

Flights:

We booked our flights from Fort Lauderdale > New York and then separate flights from New York > Thailand

We also opted to fly from city to city on Air Asia instead of taking the train it wasn't very expensive its quicker, easier and obviously faster!

Hotels:

Be sure to account for the time difference as to when you will land and what day you will check into your first hotel, I miscalculated and was only issued a partial refund for my mistake.

We got into Thailand and chose not to spend any time in Bangkok. From what I read online it seemed like a big, overwhelming and unclean city, perhaps if we had more time we would have stayed a night or two but I was ultimately happy with our choice not to really spend time there.

Language:

Everyone speaks English! I learned a few basic Thai words for fun and just so I could get used to the different sounds but literally just about everyone, even in the smaller towns spoke English.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-sAltTy9p8g>

Kanchanaburi | December 14-18

We landed at Bangkok International Airport and immediately made our way to Kanchanaburi. Full disclosure this was a lot of travel, the flight from New York to China was 15 hours, the flight to Thailand was 5 hours and then travelling from Bangkok to Kanchanaburi was two hours outside of the city. Depending on your vacation style I would DEFINETLY recommend going to Kanchanaburi. This is a very calm town. I don't recommend it because its lively with a lot to do and see, I would recommend it for the exact opposite reason. Think greeting the hotels elephant every morning, lounging around, reading, floating down the river, massages and overall hardcore quiet time. We stayed at the River Kwai Jungle Rafts. This was a floating hotel! The only way to get to the hotel is by boat and the scenery was amazing, there is no electricity at this specific hotel but the overall town is so very simple and the view of the stars at night is breath taking. One of the humblest moments we had on our entire trip was visiting the village of the local Mon people while staying here. We were also able to book a few excursions while here, we took a day trip to the waterfalls and hiked up to seven different waterfalls. We also did a zip lining tour through one of the sister hotels.

Excursions at River Kawi Jungle Rafts

<https://www.riverkwaijunglerafes.com/kanchanaburi-hotels/things-to-do/book-tours-excursions/>

Here are a list of hotels on the river.

<https://thailand.tripcanvas.co/kanchanaburi/floating-riverfront-hotels/>

If you decide to go to Kanchanaburi be sure to get the card and phone number for the taxi driver who takes you out of Bangkok so you can call him to bring you back to the city.

Koh Samui | December 18-22

We flew from Don Mueang to Surat Thani then took a bus to the ferry port and a ferry to Koh Samui. This part seemed overwhelming but its easier than it sounds to arrange, just use the company Phantip.

<https://www.phantiptravel.com>

You will be able to walk off your flight, find the Phantip kiosk and your travel will be arranged all the way for them to drop you off at your hotel in Koh Samui or whatever island you choose to visit.

We stayed at the KC Resort & Over Water Villas I would recommend this hotel, it was so beautiful we got one of the grand junior suites and it was amazing!! The location was central. There are plenty of temples to visit and sites to see, you can do plenty of shopping, we were surprised by all the food choices there are a lot of options besides Thai food, which can be comforting when you are so far from home! Some websites say not to take a tuk tuk or one of the red bus taxis to get around, however, we found them to be perfectly safe and a fun way to get around, just agree on the price before you get in. I would recommend booking most of your excursions ahead of time if you can. We planned to book our excursions once we got there and we couldn't do any boating or water excursions because of the weather. (if we would have booked ahead of time we would have been able to go) We did the around the island tour, ATV tour, cooking class and jungle tour, all great, but really wish we would have gone island hopping!

Excursions Koh Samui

<http://www.kosamui.com/tours/tours-top10.htm>

Chiang Mai | December 22-27

We flew from Surat Thani to Chiang Mai (Northern Thailand) and arranged travel back through the same company, Phantip. Northern Thailand is known for its nature and food culture. There are a lot of temples to visit and great shopping. We really wanted to visit with the elephants, after doing a lot of research we found that riding them is super inhumane, they use bull hooks in their noses to control where they go and apparently its terrible to witness. They have elephant sanctuaries with rescued elephants, you can play with the them, help bath them and feed them, that is how we spent Christmas Day and it was phenomenal! Just do your research to find an elephant sanctuary instead of elephant park. We also took several cooking classes one of the best ones was in Chiang Mai. One of my favorite day trips while we were in Northern

Thailand was to the white temple, in Chiang Rai which was breathtaking! Chiang Mai had some of the best nightlife, markets and fun bars to go to!

<https://elephantjunglesanctuary.com/chiang-mai/>

<https://www.bonvoyagethailand.com/chiang-mai-tours/chiang-rai-white-temple-and-black-house.html>

<http://www.chiangmai.bangkok.com/5-best-nightclubs.htm>

(#2 Zoe in Yellow was great! Its in the middle of a kind of “downtown” area)