



Hidden Treasures of Thailand - r12a

Trip summary	12 days / 11 nights - 2 nights Ban Talae Nok, 2 nights Koh Surin, 2 nights Kuraburi, 1 night Chiang Mai, 2 Night Homestay Mae Hong Son, 2 nights Resort Mae Hong Son
Getting there	Tour starts in Kuraburi and ends in Chiang Mai
In-country support	International support staff, local guide, bilingual Thai/English translator, visitor's handbook
What's included	Transfers during the tour, accommodation, activities and meals as stated in the program
Availability	October 15 – May 16 – dry season

Explore the friendly Muslim village of Ban Talae Nok. Continue onto Koh Surin National Park, a paradise of fine white sandy beaches, crystal-clear waters and the most extensive coral reef in Thailand. End by exploring the natural wonders surrounding the town of Kuraburi, enjoy deep green forests, mountains and waterfalls. Then jet off to Chiang Mai to experience the Northern culture and way of life by visiting local villages and ancient wonders.

Day 1 Cultural Exchange – (L,D)

Morning Start the tour in Kuraburi at the Andaman Discoveries office for a pre-trip briefing and cultural orientation. Transfer to Ban Talae Nok village to meet your host family, and be welcomed into their way of life.

Take a walking tour of the community with your local guide to learn about the history and lives of these villagers. See an area of the village that was destroyed by the 2004 tsunami and learn how this event affected the community.

Noon For lunch, enjoy authentic Southern Thai food with your homestay family. In the afternoon take part in a handicraft workshop and learn the art of Batik, a technique of hand-dyeing fabrics by using designs drawn in wax. You can create your own design or have your hosts draw one for you, then color in the beautiful designs, and keep your creation as a souvenir. Then learn to weave leaves of the nypa palm with the villagers and help make traditional roofing from a local mangrove plant.

Take a short walk to the beach where you can relax and bask in the spectacular colors of an Andaman Sea sunset.

Evening For dinner, enjoy a barbeque dinner on the beach with your hosts and feast on freshly-caught seafood, garden-fresh vegetables, and Thai curries (weather permitting, alternative is dinner in the homestay.)

In the evening participate in a cultural activity where you can share stories and experiences with the family and local villagers. Pictures from home are always appreciated! Then try on their traditional clothing to learn more about their Muslim culture.

Overnight: Ban Talae Nok Homestay, comfortable bedding and mosquito net provided.





Day 2 Village Life – (B,L,D)

Morning Breakfast at homestay house.

Head into nature, and explore the mangrove forest in a long-tail boat, where you have the chance to spot various birds, monitor lizards and monkeys. Take a fascinating journey through the tidal canals and learn how the villagers are active in protecting this amazing ecosystem. Then go fishing with your homestay family and depending on tides and their expertise fish in the canals with nets or poles, spearing shrimp or catch crabs with traps.

Noon Lunch at your homestay. After lunch take part in a handicraft workshop - the women's group, established after the tsunami, makes beautifully hand-crafted soap, using only the finest natural ingredients. Watch an informative demonstration and then make soap for yourself with the expert guidance of the soap ladies, and keep a souvenir.

Return to your homestay and learn to make a local specialty desert. Try your hand at grating the coconut and filling the palm leaf with the batter. Then grill and enjoy the delicious snack hot off the fire.

Take a short walk back to the beach to relax and have a chance to see the water buffalo taking a swim and enjoy another colorful sunset.

Evening In the evening learn to cook local Thai food with your host family and enjoy the meal together.

Overnight: Ban Talae Nok Homestay, comfortable bedding and mosquito net provided.

Day 3 Island Paradise (B,L,D)

Morning Enjoy early breakfast with host family before departing the village.

Transfer directly to the Kuraburi Pier for your speed boat ride to the Surin Islands.

Transfer to Koh Surin National Park by speedboat. Located 60 kilometers from the mainland, Koh Surin rises like a gem from the turquoise waters of the Andaman Sea. It is a paradise of fine white sandy beaches, thick jungle, crystal-clear waters, and extensive coral reefs. Koh Surin is also home to the Moken Sea Gypsies, an ancient sea people who have lived along Thailand's North Andaman coast for thousands of years.

When you arrive to the islands head out for some guided marine exploration. Snorkeling is very popular here – there are abundant parrotfish, clownfish, and brightly colored soft coral.

Afterwards check into the National Park Headquarters and your tent accommodation on the soft and scenic beachfront.

Noon Have a Thai style lunch at the National Park headquarters.

Spend the afternoon immersed in the underwater world - the islands are a nesting site for three species of turtle.



Andaman Discoveries is a social enterprise enabling visitors and volunteers to support community education, village-led conservation, and cultural empowerment.



Evening Dinner at the National Park headquarters, fall asleep to the gentle sounds of the waves as they are washed up on the beautiful white sands.

Overnight: beachfront tent at National Park Head Quarters, bedding is provided in all tents, electricity generated 6 -10pm; all meals included

Day 4 Underwater World (B,L,D)

Morning Breakfast at the National Park headquarters.

Start the day with a visit to the island's original inhabitants – the Moken people. Traditionally nomadic seafarers, the Moken now live in a bay inside the national park. While you are in the village, support the locals by purchasing their locally made handicrafts.

Noon Lunch at the National Park headquarters.

In the afternoon, journey to another of Koh Surin's five islands for more snorkeling and underwater exploration, then watch the sunset from your tent and enjoy relaxing on the beach.

Evening Dinner at the National Park headquarters.

Overnight: beachfront tent at National Park Head Quarters, bedding is provided in all tents, electricity generated 6 -10pm; all meals included

Day 5 Natural Wonders (B,L,D)

Morning Breakfast at the National Park headquarters. On your last morning, go snorkeling or explore the nature trail that adjoins the two campsites to see the jungle and relax under the shade of the trees.

Noon Lunch at the National Park headquarters. After lunch, pack your belongings and head out for one last snorkel trip. Transfer to Kuraburi by speedboat. Arrive back to Kuraburi and check into comfortable bungalow accommodations.

Evening Enjoy dinner at a local restaurant in this quaint Thai town.

Overnight: local resort in Kuraburi with air conditioning and hot water; Breakfast and lunch included

Day 6 Eco Adventure (B,L,D)

Morning Meet your group leader at the Andaman Discoveries office for a pre-trip briefing and then ride together through the surrounding plantations and learn about the Southern way of life and livelihoods. Along the way you can stop to visit local fruit orchards and taste the delicious fruits that are in season. Make your way to the Water Lilly conservation project. Continue cycling to the Kuraburi Dam and take a short hike to the waterfall where you can swim in the fresh, cool waters.

Afternoon Enjoy a packed lunch under the shade of trees and absorb the peace and quiet of the jungle. Start your journey back and take a different road that leads you along the Nang Yon River (Kuraburi River). Return to the Andaman Discoveries office and debrief.

Evening In the late afternoon return to town and take a stroll through the evening market with your local guide and translator, enjoy an independent dinner at a local restaurant.





Overnight: local resort in Kuraburi with air-conditioning and hot water; Breakfast and lunch included

Day 7 Depart South heading to North –(B,D)

Morning Breakfast at Local market, Transfer to Phuket airport for Chiang Mai.

Noon Arrive to Chiang Mai before 18:00 and transfer to your hotel.

Evening 19.00 transfer to your welcome dinner and enjoy the traditional style meal and dance of the Northern Khan Tok Lanna.



Day 8 Chiang Mai –Black Lahu Community (L, D)

Morning Meet up in Chiang Mai and drive to Baan Jabo, a Black Lahu village where you are welcomed into the community by local guides who are members of the Ban Jabo Community based Tourism Group. After an orientation, hike up the mountain to visit the local Coffin and Coral caves, considered to be sacred sites by the Lahu people. The local community guides will explain about local beliefs and how to behave in the caves; and show you their fields, rotational rice farming system, and how local people live in harmony with the forest.

Lunch Enjoy a jungle lunch en route to the bamboo forest area and learn how the local people use bamboo as a cooking tool...a tasty jungle food, and even as building material!

Evening In the evening, spend time getting to know your homestay families. A team of ‘facilitators’ will assist translation (1 per 6 guests). Homestay accommodation in this village is very basic, but the people are wonderful and you will treasure the memory of your stay. Please remember to bring some pictures from your home to show your local hosts where you come from.



Day 9: Mae Lana Shan Community (B,L,D)

Morning After breakfast, continue hiking through the mountains and beautiful paddy fields. In the late morning, arrive at Ban Mae Lana village and meet your host families. Check into the new homestays. The Shan or Tai Yai people of Mae Lana are originally from Burma. They have interesting legends, a unique culture and spectacular performances.

Lunch together with your homestay families.

Afternoon After lunch, explore Mae Lana village with local community guides. There are many interesting people to meet, including the herbal medicine man, and local groups who make a variety of products.

Have dinner with your host families and then enjoy leisure time.

Over night at Homestay





Day 10: Merit making - Mae Hong Son (B,L)

Morning Wake up for a fresh start in the early morning and the opportunity to join in a timeless tradition of daily Buddhist life - making 'merit' by offering foods and flowers to the community's monks. Then return to your homestay for breakfast. After breakfast, travel by 4 wheel drive car to visit one of the largest caves in the North Lod Cave system. Enroute enjoy the beautiful forest around the limestone mountain area. Lunch at local Thai Restaurant.

Afternoon Explore one of the biggest Caves in the North of Thailand "Lod Cave". Lod Cave contains three main chambers, first is "a giant pillar cave" with its height of 21 meters, second is a "doll cave" which contains different kinds of stone formation and also looks like a doll. The doll cave also contains a very old wall painting aging around 2,000 years. The third cave is a "coffin cave" also aging 2,000 years old. You reach this cave by taking a bamboo raft and then hiking a short distance up the side of the cave structure.

Late afternoon, return to hotel or resort.

Day 11: Free day in Mae Hong Son (B)

Breakfast at your resort / free at leisure or enjoy a nature walk behind Fern Resort.

Day 12: Transfer to Chiang Mai (B)

Morning After breakfast, Free time to relax and check out and transfer to your next destination.

End of service

