



# BRITISH CLUB SENIORS SECTION

Ang Thong Day Trip – Wednesday, 21<sup>st</sup> February 2024

## *Itinerary & Briefing Notes*

**\*\* It's HOT ... Cold Water is available on the bus – please keep hydrated \*\***

### **08.30 – Depart BC for the Maharat Buddhist Park**

**(Approximately 1 hour 25 minutes journey, then 40 minutes at the Monument and Market, then on the bus for a 10-minute drive to view other exhibits)**



The gigantic golden statue of Luang Pu Thuat (a famous Buddhist monk) was built in order to bless people and to honour His Majesty King Rama IX and Her Majesty Queen Sirikit, in a park containing a number of large lakes in a 32,000 sq. meters compound.

Another unique component of the Park is the market that is full of food shops on the two sides of the alley that lead to the statue of Luang Pu Thuat. These food shops sell main dishes, snacks, traditional Thai desserts, beverages and many other local products (OTOPs). Please note that the Market opens at 10.00 am so may only be partially open if at all when we arrive.

**PLEASE NOTE:** When you have finished visiting the statue, please walk to the rear of the statue where the bus will be waiting to pick you up!

### **10.45 – Depart for Wat Muang Ang Thong**

**(Approximately 25 minutes journey, then 50 minutes at the Temple)**



The Temple is best known for its very large Buddha statue, which stands 92 m high, and is 63 m wide. Construction commenced in 1990, and was completed in 2008. It is painted gold and made of concrete. The Buddha is in the seated posture called the 'Maravijaya Attitude'. The statue was built to commemorate His Majesty King Rama IX and was funded by donations from faithful Buddhists as acts of making merit. It is the tallest statue in Thailand, the second tallest statue in Southeast Asia, and the ninth-tallest in the world.

However there is a lot more to see than just the statue. Wat Muang is an ancient temple originally built in the late Ayutthaya era. At that time, Ang Thong was an outpost city famous for religion, art and sculpture. During the fall of Ayutthaya in 1767, Ang Thong and the temple were also burnt down and eventually both were rebuilt.

The temple's ordination hall is decorated with millions of pieces of mirror called "Wiharn Kaew", said to be displaying the 'image of heaven'. The outside of the hall is surrounded by big lotus petals. Walking outside from the mirror hall, you will see the 'court of statues' teaching about karma, as taught in buddhism – some of which portray somewhat gruesome sights.

[Type here]

## **12.00 – Depart for the De Riva Ayothaya Restaurant in Ayutthaya (Approximately 50 minutes journey, then 1 hour for lunch)**



We have a reservation for seating on the banks of the Chao Phraya River in this large but well organised and well recommended restaurant. Lunch is a set menu to be shared Thai style. Drinking water and ice are included. If you would like any extras or other drinks, please pay separately.

## **13.50 – Depart for the “Arts of the Kingdom” Museum (Approximately 25 minutes journey, then 1 hour 15 minutes at the Museum and excellent Coffee Shop)**



A very new and modern museum, more like an exhibition hall than a museum! You will need to pay the entry fee of Baht 75 if aged over 60 years or Baht 150 if younger! You will also need to place your mobile phone, camera, and handbag (but you can take your wallet as they would like people to buy items in their shop) in an individual security cage where you retain the key. The authorities here are very seriously enforcing a ‘no photography’ policy.

The museum was built under the direction of Her Majesty Queen Sirikit The Queen Mother to showcase and highlight a collection of items created by the artisans of the Queen Sirikit Institute. The craftspeople are the sons and daughters of impoverished farmers from Thailand’s remote countryside. Some of the pieces were produced using ancient techniques dating back to the Ayutthaya Period, whilst others are the results of more recent methods. The purpose of the Institute being to rekindle the old methods and skills of making ‘artifacts’ and to help poor farmers obtain additional income.

At the Museum entry point you can collect free of charge a hand speaker device that can be set to ‘voice’ in different languages where, when progressing through the exhibits, by pressing the appropriate number as displayed, verbal descriptions of the exhibit are given in the selected language.

The Exit Route takes everyone through a quite lavish Museum Shop where Sales People can assist if you wish to buy any of the items for sale, but please be aware of the trip timings as you browse or buy!

After visiting the various Museum rooms and the Shop, then retrieving your belongings, we suggest that we all gather at or in the Coffee Shop and Patisserie located on the way back to the bus, and enjoy the tranquility of the scenery and the shop offerings if you so decide.

## **15.45 – Depart for BC (Approximately 1 hour journey)**

---