

Topdeck

DELVE DEEP: THAILAND



TRIP CODE:
TSTBP3



TOPDECKER, meet Asia (TD)

TRIP VIBE = iconic sights and in-depth adventures with a local Trip Leader. Looking for a trip that's not same same, but different? You've found it. This is your insider guide to the Land of Smiles. Expect: buzzy Bangkok and paradisaal Phuket. Out-of-this-world beaches, fairytale lakes and tangled rainforests. Finger-lickingly good street food. And more tradition, temples and tropical vibes than you can shake a satay skewer at. Let's GO!

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



Delve Deep



Nights



Download app



Meals

Thanks for choosing to holiday with Topdeck

Ready for the time of your LIFE?

The countdown's on...

ABOUT YOUR TRIP NOTES

These Trip Notes contain everything you need to know before your trip departs – from where to meet your Topdeck fam to what we suggest you bring.

Read them on the train, in the supermarket queue or on the loo – we don't mind, just look through them carefully so you know what to expect on your trip. We recommend you download this document so it's with you when you travel (and give a copy to your MVPs so they know what you're up to).

IMPORTANT: please refresh this doc as close to your departure as possible. This means you'll have the most up-to-date info available.

INCLUDED EXPERIENCES

- Overnight train to Surat Thani
- Overnight experience in an ecolodge
- Kayaking on Cheow Lan Lake
- Visit Nam Talu Cave
- Overnight experience in a floating raft house
- Phuket street food tour
- Hike Phuket's secret viewpoints

YOUR TRIP WILL START

PICK UP:

Bangkok
Thailand

YOUR TRIP WILL FINISH

DROP OFF:

Phuket
Thailand

TRIP CURRENCIES

- Thailand - THB

YOUR ITINERARY

DAY 1 | BANGKOK (THAILAND)

Ready to discover the unknown? Embrace the new and exotic? Delve deep into a richer-than-rich culture? You're in EXACTLY the right place. First: say sawasdee (sah-wah-dee) to your fellow explorers. Then, we'll kick things off with our first group dinner. Early disclosure: chawp pet noi (chop-pet-noy) is a phrase some of you will need to remember – meaning you like things 'a little bit spicy'. Best used when ordering food.



MEALS:

- Dinner

DAY 2 | BANGKOK – SURAT THANI

Take a deep breath. It's time to try and pronounce Bangkok's real name: Krung Thep Mahanakhon Amon Rattanakosin Mahinthara Ayuthaya Mahadilok Phop Noppharat Ratchathani Burirom Udomratchaniwet Mahasathan Amon Piman Awatan Sathit Sakkathattiya Witsanukam Prasit. Piece of cake. Today, Krung Thep is yours for exploring. Practise your foot jabs and switch kicks in a Muay Thai boxing class. Explore the city on two wheels with an optional bike tour. Hop on the bus and see the sights from the top deck. Or just get lost in the city's maze of luxe temples and serene golden Buddhas. Later: wave goodbye to Bangkok – we're travelling like a local this evening and jumping aboard the sleeper train. Shotgun top bunk!



MEALS:

- Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Overnight train to Surat Thani



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Muay Thai boxing class in Bangkok: from 68 USD
- Half-day bike tour of Bangkok: from 53 USD
- Full-day canal boat and bike tour of Bangkok: from 112 USD
- Hop-on/hop-off bus tour of Bangkok: from 129 USD

DAY 3 | SURAT THANI – KHAO SOK NATIONAL PARK

Say lah gorn to the locals and hop off the train: this morning we're heading to Khao Sok National Park, where jungle really IS massive. After we've checked into our rustic ecolodge and soaked up some serious tropical vibes, the afternoon's yours to delve deeper. Want recs? We got you. Level up those chef skills with a local Thai cooking class (then eat it after). Get your hike on around the stunner of a park to spot the resident wildlife – it's like being dropped straight into The Jungle Book. Flex those muscles and canoe your way along the river. Or jump on a rubber tube and bob down the tranquil waters. Tonight: listen out for the buzzing of the cicadas and the distant hoo-hoos of the gibbons. This is what you came for.



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Overnight experience in an ecolodge



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Hike through Khao Sok National Park with local guide: from 56 USD
- Thai cooking class (including a meal): from 53 USD
- River canoeing half-day tour: from 47 USD
- River tubing half-day tour: from 37 USD

DAY 4 | KHAO SOK NATIONAL PARK

Tums filled with another tropical fruit-laden breakfast, today we've got the super-stunning Cheow Lan Lake in our sights. Not to boast, but this lake is big (like, REALLY big), with magical limestone cliffs and beautiful islands galore. Time to activate explorer mode and get out there! Dive into the crystal-clear water and make BFFs (or not) with the local fish. Jump in a kayak and weave around the ultra-dramatic rock formations. And channel your inner Indiana Jones to discover Nam Talu Cave and the glittering hidden waterfalls. Lunch and dinner are on us today, so expect more drool-worthy, rainbow-coloured dishes of dreams. And tonight? We're hunkering down in a traditional raft house bobbing along the twinkling lake. FYI this is a Wi-Fi-free zone – it's time to switch off and immerse yourself completely.



MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Lunch
- Dinner



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Kayaking on Cheow Lan Lake
- Visit Nam Talu Cave
- Overnight experience in a floating raft house

DAY 5 | KHAO SOK NATIONAL PARK – KO PHA NGAN

All aboard! This morning we're hopping on a local long-tail boat to the mainland before making a beeline for the INCREDIBLE island of Koh Phangan. Think: lush rainforest, gleaming white beaches (sunbathers essential) and turquoise water so dreamy even the Little Mermaid would want to stay there. AND you've got the afternoon to explore it all. Hell. Yes. Need some recommendations? Your in-the-know Trip Leader's got them by the bucketload. This evening: track down a piping-hot dish of pad thai, grab a satay skewer and end the day on a high. Cocktails at sunset, anyone?



MEALS:

- Breakfast

DAY 6 | KO PHA NGAN

You wanted time to delve deeper, so you've got it. Today is totally up to you – but we've got the inside scoop, obv's. Keen to leave Full Moon vibes to the moon itself and discover some hidden gems instead? Stick around the north coast, where Hat Khuat and Hat Thian beaches are all about the chill scene. Go chasing waterfalls (and beaches and bars). Or crack into a coconut and relax poolside back at the hotel. Tonight, round up your trip mates and prepare for more satay, spicy soup and shrimp salad. Sparkling convo = guaranteed.



MEALS:

- Breakfast

DAY 7 | KO PHA NGAN – PHUKET

Truth bomb: today is a bit of a drive day. We'll be making tracks for Phuket via land and sea, so stock up on local snacks, soak up the tropical views, and put the lingo skills of your travel buds to the test. When we arrive, it's time to hit the ground running with an included street food tour. Expect: alllll the tingling senses. We'll wander through the maze of buzzing, steaming food stalls to sample mouth-watering chicken kebabs and crispy fried crickets (sorry Jiminy...), before a masterclass in making coconut cake. Mmm. Then: did someone say mango sticky rice? Get in our belly. To round things off, head up Khao Rang viewpoint and check out this dazzling city by night. You won't regret it.



MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Dinner



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Phuket street food tour

DAY 8 | PHUKET

Eye-popping architecture. Lip-smacking eats. And a fascinating fusion of cultures and traditions. This immense island sure packs a punch – and today it's 100% yours to delve deeper. Opt for a day trip speedboating around the Phi Phi Islands for more emerald waters, crazy-gorgeous beaches and mind-blowing scenery. Ready for round two of Muay Thai? There's a chance to brush up your skills if you're keen. Or get your sweat on at an optional hot yoga class. Tonight: gather the fam and find a local haunt for some seriously fiery green curry, or panang if you actually *don't* want to spice up your life.



MEALS:

- Breakfast



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Full-day boat tour of the Phi Phi Islands (including lunch): from 108 USD
- Muay Thai boxing class in Phuket: from 81 USD
- Hot yoga class in Phuket: from 76 USD

DAY 9 | PHUKET

Bad news = it's our last day in paradise. Good news = we've got some incred optionals lined up, so you're sure as hell going to make the most of it! Soak up some heritage with a walking tour of the bustling city. This is a world where past collides with present. Spoiler: your jaw's gonna DROP. Or spend an unforgettable morning at an ethical sanctuary for rescued elephants to see these majestic creatures roam the jungle and wide-open fields. You'll feed them snacks (don't be stingy – these guys never forget), and watch them bathe, play and generally live their best elephant lives. It's all the feels. And later? Strap on those hiking boots one last time – we're off to discover two of Phuket's stunning secret viewpoints. Local knowledge = levelled up. Not ready for the fun to end? Opt to show off some skills at an evening cocktail workshop and become THE boujee cocktail connoisseur of the group. Tonight, settle in for our final group dinner. WHAT an adventure it's been.



MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Dinner



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Hike Phuket's secret viewpoints



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Visit an elephant sanctuary (including lunch): from 136 USD
- Essence Sino Heritage half-day walking tour: from 93 USD
- Evening cocktail workshop: from 140 USD

DAY 10 | PHUKET

Ten days of UN-believable local experiences, gobsmacking views and ultimate eats? Completed. But now it's time to say goodbye. Sob. What's that? You're gonna jump on the next flight to Bali and join our Delve Deep trip there? We LOVE your style.



MEALS:

- Breakfast

OTHER INFORMATION

TOPDECK APP

Feeling appy? Download the Topdeck app and get PUMPED for the adventure ahead. Best bit is: from 45 days before departure you'll be able to chat with your soon-to-be tripmates.

Plus, get your itinerary at your fingertips – so you know where you'll be going and what you'll be doing on each day of your trip. Nice!

Links:

Apple <https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/topdeck/id994727866>

Android <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.FlexiTechSolutions.TopDeck&hl=en>



YOUR SAFETY

NIGHTS OUT

We love a good night out – experiencing the nightlife and entertainment places have to offer is a big part of travelling. But alongside the fun it's important to be aware of your surroundings and personal safety.

When you're out late, remember to avoid walking alone – particularly through deserted areas like beaches and back streets. Always stick together, take a registered taxi where possible, and keep a note of your accommodation so you can find your way back to your fellow Topdeckers if you become separated. Make sure you have your trip mates' mobile numbers in case you need to get hold of them while out and about.

In some countries, alcoholic measures can be considerably larger than what you may be used to. Try to keep track of what you're drinking – and if you see one of your trip mates looking a little worse for wear, take them back to your accommodation. Never leave your drink unattended.

It's also important to be aware that what you might consider harmless flirting may be interpreted differently in some countries. Be yourself and have fun, but stay savvy – you don't want to find yourself in an uncomfortable situation.

DRUG USE

Topdeck has a strict zero-tolerance drug policy. Customers should not bring any illegal substances onto the Topdeck coach or into any of the accommodation we stay in on our trips. This includes marijuana – even if it is legal in some of the states your trip passes through. If you are found in possession of drugs, you will be removed from the trip immediately. All instances of drug possession will be reported to Topdeck Head Office, who may consider alerting the relevant authorities.

REMEMBER: if you are found in possession of drugs, not only do you risk getting in trouble with the local police, but our Driver will also be held responsible if they are found on the Topdeck coach. Trust us, you don't want that to happen to any of our Drivers – they're awesome.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Culture shock, homesickness, random periods of feeling down – these things happen and are totally normal. You can rest assured that if you're feeling low, your Topdeck crew will do their utmost to cheer you up.

Measures you can take to look after your mental health and wellbeing while on the road with us are:

- Call home. Sometimes it's nice to hear a familiar voice and have a good old-fashioned catch up with your loved ones
- Eat well. Never underestimate the power of a good, wholesome meal. Nobody feels at their best when they're hungry!
- Drink responsibly. Not only will you swerve the dreaded hangover, but by keeping an eye on what you drink you could also avoid getting into any potentially uncomfortable situations

- Talk to your Trip Leader. Don't forget, they're probably far from home too – so they're sure to know some tried- and- tested ways to beat the blues
- Integrate with your fellow Topdeckers. This one is key! The more fun you're having on your trip, the less likely you are to feel homesick (fact!)

TRAVEL SINCE COVID-19

Travel looks a bit different since COVID-19. That's why we've put some new procedures in place to help keep you safe on the road.

What remains the same? Your Topdeck trip will be run hygienically, responsibly, and with your safety at the forefront of everything we do. End of.

Here's the info: <https://www.topdeck.travel/resources/travel-safely>

RESPECT ON THE ROAD

RESPECTING FELLOW TRAVELLERS

Our trips are for everyone. We're a family – and we want every Topdecker to have an incredible time.

What we're not about is excluding people or making them feel like they don't belong. That's why we always encourage Topdeckers to be kind and courteous to their fellow tripmates . The golden rules? Respect each other's space, be mindful of causing excessive noise in shared accommodation, and treat others how you'd wish to be treated. Easy!

HOW TO BE A RESPONSIBLE TRAVELLER

Responsible travel isn't difficult to achieve. With a little conscious thought and preparation, you can have an awesome adventure AND a positive impact on the places you visit. Sweet!

Here are five things you can do to ensure you're travelling responsibly:

- Conserve water. You know the drill – reuse your room towels, take short showers and remember to turn off the tap when you're brushing your teeth
- Reduce your waste. Ditch the plastic bag, refuse unnecessary packaging, dispose of your waste responsibly and recycle as much as possible
- Go local. Hunt down locally owned and operated restaurants and bars, shop in local markets, and book tours and activities run by local guides
- Consider the wildlife. Avoid any attractions that involve closely engaging with wild animals
- Respect local people and culture. Obeying local laws is a given – but also remember to dress and behave in a manner appropriate to the community. Be polite and keep an open mind!

INSURANCE

Before your trip departs, it's compulsory for all passengers to take out comprehensive travel insurance covering cancellation, medical expenses (including repatriation), loss or damage to baggage and personal belongings, money and personal liability.

Head to our FAQ for more info: <https://www.topdeck.travel/resources/faqs-0>

Got more Qs? Chat with our Customer Service team: <https://www.topdeck.travel/about-us/contact>

PASSPORTS AND VISAS

Please make sure your passport is valid for at least six months after the last day of your trip. Some countries will refuse entry if you do not have at least six months validity remaining on your passport after your departure date. Depending on your nationality, you may require a visa to enter certain countries.

It is your responsibility to obtain visas prior to your trip's departure. To determine which visas you'll need, you can consult either your own government's website or the government websites of the countries in which you will be travelling. Check out our handy interactive map showing global visa requirements:

<https://www.topdeck.travel/resources/latest-border-restrictions>

PLEASE NOTE: some visas can take up to six weeks to acquire, so don't leave it until the last minute. Also, bear in mind that the validity of a visa often runs from its date of issue rather than the date of entry into the country. Please check with the appropriate embassy/embassies prior to departure, as requirements do change periodically.

TIPPING

Basically: it's not necessary.

Your Trip Leader and Driver don't expect tips, and they won't ask for any either. Meaning? More dollar to spend on optional activities (and a souvenir for your nan).

WHAT TO BRING

Based on our experience, these items are key. Everyone's different though – so if you want to bring more or less, go for it (as long as you don't exceed your 20kg allowance, that is!).

Off to Japan? Your luggage must be no bigger than 160cm in total (height x width x length). So maybe leave the hairdryer at home.

Psst: this is a packing list for Topdeck trips in general. Obv you'd look silly splashing around the Greek islands in a snowsuit.

- 1 pair of comfortable walking shoes + 1 pair of smart casual shoes
- 1 pair of thongs/jandals/flip-flops
- 2 pairs of jeans/trousers
- 2 pairs of shorts/skirts
- 4 shirts/T-shirts
- 2 sweaters/jumpers
- Smart casual evening wear
- 1 warm jacket + 1 rainproof jacket
- Underwear and socks + swimwear
- Towel
- Toiletries
- Hat and sunscreen

- Basic medical kit (including plasters, aspirin etc)
- Adaptor plug
- Reusable water bottle
- Snow gear



THAT'S IT!