

Thailand on a Shoestring - ATRT

16 days: Bangkok to Bangkok

What's Included

Chiang Mai Night Bazaar, Hilltribe trek, ethnic minority village stay, Elephant Riding, bamboo Rafting, stay in the surrounds of Khao Sok National Park, Beaches of Koh Samui and Koh Tao

The information in this trip details document has been compiled with care and is provided in good faith. However it is subject to change, and does not form part of the contract between the client and G Adventures. The itinerary featured is correct at time of printing. It may differ slightly to the one in the brochure. Occasionally our itineraries change as we make improvements that stem from past travellers, comments and our own research. Sometimes it can be a small change like adding an extra meal along the itinerary. Sometimes the change may result in us altering the tour for the coming year. Ultimately, our goal is to provide you with the most rewarding experience. Please note that our brochure is usually released in November each year. If you have booked from the previous brochure you may find there have been some changes to the itinerary.

VERY IMPORTANT: Please ensure that you print a final copy of your Trip Details to review a couple of days prior to travel, in case there have been changes that affect your plans.

VALIDITY: Valid for all trips departing January 1st, 2013 - December 31st, 2013

Itinerary



Day 1 Bangkok

Today is arrival day so there are no activities planned. You are free to relax, explore the city & adjust to the frantic pace and humid heat of Bangkok.

Please arrive at our start point hotel before 6pm for an important group meeting where you will meet your Chief Experience Officer (CEO) and the other group members. Please look for a sign on the hotel's notice board for the time and location of your group meeting.

After your meeting, you may choose to head out for an optional dinner to further get to know your CEO and fellow group members.

We spend this evening in Bangkok. Our hotel is located in China Town, next to the central train station and MRT (Subway), and is only a short USD2 taxi ride from Khao San road and the central shopping area of Siam Square, MBK, Siam Paragon, etc. All rooms are double or twin share with air conditioning and en suite bathroom. The hotel has a small pool and wifi is available at extra cost.

Day 2 Bangkok

Today you have the option of a one-hour long tail boat tour of Bangkok's famous klongs, or canals to the royal temple of Wat Po. Introduce yourself to Thai Buddhist culture and show you the famous reclining Buddha. Why not take some time for afternoon shopping, a visit to Grand Palace or a stroll through the backpacker area. We will meet back at the hotel within easy walking distance to the train station where we board our overnight train to Chiang Mai.

Tonight's accommodation is an overnight sleeper train. Beds are dormitory style, with bunks on two layers along the side of the train carriage. There are curtains along each bunk for privacy. Your luggage will be accessible during the journey. The train has air-conditioning and clean bedding is provided for each bunk. There are both western style and asian style toilets at the end of each carriage. Food and drinks are served on the train but you can always bring your own food from the shops and restaurants in the train station.

Note: Due to disruptions of Thai trains in the north during the monsoon season, trips running July through October may be upgraded to a flight and extra hotel night in Bangkok.

Approx travel time:

Bangkok to Chiang Mai by sleeper train: 12-13 hours

Day 3 Chiang Mai

We arrive in the early morning and have free time to explore for the rest of the day. To fill your free time you can choose from a large range of optional activities or stroll the city independently.

Surrounded by rolling hills, Chiang Mai is the cultural center of Thailand. Enclosed by a moat and crumbling walls, the old city features great cafes, shops and over 300 temples. Many visitors come here to attend cooking courses, massage classes or yoga lessons. It is also a mecca of handicraft production, with a long history of silverwork, woodcarving, pottery-making and weaving. A trip out to the countryside is available for those interested in riding elephants or cruising down a stream on a bamboo raft. The fun does not end when the sun goes down, as the night bazaar opens. The bazaar is a series of covered markets, shops and stalls that offer the best selection of handicrafts in Thailand.

In the late afternoon you may choose to visit the temple complex, Doi Suthep. Here we can delve deeper into Thai Buddhist culture and we may be fortunate enough to witness the chanting of the monks.

We overnigh in Chiang Mai. Our hotel is well located within walking distance to Chiang Mai Night Bazaar and other city destinations. All rooms are double or twin share with air conditioning and en suite bathroom. Free wifi is available.

Day 4-6 Hilltribe Trek (3B,2L,2D)

Day 4-6 Hilltribe Trek (3B,3L,2D)

From Chiang Mai, we start a 3 day hilltribe trek where we visit various hilltribe minority groups, each with their own language, clothing and religion. Enroute we stop for a local market tour for last minute supplies and your CEO will explain fruits and quirky market food. We also have the opportunity to stop at the stunning Mork Fa Waterfall for a swim before lunch.

Over these 3 days we will get the chance to ride an elephant (approx 45mins) and test our rafting skills while bamboo rafting*. We walk approximately 4-5 hours each day along sloping hills and valleys. We leave our big packs in storage and take an overnight bag. Each person is required to be able to carry their own pack as our porters will be carrying food and water supplies. Accommodation is group share, where you will be sleeping on the floor of the village huts. Toilet and washing facilities are very basic in most of the villages so be prepared to rough it for a few days. During the trek simple food is provided for breakfast, lunch and dinner. It can be cold during the evenings so make sure you have some lightweight warm clothes with you. We return back to Chiang Mai in the late afternoon of Day 6.

Approx travel time:

Songthaew (local bus) back to Chiang Mai: 2 hours.

Please note that trekking times are highly dependent on each groups level of fitness. The path that we follow may be changed to suit the groups fitness level or the weather during rainy season.

*During the rainy season we may not be able to Bamboo raft because of high and dangerous water levels.

Day 7 Chiang Mai

We have more time in Chiang Mai today to explore the city before we catch our overnight train back to Bangkok. Try some of the things you did not get the chance to do the first time. Hire a bicycle and see more of the city, or take a cooking class and learn about Thai cuisine.

Tonight's accommodation is an overnight sleeper train. Bunks are dormitory style, with bunks on two layers along the side of the train carriage. There are curtains along each bunk for privacy. Your luggage is stored beside you. The train has air-conditioning and clean bedding is provided for each bunk. There are both western style and asian style toilets at the end of each carriage, with wash basins. Food and drinks are available on the train, but you may choose to bring your own snacks from the shop and restaurants around the train station.

Please note: Due to disruptions of Thai trains in the north during the monsoon season, trips running July through October may be upgraded to a flight and extra hotel night in Chiang Mai instead of the overnight train.

Approx travel time:

Chiang Mai to Bangkok by sleeper train: 12-13 hours.

Day 8-9 Bangkok

Arrive in the early morning and giving you the chance to spend a full day in Bangkok catching up on any shopping or sightseeing you might have missed. On the evening of Day 9 board a train to Surat Thani.

We spend the evening of Day 8 back in Bangkok. Our hotel is located in China Town, next to the central train station and MRT (Subway), and is only a short USD2 taxi ride from Khao San road and the central shopping area of Siam Square, MBK, Siam Paragon, etc. All rooms are double or twin share with air conditioning and en suite bathroom. The hotel has a small pool and wifi is available at extra cost.

On Day 9 our accommodation is an overnight sleeper train. Beds are dormitory style, with bunks on two layers along the side of the train carriage. There are curtains along each bunk for privacy. Your luggage will be accessible during the journey. The train has air-conditioning and clean bedding is provided for each bunk. There are both western style and asian style toilets at the end of each carriage. Food and drinks are served on the train but you can always bring your own food from the shops and restaurants in the train station.

Approx travel time:

Train Bangkok to Surat Thani: 12-13 hours

Day 10 Khao Sok National Park (B)

Arriving in the early morning, we take a public bus to the Khao Sok National Park and settle into our simple, yet comfortable, fan cooled bungalow style rooms for an afternoon of exploration and discovery. Entrance to the National Park is not included.

Khao Sok is a diverse area of natural beauty, a perfect place for people who want to hike and get out there in nature or those that just want to chill out in a hammock by the riverside watching monkeys take their afternoon bath.

Khao Sok National Park covers an area of 739 sq.km. Thanks to other protected areas (Klong Saers and Khlong Nakha) next to Khao Sok, the actual protected area measures almost 4000 sq.km. The dominant forest is lowland rainforest and is about 160 million years old, which makes it older than the Amazon!

Our hotel in Khao Sok is about 100 meters from the entrance to the National Park. All rooms are double or twin share with en suite bathroom. Free wifi is available.

Approx travel time:

Public bus to Khao Sok: 3 1/2 hours

Day 11-12 Koh Samui

Lying off of Thailand's east coast in the Gulf of Thailand, Koh Samui offers everything you could possibly want in a beach retreat: white sandy beaches, coconut palms, fresh seafood and warm, clear waters. With an area of 247 square kilometers, Koh Samui is the largest island in an archipelago of around 80 islands. Like Phuket, Koh Samui attracts many visitors but still has plenty of out-of-the-way spots for those wishing to get away from it all.

Taking a public bus and ferry from Surat Thani, arrive at Koh Samui during the afternoon. The island is well known for it's magnificent beaches and party nightlife. Take a tour of the island and it's main sights or simply relax and enjoy the beautiful beaches.

Our hotel in Koh Samui is located in South Samui. All the rooms are comfortable twin or double share rooms with en suite bathrooms. There is a pool at the hotel and free wifi is available.

Approx travel time:

Public bus Khao Sok National Park to Surat Thani: 3 1/2 hours

Public bus Surat Thani to Don Sak pier: 1 hour

Ferry to Koh Samui: 2 hours

Private transfer to hotel: 30 min

Note: During seasonal monsoon rains from Nov-Jan we sometimes have to alter our itinerary as ferries between the islands do not operate during heavy rain and strong waves.

Day 13-15 Koh Tao

Days 13-15 Koh Tao (B)

Koh Tao, in English, is known as 'turtle island', some say because of its shape, others say because the waters in the area were rich with sea turtles, whereas now they have moved onto other breeding grounds. Initially the island was not inhabited and there was only the occasional fisherman from the neighboring islands looking for shelter in a storm or just taking a break before continuing their journey. In 1980s the first travelers discovered the island paradise and word spread and made it widely known and a popular backpacker destination. As a consequence, bigger, faster and safer boats were used to allow easier access to Koh Tao.

During the past 10 years the reputation of Koh Tao's natural beauty, especially its marine life and coral reefs, has spread the world over and the number of paradise seekers and divers increased rapidly. It soon became one of the major dive sites in Thailand, attracting beginners and professionals alike. The island today, though still remaining a unique paradise caters for all tastes and budgets.

On the afternoon of Day 15, return to the mainland to board a train back to Bangkok.

Our resort is located on the beach with comfortable twin and double rooms with en suite bathrooms. There is a pool close to the beach and there is free wifi available in the lobby.

Approx travel time:

Day 13

Hotel to the pier: 30 min

Ferry from Koh Samu to Koh Tao: 2 hours

Pier on Koh Tao to hotel: 20 min

Day 15

Hotel to pier: 20 min

Ferry Koh Tao to mainland: 1 1/2 hours

Transfer to train station: 30 min

Train to Bangkok: 9-10 hours

Day 16 Bangkok

Arrive in the early morning at the train station and bid farewell to everyone. If you are departing Bangkok today please do not book any onward travel until after 3pm.

We look forward to receiving your evaluation regarding this tour itinerary and your CEO's performance. We value your input into what we could improve to make this trip even better and of course love hearing about what we are already doing well! You will be sent a post tour email on your return with details on how to go on line and fill in this simple form. Thank you so much in advance.

What's Included

Chiang Mai Night Bazaar, Hilltribe trek, ethnic minority village stay, Elephant Riding, bamboo Rafting, stay in the surrounds of Khao Sok National Park, Beaches of Koh Samui and Koh Tao

Highlights

Experiencing the bustling streets of Bangkok, exploring colourful Chiang Mai, trekking on foot and by elephant through the jungle, overnighing in remote hilltribe villages, floating down a river on a bamboo raft, sleeping in Khao Sok National Park, enjoying the island beaches of Koh Samui and Koh Tao.

Dossier Disclaimer

The information in this trip details document has been compiled with care and is provided in good faith. However it is subject to change, and does not form part of the contract between the client and the operator. The itinerary featured is correct at time of printing. It may differ slightly to the one in the brochure. Occasionally our itineraries change as we make improvements that stem from past travellers, comments and our own research. Sometimes it can be a small change like adding an extra meal along the itinerary. Sometimes the change may result in us altering the tour for the coming year. Ultimately, our goal is to provide you with the most rewarding experience. Please note that our brochure is usually released in November each year. If you have booked from the previous brochure you may find there have been some changes to the itinerary.

VERY IMPORTANT: Please ensure that you print a final copy of your Trip Details to review a couple of days prior to travel, in case there have been changes that affect your plans.

Itinerary Disclaimer

While it is our intention to adhere to the route described below, there is a certain amount of flexibility built into the itinerary and on occasion it may be necessary, or desirable to make alterations. The itinerary is brief, as we never know exactly where our journey will take us. Due to our style of travel and the regions we visit, travel can be unpredictable. The Trip Details document is a general guide to the tour and region and any mention of specific destinations or wildlife is by no means a guarantee that they will be visited or encountered. Aboard expedition trips visits to research stations depend on final permission.

Additionally, any travel times listed are approximations only and subject to vary due to local circumstances.

Important Notes

Please note that this trip is a combination of Northern Hilltribes and Villages and Southern Thailand Sojourn tours. As such the leader operating your tour may change between sections, as may the group of people you are travelling with.

Group Leader Description

All G Adventures group trips are accompanied by one of our Chief Experience Officers (CEO). The aim of the CEO is to take the hassle out of your travels and to help you have the best trip possible. They will provide information on the places you are travelling through, offer suggestions for things to do and see, recommend great local eating venues and introduce you to our local friends. While not being guides in the traditional sense you can expect them to have a broad general knowledge of the countries visited on the trip, including historical, cultural, religious and social aspects. We also use local guides where we think more specific knowledge will add to the enjoyment of the places we are visiting- we think it's the best of both worlds.

Group Size Notes

Max 16, avg 10.

Meals Included

4 breakfasts, 2 lunches, 2 dinners.

Meals

Eating is a big part of traveling. Travelling with G Adventures you experience the vast array of wonderful food that is available out in the world. Generally meals are not included in the trip price when there is a choice of eating options, to give you the maximum flexibility in deciding where, what and with whom to eat. It also gives you more budgeting flexibility, though generally food is cheap. Our groups tend to eat together to enable you to taste a larger variety of dishes and enjoy each other's company. There is no obligation to do this though. Your CEO will be able to suggest favourite restaurants during your trip. Included breakfasts will usually be asian style consisting of noodles or congee (rice porridge) or bread and eggs. Vegetarians will be able to find a range of different foods, although in some areas the choice maybe limited. While trekking in remote regions food is included, plentiful and made of fresh local ingredients. For all trips please refer to the meals included and budget information for included meals and meal budgets.

Meal Budget

Allow USD325-425 for meals not included.

Transport

Local bus, train, elephant, walking, boat.

Local Flights

All local flights are included in the cost of your tour unless otherwise noted. It is important that we have your passport information at the time of booking in order to process these tickets. Internal flight tickets are issued locally and will be given to you prior to the flight departure.

Solo Travellers

We believe single travellers should not have to pay more to travel so our group trips are designed for shared accommodation and do not involve a single supplement. Single travellers joining group trips are paired in twin or multi-share accommodation with someone of

the same sex for the duration of the trip. Some of our Independent trips are designed differently and single travellers on these itineraries must pay the single trip price.

Accommodation

Simple hotels/bungalows (9 nts), basic hilltribe huts (2 nts, multi-share), sleeper trains (4 nts).

My Own Room Exceptions

Nights 2, 7, 9 and 15, Sleeper Train, Nights 4 and 5 trekking

About Accommodation

A variety of styles of hotels/guest houses are used on this trip. In many instances they might not be like what you are used to back home as service and efficiency can vary. In some areas we stay in simple local guest houses in stunning locations - rooms are small and simple and there may only be shared toilet facilities and showers.

Joining Hotel

Bangkok Centre Hotel
328 Rama IV Road
Bangkok
+66 (0) 2 238-4980-99

Joining Instructions

When arriving at Suvarnabhumi Airport (pronounced 'su wan na poom') in Bangkok proceed to the Arrivals Hall where you can change money into Thai Baht. (You may be approached by nicely dressed, official looking touts offering an expensive limousine service to your hotel; ignore these offers.)

You have three transport options; public bus, the Airport Train & MRT or public taxi. All transportation is located on the 'ground' floor.

Public Bus

The Airport Bus operates 4 bus routes to downtown for a cost of 150 Baht for the entire route. Bus AE4 goes to Hua Lamphong train station. Our hotels are located in the Hua Lamphong area.

Taxi

The airport is located 30km's away from downtown Bangkok. Approach the taxi counters, advise them where you are going and they will write this information down for you along with the taxis registration details. Taxis should always use the meter and you are required to pay a 50 Baht airport surcharge on top of the metered fee plus any tollway fees (approx 70 Baht depending on the route taken). Total journey will cost between 350 THB – 500 THB, depending on traffic and toll fees. The expressway is substantially faster, so tell the taxi driver to use the expressway, you can say either ""kuen ton-way"" (from 'tollway') or ""kuen taang duan"" in Thai (but most understand Tollway/express way in English).

Airport Train

If you are staying at the Bangkok Centre Hotel you can take the Airport Train. Board the express airport train at a cost of 150 THB to the City Air Terminal; Makkasan. Here you will need to disembark and change to the MRT (subway) Blue line, boarding at Phetchaburi Station. From Phetchaburi Station travel to the last stop, Hua Lamphong, and follow the signs at the exit for the Bangkok Centre Hotel.

Arrival Transfers

If you have paid for an arrival transfer when you booked your trip then please proceed to the ATTA counter in the Arrivals Hall of the airport where our local Thai representative will be able to assist you to your hotel.

Arrival Complications

We don't expect any problems, and nor should you, but if for any reason you are unable to commence your trip as scheduled, as soon as possible please contact your starting point hotel, requesting that you speak to or leave a message for your CEO (if you are not on a group tour please refer to the emergency contact details provided in this dossier). If you are unable to get in touch with your leader, please refer to our emergency contact details.

If you have pre-booked an airport transfer please meet your driver at an ATTA Counter (the Association of Thai Travel Agents)

located at door 6 and/or door 10 of the arrival hall (level 2). If for any reason you can not locate your driver please call our emergency transfer phone number at (+66) 081 372 8808. If you have still have not made contact with our representative within 30 minutes of clearing customs and immigration, we recommend that you make your own way to the Starting Point hotel, following the Joining Instructions. Please apply to your travel agent on your return for a refund of the transfer cost if this occurs.

Emergency Contact

Should you need to contact us during a situation of dire need, it is best to first call either the G Adventures Local Representative (if one is listed below) or our G Adventures Local Office. If for any reason you do not receive an immediate answer, please leave a detailed message and contact information, so they may return your call and assist you as soon as possible.

AIRPORT TRANSFER

If you have purchased an arrival through G Adventures or if an arrival transfer is included in the cost of your tour, please note that:

Your arrival transfer has been arranged based on flight information provided to us. If you are advised of a flight schedule change within 48 hours of your scheduled arrival time, we will do our best to rearrange your arrival transfer however we cannot guarantee this. If your arrival transfer does not arrive within 30 minutes after you have exited the arrivals area please take a taxi to your start point hotel.

If your call is specifically concerning Bangkok Airport Transfer complications please call our local G Adventures Transfer provider directly at: +66 81 847 3034 (081 847 3034 from within Thailand) or +66 86 339 5881 (086 339 5881 from within Thailand)

EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS

G Adventures Office Bangkok, Thailand

During Office hours (Weekdays, 9am-5pm Local Time)

From outside Thailand: +66 2 381 5574

From within Thailand: 02 381 5574

After hours emergency number

From outside Thailand: +66 87 049 6074

From within Thailand: 087 049 6074

If you are unable for any reason to contact our local office, please call the numbers listed below, which will connect you directly with our 24 hour Sales team, who will happily assist you.

Toll-free, North America only: 1 888 800 4100

Calls from UK: 0844 272 0000

Calls from Germany: 01805 70 90 30 00

Calls from Australia: 1 300 796 618

Calls from New Zealand: 0800 333 307

Outside North America, Australia, New Zealand, Germany and the UK: +1 416 260 0999

What to Take

What you need to bring depends on the trip you have chosen and the countries or regions you are planning to visit. We suggest that you pack as lightly as possible as you are expected to carry your own luggage. As a rule we try not to have to walk more than 15-20 minutes with your bags which is why we recommend keeping the weight of your bags between 10-15kg/22-30lb. Suitcases are not recommended for G Adventures trips! Most travellers carry a backpack or rolling bag of small to medium size (no XXL ones please!) as they need to fit under the beds when travelling on sleeper trains. You will also need a day pack/bag to carry water, cameras and other electronics like ipods and mobile phones. If your trip involves overnights in homestays, villages or camping then you usually have the opportunity to rent sleeping bags if need be instead of bringing them with you.

Checklist

Passport (with photocopies)

Travel insurance (with photocopies)

Airline tickets (with photocopies)

Credit or debit card (see personal spending money)

G Adventures vouchers, pre-departure information and dossier

Any entry visas or vaccination certificates required

Alarm clock
Flashlight
Sun hat, Sunblock, Sunglasses
Insect Repellent - Tropical Strength
Water bottle
Small towel and swim wear
Toiletries -biodegradable to avoid polluting the local drinking water or waterways
Ziplock plastic bag
Sturdy walking shoes
Money belt
Shorts
Long trousers
Hiking pants/track pants
Shirts/T-shirts
Warm clothes for Nov-Feb. Fleece, Windproof/waterproof jacket
Waterproof clothes for wet season May-Oct.
Umbrella or waterproof jacket(Poncho's can be purchased locally for approx \$1)
Cover for backpack or plastic bags to keep clothes dry.
Clothes for temples – long pants or sarongs (shoulders and knees must be covered)
Sleep sheet for trekking and overnight train.
Camera and film
Reading/writing material
Pocketknife
First-aid kit (should contain lip salve, Aspirin, Band Aids, anti-histamine, Imodium or similar tablets for mild cases of diarrhea, re-hydration powder, extra prescription drugs you may be taking).

Laundry

Laundry facilities are offered by some of our hotels for a charge. There will be times when you may want to or have to do your own laundry so we suggest you bring non-polluting/biodegradable soap.

Visas

It is your responsibility to arrange visas before you travel. Your travel agent can assist. Below are the visa requirements for Thailand, at the time of printing. Note that your passport must be valid for at least six months from your time of entry: Thailand: Australian, British, Canadian, American, Belgian, Swedish, German, Dutch and Danish passport holders do not require a visa for a stay of 30 days or less. If staying in Thailand for more than 30 days, you will be required to obtain a tourist visa in advance. New Zealand passport holders do not require a visa if their stay is 90 days or less. For other nationalities, please ask your travel agent. Most nationalities do not need a visa for Thailand for stays of 30 days or less but if you do they are available on arrival at Bangkok Airport. Please note that as of December 2008, 30 day Thai visas are no longer available at land borders. Only 15 day tourist visas are issued when you enter Thailand overland. If you are staying more than 15 days you should consider getting your visa prior to your trip.

*Please note that certain nationalities (including: Bhutan, China, Cyprus, Czech, Estonia, Hungary, India, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Maldives, Oman, Poland, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Taiwan and Ukraine) may not be able to obtain visa at a land border.

Spending Money

Every traveller is different and therefore spending money requirements will vary. Some travellers may drink more than others while other travellers like to purchase more souvenirs than most. Please consider your own spending habits when it comes to allowing for drinks, shopping and tipping. Please also remember the following specific recommendations when planning your trip.

Money Exchange

During this tour the local currency you will use is the Thai Baht. As currency exchange rates in South East Asia do fluctuate, we ask that you refer to the following website for the most up to date daily exchange rates: www.xe.com for each of the above mentioned currencies. The best way to carry your money is in debit cards, withdrawing cash in local currencies from ATM machines. ATMs are found throughout South East Asia and will generally accept cards on the Visa and Mastercard networks. It is a great idea to travel with both a Visa and Mastercard if at all possible in case of loss or problems with one card, you will have a back up. Please note, your bank will charge a fee for overseas withdrawals. USD Cash is recommended for times when ATMs are not accessible. You should

bring some cash with you for emergency situations (please refer to our trip dossier) but carrying only cash is a high safety risk. ATM card/s and some cash is the ideal mix. Travellers cheques can be tricky, timely and expensive to exchange. While we do not recommend that you bring them as your primary source of funds, it is great to have one or two cheques in case of emergency. Thomas Cook or American Express travellers' cheques in US currency are the easiest to exchange. Cash advances can also be made with some banks but are time consuming and tend to have high fees attached. Credit cards can be used at some upmarket restaurants, and at some larger stores if shopping for big items. If you are bringing US Dollars, please make sure that the notes are new and in good condition. Notes older than 2003, or with any tears or blemishes may not be accepted. Be fussy with your bank when buying cash!

Emergency Fund

Please also make sure you have access to at least an additional USD \$250 (or equivalent) as an 'emergency' fund, to be used when circumstances outside our control (ex. a natural disaster) require a change to our planned route. This is a rare occurrence!

Departure Tax

Departure Tax is included in all International and Domestic tickets in China, Thailand and Vietnam.

Tipping

It is customary in Asia to tip service providers such as waiters, at approximately 10%, depending on the service. Tipping is expected - though not compulsory - and shows an expression of satisfaction with the people who have assisted you on your tour. Although it may not be customary to you, it is of considerable significance to the people who will take care of you during your travels. There are several times during the trip where there is opportunity to tip the local guides or drivers we use. You may do this individually, or your CEO will offer to collect the money and tip as a group. Recommendations for tipping drivers and local guides would range from \$1.5-\$3.5 USD per person per day depending on the quality and length of the service; ask your CEO for specific recommendations based on the circumstances and culture. Also at the end of each trip if you felt your G Adventures CEO did an outstanding job, tipping is appreciated. The amount is entirely a personal preference, however as a guideline \$20-25 USD per person, per week can be used.

Optional Activities

Optional Activities: USD180 for optional activities not included in the trip.

Grand palace (Bangkok) - USD11

Wat Po (Bangkok) - USD2

Klong(Canal) Tour (Bangkok) - Approx \$10-30 dependent on numbers

Thai massage (Bangkok) - USD10 per hour

Doi Suiethep (Chiang Mai) - USD2 (plus transport)

Bicycle tour (Chiang Mai) - USD30 for Half Day

Thai Cookery Course (Chiang Mai) - USD30 for Half Day

Kan Toke Traditional Dinner (Chiang Mai) - USD30

Elephant riding (Khao Sok National Park) - USD19

Tubing (Khao Sok National Park)- USD10

Elephant riding (Samui) - USD18

Waterskiing (Samui) - USD20 for 15 minutes

Kayaks (Samui) - USD3 p/h

Angthong Marine Park Tours (Samui)- USD50

Scuba diving (Samui) - USD60-80

Ang Thong Marine National Park - kayaking, snorkeling and sightseeing (Koh Samui) USD 60

Island City Tour - Big Buddha Temple, Chinese temple, 1000 arms goddess, View Point, Grandmother and Grandfather rock, waterfall, mummified monk (Koh Samui) USD 15

Boat tour around Island - Big Buddha Bach, snorkeling at Green Peace Island, Swallows Nest Island, sightseeing and relaxing (Koh Samui) USD 50

Cooking Class (Koh Samui) USD 43

Jungle Safari Tour (Koh Samui) Full Day tour USD 67 and Half Day tour USD 50

All prices are per person (unless stated otherwise), and are subject to change as services are provided by third party operators.

Health

Please note inoculations may be required for the country visited. It is your responsibility to consult with your travel doctor for up to date medical travel information well before departure.

You should consult your doctor for up-to-date medical travel information well before departure. We recommend that you carry a First Aid kit and hand sanitizers / antibacterial wipes as well as any personal medical requirements. Please be aware that sometimes we are in remote areas and away from medical facilities, and for legal reasons our leaders are prohibited from administering any type of drug including headache tablets, antibiotics, etc. In Asia pharmacies tend to stock the same western drugs as you get at home but they are usually produced locally so please bring the full drug name with you when trying to purchase a prescription drug. When selecting your trip please carefully read the brochure and itinerary and assess your ability to cope with our style of travel. Please refer to the Physical and Culture Shock ratings for trip specific information. G Adventures reserves the right to exclude any traveller from all or part of a trip without refund if in the reasonable opinion of our CEO they are unable to complete the itinerary without undue risk to themselves and/or the rest of the group.

Safety and Security

Many national governments provide a regularly updated advice service on safety issues involved with international travel. We recommend that you check your government's advice for their latest travel information before departure. We strongly recommend the use of a neck wallet or money belt while travelling, for the safe keeping of your passport, air tickets, travellers' cheques, cash and other valuable items. Leave your valuable jewellery at home - you won't need it while travelling. Many of the hotels we use have safety deposit boxes, which is the most secure way of storing your valuables. A lock is recommended for securing your luggage. When travelling on a group trip, please note that your CEO has the authority to amend or cancel any part of the trip itinerary if it is deemed necessary due to safety concerns. Your CEO will accompany you on all included activities. During your trip you will have some free time to pursue your own interests, relax and take it easy or explore at your leisure. While your CEO will assist you with options available in a given location please note that any optional activities you undertake are not part of your itinerary, and we offer no representations about the safety of the activity or the standard of the operators running them. Please use your own good judgment when selecting an activity in your free time. Although the cities visited on tour are generally safe during the day, there can be risks to wandering throughout any major city at night. It is our recommendation to stay in small groups and to take taxis to and from restaurants, or during night time excursions.

Protests and Demonstrations- Protests and demonstrations, even those that are well intended, have the potential to turn violent with no warning. Counter protests can also turn violent. Action by security forces to disperse demonstrators and protesters may occur at any time. If you are in an area where demonstrators or protesters are gathering, avoid the temptation of staying for a good photo opportunity and leave the area immediately.

Water based activities have an element of danger and excitement built into them. We recommend only participating in water based activities when accompanied by a guide(s). We make every reasonable effort to ensure the fun and adventurous element of any water based activities (in countries with varying degrees of operating standards) have a balanced approach to safety. It is our policy not to allow our CEOs to make arrangements on your behalf for water based activities that are not accompanied by guide(s).

Swimming, including snorkeling, is always at your own risk.

We take all prudent measures in relation to your safety. For ways to further enhance your personal safety while traveling, please visit:

www.gadventures.com/travel-resources/safety/

Trip Specific Safety

We strongly recommend the use of a neck wallet or money belt while travelling, for the safe keeping of your passport, air tickets, travellers' cheques, cash and other valuable items. Leave your valuable jewellery at home - you won't need it while travelling. Many of the hotels we use have safety deposit boxes which is the most secure way of storing your valuables. A lock is recommended for securing your luggage.

Medical Form

Our small group adventures bring together people of all ages. It is very important you are aware that, as a minimum, an average level of fitness and mobility' is required to undertake our easiest programs. Travellers must be able to walk without the aid of another person, climb 3-4 flights of stairs, step on and off small boats, and carry their own luggage at a minimum. Travellers with a pre-existing medical condition are required to complete a short medical questionnaire, which must be signed by their physician. This is to ensure that travellers have the necessary fitness and mobility to comfortably complete their chosen trip. While our CEOs work

hard to ensure that all our travellers are catered for equally, it is not their responsibility to help individuals who cannot complete the day's activities unaided. Please refer to the physical ratings in this Trip Details document for more information. Please note that all passengers traveling to Antarctica are required to fill out this questionnaire.

The medical questionnaire can be found online at:

- www.gadventures.com/medical-form.

A Couple of Rules

Illegal drugs will not be tolerated on any trips. Possessing or using drugs not only contravenes the laws of the land but also puts the rest of the group at risk. Smoking marijuana and opium is a part of local culture in some parts of the world but is not acceptable for our travellers. Our philosophy of travel is one of respect towards everyone we encounter, and in particular the local people who make the world the special place it is. The exploitation of prostitutes is completely contrary to this philosophy. Our CEOs have the right to expel any member of the group if drugs are found in their possession or if they use prostitutes.

A Word of Warning

Please do not buy gems in Bangkok unless you know what you are doing. Even if genuine you should not expect to be able to sell them at home. If you fall victim to a gem scam, we are unable to assist you.

Travel Insurance

Travel Insurance: Travel insurance is compulsory in order to participate on any of our trips. When travelling on a group trip, you will not be permitted to join the group until evidence of travel insurance has been sighted by your CEO, who will take note of your insurance details. When selecting a travel insurance policy please bear in mind that all clients must have medical coverage and that we require a minimum coverage of USD 200,000 for repatriation and emergency rescue. We strongly recommend that the policy also covers personal liability, cancellation, curtailment and loss of luggage and personal effects. If you have credit card insurance we require proof of purchase of the trip (a receipt of credit card statement) with a credit card in your name. Contact your bank for details of their participating insurer, the level of coverage and emergency contact telephone number.

Planeterra-The G Adventures Foundation

Through our commitment to responsible tourism we have developed the Planeterra Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to making a positive difference in the lives of people and communities around the world through support of international charities, local organizations and community projects in the places that we visit on our tours. G Adventures matches all individual donations and pays all administration costs, which means that 100% of each donation is doubled and goes directly to support our projects. For more information about Planeterra and the projects we support, or to make a donation, please visit www.planeterra.org

Planeterra Dollar-A-Day Program

Our Dollar-A-Day Program provides travellers with the opportunity to help us give back to the people and places visited on our tours by donating one dollar per day for the duration of their tour. 100% of these proceeds will go directly to support our Planeterra projects.

To participate in this program please indicate at the time of booking that you would like to participate in G Adventures' Dollar-A-Day program, either by clicking the check box online, or by advising your G Adventures specialist or travel agent. (Note: Donation will be charged in the currency of your booking)

Local Dress

In Asia the dress standard is more conservative than it is back home. When packing try to pick loose, lightweight, long clothing that will keep you cool in the usually hot and humid climate of Asian summers. In predominately Buddhist, Hindu and Muslim countries we ask that you dress respectfully and avoid very short shorts/skirts and singlets/tanktops when visiting temples, mosques or other holy sites and Hilltribe Villages. In Southern Thailand topless or nude sunbathing is not allowed or appropriate and in some Muslim villages passengers should swim using a sarong or a long tshirt to cover up their swimsuit.

Feedback

After your travels, we want to hear from you! Your feedback information is so important to us that we'll give you 5% off the price of your next G Adventures trip if your feedback is completed on-line within 30 days of finishing your trip. Your tour evaluation will be e-mailed to you 24 hours after the conclusion of your trip. If you do not receive the tour evaluation link in the days after your tour has finished, please drop us a line at customerservice@gadventures.com and we will send it on to you.

Newsletter

Our adventure travel e-newsletter is full of travel news, trip information, interesting stories and contests. To avoid missing out on special offers and updates from G Adventures, subscribe at www.gadventures.com/newsletters/

Stay current on how our company invests in our global community through our foundation – Planeterra. Sign up for [Planeterra's monthly news](#) to learn more about how to give back and support the people and places we love to visit.

Travel Forum - The Watering Hole

Be sure to stop by [The Watering Hole](#), our adventure travel forum. If you're interested in meeting others booked on your upcoming trip, check out the [Departure Lounge](#) section of our forum and introduce yourself. Otherwise, just drop in at anytime to share some travel tips, ask questions, meet other travellers and quench your thirst for travel. Our forum is located at wateringhole.gadventures.com.