

DAY 1

ARRIVE IN BANGKOK:

After arriving at Bangkok Airport, meet your driver for a private transfer to a centrally located hotel. The remainder of the day is free for relaxing or exploring your surroundings. Dinner will be on your own this evening and your hotel can offer assistance to restaurants nearby.

(Accommodations, Bangkok)

DAY 2

BANGKOK:

After breakfast, meet your English-speaking guide for a private tour of two of the most important sights in Bangkok. Along the way, your guide will acquaint you with Thai history and customs, such as the wai; done by pressing your palms together at chest or nose level and bowing your head slightly. An integral part of Thai etiquette, it's denoting respect (or reverence when performed in front of a Buddha image), and also used to express a hello, thank you, or goodbye. We'll stop to view the Reclining Buddha at Wat Pho, a giant lying Buddha covered in gold leaf. The Grand Palace* is also a must see for every visitor to Bangkok. Located close to the banks of the Chao Phraya River (The River of Kings), the Grand Palace is the perfect example of an ancient Siamese court. Within the compound is the Temple of the Emerald Buddha (Wat Phra Kaew) which houses Thailand's most precious image of the Lord Buddha.

*Important: Please note that for visiting the Grand Palace you will be required to wear proper attire (no bare shoulder bare knees or strapless-heel shoes). Shoes must be removed before entering all temple buildings as a matter of respect.

(Breakfast & Accommodations, Bangkok)

DAY 3

BANGKOK:

Travel like the locals and take the BTS Skytrain to the Chao Praya River and board an Express Boat to the Rachawong pier. From there, walk to the heart of Chinatown to pay a visit to the Chinese temple of Wat Leng Noei Yi. Enjoy a coffee or tea in a typical Chinese shop that looks exactly as it did decades ago, before continuing by public bus to the Indian quarter. Stroll across the old iconic bridge Saphan Phut. Cross the bridge to reach the Thonburi side of the river and its Portuguese quarter. There, visit Wat Prayoon, built during the reign of King Rama III. Stroll through old, narrow alleys to the 18th-century chapel of St. Cruz-Church. We will then board a longtail-boat for a klong (canal) tour which ends up at Klong Bang Luang, a small artist-village. Walk along the stilt-houses, where art of all kinds is on display and for sale. On most days, with the exception of Wednesday and Thursday, you will be able to see a puppet-show. Return by boat to the pier and then transfer back to the hotel. But before heading back, don't miss out on feeding the fish in the klongs, as it's said to bring good luck.

(Breakfast & Accommodations, Bangkok)

DAY 4

BANGKOK - AYUTTHAYA:

After breakfast, your driver will meet you at the hotel for your private transfer to the pier, and your short boat ride to Koh Kret. It's a tiny island on the Chao Phaya river in Nonthaburi Province, but considered part of Bangkok. After disembarking from the boat, you'll begin a walking tour and paying a visit to Mon community; the inhabitants of the island, who were a dominant tribe of central Thailand between the 6th and 10th centuries. Today, Koh Kret is known for its rural atmosphere and its distinctive pottery. Their pottery is recognized from its unique feature, all made by hand, piece by piece gradually. You can watch the process, see the potter at work, admire their accuracy and the exquisite pattern created. The Island has banned cars so the roads are shared between pedestrians, motorbikes, and bicycles, making your visit a pleasant one with fresh air in serene surroundings. After your visit, we'll stop for lunch at a local restaurant before continuing to Ayutthaya and your hotel for the evening.

(Breakfast, Bangkok; Lunch, Koh Kret; Accommodations, Ayutthaya)

DAY 5

AYUTTHAYA:

Meet your guide in the hotel lobby at 8:30am for the short drive to Bang Pa In for your Rice Culture at a certified organic rice farm experience, where you'll learn about Thai Rice culture. Your cooking class will commence with picking your own fresh herbs and vegetables. You'll learn how to cook a few basic Thai dishes with the produce that you have hand-picked. Then enjoy lunch, followed by a Thai dessert. Later in the afternoon, we'll return to Ayutthaya.

(Breakfast, Lunch & Accommodations, Ayutthaya)

DAY 6

AYUTTHAYA - SUKHOTHAI:

In the morning, you will visit some of the most interesting temples in Ayutthaya. In the morning, you will visit some of the most interesting temples in Ayutthaya. The entire area is listed as a UNESCO Heritage site as Ayutthaya Historical Park, and is fairly spread out throughout town. Ayutthaya's star attractions include Wat Phra Mahathat, Wat Phra Si Sanphet, Wat Thammikarat, and Wat Phanan Choeng and you will have enough time to visit at least three temples before heading to your lunch.

We'll take time to enjoy a typical Thai lunch in one of the local restaurants before continuing to Sukhothai. After checking into your hotel, the remainder of the day is at your leisure.

(Breakfast & Lunch, Ayutthaya; Accommodations, Sukhothai)

DAY 7

SUKHOTHAI:

Drive to the lovely village of Sukhothai Baan Na Ton Jan. Learn about the traditional mud-soaked textile, a hand-woven cloth developed with folk wisdom which has become a unique item identified with the place and inherited from ancient times by generations of textile weavers. After a typical lunch at the community center, you will proceed to a local fruit orchard. Enjoy a relaxing afternoon in the quaint countryside, and indulge in exotic fruits such as Wollongong, rambutan and more.

(Breakfast & Accommodations, Sukhothai)

DAY 8

DEPART SUKHOTHAI:

Sukhothai, which literally means "Dawn of Happiness", was the capital of the Thai Empire for approximately 140 years. It was here that the Thai written language was created. Though influential in the history and founding of the country, the Sukhothai reign was short. Only two hundred years after its founding, they were dominated by the Ayutthaya. After breakfast, your guide will drive to visit the famous Historical Park of Sukhothai. You will be amazed by the many historical ruins dating from the 13th century inside the city wall and moat.

Wat Mahathat is considered the magical and spiritual center of the Kingdom and at Wat Sri, you will see one of the largest sitting Buddha statues of the country. We'll stop for lunch at a local restaurant before transferring to Sukhothai Airport for your return flight or onward to your next Avanti Destination!

(Breakfast & Lunch Sukhothai)