



WORLD DISCOVERY  
— HISTORY CULTURE WILDLIFE —

## Undiscovered Thailand



The Khmer ruins at Phimae (DAY 9)

**DAY 1 – Depart UK.**

**DAY 2 – Arrival in Bangkok.**

On arrival in Bangkok you will be met outside customs by a representative of World Discovery and taken by private car direct to your hotel.

**DAY 3 - Bangkok.**

After a leisurely breakfast, your guide will meet you at your hotel and take you to the fascinating heritage home that belonged to the late **Kukrit Pramoj**, a famous politician, journalist, poet, playwright and much else besides who is regarded as one of Thailand's leading figures of the twentieth century. His traditional Thai house houses a lovely collection of antiques, artifacts and items used in the classical Thai arts which he gathered up during his life. Continue to the **Grand Palace**, arguably the most important cultural icon in the land. Once the royal abode, the palace is today used mainly for ceremonial functions. You are allowed inside to see the **Emerald Buddha**, the displays of royal artifacts and memorabilia, and wall decorations. Continue on foot to the **Royal Navy Club** for a simple Thai lunch. Board your private boat nearby, and cross the Chao Phraya River to the Thonburi district, where you will visit the **Wangderm Palace** and the **Royal Barge Museum**. The grand procession of Royal barges is seen only once a year during His Majesty the King's birthday celebrations (early December). See the actual boats in their dry docks. Now it's time to relax and experience life on the water with a beer or soft drink as your boat continues along Bangkok's old **klongs** (canals) and waterways. Today Bangkok is a modern cosmopolitan city but not many decades ago huge areas of the city were still accessed primarily by these kinds of canals. Return to your hotel in the late afternoon.

**Meals included: Full breakfast, lunch.**

## DAY 4 - Bangkok. Board the overnight train to Ubon Ratchathani.

At leisure in Bangkok. In the evening you will be taken to the Railway Station to board the overnight train to Ubon Ratchathani in Thailand's far northeast Isaan Province.

**Meals included: Full breakfast, dinner.**

## DAY 5 - Ubon Ratchathani. Khong Jiam.

Local breakfast is available on the train but we will provide breakfast on arrival in Ubon Ratchathani. Take a brief look at this small city before setting off for the tiny town of Khong Jiam, stopping en route at a village that exclusively produces gongs and large bells for temples; appreciate the accuracy the artisans employ producing these lovely pieces. After lunch at a local riverside restaurant drive to your resort on the banks of the Mekong, your base for exploring this fascinating region.

**Meals included: Full breakfast, lunch.**

## DAY 6 - Pha Taem National Park. Mekong boat trip.

Take a short drive to Pha Taem National Park and enjoy a walk to view the 4,000 year old paintings on the face of a cliff overlooking the Mekong. The walk of 3.5km is relatively easy and offers great views, as well as taking you through bamboo forests and areas of delicate wild flowers. A picnic lunch will be provided in a comfortable shaded spot. Return to your resort for an afternoon of relaxation by the pool, or you may choose an active time making use of the bicycles or kayaks belonging to the resort.

**Meals included: Full breakfast, lunch.**

## DAY 7 - Drive to Surin. Khmer Temples. Elephant ride.

In the morning drive to the town of Surin. Everyone knows about the temples of Angkor, but the Khmer Empire spread far beyond the modern boundaries of Cambodia and there are several superb ancient Khmer sites in this region of northeast Thailand. Today you will visit **Sa Kamphaeng Yai**, the largest and best preserved ruins in Si Saket Province; originally built as a shrine to the Hindu god Shiva, this complex was changed into a Mahayana Buddhist temple in the 13th century. You will also have time to explore the ruins of **Si Koraphom**, on a smaller scale but still very interesting. Finish off your day with an enjoyable elephant ride beside the Mun River.

**Meals included: Full breakfast, lunch.**

## DAY 8 - Phanom Rung. Prasat Muang Tam. Continue to Khorat.

Regarded as the finest example of Khmer architecture in Thailand, the temple of **Phanom Rung** is your first visit today. Built between the 10th and 13th centuries, Phanom Rung is graced by exquisite carvings, including the famous lintel above the east entrance depicting a reclining Vishnu. The approach to the main temple is particularly impressive, a 200 metre avenue symbolising the journey from earth to the heavenly place of the gods. You will also explore the small but elegant 11th century temple complex of **Prasat Muang Tam**, characterised by its four L-shaped ponds set around a central gallery. In the afternoon continue to the town of Khorat.

**Meals included: Full breakfast, lunch.**

## DAY 9 - Phimae. Kao Yai National Park.

After breakfast visit the impressive Khmer ruins of **Phimae**, known for their intricate sandstone carvings, before driving to Kao Yai National Park, Thailand's first National Park (1962) which has been granted UNESCO World Heritage status.

**Meals included: Full breakfast, lunch.**

## DAY 10 - Kao Yai National Park.

Encompassing a wide range of habitats, Kao Yai National Park boasts over 300 bird species - including 4 different varieties of hornbill - and twenty large mammal species; it is the only place in Thailand where you have a realistic chance of seeing wild elephants. There are many walking trails to take advantage of the wonderful scenery. Today you will explore the park with a naturalist guide, including a visit to a cave just outside the park at dusk to witness the amazing spectacle of millions of bats emerging in a twisting black cloud in search of their nightly food.

**Meals included: Full breakfast.**

## DAY 11 - Kao Yai National Park. Depart for UK.

Spend further time in the park until your evening departure to Bangkok Airport for your flight to the UK.

**Meals included: Full breakfast.**

## DAY 12 - Arrive UK.

Your flight departs in the early morning and arrives in London the same morning.