

## Extended Tour Sample #2

### *Northern Thailand Textiles Tour*

**Day 1:** Tour begins in Bangkok or Chiang Mai. Those who begin in Bangkok can spend the day visiting a few major landmarks before catching the overnight train to Chiang Mai province.

**Day 2:** In the morning the group will attend an Introduction to Thai Textiles lecture by a well known expert on Thai and Laos fabrics. The afternoon is spent visiting a hill tribe museum and sacred monastery, which is revered by Thai Buddhists across the Kingdom. In the evening you may visit the famous Chiang Mai night bazaar – a Mecca of arts and crafts crammed into one bustling market area.

**Day 3:** Today we visit a hill tribe village doing back strap loom weaving. We will learn about their expanding project and take part in some dyeing and weaving activities.

**Day 4:** We will be welcomed at an Elephant Conservation and Training Centre today where we will see an exciting elephant show, and take a short jungle ride atop a large jumbo! We will also spend time looking at their project of making paper from elephant dung and taking part in a papermaking workshop.

**Day 5:** During today's drive to Chiang Rai province we will visit a recently constructed temple, created by a renowned Thai artist. We will also make a stop at a museum that showcases collections from the Lanna Kingdom.

**Day 6:** Two different craft producing communities are on the agenda today. First we will visit a weaving cooperative to see how they rear silk worms, produce the silk yarn, dye it and finally weave it. In the afternoon we travel to see a group that produces various gift products from handmade paper. In the evening we enjoy a Northern Khan Toke dinner accompanied by traditional Thai dancing.

**Day 7:** After breakfast we visit a tribal village that is famous for their cotton clothing decorated with embroidery, appliqué, seeds, silver ornaments, coins and shells. In the afternoon we continue on to the Golden Triangle region where the borders of Thailand, Laos, and Burma meet. This area is famous for having been one of largest drug trading centres in Asia.

**Day 8:** Our first stop of the day is the Hall of Opium museum where we will learn about the drug trade of the past. As we continue onward we will visit weavers in small communities and ancient towns in areas bordering Laos. Along the way, we can enjoy the mountainous scenery and the majestic Mae Khong River.

**Day 9:** Today we travel towards Nan province, over hills and along valleys. Here we will visit a Tai Leu village to see traditional weaving and to visit an ancient Leu-style temple. We will also stop at another few villages along the way where we can learn about indigo batik, appliqué stitch work, embroidery and hand made silver jewellery.

**Day 10:** This morning starts with a private viewing of an extensive textile collection, which belongs to a local expert. We will spend time learning about the various textiles in the collector's traditional Nan home. Afterwards, we continue on to a bamboo basket-making village and then travel to a National Park to spend the night.

**Day 11:** Our first stop of the day is to visit a notable weaving group whose traditions originate from Yunnan, now part of Southern China. They are famous for their multi-colored zig-zag patterns woven in tapestry weave, which is locally called “Nahm Laay” (flowing water). In the afternoon we visit an indigenous group who have been in Thailand for over 900 years and are possibly the most prolific weavers of all the hill tribe peoples. They are well known for their home-grown and spun cotton, back-strap looms, and the natural-dyed weaves with a hint of an ikat pattern in the warp.

**Day 12:** Today we can visit the Nan fresh morning market, local museum and ancient temple before flying back to Bangkok where the tour concludes.

**Optional Extensions:**

- An extension at the beginning of the tour can be arranged so that travellers can experience more of Bangkok.
- The Isarn: Blend of Cultures tour itinerary can be added to the end of this trip to observe many other silk and cotton weaving projects plus natural dye techniques.
- A leisure trip to the beaches in Thailand’s famous South can also be arranged for individuals or for the group.