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## Thailand Experience Extra weeks Childcare

Adventure



Relaxation



Culture



**Trip Name:** Thailand Experience Extra weeks Childcare    **Trip Code:** THCX    **Duration:**

### Trip Highlights

- A fabulous opportunity to dedicate your skill and energy to some of the poorest children in Thailand.
- You'll be looking after pre-school children in day-care centres – children who really need you and will love having you around
- There's the chance to travel too in this beautiful country

### Overview

This programme is perfect for those volunteers who are positive, energetic, enthusiastic and want to help care for local Thai children.

### Destination Info

Thailand is just a beautiful country – outstanding natural gorgeousness, impressive architecture, eye-catching temples, lovely, friendly people and just the best Thai food you ever ate and a lot cheaper than over here.

You will be spending your time as a volunteer in Sangklaburi is in NW Thailand on the border with Myanmar (Burma). Sangklaburi is positioned on a 72 km long manmade lake fed by the numerous local rivers and waterfalls. The town is surrounded by mountains and creates a picturesque landscape, an idyllic location for travellers and volunteers.

### Itinerary

There are various different childcare centres, most of which are just outside of Sangklaburi. They provide a safe place for those children with poor working parents. With monthly wages as low as £50 for an adult working on a farm this is an essential resource. Moreover, in many cases parents move to the cities to find work leaving grandparents to bring up the children. The use of the centres is a very welcome break to these people and therefore provides an essential service to the local community and you will soon feel that you are part of the community.

# Thailand Experience Extra weeks Childcare

There can be up to 50 pre-school children (up to 4 years old) at one time at the centres so your help is vital to ensure that the children are well looked after. You will assist the local staff in looking after the children during the day organising games, activities, lessons and preparing food and you can also get involved with renovation and repair work at the centres which may include painting walls or renovating kitchens. Just a few hours a day can make such a difference. All of this work has a long term positive affect on the staff, the children, the families and the local community.

Your typical week will consist of volunteering Monday to Thursday with a long weekend to relax or travel. You will be picked up from your accommodation around 8am and taken to your volunteer work and you will return to your accommodation around 3-4pm. The project staff will work alongside you throughout your day to answer any questions that you may have.

Your last working day will be the last Thursday of your final week. Volunteers are allowed to stay in the accommodation up until the Saturday.

At the end of your programme you will need to arrange your own way back to Bangkok or make your onward travels from Sangkhlaburi. If you wish to go back to Bangkok, you can get a train from Sangkhlaburi on the Friday or the Saturday. It will leave Sangkhlaburi at 8am and arrive into Bangkok at around 3pm. An air conditioned compartment costs around £7, please speak to your project representative in Sangkhlaburi who will be able to help you organise this. Please note, if you are flying out of Bangkok, we recommend that you stay a night in the city prior to your flight departing to allow for any delays, we can arrange this for you for £16.

## Accommodation

You will be staying in a shared volunteer house in a twin share room with self catering facilities to prepare your own food. All volunteer houses have a basic kitchen including a hob, sink, toaster, kettle, fridge and utensils.

## Programme Services and Facilities

### Telephone

The international telephone access code for Thailand is +66. To place an outgoing, direct-dialled international call, dial +44 for the UK, followed by the telephone number. For example to call Real Gap Experience dial +44 1892 516164.

Don't forget to contact your family once you are in Thailand, to let them know you have arrived safely!

### Hospital

There is a hospital located 5 minutes from the accommodation.

### Laundry

Laundry facilities are available at the accommodation for only 40 baht for 1kg of dirties!

# Thailand Experience Extra weeks Childcare

## Internet

There are many internet cafes in the town around 10-15 minutes from the accommodation and cost around 40 baht an hour.

## Meals

Eating out is incredibly cheap in Thailand, and you are able to walk to one of the many local restaurants where a meal can be purchased for as little as 100 baht (around £1.80).

## What's Included

- Transfer from Bangkok to Sangkhlaburi
- Child care project in Sangkhlaburi
- Shared volunteer house accommodation in Sangkhlaburi

## What's Not Included

- Flights
- Visa
- Food
- Return transfer to Bangkok
- Insurance

## Police Check

This trip requires a Police Check to be carried out - please contact us for further information on how to do this.

## Support & Advice

Your safety is paramount which is why all our programs have been visited and assessments have been conducted to ensure any major risks have been minimized.

In addition, you will have access to a 24 hour emergency contact number so you can contact one of our staff at any time should you need to. In addition our overseas partners and coordinators are on hand in-country to assist you.

## Financial Security

We know that the last thing you want to worry about when you're planning your trip of a lifetime is whether your



# Thailand Experience Extra weeks Childcare

money is in safe hands. As a leading global gap year provider it's our job to make sure your finances are secure, so when you book with us you can be confident that we do just that.

Real Gap Experience is part of TUI Travel Plc, one of the largest travel organisations in the world, and these days in the travel industry, large means secure.

## Insurance

Whether you're traveling for two weeks or two years, trekking the Amazon in Ecuador or on safari in Africa, insurance is an essential part of your adventure and will help you enjoy your travels, secure in the knowledge that you have the protection you need. In fact, everyone traveling with us must have adequate cover before their trip begins.

Of course you are free to buy insurance from any provider, however at Real Gap Experience, we have partnered with World Nomads to offer policies that have been specifically designed to meet the needs of global travel. If you think you're already covered by an existing policy, such as those offered by credit card providers, check the policy wording very carefully to ensure it covers you for your Real Gap Experience.

For more information on travel insurance please contact us to speak to one of our travel advisors.

## Money Matters

The unit of currency in Thailand is the Baht (THB; symbol). There are 100 Satang to the Baht and coins come in denominations of 1, 5, 10, 25 and 50 Satang or 1, 2, 5 and 10B. Paper bills come in 20B (green), 50B (blue), 100B (red), 500B (purple) and 1000B (beige).

US Dollars are the other most widely accepted currency and credit cards can be used for a fee in most large cities or at resort hotels but are not often accepted by small locally run businesses. ATMs are found in all major cities and almost all provincial banks.

Meal, Inexpensive Restaurant around \$3

Domestic beer (from a local store) \$2

Domestic beer (at a restaurant) \$3

Coke/Pepsi (0.33 litre bottle) \$0.53

Water (1.5 litre bottle) \$0.5

**(Prices quoted in US Dollar)**

## Passports and Visas

You should ensure that you have a full passport that is valid for 6 months beyond the intended length of stay. It is your responsibility to have the correct personal documents and to obtain your own visa, if one is necessary, in accordance with the regulations of the country you are to visit. The information provided below is to help you with that process. We are not responsible for the actions of local immigration and customs officials, whether at points of entry or otherwise, and any subsequent effects.

Citizens of the UK, the USA, Ireland, Australia, South Africa, New Zealand and most European countries do not require a visa for stays of less than 30 days. For stays of between 31 and 60 days you can obtain a 60-day tourist visa for a fee from a Thai embassy or consulate before you travel. For stays of up to 90 days, you can extend the 60-day visa for a further 30 days while you are in the country, for a fee.

## Visa courier service

For those of you who would prefer to use a specialist visa service to help you obtain the right visa for your travels, we have teamed up with VisaCentral, to offer you specialist assistance and advice - making preparations for your trip easier and more straight forward.

Click on [VisaCentral](#) to find out more about their services and prices.

## Cultural Considerations

Whilst parts of Thailand are developing very quickly and Bangkok can feel more modern than many Western cities, much of the country is still very poor and people have challenging lives. The accommodation you will be staying in is very basic and you will not have the luxuries that you may have in this country. Please respect that this is the way locals live and take the opportunity to experience this new way of life. The friendly people, the great atmosphere and beautiful location will more than make up for this. Most travellers enjoy this change in lifestyle. It is very healthy, refreshing and opens your mind to a new world.

## Religion

Religion is an important part of Thai day-to-day life and the main religion is Buddhism. Around 4% of the country are Muslim (largely concentrated in the far south of the country) and there is a small Christian population.

## Clothing

Note to all regarding clothes: Thailand is a very conservative country and, away from the beaches, people generally like to dress as smartly as possible and, even in rural areas you will see that most people are very conscious of being in clean and conservative clothes. Although no-one expects you to wear a suit and tie, and when at your project old t-shirts and shorts/jeans are totally appropriate, please do remember to cover up and try not to show too much flesh.

Boys – please note that wandering around without wearing a shirt/t-shirt is frowned upon (away from the beach) and in urban areas can draw the attention of the police.

Girls – please try not to expose too much flesh. Try to avoid t-shirts that expose too much and don't wear short shorts.

NOTE: When visiting a temple you are expected to cover up. Wear trousers or skirts and cover your shoulders, midriff and back.

There are plenty of opportunities to sunbathe and swim whilst in Thailand, so remember to take your bikini, swimsuit, swimming shorts etc. Flip-flops are the easiest and coolest footwear to take with you. Whenever you enter houses, temples, or home stays you will need to remove your shoes and leave them at the door. This will soon become habit and you won't even realise you are doing it. Remember to take some trainers with you as well for the outdoor activities.

There are many opportunities to buy cheap clothes from markets. These are cool, cheap and ideal for the climate and social norms.

## Smoking, Alcohol and Drugs

Smoking and drinking is acceptable in Thailand and readily available. However, please respect other people. Smoking is not permissible in volunteer apartments or the host families' homes. Drinking is only permissible in moderation and must not impact upon any volunteer work you undertake. While we want you to have fun in your free time, antisocial behaviour will not be tolerated.

It is absolutely forbidden to carry drugs into Thailand. Being caught in possession of drugs can lead to at least a

prison sentence and a hefty fine if you are lucky but remember there is still a very real threat of the death penalty for carrying drugs in Thailand. Always keep an eye on your luggage while travelling. Never bring anyone else's luggage through customs.

## Bathroom Facilities

You will experience a range of different shower and toilet facilities. Unless you are staying in a hotel you will rarely have hot water. The cool water takes a little getting used to but we are sure you'll find it refreshing after a hot and humid day. Toilets will be a combination of western and Asian. Remember to put all toilet tissue in the bin provided and not in the toilet.

You'll find that many places don't have soap or toilet/tissue paper in the bathrooms. Without going into too much detail, that's what the water can be used for (as well as flushing) or often a small water spray pipe next to the toilet. It can be useful to carry a small bottle of antibacterial gel for washing hands and small packets of tissues.

## Vaccinations & Health

Travel health can often be something people forget about before going away, but a little preparation and knowledge can go a long way to help you stay fit and healthy while abroad. The risks to your health whilst travelling will vary depending on your general health and the type of activities you are going to be partaking in and the length of your stay.

Since we are not medically qualified, it is recommended that you consult with your Doctor or a recognised Travel Medical Advisory Service who will assess your particular health risks before recommending vaccines and/or anti-malarial tablets and advising you on what precautions you should take.

## Safety

As in most countries there are people who try to take advantage of tourists. The following advice is intended to help you keep safe:

- Always keep your personal items such as passport, money and camera with you and in a safe place. You can buy mini padlocks to prevent people from going into your day sack without your permission.
- Always walk around in groups, never go off with strangers and people that you have only just met
- Never go out alone after dark
- Stick with the escorted trips. If you do go out in the evening unescorted, you do so at your own risk. Please tell the co-ordinator or your home-stay family where you are going, what time you will be back and ensure you sign the release form.
- Please do not get into fights, or arguments with local Thais. We cannot guarantee your safety and it could provoke future attacks on other travellers
- As in this country there have been reports of drinks being spiked on the islands. Please do not leave your drinks unattended and do not accept drinks from strangers.
- Most importantly of all, if you wouldn't do whilst your at home, then don't do it whilst you are away!

This information is not intended to scare you. Unfortunately, bad things can happen, as they can do in any country and we want you to be prepared. We want you to stay safe and have a good time.

We would like to add that the majority of the locals are friendly, warm and hospitable people who love meeting our travellers. Please be friendly, respectful and stay aware and you will have a great time.

We advise that you check your government's advice before travelling abroad. For UK, American and Australian customers please see the relevant links below;

UK: [www.fco.gov.uk](http://www.fco.gov.uk)



USA: [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov)

Australia: [www.smartraveller.gov.au](http://www.smartraveller.gov.au)

## ATM Theft

It is very likely that you will need to withdraw cash at some point during your travels. Please be cautious when withdrawing money from an ATM and ensure that you are vigilant of other people near the ATM, especially those that offer unsolicited assistance if your card is detained. It has been recognised that individuals are operating unlawful withdrawals by placing 'traps' in ATMs whereby personal bank cards are being detained, causing the victim to believe their card transaction has not been completed, and leaving their bank card in the ATM which is then later retrieved by the thief.

If your card is confiscated or you are concerned that your card has been tampered with, please report immediately to the bank or cancel your card.

## Thailand Terrorist Threat

Thailand is one of the most popular destinations for visitors to Southeast Asia. Most visitors enjoy a trouble-free stay. However, Thailand does have a history of political instability and has experienced a number of military coups since 1932. The political future of the country remains uncertain, though the situation remains stable.

Over the past 3-4 years there have been a number of political demonstrations in Bangkok and some other urban areas. Tensions rise and fall but other than in 2010, most protests are usually peaceful and Thais still go out of their way to be hospitable to visitors. However, it's always advisable to avoid large gatherings and listen to the advice of the team in country

## Language Guide

Here are some useful phrases to remember when you get to Thailand. We also suggest you obtain a Lonely Planet or language guide for the destination(s) you are travelling to.

Hello (Male speaker) - *sawatdee krup*

Hello (Female speaker) - *sawatdee kaa*

How are you? - *sabai dee reu*

Thank you - *kop koon*

I can't speak Thai - *phoot Thai mai dai*

I don't understand - *mai kao chai*

Do you understand? - *kao chai mai*

Where is the rest room? - *hong nam yoo tee nai*

How much does this cost? - *nee tao-rai*

What is this? - *nee aria*

Good-bye - *la gon*

Sorry/Excuse me - *kor thoad*

The bill please - *Gep taang*

## Food & Drink

It's normal in Thailand to eat rice dishes for breakfast and it is all part of the cultural experience. In fact, rice and noodles are served with all meals. The food is gorgeous, with fresh vegetables tasting far better than they do back home. Vegetarians will be happy, as Tofu is widely available as is plenty of fresh fruit. And meat lovers will also be tantalising their taste buds visiting the many local markets where you can buy chicken satay (marinated kebabs), beef kebabs and other types of meat. It is very cheap too. Remember to let us know before you depart if you have any special dietary requirements.

## Public Holidays

When planning your trip, you should be aware of the major national holidays celebrated throughout the country. However, although businesses and government offices are closed on public holidays, tourist attractions and shops are almost never closed. The main impact on the tourist of these holidays is the increased competition for travel and accommodation from Thais who use long weekends to get away from the big city.

## Weather

Thailand's equatorial climate remains tropical and warm for most of the year, with the south getting the best of the weather. The monsoon season falls between May and October, bringing warm and humid air and dipping to a minimum of 18°C. This means that Thailand is a great destination at most times of the year, though the best months are between November and February when temperatures are comfortable and rains have slackened off.

## Time

Thailand is 7 hours ahead of GMT.

## Electricity

The electricity in Thailand is 220 volts and frequency 50 Hertz. Devices that do not accept this voltage will need to be used with an adapter. Outlets in Thailand generally accept 2 types of plug:



Flat blade plug

or



Two round pins

## Trip Note Disclaimer

The information contained in this trip note has been compiled with great care and is provided in good faith. Any itinerary featured is correct at time of release. However, our itineraries may change as make improvements that result from travellers' comments, our own research or from time to time as a result of recommended travel advice.

You can rest assured that it is always our goal to provide you with the most rewarding trip and experience ever!

## Our Details

If you have any questions about this trip please do not hesitate to contact us and we'll be happy to answer them.

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