



Volunteer Survival Kit



Before you go...

USEFUL FACTS ABOUT THAILAND

- Currency: Baht
Code = THB
Symbol = ฿
Example conversion rates (June 2008) = 1 US\$ = 33
1 UK£ = 66
1 Euro € = 52
1 Yen ¥ = 0.31
- Electric plugs: Two Pronged (220V 50Hz)
- Time Zones: GMT / UTC +7 (Indochina Time)
- Country dialing code: +66
- Weights and measures: metric
- Examples costs:
1 bottle of water = ฿5.00 – 10.00
1 large beer = ฿150.00
Street vendor noodles = ฿25.00 – 30.00

Adapted From:
<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/worldguide/thailand/>

Preparation

- **Flights:** Kid Launch regrets that they are unable to cover the costs of flights to and from Thailand. Thai immigration usually requires that new arrivals have onward flights.
- **Passport and Visas:** Make sure your passport is valid and that you are well-researched on the visa requirements for Thailand. Some guidelines are provided on the next page.
- **Health:** It is advisable that volunteers with Kid Launch be physically fit. If you have a medical condition, please consult your doctor before you book your flight. It is also recommended that volunteers have the necessary vaccinations done before arriving in Thailand. See page 4 for details.
- **Insurance:** It is strenuously recommended that volunteers take out insurance for their period of volunteering.

WorldNomads.com is one website that can guide you through the procedures.

Getting there

Kidlaunch's head office is in Chiang Mai province the Northern Thailand. We are also working in different province such as : Chiang mai ,Kachanaburi , Mae Hong Sorn and Chiang Rai. We will let you know which one you'll need to go to once you arrive in Thailand, depending on which village you'll be volunteering in.

For detailed information about Chiang Mai and how to get there, we recommend that you check out:

<http://www.1stopchiangmai.com/>

For the best ways to get to and around Kanchanaburi and for more information about it, the best websites to go to are:

[http://wikitravel.org/en/Kanchanaburi_\(province\)](http://wikitravel.org/en/Kanchanaburi_(province))

http://www.thailandtravelplanner.com/information/travel_kanchanaburi.htm

For Chiang Rai and Mae Hong Son, check out:

<http://www.travelmaehongson.org/index.html>

http://wikitravel.org/en/Chiang_Rai

<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/worldguide/thailand>

www.thaivisa.com

Visas for staying in Thailand

(from <http://www.1stopchiangmai.com/living/visa/>)

Everyone wants to come and live in Thailand these days, it's comfortable, cheap and an enchanting place which is attracting an increasing amount of foreigners. It's also relatively easy to enter the Kingdom and continue staying indefinitely. The locals aren't fussed but the immigration department have become increasingly sticky about applying the rules. They are generally regarded as bureaucratic, and aren't immune to suggesting underhand gratuity. They can, and do, give you the run around, so pay attention to your options.

In general, the government is more interested in attracting 'monied' foreigners, rather than foreigner dropouts who tend to swell the ranks of ex-pats here. Everyone is welcome provided you have a good excuse to stay here or a generous monthly income to live off.

The following are the common and accepted ways, as of November 2007:

- Tourist visas
- Non-immigrant visas
- Work Permits
- Spousal visas
- Retirement visas
- Permanent residence
- Business owner

Note: For more detailed information, check out: www.thaivisa.com

30 day visas

These are issued to most nationalities upon entry to the Kingdom and can be extended once, for 10 days, by visiting your nearest immigration department before the expiry date. The fee for this is 1,900 baht. Overstay fines are 500 baht per day and can jeopardise your future applications. Every time you leave and re-enter Thailand at any border post, a new 30 day visa is issued, no matter how short your exit stay is. In mid 2006, a new directive was issued permitting only a maximum stay of 90 consecutive days (ie two renewals) on a tourist visa, after which you have to leave the kingdom. This can be resolved by applying for a 60 day tourist visa at a neighbouring consulate, and starting over. Furthermore, those leaving and re-entering Thailand on the same day are usually asked to show proof of at least 10,000 baht in a local bank account or cash.

60 day tourist visas

These are issued by Thailand Embassies abroad for a variable fee (about \$15/?10) and can be collected on-the-spot. Once in the Kingdom you may renew this visa for a further 30 days at your nearest immigration department before the expiry date. The fee for this is 1,900 baht.

Visa runs

For many in Chiang Mai, the 30 day visa is all they bother with, for the paperwork necessary for a non-immigration visa is sometimes problematic. Fortunately, the Myanmar border is only a three-hour drive away and many conduct a monthly 'visa run' to the Mae Sai border north of Chiang Rai. Some have continued this routine for a year or more. From September 2004 onwards the immigration officials have been asking to see proof of at least 10,000 baht for each 30 days you intend to stay, this would have to be in hard cash or shown in a Thai bank account book. Read about doing a visa run.

Recommended Vaccinations

Malaria: For rural areas bordering Cambodia and Myanmar, prophylaxis with Malarone or doxycycline is recommended. For rural areas bordering Laos, either Malarone, doxycycline, or Lariam should be taken.

Vaccinations:

All travelers should visit either their personal physician or a travel health clinic 4-8 weeks before departure.

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Hepatitis A | Recommended for all travelers |
| Typhoid | For travelers who may eat or drink outside major restaurants and hotels |
| Yellow fever | Required for all travelers greater than one year of age arriving from a yellow-fever-infected area in Africa or the Americas. Not recommended otherwise. |
| Japanese encephalitis | For long-term (>1 month) travelers to rural areas or travelers who may engage in extensive unprotected outdoor activities in rural areas, especially after dusk |
| Hepatitis B | For travelers who may have intimate contact with local residents, especially if visiting for more than 6 months |
| Rabies | For travelers who may have direct contact with animals and may not have access to medical care |
| Measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) | Two doses recommended for all travelers born after 1956, if not previously given |
| Tetanus-diphtheria | Revaccination recommended every 10 years |

From: <http://www.mdtravelhealth.com/destinations/asia/thailand.html>

When you get there

Meeting Kid Launch...

After the interview process has been completed and your flights and visa have been organised, further arrangements will be made for your arrival in Thailand. Kid Launch will give you all the necessary guidance for finding your way to our volunteering locations. Depending on where you are assigned, once you arrive at the main transport hub for that village, e.g. Chiang Mai bus or train station or airport, Kid Launch will meet you and take you to the office. **Alternatively, arrangements can be made for Kid Launch to pick you up at Suvarnaphumi Airport in Bangkok for special cases only.** After you arrive at the office, you will be taken to your assigned location. Please feel free to ask any questions to our staff at any point.

Arriving at the volunteering location...

You will be taken to your lodgings and given time to settle in and meet the local community. Meanwhile, the following are some useful tips for daily life in a hill tribe village:



- **Food and Drink:** There are one or two small village shops that sell all the regular convenience goods, although if you need anything special, it is best that you buy this beforehand and bring it with you. Normally, the villagers make meals using the food that they have harvested and volunteers are invited to join in with the meal preparation and can eat with the family that they are staying with. However, don't expect a huge variety of choice in terms of food available. If you have any special dietary needs or allergies, please inform Kid Launch before your period of volunteering begins and it will be possible to stop on the way to the village to purchase what you need.



- **Facilities:** Please be warned that the laundry and bathroom facilities are very basic. The bathroom is usually communal and in most cases, is in the form of a shack located behind the living quarters. Laundry is done by hand either there or by the local river or stream.
- **Free time:** If you are used to living life in the fast lane, be prepared to slow things down dramatically during your period of volunteering. Life in the hill tribe villages is very peaceful and there is generally little to do outside of work and daily chores. It is recommended that you bring plenty to keep you occupied during out-of-school hours.

• **Making contact with the outside world:** If you enjoy being able to escape completely from the stresses and strains of daily life, then Kid Launch might be able to provide! Often, the hill tribe villages are located in valley areas that are out of the range of communication satellite systems, in which case, a long walk (or a ride) to a location in range might be required if you wish to use a mobile phone or the Internet. In case of emergencies, there will always be an assigned person on hand who will have the transport in order to get help, etc. Don't worry, you won't be abandoned! It is one of Kid Launch's objectives to make their volunteers as comfortable and happy at work as they can. However, since contact with the outside world can be quite difficult, it is recommended that volunteers make the appropriate preparations for this and keep this in mind when deciding how long they want to volunteer for.



While you are there

Please remember to observe and respect the rules and the culture of the village you are staying in. **THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT.** Kid Launch's objective is not to change or damage the culture of these villages, it is to promote the importance of education and help the children find a future. Please note the following Do's and Don't's:

| DON'T's | DO's |
|---|---|
| <p>1. Don't bring foreign food into the village.</p> <p>2. Don't wear revealing or immodest clothing. The villagers are not used to seeing people who wear this kind of clothing and do not wish to see them either. When going about your daily routine, please maintain your modesty at all times. For example, when swimming in the local river, please wear shorts and t-shirt rather than a swim suit.</p> <p>3. Don't be a bad role model. Loud and unruly behavior is not acceptable. You are potential role models for the children and as such, you are expected to act like responsible, respectable members of society.</p> <p>4. Don't smoke or drink openly. Again, as you are potential role models for the children, please try to be discreet.</p> <p>5. Don't point your feet at anybody while you are seated.</p> | <p>1. Do feel free to make friends and make close connections with the people in the village. It is part of their culture to be very friendly and hospitable and in general, many people are very inquisitive and will want to know more about you and where you come from.</p> <p>2. Do bow your head in politeness when you walk between two people who are having a conversation.</p> <p>3. Do feel free to ask for anything you need at any time. The village is your home as well as your host's while you are staying with them, although of course, please remember to be respectful of your host's privacy.</p> <p>4. Do set the rules for the children as soon as you arrive. Usually, the houses are open for the children to go in and out as they please. The children will want to visit you very often so making a rule that they must knock first before entering your room would be wise!</p> |



And finally....

Don't forget to enjoy yourself and make the most of your time living as a hill tribe villager! You'll see that once you have established a routine and started to build relationships with the kids and the villagers, you will probably feel like you never want to leave!