



FLY and BiKE
internationaal gezelschap

**14 Days/13 Nights
Departure Dates:**

2009

8 Nov – 21 Nov

13 Dec – 26 Dec

2010

24 Jan - 6 Feb

14 March - 27 March

6 June - 19 June

4 July - 17 July

7 Nov - 20 Nov

12 Dec - 25 Dec

If these dates don't suit your travel schedule, please

contact us to talk about operating a private tour or customizing a tour for you or your group.

Prices

USD 1950 Tour
USD 150 Fiets

€ 375 Single Supplement

De prijzen in Euro vindt u op de website www.flyandbike.be

River of Kings Ride

Thailand's long history is an ever present companion during this bicycle tour as you ride through ancient cities of Thailand, where the ruins of once-great kingdoms now lie in silent splendor giving testament to their glorious past.

Our ride starts from the city walls of Chiang Mai, the former capital of the Lanna kingdom which ruled northern Thailand from the 13th to 18th century. Cycling south we reach Lampang, another stronghold from the Lanna era and stop to see the oldest and holiest stupa in Thailand, Wat Phra That Haripunchai.

Taking quiet back roads, where you will be amazed at how little traffic is encountered, we follow the Chao Phraya river valley south to Sukhothai. Here the king had absolute power and reigned over his subjects in the 13th and 14th centuries and we'll spend the day exploring the ruins and learning about this era. We then get truly off the beaten path and head to Kampheng Phet, the Diamond Wall City, a former defensive fort built to protect Sukhothai.

Next stop will be Ayutthaya, which reigned from 1350 until being sacked by Burma in 1767. The ruins are worth visiting before we head towards the more modern period of the Rattanakosin Kingdom and the summer palace at Bang Pa In.

We leave ancient history behind us when we go to Kanchanaburi and visit the infamous Bridge Over the River Kwai. Another difference will be the landscape, which suddenly rises up into sharp karst mountains, a dramatic change from the plains of central Thailand.

The River of Kings Ride takes you back in time, far from the busy streets and fast paced modern city to a period of more than 700 years ago. It's a tour where you can lose yourself in old world ruins and history, thereby experiencing the culture of this truly mesmerizing country.



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Trip Profile

The scenery is ever changing as it starts in the mountainous north, then continues through the emerald paddy fields of the central rice belt and then to the rugged jungles of Kanchanaburi before arriving in the vibrant metropolis of Bangkok.

Biking Difficulty



(out of five)

Good quality tarmac roads over primarily flat terrain except for the first two days. Some days are more than 100 km.

We ride 530 kilometers in 11 days of riding, but this tour is mainly on road so the distances are not too strenuous. We have designed the route for those who wish to see the rural Thai countryside and the rich history of Thailand, all while enjoying an active holiday.

We have a few climbs on the first two days as we cross the hills surrounding Chiang Mai. The central part of Thailand is flat, and after the third day we do not see many other hills of significance.

The trip is fully supported and your guide's expert knowledge of the area and terrain means that you always know what is coming up in terms of distance and difficulty. This makes a tremendous difference, as does the constant supply of cold drinks and fresh fruit.

Suitability: You can expect a fairly gentle ride each day with none of the distances being overly long. There are a few small hills and some dirt trails, but these can be tackled by anyone with even a moderate amount of fitness. The emphasis on this tour is Thailand's history, culture, scenery and all off the beaten track.

Biking Conditions: This trip is mainly on tarmac roads with a few days where we will have hard packed dirt trails – no off road experience required. An air-conditioned support bus travels behind the group to support us and participants can cycle as much or as little as they like and still enjoy the same views as the rest of the group.



Cycling Distance

530 kilometers

Cycling Days

8 full, 3 half

Day to Day

B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner

Day 1 - Chiang Mai

Arrival at Chiang Mai and transfer to the hotel. Check-in and leisure time. In the evening, we enjoy a delicious welcome dinner at a restaurant overlooking the Ping River.

Manathai Village. D

Day 2 - Chiang Mai

After breakfast, we explore the ancient and modern city of Chiang Mai, including its old city walls, gates and moat, markets, residential areas and Tapae, Chiang Mai's main street. We continue our tour with a drive up Doi Suthep to Wat Phra Thad Doi Suthep (AD 1384), the most sacred temple in North Thailand. Inside the cloister of the temple you will see one of the most sacred stupas in all of Thailand. A panoramic view of the city can be seen from here at 3,500 ft. above sea level. Then visit Wat Jed Yord (AD 1455) featuring a seven spired stupa and Wat Suan Dok, where the ashes of Chiang Mai's royal family are interred. Dinner is your choice tonight; our guides have a list of recommendations.

Manathai Village. B L

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We have carefully chosen accommodation that is the best available for the location and offer a good mix, from home stays to luxurious lodges, on our tours.

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We love Asian cuisine, well-known for being hot and spicy and for its use of fresh ingredients, and will make sure you get to sample lots of it.

Day 3 - Chiang Mai – Lampang

We ride south of Chiang Mai following a scenic route alongside the Ping River. Eventually arriving at the ancient town of Lamphun in time for lunch. Afterward we visit Chiang Wat Phra That Hariphunchai, built around 1044 AD, and one of the finest examples of ancient Lanna temple architecture before transferring to Lampang. Dinner is at delightful riverside restaurant.

Wienglakor Hotel. Ride 50 km. B L D

Day 4 – Lampang – Uttaradit

After our short transfer into the hills of Maerang, we ride on small country roads over small quaint bridges and through small local villages. You'll also be able to get off your bike and stroll through the many colorful markets found on today's tour. Stopping at one of the many temples we pass is also encouraged and you might be intrigued by the town of Ban Nasan, noted for its bamboo products. We have a few hills to climb before we reach the Mysterious Rock Garden and then it's downhill all the way into the historic town of Phrae. Transfer to Uttaradit.

Seeharaj Hotel. Ride 47 km. B L D

Day 5 - Uttaradit - Sukhothai

We really head off the beaten track today as we ride on some of the most secluded and beautiful roads in Thailand as a canopy of palm trees provides some natural protection from the hot Thai sun. We pass lush green paddy fields and many villages as we wind head towards the first capital of Thailand, Sukhothai. The 13th Century reign is generally viewed as the "golden age" of Siam due to the fact that its influence spread as far west as Burma, east as far as Cambodia and south down into Malaysia. Ride to Sri Satchanali Historical Park. Transfer to hotel. Tonight we have dinner at the excellent Dream Café surrounded by artifacts and antiques.

Ruean Thai Hotel. Ride 82 km. B L D

Day 6 - Sukhothai

A day to enjoy the original capital of Thailand by taking a ride round the historic park. A UNESCO World Heritage site, there are more than 193 ruins surrounded by three moats and bridged by four gateways. Bikes are the best way to enjoy this ancient city and you won't want to forget your camera to capture some of the stunning Buddha statues. Or simply have a day off the bike and enjoy the town of Sukhothai.

Ruean Thai Hotel. Ride 25 km. B L D

Day 7 - Sukhothai - Khampeng Phet

Khampeng Phet, also known as the "Diamond Wall City," was a military fortress used to help defend Sukhothai from invading armies. The moss and flower covered ruins give it a quality that is not seen in its more popular and restored neighbor of Sukhothai. We have plenty of time to visit the sites by foot or by bicycle. The ride to Khampeng Phet is on pleasant country roads with plenty of activity going on to keep your attention.

Chakungrao Riverview. Ride 89 km. B L D

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Thailand is one the world's largest producers of rice and accounts for 26 per cent of world exports, more than any other country. Thailand grows high quality, long-grain white rice on some 10 million hectares of land in all provinces of the country.

Day 8 - Khampeng Phet - Uthai Thani

Transfer in the morning before enjoying a leisurely ride along very scenic roads to Uthai Thani. You'll quickly understand why Thailand is the top exporter of rice when you see the many paddies on your route today. Look out for water buffaloes wallowing in a puddle and for ducks taking a dip in a rice field. Arrive in Uthai Thani in time for lunch on board a charming restored rice barge while you cruise on the Sakaekrang River. Relax as banks of the river offers up glimpses into traditional Thai-style of living – from men fishing to women doing the laundry to children playing.

Uthai River Lake Resort. Ride 49 km. B L D

Day 9 - Uthai Thani - Pa Mok - Ayutthaya

After breakfast time to get on the bike for a ride on Thepho Island. This forested island is noted for its attractive lush greenery and is where the Chao Phraya River and Sakaekrang rivers meet. Today we cross the river several times by ferry, passing by orchards and rice fields, and riding along the shady banks of the Chao Phraya River. Finally arriving in Chai Nat in time for lunch. In the afternoon we transfer to Wat Pa Mok where we visit a reclining Buddha before arriving in Ayutthaya. If you still have the energy, enjoy a late afternoon ride around the historical park.

Pludhaya Resort & Spa. Ride 59 km. B L D

Day 10 - Ayutthaya - Bang Pa In – River Kwai

Today we ride south to Bang Pa In to visit the Summer Palace of King Rama V who regularly spent his summers there. The structures represent a variety of architectural styles, from very old Chinese handicraft to European 19th Century ornaments and furniture. All of them set in a large park around ponds and waterways. After a local lunch, transfer by van to Kanchanaburi, stopping en route to visit the bridge over the River Kwai. Arrive at your jungle resort in the evening.

Resotel Resort. Ride 27 km. B L D

Day 11 - River Kwai – Kanchanaburi

Today we follow the River Kwai as we ride through the jungle, between farmer's fields, along a mixture of jeep trails, tarmac and quiet back roads to the town of Kanchanaburi. We stop for lunch at a local restaurant on the way.

Royal River Kwai. Ride 50 km. B L D

Day 12 - Kanchanaburi - Floating Market

In the morning we depart by bus to Damnoen Saduak and visit the famous floating market. We then start our bicycle ride following canal paths and small back roads where you'll see temples and fruit orchards varying from lychee to pomelo and guava to coconuts ripe for picking.

Chotika Riverfront. Ride 32 km. B L D

Day 13 - Bangkok

We transfer to Bangkok and then take a ride in the green part of Bangkok called Ban Kra Jao. You will be surprised feel so removed from the bustling city just on the other side of the river. Our farewell dinner will be a river cruise on a converted rice barge on the Chao Praya River – what better way to end The River of Kings tour.

Majestic Grande Hotel. Ride 20 km. B D

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Day 14 Bangkok – Departure

Free time until transfer to the airport for your onward flight.

B.

Nuts & Bolts

Bikes: Rental bike included. The bikes are well-known makes of Hybrid or Mountain bikes (depending on the tour) with lightweight alloy frames, 24- to 27-speed gearing, v-brakes and Shimano components and front suspension.

Safety: Wearing a helmet is strongly recommended on all our biking adventures and if you choose not to wear one you will be asked to sign a liability waiver. Your tour leader is trained in first aid and emergency rescue, but to a large degree you must be responsible for your own safety while riding. It is therefore compulsory that you take out travel insurance that will cover you for a mountain biking tour.

Support: We will be supported by an air-conditioned vehicle that has been specially modified for cycle tours. The vehicles follow us the whole time and it is very easy to get bikes on and off, so you can rest when you are tired and cycle whenever you feel like it.

Guides: You will be led by a local English-speaking tour leader and if the group is 8 people or more we will add another leader to the tour. All our tour leaders are well informed in the history, culture and religions of the area where you are biking and are skilled at passing that knowledge on to you. Your tour leader is also medically trained and an experienced cyclist, able to handle most minor repairs en route.

Subject to Change

In remote destinations abnormal conditions can prevail at any time, and all adventurous holidays can therefore be subject to unexpected change and we will do our best to adhere to the original itinerary and cannot be held responsible for any last minute changes; in order to enjoy them you should be prepared to be flexible when necessary.

The Nitty Gritty

Arriving and Departing: This tour starts in Chiang Mai and ends in Bangkok, Thailand. International and domestic flights to and from there are not included in the tour price. Please contact us for advice before arranging flights for the best arrival and departure times.

Passports and Visas: All nationalities require a passport for entry into Thailand. Please ensure your passport is valid for at least 6 months from date of entry. If staying less than 30 days then a visa in advance is not required by European, North American, Australian and many other nationalities. You will need to show proof of an onward flight out of Thailand to be eligible for the visa on arrival. This is strictly enforced.

Health: We recommend that you visit a travel medical doctor and ask about the following vaccinations: typhoid, polio, tetanus and hepatitis A. A certificate for Yellow Fever is required when arriving from an infected area within six days.

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Weather: Northern and Central Thailand has a tropical climate with fairly high humidity. There are three seasons: from March to June it is hot and dry, with temperatures between 27 and 40C, with night temperatures in the 20s. The rainy season is from July to October, but temperatures are slightly lower, because of the effect of the rain. During this time it will not rain continuously, but in sharp bursts, and the sun can come out quickly. The cooler season is from October to February, with average temperatures between 20 and 30C.

Food: Meals are included as per the itinerary where B = breakfast, L = lunch, D = dinner. Most meals are local and feature noodles, rice, curries and soups. Any special dietary requirements can also be catered for as well. Please let us know at the time of booking.

Drink: Keeping you completely hydrated is a job we take very seriously. Cold water, some energy-restoring local fruit and soft drinks are included in the tour price. Beer is freely available everywhere, but is NOT included in the price.

Extra Expenses: We recommend that you tuck away a few extra dollars, perhaps US\$20, for incidentals.

Money: The Thai currency is the baht. ATMs, which are abundant, are the easiest ways to get Thai baht. Have a supply of US dollars in cash on hand, just in case your card doesn't work. Banks or the more rare private moneychangers offer the best foreign-exchange rates. Credit cards are accepted in big cities and resort hotels but you'll need baht for family-run guesthouses or restaurants.

The information in this document is given in good faith, and covers the average range of conditions likely to be found on this trip. Where differences exist in the information between this and previous information, this document is the correct version and supersedes the brochure or website.

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