



CHIANG MAI

Located some 700 km. from Bangkok, Chiang Mai is the principal city of northern Thailand and capital of the province of the same name. Popularly known as “The Rose of the North” and with an enchanting location on the banks of the Ping River, the city and its surroundings are blessed with stunning natural beauty and a uniquely indigenous cultural identity. Chiang Mai also continues its renowned tradition as a handicraft centre, producing items in silk, wood, silver, ceramics and more, which make the city the country's top shopping destination for arts and crafts. Beyond the city, Chiang Mai province spreads over an area of 20,000 sq. km. offering some of the most picturesque scenery in the whole Kingdom. The fertile Ping River Valley, a patchwork of paddy fields, is surrounded by rolling hills and the province as a whole is one of forested mountains (including Thailand's highest peak, Doi Inthanon), jungles and rivers. Here is the ideal terrain for adventure travel by trekking on elephant back, river rafting or four-wheel drive safaris in a natural wonderland.

MUST SEE

Temples: Chiang Mai's temples are perhaps the most interesting of its many attractions. Unlike Bangkok, where few temples are more than 200 years old, some temples in Chiang Mai are as old as the city, which celebrated its 700th anniversary in 1996. Wat Chiang Man is Chiang Mai's oldest temple. Wat Chedi Luang is the largest *Chedi* in Chiang Mai measuring 98 m. tall and 54 m. wide. Wat Phra That Doi Suthep is Chiang Mai's most famous and most visible landmark.

Chiang Mai Aquarium: This brand new Chiang Mai Aquarium is the longest aquarium in Asia. It is an incredible collection of marine life from oceans halfway around the planet and from rivers on several continents. Please visit www.chiangmaiaquarium.com for detailed information or contact them at info@chiangmaiaquarium.com.

Chiang Mai Night Safari: Chiang Mai Night Safari has 3 main zones which are Predator Prowl, Savanna Safari and Jaguar Trail. In these 3 zones you can see wild animals such as Cinereous Vulture, White Tiger, Canadian Wolf, White Rhinoceroses,

Spotted Hyenas, White Tigers, Jaguars, Brazilian Tapirs and others. It is 12 km. away from downtown Chiang Mai. By car, it takes only 15-20 minutes from Chiang Mai International Airport, the train station or the bus terminal to Chiang Mai Night Safari. www.chiangmainightsafari.com

Chiang Mai National Museum: Standing next to Wat Chet Yot and in modern Lanna style, the museum houses an interesting collection of northern arts and crafts. Open Wednesday to Sunday from 9.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. except on Songkran and New Year. www.thailandmuseum.com

Royal Flora Ratchaphruek Garden: Ratchaphruek Garden is situated 10 km. southwest of Chiang Mai, in Mae Hia sub-district. The garden is open for public but groups must be booked in advance. There is no entry fee. Doors open every day except Monday, from 09:30 - 18:00.

Doi Inthanon National Park: The 1,005 sq. km. park encompasses Thailand's highest peak which rises to 2,565 metres above sea level. Rich in flora and fauna, especially bird life, and with waterfalls, nature trails and Hmong and Karen hill tribe villages, the park as a whole is one of Chiang Mai's top attractions and well worth visiting.

Ban Thawai Village: It is Chiang Mai's biggest shopping center for handicraft products. For several generations, Thawai villagers have produced the finest pieces of woodcarving from simple bookmarks to exquisitely carved doors.

Shopping Areas: Among Chiang Mai's best buys are silk, cotton, silverware, woodcarvings, ceramics and other kinds of handicrafts. The shops are mostly scattered on Mae-on road (San Kamphaeng), Wua Lai road, Nantharam road and Chang Khlan road. The goods are also available at the famous Night Bazaar located in the heart of the city. On Saturday evenings, from 4 p.m to 10 p.m., Wua Lai road is closed to traffic making it a Saturday market. Likewise, Tha Phae Walking Street runs on Sundays at Tha Phae Gate and along Ratchadamnoen Road from 4 p.m to 10 p.m.



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GETTING THERE

BY AIR

Domestic airlines including Thai Airways, Bangkok Airways, Air Asia and Nok Air operate several flights daily between Bangkok and Chiang Mai.

BY RAIL

Trains depart from Bangkok Railway Station to Chiang Mai daily. The trip takes about 11-12 hours for express trains. Website: www.railway.co.th.

BY BUS

Both air-conditioned and non air-conditioned buses to lampang leave Bangkok Bus Terminal on Kamphaeng Phet II Road daily. Website: www.transport.co.th.

BY CAR

From Bangkok, take Highway 32 Nakhon Sawan and then Highway 1 to Lampang via Kamphaeng Phet and Tak, a total distance of 696 km.

For more information, please log on to :

<http://www.tourismthailand.org/destination-guide/chiangmai-50-1-1.html>

FOR ACCOMMODATION information, please log on to : <http://www.tourismthailand.org/accommodation/chiangmai-50-1.html>

Important Phone Nos : Tourist Service Centre : 1672
Tourist Police : 1155

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