

# thailand jungle challenge,

## q&a



**important:** We need your passport number, name as it appears on your passport, issue and expiry numbers as soon as you book to ensure you are covered by the Thai ground handlers public liability insurance.

### how big is the group?

Each group is intended to be a minimum of 16 people in order to run and a maximum of approximately 30 people due to the wilderness environment in which the challenge is taking place and transport limitations. We will be able to run this challenge for 10 to 15 people by charging a small group supplement of £75 which will be added to your final balance invoice (self funders) or charged to your charity (minimum sponsorship or flexi).

### who do we fly with?

You will be flying with from London Heathrow Airport to Bangkok and returning from Bangkok to London Heathrow Airport with Gulf Air, KLM or Thai Airways. Your flight tickets will be issued to you upon departure at the airport. If you choose to book your own flights you must confirm with the Charity Challenge office before paying otherwise you may be liable for your included group flights (please contact [flights@charitychallenge.com](mailto:flights@charitychallenge.com) for further assistance).

### what's the luggage allowance?

Luggage should be kept to the absolute minimum. Full details on what to pack are provided in your kit list. Your rucksack (suitcases are not appropriate) must not exceed 15kgs in weight. You will be carrying three days worth of personal items in your day-packs. This will not include food, tents, and other 'group' items, which will be carried by the local guides. The rest of your belongings will be either safely stored until your return. You will need to allow for the following in your day pack: three t-shirts, two pairs of trousers, sleeping bag liner, first aid kit, torch, wash kit and water bottle.

### what will the accommodation be like?

The hotel in Bangkok is the Viengtai Hotel. A comfortable hotel situated in the Banglamphu area of downtown Bangkok, very close to markets and shopping areas. Outside of Bangkok you will stay in a small guesthouse in Kanchanaburi & the Burmese Inn; a small family run Guesthouse situated in a garden setting on the edge of Khao Laem Lake. In Thong Pha Phum you will stay at the Ban Huay Ulong Resort, a traditional style, all wood resort on the banks of the Ulong Stream. At the River Kwai riverside chalets will be your home in the tranquillity of the jungle. If you are travelling with a friend or partner who you wish to share with, please let Charity Challenge know in advance.

### do we need to take our own sleeping bags and mats?

Yes. A sleeping bag liner is generally adequate for summer treks and a two season sleeping bag for Nov-Feb treks. A sleeping mat such as a thermarest will aid your chances of a comfy night's sleep. Also see Kit List notes.

### what are the toilet/washing facilities like?

The facilities are very basic. Simple squat toilets and river bathing so only bio-degradable soap is acceptable. Toilet paper is not provided but is easy to purchase in country.

### will my valuables be safe?

We will do everything to provide adequate safety for the group and security for your possessions. The general rule is that if you do not need it, do not bring it. This includes jewellery, necklaces, rings and even watches. Your passport and money can be left in a safe at the hotels and collected on departure. Your passport should be kept in a plastic bag to protect it from damp or water damage.

### what is the food and drink like?

The emphasis throughout your challenge will very much be on local cuisine. During the trek the food will be cooked by your local team in the villages and will be fairly simple. We endeavour to cater for vegetarians but please note that Thai cooking is strongly based on the use of fish products. Please let Charity Challenge know prior to departure if you have any specific dietary requirements or allergies.

### who will be leading the group?

Your challenge will be led by two first aid qualified challenge leaders, both of whom speak English and Thai – one acting as a leader, one as a cultural guide. They will be ultimately responsible for the running of the itinerary and the safety of your group. You will also be accompanied by local non-English speaking Karen guides who will assist with the catering and your trekking and safety needs.

### what is a typical day?

During the trekking days we rise early and pack up camp after breakfast then trek carrying only daypacks. There will be a picnic lunch en route and plenty of time to stop and view the remarkable scenery. Usually there are also plenty of opportunities for a dip in mountain streams. The trek zone is remote and rare flora and (possibly) fauna will be seen. The terrain is up & down, over rocks and mud, crossing stream and so on. The guides will make it safe for everybody. The evenings are spent camping or in jungle villages, where the food and facilities are fairly simple.

### what are the kayaks like?

Kayaking will be by individual kayaks or two-person kayaks/canoes for the uninitiated. Double ended paddles are used. They do not have skirts.

### how fit do I need to be?

Training is required for this challenge. Anyone who leads a fairly active and moderately healthy lifestyle should be OK as long as they prepare / train before departing on the challenge. Don't forget that the temperature and humidity is different from the UK and that you will be exercising constantly for a number of days. You will therefore find this tougher than you may anticipate. Also see Fitness Training Advice notes.

### what if I cant keep up?

The event is not run as a race and there is always a large discrepancy in people's abilities. We allow for this. There will always be a staff member at the back of the group to ensure you are not left behind and can take things at your own pace.

### what happens if I fall ill, can't keep up or there is an emergency?

Back up support will never be far away and can be brought in, in the event of an emergency (car, moped, mini-bus etc). Contact will be maintained between guides and the support team. There is always a large discrepancy in people's walking ability, which is catered for.

### what is included in the cost of the challenge?

The following items are included in the cost of the challenge: international flights to and from Thailand, all internal transfers, all meals and drinking water with meals and during trekking (unless otherwise stated in the itinerary), all accommodation, group first aid supplies, an English speaking challenge leader, a full local support team of guides and drivers, relevant back-up facilities, US\$20 to the local community project, and discount from Nomad Travellers Stores for personal equipment. We also make a contribution through Climate Care to offset the equivalent CO2 emissions of your international flight.

### what is not included in the cost of the challenge?

The following items are not included in your challenge and will be at your own expense: tips for the local support team, activities not mentioned in the itinerary, personal spending money, drinks and food outside of designated meal times and soft or alcoholic drinks at any time and travel to and from UK airports.

### what shall I do about spending money?

You will not need large amounts of money during this trip. You will only need money for tips, drinks (other than water with meals), gifts and souvenirs, and any other additional activities. Typically £150-200 is an average ball park figure. Bring more if you wish to buy souvenirs but don't forget your weight limit on the flight!

### how much would you recommend for tips?

Tippling is personal and at your sole discretion. You should only tip if you feel that you have received good service. We recommend approx. £10 per person per day and this should be given to the challenge leader at the end of the trekking part and kayaking part of the challenge and they will distribute it among the support teams. If you want to tip your Challenge Leader & local guide this can be done at your own discretion.

### what is the weather likely to be like?

Thailand has a continental tropical climate and, whilst relatively hot and humid all year round, possesses three distinct seasons: a dry, cooler period from November through to February; a dry, hot season from March to May; and a rainy season from June to October. But like the UK, it's getting increasingly difficult to predict. If it does rain, 'typical' rainfall would be a heavy downpour for a couple of hours around tea-time. Temperatures vary considerably throughout the year. In April it can get as

hot as the low forties while in winter during the cool season, night-time temperatures can get as low as zero.

To ensure you stay warm or cool enough at all times we would advise taking clothes that you can layer and a decent set of lightweight waterproofs.

### what do you do to protect the environment?

We are keeping to a small group so that we limit the impact we have on the surrounding environment. We will ensure that all rubbish is disposed off responsibly. We follow the local guidelines on cultural and environmental protection and respect. We will also be donating US\$20 per participant towards a local community project and Charity Challenge supports a school in one of the Karen villages that you will pass by, to enhance local living conditions. Also see Responsible Tourism notes.

### useful phrases

Thai is a tonal language (five tones) with 44 consonants and 16 vowels. Learning some basic Thai phrases will hugely enhance the responses you receive from the Thai-speaking people that you will meet along the way. The speaker normally ends all of his or her sentences with khrap (for men) or kha (for women). It is the gender of the speaker that is being expressed here. It is also the common way to answer 'yes' to a question or show agreement. Smiling is polite and means 'please', 'thank you', 'hello' etc.

#### english

Hello  
Goodbye  
Yes please  
Thank you  
My name is....  
How are you?  
You're welcome  
Excuse me  
I'm sorry!  
I don't understand  
Yes  
No  
How much?  
When?  
Where is...?  
It's delicious  
What is the time?  
Do you speak English?  
I don't speak Thai  
Toilet  
Water  
Zero  
One  
Two  
Three  
Four  
Five  
Six  
Seven  
Eight  
Nine  
Ten

#### thai

sawat-dee (kha/krap)  
sawat-dee  
ao krap/ka  
korp kun  
pom/chan choo.....  
sabai dee mai  
mai pehn rai  
kor thot  
kor thot  
mai kao-jai  
krap/ka or shai  
mai-shai  
tao-rai?  
meur-arai?  
tee nai?  
a-roy  
Kee mong  
poot ang-grit dai mai?  
poot Thai mai dai  
hong narm  
narm  
soon  
neung  
sawng  
saam  
sii  
haa  
hok  
jet  
paet  
gao  
sip

NB: The information provided above was correct at the time of going to print.