

Northern Thailand In Style:

9 Nights / 10 Days

Information Kit

Thailand:

Incredible riding, cultures, landscapes and cuisine await you in Northern Thailand



"Great riding, great hotels and the exquisite Thai cuisine make this tour something out of the ordinary."

Stepping up the luxury with high-end accommodation and a focus on superb riding with amazing food and culture experiences, Compass Expeditions are setting the standard for luxury motorcycle adventure.

Itinerary

Joining Day: Chiang Mai

Your transfer will meet you at the Chiang Mai International Airport and transport you in comfort to our Joining hotel - a 30-minute drive outside of the town.

At 3pm we will transfer to the bike service centre for the bike handover and spend some time getting to know our bikes, your partner for the next 7 days. After signing all necessary documents and finalising your bike set-up we will take a short introductory ride back to the hotel to enjoy a welcome dinner and have our tour briefing for the next day. We overnight in Chiang Mai.

Day One: Nan

In the morning we start our tour from Chiang Mai in eastern direction. It is an easy first day of riding, ideal to get familiar with your motorbike. We cruise hilly roads and reach Phayao where we stop by the lake for lunch. In the afternoon we will arrive in Nan, the capital of the Nan province. For centuries it was a separate, autonomous Kingdom with few relationships to the outside world. Now, the city is a beautiful town with many well-preserved temples. Dinner will be at a local restaurant by the Nan River. We will overnight in Nan.

Day Two: Nan - Bo Kluea - Nan

Without a doubt, the road to Bo Kluea offers some of the best riding in Thailand, so it had to be included in the Northern Thailand in style tour. Classic twisty roads with almost no traffic will make today an unforgettable riding experience. The tiny village of Bo Kluea is located in a scenic valley close to the Lao border, it is remote and picturesque. "Bo Kluea" means salt well as the village has grown up around two natural saltwater wells which have been used for centuries.

From Bo Kluea we cross over the mountain through Phu National Park, enjoy the more stunning scenery and more empty roads. We will arrive back into Nan in the early afternoon, with time to visit, what is regarded as one of the most beautiful temples in Thailand, Wat Phumin. The temple was built as if it were on the back of two immense snakes. We will spend the evening at an authentic local restaurant on the bank of the Nan River. Overnight in Nan.

Day Three: Chiang Rai

We leave Nan and follow the main Road 101 for a while before we turn left and ride for an hour on a perfect motorbike road with nice sweeping corners to Phu Langka. Here we take a break





at a great view-point and have a simple local lunch. Afterwards we make our way through the hinterland on small back roads towards the north. We pass through rice fields and fruit plantations and then cruise through farming villages. Before heading to our hotel, we visit the impressive Wat Rong Khun (the White Temple), which is today recognized as one of Thailand's main attractions. Dinner will be at a local restaurant. We Overnight in Chiang Rai province. For centuries it was a separate, autonomous Kingdom with few relationships to the

Day Four: Chiang Rai – Rest day

Today you have a well-earned rest day to enjoy a leisurely breakfast at the hotel, spend some time by the pool or wander out to explore the wonderful temples and markets of bustling Chiang Mai. Renting a scooter is a fun way to see the city without the concern of navigating a larger adventure bike in city traffic. Our crew will be able to arrange scooter rental if required. We Overnight in Chiang Rai.

Day Five: Thaon

From Chiang Rai, we take a short ride to the mighty Mekong River at the legendary Golden Triangle where the three borders of Thailand, Myanmar and Laos meet. We swap the motorcycles for a boat and explore the river region. Taking a short break in Laos (no visa needed, only bring your passport) before returning to our motorcycles.

From the Golden Triangle we continue our ride along rice paddies and farm villages. We visit the most Northern town of Thailand in Mae Sai and explore the impressive Choui Fong Tea House. The teahouse serves all kinds of different tea blends and great cakes and the scenery is lovely. Continuing on to Doi Mae Salong on yet more amazing twisty mountainous roads. Doi Mae Salong is a Chinese settlement, which was built, by a division of the Chinese Nationalist Army that refused to surrender to Chinese communists after the Nationalist Kuomintang government was routed in 1949. Today the village still offers a native Chinese cuisine, lovely houses with flowers and countless tea plantations as far as the eyes can see. We then descend from Doi Mae Salong to Thaton, a small town on the banks of the Kok River, bordering with Myanmar. We stay overnight in our hotel in Thaton.

Day Six: Pai

After breakfast we will ride up the hill in Thaton and enjoy a splendid view from Wat Thaton over the town and the vicinity. Then we follow the main road No. 107 until we turn right and cross the mountains from Mae Taeng to Pai. This is the beginning of the road to Mae Hong Son, famous for having 1864 bends of varying sharpness. Lunch en route is at a nice resort.

Before we reach your hotel stop at an Elephant Camp near Pai. Once in Pai, enjoy the pool at the resort. After the sunset stroll down along the walking street, taste food from the street food stalls or enjoy dinner at one of the many restaurants.

Pai is the hippie capital of South East Asia. It is a town full of diversity and contradictions. There are backpackers, tourists with suite cases, people who once came and never left. A mix from all corners of the earth, all walks of life and age groups. This little town is full of bars, live music and life. Enjoy! Overnight in Pai.

Day Seven: Mae Hong Son

Today is a very scenic ride day. The distance is not great, however there are plenty of mountains and switchbacks to negotiate, don't worry, you will need the full day. This is also the second part of the road famous for its 1864 bends of varying sharpness. We cross two mountains with great scenic views. The journey takes us through stunning mountainous scenery. We will arrive at Ban Rak Thai around mid-day where we have lunch in one of the local Chinese restaurants by the little lake. They serve delicious Chinese specialities. Ban Rak Thai means literally "the Thai-loving village", built around a lake on the Myanmar border. About 800, mainly Chinese settled here after the communist takeover of China and many of the buildings have a distinctively Chinese appearance.

After lunch, we continue to Mae Hong Son, up the hill to visit the Wat Phrathat Doi Kongmu. From there is a great view of the city and its surroundings. Our next destination is the pier where we park our motorcycles for a 20-minute scenic boat ride on the Pai River to the Karen Long Neck village. The Karen, a tribal minority, historically lived in the hills on the Myanmar side of the border. Some of the Karen women wear heavy brass rings around their necks, forearms, and shins. Many ideas regarding why the coils are worn have been suggested. Including that the rings protected women from becoming slaves by making them less attractive to other tribes and that the coils originate from the desire to look more attractive. One far-fetched story has the rings as protection from tigers (?). After spending some time at the village, we return by boat to bikes and ride to the nearby Resort. Enjoy a drink at the sunset bar overlooking the rice paddies then a wonderful dinner in the gardens. Overnight in Mae Hong Son.

Day Eight: Chiang Mai

On this last riding day, we continue from Mae Hong Son to Khun Yuam on another sensational windy road. In Khun Yuam we visit the local War Museum. The Imperial Japanese Army troops were stationed here during the construction of a highway to Burma and India. We continue on a rural road to Mae Chaem for a local lunch. If time and weather permit, we will ride up to Doi Inthanon, which at 2,565 m is the highest mountain in Thailand. Our last stop will be at the Vachiratharn Waterfall - an impressive and powerful 80 m high waterfall. We reach Chiang Mai in the afternoon, in time to get ready for our farewell Chiang Mai dinner. We end the day together with our new friends, sharing good riding memories and looking at some of the pictures from our adventures of the last days. We will overnight in Chiang Mai.

Day Nine: Departure Day - Chiang Mai

After breakfast at the hotel we have a transfer to get you to the airport in comfort for your onward travels. **Day Ten: Bangkok**

After an easy morning in Chiang Mai, we transfer to the airport for the flight to Bangkok. Transfer to the hotel and check in early in the afternoon because you now have time for some leisure! In the evening, we enjoy a farewell dinner at the terrace of the hotel by the river. Once again we overnight in Bangkok.

Ride Details

Ride Grade: 1

The roads are mostly easy to ride but there are some steep and technically demanding stretches. You must be able to handle a motorcycle and do not expect to learn how to ride while on this tour.

100% of this ride is on paved road, however these road surfaces can be in bad condition with large potholes and tall shoulders and poor signage. Local drivers can be a little less careful to what we may be accustomed to; therefore careful attentive riding is required.

Distances

The biggest riding day is 310 km / 192 mi, with the shortest being 160 km / 100 mi. Most riding days we average around 200 – 300 km / 124 – 186 mi with 7 riding days included in the tour. The total distance is approximately 1780 km / 1100 mi

Bikes

Our fleet of Bikes consists of the BMW F750 GS / F850 GS and the R1250 GS. All bikes come equipped with a top-box and are highly maintained, ensuring peace of mind and reliable riding.

Experience required

This ride is suitable for two up riding, there is no off road riding required on this tour.

You must be able to handle a motorcycle of the size and height and weight that you have requested and do not expect to learn how to ride while on this tour.

All riders **must** have a valid motorcycle license.

Weather

October is the end of the rainy season and a good time to visit Chiang Mai, weather-wise. During the day the temperatures max out at a pleasant 30°C (86°F) but bring a jacket because the temperature drops rapidly after sunset, sometimes to as low as 10°C (50°F). If rain is forecast, it will generally be late in the afternoon so bring wet weather gear just in case.



Highlights

- Incredible riding
 - Chiang Mai
 - Mysterious Nan
 - The Golden Triangle
 - Choui Fong Tea House
- Doi Mae Salomg stunning mountain riding
- The Road Of 1,864 Curves to Mai Hong Son
- Karan Long Neck Hill Tribe
- Dai Inthanon, The Highest Mountain in Thailand
 - Superb Thai cuisine
 - Great accommodation
 - Thai hospitality



Meals

Thai food is a very important part of this tour.

On every day of the tour we include breakfast.

On mentioned ride days we provide lunch, often at a local eatery specialising in the flavours and style of food served in the region that we are travelling

We include mentioned dinners in wonderful and selected restaurants to showcase the cuisine of the region.

Breakfasts: **9**

Lunches: **7**

Dinners: **8**

Accommodation

9 nights of accommodation: For this very special tour we have selected wonderful hotels for each region that we visit. A generally high standard of amenities and luxury are expected, however we will enjoy the basic but lovely Eco resort in the middle of rice paddies on one evening as well.

All accommodation is on a twin share basis. If you are traveling alone we will pair you up with another solo traveller.

However, if you prefer single accommodation a single supplement is available: US\$800.00

Accommodation: **9 nights**

Tour Inclusions:

- Airport Transfers
- Motorcycle rental as per your selection with a top box
 - Fuel
- First class motorcycle insurance with max USD 1,500 deductible in case of damage
 - Support vehicle with passenger carrying ability
 - Services of ride leader and support vehicle driver
 - Pre-departure material and route maps
 - Emergency assistance if required
 - Local Guide / Driver (English speaking)
 - Compass Expeditions T shirt
 - Entrances to all national parks mentioned in the itinerary

Your Responsibilities

Riding equipment

You will need to bring the following riding gear:

Riding jacket and pants: Every weather event should be expected from cold mornings to higher temperatures as the days warm up, therefore a multi layer jacket and pants are essential. The jacket and pant ideally need to have good ventilation as well as internal removable liners and protection / armour, as well as have a waterproof pocket for your documents and small camera. Preferably your jacket and pants should be 100% waterproof or carry a set of waterproofs in your top-box.

Helmet: Your helmet should be full faced and of a good quality. Ensure you have a spare visor or replace before departing if scratched. Motocross style helmets are unsuitable for long distance rides, on what may be sometimes dusty surfaces, as you will experience considerable dust ingress. Internal drop down tinted visors are great, but not so if you need prescription sunglasses.

Boots: Motorcycle boots would be best. When choosing a boot, it is essential to choose a boot that offers the most rigid ankle protection possible; ankle injuries are the most common injuries we experience. Pack a set of walking boots in your top-box for those off bike excursions.

Gloves: We recommend the use of both summer and winter (ideally waterproof) gloves, as the weather is extremely changeable.

Additional items: Silk neck warmer, great for keeping the wind out. Earplugs are great for keeping the noise out.

Travel insurance

It is compulsory to have travel insurance to tour with us. It just makes sense! Your insurance must cover you for any incident you may have whilst riding a motorcycle 700 cc and over. We have negotiated a 10% discount with various insurance providers around the world, who WILL offer coverage for you, for the activity of riding a motorcycle 700cc and over in foreign lands. For recommended travel insurance policies, return to the "tour page" on our website and click on the "insurance" tab.

Passport & Visas

Your passport will need to be valid for at least six months **AFTER** completion of your ride. Your passport should have at least one full page available, for each country you will be visiting. Compass Expeditions has teamed up with the world leaders in visa procurement, CIBT, who have created a special Compass Expeditions visa application page. They have offices in Australia, USA, Canada, UK, Mexico, Brazil, Singapore and numerous European countries. Tour participants can obtain their own visas if preferred, however, for a small charge, CIBT can obtain your visa and negotiate any issues that might arise. Links to CIBT / Compass page for visa applications, for other nationalities please contact us directly:

Australia: <https://visalink.com.au/compassexp>
Canada: <http://www.cibtvisas.ca/compass>
USA: <http://www.cibtvisas.com/compassexp>
France: <http://www.cibtvisas.fr/compassexp>
UK: <http://cibtvisas.co.uk/compassexp>

Most nationalities do not require a visa for Thailand. It is the participant's responsibility to ensure they have any visas that may be required.

Vaccinations

We highly recommend that you speak with your doctor, and/or check out the World Health Organization website at www.who.int/country and have a look at their excellent International Travel and Health book, available online. In Australia, visit the Australian Medical Centre website at www.traveldoctor.com.au or phone 1300 65 88 44. For our U.S clients, visit www.cdc.gov/travel/ and for our U.K clients, go to www.doh.gov.uk/traveladvice/, for travel health recommendations in general, go to www.mdtravelhealth.com, now part of red travel.



You've made a booking, what happens next?

Once a booking has been made, you will receive an automated booking confirmation. Soon after, you will receive a "welcome" email, and then receive our comprehensive pre departure booklet in the post. This booklet will prepare you for your adventure and has more details on what to bring and what to expect. We email a "tour dossier" 90 days before departure; this dossier is full of information, including historical and country information. The more you read, the more you will get out of your ride.



Thanks for spending your time reading this information kit. We hope it has inspired you to challenge yourself, if not riding with us then just riding and enjoying this remarkable world that we live in.

If you have further questions, please contact us.

Compass Expeditions

Email: info@compassexpeditions.com

Phone: + 61 3 9747 2379 (international)
1300 887 327 (within Australia)

Website: www.compassexpeditions.com

