



AMAZING GREEN ROUTE



Enjoy the Eco-friendly Journey,
Experience the Community's Way of Life

Chiang Rai ↓ Phang-nga





AMAZING
GREEN
ROUTE

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AMAZING GREEN ROUTE

Enjoy the Eco-Friendly Journey,
Experience the Community's Way of Life

The Amazing Green Route is one of the 7 Greens activities that will take travellers on a journey to explore the natural beauty, ways of life, and culture in Thailand that have been carefully preserved. The sample routes that are featured in the Amazing Green Route showcase the competent communities or hosts that illustrate their commitment to environmental conservation. The Amazing Green Route also urges travellers to be interested in environmentally-friendly tourism, as well as to understand and respect the beliefs, values, and customs of the local people. Travellers are also encouraged to spend more time on nature-based tourism activities and live a simple and peaceful life. A helping hand from everyone can help make a valuable contribution to preserving the extraordinary gifts of nature for the sustainable future.





Start with

Green Heart

Travel with respect for the nature, culture, and local traditions, as well as be aware of the impacts of tourism-related activities.

Green Logistics

Choose environmentally-friendly modes of transportation to reach the destinations. Help save energy, use renewable energy, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Green Plus

Travel responsibly and create opportunities to give the benefit back to society, through various volunteering activities. Also share your eco-friendly tourism experiences to others who may become the next green travellers and join hands to protect our Earth for future generations.

Green Service

Choose the tourism-related service providers who have high regard for the environment in every process of their operations, including selecting nature-based materials, quality waste management, and the efficient use of water and electricity.



Understanding the 7 Greens



Concept helps contribute to sustainable Thai tourism.



Green Community

Visit tourism communities with knowledge management for tourists, which have regard for the environmental, social, and cultural sustainability. These communities have maintained a balance between the tourism development directions and management of tourism-generated benefits.

Green Attraction

Visit tourist attractions that are concerned about the significance of natural resource, culture, and way of life conservation, with eco-friendly management to create the sustainability of the tourism resources.

Green Activity

Participate in tourism activities that provide happiness and enjoyment, and also opportunities to learn and experience the environmental and natural resource conservation.

Just start with taking responsibility of the environmental and cultural conservation, everyone can help to sustain tourism resources for future generations.





The Route of Mae Fa Luang Town to Sufficiency Agriculture to the Arabica Coffee Empire of Thailand Chiang Rai Province

Chiang Rai is the northernmost province of Thailand and is characterised by lofty mountains, lush forestlands, and serene waterways, with human settlements on the hilltops and flatlands in the valleys. This route starts at the royal project of the **Doi Tung Development Project**, and visitors are able to learn about the transformation of the land once known as the source of narcotic drugs into the current forested hills full of cash crops.

The route takes us to the **Cottage Industries Centre and Outlet** for *Doi Tung* brand handicraft products to witness the environmental protection programmes of the royal project. Then it is on to marvel at the temperate zone flowerbeds at **Mae Fah Luang Garden** to learn of the value of the plants for the people of Doi Tung and the socially-responsible company, *Navuti*. You can relive the heart-warming stories of the Mahidol Royal Family at the **Hall of Inspiration**, and then gather information about the health benefits of plant oils at the **Tea Oil and Plant Oils Development Centre**. There is much to learn about sustainable agriculture at the **Prince Chakraband Pensiri Centre for Plant Development** before taking a bike tour around **Pang Ha Village**. Then it is on to experience Saa paper craft at **Jinnaluck Miracle of Saa** prior to concluding the route at **Doi Chang** at the **Arabica Coffee Empire of Thailand**.





Somdet Ya, Mae Fah Luang of all Thais

Somdet Phra Srinagarindra Boromarajajonani (Somdet Ya), the Princess Mother, née Sangwan Talapat, was the royal consort of Prince Mahidol Adulyadej, the Prince of Songkla. She was the mother of the late HRH Princess Galyani Vadhana, the late King Ananda Mahidol, the eighth monarch of the Royal House of Chakri, the late King Bhumibol Adulyadej, the ninth monarch of the Royal House of Chakri, and paternal grandmother of King Maha Vajiralongkorn Bodindradebayavarangkun, the tenth and present monarch of the Kingdom of Thailand.

After the Prince of Songkla passed away, the Princess Mother, from the age of 29, single-handedly raised her three royal children. She was a perfect role model with gentleness in behaviour, sufficiency principles, determination, and care and concern for all people, qualities that were inherited by her daughter and sons. The Princess Mother worked tirelessly for the Thai people in remote areas regardless of religion and social status. She travelled to many remote places throughout the country and provided people with assistance in public health, food, and other necessities in their lives.

In the year 2000, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) recognised the Princess Mother as a “great personality in public service in the fields of education, applied science and human, social, and environmental development.” The Princess Mother was a role model for her family and the Thai people throughout the land.





Day 1



The route starts at the royal project **Doi Tung Development Project**, an initiative of tree planting in which the people and forests grow together. The Doi Tung Development Project is located on Khao Nang Non and covers three districts, Mae Chan, Mae Sai, and Mae Fa Luang of Chiang Rai province. The area is inhabited by 6 hill tribes: *Akha, Lahu, Kuomintang Chinese, Shan, Lue, and Luo*. Before starting the trip, let us take a stroll down memory lane to the origin of Doi Tung before it became an established royal project.





From a Grey Misty Land to a New Life of Hope

"I will reforest Doi Tung"

This statement was made by the late Somdet Phra Srinagarindra Boromarajajonani (Somdet Ya – the Princess Mother) when she visited Doi Tung on 15 January, 1997. She found numerous problems that faced the hill tribe people – poverty, lack of basic infrastructure, and no nationality and education opportunities. These problems forced them to survive with shifting cultivation, opium poppy growing, drug trading, and human trafficking causing economic, social, and environmental damage, which plunged Doi Tung into a dangerous situation. With her wide vision and great compassion, Her Royal Highness the Princess Mother had a royal residence constructed as her office to start working on returning fertility to the forestland and uplifting the people's quality of life.

"I am building a home here, but without the Doi Tung Project, I won't come!"

As a result, the Doi Tung Development Project came into being.





A Ray of Light Flashes from Heaven 'Mae Fah Luang' of the People

"Come back home, my child!

We now have jobs!

*Somdet Ya came with the project
to help us!"*

said Mrs. Kham Takhamjing,
Chief of the Woven Textile Section,
Cottage Industries Centre and Outlet.



Like many others, Mrs. Kham was given the chance to work on the Doi Tung Development Project. She regarded the arrival of the Princess Mother by helicopter to develop and help highland people as a gift from heaven.

The Doi Tung Development Project was established in 1988 under the Mae Fah Luang Foundation and royal patronage. Her Royal Highness the Princess Mother studied various royal initiatives of the late Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej (Rama IX) and adapted them to solve the problems at Doi Tung by deciding that the reforestation of Doi Tung needed to be integrated with the cultivation of the people at the same time.

However, such a solution could not be achieved overnight. The Princess Mother resorted to reforestation in the hearts and minds of the people first by developing human potential in tandem with the environment, and creating an approach that required the people to co-exist with nature. People were employed to plant conservation forests and grow their own cash crops; such as, coffee and macadamia. When the villagers started to recognise the value of their produce, they became protective of the land and wanted to conserve the forests. It took over 30 years for the Doi Tung Development Project to succeed in making people accept this perspective, but finally forest encroachment for opium cultivation was permanently wiped out.



With the foundations securely laid, the next step was to improve the people's quality of life with the setting up of 5 social enterprises comprising handicrafts, processed food, agriculture, tourism, and the Doi Tung Café. These are very important because, apart from creating jobs and stable income for the people on Doi Tung, they helped the people to have better living conditions and educational opportunities, so that they were able to acquire knowledge, skills, and a dignified self-reliance.

The once dark sky turned bright as Doi Tung became a model of business for sustainable social and community development as well as a famous tourism destination. This evolved from the kindness and compassion of the Princess Mother, and her efforts to reclaim the lush forests and save the people from the vicious cycle of sickness, poverty, and ignorance. As a result, the hill tribes awarded the Princess Mother the title of *Mae Fah Luang* – Royal Mother from the Sky for the people.



Before



After

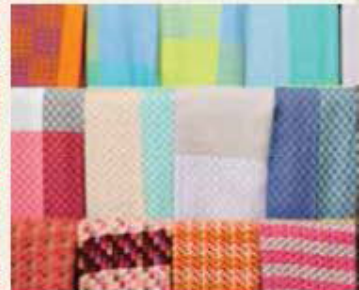


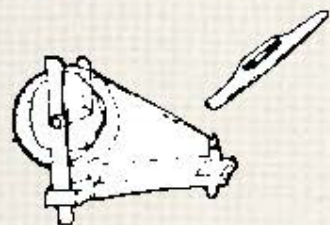
The Doi Tung Model is Recognised Around the World

The Doi Tung development transformed the land from the growing of opium for the production of narcotic substances, resulting in damage to health, the environment, and society, into land covered by green, productive forests. This transformation gave new lives to the local people. The world recognised this success and the Doi Tung Model has been adopted and applied to solve problematic areas in countries; such as, Myanmar, Indonesia, and Afghanistan.



Today, we experience various activities of the Doi Tung Development Project that represent outcomes of past operations up to the present time. There are opportunities to have friendly chats with the people of Doi Tung to learn about their environmental care and protection. We start at the **Cottage Industries Centre and Outlet** on the slopes of Doi Tung in Tambon Huai Khrai, Mae Sai district. A handicraft plant allows tourists to take a close look at the production processes of woven textiles and Saa craft paper created from natural raw materials by the local people's craft-making skills and inherited wisdom. High quality products of traditional and modern designs under the *Doi Tung* brand are popular in domestic and international markets.





Cottage Industries Centre and Outlet

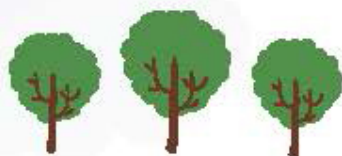
Woven Textiles

Doi Tung's success is based not only on the reforestation achievements, but also the skills of the local people. One of the first tasks was to identify these skills and then develop them. People; such as, Auntie Kham Takhamjing, were given the opportunity to refine their inherited weaving skills to be trained in textile weaving as a profession. In this way, the dreams of the Princess Mother came to fruition and from a few small household weaving looms, an efficient weaving and cloth-making production process has emerged, ready to become a world-class woven textile industry.



Saa Paper

Saa paper factory



Opposite the textile weaving plant is the saa paper plant. Saa is the local hemp from the mulberry family, which grows in abundance on Doi Tung. The peel of the saa branch is mixed with scraps of other natural materials to produce saa paper, an eco-friendly product under the *Doi Tung* brand. Presently, saa paper plant has Japanese and Thai production processes, which tourists are allowed to view and learn the stacking of saa paper pulp.





Dried peel of the saa branch

Stacking saa paper pulp



As part of an eco-friendly artwork, the dye used for saa paper is safe for producers and consumers. Scraps of natural materials found locally; such as, coffee pulp residue, leaves, and flowers from the Mae Fah Luang Garden, are used to add to the texture. Screened patterns that represent Doi Tung; such as, the 6 ethnic groups and endemic flora of Doi Tung, are used to produce attractive craft paper that is made into notebooks, fans, boxes, and cards.

Following the observations of the textile weaving and paper-making processes, visitors can shop for high quality *Doi Tung* products in the textile weaving plant. Every Baht raised is returned to the community and the Doi Tung Development Project for further social and environmental development.



Leaf

Flower



Products from saa paper



Beside the two plants already visited, there are 3 minor plants, carpet tufting plant, coffee roasting plant, and ceramics plant. All of these are later extension programmes of the Doi Tung Development Project. Those interested to observe the plants should contact the officials in advance.





Green Factory



Behind the orderly landscape of the **Cottage Industries Centre and Outlet** is the solid environmental conservation system of the Japanese 5S principles – Seiri, Seiton, Seiso, Seiketsu, and Shitsuke (in Thai and English; *sasang* – sort, *saduak* – set in order, *sa-at* – shine, *sukha laksana* – standardise, and *sang nisai* – sustain), which all personnel must observe. Within the Centre, there are segregated waste bins placed at various spots. Hazardous waste is disposed of in a landfill, while waste that cannot be recycled for further use in the plant is sent to a waste separating department. At 16.30 Hrs. each day, all workers in the weaving



plant collect garbage to be separated. Leftover textile strips from the weaving or cloth-making processes are made into various products; such as, key chains, wallets, and buttons to be sold and used in the Doi Tung Development Project. This reduces the waste that has to be disposed of by landfill methods. Another activity of the green factory is a scoring system for proper waste separation, with results announced annually. The department with the highest score receives a reward and certificate of distinction.



Leftover textile strips from the weaving or cloth-making processes are made into products; such as, key chains, wallets, and buttons.



Biomass Energy

Various plants in the Doi Tung Development Project use biomass energy for boiling, bleaching, drying, and burning, including the process of macadamia baking with macadamia shells, coffee hull, mulberry paper, and fabric scraps processed into fuel.

This reduces expenditure on gas and the amount of waste sent to landfill sites.





A Green Garden

Not far from the factory, we can hear music. Stroll towards the source and we find a happy hen farm! Music is played to accompany the chickens running around happily and for the mother hens to contentedly hatch their eggs. The chickens are raised on non-toxic feed; such as, vegetables from the gardens in the Project, and produce large organic eggs of high quality.

Next to the chicken farm is a so-called constructed wetland type of wastewater treatment pond based on the 'nature helping nature' method. This pond has an aerator



to increase oxygen in the water, reeds and vetiver grass grow as habitats for bacteria to help remove waterborne pollutants, and planting of canna along the sides further helps absorb waste and purifies the water to a satisfactory standard for releasing into natural water sources without damaging the ecosystem. At the same time, the reeds and vetiver grass in the constructed wetland can be used as raw materials for weaving to make placemats and table cloths, while the treated water is used to nurture plants around the factory and in the vegetable plots.

Nearby, we can find these plots full of lettuce, onions, coriander, eggplants, and a wide range of other vegetables, thriving in the compost created from the refuse and earthworm excretory waste. The produce is sent to the Krua Tamnak Restaurant on Doi Tung.



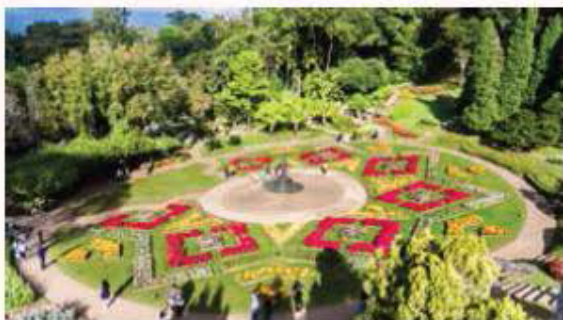
Satisfying Your Appetite and Taste Buds

For lunch today, we come to the Krua Tamnak Restaurant at Doi Tung, Mae Fa Luang district. Freshly-cooked organic brown rice with an inviting aroma is served with our choice of the signature Doi Tung fried rice, Northern style pork curry, Doi Tung fish snack wrapped in lettuce leaf, or several local dishes. Lunch here is special in that every dish is made from fresh local materials grown with no use of chemicals throughout the production process, guaranteeing their freshness and safety.



Mae Fah Luang Garden, the Garden of Life

Mae Fah Luang Garden is not just a garden of wondrous flowers in bloom, but a garden that also gives life to highland residents through job opportunities, income, and the development of skills in growing temperate zone plants that attract tourists. We can stroll through various landscaped parts; such as, Khao Wongkot (Maze Garden), Rock Garden, Bromeliad Garden, and the Recycle Water Pond (a retention pond of treated water used to water lawns and trees in the dry season).



In the open space in the middle, we wonder at the tremendous "Statue of Continuity", which stands broadcasting the message, "Whatever the Princess Mother undertakes, she keeps up in continuity, not just a touch and go." There are also the Doi Tung Café and handicraft outlets, which provide the local people with additional sources of income.

In 1993, the Mae Fah Luang Garden received a Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) Gold Award in the category of destination development. This was fine recognition of the efforts of all associated with the garden.



Doi Tung

Tree Top Walk



Learn about the forests of Doi Tung by undertaking the **Doi Tung Tree Top Walk** within the Mae Fah Luang Garden. Tourists can experience an adventure walking on a wooden suspension bridge 30 metres above the ground and covering a distance of 295 metres. The bridge allows us to see the primary forest and streams down below indicating the fertility of the area, and to wonder at the great ancient Giant Fishtail Palm and seasonal plants, before arriving at a coffee plantation that employs the original planting practice of subordinate bushes under big trees in a terrace system. Then there is the tremendous view of Doi Chang Mup, the highest point of the Khao Nang Non Mountain, before concluding the walk at plots of vetiver grass.

The suspension bridge is built of red Siamese Sal wood, in harmony with nature with construction mechanisms that do not damage the surrounding environment, and the safety of tourists is guaranteed throughout the walk.



Vetiver, the Miracle Grass

The Princess Mother once expressed her deep concern for the villagers around Doi Tung, as they often faced the problem of topsoil erosion, making water sources shallow, murky, and unfit for consumption. The late King Bhumibol Adulyadej, Rama IX, believed the long piercing roots of vetiver grass held the topsoil on steep slopes and helped eliminate silt. These properties strengthened the sloping land and retained water in the soil. King Rama IX advised the Princess Mother to have the grass planted to solve the problems on Doi Tung. As a result, vetiver grass has played a significant role in the growth and fertility of the Doi Tung forests seen today.



Navuti, the Genesis of Doi Tung Cash Crops

Navuti means 90. When the Princess Mother reached 90, she planted seedlings of macadamia and Arabica coffee as part of the establishment of a vast economic forest on Doi Tung named **Navuti**.

More About **Macadamia** and Arabica Coffee



Macadamia

is harvested from May to September.



Coffee

is ready to be harvested between October and February.

Macadamia is a plant in the same family as Ko, a local plant of Doi Tung. Coffee is a plant that thrives well under large trees. Both must be cultivated at an elevation of 800 metres above mean sea level and upwards. They therefore are suitable for Doi Tung – the more coffee grown, the larger the forests become. Furthermore, they are plants that can be maintained together as the flowering and harvesting periods differ. Thus people can be engaged in harvesting the whole year-round.

Navuti is a model of a Thai social enterprise involving the planting, maintenance, and processing of cash crops at Doi Tung, and established by a collaboration of Thai and Japanese private companies under the operation of the Mae Fah Luang Foundation. Here, tourists can visit and learn about macadamia and Arabica coffee plants. Presently, part of the coffee plantation is under the care of the villagers, and seedlings are distributed to the local people to plant on their private land. People can now produce and distribute coffee on their own; such as, Slow Coffee from Doi Pha Hi, which has developed into a national quality coffee. Such enterprises illustrate the success of the Doi Tung Development Project in the promotion of people's sustainable independence. Macadamia and Arabica coffee have become important plants in the development of the people and the forests.





1. Ripe macadamia nuts are husked to release the shelled nuts.

2. Shelled nuts are heated dry in a gas oven for 7 days and 7 nights.



3. The hard shells are cracked open to obtain the macadamia kernels inside.

4. The kernels are processed into various products; such as, baked macadamia and macadamia nut spread, and small freckles are used as cake dressing or cookie ingredients.



Processing of Macadamia

All the parts of macadamia nuts can be further utilised in various ways; such as,



1. The outer husk is finely ground to make fertiliser for macadamia plants instead of chemical fertiliser.



2. The removed nutshells can be used as biomass fuel for boiling water and can also be placed around pieces of ceramics in the firing process to create patterns on the finished ceramics.



3. Ashes from the burning of macadamia nutshells are mixed with chemicals to make ceramic glazes.

Since macadamia plants on Doi Tung are grown chemical-free, bees build their hives on low branches and help pollinate flowers. As a result, Doi Tung has become the first and only place in Thailand to sell honey from macadamia flowers.

As much as possible, from the top of the macadamia plants to the roots is utilised in the production of numerous items; a fine example of sustainability and environmental conservation.



Revealing

the Floral Charms of Doi Chang Mup

Now, the undisputed beauty of Rhododendron, the Queen of Flowers, and a wide range of rare flora will keep you enchanted at the Mae Fah Luang Arboretum, **Doi Chang Mup**, the site of the country's largest collection of rhododendrons or in Thai *katap phan pi* – millennia rose. The Princess Mother replaced a large opium poppy-growing area with this flower garden to create employment opportunities, reduce drug problems among the local people, and destroy the major drug-trafficking routes in the region. In addition, an orchid breeding station was established.



The Mae Fah Luang Arboretum has many winding paths leading to diverse pure breed and hybrid flora; such as, rhododendrons, azaleas, and kham daeng or Rhododendron arboreum. There are many cold climate flowering plants; such as, dahlias, ornamental cabbages, camelias, and ajugas with strong scents and bright colours among the pine forest, as well as ferns and moss.

The Mae Fah Luang Arboretum is a year-round dream garden that retains its natural beauty with introduced plants and flowers, all existing harmoniously without harming the environment. All the attractions of the Mae Fah Luang Arboretum resulted in it being the recipient of an Award of Outstanding Performance in the category of Recreational Attractions at the Thailand Tourism Awards 2010, a proud achievement for the people of Doi Tung.





Flowers, Food, and Sunset

With the permission of the Doi Tung Development Project officers, we enjoy a diverse local menu based on seasonal crops and vegetables of Doi Tung, grilled barbecue-style, accompanied by the chirpings of wild birds and the scents and colours of the flowers in the middle of the Arboretum.



Not far away lies the Doi Chang Mup Military Camp, a vantage point from which to view the sunset over the forests and green mountain ranges on the Myanmar side.





Day 2

This morning we remain on Doi Tung. First on our schedule is the **Doi Tung Royal Villa**, built with the Princess Mother's personal funds as her home and office for the Doi Tung Development Project. The Villa is a simple design of Lanna architecture with elements of a Swiss chalet that gives the feel of the original royal residence, Villa Vadhana, in Switzerland. There is a 20-minute audio tour of the Royal Villa arranged for visitors and photographs may be taken of the exterior of the Royal Villa only.

Stars at Doi Tung Royal Villa



The first steps into the Royal Villa reveal the warmth created by the sight of various personal belongings of the Princess Mother arranged in various corners. The Princess Mother used her leisure time productively, as evidenced by her handicrafts; such as, cross-stitch work, pottery, ceramics, and pressed flower cards. Entering the main hall, we are greeted by an elaborate star ceiling with hand-crafted wood inlays of constellations, designed by the Thai Astronomical Society, with stars aligned in the positions of 21 October, 1900, the date of birth of the Princess Mother. A star map is on her bed's footrest, and the balcony of her bed chamber is also carved with constellations. Astronomy was one of the Princess Mother's favourite topics.





In the study, there is the telescope used by the Princess Mother to survey the denuded hills and inspect the progress of the Doi Tung Development Project with her own eyes. When she needed to relax, the Princess Mother came to the study to observe the flowers at the balcony and landscape of Doi Tung and the faraway mountain ranges marking the Thailand-Myanmar border. Whoever stands in this study now may enjoy a view of magnificent forests, proving that the hopes of the past have become a reality of today.

Stories of the Mahidol Royal Family

After a tour of the Doi Tung Royal Villa, we move on to the Hall of Inspiration to learn about the stories of the Princess Mother and the Mahidol Family, presented through a biography of the Princess Mother. The story starts with a young Ms. Sangwan who becomes a mother who bore two great monarchs. The path of the story includes the room of 'People's Hardships', which tells us that the small voices of suffering subjects were never ignored, and outlined the tireless efforts and determination of the late King Rama IX to develop the country under the principle of the 'King's Philosophy' aimed at 'Understanding, Connecting and Development' to solve problems for the Thai people throughout the country. This principle was applied by the Princess Mother at the Doi Tung Development Project, sometimes termed the project in which "the son learned from the mother, the mother learned from the son, and the people of Doi Tung learned from Somdet Ya," resulting in today's success.



A Green Empire and a Fertile Forest

The people of Doi Tung and the forests co-exist happily. The whole area is shady and cool as up to a million trees thrive and provide a pleasant environment in which to live. However, the development does not stop here.

The next step for Doi Tung is the emergence of a green destination with the 'Change = Plant' Project involving changes in behaviour and reductions in energy being equal to the planting of more trees for our world. Messages aimed at creating an environmental conservation consciousness among tourists are found at various spots throughout Doi Tung; such as, "Rest Your Car, Let's Take Public Transport." This message is accompanied by parking lots and shuttle buses provided to cut air pollution. Others involve segregated waste bins at various important spots throughout the area and shops using food containers that are naturally degradable.



Sustainable Life Learning

The Mae Fah Luang Foundation organises the 'Faidee Kids Camp' to promote young people's protection of natural resources. In this initiative, nature is the teacher and various creatures act as classmates. More details are available at <https://www.facebook.com/faideecamp/>





The Colours of the Doi Tung Festival

The sound of music from the different tribal groups marks the beginning of the annual festival on Doi Tung. Tourists are invited to join the residents in marking the end of one year and welcoming in the beginning of a new one. Numerous activities are arranged for the Festival, including performances and games of various ethnic tribes displaying the diverse cultural traditions, and exhibitions of the practices and contributions of Somdet Ya to the arts and sciences, with workshops and demonstrations of handicrafts; such as, ceramics making, saa paper decorating, and carpet weaving. There are artistic displays and the most beautiful walking street in the country, 'Kat Chon Phao – the Ethnic Tribe Bazaar,' with handicrafts and local food offered by the hill tribe people in their colourful garments. This festival is the result of the development throughout the years, and it highlights the pride of the Doi Tung people in their way of life.



Doi Tung is a symbol of achievement, which shows the Princess Mother as a good leader and a person of kindness and compassion. She helped people to appreciate and respect themselves, returning human dignity to a large number of locals while transforming dreary, denuded hills into a vast forest that nurtures a variety of living creatures and plants.

Tea Oil Plants



The tea oil plant, *Camellia oleifera*, is a member of the tea family but does not yield leaf to be brewed as a beverage, instead produces seeds to be pressed for the health benefits of the oil.

In the afternoon, we leave Doi Tung and head for the **Tea Oil and Plant Oils Development Centre** in Mae Sai district. At the time, as Doi Tung forest area was recovering from mass destruction, Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn recognised the benefits of tea oil plants, which originated in China, as their roots stabilise the topsoil, reduce erosion, and solve the problem of soil degradation. She proposed that the Chaipattana Foundation work with the Mae Fah Luang Foundation in conducting the *Project of Education and Development of Cultivated Tea Oil and Plant Oils* by bringing tea oil plants from China to be cultivated experimentally on an area of over 3,000 rai in the Mae Fa Luang district.



The Princess' initiative to cultivate tea oil plants for the conservation of a watershed area yielded tremendous outcomes as researchers found that tea oil contains high amounts of mono-unsaturated acid that have great health benefits for humans, stemming the growth of free radicals, reducing cholesterol, and strengthening the heart and body. The oil can be used in several forms of cooking without worrying about carcinogens. Tea seed oil was recognised as a 'Heart-Healthy Food' brand by the Heart Foundation of Thailand under the Royal Patronage, and the plant has become an important cash crop that is constantly harvested and brings long-term stable income to the Doi Tung residents.

The research centre was set up to conduct studies and to promote high quality tea seed oil suitable for various health products; such as, cosmetics for hair and skin. It is also an institution that educates and cultivates health awareness with video presentations and exhibits relating to the origin of oil tea and the oil plants in Thailand and its health benefits. Study tour groups may contact the centre, so that officials and sites can be prepared for visitors in advance.



Model Oil Factory

The manufacturing factory of tea oil and plant oils is also located in the research centre. It is a model eco-friendly factory with the use of clear glass panels that result in free-flowing, naturally-lit, open space. Visitors are able to observe all steps of the production process, including seed pressing, reduction of humidity, extraction of oil, and packing in glass bottles. Machinery used is all the result of Thai inventions and production runs at 20,000 bottles a month. A sample of each new lot of produced seed oil was presented to Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn to be tasted before being released onto the market.

Environmental protection is high priority at the factory. Leftover natural materials from the production process are utilised for maximum benefits. Tea seed cake from seed pressings is made into soap and cleaning mixture and herbicide to eradicate apple snails in the rice fields, and tea seed coat can be milled and used as dye for textiles. The factory is not air-conditioned and natural light is used to



save energy, and wastewater is treated in the 'nature helping nature' project.

The factory also produces oil from Perilla seed, Niger seed, Moringa seed, and several other plants. Visitors are welcome to tour the factory from Mondays to Saturdays.



Oil Plant Demonstration Plots

After observing the oil-producing process, we take a stroll through the oil plants in the 8 rai of demonstration plots. This is a pleasant, shaded garden area suitable for learning about the diverse range of plants from which oil can be extracted; such as, pumpkin, basil, and safflower. Next to the oil plant garden are organic vegetables plots producing large-sized seedless lime and various salad vegetables. Produce is directly sent into the kitchen of the Maletcha Restaurant. We can then walk under the canopy of passion fruit vines that stretches through to the main demonstration plot where tall *Perilla* plants in green and brown colours are seen in lines. The green plants are immature, and the brown ones are withered, and seeds can be harvested for oil to be extracted. *Perilla* seed oil is good for the brain and memory.



Next is the model herb garden in a eucalyptus forest. This is an area in which once nothing grew but now, due to the efforts of the research centre, surrounding the bases of trees with coconut coir fibre up to the middle height of the trees to help retain water and stop degradation of the soil, the area thrives. The forest hosts several herbs, including those named in honour of the Royal Family; such as, *Bauhinia sirindhorniae* and *Afgekia mahidolae*, and general herbs; such as, aloe vera, asparagus fern, and Indian trumpet tree. Altogether, there are more than 130 species. Also, there are plant nurseries and greenhouses using evaporative



air cooling systems producing various seedlings and lavender with inviting sweet aroma, just waiting for visitors to savour the scents.

This demonstration area is irrigated by a dripping method with water pumped from the Monkey's Cheek reservoir at the research centre. The method saves water while the plants enjoy the humidity. Green fertiliser is used, produced here by raising earthworms in moist areas, neither too wet nor too dry, fed by leftover fruits and vegetables. The excretion of earthworms is then sprinkled as fertiliser over the plots, resulting in high-yielding oil plants and non-toxic vegetables, bursting with goodness.



Products from Nature



From the demonstration plots, we go shopping for products extracted from tea seed and other oil plants at the **Maletcha Souvenir Shop**. The brand name of these products is *Pat Pat* and includes such items as tea seed oil and Niger seed oil. There are other plant oil and cosmetic products; such as, sunscreen, soap, and lotion that work wonders as moisturisers and softeners, keeping the skin wrinkle-free, quality products from the Chaipattana Foundation, and villagers' handicrafts showing distinctive local identities. All of this also contributes to the development of community enterprises.



Healthy Dishes

For today's supper, we can choose from dishes made from HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn's recipes; such as, garnished tofu, concentrated tomato soup, bacon croquette, and spicy strawberry salad. The Maletcha Restaurant's number one concern is the consumers' health; therefore, every process is conducted with care and only fresh chemical-free raw materials are selected for safe and delicious food to be served to everyone.



Research Centre for All People

The vision of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn has created many benefits for the people as the research centre is not only the site for planting, researching, and production of various plant oils, but also a large public park, full of magnificent trees surrounding a shaded



pond in a clean and pleasant atmosphere. People come to exercise, relax in nature, and enjoy picnics with their families. It is also a place that creates jobs and allows locals to access improved living conditions. In addition, the Centre enables residents to increase their awareness about food consumption and production processes, and to achieve a sustainable, dignified lifestyle.





Day 3

Our destination this morning is the **Prince Chakraband Pensiri Centre for Plant Development**, established to commemorate the centenary of His Royal Highness Prince Chakraband Pensiri who laid a firm foundation to push traditional agriculture into sustainable agriculture. Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn remarked that, *"An essential factor of agriculture, apart from water and soil, is having good seeds for agriculturists to grow. This is very important."* This was the basis of her decision to establish the Centre.



ศูนย์พัฒนาพันธุ์พืชจักรพันธ์เพ็ญศิริ

Prince Chakraband Pensiri Center for Plant Development





Here we view the origins of high quality local plant seeds full of excellent food nutrients, experience various agricultural techniques, and visit agricultural plots of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) standard.

The Prince Chakraband Pensiri Centre for Plant Development aims to improve, develop, and experiment with the cultivation of good quality crops so that Thai agriculturists are able to work with seeds that are resistant to pests and insects. Also, it strives to encourage villagers in surrounding areas to join the 'Friends Helping Friends' Project to enhance the production of quality seeds and to help fellow people in times of need.

Within the Centre there are numerous agricultural activities, and visitors can explore the experimental vegetable plots over an area of 135 rai by a leisurely stroll or rented bicycle every day. A treat on special occasions is the free tractor ride around the Centre.



Happy Plants and Growers



Butterhead



Red salad bowl



Cos



Red oak



At first light of day, workers can be seen selecting and gathering ripe crops. This is most noticeable in the Plant Development Plot, an experimental area growing white and green asparagus, and seven varieties of lettuce, butterhead, lettuce mix, cos, red oak, red leaf, red coral, and red salad bowl. Some of these are ready to be harvested every day.

Nearby is the Seed Production Plot, where diverse vegetables are grown for seeds to be given to agriculturists in need; such as, gourd, from which seeds are obtained from ripened and dried fruits for breeding purposes. There are also flower beds, nurseries, and a packaging hall where you can observe at close range plant breeding processes as well as standardised vegetable cleaning.

The entire area of the Centre is divided into different vegetable plots using a crop rotation system so as to give the soil a break and some time to rejuvenate by the growing of sunn hemp to help add nutrients and fix the nitrogen levels. In this way, the plots are always prepared for vegetable growing. Visitors who aim to visit the vegetable plots are advised to come before 9.00 a.m. for a chance to talk to and get information about the crops directly from the growers themselves.



Safe Vegetables for Everyone



Close attention to detail is needed on the long and arduous path to obtaining good seeds. To make sure that every production step is chemical-free, the Centre uses its own organic fertiliser produced in accordance with a formula introduced by the Faculty of Engineering and Agro-Industry, Maejo University, called *Engineering Maejo I*. This is made by fermenting dry leaves, residue of crops and vegetables, and remains of insects and pests with animal excreta at the ratio 3:1 for a period of 60 days. This produces not only quality organic fertiliser, but also reduces traditional waste disposal by burning, which causes numerous environmental problems. With such care and attention, vegetables here are certified with GAP, guaranteeing high quality produce that is healthy and has no added chemicals. In this way, growers and consumers enjoy good health.





Idyllic Pond and Rolling Hills

In the middle of the Centre is a large pond with colourful teals floating around happily against a backdrop of rolling hills. Water from the pond is used to nurture the crops and vegetables in the plots. This maximises the use of existing resources in line with the Sufficiency Economy principles. It is a place to relax, enjoy the pleasant atmosphere, and simply focus on the natural beauty around you.

Good Vegetables for Good Health

After admiring the vegetable plots, we enter the Exhibition Hall, where knowledge about vegetables, cultivation methods, maintenance, and nutrients is gathered and distributed to educate everyone about the benefits of vegetable consumption. It is also a place to learn about the extension projects carried out by the Centre in co-operation with the villagers. These include initiatives; such as, *This Loving Home where Members Grow Vegetables Themselves* in which vegetable seeds are distributed to the community to promote villagers to lead a sufficiency lifestyle, and *This Loving Side Road with Vegetables Grown and Shared* and *Growing Safe Vegetables under GAP Standards*, both aimed at strengthening communities based on simplicity, happiness, and mutual support among members.





Creative Menu at Jun Ka Pak

For lunch, satisfy your appetite and with healthy food at Jun Ka Pak (H.R.H. Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn's exclusive name for the place, a spoonerism of the name *Chakraband*). This restaurant is the destination of fresh vegetables sent directly from the plots and presented as superb dishes; such as, *Jun Ka Pak Party*, which is made up of more than 9 varieties of fried seasonal vegetables. Not to be missed is *Jun Ka Pak Beverage*, a sour vegetable and fruit juice, and *Jun Ka Pak Coffee*, a special brew of a mix of butterfly pea juice and caramel, adding a sweet and sour taste to the inviting coffee aroma.

Conclude with home-made ice-cream of diverse flavours; such as, butterfly pea, pumpkin, banana-cheese, and, of course, *Jun Ka Pak*. Within the Centre is also a shop selling organic fresh vegetables from the community, and we can shop for royally-granted seeds in eco-friendly saa paper envelopes to be planted in our backyards, to become one of the many agriculturists pursuing sufficiency.



Sustainable Agriculture, a Foundation for Long, Healthy Life

Visiting the Prince Chakraband Pensiri Centre for Plant Development makes us understand true sustainable agriculture involves fertile soil, sufficient water, strong seeds, and cultivation methods that have no impact on the environment, resulting in a good quality of life for agriculturists and consumers. This centre is an excellent example of fine agricultural practices that promise productive plant development.





Lover of Nature to Social and Environmental Entrepreneur



In the afternoon we travel to **Pang Ha village** in Mae Sai district to visit **Jinnaluck's Miracle of Saa**, a place of learning and creative ideas for tourists to recognise the value and beauty of the environment around us.

Twenty years ago, Ms Jinnaluck Chummongkol, a young girl who grew up in Pang Ha, was fascinated by the local handicrafts of the Northern Region, particularly saa or mulberry paper. With a keen interest in the craft, Jinnaluck purchased mulberry paper from villagers to sell to the paper factory. The factory sent back the product on the grounds that the quality fell short of standards.



But Jinnaluck was undeterred, and decided to transform herself from a buyer and seller of saa paper to the owner of a factory manufacturing quality paper and products from the paper; such as, floral cards. These became immensely popular and the factory sold over 10 million pieces a year, creating jobs for villagers in the surrounding area.

Raw materials were sought from leftover natural fibres; such as, banana trunks, torch ginger plants, garlic peel, Caribbean agave, and vetiver grass, as part of experiments in paper-making and processing diverse products; such as, gift boxes, bags, notebooks, wallpaper, and wedding gowns. The products that brought her fame were those made from banana trunk fibre. These were certified with the Upcycle Carbon Footprint label as products created from natural waste to reduce the effects of global warming.



However, the path of business is not always smooth. High investment in hand-made products and changes in the world saw paper from natural fibres wane in popularity, and Jinnaluck was forced to adapt her factory into a tourist destination to spread the wisdom of mulberry and natural fibre paper.



Vetiver Grass Paper Pays Back to the Land

Jinnaluck Miracle of Saa is also the producer of vetiver grass paper, which helps to reduce the amount of leftover vetiver leaves from various projects of the Chaipattana Foundation. With the use of vetiver leaf, saa mulberry plant can save up to 90 % in paper production. The residents of Pang Ha consider themselves fortunate to be able to pay back to the land with this work for Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn.



The World of Saa Mulberry Paper

Visitors can learn the story of Jinnaluck saa paper and view ancient mulberry paper with Lanna scripts dating back over a century and a royal message from a Chinese Emperor, inscribed in black ink from the period of the Han Dynasty, 800 years ago, one of only two such documents remaining in the world today. This shows the durability of mulberry paper although the colour of the paper has faded. However, the inscriptions remain clear. Not to be missed here is a vetiver grass paper craft work by Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn when she visited several years ago.





At a cost, visitors are able to join a saa paper workshop. They select pieces of flowers and leaves to decorate their own work, according to their imagination, and retain it as a souvenir at the end of the process.

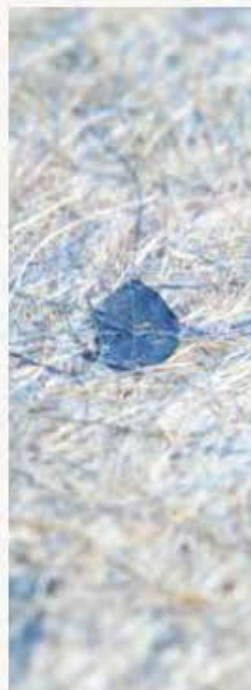


Remark: There is a participation fee to join the saa paper workshop.

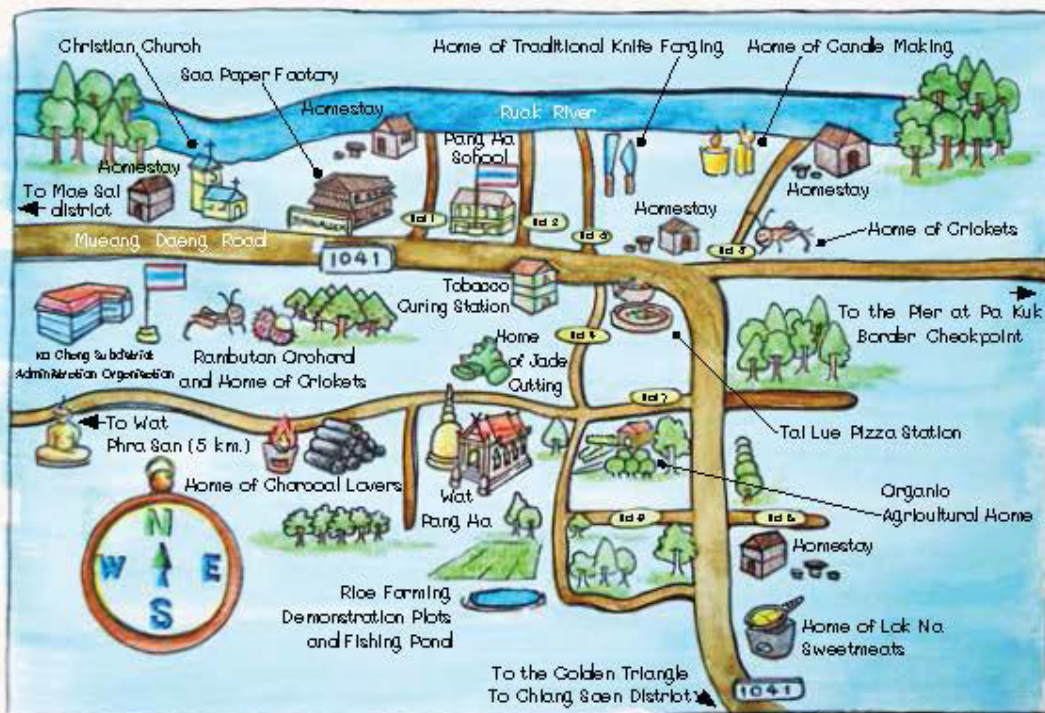


Initiative of the Heart Results in Community Benefits

Jinnaluck Miracle of Saa is devoted to the creation of jobs and security for local residents, and Pang Ha has become one of the leading natural and cultural destinations of Chiang Rai province, always ready to welcome visitors.



Map of Pang Ha village



Tourist Village and Green Route to Happiness

Pang Ha, a tiny Tai Lue community in Mae Sai district, has become a tourism destination with the attractions of folk art, cultural traditions, and a sufficiency lifestyle. Tourists may cycle around the village via a green and shaded route, familiarising themselves with the Pang Ha villagers and observing a number of community activities.

Cricket Breeding



The bike route through endless green pastures is a pleasant experience. On the way, we may call in on the Hundred Thousand Baht Home of Crickets in Fruit Orchard – we will know when we have arrived by the volume of the loud chirping songs that greet us. Auntie Nang, the proprietress, informs visitors that she took up the breeding of crickets about 3 years ago. It now generates a good income with little investment. Crickets are easy to raise and feast on rough rice bran, maturing in 45 days and ready for sale at the market. Her main income comes from the crickets, but she also has a fruit orchard next to her home, bringing additional income at certain times of the year.

Home of Traditional Knife Forging

The rhythmic sound of a hammer beating metal indicates that we have arrived at the home of Uncle Saeng, the legendary knife forger, and his wife, Auntie Kham. Upon arrival, we are greeted with cool water, tidbits, and fruits, just like we are family members. We then learn about traditional knife forging in an ancient kiln from Uncle Saeng who has over 40 years of experience. He is able to forge all types of knife blades, pocket, kitchen, and folding knives from old leaf springs, and also sharpens old knives.



Outside, there are longan trees, maize, and a small kitchen garden maintained without chemicals. The knife forger and his wife, as well as practising their traditional skills, grow food for their own consumption or as gifts to neighbours and visitors, with the excess produce put on sale in the community to raise some additional income.



Sufficiency from Making Candles

Next, we visit the home of Uncle Pichai, a wax candle maker. There is a demonstration of candle making with modern machinery, including the boiling of paraffin wax, colouring, and attaching the wicks. Wax candles are produced in two colours, white and yellow, and in a range of sizes.

Just like at Uncle Saeng's home, Uncle Pichai runs a maize plantation in addition to candle making. There is also a kitchen garden, and chicken enclosures over a pool where nilapia fish are kept. This arrangement is so that the chicken excreta falls into the pool as fish feed, and the water from the pool is used on the vegetable plots. Uncle Pichai consumes his own produce and exchanges the excess for neighbours' crops. Here is another resident of Pang Ha who lives by the principles of Sufficiency Economy in a traditional way of life.



Pick Kim Ju Guava for Yourself

We then stop at the Kim Ju guava plantation. Here, the crunchy vitamin-rich fruit is grown organically and cared for fastidiously, with each fruit individually wrapped to prevent insect attacks. This results in fine, clean, crunchy ripe fruit that is normally sold in bulk to the Mae Sai Market. However, visitors can pick their own and enjoy the product of their labour on site.



Products of Organic Farming

A tiny cement house in Pang Ha Village is surrounded by a mix of organic vegetables, herbs, and fruits. Originally, the house-owner decided to grow his own food, using only green manure as fertiliser. However, his efforts were so successful that he produced more than he was able to consume. He decided to sell what he could not use from his own front yard, and neighbours and tourists are invited to shop for fresh and safe food items at affordable prices.



Tai Lue Pizza!

We come now to the last station to sample Tai Lue (an ethnic tribe) pizza, an adaptation of the popular international food, pizza.



1. Pour a rice flour mixture in a round steaming pan.

2. The filling is then prepared with beaten eggs seasoned with special Northern flavours of saturated bean curd, fried garlic, and hot chilli in vinegar.



3. Mix and pour the filling onto the steamed rice flour mixture.



4. Garnish with sausages and cabbage. This is all steamed again – and presto!



A delightful Tai Lue pizza is ready!





Firmly Established Sufficiency Lifestyle

Pang Ha has several other interesting activities; such as, the Home of Jade Cutting, the Home of Lok Na Sweetmeats, and the Home of Charcoal Lovers. If we find it impossible to visit all in half a day, we can make an overnight arrangement with the home stay service of the village. This overnight stay gives us the opportunity to join the Khan Tok party, enjoying folk entertainment and participating in Tai Lue ramwong folk dances.

The residents of Pang Ha are ready to welcome tourists with their hearts, and to allow them to learn about living according to the Sufficiency Economy principles in a simple lifestyle that strives to preserve its cultural traditions.





Day 4



This morning, we leave the city area of Chiang Rai and climb to 1,700 metres above sea level, penetrating the blanketing fog to reach Tambon Wawi, Mae Suai district. Here we find Doi Chang, a hill covered with coffee plants in a vast area of more than 30,000 rai. Doi Chang is the ideal site for the largest production centre of Arabica coffee in Thailand due to its appropriate altitude, cool weather throughout the year, fertile soil, and adequate water.



Sky High Coffee Empire

In the past, people on Doi Chang earned their living through opium growing and shifting agriculture, resulting in the problem of heavy forest encroachment, leading to almost complete loss of forest cover. A group of villagers brought coffee seedlings to the area as an opium substitute and to revive the natural resources as a result of initiatives of the late King Bhumibol Adulyadej, Rama IX. The coffee seedlings thrived and yielded splendid results. Their growth signalled a bright future for the people on Doi Tung.

In 1985, the **Chiang Rai Agricultural Research and Development Centre** decided to carry on the goals of the royal initiatives by researching the most suitable and disease-resistant coffee breeds for the area. Seedlings were distributed to villagers to be grown on their own land. The Centre also introduced local, endemic, fast-growing seedlings and cold climate plants; such as, peaches, apricots, plums, and macadamia for reforestation, speeding up the transformation of a dry denuded hill into a coffee empire in a large and fertile forest.

It has taken many years for the people on Doi Chang to monitor the growth of this cash crop, with numerous problems and obstacles to overcome. Finally, coffee has led to new lives for these people, changing their farming from opium growing to mainly growing coffee, developing the processing of the coffee, opening coffee shops, and creating brands of their own. These actions mean that they have reduced the need to search for jobs away from their homes, as the coffee plants have become their precious treasure from nature around them.



Forest Protection to Coffee Production

Various agencies and villagers joined forces to protect this home of a million coffee plants by the establishment of the **Community Enterprise of Organic Coffee Group for Forest Protection of Ban Doi Chang**. Membership of this group is confined to those villagers who cultivate no less than 50 trees per rai on their coffee plantations and observe organic agro-forest methods in the maintenance of their coffee trees. Presently there are 62 members. The group's produce has been certified with 'International Organic Standards' by the European Union, Canada, and the United States of America, under the brand *MiVana Coffee* supervised by the Earth Net Foundation. With its concentrated taste, freedom from chemicals, and natural aroma, *MiVana Coffee* won the 'Best Quality Award' at the national level for 2013 and 2014 from the Specialty Coffee Association of Thailand.



The cultivation of organic coffee and forest protection has led to numerous benefits. The full ecosystem of the forest has returned; villagers sell organic coffee beans at higher prices and gain more income from the fair trade system, and they enjoy good health and a chemical-free and sustainable lifestyle. Interested visitors wishing to make a study tour can seek information from the Group.



Fine Seedlings, Trees of the Future

The Chiang Rai Agricultural Research and Development Centre delivers green knowledge to visitors via the **Plant Nursery** where cold climate seedlings of perennial trees and cash crops can be seen, including vetiver grass, Himalayan cherries, Chinese chives, swan plants, macadamia, and coffee.



One-year-old coffee seedlings are planted in the rainy season.



And start to yield produce for harvesting in the third to fourth years after cultivation.



With full yields after six to eight years.



The coffee variety grown on Doi Chang is *Catimor Chiang Mai 80*, found by researchers to be the most suitable for the area.



In winter, in the **Conservation Forest**, young red maple leaves can be seen, and Himalayan cherries bloom in white and pink, adding colour to the surroundings. In the Primary Forest, coffee plants thrive well under the shade of large perennial trees; such as, Sandalwood or *Mansonia gagei* Drumm, and cherries or red ripening coffee beans hang in heavy bunches on the boughs. At harvest time, villagers pick only the ripe cherries by hand to obtain high quality produce.



Doi Chang to the Horizon

At a vantage point, we can get a panoramic view of Doi Chang, with villages of coffee growers down below, accentuated by the blue horizon and white clouds flowing through large and small mountain ranges, as if spreading a blanket over the villages. This is the fine scenery to keep in your memory.



Making a Cup of Coffee

To provide the full cycle knowledge about coffee, officials from the Centre guide tourists through the small coffee processing plants in which the roasting and grinding is done, finishing with the aromatic coffee in a cup.

1. Ripe coffee beans are picked from the trees.



2. The beans are immersed in clean water, which is changed every day, for three days to make peeling easier. Floaters are damaged beans and are discarded.



3. The beans are milled or pulped to separate the coffee from the skin.



4. The coffee pulp is dried in the sun or put through a dehumidifying machine to make sure that it is dry with a humidity of 7-8 degrees Celsius.



5. Fermenting pulped coffee is placed in gunny sacks to be stored for 7-8 months to obtain a blended taste with better aroma.



6. Pulped coffee is milled to obtain coffee seeds.

7. Coffee seeds are graded by a machine that separates the seeds by size and nature; such as, large rounded seeds, rounded seeds with crack, and broken seeds.



8. Coffee seeds are put into a temperature-controlled coffee roaster to obtain the desired taste. During the roasting, seeds may be broken so another department is responsible for sifting out the broken seeds.



9. The complete seeds are packed and distributed in the form of roasted coffee seeds and roasted and ground coffee ready to be brewed.



Both hills are situated in Tambon Wawi.

Doi Wawi – Tea, Not Coffee!

Wawi coffee is the brand of the product from Doi Chang in Tambon Wawi, thus named after the subdistrict. Doi Wawi is a hill also located in Tambon Wawi but there are no coffee plants there. The villagers favour tea-growing as their speciality. Tea-lovers should head to Doi Wawi.



To reduce waste, the Centre makes use of the burnt coffee seeds to dispel foul odours, while the skin of the coffee pulp is made into organic fertiliser and fuel.





Doi Chang Coffee Plant

In the afternoon, we visit the **Doi Chang Coffee Plant**, the largest producer and purchaser of coffee beans in the area. The Plant produces special coffee certified with Geographical Indication (GI) by the European Union. At produce purchasing time (October to March), this plant is full of 40-50 tonnes of beans per day. The beans then enter the processing process to be distributed. Tourists can shop while sipping on freshly-roasted and brewed coffee from the plant, and those interested in learning about the production processes of purchasing, grading, roasting, and packaging are led through the plant.



The Forest – Key to Doi Chang



Doi Chang continuously conserves its forest areas in tandem with quality Arabica coffee cultivation, creating numerous small coffee businesses that grow all over the place. Villagers and the Centre conduct campaigns aimed at tourists to take home their garbage and to respect the environment. In doing so, visitors are supporting the efforts of the residents in making Doi Chang a sustainable green area and conservation tourism site of the local area and Chiang Rai province.

The Route of Mae Fa Luang Town to Sufficiency Agriculture to the Arabica Coffee Empire of Thailand

illustrates initiatives that helped the development of isolated and rundown communities. Through the kindness and encouragement of HRH the Princess Mother, the hill tribe people of Chiang Rai adopted the principles of forest replanting and conservation, organic farming, taking care of the environment, and maintenance of community cultures. Through these actions, they developed a dignified and sustainable lifestyle. This green route is an inspirational journey that allows visitors to enjoy and experience the stories of their lives.



Green Experience



The Route of Mae Fa Luang Town to Sufficiency Agriculture to the Arabica Coffee Empire of Thailand

Chiang Rai province

This route allows visitors to interact with people who practise organic agriculture and use their local wisdom to lead sustainable lives and co-exist happily with the forests in a beautiful, natural environment according to the principles of Sufficiency Economy.

7 Greens on This Route



Green Heart

With a love of nature, the hill tribe people and communities on the flatlands joined forces to assist the forests to recover their full ecosystems while maintaining cash crops with sustainable organic agricultural practices, and reducing waste by separation and the use of degradable food containers.



Green Logistics

Various destinations have non-toxic vegetable plots acting as an instant stock of their green food; such as, Pang Ha, an organic agricultural village with individual plots next to most homes. These provide fresh vegetables that can be picked for cooking right away. Excess produce is shared with neighbours, thus reducing the need to travel far from home for food.



Green Attraction

Every destination on this route attaches great importance to the environment. At the Doi Tung Development Project, there are segregated dust bins and residue from production is used as fuel for the factories, organic vegetables are grown and supplied directly to the Project kitchen, 'nature helping nature' sees the treatment of wastewater, and the Happy Hen Farm provides eggs.





Green Activity

There are numerous activities for green experiences on this route; such as, the Doi Tung Tree Top Walk that places participants in intimate contact with nature and enhances understanding of the reforested area. There is also the saa paper workshop at Jinnaluck, biking around the Prince Chakraband Pensiri Centre for Plant Development, and opportunities to see the beauty of vegetable plots and flower gardens in harmony with the environment.



Green Community

Pang Ha is a model community that maintains its folk wisdom and original way of life at the same time as welcoming tourists into local homes. There is also the Community Enterprise of Organic Coffee Group for Forest Protection of Ban Doi Chang which promotes the cultivation of organic coffee and planting of trees to increase the forest area on Doi Chang.



Green Service

Food services on this route pay great attention on each step of food preparation; such as, the Krua Tamnak Restaurant and Jun Ka Pak Restaurant, which select fresh raw materials from the area and serve organic rice and non-toxic vegetables from the plots. The Maletcha Restaurant uses cold pressed tea seed oil in its cooking, allaying all visitors' worries about carcinogens, and assures the safety of all items on its menus.



Green Plus

On Doi Tung, there exists the 'Change = Plant' Project that cultivates a consciousness of environmental conservation among tourists with the organising of the 'Faidee Kids Camp.' This activity specifically targets young people to plant trees, enjoy nature, and grow into adults with environmental awareness in their hearts and an appreciation of the sustainable sufficiency way.





Contact Information

Mae Fah Luang Foundation under Royal Patronage

- ☎ +66 (0) 2252 7114
- ☎ +66 (0) 2253 6999
- 🌐 www.maefahluang.org
- 📍 Mae Fah Luang Foundation
under Royal Patronage

Doi Tung Development Project

- ☎ Chiang Rai Office
+66 (0) 5376 7015 - 7
- ☎ Bangkok Office
+66 (0) 2252 7114
- ☎ +66 (0) 5376 7077
- 🌐 www.doitung.org
- ✉ tourism@doitung.org
- 📍 DoiTung Club / Mae Fah Luang
Foundation under Royal
Patronage
- 📍 [doitung_official](https://www.facebook.com/doitung_official)

The Chaipattana Foundation

- ☎ +66 (0) 2447 8585 - 8
- ☎ +66 (0) 2447 8574
- 🌐 www.chaipat.or.th

Amphoe Mae Sai

Cottage Industries Centre and Outlet

- ☎ +66 (0) 5376 7015 - 7
- 🕒 8.00 a.m. - 5.00 p.m.

Tea Oil and Plant Oils Development Centre

- ☎ +66 (0) 5373 4140 - 2 Ext. 0
- ☎ +66 (0) 5373 4140 - 2 Ext. 205
- 🌐 www.teaoilcenter.org
- 📍 TeaOilCenter

Prince Chakraband Pensiri Centre for Plant Development

- ☎ +66 (0) 5373 3222
- ☎ +66 (0) 5373 3997,
+66 (0) 5373 3734
- 🌐 www.princechak.com

Jinnaluck's Miracle of Saa

- ☎ +66 (0) 5367 5395,
+66 (0) 1883 9062
- 📍 Jinnaluck Miracle of saa
- ✉ jinnaluck@gmail.com

Pang Ha Village

- ☎ +66 (0) 4679 7470
- 📍 panghahomestay
- 📍 Pang ha Homestay

Amphoe Mae Suai

Chiang Rai Agricultural Research and Development Centre

- ☎ +66 (0) 5316 0812,
+66 (0) 5360 2751
- ☎ +66 (0) 5316 0813
- ✉ wawee.doa@doa.in.th
- 🕒 Monday - Friday

Earth Net Foundation

- 📍 Phichai Samrong daeng
- ☎ +66 (0) 5711 9955

Community Enterprise of Organic Coffee Group for Forest Protection of Ban Doi Chang

- 📍 Phakphum Laechoek
- ☎ +66 (0) 1373 2007

Recommended accommodation on this route

Amphoe Mae Fa Luang

Doi Tung Lodge

- ☎ +66 (0) 5376 7015 - 7,
+66 (0) 5376 7003
- 🌐 www.doitung.org

Amphoe Mueang Chiang Rai

Le Méridien Chiang Rai Resort

- ☎ +66 (0) 5360 3333
- 🌐 www.lemeridienchiangrai.com
- 📍 Le Meridien Chiang Rai Resort

Le Patta Chiang Rai

- ☎ +66 (0) 5360 0680
- 🌐 www.lepattachiangrai.com
- 📍 Le Patta Hotel, Chiang Rai
- ✉ sales@lepattachiangrai.com

La Vie En Rose Hotel

- ☎ +66 (0) 5360 1331,
+66 (0) 3203 7890
- 📍 La Vie En Rose Hotel

Nak Nakara Hotel

- ☎ +66 (0) 5371 7700 - 3,
+66 (0) 6195 0702
- 🌐 www.naknakara.weebly.com
- 📍 NakNakara
- ✉ naknakara_hotel@hotmail.com



**The Legend Chiang Rai Boutique
River Resort & Spa**

- ☎ +66 [0] 5391 0400
- 🌐 www.thelegend-chiangrai.com
- 📍 The Legend Chiang Rai Resort & Spa
- ✉ info@thelegendchiangrai.com

River Rai Resort

- ☎ +66 [9] 2693 9495
- 🌐 www.riverrai.com
- 📍 RIVER RAI

Rasa Boutique Hotel Chiang Rai

- ☎ +66 [0] 5371 7454 - 5
- 🌐 www.rasaboutiquehotelchiangrai.com
- 📍 Rasa Boutique Hotel Chiangrai
- ✉ rasaboutiquehotel@hotmail.com

Maryo Resort

- ☎ +66 [0] 5360 0890 - 1
- 🌐 www.maryoresortchiangrai.com
- 📍 MaryoResort
- ✉ maryochiangrai@gmail.com

Amphoe Mae Sai

Poonyamantra Resort Chiang Rai

- ☎ +66 [0] 5376 3111
- 🌐 www.poonyamantra.com
- ✉ info@poonyamantra.com

Viva Valley

- ☎ +66 [0] 5364 6781 - 2,
+66 [8] 5553 9753
- 📍 Viva Valley
- ✉ joopw@gmail.com

Du Doi Suay Resort

- ☎ +66 [0] 5370 9800,
+66 [8] 9700 5506

**Recommended
restaurants on
this route**

Krua Tamnak Restaurant

- ☎ +66 [0] 5376 7015 - 7
- 🕒 Every day 10.00 a.m. – 8.00 p.m.

Maletcha Restaurant

- ☎ +66 [0] 5373 4140 - 2 Ext. 104
- 🕒 Every day 10.00 a.m. – 8.00 p.m.
- 🌐 www.teaoilcenter.org

Jun Ka Pak

- ☎ +66 [0] 5373 3222,
+66 [9] 8564 2425
- 🕒 Every day 7.30 a.m. – 9.00 p.m.

**Recommended
restaurants in
Amphoe Mueang
Chiang Rai**

Manorom

- ☎ +66 [9] 2373 7666
- 📍 Manoromcoffee
- 📍 Manoromcafe
- 🕒 Every day 9.00 a.m. – 8.00 p.m.

Suankularb Chiang Rai

- ☎ +66 [0] 5316 6703
- 📍 Suankularbchiangrai
- 📍 Suankularb_chiengrai
- 🕒 Every day
11.00 a.m. – 10.00 p.m.

Melt in your Mouth

- ☎ +66 [0] 5202 0549
- 📍 Melt in your Mouth Chiangrai
- 📍 Meltinyourmouthchiangrai
- 🕒 Every day 8.30 a.m. – 8.30 p.m.

Thanam Phulae

- ☎ +66 [0] 5316 6888
- 🕒 Every day 5.00 p.m. – 11.00 p.m.

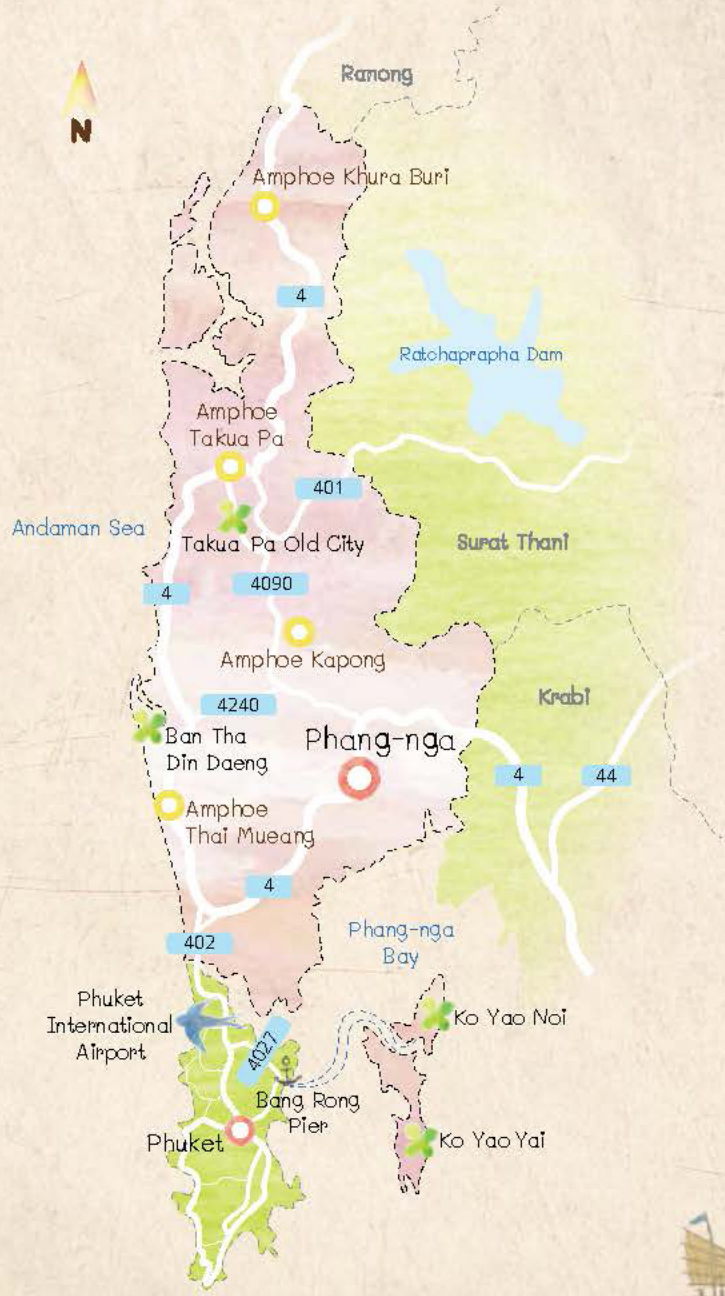
Krung Kaeo

- ☎ +66 [6] 3442 4551,
+66 [8] 8805 5399
- 🕒 Tuesday - Sunday
11.00 a.m. – 9.00 p.m.
(closed on Mondays)

Huean Him Doi

- ☎ +66 [8] 1555 3132
- 📍 HueanHimDoi.restaurant
- 🕒 Every day
10.00 a.m. – 11.30 p.m.





The Route from Takua Pa Old City to the Sustainable Ways of Ko Yao Phang-nga Province

Phang-nga, a southern province on the west coast of Thailand, was an important tin mining area that attracted many foreign traders and considerable amounts of money. Evidence of these foreigners may be seen in the present day architecture, traditions, and food. Phang-nga is rich in other natural resources; such as, vast areas of mangrove forests, which act as breeding grounds and nurseries for various species of marine creatures, white, sandy beaches stretching over a hundred kilometres, and the spectacular limestone formations of the world-renowned Phang-nga Bay. In the east of the province are mountain ranges, verdant green forests, waterfalls, wildlife reserves, and national park areas. Phang-nga is a beautiful ecotourism site, under an environmentally-conscious administration that encourages communities to be major forces in the establishment of a sustainable way of life.

This route takes us back in time with the legend of **Takua Pa Old City**. It gives us the opportunity to leisurely stroll or cycle through beautiful ancient architecture, witness original ways of life, and learn to cook main dishes and desserts handed down over the ages. We then visit the **SAORI Training Centre** to view ancient Japanese textile weaving, learn about organic agriculture, kayak through mangrove forests, stroll along the beach at **Ban Tha Din Daeng**, and finish the journey at **Ko Yao Noi and Ko Yao Yai**. Here, we may experience the beauty and fertility of offshore and onshore nature, and observe the ways of life of coastal fishing communities and farmers on the land, in the splendid setting of the various islands in Phang-nga Bay.





Day 1



Lead



Tin



Takua Pa Old City

We start on the route by touring around the old city and listening to the tales from the past at Takua Pa Old City, Tambon Talat Yai, about 7 kilometres from Amphoe Takua Pa. In the past, this area was a glorious port city on the Andaman coast under the name of 'Takola' or 'Takkolam,' Tamil words for 'Piper cubeba' or 'Calyptranthes jambalana, otherwise cardamom, a spice found in abundance in the area and, in the past, as precious as gold. The place attracted traders from India, Persia, and China. The area was also popular with people from Britain, Australia, and Holland who used Takola as a shortcut trade route across the Malay Peninsula from the Andaman coast to the Gulf of Siam. It became known as the 'Takola Emporium.' Its topography of islands, stone formations, and deep watercourses allowed places for the landing of goods for trade and the seeking of refuge from storms. The area was rich in mineral resources in great demand in the world market; namely, tin and lead, and Takua Pa became



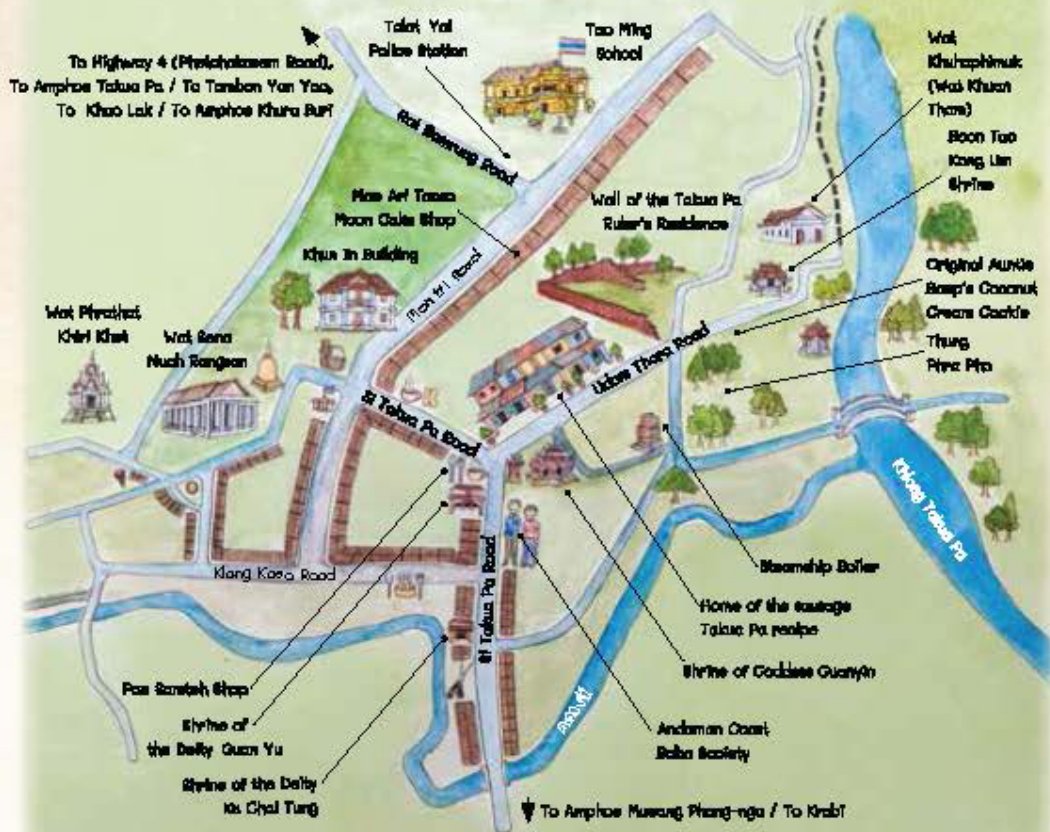
the 'Mining Capital,' bringing enormous wealth to the country, especially during the reign of King Nang Klao (Rama III) in the Bangkok or Rattanakosin Period.

The influx of foreign traders during this time had numerous cultural effects on the area. This was especially true of the Chinese migrants from Hokkien and Fujian who worked in the mines. The immigrants' enterprising and industrious nature, combined with the rich local resources, resulted in wealthy migrant workers, some of whom settled down and married local women. Their male children were called by the honorific term of 'Baba' and the females were 'Nyonya.' Presently, it is estimated that over 90% of Takua Pa residents are Baba descendants. Therefore, this city is full of a diverse cultural mix of Thai and Chinese, resulting in a variety of faiths, rites, food, architectural styles, and unique forms of dress. Although mining has disappeared, the city has maintained the beauty of its original ways of life, and has emerged as a historical destination of the South that welcomes visitors to come and talk to residents who are keen to preserve their cultural roots and historical links.





Map of Takua Pa Old City



Touring around Takua Pa Old City

This morning we learn about the history of Takua Pa Old City by cycling or strolling around the area. We start by paying homage and seeking a blessing at the **Shrine of the Deity** Guan Yu, the spiritual focus of Takua Pa residents. There are several other shrines; such as, Hokkien Huay Kuan, Ku Chai Tung, and Tam Kong Ea, all resulting from the Chinese immigrants who brought their revered deities with them and built shrines in their new settlements to pay homage and provide a cultural



heritage for the younger generation. A major homage-paying ceremony takes place at the Vegetarian Festival of the city.

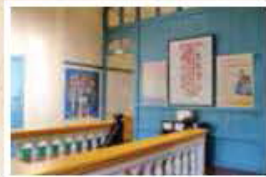
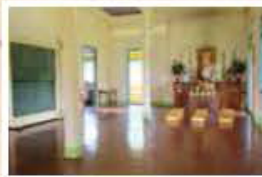


The **Vegetarian Festival** is the largest festival of Takua Pa, and is held over 10 days in October each year. During this period, the strong faith of the Takua Pa people can be observed, as they participate in the sacred rites dressed in their white outfits.





We move on to observe the making of moon cake, an ancient dessert of Hokkien and a traditional souvenir for visitors to Takua Pa, at **Mae Ari Taoso Moon Cake Shop**. The techniques have been handed down from generation to generation for more than a century. The shop welcomes visitors to closely watch the steps in moon cake making, including the kneading of flour, making of fillings, baking, and packaging. Not far from the moon cake shop is the **Tao Ming School**, a solid, distinctive yellow, two-storey building that uses rocks as poles. It was built by donations from mine owners and rich Chinese merchants who wanted their children to be educated and to learn the Chinese language, so that they would not forget their roots. Although no classes are held at present, this Sino-Portuguese building remains intact and beautiful, and has been converted into a **Religious Centre**, where Dhamma camps and Buddhist events are held.

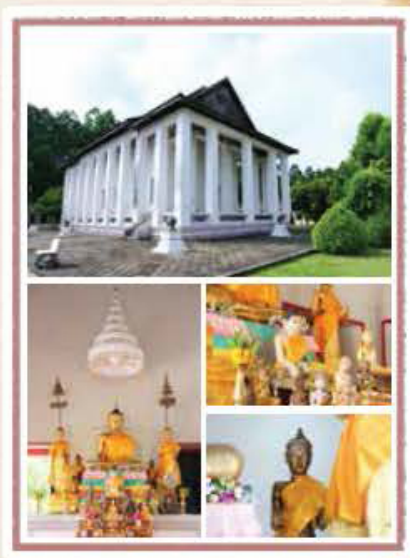




Wat Phrathat Khiri Khet



Wat Sena Nuch Rangsan



Takua Pa Old City has numerous Buddhist temples as well as Chinese shrines. **Wat Phrathat Khiri Khet**, the first Buddhist temple of Takua Pa, features an elaborate and well-proportioned prayer hall where the venerated holy relic of the city is enshrined, and there is also an old ordination hall and a natural eternal pool from which water was drawn for officials' pledge of allegiance ceremonies in former days. At a short distance is **Wat Sena Nuch Rangsan**, a Buddhist memorial built by Phraya Senanuchit (Nuch Na Nakorn), the ruler of Takua Pa. The white ordination hall here was made of bricks on all four sides, fixed with wooden wedges instead of nails, and surrounded by square pillars and carved stone boundary markers. Enshrined in the hall are antiquated bronze Buddha images from the early Rattanakosin Period towards the end of the reign of King Nang Klao (Rama III), and up to that of King Chulalongkorn (Rama V) the Great, including the Buddha in subduing Mara posture, the Buddha with Red Lips, and the white Jade Buddha, all invaluable archaeological objects.





The charms of Takua Pa city are not confined to temples. Equally fascinating are some of the old houses from various eras of construction. Along **Udom Thara Road**, houses of the first batch of Chinese settlers in the reign of King Rama III can be found. They were built of bricks from Penang, Malaysia, with walls made of compressed earth with sugar cane syrup, and highlighted by massive columns and distinctive double wave tiles. One intact surviving example remains in this city, and this is also the home of the **Takua Pa Recipe Sausage** produced for over 50 years. This special sausage is soft, crunchy, and laced with hot and aromatic Southern spices and hidden tastes of ground nuts, minced pork, and coconut milk. This product is sold out quickly every day.



Double wave tiles



Sausage Takua Pa recipe





Si Takua Pa Road was built in a later period and features houses in mixed architectural styles of Thailand, China, and Europe known as Sino-European. Almost every house has an arcade, an adjoining arch over a 1.5-metre wide path, which provides shelter from the sun and rain. This is perfect for a stroll at leisure while stopping to photograph **Street Art** on the walls, which tells the history of tin mining and way of life in Takua Pa.

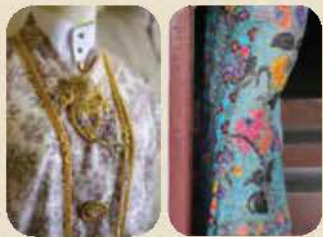
Several families of original Takua Pa residents still live in the Old City, with some houses turned into groceries, food outlets, barber shops, old-time coffee shops, and souvenir stalls. Not to be missed is a visit to the **Ancient Clock Shop** with craft handed down from grandpa, repairing and distributing clocks of diverse generations. In the same neighbourhood is also the **First Hotel of Takua Pa**, now closed, leaving only the building as evidence of its earlier popularity.



Si Takua Pa Road is also the location of the **Andaman Coast Baba Society**, an organisation that aims to conserve the traditional culture of the Baba, especially their dress style. In the building, photographs show the Baba dress-style classification by gender, age, and social status, designed to be both functional and to display affluence.



'Madam,' wife of a mining boss, wears a long gown over a white blouse with a stand-up collar and pleated sleeves, with a handkerchief placed over the shoulder, kept in place by elaborate Kero-sang pins instead of buttons.



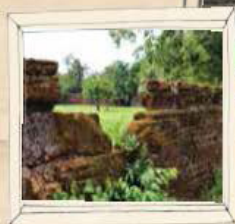
When attending parties at the club, the females wear lace top over a short gown, with handkerchief and purse tucking at the waist.

Young Baba females wear beaded shoes embroidered in beautiful patterns and ankle bangles, all finely handcrafted to indicate the class and good breeding of those days.



Apart from various important occasions; such as, major merit-making and wedding ceremonies, various government agencies of Takua Pa have designated that, every Thursday, officials wear Baba clothes to work as part of the conservation of Baba culture.





Next, we ride bicycles to visit the **Wall of the Takua Pa Ruler's Residence**, a large, solid wall about 4 metres in height. This was built to surround the Ruler's Residence, which also served as a refuge for people when riots broke out among various groups of Chinese migrants. In the same area, we find the **Gigantic Banyan Tree**, with spreading prop roots firmly attached to the wall, enveloping a large area as wide as the branching tree itself, a masterpiece of nature. The next stop is at **Original Auntie Baep's Coconut Cream Cookie**, the home of the original recipe for Thai coconut cream cookies handed down from grandma who was a cook in the Takua Pa Ruler's Residence. Thai mini cookies are special for their aroma and softness, melting in the mouth at first bite. We conclude the bike ride at the **Boon Tao Kong Um Shrine**, the first Chinese shrine established near Khlong Takua Pa, formerly a landing port. Legend has it that anyone passing by ship for trade must pay homage at the Shrine to be free of hazards during the trip. In the Shrine, one can find a joss stick pot presented by King Vajiravudh (Rama VI) when he visited Takua Pa in 1910, the 128th year of the Rattanakosin Era.





Baba Dishes from Two Cultures

Lunch today is in typical Baba style, originating from the harmonious blend of two cultures, Chinese and local Southern Thai cooking.

Tofu pork salted fish soup

a local food that reflects Chinese wisdom in food preservation and their economic nature using leftover fish from a previous meal, dried as salted fish, to be boiled as soup with tofu to add the taste of crunchiness and saltiness.

Cho Raeng
(prawn dip)

Mu Hong - streaky pork seasoned with spices and star anise to enhance the aroma.

Stir-fried pineapple - fruit mixed and fried with shrimp, pork, and squid to add sweet and sour tastes.



Nam Chup Yam
(seasoned mixed dip)

Also, there are *salt-roasted pork*, *Cho Raeng (prawn dip)*, *Nam Chup Yam (seasoned mixed dip)*, and *pao lang*, grilled stuffed sticky rice. Most Baba dishes are not as spicy as Southern dishes in general because local women married to Chinese settlers adapted their cooking with toned down spices to suit their husbands' palettes. More importantly, the Baba people often use their meal time to talk and exchange views and news reports to strengthen family relations.



Cleanliness and Preservation of Tradition

The Takua Pa residents are tidy and can be seen cleaning their houses and sweeping in front of their houses every day. This tidiness is reflected in the city. The municipality launched a project titled 'Takua Pa Clear and Beautiful, without Pollution, far from Diseases' with an activity 'Hazardous Waste in Exchange for Eggs' to motivate people to separate their garbage for environmental protection and the good health of the people, designated by the municipality at specific times and places; such as, every third Monday of the month at the Takua Pa Fresh Market. There are also orange receptacles for community hazardous waste set up at various strategic sites around the city.

Takua Pa Old City reflects the promise of its history in the modern era in that it is an area based on the hard work of migrant mine workers, entrepreneurs, and their extended families. They are keen to keep alive their ancient rites and rituals, ways of life, and traditions, at the same time as making progress in the modern world.

A tour of Takua Pa allows visitors a view of these communities' historical values and preservation efforts as they exist now.





Within Takua Pa Old City, there are numerous interesting attractions; such as, a Steamship Boiler, Thung Phra Pho, and Wat Khuhaphimuk (Wat Khuan Tham). If time permits, it is advisable to spend 3 days and 2 nights here on this trip to fully absorb the charms of this old city. Start by taking in the quaint landscape of the city at sunrise, sampling typical rice noodles in tasty sauces with the addition of Chinese fried dough, sipping a hot soup of boiled yellow noodles, and tasting an array of dim sum, and then at and after sunset, strolling through the beautiful old illuminated houses.

If you are interested in renting a bicycle, contact the Pae Samteh Shop (coffee shop at the curve of the road) Si Takua Pa Road, opposite the Shrine of Goddess Kuan Yin.

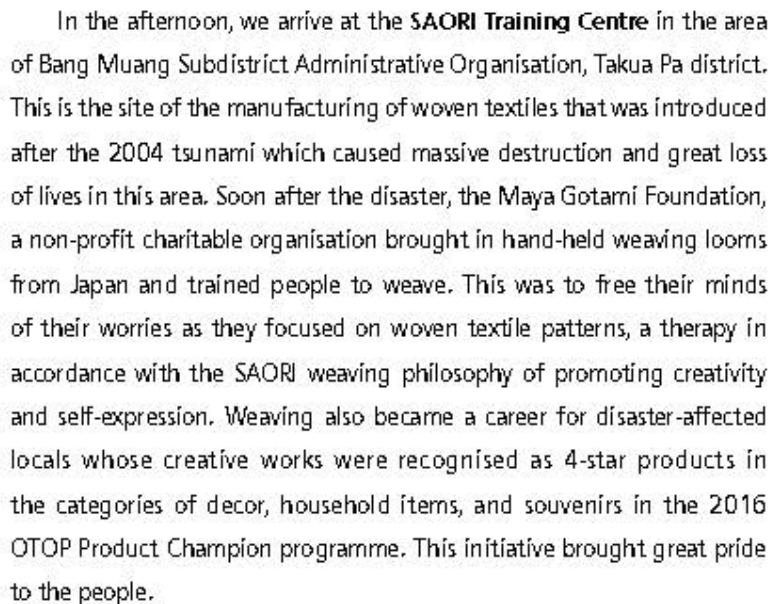




SAORI...



Creating Jobs, Values, and Spirit



In the afternoon, we arrive at the **SAORI Training Centre** in the area of Bang Muang Subdistrict Administrative Organisation, Takua Pa district. This is the site of the manufacturing of woven textiles that was introduced after the 2004 tsunami which caused massive destruction and great loss of lives in this area. Soon after the disaster, the Maya Gotani Foundation, a non-profit charitable organisation brought in hand-held weaving looms from Japan and trained people to weave. This was to free their minds of their worries as they focused on woven textile patterns, a therapy in accordance with the SAORI weaving philosophy of promoting creativity and self-expression. Weaving also became a career for disaster-affected locals whose creative works were recognised as 4-star products in the categories of decor, household items, and souvenirs in the 2016 OTOP Product Champion programme. This initiative brought great pride to the people.





SAORI is the art of hand-weaving in free form. It was invented by Mrs. Misao Jo in 1988 and combined 'Sa' (meaning free or unique) and 'Ori' (weaving).



Weaving That Lets the Imagination Run Free

SAORI Training Centre is open for tourists to observe the entire production process, including warping, weaving, quality control, and packaging. Auntie, one of the weavers, told us that:

"What is special about SAORI weaving is freedom, also in choosing colours of threads to be woven, you just set yourself free and pick the threads to be paired with your imagination, and you get a fine and unique woven fabric."

Excess thread from the production process and various leftover natural fibres are mixed to create new works; such as, Hang Uan or palm leaf fibres once used in fish net weaving. Silk strips added to the threads on the looms make the fabric more distinctive. Also, leftover thread is torn and woven into new products; such as, bed bands, coin purses, and key chains. Products are available for tourists at the outlet hall.





Day 2

This morning we become familiar with an ecotourism destination made up of mangroves, swamp forest, beach forest, and crystal-clear sea at **Ban Tha Din Daeng**, Tambon Lam Kaen, Thai Mueang district. It took more than 30 years to rehabilitate the area to its present pristine state after being plundered for mining and materials for making charcoal. The ecosystem was revived after the end of the mining era, and great effort was made to reforest the site. Ban Tha Din Daeng has been restored to a village in the midst of a green area. The tsunami was another major turning point for the village. Following the disaster, the villagers were worried about going out to sea, their



main traditional source of livelihood. The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations in co-operation with the Phang-nga Provincial Agricultural Extension Office surveyed the area and found it suitable for soil-less culture as an alternative livelihood. Projects; such as, the *Community Enterprise of Ban Tha Din Daeng Vegetable Growers Group* and *Ban Tha Din Daeng Community-based Tourism Group* emerged. Numerous other onshore and offshore activities were established around the village for tourists to gain knowledge, experiences, and enjoyment while taking in the beauty of the rich ecosystem.

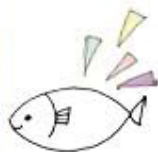


Kayaking in the Mangrove Forests



Today's first activity is kayaking through the mangrove forests with a local guide called Bang (elder brother in Malay). The thick shrubs and trees make many natural tunnels through which to paddle. There are many other plants in addition to the loop root mangroves; such as, *Aegiceras corniculatum*, *Lumnitzera littorea* with red blooms, cork trees, and *Xylocarpus granatum* or cannonball mangroves. The most common member of the loop root mangrove family is *Rhizophora apiculata* Blume. At the same time as getting some exercise and enjoying the natural surroundings, we are able to learn some local wisdom by using a 'crab trap,' a simple method to catch black crabs with fish flesh in a bamboo trap as bait.





There are schools of barracuda and mullet swimming in the waves alongside the boats, tiny moon jellies show themselves on the surface, and big spiders hang in their webs between the branches, all part of a rich ecosystem. We reach Khlong Tha Din Daeng, a waterway flowing to the Andaman Sea. At this point, the vast wall of the mangrove forests comes into full view, providing a magnificent natural wave and storm barrier. We find *Lumnitzera littorea* with small bunches of bright red flowers in full bloom. These *Lumnitzera littorea* show beautiful roots on the surface of the water in the sun's reflected rays. Before returning, we stop at a fish enclosure where bait is used by villagers to put on a fish show for visitors. The stars of this show are sea bass, groupers, large oysters, and puffer fish.



Back on shore, there are 2 more interesting learning sites around the port, an old ore conveyor and a community forest. The old ore conveyor, consisting of a 40-metre-long twin concrete ore conveyor and a water source nearby, is evidence of the flourishing tin dredging operation in the past. If time permits, it is worth trekking the nature study trails in the 79-rai community forest that acts as a green belt created by villagers to conserve the environment.



! Some advice to avoid getting wet when kayaking – if an obstacle presents itself, lower yourself straight down without leaning to the left or the right to avoid capsizing.

Through the Savanna towards Khao Na Yak – Demon Face Hill

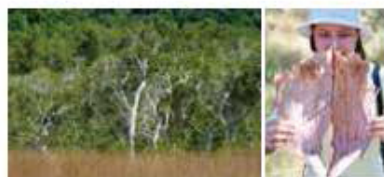


We continue with our survey of natural beauty of Ban Tha Din Daeng by taking a 15-minute ride on Ruea Hua Thong – a local fishing boat with a prominent brow – to **Khao Na Yak (Demon Face Hill)**, part of Thai Mueang-Khao Lampi National Park. Legend has it that during World War II, Japanese naval forces cruised in this area and faced a ferocious storm they believed to be caused by the curse of the mountain in the shape of a demon face. Enraged, they blasted the hill with artillery. Today, Khao Na Yak can no longer be seen – all that is left is the name and the legend.





Once reaching Khao Na Yak by boat, we have to trek about 1 kilometre. On the way, we find a field of *Melaleuca cajuputi* Powell (paper bark trees) covered with thick, soft bark in a distinctive beige colour. The bark is carefully peeled off without damaging the tree, and is used as fuel, roofing material, or bed matting. Trekking further for a while, we come to a golden pasture of savanna, the grass almost as tall as humans and illuminated by the sunlight. This is called Ya Chao Chu (flirtatious grass), *Chrysopogon aciculatus* (Retz.) Trin. or gold beard grass. Prior to the tsunami disaster, this area was grassland,



with only small bunches of grass and low bushes, but after, the gold beard grass thrived and spread into a vast savanna.

Walking a short distance past the savanna is **Hat Khao Na Yak**, a shimmering white sandy beach against a crystal-clear turquoise sea. Walking on the beach reveals the softness of the super fine sand, and from the cliff jutting out into the sea, there is a full view of the clean beach curving into a beautiful bay as far as the eye can see.



The Ban Tha Din Daeng Community-based Tourism Group has dive activities around Khao Na Yak for interested tourists who have made advance bookings.



Healthy Vegetables from the Garden and Fish from the Canal



Lunchtime at the **Sufficiency Economy Learning Centre** is where villagers prepare local Southern food for us; such as, *spicy soup of star gooseberry leaves*, *fried mullet with turmeric*, *Litsea Petiolata leaf spicy dip*, *spicy fish entrails soup*, and *crisp fresh vegetable with refreshing homemade salad dressing*. During the meal, we are able to chat to some of the locals as we enjoy their delicious food.



*At Ban Tha Din Daeng,
most residents are Muslims.
Within the village area, tourists
should respect common practices,
do not smoke, and do not drink
alcohol.*



Experts In Organic Agriculture

The Sufficiency Economy Learning Centre was set up by the villagers who know about organic agriculture and are aware of the hazards of using chemicals. They are happy to share their knowledge and experiences with visitors at various agricultural learning stations. The *Hydroponic Vegetables Station* has white greenhouses full of thriving vegetables in orderly rows – lots of colourful lettuce, kale, bok choy, and napa cabbage. Almost 100 greenhouses have been set up at Ban Tha Din Daeng, with the produce sold at the market and the rest consumed by the residents or made into dishes for tourists.



Apart from hydroponic vegetables, villagers grow other vegetables and fruit-bearing plants: such as, bitter gourd and watermelon. All produce has been certified with Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) standards and is safe for consumption. There are also learning stations about keeping goats and chickens, and there is a catfish pond to study. The goat and chicken excreta is used as fertiliser on the gardens, and the chickens are free range and produce organic eggs. This sufficiency approach is part of the locals' way of life, allowing them to produce their own food and earn more income.



Hello... Ko Yao Noi



In the afternoon, we travel to Bang Rong Pier, Amphoe Thalang, Phuket province. Here, we board a boat for Ko Yao Noi, Amphoe Ko Yao, Phang-nga province, the only island in the country with more than 800 rai of rice fields and inhabited by more than 100 hornbill couples and villagers devoted to natural conservation. The island is one of three winners of the World Legacy Awards in the category of Destination Stewardship for overall protection of natural and cultural heritage by the National Geographic Traveller Magazine of the United States.



Villagers have had to struggle to make Ko Yao Noi an island of natural beauty and authentic way of life as it is today. These struggles have involved negotiations with large commercial fishing vessels with modern technologies that swept the ocean for aquatic animals and destroyed marine ecosystems, having a direct impact on the locals' livelihoods. The Ko Yao Noi residents were eventually successful in making the island out-of-bounds to commercial fishing, and it has become a conservation island with sustainable fishing and a fine example for the rest of the country. The villagers established the *Ko Yao Community-based Tourism Club*, which aims to promote visitors' understanding of the conservation of natural resources, ways of life, and culture through activities of touring the island. In this way, tourists can trace the local people's lifestyles and experience the stories of the fishing communities at sea and the farmers on the land.



Ko Yao contains 2 islands,
Ko Yao Noi and **Ko Yao Yai**.

Over 97% of islanders are Muslims,
so tourists should show respect
for the place and the residents by
observing common practices; such as



1. Dressing and behaving in line
with the community's culture.



2. Not consuming
alcohol nor using
narcotics.



3. No littering
in the village.



4. No collection of
shells nor coral, and
not damaging the
environment.





There are minibus services for touring around Ko Yao Noi, and also bicycles and motorcycles can be rented.



Evenings on Ko Yao Noi

In the late afternoon, do not miss the opportunity to view the setting sun at the **80th Anniversary Birth Commemoration Garden for His Majesty the King** on a wooden jetty jutting into the sea. At low tide, the beach and mangroves stretch as far as the eyes can see. Gentle orange rays paint the horizon and light sea breezes welcome visitors. It is time for dinner, and fresh seafood is available at diverse outlets, and home-stays cook fresh seafood for their guests. Many tourists stroll at leisure along the pier at night, and then enjoy some of the 80 items on the menu at **Rotee Chao Ko Shop**; such as, pizza roti, cashew nut roti, and young coconut crispy roti. After that, it is time to return to the accommodation to rest and get ready for tomorrow's activities.





Day 3



Up early, we can catch the first rays of light shining over a myriad of islands off the coast of Krabi from a vantage point called Hat Laem Baek. Another site from which to watch the sunrise is Ban Tha Khao Viewpoint over misty islands; such as, Ko Kramit, Ko Rai, Ko Phak Bia, Ko Lao Antu, Ko Lao Chabang, Ko Lading, Ko Lao Riam, and Ko Lao Ka, forming a tapestry of impressive natural wonders in the sea.



Thai Coconut Custard



Chicken Biryani



Khao Yam



Getting to Know Ko Yao Noi Residents through Food Culture



Morning is a good time to observe the way of life of the Ko Yao Noi residents, particularly at various food shops and stalls. Women are busy in the kitchen, preparing local breakfasts for customers; such as, chicken biryani, rice noodle with sauce and vegetables, rice soup with fish, and, definitely not to be missed, Khao Yam rice salad of a special recipe, steamed rice blended with shrimp paste mixture and roasted coconut flesh, and sprinkled with herbs, so aromatic and delicious. Men, on the other hand, assemble in groups over tea or coffee, munching on desserts or snacks; such as, sticky rice topped with egg custard, Chinese fried dough, wrapped sticky rice with banana, and traditional coconut rice pancakes. They chat and greet new customers in a friendly manner, showing friendship among themselves and to visitors.



On the Trail of Fishing Communities

"The sea is like an ATM. People never starve. But to achieve what is seen today, we had to struggle a lot when commercial fishing came in with trawls, push nets, catching all types of aquatic animals, reducing their number so fast, while coral reefs were badly damaged. My only thought then was that we could not let it continue that way. I then moved to protect our sea."

This statement was made by Mr. Samroeng Rakhet (Bang Mee), President of the Ko Yao Community-based Tourism Club, indicating that marine resources have supported the lives of the Ko Yao residents historically and presently. If cared for, these resources are inexhaustible, but they must be cared for. Today, the main occupation is traditional fishing, a nature-based lifestyle with minimal environmental impact.

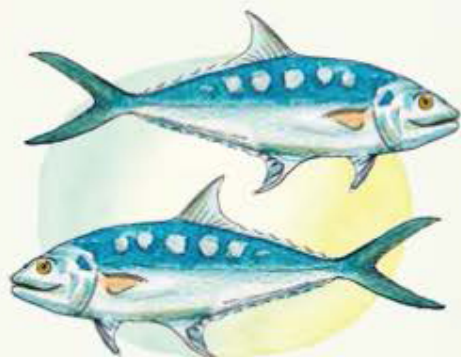




Today, we experience the **trail of a traditional fishing community**, with local hosts, and fishing and agricultural experts as tour guides providing knowledge throughout the trip. We start by boarding a local fishing boat with a prominent prow at the municipality pier, and cruise through fishing communities around the mangrove forests. It is noticeable that every home has a fishing boat tied to it. Cruising through the mangrove forest area into the open sea, we find small fishing vessels and people trawling the seine nets with expert skills. The seines are deployed the previous night, each about 3 kilometres apart. The catch is cooked and sold on the shore, or a market at sea may be opened if tourists are interested in fresh and clean seafood at affordable prices before they return to shore.



In trawling the seine, fisherfolk carefully pull up the nets and select only that from the catch that is appropriate for consumption. Immature aquatic animals or side-catch, such as jellyfish and starfish, are released back into the sea. If female crabs carrying fertilised eggs or berries are found, they are separated and taken to the Crab Bank, which offers one new crab net for 30 female crabs with berries. The Bank keeps the deposited crabs until they release their fertilised eggs into the sea in the natural breeding process. This sustainable fishing of Ko Yao Noi is a key to the capture of aquatic animals in a traditional fishery, a process that is completely different from commercial fishing.



Yellow queenfish

Scomberoides lysan, known in Thai as **Sisiat** or **Talang** fish, is a specialty of Ko Yao Noi, caught only on dark moon or little moon nights.

It is processed as special salted fish with a soft texture, clean, and non-toxic, and is very popular as an OTOP product of Ko Yao Noi.

Fish Enclosure

Our next destination is a **Krachang fish enclosure in the sea**, the breeding site of aquatic animals for sale, and it is open for tourists to learn, just like a museum in the water. Highlights of this enclosure are painted spiny lobsters in bright rainbow colours, an imported breed from Kenya. Those carrying eggs are left to release the fertilised eggs to grow in the sea. They are fed with horse mussels every ten days to make sure they receive sufficient calcium. Lobsters here are a healthy and solid investment, earning as much as 3,000 Baht a kilogramme.



Breeze, Sea, and Sand at Ko Nok

Not far from the fish enclosure is **Ko Nok**, an island made up of a small limestone hill surrounded by white sandy beaches and crystal-clear water teeming with fish. The island can be accessed by kayaks paddled across the small distance from Ko Yao Noi. Those who are adventurous can climb the steep and sharp limestone hill to enjoy a pleasant breeze and take in the view of the curving beach jutting into the sea and islands and rock formations off the Andaman coast.





From the 4th to the 11th days of the waning/waxing moon, the sea is at low ebb from 11 a.m. onwards and several attractions emerge; such as the **Dragon Spine Dune**. This sand dune of more than 2 kilometres in length, looks like a dragon swimming with its tail twisted towards **Ko Phlong**. Ko Phlong is the place for ironwood trees called Ton Phlong, yielding hardwood to be made into handles for hoes and big knives.



Another interesting activity that promotes knowledge of fisheries at low ebb is **Following the Trail of Wing Shells** in the vast wetland area. Villagers edge forward carefully, looking for the wing shells hidden in clumps of sea grass. When picked, the wing shells are put into net bags and hung outside overnight so that the shells spit out mud before being taken to the market.





**Enjoying Delicious
Desserts and
Natural Scenes
on Ko Yao Yai**

In the afternoon, we take a 10-minute shuttle boat ride from Ko Yao Noi to **Ko Yao Yai**, located to the south. This island is twice the size of Ko Yao Noi, and is full of local wisdom for tourists to experience, including the making of Thai desserts, local fishing, and many natural resources.



A mini-bus service takes us to explore the island and observe the way of life of the Ko Yao Yai residents, starting with...



"Khanom Babin"



Legendary Thai Dessert

The abundant coconut trees around the island give rise to a local Thai dessert of great fame, Khanom Babin, a Thai version of the popular Portuguese "Queijadas de Coimbra" with coconut flesh replacing cheese. The special recipe of **Charee's (a person) Young Coconut Babin** has existed for over half a century, and the blue-white home is open to tourists to observe the dessert-making process. Of interest is the rhythm in whipping the dessert from the cooking pan onto the plate. Khanom Babin of Ko Yao Yai is unique for its taste, texture, crispy on the outside and soft inside, plus the aromatic young coconut as its main ingredient.



Coastline Fishing Community at Laem Lan

We come next to a coastline fishing community, Ban Laem Lan, to observe their way of life. During the low ebb period of the 13th to 14th days of the waxing moon, we can take a boat or walk from Laem Lan around the sand dunes to view colourful starfish gathering at the mouth of the bay.



Stroll the Beach at Ao Lo Chak



Our next stop is Lo Chak Bay, a pristine white beach edged by crystal-clear water. This is an ideal place for relaxation, sunbathing, and observing the simple way of life of the villagers whose lives revolve around the sea.

Thereafter, we travel back to Ko Yao Noi for dinner at food shops or with hosts at home-stays in the warmth of a home atmosphere.





Day 4

Apart from its distinction for coastal fisheries, Ko Yao Noi is also famous for its agriculture. The soil is so fertile with minerals from rock, gravel, and sand deposits. Seeds thrive and yield beautiful results, in particular rice seedlings. Ko Yao Noi has thus become the only island in all of Thailand with rice fields covering an area of over 800 rai on the western side. The farmers are happy to share their experiences and wisdom.





Our destination this morning is **Ban Tha Khao**, but first, we come across **Hat Pa Sai**, a beautiful long stretch of sandy beach, the most famous attraction of Ko Yao Noi. The beach is special with the *Terminalia catappa* or sea almond trees decorated with cloth bands as notification that they are the homes of hornbills. More than 200 hornbills live on the island. Ko Yao Noi is also home to over 162 species of wild birds, easily spotted along the beaches, in mangrove forests, rice fields, or even in front of rooms and bungalows. These are clear indicators of the rich natural resources on the island.

At **Hat Khlong Chak**, we can view the beauty of the **Naga Heart** by looking through the gap between the joined Ko Lao Antu and Lao Chabang to find the shadow of Ko Phak Bia in the beautiful shape of a heart in the background.



Works of Art of the Farm Housewives' Group



We arrive next at **Ban Tha Khao**, the location of the **OTOP Village for Tourism**. Batik in bright colours flutters in the wind attracting passers-by to stop for a visit. This building was started by a farm housewives' group looking for activities for members to be engaged in when free from tending rubber or fruit plantations. They officially set up the *Ban Tha Khao Farm Housewives Group (Tha Khao Batik)* in 2012 to produce batik in bright colours, characterised by patterns of Ko Yao Noi; such as, hornbills and Hua Thong local fishing boats with prominent prows. These developed into famous OTOP goods that earn additional income for the group.



Tourists can learn and try their hand at batik painting, with the housewives happy to give advice at every step. Interested persons should contact the group at least 3 days in advance, so that the necessary tools can be prepared. Apart from batik, numerous OTOP goods from neighbouring areas are available at the building.





Steps In Batik Painting

1. Boil the wax.
2. Rub the boiled wax on a wooden frame and stretch a piece of cotton or rayon cloth on the frame.
3. Draft a pattern on the cloth with a pencil.
4. Use a wax drawing tool called a canting to draw on the drafted pattern made by pencil with the boiled wax to create a water-resistant area for the colours. Take great care as the boiled wax is at a high temperature.
5. Selectively colour the fabric with cloth dyes already diluted in water.
6. Coat the coloured area with sodium silicate to fix the dye.
7. Boil the cloth to remove the wax.
8. Clean the painted cloth with clean water twice.
9. Finish the product by ironing and tidying the trim.



Home of Organic Agriculture

The Home of Organic Agriculture is housed in an elevated wooden home surrounded by large trees, diverse crops and vegetables, and a rice field of over 11 rai, which has just been harvested. This is the place to find Uncle Decha Roengsamut, the owner of this property handed down through generations. Today, Uncle Decha remains committed to continue the spirit of an agriculturist by maintaining rice fields, rubber plantations, fruit orchards, practising animal husbandry, and keeping catfish, cattle, and Babary ducks in a true integrated farming approach. There is sufficient produce for consumption all year round, and any excess is shared with kinsfolk and donated to the needy in line with the 'Zakat' rule of Islam. Uncle Decha maintains the principle of 'Using less capital, more environmental friendliness,' keeping free-range livestock and making green fertiliser from





animal excreta. Harvested paddy is sent to the village rice mill located in the middle of the rice fields to reduce the dependence on external factors as much as possible.

The Home of Organic Agriculture is a learning centre open for tourists to gain green experiences of integrated agriculture around the house, feeding ducks, picking young neem tree leaves, viewing sapodilla trees, touching large ripening jackfruits, and searching for Phimsen mango, one of the local strains of Ko Yao Noi. Uncle Decha is always available to offer information in his easy-going manner. In rice planting and harvesting periods, tourists are welcome to help the farmers transplanting rice seedlings and reaping rice in the paddy fields.



Freshwater Wells in the Sea

We then make a stop at the **Sacred Wells**, 3 small freshwater wells that emerge in the midst of mangrove plants, seen only at low tide. They are believed to contain sacred water and believers can be seen praying and drinking it. Visitors are not permitted to throw coins or bathe in these pools.



Aromatic Coconut Juice at Ban Na



In the late afternoon, we come to the **Ban Na Coconut Grove**, a tiny home in the midst of tall coconut trees that provides a welcome shelter for the hosts and visitors. Here, we must sample fresh non-toxic fruits made direct from household plants and refreshed with sweet and aromatic coconut juice. We also get the chance to munch on crunchy apple variety mangoes, the mango of Ko Yao Noi that yields fruit throughout the year. Also, do not miss the sweet watermelons picked from the non-toxic fruit orchard in the backyard.



One of the most entertaining sights is to watch the talented little monkeys trained to pick coconuts. At the home owner's command, the monkeys immediately climb to the top and look for ripening coconuts. They then bite the coconuts off the tree and throw them to the ground. At the completion of the task, the talented monkeys are rewarded with eggs, milk, and coconut juice by the trainer.



To recognise the maturity of coconuts, we are told to look at the nut heads. If the caps are surrounded with a bright green or white area, the nuts are immature and have less and soft meat, contain more water, and have a tint of sourness, compared to those surrounded with a green to dark green area, or with cracks around. These are the mature nuts, with hardening, crispy meat, and sweet water. We are advised to observe the coconuts on the lower parts of the bunches where the most mature nuts are found. The coconuts develop clockwise and those at the top of the bunch are the most immature.



Buffalo Raisers Club

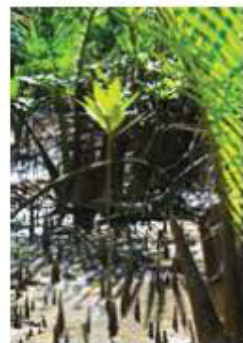
In the evening glow of the day, we find more than 30 water buffaloes grazing and preparing the field for the upcoming rice season. Every day, buffalo raisers come together to chat happily in the farm shelter. At 5 p.m., as the raisers move, the buffaloes break into different herds and walk back to their specific rice plots without hesitation. Buffaloes under each raiser form a herd at a specific plot, separated from others by ridges. The leader of each herd is then tied with a rope, and the raisers go home to rest, ready to return in the morning and release the animals to roam freely again. It is such an encouraging scene, seeing farmers working closely with buffaloes.





An Island Aiming at Sustainability

Ko Yao Noi has become an area known for its strong conservation of marine and land resources, with everyone co-operating to achieve common goals. The Ko Yao Community-based Tourism Club purchases 7,000 seedlings of mangrove and perennial trees and distributes them to villagers to plant around the island every year. At the back of the **Ko Yao Wittaya School**, almost 2,000 trees are thriving. Villagers are also encouraged to join the Tree Bank Project, planting, in the late King Bhumibol's words, 3 kinds of forest, for household use, consumption and cash crop, for 4 benefits, soil and water conservation as well. They add seedlings of economic plants; such as, Yang or Gurjan, Mahogany, ironwood, teak, etc. to add values to trees so that they can become assets as guarantee in financial transactions and for the younger generation to benefit from the forest in the future while adding green areas to Ko Yao Noi and increasing oxygen to the Earth. Tourists wishing to join the mangrove forest replanting activity can contact the Ko Yao Noi Homestay and the Club will arrange mangrove seedlings for them.



This Road is Green

We find the roads on the island to be tidy as a result of cleanliness campaigns; such as, the Big Cleaning Day organised every fortnight. People join forces to pick up garbage, trim tree branches, and clean roads. Waste bins cannot be found on roadsides as the municipality decided on waste separation from the sources for convenience in waste management. Hazardous waste can also be exchanged for eggs and garbage bags.



Ko Yao Noi, the Green Paradise in the Ocean

Ko Yao Noi has co-operated with the Ministry of Energy and Suranaree University of Technology to create the *Ko Yao Noi Model* as the *Project on Establishing a Prototype of Fuel Oil from a Waste Station*. This is a system of waste disposal that turns waste into energy by the following process:

1. Waste treatment system by mechanical and biological means involving waste separation by machines and reconditioning the waste for the manufacture of fuel or \fertiliser by a biological fermentation method.

2. Refuse-derived Fuel (RDF) system, to meet the alternative energy standard.

3. Organic fertiliser production system, with fine blending of biological fermented waste into organic fertiliser to be sold.

4. Plastic waste into fuel oil processing system resulting in crude oil and diesel.

Waste left from the disposal system or the residue that cannot be of further use is sent to a non-smoke waste incinerator to make charcoal and ash for seedling breeding purposes.





Tourism encourages the villagers to take care of their natural treasures on the ground and in the sea, and maintain their way of life and culture. This has turned Ko Yao Noi into a paradise island for those seeking simplicity in life, attracting people from around the world to relax, and gain new experiences in conservation. Those taking homestay services with the hosts ready to take them around the island get an even deeper insight in the way of life. In 2016, the Ko Yao Noi Homestay was awarded the 'ASEAN Tourism Standard 2016-2018,' and has also won Thailand Tourism Awards from the Tourism Authority of Thailand on three occasions. These include Awards of Outstanding Performance in the category of Tourism Promotion and Development Project in 2002, the Most Outstanding Tourism-based Community in 2007, and Award of Excellence in Tourism Support and Promotion Organisation in 2010.

The Route from Takua Pa Old City to the Sustainable Ways of Ko Yao

sprinkled with beautiful examples of ways of life and culture that familiarise visitors with historical information and provide a look at present efforts to preserve these ways of life, food, and ancient architecture. At the same time, the route displays the richness of marine and land resources once destroyed and now revived by the hard work of the villagers; such as, in the conservation of traditional fisheries to help achieve a sustainable environment. This is therefore a route for travellers with green hearts to experience and learn for themselves.





Green Experience



**The Route from Takua Pa Old City
to the Sustainable Ways of Ko Yao
Phang-nga Province**



The route takes you to visit the homes of conservationists of Phang-nga who joined forces to maintain old cultures and revive depleted natural resources to their full beauty. This not only benefits the world and green areas, but also supports villagers to participate in setting the direction of sustainable tourism. At the same time, it stimulates visitors to be aware of the values of natural ways, cultural heritage, and environmental protection.

7 Greens on This Route



Green Heart

The hosts' environmental care is evident in the clean habits of the Takua Pa residents in their use of leftover cloth and natural fibre in SAORI weaving to manufacture products and reduce the volume of waste, and the annual reforestation by Ban Tha Din Daeng and the Ko Yao Noi residents.



Green Logistics

Various forms of transport that have limited effect on the environment exist; such as, bicycles for rent in Takua Pa Old City and on Ko Yao Noi, and mini-buses that accommodate several passengers at a time. The initiative to encourage residents to keep kitchen gardens and fish ponds from which they collect fresh raw materials to cook saves energy and time spent travelling outside the local area to purchase produce.





Green Attraction

Sustainable tourism is the main aim of all destinations on this route. A prominent example is Ko Yao Noi, which has a number of admirable projects. These include the cleanliness campaigns, arranging a Big Cleaning Day every fortnight, waste disposal schemes that turn waste into alternative energy, maintenance of local fisheries to promote sustainable marine life, and the use of organic fertiliser.



Green Activity

Ban Tha Din Daeng offers numerous conservation activities; such as, the learning centre about hydroponic vegetables and kayaking through the ecosystem of the mangrove forests. At Ko Yao Noi, the activities on the trail of fishing communities and farmers on the land provide a true understanding of nature-based lifestyles.



Green Community

Takua Pa Old City residents have conserved their traditional way of life. They are happy to share this by opening their homes for tourists to learn about the making of traditional buns and coconut cream cookies, and by the establishment of the Andaman Coast Baba Society to conserve and publicise Baba culture in dress and food. Residents of Ko Yao Noi are excellent hosts, helping tourists to experience their way of life, giving information, and sharing knowledge.



Green Service

Villagers at Ban Tha Din Daeng provide local food for tourists from their own gardens; such as, hydroponic vegetables, organic chicken eggs, and fish bred in their ponds. At the Ban Na Coconut Grove, Ko Yao Noi, chemical-free coconuts picked directly from the trees and various fruits are served.



Green Plus

Ko Yao Noi has the mangrove reforestation activity for tourists in which to participate at any time. Tourists can return benefits to the society by behaving in line with community practices; such as, no littering in the village, waste separation from the source, and no shell and coral collection or other environmental damage. Such small efforts mean that improved green areas may be passed on to future generations of visitors to enjoy.





Contact Information

Amphoe Takua Pa

Takua Pa Old City
Phensi Chitprasan
☎ +66 (9) 6636 1274
Siriphon Chuengsakun
☎ +66 (9) 3583 9421
Ekkasit Iapsakun
☎ +66 (9) 5932 9462

Mae Ari Taoso
Moon Cake Shop
Athiphon Phruksanan
☎ +66 (0) 7642 5313

Original Auntie Baep's
Coconut Cream Cookie
Kanthima Wongsakun
☎ +66 (8) 7265 2190

Andaman Coast Baba Society
Jarin Niranatwarodom
☎ +66 (8) 1719 0224
● babajarin@gmail.com

SAORI Training Centre
Phawanop Sakhonphanit
☎ +66 (8) 7405 8435
☐ SAORI for TSUNAMI
THAILAND
● mayagotami@gmail.com



Amphoe Thai Mueang

Ban Tha Din Daeng
Community-based Tourism Group
Habidin Waharak
☎ +66 (8) 6273 0823
Patiphat Waharak
☎ +66 (8) 4443 3539
☐ Thadindaeng community
khaonayak tour
Remark: Advance Reservation
is required.

Amphoe Ko Yao

Ko Yao Community-based
Tourism Club
Samroeng Rakhiet
☎ +66 (8) 1968 0877
Dusit Buttri
☎ +66 (8) 6942 7999
● bangmee1@hotmail.com
dusit999@hotmail.com
Remark: Advance Reservation
is required.

Ban Tha Khao Farm Housewives
Group (Tha Khao Batik)
Sapiya Yuso
☎ +66 (8) 9295 6322

Home of Organic Agriculture
Decha Roengsamut
☎ +66 (0) 7659 7280

Ban Na Coconut Grove
U-san Buathong
☎ +66 (9) 4072 1263



Recommended accommodation on this route

Amphoe Takua Pa

Casa de La Flora, Khao Lak
☎ +66 (0) 7642 8999
☐ www.casadelaflorea.com
● info@casadelaflorea.com

Khaolak Laguna Resort
☎ +66 (0) 7642 7888
☐ www.khaolaklaguna.com
● rsvn.khaolaklaguna@yahoo.com

The Sarojin
☎ +66 (0) 7642 7900 - 4
☐ www.sarojin.com
● info@sarojin.com

Apsara Beachfront Resort & Villa
☎ +66 (0) 7658 4444
☐ www.apsarakhaolak.com
● rsvn@apsarakhaolak.com



Amphoe Thai Mueang

Khaolak Merlin Resort

☎ +66 [0] 7642 8300,

+66 [0] 7659 5300

🌐 www.merlinphuket.com

✉ khaolakmerlin@merlinphuket.com

Amphoe Ko Yao

Paradise Koh Yao

☎ +66 [0] 7658 4450

🌐 www.paradise-kohyao.com

✉ res@paradise-kohyao.com

Six Senses Yao Noi Resort

☎ +66 [0] 7641 8500

🌐 www.sixsenses.com/resorts/yao-noi/destination

✉ reservations-yaonoi@sixsenses.com

Ani Villas Thailand

☎ +66 [9] 6973 7621

🌐 www.anivillas.com/destinations/thailand

Cape Kudu Hotel, Koh Yao Noi

☎ +66 [0] 7659 2600

🌐 www.capekuduhotel.com/th

✉ reservations@capekuduhotel.com

Ko Yao Noi Homestay

☎ +66 [0] 7659 7244,

+66 [8] 1968 0877

Recommended restaurants on this route

Amphoe Takua Pa

Ngo Meng Heng

☎ +66 [0] 7647 1072,

+66 [8] 7283 3123

🕒 Every day
9.00 a.m. – 9.00 p.m.

Sam Si Seafood

☎ +66 [8] 5883 8267

🕒 Every day
11.00 a.m. – 9.00 p.m.

Yim Yim

☎ +66 [0] 7659 3058

🕒 Tuesday - Sunday
11.00 a.m. – 9.00 p.m.

Amphoe Ko Yao

Ban Chang Restaurant and Bar

☎ +66 (6) 1542 6166

🕒 Every day
10.30 a.m. – 12.00 a.m.

Pum Pui Restaurant

☎ +66 [0] 7659 7474 Ext. 212

🕒 Every day
6.00 p.m. – 10.00 p.m.

Rotee Chao Ko

☎ +66 [8] 9589 5592

🕒 Every day
10.00 a.m. – 11.00 p.m.

The Rest Calm Koh Yao Noi

☎ +66 [9] 8670 4195

🕒 Every day
12.00 p.m. – 7.00 p.m.





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Attractions Promotion Division
Tourism Authority of Thailand

1600 Phetchaburi Road, Makkasan,
Ratchathewi, Bangkok 10400 THAILAND
Tel.: +66 (0) 2250 5500 Contact Center: 1672
Email: 7greens@tat.or.th
Website: <http://7greens.tourismthailand.org>



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