

THAILAND COUNTRY INFO

The Location

Land of golden temples and lush, glowing landscapes, Thailand is a country of surreal beaches, rural areas rich in culture, and fascinating cities in Southeast Asia. Its monsoon season begins sometime between May and July and typically lasts until November. Exotic elephants, tropical rain forests, floating markets and temple ruins, the resplendence of Thailand drives its tourism industry, but it also hides its dark secrets.

The Condition

Thailand has over 80,000 child prostitutes and AIDS has left nearly 300,000 orphans. The girls who have the highest risk of falling into prostitution are those from poor tribal villages who have no educational opportunities, like those we will be ministering to in Chiang Kham. The primary religion in Thailand is Buddhism, making up 95% of the population! For more than a decade, RIM teams have partnered with local pastors to offer hope in the midst of suffering.

The Strategy

Once you arrive in country, you will be involved in a variety of ministry opportunities. These include ministering at an orphanage for girls saved from going into prostitution, developing relationships through teaching conversational English, a few days in the red-light district, community development projects, preparing or planting rice depending on the rainy season, prayer walks in Buddhist temples serving local churches and pastors, and evangelism presentations and one-on-one outreach.

Also, **practice your Thai!** A strong and immediate bridge can be built with your new Thai friends if you know just a few phrases in their language (see Thai Conversations at the back of this packet). The fact that you made an attempt will mean a lot. You'll develop a close rapport quickly!

Cultural Tips

The Thai people are proud of their country and culture so your interest and respect for both will certainly be well received. As with many countries in South Asia, people tend to speak much more softly than in America. Remember to keep your voice at an indoor level! In addition, recognize that saving face is important so never criticize someone in front of others. Touching someone of the opposite sex is unusual, so keep this in mind both with your teammates in public and when meeting Thai people. However, smiling is almost always appropriate! A pleasant and patient manner is the default attitude in Thailand.

A common greeting among Thais is the “wai” in which a person places the palms of their hands together at chest level and bows slightly. It is not necessary or usually expected of foreigners to initiate this greeting, but always return a “wai” if it is offered. The use of last names is uncommon in Thailand so it is usual to address adults with a title then their given name (i.e. Mr. Scott, Ms. Kat). These tips will create lasting relationships and Kingdom opportunities!

Challenges for Prayer

Begin to pray daily for Thailand. Lift up the local church and its leaders as they minister to the people in their communities. Pray for those we will have the opportunity to share the Gospel with and for their continued relationship with the Lord and involvement in the church long after our team has left. Pray for spiritual freedom for Thai believers and physical freedom for the thousands of people in bondage, both those forced into slavery by others and those bound by addiction and sin. Prepare for the Lord to use you to shine the light of Jesus through the darkness in Thailand!

Our Ministry Schedule

As we worship and serve together, our team will bring light into the spiritual darkness and help the truth of the Gospel shine brighter than ever!! The month will include:

- Serving at girls homes that prevent trafficking
- Community development projects (red light district and tribal village outreaches)
- Talking with monks and prayer walks at Buddhist temples
- Teaching Thai students conversational English
- Visiting and encouraging house churches
- Adventure Day – Riding elephants, bamboo rafts, visiting temple ruins, and more...