



THE CHARM OF ISAAN

TRANSFORMING LOCAL WISDOM
INTO CREATIVE ECONOMY

5 - 6 AUGUST 2024 ✦ SAKON NAKHON AND NAKHON PHANOM



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Introduction

The Department of Information, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, has been organising Study Visits for members of the Diplomatic Corps and foreign media in Thailand, to a number of provinces across the country, including Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai, Chachoengsao and Chonburi. The main purpose of these Study Visits is to learn firsthand about the Royal Projects operating throughout the country, their far-reaching impact on the local communities as well as their contribution to the international community at large.

As part of the commemoration of the Auspicious Occasion of the 6th Cycle Birthday Anniversary this year of His Majesty King Maha Vajiralongkorn Phra Vajiraklaochaoyuhua on 28 July 2024, the Department of Information has organised a special Study Visit to Sakon Nakhon and Nakhon Phanom provinces from 5 - 6 August 2024.

The purpose is to highlight His Majesty's commitment to continue, preserve and build upon the royal legacy left behind by his father, His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej The Great, and how the people are taking this legacy forward. Themed "The Charm of Isaan: Transforming Local Wisdom into Creative Economy", this particular Study Visit will also feature the creative economy of Northeastern Thailand (Isaan region), well-known for their rich local wisdom, cultural diversity and creative endeavours.

Furthermore, these provinces offer significant prospects for growth and development. The Study Visit will also provide a platform for exchanging knowledge and ideas, fostering a deeper understanding of the Royally-initiated projects and local initiatives, and their lasting influence on the livelihoods of the Thai people.

Tentative Programme

'The Charm of Isaan: Transforming Local Wisdom into Creative Economy'
A Study Visit to Sakon Nakhon and Nakhon Phanom Provinces
5 - 6 August 2024

Monday, 5 August 2024 (Bangkok - Sakon Nakhon - Nakhon Phanom)

- 06:00 hrs. - Members of the Diplomatic Corps and Foreign Media arrive at Don Mueang International Airport
Dress Code: Smart casual with walking shoes. Participants may bring sunglasses, hat or umbrella and UV sunscreen for outdoor activities.
- **Registration & check-in** (luggage must be tagged by MFA/organizer team)
Remark: Please bring passport or identification for check-in at the airport
- 07:30 hrs. - Depart for Sakon Nakhon Airport by Thai Air Asia flight FD3510
- 08:40 hrs. - Arrive at Sakon Nakhon Airport
- 09:00 hrs. - Depart for Phu Thai Community at Ban None Hom Village by vans
- 09:30 hrs. - **Arrive at Phu Thai Community at Ban None Hom Village**
- Welcome & traditional performances by the Phu Thai Community
- 10:30 hrs. - Depart for Royally-initiated Nam Pheung Nam Kam River Basin Development Project

- 10:40 hrs. - Arrive at Royally-initiated
Nam Pheung-Nam Kam River Basin
Development Project
- 12:00 hrs. - Briefing and study visit of the project site
- Depart for the Puparn Royal Development
Study Centre
- 12:30 hrs. - Arrive at the Puparn Royal Development
Study Centre
- Lunch
Venue: Puparn Dining Hall
Remark: Food will be served in a sharing set
menu
- 13:30 hrs. - Briefing on background and main
objectives of the Study Centre
- Visit learning stations by tram,
including vetiver grass plantation, rice
cultivation, animal husbandry and
public health
- 16:00 hrs. - Depart for Vela Dhi Nakhon Phanom
Hotel, Nakhon Phanom Province
- 17:30 hrs. - Arrive at the Hotel and check-in
- 09:00-20:30 hrs. - Dinner Talk on “The Charm of Isaan:
Transforming Local Wisdom into Creative
Economy” hosted by Mr. Panidone
Pachimsawat, Deputy Director-General,
Department of Information, Ministry of
Foreign Affairs of Thailand
Venue: Yham Dhi B Reception Room
Dress Code: Smart casual
- Overnight at the Hotel

Tuesday, 6 August 2024

(Nakhon Phanom - Sakon Nakhon - Nakhon Phanom - Bangkok)

- Morning - Breakfast & Check-out
Venue: Yham Arun Restaurant, Vela Dhi Hotel
Remarks:
1. Please bring the luggage to the hotel lobby by 08:30 hrs. The Organizer team will collect all check-in luggage for advance check-in at the airport.
2. Please return key card at reception desk.
- 09:00 hrs. - Special Event / Workshop: 'Isaan's Burgeoning Tea Culture' by Chef Joe ("Samuay & Sons", an Isaan fine-dining restaurant, Bib Gourmand awardee in Michelin Guide 2023)
Dress Code: Smart casual
Venue: Yham Dhi B Reception Room
Remark: Snacks & drinks will be provided during the workshop
- 11:20 hrs. - Depart Vela Dhi Nakhon Phanom Hotel
- 11:30 hrs. - Lunch
Venue: The Tree Café & Restaurant, Mueang District, Nakhon Phanom
Remark: Food will be served in a sharing set menu

- 12:30 hrs. - Depart for Ban Donkoi (Sustainable Village) by vans
- 14:00 hrs. - Arrive at Ban Donkoi (Sustainable Village)
 - Background briefing on the Donkoi Model Global Market Project / Learn indigo fabric dyeing and weaving traditions
- 16:00 hrs. - Depart for Nakhon Phanom Airport
 - Remark: Snack box will be served.
- 18:00 hrs. - Arrive at Nakhon Phanom Airport
- 19:45 hrs. - Depart for Don Mueang International Airport by Thai Air Asia flight FD3343
- 20:55 hrs. - Arrive at Don Mueang International Airport

Sakon Nakhon Province

Sakon Nakhon, a unique province that seamlessly blends ancient traditions and cultures, is in the upper northeastern region of Thailand. Its rich history is evident in its numerous historical sites and Buddhist temples, which represents a harmonious combination of diverse culture.

With the vast Nong Han Lake dominating the scenery, the province is a haven for agriculture, with rice fields and fruit orchards all around the countryside. Also, Wat Phara That Choeng Shum, an ancient temple, is a testament to the province's rich history and architectural marvel. The Wax Palace procession festival, which celebrates the day before the end of Buddhist Lent, showcases the vibrant culture and traditions of the province. With its natural beauty, historical landmarks, and cultural festivities Sakon Nakhon is a captivating destination.

Reference: [TAT official website](#)



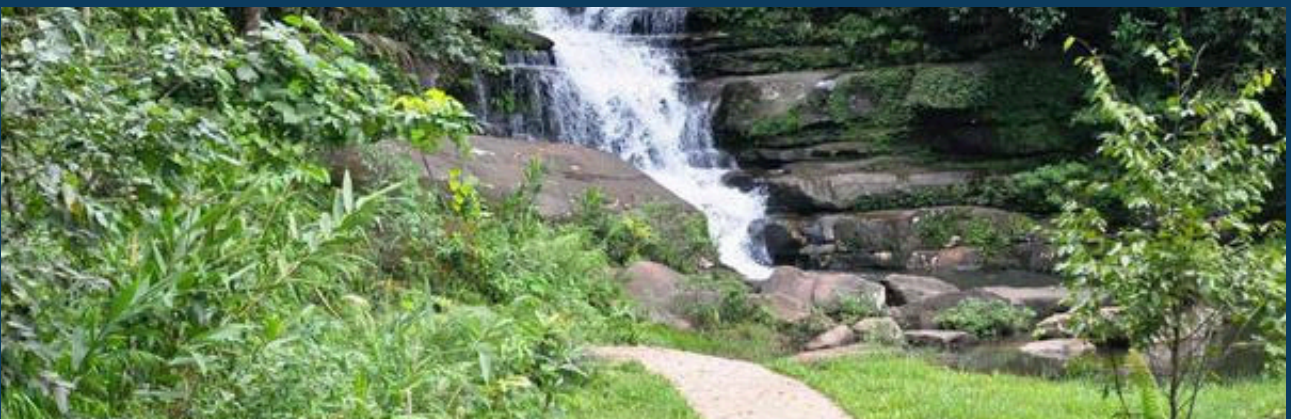
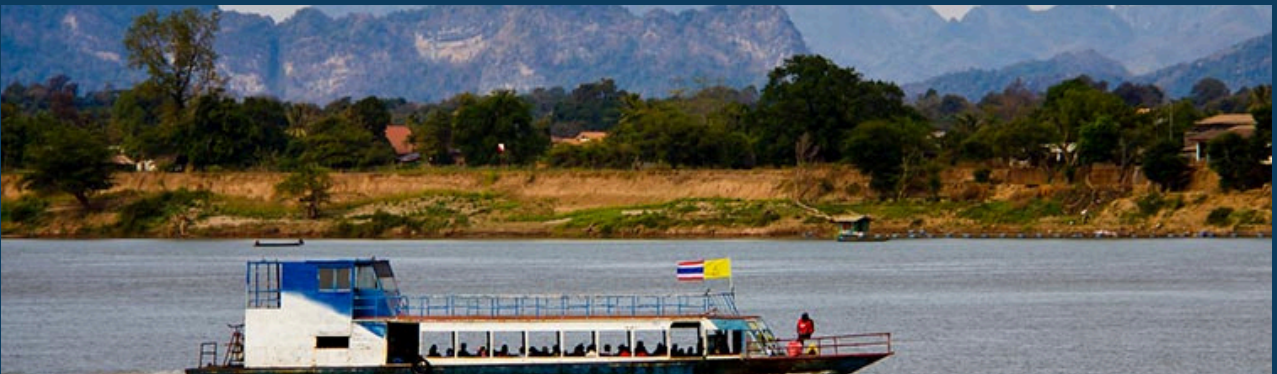
(Source: <https://www.expedia.se/Sakon-Nakhon.dx6241930?gallery-dialog=gallery-open>,
<https://www.takemetour.com/amazing-thailand-go-local/things-to-do-in-sakon-nakhon-thailand>)

Nakhon Phanom Province

Nakhon Phanom, nestled along the western bank of the Mekong River, offers a picturesque setting enhanced by the jungle-covered mountains and a rich cultural heritage. King Rama I fittingly named the province Nakhon Phanom, meaning “city of mountains,” due to its remarkable mountainous landscape. Throughout history, Nakhon Phanom was the centre of the ancient Sri-Kotrabun Kingdom, attracting Laotians and smaller ethnic minority groups who migrated across the Mekong River. This has resulted in a diverse array of ethnic cultures and traditions, particularly influenced by the Laotians. This influence is evident in the local architecture, customs and cuisine, creating a unique cultural tapestry.

The province is also known for its captivating historical sites, including Wat Pra That Phanom, a revered Buddhist temple and the Ho Chi Minh Trail, a significant route during the Vietnam War. Nakhon Phanom’s vibrant festivals, such as the Illuminated Boat Procession, are a stunning showcase of its cultural traditions, filling the streets with vibrant colors and music.

Reference: [TAT official website](#)



(Source: <https://travel.kapook.com/view139555.html>, <https://itsbetterinthailand.com/provinces/nakhon-phanom>, <http://www.bansansuk.com/travel/TatPho>)

Site Information

Day 1

Phu Thai Community



Phu Thai Community

Source: www.fb.com/sakonnakhon

In 1857, a group of Phu Thai tribes migrated from Phu Wana Kadaeng in Laos, crossing the Mekong River. They traversed the Pu Parn mountain range, heading west into a large swampy plain (currently Nong Han Lake, Sakon Nakhon) and then dispersed to settle in suitable areas. In 1882, "Ban Non Hom" was founded with Mr. Hom as the villagers' leader, and to this day, they continue to preserve their culture and the unique Phu Thai way of life.

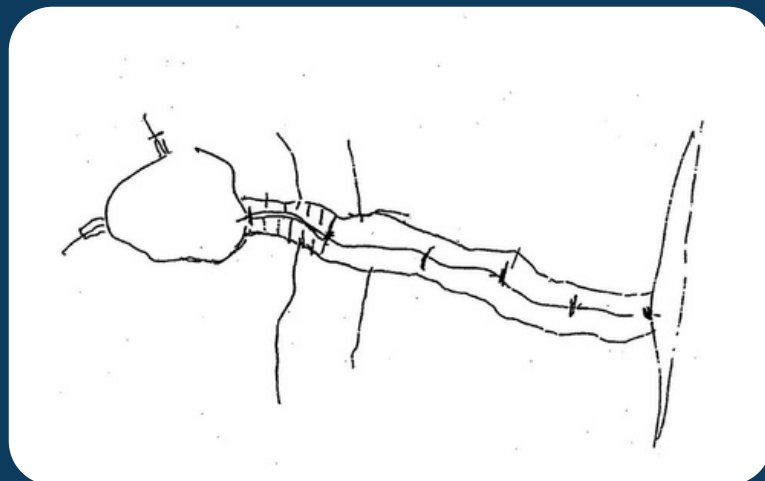
Phu Thai people are known for their weaving culture. Various types of clothing, both cotton and silk, are prominent among the Phu Thai people, especially Praewa cloth, which is considered a great example of Phu Thai clothing culture. Besides their vibrant clothing, Phu Thai communities are also known for their friendliness and exceptional hospitality, welcoming their guests with a ceremony known as “Basi Su Khwan” and a traditional dance performance native to the region, which we will be attending on the first day.

Reference: <https://shorturl.at/HGlOG>

Lam Nam Phueng-Nam Kam Floodgate Project under the Royal Initiative

In 1992, His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej The Great traveled to inspect the area on the eastern side of Huai Nam Pheung, including the various creeks in the area. Right away, he noted the pronounced lack of irrigation work that the area so sorely needed due to the high level of the water overflowing the banks and flooding farmland during the rainy season. He also noted that conversely during the dry season, the local communities suffered from severe water shortages for agriculture and consumption.

In 1999, His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej The Great proposed the idea of constructing water control stations and floodgates at various strategic locations, as well as dredging shallow streams, such as Huai Rong Chang Phueak, to connect them to various natural swamps. The main objective was to facilitate irrigation work and improve the living standards of the surrounding communities.



Hand Sketch of the Project by His Majesty King Rama IX



Lam Nam Pheung-Nam Kam Floodgate

As a result, a royal development project was designed and implemented and has since significantly reduced inundations in two districts within Sakon Nakhon province, namely, Mueng and Phom Na Kaeo district. The construction of floodgates and water diversion canals has helped divert up to 40% of the water flowing from the Nam Phueng River before reaching Nong Han and flowing into the Nam Kam River.

This royal initiative has critically improved water security in the province, allowing local communities to support agriculture, livestock and industry. In total, the project has mitigated water-related problems for around 10,857 households and 53 villages, covering an area of 4 sub-districts, benefiting the area in both the rainy and dry seasons.

Reference: [The Royal Development Projects Board official website](#)

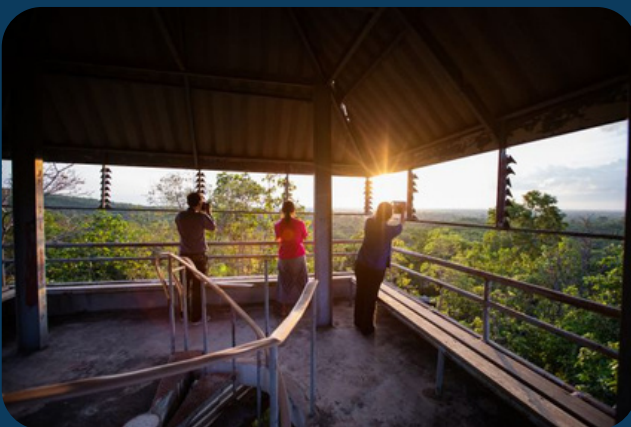
The Puparn Development Study Centre

The Northeast is the largest region of the country and faces three main problems: soil degradation, water resource issues and deforestation, as well as challenges related to education and training. His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej The Great initially founded the Puparn Royal Development Study Centre to provide an appropriate and sustainable development model for the Northeast. It is the largest of six Royal Development Study Centres in the country.

The Puparn Royal Development Study Centre is beneficial to the development of careers, livelihoods and the quality of life for Thai people living in the northeastern region based on the area's natural characteristics and biological cycle.

The operation of the Puparn Royal Development Study Centre consists of two important main tasks: the first is education, experimentation and research, and the second is the dissemination and expansion of the outcomes of various studies conducted.

In addition, the centre undertakes activities covering all aspects of the lives of the people in the area, such as irrigation, education, agricultural development, livestock studies and development, and training and technology transfer. The centre also promotes groups of farmers and villagers in weaving and indigo dyeing to provide additional income from farming and to preserve the identity and local wisdom of the Phu Thai people.



Source: [Museum of Thailand official website](#)

Day 2

Ban Donkoi (Sustainable Village)

Ban Donkoi is a model for driving sustainable village development across three key areas: food security, a sustainable environment and social resilience. This model follows the Royal Initiative of Her Royal Highness Princess Sirivannavari to enhance the quality of life for the people by focusing on human development first. This approach encourages community members to build teams and continue caring for each other.

Within the village, professional groups have been established, including those working with color trees used for dyeing in the weaving process of Ban Donkoi, particularly for indigo-dyed and naturally dyed fabrics under the brand “Donkoi Model.”

Currently, the Donkoi Model Project has expanded into the Donkoi Model Project for the Global Market (Donkoi Model Global Market), supported by the Community Development Department, Ministry of Interior. This project is a prototype weaving group that aims to lay the foundation for improving the quality of weaving and creating contemporary fashion collections to revive local wisdom in fabric creation.

For more information of the Donkoi Model, please visit <https://donkoimodel.com> (e-Book)



Source: [Bangkok Post](#)

Medical Support

Sakon Nakhon Hospital

Address: 1041 Charoen Mueang Road, That Choeng Chum Subdistrict, Mueang District, Sakon Nakhon Province 47000

Telephone: 042-176000

Princ Hospital

Address: 99 Pracha Uthit Road That Choeng Chum Subdistrict, Mueang Sakon Nakhon District, Sakon Nakhon Province 47000

Telephone: 042-092888

Nakhon Phanom Hospital

Address: 270 Aphibancha Road, Nai Mueang Subdistrict, Mueang Nakhon Phanom District, Nakhon Phanom 48000

Telephone: 042-199222

Accommodation



Address: Vela Dhi Hotel Nakhon Phanom
Chayangkun Rd, Nakhonpanom City Center, Nakhon
Phanom, 48000

Telephone: 042-515919

Reference: Vela Dhi's Facebook

Weather Forecast

On 5-6 August 2024, the weather forecast for Sakon Nakhon and Nakhon Phanom indicates a pattern of rain and thunderstorms.

Sakon Nakhon: Expect moderate to heavy rain showers throughout both days, with occasional thunderstorms. The temperature will range from around 25°C to 34°C, with high humidity levels.

Nakhon Phanom: Similar weather conditions are forecasted, with light to moderate rain and thunderstorms. The temperatures will ranging from 24°C to 34°C, and high humidity will persist.

Overall, visitors should prepare for wet weather and potential thunderstorms while in these provinces during the specified dates.

