

12 Days / 11 Nights

# NORTHERN THAILAND, UPPER MEKONG & LUANG PRABANG

Departing ex Perth 18 November 2012



*This is one of a developing range of escorted groups which have been prepared for real travellers - by an immensely experienced team of experts. In undertaking one of these tours, you will enjoy a wonderful programme and the richest of cultural experiences.*

- Experience:** A fascinating 3 day cruise on the upper Mekong and the delights of Luang Prabang  
**Witness:** Rural lifestyle and traditional cultures amongst the hill tribes of Thailand and Laos; and breath-taking scenery  
**Celebrate:** The fine examples of eco-responsible tourism which are providing for a better way of life  
**Be inspired:** By the simple lives of the hardy hill tribes

- Sun 18 November** **Perth to Bangkok** **TG482** **1650.2245**  
You depart this afternoon with Thai Airways for Bangkok where you take the walkway to the Novotel Suvarnabhumi Airport Hotel for an overnight stay.
- Mon 19 November** **Bangkok to Chiang Rai** **TG134** **1315.1435**  
After a leisurely breakfast, you return by walkway and check in for the flight to Chiang Rai where you will be met by your escort and transferred to the Wiang Inn for an overnight stay. (B)
- Tue 20 November** **Chiang Rai to Lianjia Lodge** **OVERLAND**  
At leisure this morning then, early this afternoon, we drive into the hills and arrive at the Lianjia Lodge where we stay 2 nights. We can relax this afternoon before settling in for dinner and traditional Hmong performances. (B)
- Wed 21 November** **Lianjia Lodge**  
After breakfast, we will view a presentation on the "Golden Triangle," learning of the Hmong and Lahu tribes and the Pla Buek (the world's largest fresh-water fish) which are found in the Mekong River. We then set out to visit nearby villages, drink tea with the Hmong shaman and hear of the tradition of burying the placenta of newborn babies. After lunch, you can learn how to make Hmong batik handkerchiefs, set animal traps and assist in planting trees at the Herbal Plant Nursery Project. The Thai government has, for many years, encouraged the hill tribes to plant vegetables in order to move them away from the production of opium poppies. (B/L/D)
- Thu 22 November** **Mekong cruise to Luang Say Lodge**  
We set out early this morning in order to board the Luang Say prior to 9am. We then depart on our "slow boat," travelling down river while we relax and view river life (of which there is plenty). We'll stop to observe rural life at Ban Houei Phalam, a Kamu village, and enjoy a buffet lunch before arriving at Pakbeng where we will be accommodated (overnight) at Luang Say Lodge. After viewing the sunset, we take dinner on the terrace, overlooking the Mekong River. (B/L/D)  
**Note:** Due to limited availability, accommodation will be share twin (only) at Luang Say Lodge.
- Fri 23 November** **Mekong cruise to Kamu Lodge**  
After a continental breakfast on the terrace, we reboard our riverboat at 8am and continue our journey down river to Ban Baw village where we watch as villagers make traditional rice alcohol. A buffet lunch will be served on board before we arrive at Kamu Lodge, an eco-lodge which aims to strike a delicate balance between tourism and the maintenance of the region's cultural and ethnic heritage. This afternoon, you can engage with the villagers in an archery contest, rice planting / harvesting and traditional fishing. Dinner will be served on an open-air terrace before we retire for the night...in very comfortable "safari" tents. (B/L/D)  
**Note:** Due to limited availability, accommodation will be share twin (only) at Kamu Lodge.
- Sat 24 November** **Cruise via Pak Ou to Luang Prabang**  
A continental breakfast is served prior to our vessel leaving at 8am. We stop opposite the mouth of the Nam Ou River to visit Pak Ou's two caves (with their thousands of Buddha images) then continue on to Luang Prabang where we disembark and take lunch at a local restaurant. Following lunch, we will be transferred to Luang Prabang Residence Villa for a stay of 5 nights. We can relax, wander around the charming town and consider our dinner options. (B/L)  
*The Royal Capital of Laos until 1975, Luang Prabang has managed to retain much of its charm through a period of dramatic change. The former Royal Palace now acts as the*  
... itinerary continued overleaf



Integrated  
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Services

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... itinerary continued

National Museum and over 40 monasteries accommodate more than 700 monks and novices. Saffron-robed monks are a common sight, particularly early morning when they seek alms from the people. Luang Prabang is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

**Sun 25 November Luang Prabang - guided sightseeing**  
This morning we'll be joined by our Lao guide who will escort us on a walking tour of this charming city. The afternoon is free for personal pursuits then, this evening, we'll visit the night markets. **(B)**

**Mon 26 November Luang Prabang – sightseeing and / or activities**  
This morning, we will set off to visit Kuang Si Waterfall, the waters of which tumble over multi-tiered limestone formations into a series of turquoise pools. You can choose to swim here, or take the tortuous climb to the top of the falls, from where you will enjoy splendid views. On our return, we will stop at a textile village to view hand-weaving. **(B/L)**  
**Optional extra:** An elephant ride can be provided today for a supplementary cost (per person) of US\$50.00 (half day) or US\$70.00 (full day).

**Tue 27 November Nong Khiaw excursion**  
Our local Lao guide will meet us for the drive to the small town of Nong Khiaw, situated on the banks of the Nam Ou River and in (arguably) one of the most attractive settings in northern Laos. You will enjoy the sight of a beautiful river which has cut its way through vertical limestone mountains...simply breath-taking. **(B)**  
**Note:** Our rooms will be held over at Luang Prabang tonight.

**Wed 28 November River cruise to Luang Prabang**  
This morning, we'll set out by private long-tail motor boat and make our way through the valley and back to Luang Prabang, The Nam Ou is the longest river inside Laos and its valley has some of the most stunning scenery in the whole of Indochina. We'll stop along the way to visit some of the local hill tribe villages and to view some local colour. Then, tonight, we'll share a farewell dinner at a local restaurant. **(B/D)**

**Thuy 29 November Luang Prabang to Bangkok** **PG942** **1210.1415**  
**Bangkok to Perth** **TG483** **2355.0750+1**  
After a leisurely breakfast, we'll be transferred to the airport for our flight to Bangkok where we'll be transferred to the Miracle (Airport) Hotel. We can relax here then, later this evening, check in for our Thai Airways' flight, arriving back into Perth on Friday morning. **(B)**



TOUR COSTS – PER PERSON	Share twin	Single (except at Luang Say & Kamu Lodges )
	\$3,520.00	\$4,290.00

**Inclusions:**

- International and domestic airfares and taxes
- Transfers and transportation
- Accommodation
- Daily breakfasts, 5 lunches and 4 dinners
- Extensive sightseeing as indicated in itinerary & entrance fees as applicable
- Services of an English-speaking guide
- Tips
- Services of a company appointed escort

**Exclusions:**

- Beverages
- Meals other than stated
- Visa fees & travel insurance

Passports must be valid for 6 months beyond date of departure from Laos and Thailand. Visas must be obtained prior to departure from Australia.

**Trip grading:** 2 – requires a reasonable degree of walking fitness

**Weather conditions (October):** Chiang Rai 28 / 17 (55) Luang Prabang 29 / 18 (13) - average maximum / minimum (monthly rainfall in mm).

**Minimum / Maximum number on this tour:** Minimum 10 and a maximum of 12 including the escort.

**Escort:** This tour will be escorted by a company representative, ex Chiang Rai.

**Extensions:** We will be pleased to co-ordinate additional arrangements in Thailand and / or nearby points of interest. Our top suggestion would be to take a side-trip to Siem Reap to visit Angkor Wat (a 5 day / 4 night programme costing around \$760.00pp – share twin) including airfares.

**Booking Conditions**

**Deposit and balance of payment**

A deposit of \$300.00 per person will be required to secure your reservation and with the balance due by 3 September 2012. The deposit is non-refundable, except if the tour is cancelled due to lack of numbers (in which case it will be refunded in full).

**Cancellation fees**

Per person cancellation fees are:-

From date of booking to 45 days prior departure	\$300.00
90-45 days prior to departure	25% of the tour price
45-21 days prior to departure	50% of the tour price
Within 21 days	100% of the tour price

Plus any charges as may be applied by hotels, operators and/or airlines, but never exceeding 100% of the tour price.

**Travel insurance**

Integrated Tourism Services will provide insurance proposals for your consideration at time of booking. Comprehensive insurance is mandatory for all participants and the Company will require proof of any insurance purchased indirectly.

**Costs**

Based on airfares, taxes and exchange rates valid as at 1 April 2012 and are subject to increase.