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## **Introduction**

Welcome to Thailand. We are so blessed that you have decided to come here. We know the preparation and commitment it takes to come here and minister God's word, and we are appreciative of your effort. While you are here, we want to serve you and assist you so that your time here will be the most effective it can be. We have included in this manual those things that we think will be the most useful to you before and during your stay here. Some of the rules may seem a little strict to your personal standards. Thai people have a different worldview than you probably do, and we want to help you adjust to this culture as quickly as possible. If there is something that you are confused about, please ask your team leader. We are more than happy to help you, as you prepare yourself to fit in, and show love to the wonderful people of this land. Thank you for showing your love to God, through showing your love to the Thai people.



### **Getting Ready To Go**

We suggest that you take at least three months to prepare for your adventure here in Thailand. Below is a list of things you will have to do before you go.

- 1) Get a passport
- 2) Get a visa if you plan to stay longer than 30 days (email The Centre if this is your plan)
- 3) Get vaccinated (ask your local doctor)
- 4) Purchase airfare
- 5) Set up accommodations (We at the Centre can do this for you ahead of time)
- 6) Set up a planned budget
- 7) Learn about Thai culture and religion
- 8) Preparation for the ministry you will be involved in



## **About Thailand**

Thailand is a wondrous kingdom with many features. From Buddhist temples to exotic wildlife; from tropical beaches to spectacular mountains, you will find in Thailand what you are looking for. Along with a unique history and a fascinating culture that includes delicious Thai food and relaxing massage, Thailand contains modern cities, and hospitable people who personify Thailand's "land of smiles" reputation.

Located just 15 degrees north of the equator, Thailand has a tropical climate and temperatures typically range from 19 to 42 degrees C (66-107 F). The weather in Thailand is generally hot and humid: typical of its location within the tropics. Typically speaking, Thailand can be divided into three seasons: "hot" season, rainy season, and "cool" season, though Thailand's geography allows visitors to find suitable weather somewhere in the country throughout the year.

The population of Thailand comprises of roughly 65 million citizens, the majority of whom are ethnically Thai, though peoples of Chinese, Indian, Malay, Mon, Khmer, Burmese, and Lao origin are also represented to varying degrees. Approximately 7 million citizens live in the capital city, Bangkok, though this number varies seasonally and is otherwise difficult to accurately count.

More than 92% of the population speaks Thai or one of its regional dialects. While the Thai language is the official language of Thailand, as a result of its cosmopolitan capital city and established tourism infrastructure, English is spoken and understood throughout much of Thailand.

Thailand is a constitutional monarchy, not dissimilar to England's, whereby an elected Prime Minister is authorized to be the head of government and a hereditary Thai King is head of state. The constitution of Thailand allows for the people of Thailand to democratically elect their leaders in the form of a parliament, with a bicameral legislature consisting of a Senate and House of Representatives, and executive authority in the hands of the Prime Minister. A Judiciary, overseen by the Supreme Court, was designed to act independently of the executive and the legislature.

The currency of Thailand is the Thai Baht. Baht come in both coin and banknote form. The value of Thai currency, both in coins and bills, will increase with size of the coin or bill. Currently it takes 31 Baht to equal the value of one US dollar. This varies depending on the state of the economy.



The Thai people are a religious people. They have a long history of worship in the Buddhist tradition. Today 92.3% of Thai people are Buddhist, 5.2% are Muslim, and 1.6% are Christians. Animism also plays a big role in the lives of the Thai people, and in most cases is practiced conjointly with Buddhism.



## About Chiang Mai

Chiang Mai is located in the northern part of Thailand. It is a growing city and has essentially become the heart of Northern Thailand. The landscape around the city is that of lush tropical mountains with the Ping River running right through the downtown area. The people of Chiang Mai are warm and friendly, enjoying a slower paced lifestyle.

Chiang Mai has grown to be quite a tourist destination as well. Many people from all over the world come here to enjoy the Lanna culture that is specific to Northern Thailand and to explore the beautiful nature that God has created in this region of the world.

Because of its location and the fact that Thailand has freedom of religion, Chiang Mai has become a hub for missionaries. Many churches and mission agencies have settled in this city to do their work. While many are reaching out to the Thai people, many are also venturing into the closed countries (i.e. Myanmar, China, Laos) that border Thailand. There has also been a huge outreach to the Hill Tribe people in this area. Because of this fact, roughly 5% of Chiang Mai is considered Christian.



### **About Nakhon Ratchisima**

Nakhon Ratchisima, also known as Korat, is located about 260 km northeast of Bangkok on the western edge of the Korat Plateau. This spreading city is considered the gateway to the northeastern part of Thailand (Isan).

Established in the 17th Century, this city helped to defend Siam from Laos. In the 19th Century, Thao Suranaree, the wife of a city official, saved the city from a Laotian invasion. Today, this heroine is celebrated throughout the city. During the Vietnam War, the US established its main Air Force base in this city.

The people of Korat are very friendly and hospitable. They also have their own local cuisine of Isan food. The area surrounding the city is full of ranches, much like you would see in Texas. Korat is a great place to visit if you want to see Thai culture without a lot of other tourists.



## About The Centre

**The Centre History:** The Centre was started in 1994 by Noel and Marnie Hutchinson of Asian Outreach Alliance. Their vision was to create a ministry that would reach out to Thai university students with the gospel. They began this work in Chiang Mai by teaching English to these students and sharing God's love with them. Through this ministry many have come to know Jesus as their Lord and Savior. Many of these have become leaders in the Thai church.

Today The Centre is still thriving and reaching out to the upcoming generation of leaders. In 2010, The Centre expanded to Korat through the leadership of Nevin Bowman. This is the first of hopefully many expansions to come.

**The Centre Vision:** We see The Centre as a platform for local young adults to be transformed spiritually and developed within a vibrant christian community to further God's purposes.

**The Centre Mission:** Our mission is to establish strong personal relationships primarily with students at The Centre, so that we can share the love of Christ with them. We will disciple those who believe through a loving christian environment. As a result they will be equipped and empowered to effectively reach out to their own community and nation. We will also partner with international and local churches and ministries, facilitating their heart to fulfill the Great Commission.

**The Centre Ministry:** The primary focus of The Centre is to reach students with the love of Christ. We do this through a number of outlets. First we are providing a need. Many university students need to learn English to further themselves in the working world, yet English is an expensive commodity. At the Centre we offer quality conversational English classes at about one-third of the price of other language schools. The reason we can do this is because all of our teachers work on a volunteer basis. While the main focus of these classes is English, our teachers are able to develop strong friendships with their students.

Second, The Centre runs many different events for the students such as cooking nights, bible studies, parties and game nights. Through these events we are able to share our lives on a deeper level and communicate the gospel message in a relevant way. The students also get to experience the Christian community in action.



Third, we are actively pursuing opportunities to hang out with the students outside the confines of The Centre. Whether it is going out to dinner with some students, or on a trip to a waterfall, we want to be in the students world as much as possible. By joining them in their activities, these students feel more welcome to join us in our activities.

Lastly, The Centre partners with other ministries in Thailand. These partnerships are with orphanages, churches, schools, slum ministries, etc. We really feel that the body of Christ needs to be unified and we want to set an example of unity here in Thailand.



## **Accommodation, Food & Transport**

**Accommodations:** While you are staying in Thailand, we at The Centre are willing to arrange for you the accommodations that you need. Depending on your budget and location preferences, we can book for you a hotel or guest house.

**Food:** Eating Thai food at local restaurants is cheap, safe and delicious (about 25-30 baht a plate in most places). In most cases, your team will be eating all meals out. Western food is a bit more expensive, but still a good price compared to the cost of food in the USA, or Europe. In most places, tipping is NOT customary.

**Transportation:** The Centre will arrange transportation for you to and from the airport / train station / bus station. Transportation through the city is easy and convenient. Songtaews (trucks with an enclosed back fitted with two benches) roam the streets looking for customers. These can also be rented for a day if you need to make a longer trip outside the city. They will pretty much take you anywhere within the city for around 20 Baht per person. Tuk Tuks (Three wheeled vehicles) are also available, and will take you to more specific locations. They are a bit more expensive.



## Health Risks

**Health Guidelines:** Never let any hospital or doctor use a syringe that was not opened from a sterile pack in front of you. Don't walk barefoot in villages. Don't drink the tap water. Coal based medicines work best for diarrhea. Salt can remove leaches. Avoid getting bitten by mosquitoes.

**Malaria:** Malaria is endemic in the border areas but not in Chiang Mai or Korat. It is best dealt with by using repellents and nets. The mosquitoes are only a threat at night.

**Dengue Fever:** Dengue Fever may occur 5-8 days after a bite by the aedes mosquito in the day, especially in the rainy season. Symptoms are sudden chilly sensations, severe headaches, pain in the joints and severe tiredness. Fevers can get high but the disease is seldom fatal. Treatment is by rest, lots of fluids and paracetamol. Hospitalization is recommended in severe cases.

**Road Accidents:** Road Accidents are one of the major risks to health in ChiangMai. All the main hospitals are well equipped to deal with trauma but the Maharaj (Government) and Chiang Mai Ram (Private) hospitals are considered the best.

**Immunizations:** (Check with your local health department) - suggest at least Tetanus  
Note: Malaria pills are available at any Thai drugstore should they be needed. We discourage Malaria pills due to their side effects.

**Team Medical Kit:** (Note that all listed drugs below are readily and very cheaply available over the counter in almost any drugstore in Thailand, so if necessary, you can easily assemble a kit when you arrive)

It should include: Aspirin/pain reliever, cold medicine, diarrhea medicine, Laxative, motion sickness pills, Band-Aids, antibiotic cream, cream for bites/stings, cream for burns/scalds, anti-itching ointment, tweezers, thermometer, packets of powdered electrolyte replacement for diarrhea.



## Thai Culture

**Greeting: "Sawatdee":** The national form of greeting in Thailand is the "wai" (pronounced like the word why). It is done by placing the hands palm to palm and raising them to the face. About level with the mouth or chin is normal with a slight bow of the head. Quickly discipline yourself to greet with the "wai", except to younger children where a smile or nod is sufficient acknowledgment. When greeting, the younger greets the elder first.

**Head & Foot:** Thais consider the head as the most honorable part of the body. Therefore it is a great insult to touch a person's head, reach over it, or to point at a person's face. If you accidentally forget and do so, politely beg his or her pardon. If it is necessary to reach for something above someone's head, apologize first.

The foot is considered "dirty" by Thais. It is the lowest part of the body. Never point your foot (especially the bottom of the foot) at someone, or refer to it or draw attention to it unnecessarily. Never move anything with your foot or step over someone if they are sitting on the floor. Sit cross-legged or fold your legs to the side, when sitting on the floor. Do not sit with your legs extended out in front of you. Always remove your shoes before entering a house.

**Monks:** Monks can in no way be touched by women, not even their garments. Women must never sit down next to a monk nor hand anything directly to him. If a monk gets on a bus and desires to take an empty seat next to a woman, the woman must vacate her seat and stand up (or find another seat). When speaking to a monk be sure to leave space between you and him.

**Temples:** All Buddha images, large or small, in good or bad condition, are regarded as sacred objects. Do not climb up on them to take a photograph or do anything that would show disrespect to Buddhism and indirectly to the Thai people. Buddhism is the national religion in Thailand. Showing disrespect to Buddhism, temples, or images (and other religions as well) is against the law, and could result in expulsion from the country

**Bargaining:** Bargaining is not done in department stores or up scale shops. However, bargaining is done in markets and in small shops set up along the streets. Do not bargain with restaurants or food vendors on the street. Of course, find out the price before ordering food. Often a shopkeeper will lower the price if you show a hesitancy to buy. One can bargain with Tuk Tuks (3 wheeled taxis) and Songtaews, but not with metered taxis.

**Shocking Questions:** Thais love to ask questions. Most are quite routine, but others can be quite shocking to foreigners who like to protect their personal privacy. Thais will usually ask such routine questions as, "Where are you going?" or "Where have you been?" or



"Have you eaten yet?" Other more prying questions such as, "Why are you fat?", "Why are you not married yet?" or "How much money do you make?" or "What kind of birth control do you use?" are quite normal questions in Thailand and are not considered nosy. A straight forward answer is not always expected and you can make a bit of a joke about it. A noncommittal answer will evade many of these questions.

**Dress:** Dress should be modest. Thai culture nowadays is very casual in appearance, but at times you will see some Thais that seem to dress up every day. Usually a Thai in a position of authority will be required to wear pants and a button down shirt if it is a man, and a mid to long length business skirt if it is a woman. All Thai students typically wear uniforms, even at universities.

When you come, feel free to dress comfortably. The weather is hot, so shorts are okay as long as they are not too short. Also, woman should avoid wearing clothes that are too revealing. Low cut tops are not appropriate in Thai culture. For swimming purposes, we ask that you not wear bikinis as well. Remember, we are trying show Christ to the Thai people, not our skin.

**Manners:** Thais place great emphasis on politeness and respect for elders and those in authority. If you are at a place where people are sitting on the floor in a meeting, it is best to seat yourself as soon as you can, or leave the room, since it is impolite to have your head above the others. (Having Your head above the others passes the message that you consider yourself superior to them). If you must pass through or in front of a person or group, move with your head and torso slightly lowered (This position gives the message that you don't intend to be higher than those seated in the room). Do not step over people or books on the floor.

In Thailand, it is not polite to show emotion in public. Thais are especially offended when one openly displays anger (public displays of anger are considered more serious than adultery). So guard your tongue and learn to control your emotions. One angry outburst directed at a Thai will effectively cancel your influence with that person and those who observed your behavior.

Thais are very modest. When using a public dressing room, such as a pool changing room, use the changing stalls provided as nudity is considered impolite.

To call a taxi or a person, signal them with a palm down, hand waving motion. Do not use your index finger to call some one or point. Be aware of the volume of your voice, as most Thais are soft spoken, and it is essentially impolite to talk loudly or shout. Because of the inhibitions in showing emotions, Thais will laugh in embarrassing or tense situations. This can be very disconcerting, but they are not laughing at you.

You address people by their first name and the title "Khun", as in "Khun Somchai" or "Khun



Ratana". If the person is older than you, address them as "Pii" instead of "Khun". The younger or social inferior greets the elder or superior first.

Gifts are generally opened in private, not in front of the giver (unless the giver invites them to do so). Expression of appreciation for a gift is welcome. It is also not uncommon for the recipient not to mention the gift again. To do so might communicate that they want more.

**Hospitality:** Always take off your shoes when entering a person's home. You will be stepping into some awful things on the street as you walk. In home with dirt floors, this is usually not necessary. When visiting Thais at their home (or when they are visiting your home), it is the host's responsibility to give the guest a glass of water or something to drink. Failure to do this is a breach of common courtesy. But it is not the guest's responsibility to drink the water, and it is acceptable not to touch it. When visiting Thai homes (especially if invited for a meal), it is customary to bring some fruit or small desserts. When in doubt about questions on etiquette, ask a Thai. Often, if a Thai person offers you something, they may merely be trying to be polite and expect you to refuse the offer. It is good practice to politely say "No thank you". If the Thai person persists, then they genuinely want you to accept the invitation. The same is true in reverse. For example, if you ask a Thai person to eat with you, often they will politely decline the first offer, but accept the second or third.

**Social Code:** From an early age, Thais are taught to respect superiors, parents, teachers, and the elderly. Accordingly, the emphasis in relationships is vertical rather than horizontal. Thais are concerned about fitting properly into society. Honor, avoidance of conflict, and a desire to please others are all hallmarks of the Thai character. Therefore, when meeting people of a higher status, it is wise to remember to address them politely and with respect. Remember to smile and wai.

**The Thai Attitude toward Life:** Generally, Thais accept their lot in life without resentment. They are usually good natured and give the appearance that they are carefree (which is not always the case). There is a sense of fatalism in their attitude towards life which comes from the Buddhist concept of karma, that is, one's past deeds brings consequences, both good and bad, to one's life. Trouble and suffering are believed to be the result of bad karma. Prosperity is believed to result from good karma.

**Helping others:** Help should not be offered verbally. If you see that you could be of help, "Just do it!". If you ask first, the person will refuse and say never mind, because they want to be considerate and do not wish to bother anyone. Your desire to help is noted and appreciated if you actually take the opportunity to be helpful.

If you feel the need to help someone financially, student or staff, please do not address the situation without the guidance of The Centre's director.



**The Thai Smile:** Thailand is known as the "Land of Smiles". To the foreigner who is unfamiliar with Thai culture, it may seem that the Thais are always happy. Smiles have a variety of meanings in Thai society. The following are a few meanings: to indicate amusement, to excuse and give pardon for minor offenses, to thank someone for a small service, to avoid comment on issues, or to show embarrassment. Smile when you greet people or if people smile at you, smile back. When foreigners refuse to smile, Thais are not sure what to think.

**Face:** The concept of "Face" is most important in Thai culture. Keeping one's "Face" is equivalent to keeping one's self respect and dignity intact. Not only are Thais concerned about maintaining "face" themselves, they are also concerned about other people's face. Thais will go to great lengths to ensure that, as much as possible, you do not lose "Face". This means that they will rarely confront even when you have offended them. Therefore, confrontation must be done with great care to avoid shaming a Thai person.

**Gift/Giving Receiving:** If you give a gift, don't give it in front of a group. Gifts are given with two hands and received with two hands. It is customary not to open a gift in front of the giver. Wait until the end of the trip so that the recipient won't feel compelled to give a gift in return. No money is to be given unless given by the entire team and not without a consult from The Centre's Director first. Defer receiving gifts of significant value until getting approval from team leaders. Needs are not always as they appear.

**Sitting:** The Thais consider it poor manners to sit on a chair with legs crossed, extended out in front of you, or for ladies, legs apart. Do not bounce your foot up and down. When sitting on the floor always sit as discretely as possible, ladies should sit on one hip with the legs pointed behind them. Ladies should either wear a Thai skirt, slacks, or knee length full skirt, not a short tight skirt. If caught in an unexpected situation, keep your knees covered with a headscarf or handkerchief. Men may sit crossed legged, so long as the feet don't point at anyone. Always try to sit at the same level as others. If someone else is seated when you enter a room, it is desirable for you to seat yourself as soon as possible. This is especially true if the other person is older, or of higher status. If you disregard this rule, you are thought to rudely hold yourself of more importance than the other people involved because your head is higher.

**Passing Items:** It is impolite to pass an item to someone by tossing it or pushing it towards them with your feet. When you pass something, use your right hand, as using the left hand for passing things is rude because of cultural toilet practices. Be aware also that it is rude to point with your hands or feet.

**The national anthem:** The Thai national anthem will always be played before movies and everyone is expected to stand silently. This is also true when present in public places whenever the Thai anthem is heard. It is played daily throughout the country at 8:00am and 6:00pm.



**The King:** The King is the most respected person in Thailand. He is loved and adored and even worshiped by the Thai people. He is the oldest and longest reigning king today and has done a great many things to help the poor in Thailand. He has also implemented an open atmosphere with the west. Do not say anything negative towards the King. This would cause you to be ostracized by the Thai community and you could even be arrested.

### **Things that might shock you**

- Blowing nasal contents onto the ground
- Going to the bathroom in public
- Unsanitary conditions
- Squatty potties
- Unclean utensils, bowls, cups, especially in villages
- Rats and other things that go "bump in the night"
- Chaotic traffic
- People outright calling someone fat or ugly



## Thai Religion

**CHRISTIANITY IN THAILAND:** Christianity came to the kingdom in 1554 when two Catholic chaplains came to minister to the Portuguese troops serving under the king of Siam. The Catholic Church has shown a slow growth and at times has suffered extreme persecution. Protestants entered the kingdom almost 275 years later, and during their 160 years here, have also experienced extremely slow progress and growth. Thailand is considered to be one of the toughest mission fields in Asia. Whatever the reasons for this, we truly believe that the Lord desires to reveal Himself to the Thai people. God is doing a new thing and we are glad to have you come and be a part of it at The Centre.

**Sharing the Gospel:** Thailand is a Buddhist country and many of our Western concepts of God are difficult for the people to understand, especially our Christian cliches. Be careful to explain the meanings of the Christian terms that you use otherwise the people may reinterpret what you are saying in terms of Buddhist concepts and thereby totally misunderstand what you are trying to convey. A key ingredient in evangelizing Thais is to build a solid relationship with them in order to gain their trust. We must learn to think in Asian or Thai concepts, and ask God for creative ways to express the gospel. Bear in mind that most Thai people have no Christian background whatsoever, and therefore winning them to Christ and then discipling them is a lengthy and often frustrating process. Christianity and Buddhism use many of the same terms but the meanings are often very different.

**PRAYER:** Paul wrote that we, "wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers and rulers of wickedness in high places". We are aware of this as we work daily in this nation and are confronted with Buddhism and Animism. However, "our weapons are not carnal but are mighty in God to the pulling down of strongholds".

The major strongholds in this nation are Buddhism and Animism which controls the culture, minds, and understanding of about 96% of the 65 million Thais. We cannot emphasize the aspect of prayer enough for the work here in Thailand. Please do not neglect it! If we plan to accomplish anything for the Lord here, it will have to originate and function through prayer. We have witnessed the fruit of outreach teams who have drenched their work in prayer and others who have relied on their own efforts. It is crucial that teams allocate time to this vital task of team prayer meetings, worship, and intercession. Only God can bring about a change in people's lives - so let's stand in the gap for them!

**BASIC BUDDHISM:** If you have or can get the chance to see the movie "Little Buddha," it would give you a good idea as to the origin and basic principles of Buddhism. In short, Buddhism began in India, about 500 years before the birth of Christ. The founder of Buddhism, Siddharta Gautama, is said to have had a supernatural birth and was then cloistered from the world by a loving but over-protective father, the king. When he



eventually encountered suffering and death, he was so struck by the experience that he set himself a lifelong goal of trying to find an answer to the problem of suffering. He left the palace life, his wife, and son and lived a life of asceticism in the forest. This led to the discipline of meditation which he practiced for 6 years. During this time he tried to punish his body in pursuit of answers but it led him nowhere. One day, while meditating under a tree, he attained "enlightenment". While alone, he obtained the truth about life. He then found that by turning to the mind, he was able to find the answers he was seeking. Gautama, now referred to as Lord Buddha, found that man's suffering sprang from his many desires. This led him to the logical conclusion that in order to stop suffering, man would need to free his life from all desire.

Buddhists are taught three duties:

- 1) Refrain from evil
- 2) Do good
- 3) Purify the heart

To accomplish these duties, followers are expected to understand and follow the Dharma, which is the teachings of Buddhism. It teaches primarily about doctrine, righteousness, condition, and phenomenon. Buddhists also believe in Karma, which is said to follow you like your shadow, which is ever present. Karma has to do with deeds, actions, the law of automatic moral retribution and is illustrated in the cycle of Wanda (cycle of life; birth, suffering, aging, death, and rebirth). Karma holds to the principle of "cause and effect." In essence, you receive good for good and evil for evil. Man has little control over his life and must, therefore, make merit wherever possible to obtain good karma, if not in this life then in the next. Sin is understood by what you do and not by what you are. Salvation can only come by destroying the desire in your life which leads to sin and suffering. When you have destroyed all desire in your life and are unaffected by what is around you, then you have reached enlightenment. This is Nirvana and reaching this state means the cycle of reincarnation and karma has been broken.

When asked the question, "For what is man born?" Buddha answered: "Man has life in order to struggle himself free from the trap of suffering in which he is caught, by destroying the god who created him. His goal in life is to escape from the hand of his maker, or from the great heap of suffering which is the product of Avija, which creates the insufferable state of existence."

#### **THE 5 PROHIBITIONS:**

- 1) Do not kill animals.
- 2) Do not steal.
- 3) Do not commit adultery.
- 4) Do not be deceptive, i.e. lie. .
- 5) Do not drink alcohol.



**BUDDHISM IN THAILAND:** The official religion of the kingdom is Theravada Buddhism. It does not hold uncompromisingly to the teachings of Gautama, but also embraces a wide spectrum of animism. There are close to 30,000 temples and more than 200,000 monks in the kingdom. It is generally expected that a male will spend at least 3 months in the temple as a novice; he is not considered "ripe", or treated with true respect until he has done so. Most men enter the priesthood to repay their parents by obtaining merit for them. Merit is made by doing good, giving offerings to the priesthood and temple, and by obeying the Dharma. You will notice spirit houses throughout the kingdom. These are a part of the Thai animistic belief that good spirits need to be respected and evil ones placated with offerings. These spirit houses are where people go to pay respect and make offerings.

**THAILAND'S SOCIAL PROBLEMS:**

- 1) The sex industry.
- 2) Drugs and drug lords.
- 3) Corruption.
- 4) Child exploitation.
- 5) The environment.

**SIMPLY THE GOSPEL:** As you share the Gospel here in Thailand, remember that the Thai does not think as we do in the west. They believe in reincarnation, karma, merit, ancestor worship, and ghosts of many kinds. Thais also have a different culture than yours which causes them to value things and look at life differently. One book we highly recommend reading is *From Buddha to Jesus* by Steve Cioccolanti. Since your time in Thailand is short, the best thing to do is stick with what you know best, your own testimony. Testimonies have a big impact on Thai people and it should be familiar ground for you to work from. When it comes right down to it, the Thai people have an emptiness in their hearts which only God can fill, just as it is with us. Remember, God has called you to Thailand.

Be encouraged that your testimony, especially your relationship to God is valid. The fact that Jesus Christ is the center and most important thing in your life says a lot once communicated. Buddhism is basically doing Buddhist things. The idea of a loving Creator God who can be known is unheard of. Many people have found it best, however, to start at the beginning with Creation as opposed to starting with Christ, dealing with the existence of God and His purpose in creating Man. Then, talking about relationship with Christ after establishing that there is indeed a God and that He does have a plan for our lives.

Finally, God has sent you to be among the Thai people at this time, to show them His love through your life. The way that love will be seen is as you show your wish to be friends and spend time with your new Thai friends. So, make a friend today and you might be helping them to follow Jesus later.



## Budget

The following is a typical budget that a team will incur while coming to The Centre for 30 days. This is based on an exchange rate of 30 Thai Baht to 1 US Dollar. This budget does not include transportation to and from Thailand.

Expense	Cost per day per person Thai Baht	Cost per day per person US Dollar	Total Cost per person Thai Baht	Total Cost per person US Dollar
Housing	400	13.33	12000	400
Food	120	4.00	3600	120
Transportation	150	5.00	4500	150
Ministry Costs	100	3.33	3000	100
Miscellaneous	50	1.67	1500	50
Suggested Donations*	50	1.67	1500	50
Total	870	29.00	26100	870

This budget is only an approximation. At times it can be cheaper or more expensive depending on the team's preferences. Remember, the exchange rate fluctuates on a daily basis. If a team decides that they would like to run an English Camp for The Centre, **this will be an extra ministry expense.** For an English Camp of around 30 students, the cost will be around 30,000 Thai Baht / \$1000 US. The team would have to raise the money for this event. If the team chooses to run an English Camp, they will have to inform The Centre at least three months in advance.

\*Please consider giving a donation to the different ministries you will be working with. This would be a big benefit to the ministries in Thailand.



## **Ministry Objectives & Opportunities**

Before you come to Thailand, you and your team should discuss the objectives of your trip. While reaching out to university students is our main objective, The Centre has a long history of partnering with many ministries in Thailand. Teams that come to us will find a wide variety of ministries that they can be involved in. Your length of stay in Thailand, will determine how much you can be a part of. Yet we have found that even teams staying as short as two weeks have been able to ministry in multiple areas. Below are some examples of what your team could be involved in. (As a side note, we highly recommend that whatever ministry you partner with, a small donation to that ministry would be appreciated.)

### **ESL Classes - Scratching the Surface**

Daily ESL classes for Thai university students - These classes are typically 4 weeks in length for 2 - 7 students. You will have the opportunity to sit in on classes every day and help the instructor and students on a one to one basis. These ESL classes are instrumental on building relationships with these students.

### **ESL Classes - Digging In**

Daily ESL classes for Thai university students - These classes are typically 4 weeks in length for 2 - 7 students. You will be given the responsibility of being an instructor for these classes. Culturally there is a strong connection between student and instructor. This will allow you a unique connection with your students.

### **Student Outreach**

The Centre runs regular programs to strengthen relationships with students. Depending on the skill set of the team or individual, we will develop a program that suits you. Below is a list of successful programs that The Centre operates.

- **Cooking Nights:** Your team can hold a cooking class for the students, teaching them how to cook your favorite Western dish.
- **Event Nights:** These events cover a wide variety of activities. Utilizing your team's skill set, you can build relationships and communicate God's love to the students
- **Out and About:** During the course of your stay, you will help to coordinate and lead outings with the students. Whether it is within the Urban environment or out in Nature, you will be able to connect with the students in a profound way.
- **On Campus:** Your team may have the opportunity to partner with on campus events through The Centre.
- **Government Schools:** Get a chance to assist local missionaries in teaching English at Thai secondary schools.



## **Partner Ministry**

Again, depending on the skill set of the team or individual, we will develop a program that suits you. Below is a list of successful programs that The Centre operates.

- Village Outreach: VBS style ministry to the children of surrounding villages
- Orphans: Ministry to local orphanages
- The Homeless: Ministry to Burmese refugees near the Thai border (The Centre Chiang Mai only)
- Sunday Ministry: Ministry in the local Thai church
- Inner City: Ministry in the city slums
- Street Ministry: Outreach in local markets and bazarres

## **Prayer & Worship**

Your team will be able to participate in strategic prayer walks throughout the cities of Chiang Mai and/or Korat. Tearing down strongholds is a significant part of reaching students for Christ. There are significant spiritual landmarks throughout the cities of Thailand, from Buddhist temples and Jedi's to ancient trees and significant monuments. Teams will be given the opportunities to lead prayer and worship times at The Centre.

## **Weekly Cell Group**

Your team will have the opportunity to join in a weekly cell group meeting lead by The Centre Staff. The purpose of these cell groups is for discipleship while you are on mission.

## **English Camp**

If your team so chooses, we can coordinate an English Camp on a weekend for you to run. This is a retreat style ministry. These camps are great times for students as they get to hang out with foreigners, learn to speak English better and hear the good news of Jesus. In the past, these have been one of our most effective outreach events. Because there is much preparation to these camps we would have to know at least three months in advance if you desire to do this. A donation of \$1000 US per English camp would cover the cost of this outreach (some of this money will be recouped from student fees). This donation will cover accommodations, food, t-shirts, camp supplies, transportation, etc. In preparing for your trip, if you would consider raising the cost of the English camp, it would significantly lighten The Centre's financial load. The best times to put on these camps would be in either early March or early November, yet we are open to running a camp that suits your time frame. To effectively run the camp, we would need a team of at least six people. This option is open for teams only.



## Going Home

Sometimes leaving can be the hardest thing to do. Many people will find that they love the atmosphere and people of Thailand. Plenty create strong friendships while they are here. When they leave they can find it a difficult thing. Feel free to show your emotions to the Thai people when you go. It will show how much you really care about them. We recommend staying in contact through email, facebook, skype or even old fashioned letter writing. Your ministry to the Thai people doesn't have to end when you get back on that plane. You can have an impact even if you are on the other side of the world.

If there is anyone in particular that you have connected with and feel that it would be good for a longterm worker to follow up on, please let the staff at The Centre know. We want to be proactive when it comes to helping the Thai people know more about Jesus.

Sometimes when people get back home, there is a sadness felt inside. When you and your team arrive back home, we recommend that you have a debriefing meeting. Usually a video or powerpoint presentation of your trip would be good. Also, a time to connect as a group is usually helpful as well. Below are some good questions to ask one another.

- What is your fondest memory of Thailand?
- What were some of your struggles while you were there?
- What were some of your victories while you were there?
- Who did you really connect with?
- How do you feel now that you are back?
- What about you is different from when you left?
- Would you want to do another mission trip if you had the chance? If yes, where to?
- Has this trip sparked any interest in you becoming a full-time missionary?
- What about Thailand did you bring back home with you?
- How will this trip help you move forward in life?

We also recommend sharing your adventures with family, friends and members or your church. Who knows, you make spark interest in another for missions.

On a last note, if you are ever interested in coming back to Thailand, you are more than welcome at The Centre.



### The Centre Wish List

1. Playing Cards - Something that will identify your Country, State or Province ( Sports team, Identifying Statue, Monument, or landscape)
2. Seasonal decorations. - garland, wreaths, tree ornaments, window decorations, Nativity scene, Thanksgiving, Easter, New years.
3. Games - Scrabble, Apples to Apples, Phase 10, Uno, Whoonu, New or Used X box, Play Station or Wii's
4. Chalk- We need lots of colored Chalk as well as 3D chalk. As many colors as possible.
5. Coffee Maker - Can be purchased here if you have the funds raised. - 4,000 to 6,000 Baht
6. Cappuccino maker- Can be purchased here if you have the funds raised. - 5,000 to 7,000 Baht
7. Coffee mugs - Something that will identify your Country state or Province ( Sports team, Identifying Statue, Monument, or landscape)
8. Drink Coasters - Something that will identify your Country state or Province ( Sports team, Identifying Statue, Monument, or landscape)
9. Glasses - for specialty drinks - Can be purchased here if you have the funds raised.
10. Microwave Popcorn, Cake mixes, Large Marshmallows, Kool-aid packages, Suckers,jaw breakers, Bazooka Gum, and other assorted treats to use at the coffee bar or give away to students.(leftover Halloween candy from wall-mart would be awesome!)
11. Video Projector (new or used) - spare bulb
12. Stereo system - Can be purchased here if you have the funds raised. - 6,000 to 7,000 Baht



**Important Phone Numbers**  
**Consulates, Private hospitals, & Clinics**

**The Centre, Chiang Mai**  
100/137 Huay Keow Rd  
T. Changphuak, Muang Chiang Mai  
Thailand 50200  
**Postal:** P.O. Box 177 CMU  
Chiang Mai, Thailand 50200  
**Phone:** +66 053214856  
**Cell:** 0882581015  
**email:** [thecentrecm@gmail.com](mailto:thecentrecm@gmail.com)  
**web:** [www.thecentrethailand.org](http://www.thecentrethailand.org)

**Consulates**

**British Consulate, Chiang Mai**  
198 Bamrungrat Rd., A.Muang, Chiang  
Mai  
Tel : 053263015

**Consulate General of the United  
State of America, Chiang Mai**  
387 Wichayanon Rd., A.Muang, Chiang  
Mai  
Tel : 053252629

**Canadian Consulate, Chiang Mai**  
151 Super Highway  
T. Tahsala, A. Muang  
Chiang Mai, 50000  
Tel: 053850147

**Australian Consulate, Chiang Mai**  
236 Chiangmai Doi Saket Road  
A. Sansai, Chiang Mai 50210  
Tel: 053482480

**Chinese Consulate, Chiang Mai**  
111 Chang Lor Rd., T. Hai Ya, A.Muang,

Chiang Mai  
Tel : 053276125, 053200424

**French Consulate, Chiang Mai**  
138 Charoen Prathet Rd., A.Muang,  
Chiang Mai  
Tel : 053281466, 053275277

**Honorary Consulate of Sweden,  
Chiang Mai**  
11 Soemsuk Rd., Soi Mengrairatsami,  
A.Muang, Chiang Mai  
Tel : 053220844

**Honorary Consulate Australian,  
Chiang Mai**  
165 Sirimungklajarn, T. Suthep,  
A.Muang, Chiang Mai  
Tel : 053221083

**Honorary Consulate of Austria,  
Chiang Mai**  
15 Moo 1, Huay Kaew Rd., A.Muang,  
Chiang Mai  
Tel : 053400232

**Honorary Consul of Canada, Chiang  
Mai**  
151 Chiang Mai-Lampang Super  
Highway Rd., T. Thasala, A.Muang,  
Chiang Mai  
Tel : 053242292, 053850147

**Honorary Consul of the Federal  
Republic of Germany**  
199/163 Moo 3, Baan Nai Fun 2, Kan  
Klong Chonpretan Rd., T. Mae Hia,



Chiang Mai  
Tel : 053838735

**Indian Consulate, Chiang Mai**  
334 Charoenraj Rd., T. Watket,  
A.Muang, Chiang Mai  
Tel : 053243066

**The Japanese Consulate Post at Chiang Mai**  
Suite 104-107 Airport Business Park, 90  
Mahidol Rd., T.Hai Ya, Chiang Mai  
Tel : 053203367

#### **Private hospitals & Clinics**

**Central Chiang Mai Memorial Hospital**  
186/2 Chang Klan Rd., Chiang Mai  
Tel: 053277090-3

**Chang Puek Hospital**  
1/7 Chang Phuak Rd. Soi 2, Chiang Mai  
Tel: 053220022

**Chiang Mai Dental Hospital Co., Ltd.**  
1/42 Chiang Mai-Lampang Rd., Chiang  
Mai  
Tel: 053411150-1

**Chiang Mai Ram Hospital**  
8 Bunruangrit Rd., Chiang Mai  
Tel: 053224851-69

**Theppanya Hospital**  
99 Moo 5 Chiang Mai-Lampang Rd.,  
Chiang Mai  
Tel: 053852590-6

**Children's Clinic**  
722/2 Mu 3 Hassadisewee Road  
0700-20.30

**Lanna Hospital**  
1 Sukkasem Rd., Chiang Mai  
Tel: 053357234-53

**McCormick Hospital**  
133 Kaew Nawarat Rd., Chiang Mai  
Tel: 053262200-19

**Rajavej Chiang Mai Hospital**  
316/1 Chiang Mai-Lamphun Rd.,  
Chiang Mai  
Tel: 053801199

**Rhuam Path Hospital Chiang Mai**  
21 Nantaram Rd., Chiang Mai  
Tel: 053270144-50, 053273576-7

**Bangkok Hospital**  
1308/9 Mitrapap Rd., Nai Muang,  
Nakhon Ratchasima, Thailand 30000  
Tel.(+66) 44 429-999

**Dr. Candy** (a Christian doctor at  
Bangkok Hospital)  
081-897-5365

#### **Lawyers**

**Isaan Lawyers**  
358 Pho Klang, Muang, Nakhorn  
Ratchasima  
30000, THAILAND  
English/Thai : 044 245 001  
FAX: 044 245 265  
<http://www.isaanlawyers.com>



## Travel checklist

This list has been compiled by veteran travelers. The worst thing on an outreach is to bring too much. Next is forgetting your underwear! Use this list as a general guideline in preparation for your trip to Thailand.

### **Things to think of before traveling**

Did ticket cover the airport tax? (Thailand 500B)  
 Visa (Inquire about visa regulations at a Thai embassy/consulate) If your stay is less than 30 days, most nationalities can get a visa upon arrival in Thailand at no charge.  
 Do we have valid passports/visas/tickets  
 Are gifts required for those we visit?  
 Continually keep in mind the temperature of the destination (Thailand very Hot)  
 Don't bring your best stuff, in fact plan to leave some stuff with those who might need it more. (ie- clothing/ towels...)  
 Make room for items that you purchase there  
 Arrange for transportation  
 Reconfirm flight and time  
 Are we going camping/trekking?

### **Clothing**

T-shirts  
 Nice shirts  
 Pants/Jeans  
 Shorts  
 Bathing suit (NO bikini's)  
 Underwear  
 Socks  
 Rain Gear/ Jacket/ Hat  
 (Rainy Season May - October)  
 Shoes  
 Tennis or Hiking Shoes  
 Thongs/Sandals  
 Something to keep shoes from warping in baggage

### **Toiletries**

Shampoo (small)  
 Deodorant (sticks are smaller than spray)  
 Comb/brush  
 Toothbrush/Toothpaste (small)/Floss  
 Razor & Cream (or electric)  
 Bug spray  
 Soap (In container) (get there)  
 Wet ones or hand gel (small)  
 Tissues (get there)  
 Eye drops (optional)

Suntan lotion (SPF 15-45)

Ladies - sanitary napkins are available at any grocery store.  
 Tampons are harder to find.

### **Medicine**

Medicines (prescription)  
 Small Tylenol, Neosporin, Zantac (optional)  
 Vitamins (optional)

### **Other Stuff**

Empty day carry packs  
 Luggage ID tags  
 Dirty clothing bag (compression bag)  
 Towel (optional) (Light camping towel?)  
 Books  
     Technical: For specific project/task  
     Spiritual: (ie prayer walking)  
     Fiction/fun (only 1)  
     Bible (small?)  
     Notebook/journal/pens  
 Hiking water bottle  
 Camera (optional)  
 Photo album of family (very small/optional)  
 Walkman/Music (Walkman: Not recommended for Thailand Trip)  
 Batteries and 110/220v charger (optional)  
 Alarm clock (optional)  
 Small Portable mirror (optional)  
 Eye covers/ear plugs (optional)  
 Sunglasses/prescription glasses (Spare?)  
 1 guitar for the team  
 Gifts and trinkets for the children (i.e. key chains, plastic rings, stickers, hotwheels, dolls, stuffed animals, etc.)

### **Financial**

Wallet/coin pouch/check book  
 Small locks for bags (optional)  
 Business cards (optional)  
 Small Calendar/Diary (optional)  
 Or Electric organizer/address book/phone numbers