



Smiling Albino's Ultimate Chiang Rai Northern Exposure

Chiang Rai & The Golden Triangle

A sophisticated approach to soft adventure, elephants,
lush mountains, exotic food & hilltribe culture

6 Days



Background



This creative six-day adventure brings us in touch with some of the most memorable venues in northern Thailand.

Chiang Rai, Thailand's northernmost province, borders Myanmar on the west and Laos on the east to create the infamous 'Golden Triangle'. Each day is crafted with an eye to the variety that makes Thailand special. We'll use bicycles, foot, kayaks, elephants, motorscooters (optional!), boats and more for this exhilarating jaunt through the far north.

Accommodations feature the brilliant variety of what Northern Thailand offers: from charming, small local properties – clean and rustic – right up to grand luxury at the renowned Anantara Golden Triangle. Your adventure features outstanding food, seamless transitions, and capping it all off with a quintessential Thai experience: you'll take in the renowned Elephant Mahout handler program at the Anantara Golden Triangle. A fitting ending to an unforgettable adventure.

Prepared to be hosted!

Day 1 Northern Thailand & the Golden Triangle

Flight: TBA, Depart Bangkok Arrive
Chiang Rai
Meals: D
[The Legend Resort & Spa,](#)
Superior Studio



In the afternoon you'll board a flight from Bangkok to Chiang Rai city. Upon arrival you'll be escorted by your Smiling Albino host to a gorgeous villa along the Mae Kok River. Enjoy the rest of the day to get into the northern groove - perhaps enjoy the herbal spa, a dip in the infinity pool or a traditional Thai massage. If time permits your host will take you on a late afternoon cyclo trip around the city. You'll spend the first two nights of your odyssey at The Legend Chiang Rai, a stunning boutique riverside resort, sure to stimulate the senses.

Day 2: Bikes, Boats, Caves & Villages



Flight: TBA (Early morning)

Riding: 20-50km (to your preference) sealed road, dirt road, fun road, with support vehicle

Meals: B, L, D

The Legend Resort & Spa,
Superior Studio

This morning we'll grab our bicycles and head through the city of Chiang Rai then out into the open farmland west of the city. Verdant rice fields, forested villages, and lovely bits of road and track await. On the way we'll tuck into a couple of local cave temples, and pass through various Ahka and Lisu villages. Around Mid-afternoon return to the hotel for some r n'r, massage, pool, and holiday reading.

After some downtime at the resort, we'll head out for a northern Thai feast at a cool outdoor Thai restaurant and then night markets.



About The Legend Resort & Spa

The Legend is a charming boutique property in Chiang Rai, designed in 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 3:
Hilltribe Hiatus:
Chiang Rai to Mae Salak



Scooter/Drive: 85km (paved roads)
Paddling: 1-2hrs, low-grade river currents
Meals: B, L, D
Huai Khum Lahu Resort, Deluxe

If you wish to summon your sense of adventure, strap on a helmet and learn how to ride a motor scooter. With our van and scooters we'll leave the city and make a picturesque drive to the riverside town of Mae Salak, where superb bamboo mountain chalets overlook the Mae Kok River at Huai Khum. Designed using all natural materials, the rooms symbolize a traditional northern Thai cottage. After lunch chill out at the pool or embark on a river kayaking expedition down the Mae Kok, passing Lahu villages and lush forest. Tonight we'll have a Thai feast in the riverside restaurant.

Note: motor scootering is best for those who have some previous experience, or are particularly adept and such things. We can only provide basic, refresher training. Long pants required.



About Huai Khum Lahu Resort

Huai Khum is an enchanting riverside hideaway. Bungalows are handmade with bamboo, stone and natural materials from the region. The resort features a stunning backdrop onto the Kok River and has its own riverside 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 4:
To Chinatown and the
Mae Salong Hills

Meals: B, L, D

Drive: 125km (paved roads and thrilling turns)

Phu Chaisai Mountain Resort & Spa, Mountain Cottages



Today we'll do a short drive up to one of the Kingdom's most stunning destinations – Doi Mae Salong. This mountain region was settled first by indigenous hilltribes such as the Ahka and Lahu peoples, and more recently by Chinese settlers who fled the Communist Revolution in 1949. We'll drive roughly 75km up and over spectacular jungle-covered mountains en route 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.



About Phu Chaisai

The Phu Chaisai is an oasis of spirituality for urban dwellers that seek refuge from the wear and tear of the city. Luxury villas are made of bamboo, clay and natural materials. In the warm embrace of Mother Nature, many can make peace with their inner selves. Fine dining and a renowned spa make the Phu Chaisai an integral part of the Thai experience.

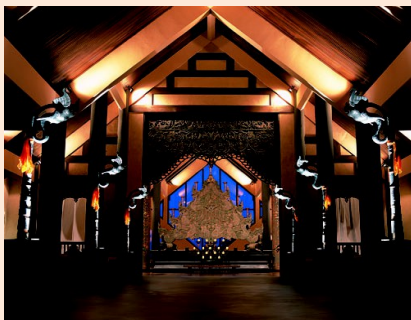
Day 5:
Choose your adventure
today & the Mighty
Mekong



Meals: B, L,
[Anantara Golden Triangle](#),
Deluxe 3-Country Room,

Mount your scooter or hop in the van and drive up to Doi Tung Royal Gardens, a renowned development center for hilltribe groups and a stop for a robust local coffee. From here a gorgeous ascending ridge brings you to one of the province's highest mountains, Doi Chaang Mub, then down one of the most spectacular roads on earth along the Thai-Myanmar border. With spaghetti-like turns and gorgeous backdrops these quiet mountain roads bring us out to Thailand's furthest frontiers. After lunch we'll pass the Golden Triangle's lush farmland towards a small resort on the banks of the Mekong River.

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. Our reward is the beautiful luxury resort, Anantara Golden Triangle.



About Anantara Golden Triangle

Anantara is a luxury lodge nestled at the confluence of the Mekong and Ruak Rivers.

The resort includes luxurious spa facilities, pools, fitness center, sauna, racquet club and Thai cooking school. The dramatic high-columned entrance, wooden carvings and artwork throughout the property are reminiscent of a Lanna palace, appropriate for a luxury hotel perched at the gateway to Indochina. You'll enjoy a Three-Country View Room

Day 6: Elephant Training in the Golden Triangle

Flight: TG141 Chiang Rai to
Bangkok, 20:20 – 21:45
Meals: B, L

Option to leave early:
Flight: TG135 Chiang Rai to
Bangkok, 15:45 – 17:05
Meals: B, L



Mahout Training Time: 07:00 – 09:30

Rise early for a quintessential Thai experience – a ‘mahout’ (elephant handler) course. 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 native verbal and physical commands. The program ends around 09:30, after which you can enjoy a great breakfast at the resort.

**For those who don’t want to ride we
recommend:**

Elephant Learning Experience (10:30 – 12:00)

Observe the behavior and playful interaction of the Golden Triangle Asian Elephant Foundation’s rescued elephants, and learn from Think Elephants International scientists about elephant behavior and intelligence. You’ll start with an exciting presentation and discussion with the education team, and then head down to the elephant camp for an up-close and personal experience (including some fun water play!) with the elephants. Part of income will be donated to support the foundations’ work.

(Continue)



Next, a visit to the Golden Triangle wouldn't be complete without a fast-paced blast in a Mekong river boat to a Laotian trading port. We'll enjoy lunch riverside and then we'll head 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.

Pope gan mai krup (until we meet again)!

PRICE:

**Approx. \$2,400 USD per person
(Minimum 4 persons)
Single supplement: \$650 USD**

INCLUDING:

5-night accommodation inclusive

- 2 nights at the Legend Chiang Rai with breakfast
- 1 night at the Huai Khum with breakfast
- 1 night at the Phu Chaisai with breakfast
- 1 night at the Anantara Golden Triangle with breakfast

Exclusive touring includes a deluxe variety of snacks, meals as indicated in itinerary, English speaking hosts, all admissions to venues in daily excursions listed in itinerary All private airport-hotel transfers in all locations, all logistics and costs for activities discussed, indicated meals, cycling, hiking, paddling, etc.

Economy class flights BKK-Chiang Rai // Chiang Rai – Bangkok

Personalized Adventure Kits, mobile phone, welcome packages upon arrival

All taxes and service charges included

EXCLUDING:

Alcohol

Souvenirs

Laundry expenses

Meals not outlined in itinerary



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 colourful 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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"See a different part of the world, differently."