

## Suggested attractions & activities for Kanchanaburi Featuring WWII History, Local Way of Life & the Wild

Located approximately 140kms or about 2.5hr drive west of Bangkok, Kanchanaburi boasts some of Thailand's most beautiful waterfalls in the jungles and some of the world-renowned WWII sites: Bridge over the River Kwai, the Death Railway and Hellfire Pass. In addition to that visitors can also immerse themselves in a slow and peaceful life of the Mon villagers at Sangkhla Buri village near border to Myanmar. Accommodations on offer here range from raft house on the river in the jungle, homestay in a local village and camping in the national park.



For visitors who do not have much time, a quick stop at **Don Rak or Kanchanaburi War Cemetery** i.e. an important WWII memorial site where the prisoners of war who had died while building the railway were buried and **Thailand - Myanmar Railway Centre** next to it will give you an overview of how cruel the situation was during the war. Another must see attraction is the **River Kwai Bridge**. If you have some time, take a **Death Railway** train from River Kwai Bridge. Seats on the left offer better view but must be reserved when purchase the tickets. This steel bridge is one of most important historical landmarks and WWII memorials in Thailand as it was part of the “Death Railway” lines. The train slowly goes across the river, through some lush jungles then on the edge of the cliff along the river. Get off at **Tham Krasae Cave** where it marks the start of the long viaduct by the cliff built by the Prisoners of War during WWII as part of the Death Railway. There's a small temple inside the cave next to where the train stops.

**Hellfire Pass Memorial Museum** is another must see attraction if you are interested in WWII history. This is the deepest cutting on the unfinished Death Railway line, built by Australian, British, Dutch and other allied POWs during the WWII. These men were forced by the Japanese to work in a cruel condition in order to complete the 110m, 17m deep cutting. ANZAC Day Dawn Service is held here every year.

For visitors who love nature, Kanchanaburi is home to some of Thailand's best **national parks** e.g. Tham Than Lod National Park, Erawan National Park, Srinagarindra Dam National Park, Chaloem Rattanakosin National Park, Sai Yok National Park, Thong Pha Phum National Park, Khao Laem National Park and Thung Yai Naraesuan and Huay Kha Khaeng Wildlife Sanctuary. Check out <http://nps.dnp.go.th/> for more information.



Kanchanaburi is also home to **Elephants World** i.e. a non-profit organisation, founded in 2008 and is a sanctuary for sick, old, disabled, abused and rescued elephants. A visit to Elephant World will give you a memorable experience watching elephants playing in the mud, feeding old elephants, bathing elephants. Here, the elephants can enjoy themselves in their own natural environment here until their last breath.

Visitors who want to explore further should visit **Sangkhla Buri** which is a small village near the border to Myanmar. Once there, you should take a long - tailed boat to see the submerged temple and old city i.e. **Wat Sam Prasop (the Underwater Temple), Mueang Badan** and watch the beautiful sunset. The site was flooded when the dam was built. A must do activity while in Sangkhla Buri is to participate in the morning merit making at **Mon Bridge** i.e. Thailand's longest wooden bridge, built by the devoted Mon villagers. The best time to look around is from 6AM – 7AM when the villagers make merit by giving food to monks. After that, you can walk across the bridge to explore **Mon Village**.

