

My Thailand Family Adventure

Naomi, Head of PR for Hayes & Jarvis explains why Thailand holidays are perfect for families.



There's no denying the thought of long haul travel with children isn't always something everyone instantly considers, but dig a little deeper into a long haul holiday and the benefits far out-weigh anything else.

My children had yet to explore the unique culture and landscapes of Asia. Thailand has so much to offer and is also affordable to move around, so we decided to explore Bangkok, Koh Phangan, Koh Samui and Thailand's ethical elephant camp, Elephant Hills Jungle Safari - Luxury Tented Camp.

We had 10 days to make the most of our multi centre adventure. Though we would be busy bees, we would also allow some time to relax too. We chose our accommodation based on some excellent family facilities that each hotel offered and it started with an incredibly spacious family suite at the Tower Club at Lebua.

These newly designed and spacious two bedroom suites came with three separate private balconies overlooking Bangkok. We could have spent the entire time here taking advantage of all the Tower Club benefits; however we wanted to explore the city. Tuk Tuks are extremely cheap so we were able to visit temples and Bangkok's famous floating market, experiencing a bygone way of life.

After two nights we boarded

an early morning flight to Koh Samui and a speedboat transfer across to the Anantara Rasananda Koh Phangan Villas set on the white sands of Thong Nai Pan Noi Beach. Our suite came with its own private plunge pool, which the children were in before we even opened our suitcases. We spent four days here paddle boarding, kayaking and spending evenings on the beach enjoying movie nights for the children. Plus we explored the local village the hotel backs onto featuring a wealth of small local restaurants and shops.

We travelled back to Koh Samui for two nights to stay at the beautiful Melati Beach Resort. The hotel offers regular Muay Thai lessons for its guests and the children loved every moment of experiencing a personal lesson in the gardens of the resort.

Elephant Hills was the final part of our journey, set on the edge of the rainforest of Khao Sok National Park. It took us quite a journey to get there – however, it was impeccably organised and despite the 5am start, by 2pm my children were chopping up pineapples to feed to the elephants.

We stayed one night at the Elephant Camp and a second night in the Rainforest Camp on the stunning Cheow Larn Lake. We had no idea what lifelong memories we would be leaving with.

The opportunity to interact

with some of Thailand's elephants – within an ethical environment – was amazing. The camp has won numerous awards – not just for the incredible work it does with the elephants and sustainability, but for the local school community too, who also performed to us that evening.

The following day we boarded a long-tail boat on Cheow Larn Lake to take us deep into the rainforest. The spectacular scenery, with its evergreen rainforest is inhabited by tigers, monkeys and elephants. Trekking and kayaking we spotted a rare trio of hornbill high up in the trees and a white ox on the bank of the lake.

Thailand now has a firm place in our hearts and has left us with an appetite for more. My children have photos that they will be showcasing forever and have learned about a new culture far away from their everyday lives – incredible!

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LONG-HAUL FAMILY TRAVEL

- Consider the time zone at your new destination to help children beat jet-lag.
- Pre-book your children's meals if required.
- Use maps to get your children excited about the holiday and how long the journey is.
- Buy children new books or magazines for the plane and holiday.
- Pack their little bags with some extra snacks for added independence.

Call our Destination Specialists on **01293 XXXX*** to discuss any of the holiday ideas featured in FOOTPRINTS. Visit hayesandjarvis.co.uk for more inspiration.

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