

Bike Tour of Chiang Mai



Highlights

Home to hill tribes, elephants and ancient ruins, the jungles and mountains you can never be short of things to do in Chiang Mai. An awesome setting for sports like cycling and whitewater rafting and you can experience both on this fun-packed three-day tour!

Discover the East on two wheels! Asia and the South Pacific are home to some truly incredible cycling routes, combining millennia-old cultural heritage with scenery of breathtaking majesty, from the mighty Himalaya to the volcanic isles of Polynesia! This Chiang Mai tour gives you the chance to explore these epic landscapes under your own steam; there are no trains to catch, no 4am starts, no watching the sublime country pass you by from the back seat of a packed bus. Better still, a bike holiday allows you to interact with peoples and places in a much more intimate fashion than is possible on many tours, where you're forever surrounded by coachloads of other tourists in default travel mode: stop, snap, shop, split. On tours like these the main things are planned for you – hotels, routes, even the best time of year to travel – leaving you free to enjoy the awesome cycling!

This three-day Chiang Mai tour has something for everyone. If you fancy a challenge you can head for the hills, pedalling past tribal villages, chequered paddies and colourful temple complexes, visiting an elephant camp and even scoring a ride on an ox cart! Or perhaps you're after something a little more laidback? The southern route follows the course of the Mae Ping to the vast ruins of Wiang Kum Kam, an ancient flooded city, then heads into the quiet country near Baan Tawai, a village renowned for its exquisite wood carving. Both routes conclude with some thrilling white water rafting.

Is it for me?

If you've been wondering what there is in the way of things to do in Chiang Mai, then look no further! This is a great cycling tour covering some of Thailand's most beautiful countryside. As such, we'd recommend this to absolutely everyone, so long as they have some cycling experience and are in fairly good shape. You won't be covering any mammoth distances – the daily average is about 25 miles – and there only a few steep hills to tackle (none on the south route), so you don't need to be Lance Armstrong to enjoy this one! The roads are relatively quiet too, meaning you don't have to worry about negotiating frenzied traffic or deciphering alien road signs. If for any reason you are struggling with the riding, you can always get a lift in the back-up van (which also carries your luggage on hotel to hotel routes) at either the beginning or end of the day, so there's no danger of you holding up the other riders.

Accommodation

On this tour you'll be staying at luxury boutique hotels and resorts in Chiang Mai, Baan Song (north route) and Baan Tawai (south route). All offer top quality en suite accommodation in a spectacular setting, with lush gardens, pools and sumptuous communal spaces as standard. All of your meals are included on this tour; the hotel restaurants serve both Thai and international cuisine and you can expect some excellent picnic lunches when you're on the road. You'll also have some free time in Chiang Mai to get out and sample some Thai specialties, from road-side Pad Thai to pan-fried grasshoppers!

Itinerary

North Route: (moderate)

Prices from

344 GBP (3 days) per person

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Day 1: Chiang Mai

From Chiang Mai Airport you'll be transferred to your hotel. Aside from getting everyone set up on their bikes there are no activities planned for today. Folks who plan their arrival early in the day can explore the historic center of Chiang Mai.

Day 2: Mae Sa Valley - Baan Song

After breakfast, you'll drive a short way out of the city to Mae Sa Valley, where you'll visit an elephant camp to learn more about their lives and activities. You'll enjoy a great lunch riverside, then everyone will get set up on their bikes. Your afternoon bike tour takes you through rural villages with colourful temples and emerald rice paddies en route to Baan Song (Baan means 'village'). Here you'll be staying in a lodge designed in traditional Lisu tribe style, but offering all Western amenities. Before dinner you can walk through the local village, visiting the Shaman and exploring a medicinal herb garden. Then during dinner you'll see some traditional Lisu Tribal dances. (Cycling - 45 km)

Day 3: Mae Taeng

In the morning, you can experience a trip by ox cart through the fruit orchards and small villages surrounding your lodge, travelling the way Thais did 50 years ago. Mid-morning, you'll set out again on your bikes, cycling deep into the hills found throughout the region. The route is lush and beautiful, with tropical forests, towering teak trees and more. You'll break for lunch at the riverside, then meet your rafting guides. The afternoon will be an exciting Class 3 whitewater run down 10 km of the Mae Taeng. You will return to Chiang Mai in late afternoon. (Cycling - 15 km)

South Route: (easy)

Day 1: Chiang Mai

From Chiang Mai Airport you'll be transferred to your hotel. Aside from getting everyone set up on their bikes there are no activities planned for today. Folks who plan their arrival early in the day can explore the historic center of Chiang Mai.

Day 2: Mae Ping - Baan Tawai

Today's flat ride takes you south along the route of the Mae Ping as it meanders through small villages and vast Longan plantations. Your first stop will be Wiang Kum Kam, the site of the first city of Chiang Mai founded by King Mengrai some 700 years ago. Accompanied by a park guide, you will pedal around exploring these vast ruins only recently excavated from underneath the local orchards. After lunch you continue south to the handicraft village of Baan Tawai, whose inhabitants specialise in wood carving and wood working. Your hotel is located in the heart of this village. (Cycling - 27 km)

Day 3: Hang Dong

After breakfast you'll work your way through the morning bustle of nearby Hang Dong town, then back into the quiet countryside en route to meeting your rafting guides. After enjoying a traditional Thai lunch at one of the small cafes along your route, you'll set out for an exciting afternoon rafting down the narrow gorge of the Mae Wan, only recently opened to rafting. You will return to Chiang Mai in late afternoon. (Cycling - 15 km)

Details

Getting there

Transfer from Chiang Mai Airport

Price includes

Price quoted is for 2 to 5 people. For groups of 6 or more price is £305 / \$455

All meals, accommodation, van support, transfers, bike, guide, sightseeing and cultural activities. Flights not included.

Available

Aug—Mar

Typical Duration

3 days

Comfort level

Refined (boutique or luxury accommodation and food)

Experience required

Some previous experience is needed