

Life Change People: Responsible Travel Policy

The Life Change People is a small company, based in Chiang Mai, Northern Thailand. We offer evidence based Life Change Programmes, delivered by experienced professional practitioners, as part of a holiday experience, designed to meet the individual needs and interests of each participant.

Our Aims

- We aim to offer every one of our clients the professional help necessary to bring about the major life change which they want or need.
- The Company is committed to remaining small, restricting the number of clients undertaking Programmes at any one time, thereby allowing us to truly cater to individual need and preference, and to minimise any negative affect on the surrounding environment.
- We ask our clients to join us in achieving our aim of ensuring that the presence of The Life Change People in Chiang Mai brings positive benefits to the area and its people. This will be achieved by: making regular donations to The Vieng Ping Childrens Home, a local Charity providing residential and community care for children whose parents have either died or cannot look after them, maintaining an attitude of respect to people and the environment, at all times and using the services of local businesses, buying local products and visiting attractions which provide employment for and understanding of the local community.

Travellers Code Of Conduct

- Water shortages can be problematic here in Chiang Mai, particularly in view of the long dry season. You can contribute to efforts to save this vital resource by;
 - a) Noting and following your hotels guidelines regarding laundry. You will usually be asked to indicate your willingness to use sheets and towels more than once, please do so.
 - b) Most hotel and some restaurant and shop toilets will have the choice of a short or long flush...select short wherever possible.
 - c) Follow the instructions on signs which ask you not to flush paper products.
 - d) Shower rather than bathe.
 - e) Use the glasses provided for cleaning your teeth and fill the sink for shaving, rather than let the water run.
- You will notice that many shops in Chiang Mai have signs asking people to avoid asking for plastic bags where possible. There are many cotton shoulder bags for sale, often in aid of local Charities. Please consider buying and using them for your shopping.

- Many local craftspeople can benefit from visitors buying their work rather than mass produced souvenirs. One of our team members, Son, who will be your guide on your chosen outings, can advise you on what is available and where to find it.
- Chiang Mai has a huge selection of locally owned small restaurants, cafes and street food stalls. You will miss a great opportunity to sample some of the most delicious and inexpensive food in the world if you don't try as many of these as possible. We are very happy to recommend both special dishes and places to eat them.
- Please bring, or be prepared to purchase, suitable clothes for visiting the many very special temples in Chiang Mai. Our staff will advise according to your chosen itinerary.
- A certain amount of bargaining is an accepted part of many transactions including market purchases and tuk-tuk rides. This can be fun if conducted with mutual respect and in the knowledge that the traders need to earn a living.
- The Thai Royal Family are revered and respected by the people of Thailand and anything said to undermine them is likely to cause offence. It is fascinating and informative to learn from local people, about the contributions made by King Bhumibol and Queen Sirikit to Thai life and economy.

Environmental

- The Life Change People has an online brochure only.
- All communication is by e-mail or Skype.
- We support local initiatives aimed at preventing the use of plastic bags.
- We collect bottles, tin and paper for recycling.
- We inform our guests about ways in which they can support their hotels and the local community by not wasting water.
- Our guests are either individuals or couples, and we restrict our number of guests to 4 at any one time. This allows us to provide a meaningful support programme for each individual as well as minimising harmful affects on the environment.
- Chiang Mai does have a traffic problem. It is a very small city, enabling a lot of sightseeing to be done on foot. We provide walking routes and maps for our guests.
- Chiang Mais' air quality has suffered from the negative affects of burning rubbish. We make our clients aware of this and ensure that we collect all litter while on trips.
- During the course of each Life Change Holiday, clients will be offered a complementary trip to a local site of historical and/or cultural interest. Holiday packages consist of a further range of

such trips and special arrangements can also be made to meet individual interests and requirements.

- The Life Change People support local initiatives aimed at preserving and caring for the elephant population. Visits to elephant camps and sanctuaries are available as part of several packages and can also be arranged by request. We particularly recommend and arrange trips to the elephant Nature Park, www.elephantnaturepark.org which is run by award winning conservationist, Lek Sangduen Chailert, which allows visitors to observe and help care for elephants in their natural environment.
- We are happy to provide information and arrange visits where possible, to Royal Projects which typify the King and Queens' contribution to the well being of their people.
- While making every attempt to satisfy our client's wishes, the range of activities and trips we offer will reflect our commitment to supporting locally run initiatives which provide employment or otherwise benefit Chiang Mai.

Economic

- Clients will stay in one of our four partner hotels in Chiang Mai. Each of these small hotels is Thai owned and the majority of staff employed are local. Each specially selected hotel makes its own unique contribution to the promotion of local history and culture. This includes traditional architecture and design, collection and display of Lanna artwork, locally sourced furniture and textiles, menus featuring a variety of local food, massage and spa treatments based on traditional principles.
- Each of our partner hotels contributes to their local temple, makes charitable donations to the Vieng Ping home and other charities of their choice and employs and trains local staff.
- The majority of trips will be of an individual nature, and will be escorted by Son, a member of our company who is himself local and is also a registered tour guide. The only exception to this will be the Hill Tribe Treks which we will arrange with a local company who shares our commitment to responsible tourism.
- The Life Change People will donate 5% of the profit from each Programme to the Vieng Ping Childrens Home. This facility cares for children living with HIV infection, and any other children whose parents have died or who cannot care for them. As well as providing residential care, they support local fostering placements, and involve children in education and work training placements.

Social

- All trips offered by the Life Change People are selected on the basis that they are of benefit to the people of Chiang Mai. This could be through providing employment, protecting wildlife, selling local crafts or promoting the history and culture of the area. Examples of popular trips include; Queen Sirikits Botanical Gardens, Tour of local temples including meeting monks, trip to Wat Phrathat Doi Suthep, a temple of great local significance, trips to elephant camps, visiting orchid growers, visit to craft village, trip to National Park to view birds and other wildlife, market trips and mountain treks which include visits to hill tribe villages as mentioned above.
- Our full time staff are only two in number, one local fully trained guide/driver and one Western Life Change Practitioner. Other Life Change Practitioners contribute to the Programmes. All professional services connected to the Life Change People, I.T. services, legal support, accounting services, are all provided by local businesses.
- The Life Change People make voluntary contributions during visits to; temples, local museums, cultural centres and the Elephant Nature Park. We also buy information and guide books produced by local temples and distribute them to our guests during trips.
- We encourage our guests to use local buses and tuk-tuks when travelling around Chiang Mai and make them aware of what they can expect to pay for particular journeys. While a degree of price negotiation is acceptable, we are keen to encourage our guests to pay fairly.
- We introduce our guests to local markets and other street food venues and advise them about local specialities. On trips, local food is always provided, usually bought from stalls on the way.
- Representatives of The Life Change People will be in contact with clients before their trip to arrange Personality Profiling, and to truly individualise your stay by discussing your preferences for trips, and other activities. You will also be offered information on any social or religious customs which may affect your choice of clothing when packing for your trip. Any change in the social or political climate will also be communicated to you before your visit.

The Life Change People takes pride in its aims as described in our Responsible Travel Policy. It has been devised by the whole staff team, will be distributed to our partner hotels and is available on our website.

We welcome feedback on how we are doing and how we could do better. In the event that you wish to complain about any aspect of the implementation of this policy, please speak to your Life

Change Practitioner who will discuss your concern with the team attempting to resolve the issue, hopefully in collaboration with yourself.