

Post conference excursion

(21th November 2014, 1.00-6.00 pm)

There are three interesting routes to offer. *Please choose one route of your interest and send us an E-mail in case you did not choose the excursion in your registration form (the deadline is on November 1st, 2014). Payment will be made in cash on the conference day (November 20th, 2014).*

Route	Thai (Baht)	Foreigner (Baht)
<i>Northern Thai culture tour</i>	800	800
<i>Golden triangle and Hall of opium</i>	1,000	1,100
<i>Doi Tung royal villa and Mae Sai*</i>	1,100	1,100

* Please note that crossing the border to Myanmar at Mae Sai is optional and the entry fee is excluded (about 10 USD (500 baht) for foreigner or 40 baht for Thai citizen).

Mae Fah Laung University (Chiang rai) : Conference venue



Chiang Rai , 785 km away from Bangkok is the northernmost province of Thailand. Scenic dense mountains, river valleys, hot springs, waterfalls, ancient settlements and historical sites, hill tribe villages such as Karen, Akha, Lisu, Meo and Muser, all can be found in Chiang Rai. Once the province became famous because of the renowned "Golden Triangle" where Myanmar, Laos and Thailand converge at the banks of the Maekong River and thus the gateway to Myanmar, Laos and Southern China. The northernmost town of Thailand, Mae Sai is the border to Myanmar. Rich in tourist attractions Chiang Rai remains until today a heaven for people looking for a rather laid back holiday, close to nature. Trekking is a highlight in any of the many National Park and roads are perfect for mountain bikes. The city of Chiang Rai was once the capital of the Lanna Kingdom and the city's most honored temple is Wat Phra Kaew.

Mae Fah Luang University , an autonomous public university, was established on the 25 th of September 1998 according to the 1998 Royal Charter of Mae Fah Luang University, and was granted royal permission to be named after the title by which the local people respectfully addressed and referred to Her Royal Highness the Princess Mother. This appellation of auspicious meaning signifies the objectives of this university as a memorial of Thai peoples loyalty to Her Royal Highness the Princess Mother for Her boundless benevolence to people throughout the Kingdom.

Route 1. Northern Thai culture tour

1. Wat Rong Khun (White temple)



Located near the city of Chiang Rai, about 5 kilometers to the south, is the beautiful Wat Rong Khun or White Temple. The White Temple of Northern Thailand has become a national landmark and, as one of the most recognizable temples in the country, attracts an increasingly large number of visitors every year.

Wat Rong Khun is unique from other temples in that it has been constructed entirely in a radiant white color with sparkling reflections from mirrored glass mosaics embedded in the white plaster. The temple is the idea of Mr. Chalermchai Kositpipat, one of Thailand's most renowned artists, who wanted to build a temple all in white to signify the purity of Lord Buddha. The artist continues to put his religious belief and desire to enrich Buddhism in Thailand into his contemporary art design. The construction of the White Temple is Khun Chalemchai's master work, which he refers to as an offering to Lord Buddha and his beloved country. (www.thailand-travelonline.com)

2. *Wat Phra Kaew*



No one seems to know exactly when the temple was built, but it probably dates to around the time of the city's founding. It was originally called 'Wat Pa Yia' which means 'yellow bamboo forest' after the bamboo which abundantly grew in the area. Several stands of the tall grass line one side of the compound today.

What is known for sure is that in 1434, lightning struck the chedi (since restored) and cracked it open. The so-called 'Emerald Buddha' now housed in the Grand Palace in Bangkok was found inside the broken chedi. Soon after its discovery, the sacred image was moved to Lampang, then Chiang Mai, then Laos and finally to Bangkok in 1778.

The 'Emerald Buddha' is actually made of jade. In 1991 a replica of the original was commissioned to honor the Princess Mother's 90th birthday. A large hunk of Canadian jadeite was donated by a rich Chinese businessman, and the replica was carved in Beijing. Following Buddhist protocol, the new 'Chiang Rai Jade Buddha' is not an exact copy of the original. It's slightly smaller with other variations. The new Buddha was installed in a custom-built pavilion at the back of the main compound. (www.thailandforvisitors.com)

3. *Wat Phra Singh*



Wat Phra Singh, Chiang Rai is a sister temple to Wat Phra Singh, Chiang Mai. It is located on the Singha Khlai Road. This temple serves as a monastery and is an important tourist destination of Chiang Rai.

Although its history and origin is not clearly established, it is believed by experts that this temple was built during the 15th century by King Pra Chao Maha Proma using the classic Lanna-style of architecture. Since then, the wat has been restored several times. It houses the famous Phra Phuttha (Buddha) Sing image which is believed to have been brought from Sri Lanka during the Sukhothai period.

All the buildings in the temple are constructed in the classic Lanna-style of architecture, and have low sweeping roofs. The inner sections of the bot are bedecked with vibrant murals, while the sections just under the bot are decorated with finely wrought animal figures. Apart from the famous Ebony and Gold image of Buddha and the Purple Jade Buddha, there are several other fascinating Buddha images housed in Wat Pra Singh under the sacred Bodhi trees. The temple grounds are scattered with Bodhi trees which are surrounded by unique images of Buddha depicting Him in numerous postures and positions.

The temple is a “must see” for all tourists visiting Chiang Rai. Apart from its captivating architectural beauty and its religious value as a leading pilgrim destination of Chiang Rai, Wat Pra Singh is also famous for yet another aspect. It serves as a teaching monastery for Pali language. There is a separate building which serves as a Pali language school to perpetuate the cultural and religious beliefs of Buddhism. (www.thailandbuddy.com)

4. King Mengrai Monument



Commemorating of founder of Chiang rai, the monument should be paid to King Mengrai before travelling further. The monument is located on the city outskirts beside the road to Mae Chan. (www.Intertea.mfu.ac.th)

5. Thai famous artist, Tawan Duchanee art house



Another impressive place is the art house of Thai famous artist, Tawan Duchanee, he is a world class artist and very famous among European art lovers and art collectors. His art works are very unique and expensive.

Route 2. Golden triangle and Hall of opium

1. Golden triangle



Golden triangle used to be the opium growing region covering northern Thailand, eastern Burma and western Laos. It has been one of the most extensive opium-producing areas of Asia and of the world since the 1920s. Most of the world's heroin came from the Golden Triangle until the early 21st century. Opium production has been illegal in Thailand since 1959. Thanks to a highly successful crop substitution program undertaken by the Royal Projects Foundation established by His Majesty King Bhumipol, opium production has largely been eliminated in Thailand. The Golden Triangle also designates the confluence of the Ruak River and the Mekong river, since the term has been appropriated by the Thai tourist industry to describe the nearby junction of Thailand, Laos, and Myanmar. The area is full of beautiful natural scenery and ancient temples, so it isn't like its not worth a visit.

2. *Hall of opium*



Hall of opium locates 10 km north of Chiang Saen Town (near the Golden Triangle) in Chiang Rai. The Hall of Opium was established in cooperation by the Mae Fah Luang Foundation and the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) with initial funding from the Japanese Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund.

The Exhibition

The exhibition begins with a walk through a 137 meter entrance tunnel, to help create an atmosphere of the contradictory moods associated with opium and narcotics: mystery, danger, fear, sleep and dreams, ease of pain, or suppressed suffering. Introductory displays are presented in the lobby, featuring **two issues** that attract people to the museum :1. the opium poppy and its products, and 2. Drug production in the Golden Triangle. This section provides a general introduction to the opium poppy, its products, and the history of its use from earliest evidence of at least 5,000 years ago to the late 18th century.

Visitors pass through a short dark and bright hallway, in which the contrasting characteristics of opium are presented. On the side a plant with products of great benefit to humans, On the other side a plant that can cause considerable suffering.

The next sections describe the development of large – scale production, trade, and use of opium in the 18th and early 19th centuries, culminating with the **Opium Wars** between China and Britain. The opium trade led to confrontation, then war between China and Britain (and later the other western powers.) On one side the most powerful military and economic powers forced their trade on China and the rest of Asia, often leading to direct colonization. On the other side, an insular and

increasingly corrupt, rigid, and weak Manchu regime attempted to maintain its tenuous control over a widespread empire.

The next large section presents the history of legal opium. Siam is selected as representative of the extensive legal opium production, trade, and use in 19th and early 20th century East and Southeast Asia.

It is the Mae Fah Luang Foundation's hope that visitors leave the exhibition with an understanding of the long and fascinating history of opium. Though the drug provides many benefits, it also brings about great suffering. Even more so, the Foundation hopes to instill in each visitor the belief that they can and should join the effort to solve the problem of illegal drugs. Those who want to continue viewing the museum over a few days can overnight at the accommodations in the Park. Advance booking is required. (www.chiangmai-chiangrai.com)

Route 3. Doi Tung royal villa and Mae Sai

1. Doi Tung royal villa



HRH Princess Srinagarindra called the villa "home at Doi Tung". The Royal Villa was built with Princess Mother's private funds; she considered it her first real home in Thailand. The Princess Mother also made it known that without the Doi Tung Development Project, she would not have built

a house in the area. She only stayed because she could reforest the land and helped to improve the lives of the local people.

The Royal Forest Department planned to present the land for the construction of the Royal Villa to the Princess Mother. However, she refused their offer, on the grounds that she was not more privileged than any Thai who had no right to own land in a forest preserve. Therefore, the Royal Villa was leased out to the Foundation for 30 years, the same period as the Project's timeframe.

The exterior of Doi Tung Royal Villa was built of concrete and decorated with wood slabs cut from discarded teak trees, which came from forest thinning work by the Forest Industry Organization. The interior of the Royal Villa is paneled with recycled pine wood, which came from crates used for imported tools and equipment. The gold teakwood that lines the floor was presented to the Princess Mother by the Forest Industry Organization. The simple interior design exudes elegance and functionality, which reflects the nature of the owner of the residence.

The upper floor of the building accommodates four sections. These include the late Princess Mother's private area, a reception hall and kitchen, and the private quarters for the Princess Mother's daughter, Her Royal Highness the late Princess Galyani Vadhana and Thanpuying Tasanavalaya Sornsonggram, Princess Galyani Vadhana's only daughter. The highlight of the Royal Villa is on the ceiling of the main hall. It has hand-crafted wood inlay of the Princess Mother's favourite constellations. Designed by the Astronomy Society of Thailand, installed light bulbs representing the stars in the centre of the ceiling showed the position of the constellations on October 21, 1900, the day the Princess Mother was born.

The Princess Mother first took up residence at the Doi Tung Royal Villa on November 23, 1988, 10 months after the start of construction, and before it was completed. She stayed at the Royal Villa on five more occasions for several months at a time to allow her to work on her projects. (www.doitung.org and www.chiangraimap.com)

2. Mae Sai



About 62 kilometres from Chiang rai is Thailand's northern-most district. Mae Sai, borders on Myanmar's Tha Khi Lek marked by the Mae Sai River with a bridge spanning both sides.

Foreign visitors are allowed to cross over to the Tha Khi Lek market by presenting their passports and paying a fee at the Mae Sai immigration checkpoint. Tha Khi Lek on the Myanmar side of the border, is a typical border town that exists purely on the trade, some say, dodgy trade, between Thailand and Myanmar. The majority of people crossing over to Myanmar are Thais shopping for bootlegged Chinese goods. (www.virtualltourist.com)