

14-DAY PROGRAM

THAILAND: ELEPHANT & EDUCATION INITIATIVE

Experience Thai culture as you split your time between supporting the well-being of elephants at a sanctuary and teaching English to children in local schools.

OVERVIEW

Journey to enchanting Chiang Mai in northern Thailand, where you'll engage with Thai youth as well as Asian elephants. Make unforgettable connections with local students through community service at a rural primary school, and take part in a cultural exchange at a local high school. Then, live alongside elephants at a sanctuary, while you learn about how to care for these animals that are an integral part of Thai culture, conservation, and tourism. Cook your own fabulous cuisine, shop at bustling markets and explore the rich history and culture of Thai temples.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Responsible care for elephants living at a sanctuary for rescued elephants
- Learn about cultural, social, and environmental issues related to elephant tourism
- Meet enthusiastic Thai youth and make a difference in their lives
- Teach English in a primary classroom
- Visit colorful night markets filled with local cuisine and handicrafts





ITINERARY

The actual schedule of activities may vary. The information provided here reflects the typical experiences planned; however, activities and excursions are subject to change due to factors such as weather conditions, community partner availability, and other unforeseen circumstances. Adjustments may also be made to best meet the needs and interests of the student group.

DAY 1	• Meet TEPA staff at the airport, transfer to Home Base for orientation, settle into rooms, and enjoy your first Thai dinner.
DAY 2	• Explore Chiang Mai with a city tour, museum visit, and walking market, followed by a hands-on Thai cooking class. • Evening reflection on leadership and travel experiences with the group.
DAY 3	• Learn about wild and captive elephant issues, help care for elephants, and observe feeding at an ethical sanctuary. • Explore the cultural significance of elephants and ethical tourism practices.
DAYS 4-6	• Plant and harvest food, assist caretakers, and feed elephants; hear from a guest speaker about expat life. • Visit local markets to shop for personal items and sanctuary supplies.

DAY 7	• Visit Thai temples and speak with an elder monk to explore cultural philosophies. • Evening at Night Bazaar for textiles, souvenirs, and street food.
DAY 8	• Learn Muay Thai basics with a local instructor and experience Thai culture through markets, parks, and Doi Suthep temple.
DAY 9	• Learn about social issues in Chiang Mai, plan lessons, and prepare for the service project teaching rural students.
DAYS 10-13	• Teach English at a local primary school, engage students with lessons and games. • Evening reflections on the differences between Thai schools and previous experiences. • Visit a final temple and local market, then gather for a farewell dinner celebrating your Thailand experience.
DAY 14	• Travel to Chiang Mai airport, check in with staff assistance, and depart for home.







TEPA HOME BASE

Stay in two small resorts on the outskirts of Chiang Mai that are clean and safe. Students sleep in gender-segregated rooms with roommates, and have access to a pool and bathrooms with hot-water showers.

FOOD

Thai cooking is known for its strong, aromatic components and a spicy edge. Dishes prepared at Home Base will be healthy and balanced, commonly including rice and noodles.

CLIMATE

Thailand is warm and humid year-round, with seasonal variations in rainfall. Even during the wetter months, showers are often brief and refreshing, offering a break from the heat. Travelers can generally expect hot, sunny days with occasional rain, making it easy to enjoy outdoor activities throughout the year.

ABOUT TERRA EDUCATION PROGRAMS ABROAD

Terra Education Programs Abroad (TEPA) partners with schools and private groups to offer pre-designed and fully custom international experiences that align with academic goals while fostering global citizenship. Building on over 20 years of youth development expertise from its parent organization, Terra Education, TEPA delivers transformative experiences for young leaders worldwide.

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