



## INSTITUTE FOR FIELD RESEARCH EXPEDITIONS VOLUNTEER ABROAD PROGRAM

### SUMMER VOLUNTEER AND ADVENTURE PROGRAM THAILAND (4 WEEKS)

**Location:** Bangkok , Chiang Mai  
**Start/End point:** Bangkok  
**Food:** Local food (3 times a day)  
**Room:** Host family or hostel  
**Date:** 4 weeks (June 29 - July 26, 2009)

With its irresistible breathtaking natural beauty, smiling people with renowned hospitality, and ruins of fabulous kingdoms, Thailand remains one of the most popular south Asian destinations for volunteers and tourists. Thailand is also blessed with beaches, mountains, cultural and historical sites, and beautiful landscaping. From the green rice field of North Thailand and the verdant limestone islands of the Andaman Sea, to the vibrating culture, volunteering in the Thailand program offers something amazing for everyone.

#### ORIENTATION IN BANGKOK (4 DAYS)

You will begin your Thailand adventure with our beneficial orientation period - including lectures on Thai culture and customs, and learning Thai language, all followed by afternoon trips. Learn about the traditional Thai language, customs, religions, and the role of the royal family in modern-day Thailand. Also, as part of this exciting orientation program, stroll through the major tourist attractions of Bangkok.

**June 28:** Arrive at Bangkok International Airport. You will be greeted and retrieved by IFRE country coordinator and taken to a hostel or hotel in Wang Noi/Ayuthaya (approx. 1.5-hour drive).

**June 29:** Participate in a general orientation about Thailand, Thai language, culture, customs and others. Later, tour the former capital of Ayuthaya, a UNESCO World Heritage site. Ayuthaya was notable for its temples which are scattered throughout this once great city. By "tuk tuk" or mini-van, travel the ancient remains of revered Buddhist temples and ride the gorgeous large elephants (rides cost 400 Bt/hr) in and around the area.

**June 30-July 1: Floating Market trip:** Be up and ready to go by 06:00 am to travel to the unique Floating Market to enjoy a very unique experience that is like nowhere else in the world. The market opens early (at about 5:00am) and remains open only until 11:00am. Therefore, you have to wake up early to reach the market to observe the exciting activities during the market's peak time.

**July 2: Bangkok trip** - Thai language with lessons continue during the morning. After class, go and check-out of your respective accommodations. That evening, enjoy an overnight stay at a regional guesthouse on the Khao San Road – a popular tourist destination filled with prismatic markets – and prepare for the next day's trip to Kanchanaburi. Before setting out for Kanchanaburi, travel some of the region's marvelous attractions, such as: the Emerald Buddha housed within the Grand Palace (the most-visited destination in Thailand: sometimes 10,000 visitors a day!), Wat Pho – a city famed for traditional healing and massage as well as the famed Reclining Buddha (over 48 meters in length).

#### TRIP TO KANCHANABURI (3 DAYS)

In phase two, you will journey to Kanchanaburi (128 km. west of Bangkok) and visit the magnificent waterfalls of Erawan. You will be able to absorb the culture of Thailand in various museums, and see the notorious Death Railway Bridge over the River Kwai. There will also be a homestay with a host family during the trip.

**July 3-4:** Early in the morning, depart for Kanchanaburi. En route, enjoy the waterfalls of Erawan (bring your

swimsuit!), the Bridge over the River Kwai, elephant camps, and more! Also, enjoy the intriguing culture of the Thai people – absorbing Thailand's history as told through various memorials and war museums (Jeath War Museum). During this time, participants are encouraged to wear shorts and be prepared to walk a great deal. NOTE: the costs associated with some of these days' attractions are NOT covered by the program fee (i.e. elephant rides, tiger temples, etc).

**July 5:** Return to Bangkok – en route: stay at the same guest house at Khao San Road for another night.

### **JULY 6-20: VILLAGE STAY AND SERVICE PROJECTS**

In phase three, you will venture out to a beautiful rural Thai village at Samutsongkram Rajaburi or Nakhon Nayok to explore the native Thai way of life. Spend time with a caring host family and working in a local school as an English-teacher or supporting local children in primary schools and child development centers. Become an integral part of village life by working in the fields with local farmers and gardeners, preparing and distributing food for Buddhist monks. Entertain yourself by boat rowing, visiting the local floating market, and hiking and biking around the local villages.

**July 6:** Check-out of hotel by 11:00am and depart for the beautiful rural Thai village of Bang Sai, Wang Noi, Nakhon Nayok or nearby areas to experience the traditional Thai way of life.

**July 7-20:** For the next 14 days, volunteers will go to different schools located at Bang Sai, Wang Noi, Nakhon Nayok or similar nearby areas. Volunteers will be sub-divided into small groups of 1-3 volunteers and placed in each school depending upon the number of school children. Spend time living with a caring host family and teach children (age 6–12 yrs) in primary schools as English teachers or play with the local children (age 3-6 yrs) in child development centers. During this period, you will become an integral part of village life. You may be required to work in the fields with local farmers and gardeners, preparing and distributing food for Buddhist monks, visiting the local floating market for food, catching fish and collecting wild vegetables, as well as hiking and biking around the local villages. The weekends (day 13-14) are free to be used at your own discretion (NOTE: during the weekend, if you choose to travel at your own expense, please inform your respective coordinator).

**July 21:** Pack your bags and be ready at 11 am to head to the sea beach.

### **Explore and Relax in Sea Beach Thailand (5 days):**

Explore world famous beach with small sparkling white sand dunes, crisp clean water and a few evergreen trees. Also explore nearby villages, vibrant Bazzars, peace and tranquility

**July 22:** Leave for Pattaya, one of the most popular tourist destinations of Thailand, where there are several white sand sea beaches and a lot to explore. Seafood is the main attraction. During this sea beach program, we provide food allowance based on the reasonable local rate so that you can choose a range of delicious food items according to your choice.

**July 23:** Relax in Jomtien Beach: Jomtien Beach is located about 2 kilometers from south Pattaya. In this beautiful beach, you can rest, relax and have fun with all kinds of water sports (Note that the costs are not covered for these sports).

**July 24:** At 8:00am, depart for Visit Koh Lan (Lan Island) – a tourist-frequented site in the Pattaya region – to observe turtle breeding grounds, nests, and other wondrous attraction within the island. In the evening, return to your respective accommodations.

**July 25:** Explore Model cities and the local temples.

**July 26:** Check-out at of your respective accommodation around 11:00 am and depart for Bangkok. Take a van/bus to Bangkok (Ekamai), taking a taxi (upon arrival in Bangkok) to your hotel or airport – depending on whether you are departing Thailand or remaining.

**Program fee covers:**

- Accommodations in hostel, hotel or host family
- Local food three times a day
- Local transportation (usually local buses or minivan)
- Airport receive and transfer
- Insurance (for medical care, participants are encouraged to pay whatever expenses they incur and complete a claim for reimbursement upon returning home)

**Program fee does not cover:**

- Any room/food before and after program.
- Water, juice, and any drinks other than the items included with normal meals during the project
- Any tips to guides and gifts to host family or projects
- Accommodations and meals for the days other than those listed on the itinerary
- Any additional activities i.e. elephant/horse ride, photographs with elephants/tigers, water sports, etc.
- Entry fees to temples, zoos, historical places
- Any personal expenses

*Program itineraries are samples and may change to meet the needs of volunteers and changes in field conditions. This itinerary will be finalized upon arrival in Bangkok.*