Best of Thailand - 8 Days

Day 1: Arrive in Bangkok

Wat Arun Temple

Welcome to Thailand! Get ready for a smooth and easy arrival at Bangkok's Suvarnabhumi Airport with *VIP Meet and Greet* and *Fast Track Service*. This special process starts at the airport's air-bridge where you'll be met by a representative who will personally escort you to the immigration counter without a queue. You'll then be introduced to your private driver for transportation to the hotel.

The rest of the day is free time: You can either rest and acclimate to your surroundings at the hotel or get out and explore the city on your own. Bangkok will certainly jolt your senses: it's a steamy, exotic, and chaotic capital of eight million residents, which melds a bit of old and new, east and west, so get out and poke around the nearby streets if you're feeling up for adventure.

Day 2: Bangkok City Tour - River Dinner Cruise

Grand Palace

After breakfast at your hotel, it's time to meet your guide at the hotel to start a fun day of sightseeing. The tour starts at **The Grand Palace**—the most important and impressive royal palace in Thailand. Your guide will show you the site's many different palaces, which are used for different occasions including the **Funeral Palace**, the **Reception Palace**, the **Throne Hall**, the **Coronation Hall**, the **Royal Guest House**, and of course the mysterious **Emerald Buddha**, the most revered Buddha image in Thailand.

From here, you'll continue to **Wat Po**, one of the oldest temples in Bangkok. In fact, Wat Po is home of the famous 149 foot (45 m) reclining Buddha as well as being the original school of traditional Thai massage. Appropriate dress is required (or can be rented on site).

In the late afternoon, you'll have some time to rest at your hotel before taking a dinner cruise. Supanniga Cruise is the latest venture from the same team that brought Supanniga Eating Room to Bangkok—one of the top table restaurants in the city. Combining three exquisite elements of Thai culture—authentic food, genuine hospitality, and the majestic view of the **Chao Phraya River**—Supanniga Cruise provides a remarkable experience on the famous historical river, unmatched by any other company.

The night includes an exquisite six-course dinner while enjoying the photogenic nighttime views of Bangkok. In addition to serving quality cuisine, Supanniga Cruise is the only river cruise operator in Bangkok that provides a proper bar onboard. Since the company has a special collaboration with Vesper, one of 'Asia's 50 Best Bars 2016', imbibers will have access to signature cocktails and champagne served in flutes. All you have to do is sit back and enjoy the views.

Day 3: Fly from Bangkok to Chiang Mai

Doi Suthep Golden Pagoda

Today, after breakfast at your hotel in Bangkok, it's time to explore more of Thailand! You'll first take a memorable transfer by longtail boat to **Resotel Pier**—a fitting way to end your time in Thailand's capital. At the pier, you and your guide will transfer back to the Bangkok airport for your short flight to **Chiang Mai**.

Upon arrival in Chiang Mai, you'll transfer to your hotel for check-in. Thailand's fourth largest city has a distinct culture steeped in history, yet also thrives as a cosmopolitan city. Despite the city's modern growth, the historic center of Chiang Mai still feels quaint—more like a rural town than a bustling city, evidenced by its strict conservation efforts.

Once you're settled at the hotel, put on some walking shoes and get ready to explore on your own. First-timers will definitely want to head for the Old City and its narrow streets, which are lined with historic buildings, beautiful temples, and old shops. All you have to do is walk around and enjoy the area's relaxed atmosphere while visiting the city's finest monuments, including **Wat Phra Singh**, **Wat Chedi Luang**, and **Wat Phan Tao**—within walking distance of each other.

If you're in town on a Sunday, make sure to check out the **Sunday Walking Street Market**. This is when the Old City's main road gives way to thousands of pedestrians who come for street stalls selling a range of local goods and unique gifts. For dinner, you can enjoy a cheap and delicious dinner at one of the many street stalls which can be found all over the city, including the North and South Gates of the Old City.

Plan your trip to Thailand
Chat with a local specialist who can help organize your trip.

Day 4: Elephant Jungle Sanctuary Excursion

Elephant Jungle Sanctuary

Get ready to spend an exciting day with elephants in mountainous northern Thailand! After an early breakfast, you'll be picked up for a 1.5-hour transfer outside of the city through peaceful landscapes, agricultural areas, and forested hills, so sit back and enjoy the scenery.

Upon arrival at the Karen village in the mid-morning, you'll meet your guide for the 15-minute walk through the village to the Elephant Jungle Sanctuary where you'll change into traditional Karen clothing and enjoy an introductory lesson about elephant anatomy, history, and behavior. Then it's time to meet the elephants! Before lunch is served, you'll get to feed, interact, and play with the elephants in their natural home while learning about their behavior and history.

Around noon, you'll take a break to enjoy a lunch of traditional Thai food and fresh fruit. Then it's back to the elephants, where you'll walk them to the river and take part in the bathing and brushing process. For more interactive fun, you'll get to join the elephants in a therapeutic mud spa before taking one last communal swim in the river—great for photos ops.

In the mid-afternoon, you'll change back into your normal clothes and return by foot through the Karen village towards your driver who will make the return trip to your hotel in Chiang Mai. Once you're back in the city, there will be plenty of time to relax and enjoy dinner on your own.

Day 5: Fly from Chiang Mai to Phuket

Turquoise water in Phuket

Today, you'll have a free morning to spend in Chiang Mai however you see fit. At the designated time, a private driver will pick you up and transfer you to the airport for the flight to **Phuket**.

Upon arrival in Phuket, you'll be picked up and transferred to your hotel. Enjoy an afternoon and evening exploring this beautiful area of the country on your own. Consistently voted one of the world's favorite tourist destinations, Phuket offers stunning turquoise and white sand beaches, as well as a staggering range of restaurants, hotels, activities, and nightlife to suit all budget levels including backpackers and luxury travelers. There's plenty to see and do in town or find a stretch of sand and watch the sunset.

Day 6: Kayaking Trip in Phang Nga Bay

Limestone cliffs provide a beautiful backdrop to the colorful sea

Today is a free morning in Phuket to spend any way you'd like. Perhaps you'll choose a leisurely breakfast at the hotel and then hit the pool or beach with a good book.

Save your energy because, in the afternoon, it's time to join a kayaking and island hopping tour off of the dramatic coast of the **Andaman Sea**—truly a remarkable experience you won't soon forget. Once you've worked up a nice appetite, you'll take part in a prepared Thai seafood buffet dinner while watching the sunset over **Phang Nga Bay**.

After dinner, you will be returned to your hotel by nightfall.

Day 7: Phuket Beach Free Day

Phuket scenery will not disappoint

Finish up your Thailand experience with a free day to hit the beaches! Phuket and the surrounding area is known for its outstanding beaches offering a wide variety of scenery, atmospheres, facilities, and even textures of sand.

For instance, **Kata Beach** is always a reliable option with soft white sand, shady palm trees, water sports, and a laid-back atmosphere. You can easily spend the day here with a handful of food and drink vendors.

Another idea is **Nai Harn Beach** located at the end of Phuket, which has grown in popularity over the years. However, thanks to the relatively small size of the bay and its large lake on the other side, the beach hasn't been developed like others nearby. That being said, nice hotels, shops, and restaurants are located nearby for food and drink.

If seeking a more isolated atmosphere, head to **Freedom Beach** with possibly the best white sand in Phuket. Though it's more challenging to get to (you can either hike a steep path or take a longtail boat to arrive), you'll escape the motorized water sports and beach vendors for truly peaceful environs.

Day 8: Depart Phuket

Goodbye, Phuket!

It's time to say goodbye to Thailand! After breakfast at your hotel, enjoy any remaining free time in Phuket. At the designated time, you'll be escorted to the airport for your departure flight home.

Map