

DOI INTHANON COMMUNITY BASED TOURISM & TREK

3 Days 2 nights / Departing from Chiang Mai

Highlights:

- *Experience local life and meet the people in traditional Karen villages;*
- *See local crafts, including bold and colourful, traditional hand-weaving;*
- *Trek with local community guides, explore the forest of Doi Intanon National Park, and learn how local people live in harmony with the natural world;*
- *Enjoy a swim in the cool, green heart of a forest waterfall.*

Overview of Trip:

This program gives guests a unique opportunity to appreciate the beauty of the Karen Hill Tribe life, spent in harmony with nature on “Doi Inthanon”, the ‘Roof of Thailand’ and our countries’ highest mountain. Guests stay in a simple village lodge, built by a group of community members. Local guides lead guests to explore local culture and crafts in the village as well as enjoying a short trek to a neighbouring village. On route, guests enjoy fresh air and beautiful scenery. Your guide will share traditional Karen legends about the intimate relationships between people and forest which help to protect the environment. In the morning, guests can enjoy a delicious cup of hot, fresh, Arabica mountain coffee.

Background to the special communities where our guests share local life:

Mae Klang Luang

Mae Klang Luang’s rice terraces illustrate local wisdom in water management. This is just one aspect of the Karen people’s renowned traditional knowledge, which enables a harmonious coexistence with the environment. From childhood, villagers explore the forest, developing an intimate knowledge of the ‘natural supermarket’ of flora and fauna.

Local guides can explain the uses of forest products in daily life. For example, as wild foods, herbal medicines and natural dyes. Moreover, traditional beliefs divide the forest into areas where crops can be cultivated; ‘community forests’ which can only be used to gather wild forest products; and sacred watersheds which must be strictly protected.

Pha Mon community

Pha Mon is also a *Pa Kaa Ka Yor*, Karen village. However, Pha Mon is much smaller than Mae Klang Luang. The people of Pha Mon prefer to welcome smaller groups of between 2 and 6 travelers. The villagers have built a comfortable bungalow in the rice fields, which is ideal for a single family to stay in, for a totally unique and intimate experience of local life.

The cultivation of flowers of temperate climate has been introduced by the Royal Project as an alternative occupational activity to generate income for the villagers and to reduce farming activity in the forest area. Guests will see villagers carrying a rainbow of brightly coloured flowers through the village, and down the mountain for sale in Chiang Mai city.

Day 1 Inthanon National Park - Nature Trail

- Guests will be picked up from Chiang Mai town and driven to “Doi Inthanon National Park”, Thailand’s Highest Point. Here, we begin our exploration of nature and Karen and Hmong hill-tribe cultures. Lunch is provided at a local restaurant.
- After lunch, local community guides will lead us on a short trek (2 hours) to see various kinds of flora and birds along the “Kiw Mae Paan Nature Trail”.
- Late afternoon, guests settle into a simple, private bungalow at the Community Resort in Mae Klang Luang Karen hilltribe village.
- Enjoy a delicious local dinner and overnight.

Day 2 Way of life & trek

- Get up early for a delicious cup of hot, local Hilltribe coffee;
- After breakfast, enjoy sharing life in the community. Explore, learn and try your hand if you wish! See how local people earn a living in various ways such as coffee plantations, weaving, farming rice, and raising fish in the Royal Project;
- Visit the local school;
- Lunch, then prepare yourself for a short trek [2-hours] through pristine forest to Pha Mon Karen village. In Pha Mon, you will see stunning terraced rice paddies, highland vegetable plantations and a community co-operative. You will experience the differences in culture and way of life between Hmong and Karen peoples.
- Return to the accommodation at “Mae Klang Lung” in late afternoon.
- Dinner and overnight. (Campfire option)

Day 3 Waterfall - Bamboo raft - Chiang Mai

- Breakfast, then visit Wachiratarn Waterfall.
- After lunch, enjoy a journey to Sanpatong to experience an unforgettable activity - bamboo rafting along the Mae Wang River to admire the beautiful nature.
- Arrive Chiang Mai in late afternoon.

Itinerary :

Regarding the village visit, 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