



CREATIVE
TOURISM
DISTRICT
THAILAND

Nan

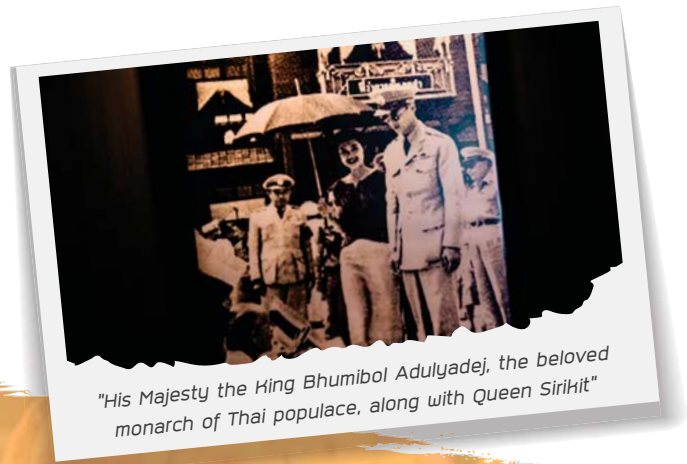
Chill

*More Travel,
More Fun,
Lasting Friendships*

Chill



It's not always true that times of happiness just fly away, because a leisurely trip with the aim to absorb different impressions along the way and indulge in each place with no hurry, to some this is a simple way to reap happiness but overflowing with life energy, accompanied by experiencing the profound charms that a rushed trip could not offer.



"His Majesty the King Bhumibol Adulyadej, the beloved monarch of Thai populace, along with Queen Sirikit"

The morning air is so refreshing you will have to overload your lungs with it. The surrounding looks brilliant. Ahead stands eminently the royal monastery, the center of Wiang Sa people's faith since the time it was still known as Wiang Po. The multilayered roof of the ubosot alternate and cascade down, glimmering under the morning sunlight. Peace and calmness at heart permeate through as you step through the wooden gate with three-layered carving to pay respect to the principal Buddha image in standing posture in the ubosot, where an old lady was compelling everyone to do so for a long and happy life. When your heart is purified, we can continue and get across the street to a red-brown wooden building just in front. The most outstanding point is on the path before the building that was once the district office of Amphoe Sa where our His Majesty the King Bhumibol Adulyadej, the beloved monarch of Thai populace, along with Queen Sirikit, laid his first footstep on ground for the first time in Nan. We got to stroll around the place that was decorated to imitate the event of that day, see the lost wooden bench His Majesty once sat on was even traced and

eventually retrieved with great efforts, watch the short film on His Majesty's first royal visit the citizens in major Northern cities, made me imagine myself as one of his subjects waiting that day to lay eyes on Him. In addition, the stories regarding His Majesty, this small museum still has a lot to offer, like different items reflecting the Sa lifestyle in the past, including fishing devices, kitchen utensils, 'khan tok' and ancient boat parts from the Boat Racing Festival Nan people take pride in.



"Carving bow of boat"



"local fish traps"

Seeing the bow of the boat or 'hua o' display made me interested in how they were carved, and my curiosity was duly answered at Suan Hom Temple, where you will get to watch both master carvers and their apprentices, which are young children, help one another in carving, decorating, and repairing the bows for the Boat Racing Festival to be held in winter, with the abbot as the chief, educating anyone fascinated to learn about the art. The bow is commonly carved into the image of the Naga, so is the stern called 'hang wan.' Every carver agreed





"Carving bow of boats in to Serpents shape "

unanimously that carving requires both concentration and positivity, which seemed apparent since everyone had bright smiles on their face, chatting with one another, and share the generosity to visitors like us. As we were observing, trying out, and walking around the vicinity, our stomach eventually growled. Many recommended me to Ban Kuai Tiao Restaurant that after I had tried myself I got fond of it I had to pass on the words. After a savory meal, let's wash our mouth with something sweet and some iced cold drinks in our next destination at Chang Nan Coffe and Gallery, where not only does it serve tasty food and coffee, the shop is also decorated into indie style by an old bus converted into seating where you can sit and enjoy your coffee, since it used to be a bus garage. You can also tour the gallery then end your visit by shopping for souvenirs and mementos, like a couple of T-shirts I got for my friends.

When we are full, it's time to get a few stretches. We will hop onto the bicycles to sightsee the city, embarking from Huean Rot Tib, where bicycles as old as from the World War era are collected. Some will be look familiar, while some will not. I decided to grab a bicycle with an oversized front wheel. Mr. Suphot, the owner, said I could ride all I want, but after a while I had to give up since it wasn't easy at all to find the balance. The bicycle only kept wobbling that I was afraid it would hit into the wall first. From Huean Rot Tib, we took our time cycling to take photos of the green rice fields and to appreciate the daily life of the local Wiang Sa community. In the space under the houses, you will see residents carrying on their daily activities, like spinning cotton, weaving fabric, making flags, making lanterns, and they will smile at us when we ask them for photos. Dogs were trotting here and there so joyously with quality of life dogs from other cities would be jealous of. According to the locals, Nan has no stray dogs. The ones you could see on the street all have owners. They were just in a middle of a stroll or an exercise at their own pace, and would return home in the evening. Even the ones seen in temples are also owned, by the monks. A dog lover like me only felt so proud when I learned that.



"Morning time at rice farm field"

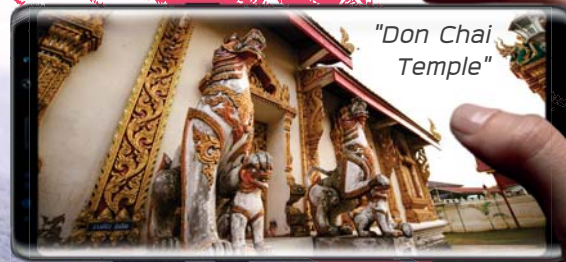


"Huean Rot Tib"



"Making Tung Kha Khing"

After that we will head towards the next destination, Don Chai Temple, a small temple in a peace community, concealed away from the main road and any confusions. Master Tone who volunteered to be our guide told us that this was the only temple whose artist of the sculpture being decorated on the steps of the stair was still alive, which should be true since the artists of the other temples would have all long departed. From Don Chai Temple, we will take a walk around the Don Chai community to take see their homes and simple lifestyle, where we will be greeted with fulfilling smiles along the way towards our true destination at Warapon Woven Fabric shop, where Ms. Warapon, her daughter, and her little granddaughter will already be waiting there to greet us. First of all,



she will demonstrate us weaving techniques by the craftswomen, who will be threading the cotton, moving the shuttles, working the loom as if it was so easy, but when I tried it with myself, before I could finish a single, my hands got all clumsy. It was so confusing finding the weft and the warp. It required a lot of concentration and determination for some time before I managed to get the gist of it. From outside, you can then move into the shop to admire the pieces of fabric on display. Each one was so mesmerizing, especially the 'nam lai son muk' pattern, and the 'nam lai yok rong' pattern Ms. Warapon adapted from the traditional 'nam lai' pattern, or the 'nam nan' pattern also inspired from flowing water wasn't any less beautiful. Each pattern was so delicate and fluttery like the movement of real stream. If you match it with a chic dress and an indie pair of sneakers, it could become a trendsetting fashion!



"Weaving fabric at Warapon woven fabric"



Our last destination was situated from far from here, that is Mr. Radom's Kalok Homestay with such a cute name. When we arrived at the homestay with no sign of people, we tried calling him with the number written in front of his house. After a while, Master Radom showed up on a bicycle to greet us in his 'mohom' attire and a hat not very different from what we had imagined. He talked with a gentle and cool voice like expected of a Northern person. He said if wanted to take a cruise we should wait for the sunlight to soften just before sunset to for an impressive



"Hitting Kalok and feeding the fish"



"Kalok homestay"

scenery. So we took the chance to watch Master Radom feed the fish first, which began by him playing the 'pucha' drum then hitting kalok which was used in the past as signal for distress or to call for assembly, then he hoisted the hung basket until it reached its destination in the river. Since the pulley screeched quite loudly, and he noticed our questioning expression, Master Radom hurried to explain that he intentionally left it unsmooth by not oiling it, so the fish would become familiar with the sound as a signal every time the pulley is pulled, not because of its age or his laziness. After watching the fish, we made a small contribution to support the food expenses for the fish in the conservation area to let them reproduce and last. Master Radom then urged us to write

Nan



Mueang script, that is a lesson on reading and writing Lan Na script. At first, I thought I wouldn't survive, but it turned out it wasn't as difficult as expected, because their letters had the same origin as Central Thai language, so some guesswork would help. The lesson lasted an hour but a half, so for a fast learning like me already managed to write my own full name in Lan Na language. I don't want to boast at all. By the time the class concluded, it wasn't that sunny anymore. When I looked at the time it was already quarter past five. Master Radom said it was already time to ride the cruise, which would be on a long wooden boat amidst cool breezes. Just sitting down and enjoying the greens of the riverbank was really calming. Everything was so peaceful. Not even the sound of a passing boat could be heard, only two other visible wooden boats moored afar with locals fishing in them. The surrounding was so still as if in a painting. The only movement is the wooden boat we were boarded in. Master Radom acted as the guide who urged us to watch the birds in the sky, in which late October was a good time to see black drongos with bicuspid tails swooping down close to the boat or perching on branches of large trees along the river, and white egrets that were migrating away from the Siberian winter. According to Master Radom, on the left was a fishing community, which was why there were rows of boats filled with fishermen, while some were just relaxing and chatting, and some packing up their companion fishing devices. He drew the boat bow close to them to greet them with intimacy in the way of a rural setting whose kindness and goodwill still hadn't been deprived away by urgency of a busy schedule and frustration from traffic condition. As we approached the river bend, Master Radom pointed us to the scene of the sun about to set dyeing the sky permeating orange with a hint of purple. It was beautiful beyond words that I wanted to cry. Witnessing such scenery under the evening sunlight, Master Radom pulled out a 'pin,' a Lan Na instrument' and plucked us a tune in lieu of a guitar. Oh, so satisfying! Tired from a day packed with activities, tonight we will stay at Khon Khun Khao Resort, Master Tone's comfy accommodation, not only fully equipped with amenities but also very delicious food.



"Writing Lanna Script"



"Boat cruising in Nan River"

In the second morning, we will head to the city center, to make 'tung kha khing' at Phra Koed Temple. 'Tung' means flag, 'kham' means tall, and 'khing' means self, put them together and that mean today we will be making Lan Na style flag as tall as yourself. The lady said Lan Na people believed 'tung kha khing' could grant longevity and rid you of misfortune, and handed use a tung as tall as ourselves made from mulberry paper to make up the face ourselves. Other motifs, like a prayer scripture of the 'sabat' pattern below that were there to shake off and eradicate any calamity were already made for, so there was nothing to worry. After you've offered away the tung, let's energize ourselves up at Surat Thani beef noodle restaurant that gained its reputation in Nan but is still named Surat Thani. Next, we will try out the way of a Lan Na lady at Chao Pho Kham Palace, where we will make flower cones to make offer to Buddha image. First we will have to tour around the palace and the resident that is inherited from a descendent of a past Nan prince to absorb the traditional Lan Na household lifestyle where the residential sector, kitchen, rice storage, and water well were built separate. After touring, we will sit down nicely to roll banana leaves into cones, pleat them into a pointy shape, which will require endurance and very tender touches. The soft Lan Na tune will calm you for a peaceful mind so you can concentrate with the works at hands. The effort will earn you the success, evinced by the flower cones in your hands. Now it's time for coffee again, but this time we will go to Sweety 9, a wooden house where Nan teenagers gather to for ice cold beverages, so we will follow suit. I'd say Green Refresh is the most refreshing, I heard traditional Nan style breakfast is also good. I will come in the morning so I won't miss it next time.



"Making flower cones"



"Making Tung Kha Khing"



"Chao Fong Kham Palace"



For a laidback lifestyle, of course we will be cycling for the afternoon, and keep cycling at our own pace, admiring the temples in far apart from one another. First, we will stop by Muang Nan Municipality Tourist Service Center in the city center across Phu Min Temple, then take a look at the world renowned 'Whisper of Love' mural, we will proceed to Phra That Chang Kham Temple not far away, where we will find Chang Kham stupa with Sukhothai art. We will then go to Nan National Museum which holds the climatic photo spot for tourists, that is the photogenic plumeria tunnel just in front, and we must not forget to visit Noi Temple which is Thailand's smallest temple. In the evening, we will stroll around to shop for local souvenirs and visit the market for 'khao soi,' 'nam prik num,'



"Phumin Temple"



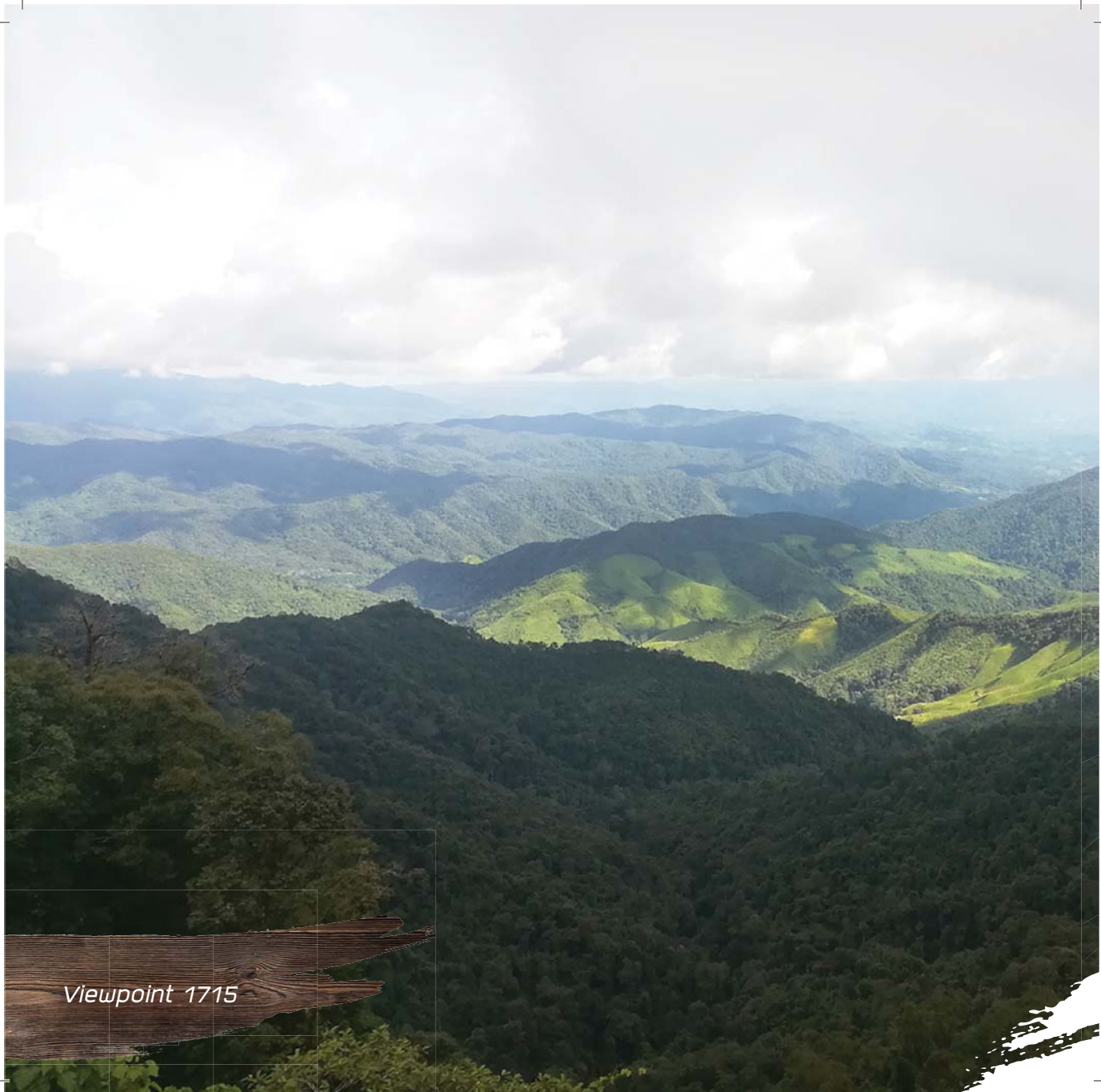
"Leelawadee Arch"

and 'sai ua' for dinner in the middle of Nan's temple scenery. The ambience is so laidback and appetizing. After dinner, we will head to Pua, as tonight we will be staying at Cocoa Valley Resort, the chicest hotel in Pua. Their chocolate lava cake and iced cocoa are irresistible, I tell you.



"Eat and Shop at walking street "





Viewpoint 1715

Next morning, we will pack up early to head to the salt well, since we want to stop by the scenic spot 1715 for a view of sea of mist first. If it's too late, it won't be very white and fluffy, so fluffy like the clouds in the sky were plucked down and sown over the valley. Right after that we will head to the salt well. This salt well is extraordinary unlike other ones, in the sense that the salt doesn't originate from the sea but from high mountain. The locals will extract the salt by transferring water from the well down the bamboo gutters into the resting well, then drawn up from this well to make the slat by boiling it in a larch pap for about 4-5 hours, wait until the water has evaporated then scooped up using a paddle to dry in a basket hung above the pan to let water drip down into the pan the scoop it up again. The steps are repeated until the water in the pan dries up, then it is refilled from the well. It's very photogenic up here, as seen by the artistic photos of the locals drawing up the brine water for salt extraction and the pretty photos of the scenery with ultimate beauty to the point that it's worth just coming up here for it alone. After that, we will indulge in a riverside atmosphere, eating chicken fried with 'makwaen,' 'yam phak kud' and 'kha mu mueang bo' in Bo Kluea View, a cute scenic restaurant with good food and fresh vegetable grown in private garden. I was so laidback I didn't want to leave. Can't I just live here for a year?



"The Ancient salt pits of Bo Kluea (Salt Well)"



"Making salt at Salt well"



Contacts for tourism:

Wiang Sa, Master Tone – Tel: 088 407 1740

Boat cruise, Master Radom – Tel: 085 029 8029

Tung Kha Khing, Ms. Tim – Tel: 087 178 2588

Chao Fong Kham Palace, Ms. Pat – Tel: 089 560 6988



Directions:

From Nan city, head south towards Wiang Sa for approximately 25 kilometers, and from Nan city to Pua, take higher no. 101 for approximately 60 kilometers. From Pua to salt well, take highway no. 1256 via Doi Phu Kha National Park to the salt well for approximately 50 kilometers.

Best time to travel:



All year round. If you want to watch the traditional Boat Racing Festival, come in October. If you want to see drongos and white egrets, also the same time. Late rainy season and early winter to enjoy the sea of mist.



Target audience:

Tourists who don't like rushing, love taking time to sink in the atmosphere and getting to know each attraction profoundly, prefer a relaxing style of traveling, and do not focus on the goal but pay for attention to values gained on the way there.

Preparation:



Camera and dairy to record your memories, jacket, sneakers to trek to the salt well



Trivia:

Wiang Sa is Nan's largest Amphoe, so called 'the Gate to Nan,' being very abundant in rivers and streams. As for Nan city, it's a cozy small town, complete with charms and living cultures, full of temples to be visited. Other important tourist attractions include Nan National Museum, Phu Min Temple, and Rim Nan Gallery. The salt mine is source of rock salt which now has only the north and south wells left

Values and impressions gained:



Happiness from an unhurried trip, taking time at every pace with no rush, slowly absorbing the atmosphere at every minute. You will get to relax and rid yourself of hassles in everyday life and spend time with yourself till inspirations and ideas are borne of them. Most importantly, you get to recharge yourself with life energy that will clearly make you more vigorous and robust.



Activities with local communities:

Carving bow of boat ,Cycling through the city
Weaving fabric at Warapon Woven Fabric
Boat cruising in Nan River, Writing Muang script, Making Tung Kha Khing, Making flower cones at Chao Fong Kham Palace



"Carving bow of boat"



Accommodations:

- Khon Khun Khao Resort
- Cocoa Valley Resort



Tourist attractions:

- Bun Yuen Temple: Wiang Sa's important temple since the ancient times. Anyone who comes will have to pay respect to the Buddha image with elegant standing posture.
- Wiang Sa Municipality Local Museum: Besides being an important archive of physical evidences of Nan lifestyle and culture, it is also the location of the first footstep His Majesty the King Bhumibol Adulyadej set in the land of Nan.
- Don Chai Temple: a small temple in Ban Don Chai Tai community, suitable for those who enjoy peach and crowded with other tourists.
- Salt well: admire the beauty of sea of mist, mountain, and the traditional salt making process that lasts till today.



"Cycling through the city"



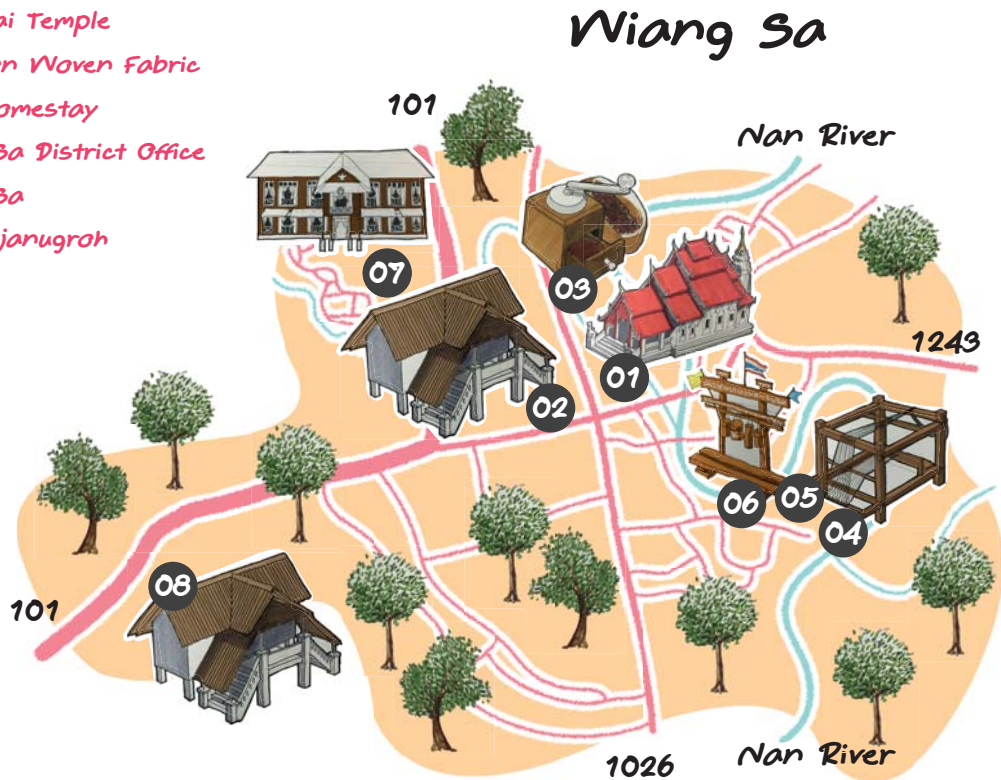
Souvenirs and must-haves:

Woven fabric from Warapon Woven fabric

Day 1

We will first stop to pay respect the principal Buddha image at Bun Yuen Temple, then go to see the King's first footstep at Wiang Sa Municipality Local Museum, and proceed to carve boat bow. We will have lunch at the noodle restaurant then have some coffee at Chang Nan Coffee and Gallery. In the afternoon, we will cycle around the Wiang Sa city, Don Chai Temple, learn about woven fabric at Warapon Woven Fabric, then we will continue to Ban Kalok to feed the fish, write Muang script and end the day with a laidback atmosphere of a cruise down the river. At night, we will check in at Khon Khun Khao Resort.

- 01 Bun Yuen Temple
- 02 Wiang Sa Municipality Local Museum
- 03 Chang Nan Coffee and Gallery
- 04 Don Chai Temple
- 05 Warapon Woven Fabric
- 06 Kalok Homestay
- 07 Wiang Sa District Office
- 08 Wiang Sa Rajaprajanugroh School



- 09 Phra Koed Temple
- 10 Chao Fong Kham Palace
- 11 Phra That Chang Kham
- 12 Phumin Temple
- 13 Walking Street
- 14 Nan Nakhon Airport

We will head to the city to make tung kha king at Phra Koed Temple. For lunch, we will stop by to have beef noodle at Surat Thani beef noodle. After that, we will learn how to make flow cones at Chao Fong Kham Palace, then have some coffee at Sweet 9. As even approaches, we will cycle to sightsee the temples and Nan lifestyle, and we can stroll around to find Nan's local food for dinner, then we will travel to Pua to stay the night at cocoa Valley Resur

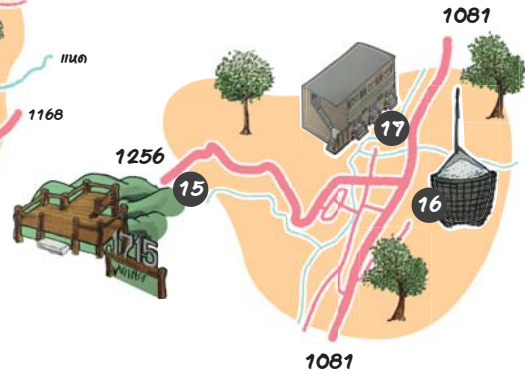
Day 2

Nai Wiang



- 15 Viewpoint 1715
- 16 Salt Well Community
- 17 Bo Kluea View

Bo Kluea



Day 3

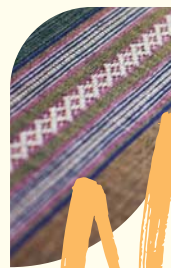
After having breakfast, we will head to the salt well via Doi Phu Kha National Park, stop to view sea of mist at scenic spot 1715, then continue towards the salt mine, where will get to see both stunning scenery and traditional salt extraction process, We will end our trip with lunch at Bo Kluea View



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