



## Thailand Highlights

Classic Tour | 13 Days | Physical Level 1

Bangkok – Kanchanaburi – Chiang Rai – Lisu Lodge – Chiang Mai

A two-week journey from south to north, this perfect first-timer tour of Thailand encompasses all the top sights as well as venturing into less-explored areas to explore pristine nature and local culture with a stay at a beautiful eco-lodge.

- Marvel at Bangkok's Grand Palace
- Cross the infamous River Kwai
- Explore historical Ayutthaya
- Meet minority hill tribes
- Stroll through laidback Chiang Rai
- Master Thai cuisine with Chiang Mai's cooking class



#### Thailand Highlights tour inclusions:

- Return international economy flights, taxes and current fuel surcharges (unless a land only option is selected)
- All accommodation
- All meals
- All sightseeing and entrance fees
- All transportation and transfers
- English speaking National Escort (if your group is 10 or more passengers) or Local Guides
- Visa fees for Australian passport holders
- Specialist advice from our experienced travel consultants
- Comprehensive travel guides

*The only thing you may have to pay for are personal expenditure e.g. drinks, optional excursions or shows, insurance of any kind, customary tipping, early check in or late checkout and other items not specified on the itinerary.*

#### Classic Tours:

These tours are designed for those who wish to see the iconic sites and magnificent treasures of Southeast Asia on an excellent value group tour whilst travelling with like-minded people. The tours are on a fully-inclusive basis so you'll travel with the assurance that all your arrangements are taken care of. You will be accompanied by our dedicated and professional National Escorts or local guides, whose unparalleled knowledge will turn your holiday into an unforgettable experience.

#### Physical Level 1:

All our tours feature a physical rating to help you select the right holiday for you. To travel on any of our tours requires unaided mobility and the ability to stroll around the sights.

'Thailand Highlights' is rated as a **physical level 1** tour. A reasonable level of fitness is required but it's more about spending time on your feet rather than covering large distances. You'll be getting on and off coaches, walking around the sights and climbing some steps.

- There will be sightseeing on foot for both short and extended periods of time
- You will be required to get on and off small boats without assistance

Of course, our National Escorts and local guides will always endeavour to provide the highest level of service and assistance; however, they cannot be expected to cater for customers who are unfit to complete the itinerary.

### Country Profile: Thailand

Thailand is a beautiful country, offering travelers stunning scenery from fertile rice fields in the central plains, rising mountains and valleys in the north, to sandy white beaches at famous island destinations such as Phuket in the south. Thailand has an ancient history shaped by war and imperialism, as well as an immersion of culture and faith.

### Joining Your Tour

The tour is 13 days in duration including international flights. Please note that depending on flight schedules passengers may arrive/depart on Day 2.

Travellers booked on 'Land Only, the price includes your arrival/ departure airport transfers if arriving/departing on the start and conclusion date of your tour. Please advise your international flight times to reservations. Join the tour on day 1 in Bangkok and end the tour on Day 12 in Chiang Mai. Please refer to your final itinerary for more specific meeting instructions pertaining to your departure.

### Itinerary Changes

It is our intention to adhere to the day-to-day itinerary as printed; however, the order of events or sightseeing may change as we look to improve our tours or as local conditions dictate. In these circumstances we will make the best possible arrangements maintaining the integrity of your trip.

## Itinerary – Thailand Highlights

### Day 1: Bangkok

You will be met at Bangkok Airport in the arrivals hall by your local guide or National Escort from Wendy Wu Tours. Together with all other group members who may be arriving at a similar time, you will transfer approximately 1 hour to your hotel and check-in to your room.

*Meeting point at the airport is located at Exit B Gate no.6. Your National Escort/local guide will welcome you there holding a signboard. If you are not able to find the National Escort, please call +66 (0) 84 138 6228 or contact the ATTA counter (Association of Thai Travel Agents) for assistance.*



#### Destination Information

**Bangkok** - Bangkok has been Thailand's dominant city since the 18th century. It was established as the capital after the former capital Ayutthaya was attacked by the Burmese and burned down. The emerging city, which was protected by a wall, was occupied by a large number of stilt and floating houses built to adapt to common seasonal flooding. Up until the Vietnam War, Bangkok was still largely undeveloped until it became a popular place of rest and relaxation for the American soldiers, which resulted in a boom of nightclubs, massage parlours and bars. However, in the 80's and 90's, Bangkok underwent rapid modernisation and exploded into the metropolis it is today; a city that is lined with skyscrapers and is full of life. With a population of over 7 million, the fast pace of the city can be daunting for the first-time visitor, yet beneath all of the hustle and bustle there are many hidden gems waiting to be discovered, offering a unique taste of Thai culture and history. Bangkok's dazzling neon signs, charming architecture, spicy Thai cuisine and colourful markets make for an exciting first few days of our tour.

### Day 2: Bangkok

Enjoy a sightseeing tour of the city today. Tour the Grand Palace, Wat Pho and Chinatown before cruising down Chao Phraya River on a longboat to Pak Khlong Talaat Flower Market, whilst enjoying an alternative view of the city. Sightseeing involves around 5 hours on foot today and involves hopping on and off the boats, often on unsteady and sometimes slippery surfaces, without handrails or assistance



#### Destination Information

**Wat Pho** - One of Bangkok's largest temples. Experience the monk's chant as you explore the grounds of Wat Pho, which is over eight hectares. The largest reclining Buddha and the largest collection of Buddha images in Thailand are housed here.

**Grand Palace** - The Grand Palace is the city's most famous landmark. Built in 1782, for 150 years it was the home to the Thai King, the royal court and administrative seat of government. Within the Palace are several impressive buildings, including the Temple of the Emerald Buddha.



**Pak Khlong Talaat Flower Market** - The biggest wholesale and retail fresh flower market in Bangkok.

**Chinatown** - Teeming with market stalls and side street restaurants, Chinatown is a not to be missed experience in Bangkok.

### Day 3: Bangkok – Kanchanaburi

Rise early this morning and drive to the Railway Track Market in Smut Songkram and then onto Damnoen Saduak Floating Market where you will travel by a motorised or paddle wooden boats through the canals. Sightseeing involves hopping on and off the boats, often on unsteady and sometimes slippery surfaces, without handrails or assistance. Continue to Kanchanaburi stopping at the famous 'Bridge over the River Kwai' on the way. On arrival in Kanchanaburi, visit the Allied War Cemetery and JEATH War Museum.



#### Destination Information

**Railway Track Market** - A open-air market with a little difference. Set on railway track; enjoy the unique experience as you see the vendors quickly pack up their stores as the train approaches the tracks.

**Damnoen Saduak Floating Market** - Step back in time to experience the traditional way farmers would trade their produce. The canals are lined with boats that are paddled by local women and piled high with vegetables, fruit and even souvenirs for the tourists. Sit back and soak up the atmosphere as the locals go about their daily life and entertain with their haggling techniques.

**Bridge over the River Kwai** - The infamous bridge built by prisoners of war during World War II, many of whom lost their lives during its construction.

**Kanchanaburi** - One of Thailand's largest provinces, rich in history and which boasts undeniable scenic beauty.

**Allied War Cemetery** – See thousands of graves belonging to British, Dutch and Australian prisoners who died while building the bridge.

**JEATH War Museum** – The Museum displays many artefacts, photos and stories of the prisoners of World War II. There are graphic images of the terrible conditions and torment that the young men faced and the stories of those who survived; some group members may find this upsetting and confronting.

### Day 4: Kanchanaburi – Bangkok

This morning visit Hellfire Pass, a dramatic part of the railway that literally cuts through mountain, and take a 3 kilometre walk through the pass. Explore the Hellfire Pass Memorial Museum, which tells the stories of human suffering at the hands of this engineering feat before boarding the train at Nam Tok Railway Station. After lunch, travel back to Bangkok. This evening, enjoy a delicious Thai meal for dinner and watch a performance of traditional Thai dancing.

*Please note the 3km walk will be on uneven ground, involves some steep steps and it is likely to be humid, be prepared for mosquitoes! If you do not wish to take part, you will still be able to see the pass from around 15 minutes' walk from the museum and you may remain in the museum area independently, please be aware that the group will be gone for around 2 hours.*

#### **Destination Information**

**Hellfire Pass** - Was constructed for the Burma to Thailand railway by Prisoners of War. This part of the railway was particularly hard to build due to its remoteness and the scale of rock-cutting required. It took only six weeks to build this section, as the prisoners were forced to work 16-18 hour days and throughout the night. Its name derived from the eerie glow produced by the torches at night, reflecting off the gaunt faces of the prisoners.

### Day 5: Ayutthaya – Chiang Rai

Discover the historical highlights of Ayutthaya by minivan on a day trip to the ancient capital of Thailand. Departing from Bangkok in the morning, drive 1 and half hours to Bang Pa-In Palace, boasting a mix of European, gothic and Thai-Buddhist architecture. There's time to explore the vast grounds that include several temple complexes, Wat Phra Sri Sanphet, a temple that forbids monks to enter (due to its 'royal' status), and then on to Wat Chai Wattanaram is a Buddhist temple in the city of Ayutthaya Historical Park the west bank of the Chao Phraya River, outside Ayutthaya island. Sightseeing will involve around 3 hours on foot today. Enjoy lunch at the local restaurant and take the road trip back to Bangkok. Transfer to the airport for your 1 hour and 20 minute flight to Chiang Rai.



#### **Destination Information**

**Ayutthaya** - The former Thai Kingdom capital city from 1350 to 1767. It ultimately suffered destruction at the hands of the Burmese. On arrival visit the largest temple of Wat Phra Sisanphet, which was used as the Royal Temple Palace by several kings. The following sight is Wat Chai Wattanaram where the construction patterns are very interesting. Then continue to Bang - Pa - In Summer Palace, which served as the summer palace for many Thai monarchs from the 17th century. This structure has a captivating collection of marvellous pavilions in a variety of Thai, Chinese, Italian and Victorian architectural styles.

### Day 6: Chiang Rai

This morning, stop at the area known as the 'Golden Triangle'; the point where the borders of Thailand, Laos and Myanmar meet. Upon arrival, enjoy a boat ride crossing the Mekong River to Laos where you visit Don Sao Island. There is a small market on the island, selling Lao clothing, handicrafts and postcards, which you can send home with a Lao postmark from the small post office located here. Continue to Mae Sai, the northernmost point of Thailand and an important trading city on the Thai-Burmese border. Learn about its history and visit the local market, where you'll be able to purchase cheap jewellery imported from Myanmar (Burma), Chinese goods and all sorts of



delicious local eats for your ride back to Chiang Rai. This evening, explore the colourful night market in Chiang Rai.

#### **Destination Information**

**Chiang Rai** - The northern-most province of Thailand sharing borders with Myanmar and Laos, and also one of the most ethnically diverse provinces in Thailand. The province is abundant with natural scenery; lush rice terraces, hills scattered with orchids and the mountains of Myanmar and Laos are visible in the distance.

#### **Day 7: Chiang Rai**

This morning drive 1 and half hours to Mae Salong Mountain, renowned for its hill tribes and tea plantations. From the base of the mountain travel by truck to a plantation where you will have an opportunity to sample local tea. Enjoy lunch at a mountaintop restaurant before an excursion to Mae Salong, visiting a tea plantation, a Yao Tribe and an Akha village known as Ban Lorcha. Sightseeing today will include approximately 3 hours on foot.

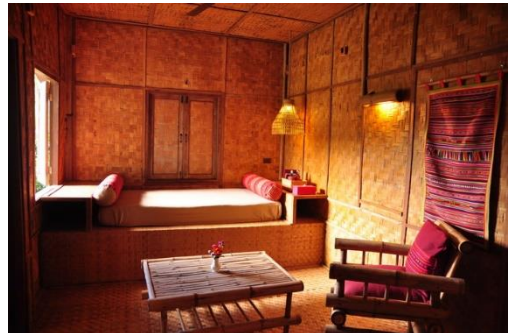


#### **Destination Information**

**Mae Salong** - Once known as a centre for opium trade in the golden triangle, Mae Salong is now associated with tribal villages and for the production of excellent local tea.

#### **Day 8: Lisu Lodge**

Depart Chiang Rai and take a short 30-minute drive to explore the Wat Rong Khun or 'White Temple'. Next, stop at local market, then continue to Chiang Mai, where you will spend the night at the Lisu Lodge. As the name suggests, the lodge is located at a Lisu hilltribe village and you will be guided through the village by some of the locals before having dinner at the terrace of one of the wooden houses, where you will also be entertained by children from the local village who will perform some Lisu folklore.



*Built in traditional Lisu style with an eye for western comforts, the guest cottages overlook the lush fields and hills surrounding the valley. Each guest room has an en-suite bathroom. The cottages include electric fans (but no air con), a mosquito net, a universal power outlet at the headboard, 2 complimentary bottles of water, a hair dryer, hot water for showers, toiletries and slippers, towels and a shower cap. You will need to pack an overnight bag for tonight's homestay as your main luggage will be left in safe storage and collected tomorrow.*

### Destination Information

**White Temple** - One of the most recognisable temples in Thailand, the White Temple is a contemporary Buddhist and Hindu temple designed by Thai artist Chalermchai Kositpipat in 1997.

**Lisu Lodge** - Named after the Lisu hill tribe village that is found near the lodge, the lodge is also part of a community-based project that aims to conserve the natural heritage of the hill tribes in Chiang Mai. The lodge is operated by Lisu hill tribe villagers who will take care of you during your stay.

## Day 9: Lisu Lodge – Chiang Mai

Have breakfast from the lodge's organic farm and begin the 1 hour drive to Chiang Mai. Upon arrival, visit the ancient city of Wiang Kum Kam, continue to Wat Chedi Luang and Wat Phra Singh. Sightseeing will be approximately 2 hours on foot today.



### Destination Information

**Chiang Mai** - Located among tall mountains, Chiang Mai is the largest and most culturally significant city in northern Thailand. The city was founded in 1296 and was the capital of the Lanna Kingdom, which was eventually occupied by the Burmese. For the next 200 years Chiang Mai was virtually abandoned until it was again taken over by Siam in the 18th century. During the 20th century, Chiang Mai became a thriving centre for handicraft pottery, weaving, silverwork and woodcarving; however tourism took over in the 1960's as the main source of income. Today, Chiang Mai is famous for its hilltribes, tea plantations and elephants.

**Wiang Kum Kam** - In 1984, just outside the modern Chiang Mai metropolitan area, archaeologists uncovered the remains of this city, which was said to have been buried underground by years of flooding. Nearly 20 temple sites have been uncovered in the area, many in ruins, except for two that are still actively used today.

**Wat Chedi Luang** - Where the famous 'Emerald Buddha' was once enshrined.

**Wat Phra Singh** - Founded in the 14th century to enshrine the ashes of King Kam Fu.

## Day 10: Chiang Mai

After breakfast, you will visit the Thai Elephant Care Centre. The centre is located in the beautiful Mesa valley and is the peaceful final resting place for old elephants. You will be met by one of the local caretakers at the gate and he will guide you through the centre, explaining about the centre and its inhabitants, and you will of course have a look at the impressive beasts and their lifelong caretakers. After the visit, have lunch and continue to Mae Daeng to enjoy an exciting rafting trip on the river. After the rafting return to Chiang Mai.

*Please note that in the rainy season, between June and August, bamboo rafting may not be possible for safety reasons.*



### Destination Information

**Thai Elephant Care Centre** – a care centre dedicated to looking after elderly elephants in their final stage of life.

## Day 11: Chiang Mai

Enjoy a cooking class where you will learn to cook traditional Thai cuisine and enjoy your creation for lunch. Later, drive 1 hour to Wat Doi Suthep where you will have the option of climbing the Naga staircase 300 steps to the top, or catch the cable car to visit the exquisite golden pagoda. This evening we enjoy a typical Thai (Kantoke) dinner while watching a performance of traditional song and dance from Northern Thailand by various hill tribes.



### Destination Information

**Talat Warorod** - Chiang Mai's oldest and largest market. Stroll past rows of stalls selling an assortment of items, from woks, toys and pickled tea leaves.

**Wat Doi Suthep** - One of Thailand's most sacred temples. Tucked away in the mountains at 1,056 metres above sea level, it offers a panoramic view of Chiang Mai.

## Days 12-13: Depart Chiang Mai

Transfer to the airport for your flight to Australia arriving home the following day; any time before your flight is at leisure.

Late check-out is not included in our South East Asia group tours. If you wish to book a late check-out for your final day, please contact our reservations department who can confirm additional pricing and make this arrangement for you, subject to availability at the hotel.

## Thailand Highlights Travel Information

### Visas

Australian passport holders do not need a visa for Thailand if they are travelling for less than 30 days for tourist purposes.

Please be advised that your passport must have at least six months validity left on it when you arrive back into Australia.

For the latest information on visa procedures, processing times and requirements, please kindly refer to our website <https://www.wendywutours.com.au/help-and-advice/passports-and-visas/>

Please note the visa procedures and requirements may change at any time. These changes are often made by the relevant embassy or consulate, Wendy Wu Tours acts as a third party and has no influence on the process of a visa.

Wendy Wu Tours does not accept responsibility for lost or undelivered items.

All information with regards to visas will be updated regularly on our website as we find visas process' are changing on regular basis.

### Insurance

We strongly recommend that you take out a policy as soon as you pay your deposit. Wendy Wu Tours cannot in any way be made liable for any additional cost incurred by the customer on any tour due to the customer not having adequate travel insurance.

We also encourage all customers to take a copy of their travel insurance documents (especially relevant international contact numbers) with them while on tour. We advise that you check the inclusions and procedures for lodging claims prior to your departure. These documents should be stored separately from the original.

### Eating in Southeast Asia

Southeast Asia is home to an incredibly rich food history. The local cuisine is known for its intense flavours, spices and some of the freshest ingredients you can find. In general, meals include either rice or noodles and are packed full of flavour. Lemongrass, ginger, lime leaves, coriander, fish sauce and soy sauce are used in most local dishes. Whilst Southeast Asian food has a reputation for being hot and spicy, each region actually has its own distinct characteristics.

Your itinerary has been carefully crafted to introduce you to a range of local dishes and we hope that you enjoy the culinary adventure ahead. All meals (excluding drinks) are included in our fully inclusive group tours from dinner on the day of your groups' arrival until breakfast on your day of departure.

Determining when it's appropriate to use chopsticks, forks or spoons can be challenging for some travellers, even other Asians, as each country has different customs. In Thailand and some other countries in Southeast Asia, fork and spoon are used for most dishes and chopsticks are typically provided to eat noodles. Usually chopsticks or other utensils are provided to scoop the food into your bowl to prevent your own chopsticks from touching the food that remains on the table. Dining in Southeast Asia is fairly casual with not too many rules. Leaving food on the plate is not considered rude.

Those with dietary requirements will be well catered for - just make sure to inform your booking agent of any specific requirements well in advance of your trip.

All the restaurants we visit will be researched and inspected regularly to ensure that they follow the strictest health, cleanliness, and safety guidelines. All waiting staff will wear face masks and gloves and self-service buffets will be avoided in favour of à la carte dining, waiter-served meals, or waiter-assisted buffets. Hand sanitiser will be provided to the group before and after every food and beverage service.

Please read your travel guide, which you will receive with your final documents for more information about eating in Southeast Asia. We recommend that when it comes to Asia food, you stay open minded and try to be adventurous!

## Accommodation

Your accommodation is selected for convenience of location, comfort or character, and can range from a business hotel in one city to a family run guesthouse in a smaller town. In more remote areas, accommodation may be of a lower standard and may not have all western amenities. Hotels are generally rated as local three to

four-star standard, but please note that there is no international classification system for hotels and differences in facilities and quality do exist between Australia and Southeast Asia. All group tour hotels have private western bathroom facilities, air conditioning, TV and telephone. Plumbing and electricity supplies can be erratic and quite often the power in hotel rooms is turned off while guests are out of the room. If you experience any difficulty, please speak to your National Escort or Local Guide. Rest assured that all hotels used by Wendy Wu Tours are regularly inspected by our staff and our partners to ensure that standards meet your needs. Please note that double bed requests can be made at time of booking but can't be guaranteed.

## Transport

**Coaches:** Coaches with air conditioning are used on our group tours for city sightseeing, short excursions to the countryside and longer transfers where necessary. **However, mini buses may be used for smaller groups (under 10 passengers).**

Roads in Southeast Asia have generally improved over recent years, but traffic and/or weather conditions may extend driving times. Road construction work usually covers an enormous section of road - not just one or two kilometres as you may be used to. For this reason, the timings listed in the itinerary are approximations only.

**Seatbelts:** Please note that seatbelts are not compulsory by law in Southeast Asia and therefore the local people largely choose not to wear them. For this reason, some vehicles may not be fitted with seatbelts or they may be hidden underneath protective seat covers. It is recommended that where seatbelts are available customers must use them and remain seated at all times while the vehicle is moving. If you have any concerns, please notify your National Escort/Local Guides.

**Air:** Internal flights are based on economy class, with reputable airlines. Pre-flight seat allocation is not available on international and internal flight sectors.

Although Southeast Asia is developing quickly, it still lacks the international standards of civil infrastructure and tourist facilities. Concepts of personal responsibility are also different to those in Australia. Consequently, tourist and public facilities may not uphold the same safety standards as in Australia; for example, you may see a hole

### Development in Southeast Asia

in the road without a warning sign or safety barricade. All of our suppliers meet local safety standards as a minimum. We want you to have an enjoyable holiday so we ask that you take extra care, use your common sense, refer to notices and follow advice from your National Escort or Local Guides.

### Thailand public holidays

If you are travelling within the below Thailand Public Holidays please note that celebrations can last a couple of days and during these times some businesses will be closed and coach, air and train travel may be affected. Chakri Memorial Day - 6<sup>th</sup> April, Songkran Festival 13<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> April, Labour Day - 1<sup>st</sup> May, Coronation Day – 5<sup>th</sup> May, the Kings Birthday – 6<sup>th</sup> December, the Queen's Birthday - 12<sup>th</sup> August, Chulalongkorn Day – 25<sup>th</sup> October.

### Souvenirs

We want to be able to give you an opportunity to buy souvenirs, so we include some stops at museums or exhibitions which demonstrates a craft or product unique to that region with pieces available to buy. We understand that souvenir hunting is not for everyone, so we aim to take you to places, which hold local interest. We trust you will enjoy these opportunities to learn about local arts and crafts and understand their historical and cultural importance

### Group Size

The group size on our Classic Tours is on average 21 passengers, with a maximum group size of 28. You may encounter other Wendy Wu tour groups while you are travelling. On our group tours we operate a seat-and-a-half policy, allowing you to travel in greater comfort.

All our departures are guaranteed to operate with a minimum of 8 travellers booked (unless cancelled due to factors beyond our control). A national escort will accompany each group of 10 or more. However, at our discretion we may operate departures with a smaller group size as we try to operate advertised departures wherever it is viable to do so.

### Tipping Policy

Local tipping is customary in Asia. However, this can often lead to awkwardness in knowing when it is appropriate to tip and how much, as well as ensuring you have a suitable amount of change available at the time. For your convenience, with years of experiences in providing the best customer service, Wendy Wu Tours operates a kitty system on our Group Tours so your National Escort will look after this aspect of your trip for you. It also ensures that the amounts paid are reasonable for you but still fair for the local people. The amount is stated on each Group Tour page will be advised again on your final documentation. Tipping is in US Dollars and will be collected by your National Escort on arrival and distributed throughout the tour on your behalf. Any additional tipping on any of our tours is welcomed at your discretion. Further guidance for tipping contributions will be outlined in your final documentation.



We generally find that most customers appreciate the convenience of our tipping policy, but we do recognize that it may not suit everyone. However, as this is a group tour we ask that everyone follows the same protocol to be fair to other group members and to ensure smooth operation of your tour.

### Packing list and Climate

Please refer to our website or brochure for detailed temperature charts.

You will find a complete packing list and a helpful climate chart in the 'Suggested Packing List', which will be included in the pre-departure information link sent within your deposit documentation. Seasonal weather patterns can be quite unpredictable. Up to the minute information on worldwide weather can be found on [www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com)

### Luggage

All travellers are limited to two items of luggage each; a suitcase with a maximum weight of 20kg and one piece of hand luggage with a maximum weight of five kilograms. It is essential that your luggage is lockable.

### Exchanging Cash

Australian Dollars can be easily exchanged in Thailand, provided notes are new and undamaged. We suggest exchanging your money before travelling to remote areas and smaller towns, as exchange facilities can be limited. Your National Escort will remind you to do this before departure.

### Personal Expenses & Optional Tours

Personal Expense - You will need to take some extra money to cover drinks, laundry and souvenirs, plus any additional sightseeing that may be offered to you. Based on the advice of previous customers an approximate amount of AU\$250 per person, per week should be sufficient; however, for those that can't resist a bargain or may wish to participate in all of the optional excursions, consider allocating a higher amount.

Optional tours may be offered in each city you visit during your tour at an additional cost. These are not included in the standard itinerary and will only be available if time permits. Each option will be arranged locally by your National Escort/Local Guide.

### Climbing Steps

Sightseeing at nearly all of the palaces, fortresses and some temples involves climbing quite a number of steps. These palaces were built to provide defense against potential invaders so nearly all of them stand on top of a hill, while the interiors have layers of narrow hallways and steps to slow down the advance of enemies once they were inside. The steps tend to be quite large, not level and sometimes without handrails. Hindu and Buddhist temples or pagodas also tend to be built at an elevation, as this is the most auspicious position according to ancient beliefs. This means you sometimes need to walk from the bus park to the entrance, and/or need to climb some steps inside.

People with knee or hip injuries, who have poor balance or are otherwise unable to complete these activities independently should consider the suitability of this itinerary carefully.

## Cultural Difference

Thailand has many religions, cultures and histories. Please be considerate of the local beliefs and customs and dress with consideration.

## Appropriate Dress

When visiting temples or mosques, both men and women should dress in conservative, non-revealing clothing. Full-length trousers with a shirt or t-shirt for men; and pants or skirts well below the knee with a top that covers the shoulders and upper arms for women. Women might also consider carrying a 'modesty shawl' in their daypack – this could be a sarong or light scarf – which they can wear over their shoulders and heads to feel more comfortable while sightseeing at mosques.

Religious sites and homes throughout Southeast Asia – for Hindus, Muslims or Buddhists to name a few – require all visitors to remove their shoes to enter. Even if you then need to walk outdoors, over hot or rough ground, you will not be allowed to wear shoes. You will often find shoe storage rooms near the entrance of a site where it is customary to leave your shoes near the entrance. Occasionally there are 'shoe minders' who will offer to keep your shoes safe for a 'tip' – this is not compulsory, so each customer can choose to tip for this service or not. If you do not want to remove your shoes, you will have to remain outside.

We recommend shoes that easily slip on and off and carry a pair of thick socks in your daypack, which you can wear to protect your feet from any rough or hot surfaces. The following itinerary will indicate when you need to consider this.

## Vaccinations and Your Health

We recommend that you contact either your GP or Travelvax (1300 360 164) for advice on vaccinations and travel health. Travelvax has a comprehensive website that you may also find useful [www.travelvax.com.au](http://www.travelvax.com.au)

## Before You Leave

We strongly recommend registering your travel plans with [www.smartraveller.gov.au](http://www.smartraveller.gov.au) as in the event of an emergency, Australian Consular assistance will be more readily available. You can also access the Australian Government's travel advisory service for up to date information about your destination on the same website.

## After Your Booking

Once you have booked with Wendy Wu Tours, you will receive a confirmation invoice followed by deposit documentation, which includes a visa application form (if applicable), and a help sheet. Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approximately 2-3 weeks prior to departure.

**Last updated: September 2020**