

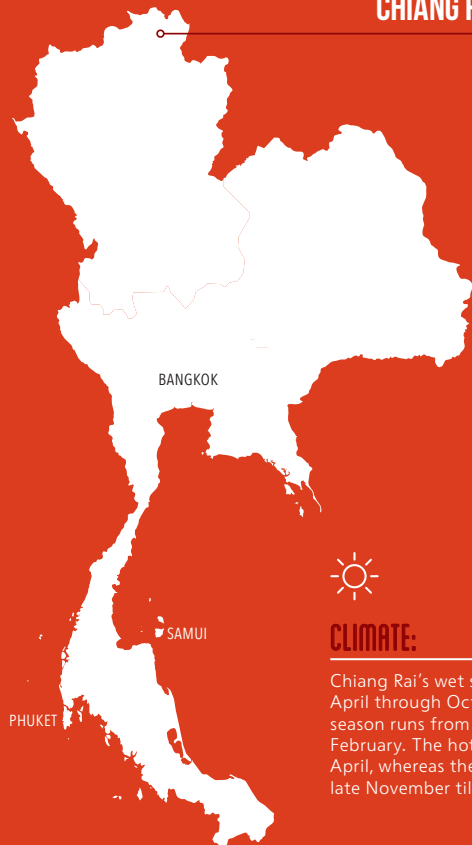
CHIANG RAI

To the North of Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai is a land of outstanding natural beauty, remote hill tribes, exotic wildlife, and unique Buddhist temples. As the area is largely mountainous, Chiang Rai is perfect for jungle trekking and mountain biking.

Once the hub of opium production and trade, the Golden Triangle where the borders of Thailand, Laos, and Myanmar meet in the middle of the Mekong River, is now a must to complete the trip to Chiang Rai.

Thanks to the works of the Royal Projects, the hill tribe villagers can now live sustainably by growing highland crops such as tea, coffee, macadamia, peach, flowers, etc.

CHIANG RAI



CLIMATE:

Chiang Rai's wet season runs from late April through October, whereas the dry season runs from November through February. The hottest month is usually April, whereas the cool period runs from late November till end of February.

ATTRACTIONS

Wat Rong Khun (White Temple)

Also known as The White Temple, this contemporary, unconventional and privately owned Wat Rong Khun is famed for its unique exterior and interior design which reflects the artist's grand visions of heaven, hell and Nirvana.

The exterior of the temple, including the gate, the bridge over the small lake and the main assembly hall, is all white. Inside the main assembly hall, the unusual murals depict demon faces, international idols such as Neo from The Matrix, Harry Potter, Superman as well as images of nuclear warfare, terrorist attacks, etc.

This masterpiece of the artist and the owner Chaloechai Kositpipat is expected to be an on-going project. When it is completed (which might take 50 years), the temple will have nine buildings.

Singha Park

Singha Park is a family-friendly attraction, suitable for visitors of all ages. There's an electric tram which carries visitors to various parts of the park e.g. fruit orchards, tea plantations, zoo. Here visitors can pick their own fruit and vegetables or simply enjoy the walking trails through the meadows. For something more adventurous, zip lining and wall climbing are both available.



Mae Fa Luang Art and Cultural Park

Mae Fah Luang Art and Cultural Park is the region's largest collection of art items from the Lanna culture or Tai culture. Through purchasing and marketing handicrafts, the Thai Hill Crafts Foundation helped preserve the traditional skills and support the livelihoods of ethnic minorities. The park also provides a relaxing and beautiful atmosphere, which is created by the Northern countryside.



Doi Mae Salong

From Chiang Rai town, visitors can travel through the beautiful mountainous scenic route to Doi Mae Salong, visit the idyllic Santikhiri Village to experience the local way of life of the hill tribe villagers. After that, visit tea and coffee plantations and the local co-op store to shop home-made products, and other locally grown produce.

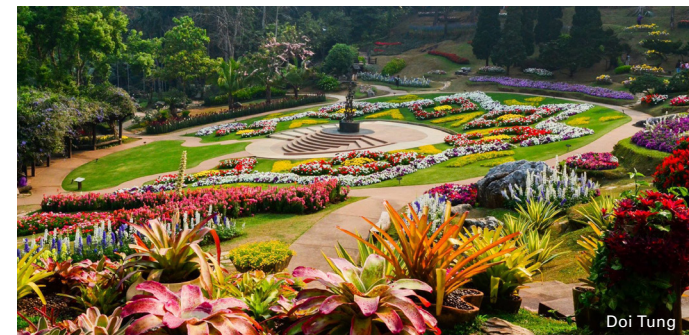
The area is usually most picturesque in December and January when the cherry blossom trees are in full bloom. This is also the peak tourist season for the area due to the cool temperature and the beautiful morning fog covering the mountains.

Wat Phra Singh

Not far from the Chiang Rai town hall is Wat Phra Sing, a historic temple once home to the sacred Lanna-styled Buddhist statue Phra Buddha Sihing, which is now in Chiang Mai. Nevertheless, Wat Phra Sing remains a temple worth visiting for its Lanna-style ordination hall featuring finest creations of Lanna craftsmen.

Doi Tung

Just over an hour drive from Chiang Rai town, visitors can visit several attractions in Doi Tung i.e. **Doi Tung Royal Villa** - a swiss styled chalet built for the late Princess Mother, **Mae Fah Luang Botanical Garden** - a beautiful landscape showcasing colourful flowers, **Wat Phra That Doi Tung** - a religious site atop the mountain with panoramic view of the surrounding countryside, and hill tribe villages.



Doi Tung

ATTRACTIONS IN CHIANG RAI

The Golden Triangle

A trip to Chiang Rai would not be complete without a visit to this Mekong Riverside notorious Golden Triangle. This is where the borders of Thailand, Laos and Myanmar meet. Here visitors can visit three countries in one hour cruise.



Doi Mae Salong

The Hall of Opium

The Golden Triangle used to be infamous as one of the largest producers/ trade centres of opium. Various Thai organisations led by the Royal Project and Doi Tung Development Project, have spent decades battling this trade. As part of this campaign, the Hall of Opium was built to educate people about the dangers of the drug through an entertaining exhibition which traces opium's history from its first use 5,000 years ago to current issues of drug abuse and addiction. Many publications regards this is one of the best museums in Thailand.



Mae Sai

This border town is the northernmost point of Thailand, facing Myanmar across the Mae Sai River. The town presents great shopping opportunities for Thai, Burmese and Chinese goods.

Baan Dam

Another of Chiang Rai's more extraordinary sites, in a town that's blessed with several rather eccentric attractions, is the highly unusual Baan Dam. Commonly known as the Black House it's a park containing a diverse and sprawling series of buildings, displays, sculptures and installations, lying in Ban Du district a short hop north of town. The park and highly eclectic contents are the lifetime's work of local and nationally renowned artist Thawan Duchanee. Ban Du district, north of Chiang Rai. Open daily 09:00-12:00 & 13:00-17:00
<http://www.thawan-duchanee.com>
T: (089) 767 4444, (053) 705 834

Chiang Khong

Located 114km northeast of Chiang Rai town, Chiang Khong is a pleasant traditional settlement faces Laos across the Mekong River. From here (Bak Pier) visitors can take a short long-tailed boat ride to Laos.

FESTIVALS

Songkran and Chiang Saen Boat Races

During 13-15 April, Songkran, the traditional Thai New Year, is celebrated nationwide. As well as the usual celebrations, in Chiang Saen there are annual boat races between teams from Thailand, Laos, China and Myanmar held on the Mekong River.

Adventurous Activities

Situated among some of Thailand's biggest and highest mountain ranges, Chiang Rai offers visitors a lot of adventurous activities such as trekking and mountain biking.

Kok River Kayaking

For softer adventurous activities, visitors can try kayaking in Kok River.



CHIANG RAI

