

Homestay with the Akha Hilltribe at Huay Kee Lek:

Highlights:

- Experience the local way of life by home stay with different host families;
- Take a part in a traditional “**Akha** celebration;”
- Take a walk in the fields surrounding the village to learn how local people grow and gather crops;
- See many of the different wild plants, fish and animals that play a key part in the villagers’ self-sufficient lives;
- Experience typical community activities and observe the extraordinary and varied craftwork that provides their traditional dress as well as many of their everyday artifacts;
- Opportunity to have an English class for children and community tour guides to improve local language skills.

Overview of Trip:

This tour offers an unusual and unforgettable insight into the everyday lives of the minority ethnic culture of the Akha tribe. The community we visit will genuinely welcome you as a special guest while they proudly present to you aspects of their traditions and beliefs. This will truly be an experience of a lifetime as you home stay with the community and become part of their family.

Background to community:

Huay Kee Lek is a hilltribe village in Chiang Rai (Northern Thailand). The local people, of the Akha ethnic minority, are using community-based tourism to earn supplementary income as well as a motivation tool to preserve their traditions and natural resources. Their village culture is still rich in vibrant traditions and beliefs and visitors can experience and learn about real rural life. Though most of the villagers do not speak any English and many know little Thai, language is not a barrier to creating friendship.

Program:

Activities for day 1 at the village:

- From Chiang Rai town, we drive southwards to the hills of **Mae Suai** district to a small village of the *Akha tribal group- **Ban Huay Kee Lek***.
- Lunch at a local garden restaurant along the way
- Greeted by leaders of the community at their sacred pond
- Take a walk in the community forest, which represents a food resource for the community.
- Exchange the way of life by home stay with different host families.
- Take a part in a traditional “**Akha** celebration”.

Activities for day 2 at the village:

- Home stay breakfast
- Take a walk in the fields surrounding the village to learn how they grow and gather crops, as well as seeing many of the different wild plants, fish and animals that play a key part in the villagers’ self-sufficient lives.
- Enjoy a picnic lunch in the fields
- Villagers lead us to visit various sacred places important to their culture and learn the various religious rites that govern and protect them.
- Experience some of their community activities and observe the extraordinary and varied craftwork that provides their traditional dress as well as many of their everyday artifacts.
- Spend a second night with host families.

Activities for day 3 at the village:

- Home stay Breakfast
- Opportunity to have an English class for children and community's tour guides to improve their language skills.
- Have lunch and bid farewell to host families.
- Make the way down back to catch a flight to Bangkok.

Itinerary : Local communities live according to the seasons and cycles of nature, not a strictly-timed schedule. Sometimes, guests may be invited to join interesting local events which are not described in the itinerary above. Occasionally, a specific activity may not be possible, due to the weather, local cultural or agricultural calendars. The tour operator will make every effort to ensure that the program runs as described. However, guests are requested to be flexible and to understand that there may be minor changes to the tour program. Often, such changes actually enhance the program, as guests get a more authentic insight into the rhythms of local life. Similarly, weather, road conditions, or other prevailing safety factors may influence a change in the published route & itinerary. However, the content of the tour will remain similar. The final decision of the actual itinerary will be made by the tour operator's staff, after consultation with community members on the day of the tour.

Transport: Private air conditioned vehicles (minivans) with drivers. Pickup truck to travel to the village from the bottom of the hill. The price does not includes travel to Chiang Rai from Bangkok

Meals: All meals (three meals a day, drinking water during meals and while traveling) as specified in the itinerary. The exceptions for this trip are breakfast day 1 and dinner day 3. The first meal will start from lunch of day 1. The last meal will be lunch of day 3;

Accommodation Style: Home stay accommodations based on two persons sharing one home.

The Price includes:

The price in the Main Tour includes all costs (entrance fees, meals, transfers, guides, accommodations, transportations, donation) as listed in the itinerary starting from Day 1 to Day 3 (3 full days excluding the following meals: breakfast day 1 and dinner day 3)

- Meals:
All meals (three meals a day, drinking water during meals and while traveling) as specified in the itinerary. The exception being breakfast day 1 and dinner day 3. The first meal will start from lunch of day 1. The last meal will be lunch of day 3;
- Private Transfers:
Between airports, train stations, hotels, villages and scenic spots;
- Private tour escort while traveling:
During tour, at all time, will be escorted with English-speaking guide. They will be your interpreters as well; English-speaking guides will accompany you throughout the entire tour;
- Accommodations:
Home stay accommodations based on two persons sharing one home.
- Transportations:
Private air conditioned vehicles with drivers. Pickup truck to travel to the village from the bottom of the hill. The price does not includes travel to Chiang Rai from Bangkok;
- Donation Fees:
We provide communities and organizations that we visit a donation for their costs and as contribution for their work.

- Arrangements:
The tour cost includes the planning, handling, operational and communication charges

The Price excludes:

- Entry or Exit Thailand International Airfare tickets;
- Visa Fees;
- Domestic flights airfare tickets or overnight bus from Bangkok to Chiang Rai;
- Airport Taxes (if any)
- Excess Baggage Charges;
- Travel insurance (Required);
- Personal Expenses:
Expenses of a purely personal nature such as laundry, drinks, fax, telephone call, optional activities, sightseeing or meals which are not included in the Itinerary;
- Gratuities, Tips to guides or drivers (escort guides can recommend to travelers when tips are expected for special guides as well as appropriate amounts)
- Meals: Any meals which are not specified in the Itinerary; breakfast day 1 and dinner day 3 are not included.
- Drinks are not included (other than plain clean drinking water) in restaurants or along the trip.
- Government Taxes when required.