



Things to do in Chiang Mai Thailand with kids

Description

Many people come to **Chiang Mai** but don't actually arrive in it, but rather use it as a home base for trips and attractions in North Thailand, especially with kids. Elephants, tigers, ziplines, insects, reptiles, two or three temples, night bazaar and let's move on. We had a chance, thanks to our slow traveling style, of experiencing Chiang Mai as a place worth a visit and a long stay in itself.

In Chiang Mai you can easily find amazing food in funny prices, a sweet old city where you can wonder in its alleys for hours and days, cool scene of second hand items and vegan and veggie and organic and gluten-free and lactose-free and whatever between them, a large variety of courses and workshops like Thai massage, cooking, photographing for beginners and for advanced, drawing, pottery and much much more. It's simply a cool city that despite being one Thailand's biggest cities, still keeps a relaxed and pleasant atmosphere.

A period of several weeks in Chiang Mai should be sufficient to chill out while wondering the streets and tasting delicacies here, there and everywhere. It's also easy to take a day trip for an out-of-town adventure or a nice attraction nearby (it's cheaper to book attractions while staying in Chiang Mai rather than doing it from home as part of a package tour) and also become a student for a short time. Take a class of some mind opening skill or a special interest you always wished you've mastered.



The streets of Chiang Mai old city



Street artist in Chiang Mai night bazaar

Essential attraction in Chiang Mai – Ziplines park

Our Eldest chose to celebrate his birthday in a zipline park, one of many marketed in signs all over the city. We took the deal of [The Flying Squirrels](#). Back at home, for some reason, most of the travel agencies will try to sell the Flight of the Gibbon which costs double for reasons that are not clear to us (it is the Lonely Planet™s recommendation though). We did some market research and eventually took The Flying Squirrels because they met our safety requirements, received good reviews in the internet and were significantly cheaper than the Gibbons.

In any case all of these parks include pickup from your hotel/guesthouse, arrival in the park itself, short briefing, shirt and bandana, safety gear and off we go to the ziplines. Two and a half hours of hovering between the trees, screams of joy and terror, and real good time. When finished everybody gets buffet lunch in the park and a ride back home. The staff is extremely professional.

It starts with the colors of the shirts that come with some distinguishable color, to make it easy for the staff to trace you while you™re flying between trees screaming like pussies. It continues with the bandanas that are not there merely for impression reasons. Soon enough you realize you need since

you sweat like a horse under the helmets. The jokes of the guides who seems to be scheduled and repeated for every new group that comes. Even the music is supposedly joyful on the way to the park in the morning and silent to non-existent on the way back, because anyway everybody fall asleep within minutes. They simply know their job.
The price is 2000 baht per person (55\$).



Flying Squirrels Ziplines park near Chiang Mai



Flying Squirrels Ziplines park near Chiang Mai



Day trip to Chiang Dao

During all our stay in SEA in general and in Thailand in particular we try to avoid “tourists traps” and attractions that include inappropriate treatment of animals (riding elephants, fondling with tigers and their alike). So it was clear for us that elephants, tigers and jeeps are not going to have the pleasure of meeting us. Jeeps are actually not an animal, but still we think they’re not fun either. Insects and

reptiles I try to avoid, so theyâ€™re also not on our attractions menu.

So we tailored ourselves a nice independent daytrip out of town with a nice British family (who has this [blog](#)). We simply hired a minivan with a driver for a whole day. We agreed on a price and a route and off we went. We picked Tuesday as our takeoff day when a local hill tribes market takes place in Chiang Dao, one of the towns not far from Chiang Mai. We carried on to a nice really impressive cave and finished the day dipping in the hot springs nearby.

The price is 1800 baht (50\$) for hiring the minivan and the driver. You can find a driver in the many travel agencies scattered around the old city. The entrance fee to the Chiang Dao cave was 340 baht for us all (10\$) that also included a private guide.



Spices seller in Chiang Dao Tuesday market



The beautiful surrounding of Chiang Dao in North Thailand



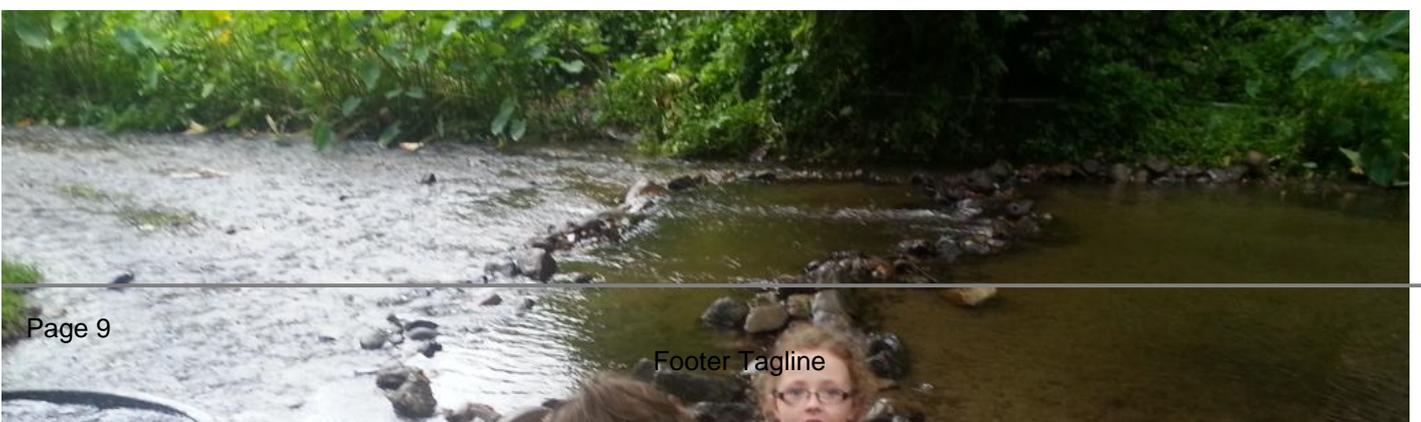
Shrine in Chiang Dao cave



Inside Chiang Dao cave (Photo credit: Aaron Brooks)



Chiang Dao Hotspings (Photo credit: Aaron Brooks)



Chiang Dao Hotsprings

Classes and workshops in Chiang Mai

From the large variety of options that are offered in this lovely city I chose a Thai massage class and a Thai cooking class. Both were excellent.

Thai Massage class

The massage class was actually a personal course I built together with the trainer. I took one day of studying the fundamentals of Thai massage and then added another longer day of a traditional Thai midwives abdominals massage class. I created a class that fitted my personal interests and that was a wonderful experience.

There is a plenty of massage classes in Chiang Mai. How to choose? TripAdvisor is full of information and that's always a good starting point. So I flipped through TripAdvisor and waited for a gut feeling to come up and direct me to the right place where my heart will want to follow. I added the physical location factor. After all in a city so full of options why not choose a place within a walking distance from our guesthouse, right next to our favorite restaurant where dine at least thrice a week.. ? That's how I picked my class and indeed it was exactly what I wanted, with a very experienced trainer. It was very methodical and well organized. It included intensive hands-on practice and a certificate with Thai scribbles in the end.

The price for a class in [MTM Thai Massage](#) was 3000 baht (82\$).



My Thai massage class

Thai Cooking class

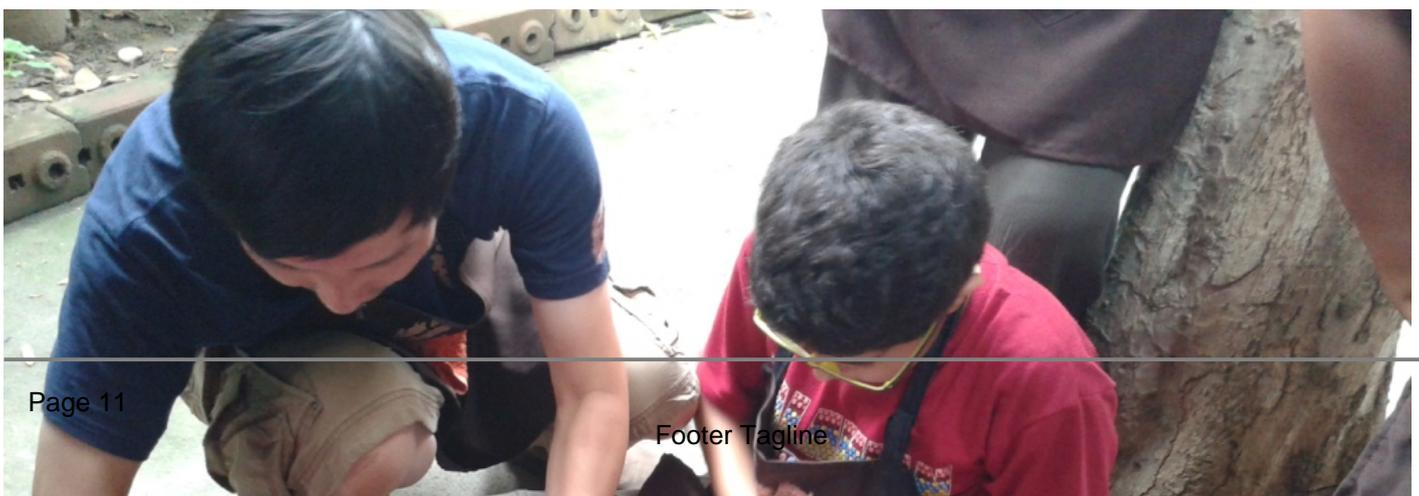
A cooking class in Thailand is almost a cliché. But, you have to do it. It's really fun. You actually learn there how to cook the familiar and delicious Thai food. It's also a great quality time if you do it as a couple or with one of your kids like I did. And of course our Eldest, the foodie and cooking fan, was so happy.

It was really a lovely day. The attractions industry in Thailand and in Chiang Mai in particular is very well organized. They know how to give you good time and value for your money without bullshit. They don't waste a minute. You smoothly flow between the different stages of cooking. The trainers are skilled. The recipes booklet you get in the end of the class is fine and detailed. The hats you'll wear when you go to the market are properly silly. In short, a perfect and delicious class and when it ends you feel exactly what you need to feel after completing a perfect and delicious cooking class – that you can do yourselves at home. Right after a week of two of recovering from what you have eaten there. And you HAVE eaten.

The price of a cooking class in [Asia Scenic](#) is 1000 baht per person (27\$).



A silly hat at the Thai Cooking class



Preparing curry paste

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