from 1942. Colonial charm and Thai design combine to create a sublime environment in the heart of Bangkok. Each room is individually decorated and the hotel's design is appointed with quality local and imported materials – old re-cycled teak floors, antique and reproduction furniture, Thai silk drapes. A gorgeous pool, yoga and meditation pavilion, spa, natural restaurant and prime location make Ariyasom an elegant sanctuary in the city.

**Day 2:
Bangkok Multi Transport
Adventure (09:00-17:00
approx)**



Meals: B, L
[Ariyasom Villa](#)

Prepare to be hosted! Home to over 10 million people, 'The City of Angels' is the largest city in Southeast Asia and also one of the most chaotically-planned. Bangkok can be confusing to navigate, leaving many visitors exhausted with their experience. With this in mind, we've found a way to do justice to the capital.

Using the elevated Skytrain rapid transit system, canal boat, motorcycle taxi, three-wheeled tuk-tuk and longtail boat to see more in one day than most folks see in three. The only question is what you'll enjoy more – the sites or getting to them!

**Day 3:
Get Your Wok On (08:20-
13:30)**



Meals: B, L (lunch included in cooking program)

[Ariyasom Villa](#)

This morning the Bai Pai Cooking School team will pick you up at the hotel at 08:20 and take you to one of Bangkok's most authentic and fun cooking schools. Situated in a charming two-storey Thai house with wooden decor and furnishing, you'll learn how to create Thai dishes focusing on traditional Thai techniques, innovative use of ingredients, and aesthetic presentation with absolute fun. The best part – you get to eat your creations for lunch. You'll finish about 13:30 and be back at your hotel about 14:30. Enjoy the afternoon relaxing, perhaps having a swim and get ready for an evening on the town.

Day 4:
Ancient Ayutthaya on
Ancient Bicycles (08:00)



Flight: Bangkok-Chiang Rai
Riding: 10km (paved roads, old-school bikes)
Meals: B, L
[The Legend Resort & Spa](#)

The ancient Siamese capital of Ayutthaya was the crowning glory of the kingdom from 1350-1767. Preserved in history, Ayutthaya remains a magnificent site to be seen. We'll use Mary Poppins-style bicycles to explore the prime sites. Along the way we'll enjoy an authentic 'Isaan' (northeastern Thai) lunch and fill you in on lots of nifty historical facts. This intimate exploration of Ayutthaya gives you a genuine appreciation for the city's significance to the Thai people.

After exploring we'll bring you to the airport to catch an early evening flight to Chiang Rai. Here you'll be met by your host in the north. He'll take you by van to check into the gorgeous Legend Resort & Spa, set on the banks of the Mae Kok River.



About The Legend Resort & Spa,

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.

**Day 5:
Bikes, Boats & Elephants
(about 09:00)**



Riding: 20km, sealed road, dirt road (with escort vehicle)
Meals: B, L, D
[Legend Resort & Spa, Chiang Rai](#)

After a great breakfast in Chiang Rai we'll cycle through the city of Chiang Rai then place our bikes on a private longtail boat and head upriver to a hilltribe settlement. This Karen village is surrounded by limestone mountains and is an ideal venue for an elephant ride, a light lunch and the starting point for an epic day in the saddle. On today's ride we'll navigate small back roads leading out of the village, up and over some medium-grade mountains, passing by Ahka and Lisu villages.

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

Day 6: Paddler's Paradise



Paddling: 2.5 hours

Meals: B, L, D

[Huai Khum Lahu Resort](#)

After breakfast we'll drive up-river to Tha Ton, a town near the Myanmar border. Here we'll learn about the local Shan people and have a look at local weaving shops before the main event – kayaking. We'll board sit-on-top sea kayaks for two-plus-hour journey down the Mae Kok River, passing hilltribe villages and lush fields. Today's paddle allows you to simply ride the currents or work up a sweat with sessions of intense paddling. A riverside picnic rounds things out and we can also visit the hilltribe village next to our remote resort and poke our heads into the school should time permit.



About The Huai Khum Lahu Resort

The Huai Khum Lahu Resort is an enchanting riverside hideaway. All private bungalows are handmade with bamboo, stone and natural materials from the region. In addition, the resort features a stunning backdrop onto the Kok River and has its own riverside swimming pool, pier and restaurant. Started as the architectural passion of the owner, Huai Khum is a darling retreat in the hills of northern Thailand.

**Day 7:
Hilltribe Hiatus**



[Motorscootering/Van](#): 75km
(paved roads)
Meals: B, L, D
[Phu Chaisai Mountain Resort & Spa](#)

Today it's off to one of Thailand's most stunning destinations - Doi Mae Salong. Nestled amongst terraced tea plantations, this area was once opium country, but is now home to Thailand's premier Oolong tea production, and Chinese who fled China during the Cultural Revolution. Put on your hiking shoes for a day trekking through terraced tea and rice plantations, hilltribe villages and stunning rolling mountains around the Doi Mae Salong area. You'll likely even meet the woman pictured here. Locals are bound to be as curious about you as you are with them. We'll also sample local teas, visit a mountain-top temple and local school.

Tonight we'll enjoy staying at one of the north's coolest hotels - the Phu Chaisai - truly a wonderful place to refresh and relax.

About The Phu Chaisai



The Phu Chaisai is an oasis of spirituality for urban dwellers that seek refuge from the wear and tear of the city. Noted interior designer ML Sudavadee Kriangkrai found Phu Chaisai a home for solace and peace of mind. Luxury villas are made of bamboo, clay and natural materials.

**Day 8:
Hiking, Hilltribes and
Horses**



Meals: B, L (Dinner on own)
[Phu Chaisai Mountain Resort & Spa](#)

We'll stay put at the Phu Chaisai today and do as much or little as you wish. Enjoy a relaxed morning then we suggest walking 45 minutes through the hills to a forest monastery where monks raise and ride horses. Have a look around then walk another 30 minutes to a horse farm where you'll ride your own small horse (large pony) through the hills for about an hour-and-a-half. From here we can either take our van back to the resort or walk an hour through the rolling hills. Enjoy a swim, the spa perhaps and take the evening as you wish.

**Day 9:
From the Mountains to
the Mekong & Elephant
Training**



Meals: B, L, (Dinner on own)
[Anantara Golden Triangle](#)

We'll get started today and drive to Doi Tung Royal Gardens and development project for a strong morning Arabica-style coffee and a visit to this renowned development center for hilltribe groups in northern Thailand. Next we'll drive 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 on past the Golden Triangle into the open farmland of eastern Chiang Rai province and the confluence of the Mekong River.

Here the real fun begins! You'll spend two hours partaking in a 'mahout' (elephant handler) course, which will see you working alongside a professional elephant trainer. You'll learn about these magical creatures, retrieve them from the jungle, assist with feeding, cleaning, bathing and then learn how to drive an elephant, via verbal and physical commands.

Enjoy the evening as you wish relaxing in this gorgeous property.

About Anantara Golden Triangle



The Anantara is a luxury lodge nestled over the confluence of the Mekong and Ruak rivers, in the famous Golden Triangle. The resort includes traditional spa facilities, as well as an infinity pool, fitness center, sauna, squash and tennis courts, and a Thai cooking school. The dramatic high column-lined entrance and wooden carvings and artwork throughout the property are reminiscent of a Lanna palace, appropriate for a luxury hotel perched at the gateway to Indochina.

**Day 10:
Elephants, Boats and
Bikes**



Cycling: 25km, paved country roads
Meals: B, L, D
[Rai Saeng Arun](#)

Start the day off with a bang on your second mahout session. You'll work with an elephant from 7-9am, learning more about them and gaining a deeper appreciation for these amazing creatures. Take breakfast then board a fast boat which will whisk you from the Golden Triangle 25km down the Mekong River to a sleepy town where we begin cycling. Our team will be waiting with high quality mountain bikes and lead you on a stunning 25km ride through quiet countryside, along the Mekong River and through some of the most gorgeous scenery you've ever seen (support vehicle will be with us). Our final night in northern Thailand is a treat...we'll stay at a concept resort in cabins overlooking the Mekong River.



About Rai Saeng Arun

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.

Background



Regarded as one of the Great Wonders of the World, Angkor Wat is the world's largest temple complex. Its magnitude and artistic significance are unparalleled. This vast city was once the most important and powerful in the region, serving as the Khmer capital for more than 600 years.

While an amazing place to explore, the town of Siem Reap (gateway to Angkor) and temples of Angkor are quickly developing and crowds can make a visit overwhelming at times. With this in mind, Smiling Albino applied our original approach to travel to create an intimate, original and fun exploration of Angkor's gems, lesser-known sites and interesting nooks. Our Amazing Angkor Adventure also provides the option for a multitude of transport options – bikes, boats, rickshaw, van and foot to name a few.

Day 11: Bring on Cambodia



Flights: Chiang Rai-Bangkok,
Bangkok-Siem Reap

Meals: B, D

[Heritage Suites](#)

A morning shuttle brings you to Chiang Rai, where you'll fly to Bangkok then catch another flight to Siem Reap, the jumping-off point for the temples of Angkor. Get ready to be blown away...

Upon your arrival in Siem Reap you'll be met by a representative who will whisk you through Immigration. From here your Smiling Albino will be waiting just outside the terminal and will transfer you to your hotel. Settle-in and get oriented before an amazing late afternoon. We'll explore a temple or two then crack a bottle of champagne (Sprite for the kids) as the sun sets over an incredible day. Tonight we'll treat you to dinner at one of the city's most famous Khmer restaurants. Depending on individual interest either mount a bicycle, fun tuk-tuk, or private car to explore Angkor's temples at your own pace over the coming days. We can ride bikes one day, then tuk-tuks and then a car – it's up to you! Today should be done by tuk-tuk or van due to time. As the sun sets we'll crack some champagne over the hills of outer Angkor temples and marvel at it all.



About Heritage Suites

A member of the Relais & Chateaux group of properties, Heritage Suites exudes style, class and elegance. Lovingly conceived and managed by its owner, classic Khmer design combines with tasteful modern touches to create one of Siem Reap's nicest properties. A relaxing pool area and high-ceiling lobby/bar offer many places to relax, enjoy and unwind.

**Day 12:
Classic Sites**



Meals: B, L
[Heritage Suites](#)

Today indulge in essential Angkor. Either jump on a bike, fun tuk-tuk, or into our private car and take in Angkor's signature sites, Angkor Thom, Bayon and the rooty, overgrown Tha Phrom. Explore the largest complex, Angkor Wat, at a methodical pace without you suffering 'temple overload'. We can take breaks as you wish, go back to the hotel for an afternoon break, hit markets, the area is your oyster.

**Day 13:
Tonle Sap Lake and
outer Angkor**



Meals: B, L, D
[Heritage Suites](#)

Today we'll cycle through local villages (or take a tuk-tuk or private car if you wish), rice fields and temples to the Rolous Group of temples and onward to Tonle Sap Lake. As Southeast Asia's largest lake, Tonle Sap is a great way to avoid 'temple-overload'. We'll board a private boat for an intimate look at floating villages where locals reside right on the lake, relying on it for food, commerce and transport. In the afternoon the choice is yours: visit the Old Market, head back to Angkor for more temples or chill out by the pool. Another neat idea to give you an idea of the country is to visit the Angkor Hospital for Children. Tonight we'll enjoy a final dinner together at a tasty eatery.

**Day 14:
A Free Day**



Meals: B
[Heritage Suites](#)

Take today to enjoy as you like. Stroll markets, hit a couple more temples, get a massage, go shopping – there’s tons to do here. If you would like our team to arrange something, no problem, just let us know and we’ll make it so!

Day 15:
Back to Bangkok



Pickup: 08:00

Flight: Siem Reap-Bangkok

Meals: B

[Anantara Riverside Resort & Spa](#)

Our team will send you to the Siem Reap airport for your flight back to Bangkok where you'll enjoy a few final days doing as little or much as you like. Upon your arrival in Bangkok and exit into the Arrivals' Hall turn right and walk to the 'Meeting Point' next to Door #3. You will see a Smiling Albino host who will escort you to your waiting van, ride with you to the hotel and answer any questions you may have. You'll love a couple nights at the Anantara Riverside, just on the edge of the city and a tropical oasis and escape.

About Anantara Riverside Resort & Spa



An oasis of tranquility in the city, but just far enough out of it to provide a tropical calm, the Anantara's huge grounds, incredibly greenery and wide range of services create an ideal environment to enjoy Bangkok. Situated along the banks of the Chao Phraya River a short 15-min boat ride takes you to and from the resort and Bangkok's Skytrain rapid system, making getting out and about a breeze.

**Days 16-17:
The Big Mango as You
Like It**



**Day 16 – Evening
Headlights (18:00-
22:00)**



Meals: B daily and Dinner on
Headlights
[Anantara Riverside Resort & Spa](#)

This is your chance to experience ‘One Night in Bangkok’. It’s out for an outstanding Thai meal, then your customized night on the town. Depending on group interest we’ll explore lots of interesting nooks and crannies, market hotspots, Bangkok’s highest rooftop bar and perhaps even snack on a well-seasoned local delicacy - fried grasshoppers! Finally, we’ll wind things up at legendary Patpong, where night markets collide with colorful characters.

Enjoy the next two days getting as much (or little) as you like. Refer to our suggestions in your Adventure Kit and get in touch with us if you’d like us to arrange anything. Enjoy!

Day 18: Homeward Bound



Pickup: 20:30

Meals: B

Accommodation: 1 room until
checkout

You'll have to checkout of one room by noon but have one room until you depart at the end of the day - one final day in Bangkok to enjoy yourselves. A driver will meet you in the lobby of the hotel in the evening and send you to the airport for your flight onwards. We hope you'll keep in touch.

Pope kan mai krup (until we meet again)!

Price: Approx. \$300/pp/day

INCLUDING:

17 nights of quality accommodations, meals as outlined, all transport/transfers, all admissions, all activities, expert hosts/guides, snacks/drinks, flight tickets in Thailand, flight tickets from Bangkok to Siem Reap and back, Angkor Wat pass, customized Adventure Kit including 2 mobile phones and memories to last a lifetime. Simply put, we've got you covered.



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. We will also provide you with a complimentary mobile phone for your use throughout your stay. 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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