

Longtail boat Phuket

# Medicine and Society in Thailand

## 24 October–6 November 2027

## With pre-tour extension to Kanchanaburi

22 October–6 November 2027

AITO
The Specialist Travel Association

JON BAINES TOURS

Level 3
MODERATE



Epic mountain scenery in the Golden Triangle, north Thailand

**This tour offers a fascinating journey through Thailand's history, culture, landscapes and healthcare systems, exploring the relationship between traditional practices, modern medicine and Thai society.**

Begin in Bangkok, a vibrant capital renowned for its aromatic street food, floating markets and the colourful rooftops of the Grand Palace. Discover a more relaxed side of the city with a visit to Wat Pho, home to the Temple of the Reclining Buddha and regarded as the birthplace of traditional Thai massage. Continue to Chiang Rai, a former royal capital known for its striking temples and as the gateway to the Golden Triangle, where Thailand, Myanmar and Laos meet.

Drive via Khun Chae National Park to Chiang Mai, a city in the mountainous north that is rich in beautiful and historic Buddhist wats.

The tour concludes in Phuket, a picturesque island known for its 19th-century shophouses and charming Sino-Portuguese architecture. Discover the spectacular Andaman coastline on a speedboat excursion to the Phi Phi Islands.

The professional visits included in the tour will position medicine in Thailand within its unique social and economic contexts. Engage with healthcare professionals to explore medical education, community-based healthcare and rehabilitation practices.

**THIS TOUR IS CLASSED AS:**

**Level 3 | Moderate**

Regular walking at destinations, extended standing and /or increased travel distances. Good fitness is required.

# Tour Leader

**Janice Liverseidge** was previously Director of Membership at The Royal Society of Medicine and is now a full-time guide and in her spare time a trustee of both the Royal Medical Benevolent Fund and the London Handel Festival.

Earlier in her career Janice worked for the British Medical Association. She is also a registered Blue Badge tourist guide and regularly leads groups in London on medical history walks, tours of the Wellcome Collection and other healthcare locations as well as providing music and art tours for the Foundling Museum and the London Handel Festival.



Janice has travelled extensively and has led highly successful RSM tours to Vietnam and Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Cuba, South Africa, China, Japan and India.

**Visit the lively Damnoen Saduak Floating Market, Ratchaburi Province**





Kanchanaburi Province (extension)

## Pre-tour extension to Kanchanaburi
22–24 October 2027

**Day 1: Bangkok** (Fri, 22 Oct)

**Am:** Arrive and make your way to the hotel.

**Day 2: Bangkok for Kanchanaburi** (Sat, 23 Oct) B L

**Am:** Drive to Hellfire Pass Interpretive Centre. Explore the museum and the memorial walking trail, learning about the experiences of Allied prisoners of war and forced labourers who built the Thailand–Burma Railway during World War II.

**Pm:** Drive to Tham Krasae Railway Station to board Train No. 258, travelling towards Kanchanaburi. Enjoy the scenic journey along the historic railway, including the famous wooden railway viaduct. Arrive at Kanchanaburi Railway Station and visit the Death Railway Museum and Research Centre, Chungkai War Cemetery, and the historic Bridge over the River Kwai.

**Eve:** Overnight at the U Inchantree Kanchanaburi Hotel.

**Day 3: Kanchanaburi/Bangkok** (Sun, 24 Oct)

**Am:** At leisure. B D

**Pm:** Return to Bangkok and transfer to the hotel to meet the group.

**U Inchantree Kanchanaburi Hotel (Extension)**
A charming riverside lodge on the north bank of the Kwai Yai River, close to the famous River Kwai Bridge. Rooms are bright and airy and the bar and restaurant offer dramatic river views. The landscaped gardens and hotel rooms are centred around an ancient Inchan tree.

### The cost of the Kanchanaburi extension per person sharing a double or twin room is £378

### The cost of the extensions with a room to yourself is £458

#### The cost of the extension includes:

- 2 nights' accommodation at the U Inchantree Kanchanaburi Hotel
- The services of a local guide on day 2
- Breakfast and lunch or dinner daily
- All internal transport
- Admission fees and taxes

#### The cost excludes:

- As per main itinerary

# Itinerary: 24 October – 6 November 2027

B = Breakfast L = Lunch D = Dinner

3 nights Bangkok – 3 nights Chiang Rai – 4 nights Chiang Mai – 3 nights Phuket




**Day 1: Bangkok** (Sun, 24 Oct) D

**Am:** Arrive and make your way to the hotel.

**Eve:** Enjoy a local dinner at Cabbages & Condoms, a unique restaurant combining authentic Thai cuisine with a mission to promote family planning.

**Day 2: Bangkok** (Mon, 25 Oct) B D

**Am:** Explore Bangkok's historic heart on a half-day city tour. Take a boat ride along the canals and glimpse local life along the waterways, before continuing to Wat Pho to see the famed Reclining Buddha and visit the School of Traditional Medicine and Traditional Massage.

**Pm:** Visit Jim Thompson House, the former home of the American businessman who played a key role in the revival of the silk industry. Continue on foot to Baan Krua Nua, a historic Muslim community with a long tradition of silk weaving.

**Eve:** Transfer to the restaurant for a welcome dinner. Return to the hotel by tuk-tuk.

**Day 3: Bangkok** (Tues, 26 Oct) B L

**Am:** Drive to the outskirts of Bangkok, to board a train and experience Mae Klong Railway Market, where vendors swiftly clear their stalls as the train passes through. Continue to the lively Damnoen Saduak Floating Market, where colourful boats offer fresh produce along bustling canals.

**Pm:** Lunch at a local restaurant. Return to Bangkok and visit a leading teaching hospital.

**Day 4: Bangkok/Chiang Rai** (Wed, 27 Oct) B D

**Am:** Fly to Chang Rai.

**Pm:** Discover artistic treasures, from the frosted Wat Rong Khun (White Temple) and striking Wat Rong Suea Ten (Blue Temple) to the Baan Dam Museum (Black House), which exhibits a unique collection of traditional and contemporary Thai art.

**Day 5: Chiang Rai** (Thurs, 28 Oct) B L

**Am:** Travel through the scenic landscapes surrounding Chiang Rai on a traditional long-tail boat along the Kok River, past riverside communities, lush farmland and natural hot springs.

**Pm:** Visit Mae Fah Luang University Medical Center Hospital to learn about healthcare delivery in Northern Thailand, including medical education, public health, community healthcare services.

**Day 6: Chiang Rai** (Fri, 29 Oct) B D

**Am:** Visit Doi Tung Royal Villa, the former residence of the Princess Mother, and the exquisitely landscaped Mae Fah

Luang Botanical Gardens. Visit Mae Fah Luang Community Hospital, which delivers healthcare to remote mountain communities and ethnic minorities. Continue to Mae Sai, Thailand's northernmost border town, and experience its lively open-air market.

**Pm:** Continue to Sop Ruak, a village at the heart of the Golden Triangle, where Thailand, Myanmar, and Laos meet. Here, visit the House of Opium and learn about the history of the opium trade and its legacy. Enjoy panoramic views of the Mekong River from Pha Ngao Skywalk.

### Day 7: Chiang Rai / Chiang Mai (Sat, 30 Oct)

B D

**Am:** Drive to Khun Chae National Park, a protected sanctuary for rare mammals like the white-handed gibbon, Asiatic black bear, serow, barking deer, slow loris, and the leopard. It is also a birdwatcher's paradise, with birds including the great barbet, blue-throated bee-eater, and red junglefowl.

**Pm:** Lunch (at client's expense) in the park at the foot of a giant Ficus tree. Continue to Chiang Mai and check in to the hotel.

### Day 8: Chiang Mai (Sun, 31 Oct)

B D

**Am:** At leisure.

**Pm:** Take a short walking tour exploring Chiang Mai's history and King Mengrai's legacy, visiting Wat Phra Singh and the 600-year-old Wat Chedi Luang. Then explore Warorot Market, the city's largest local market, for a taste of local life and an introduction to speciality Chiang Mai cuisine. Enjoy a local dinner.

### Day 9: Chiang Mai (Mon, 1 Nov)

B L

**Am:** Visit Doi Suthep, one of Chiang Mai's most revered landmarks, offering stunning views over the city. Continue to Wat Suan Dok, a Buddhist temple with a large golden chedi and white royal mausoleums.

**Pm:** At leisure with the option to join a traditional Thai cookery class.

### Day 10: Chiang Mai (Tues, 2 Nov)

B

**Am:** Discover how Thai traditions and local culture are integrated into health care. At the Industrial Rehabilitation Centre, occupational therapists combine their usual practices with traditional crafts, such as silver carving, to support



Mae Fah Luang Botanical Gardens

individuals recovering from workplace injuries as part of rehabilitation. Several community-based rehabilitation centres provide tradition-based programmes for senior citizens with age-related illnesses to promote physical health, cognitive function and social connection.

**Pm:** Visit Burma Children Medical Fund and hear a talk about their work in Thailand.

**Day 11: Chiang Mai/Phuket** (Wed, 3 Nov) B

**Am:** Fly to Phuket.

**Pm:** Arrive and transfer to the hotel.

**Day 12: Phuket** (Thurs, 4 Nov) B L D

**Am:** Take part in a walking tour of Phuket Old Town. The town's multicultural heritage is captured by its 'Sino-European' architecture, eye-catching murals and gastronomy. Learn about the city's tin-mining industry, then explore the bustling Amulet market and Mongkol Nimit Temple. Lunch at a local restaurant and return to the hotel.

**Pm:** In the late afternoon take part in a culinary tour. In 2015, UNESCO appointed Phuket as the first city in Southeast Asia to be a Creative City of Gastronomy. Here, traditional culinary culture serves as an enabler for intercultural and intergenerational dialogue. Discover the flavours of Southern Thailand and visit local markets and a shrine associated with Phuket's annual Vegetarian Festival.

**Day 13: Phuket** (Fri, 5 Nov) B L D

**Am:** Embark on a full-day speedboat adventure around Phi Phi Islands in the Andaman Sea. Explore Monkey Beach, snorkel at Phi Phi Don and visit Viking Cave, Pileh Lagoon and Maya Bay. Relax on Bamboo Island's pristine beach and enjoy a picnic lunch. Conclude the day at Koh Khai, taking in sunset views from a beach bar before returning to Phuket.

**Eve:** Farewell dinner.

**Day 14: Phuket** (Sat, 6 Nov) B

**Am:** Depart the hotel after breakfast.

Visit the Mae Klong Railway Market in Bangkok





Chala Number 6, Chiang Mai

# Hotels

**Paradox Bangkok Sukhumvit, Bangkok**
This contemporary hotel is located in the heart of Sukhumvit, one of Bangkok's most dynamic neighbourhoods. The rooms feature a warm, minimalist design and there are excellent amenities, including a restaurant, rooftop bar and swimming pool.

**Riva Vista Riverfront, Chiang Rai**
A luxury riverside resort offering a peaceful retreat within Chiang Rai's luscious jungles, the Riva Vista features modern architecture, relaxing spaces, airy rooms, excellent spa facilities, and an outdoor swimming pool. Its restaurant serves authentic Thai Lanna cuisine.

**Chala Number 6, Chiang Mai**
Located in the heart of Chiang Mai's historic Old City, directly opposite Wat Chedi Luang, this traditional boutique hotel offers comfortable accommodation surrounded by lovely gardens. Facilities include a large swimming pool, a spa, a restaurant, and a bar.

**Paradox Phuket, Phuket**
An expansive coastal hotel offers spacious rooms, reflecting the understated style of its sister in Bangkok. There are four swimming pools, excellent wellness facilities and a variety of bars and restaurants. Alternatively, cross the road to discover the pristine sands and clear waters of Karon Beach, with its appealing selection of beachfront cafés and restaurants.









Learn about Thailand's proud silk heritage at Jim Thompson House (top); Massage School (Home of Thai Massage near Reclining Buddha); Freshly cooked Northern Thai food; The colourful buildings of Phuket Old Town (above)

## The cost of the tour per person sharing a double or twin room is £3,260

## The cost of the tour with a room to yourself is £3,880

### The cost includes:

- 13 nights' accommodation in twin-bedded rooms with private facilities in medium grade and first-class hotels
- The services of a tour leader, Janice Liverseidge
- The services of English-speaking guides
- A full programme of cultural visits, excursions and activities as detailed in the itinerary
- A full programme of professional visits as detailed in the itinerary
- Comprehensive briefing notes
- All breakfasts and lunch and dinner as per the itinerary
- All internal transport including economy-class flight from Bangkok to Chiang Rai and Chiang Mai to Phuket
- All admission fees, tips and taxes

### The cost excludes:

- International flights and airport transfers
- Meals not mentioned
- Drinks not mentioned
- All optional excursions, tours and visits; all personal extras such as porterage, laundry and inoculation fees; travel insurance and visas, if applicable

**NB: All itineraries in Thailand are subject to change according to local conditions. Places on this tour are strictly limited.**

# About Us

To travel with us is to dig below the surface, revealing the deeper destination. Of course, you will visit the great historical sites; marvel at the wonders of architecture and engineering; be moved by the riches of culture and art; and experience the most spectacular landscapes in the world. We also ensure that you see the country as it is today, giving you privileged access that independent travel and other tour companies rarely get close to.

From the sublime to the humble, we provide a variety of experiences in the company of intelligent, curious, like-minded people. And while we can be worthy, we also make sure that you have a lot of fun!

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**Phuket's stunning beaches (top); Wat Pho (Reclining Buddha), Bangkok; Doi Suthep, Chiang Mai; Lanna heritage of Chiang Saen (above)**

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