



ANANTARA

GOLDEN TRIANGLE
ELEPHANT CAMP & RESORT

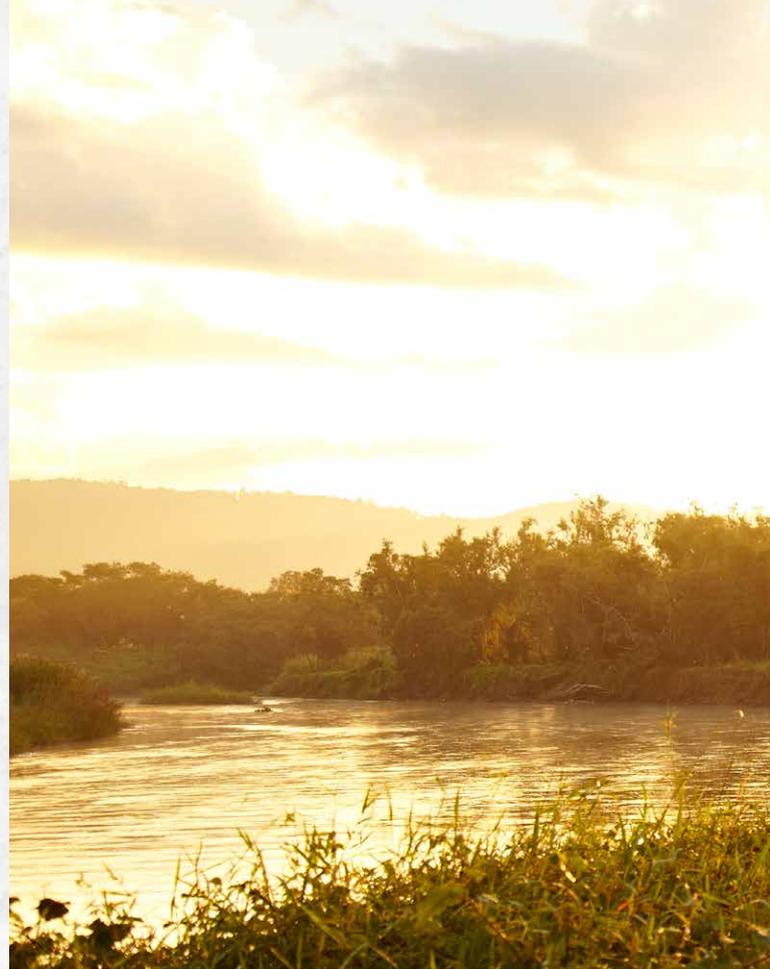


DARA CAMP

EXPLORE THE ENCHANTING WORLD OF ELEPHANTS

Welcome to Asia's premier Dara Camp at Anantara Golden Triangle Elephant Camp & Resort in northern Thailand's lush jungle. Our hilltop retreat overlooks Thailand, Myanmar and Laos, and covers 160 acres of bamboo forest, rice paddies, countryside and indigenous gardens. Discover rich destination adventures from the very beginning with our unique VIP Regal Arrival.

Travel by private car from Chiang Rai airport to the historic town of Chiang Saen. Enjoy a longtail boat journey on the Mekong River, and then a scenic elephant ride for a grand arrival at the lobby. Anantara Golden Triangle Elephant Camp & Resort operates exclusively on a luxury all-inclusive basis. The signature Discovery Package enables guests to choose one activity from four categories for each night stayed, including the Elephant Camp which offers unforgettable Walking with Giants adventures.







A photograph of a traditional mahout elephant camp. In the foreground, a large elephant stands on a dirt path, with a mahout in a blue shirt standing on its back. Behind it, three more elephants are lined up, each with a mahout sitting on its back. The background features several traditional buildings with thatched roofs and wooden pillars, surrounded by lush green trees.

A TRADITIONAL MAHOUT ELEPHANT CAMP, WITH EXTRA BENEFITS

Set up in 2003 as a traditional mahout village, Dara Camp works alongside Anantara's Golden Triangle Asian Elephant Foundation to perform street rescues, provide ongoing employment, offer a comfortable lifestyle for the elephant and its whole mahout family, as well as participating in bigger picture projects that create better conditions for all of Thailand's elephants. The Camp now supports more than 20 elephants and 50 people, and are proudly fully funded by Anantara Hotels, Resorts & Spas, Minor International and guest donations.

All of our elephants are given ample food, shelter, 24hr veterinary support and the utmost care. The mahout and his family receive food, housing, medical insurance, schooling for their children, and 100% of the profits from a traditional silk weaving business. The wider community also benefits. Groups of students and disadvantaged children enjoy memorable experiences. Local farmers receive a monthly income for the sale of elephant fodder. Our elephants also take part in traditional cultural ceremonies.

WALKING WITH GIANTS

Take our elephants on their daily walk accompanied by their mahouts and our resident Vet. Watch as the elephants have a bath in the river or a play in the mud, socialize with each other or enjoy a snack. While you meander with the elephants through the forest, learn more about elephant biology and behavior and discover more about the past, present and hopeful future for elephants in Thailand.

Please note that this program does not include any riding on the elephants.

WHAT TO WEAR

Since elephants like nothing more than to cover themselves in dust and dirt, it is best to wear clothes that you don't mind getting grubby.

As we will collect the elephants from the forest, it is important to wear shoes that are comfortable for walking.





MAHOUT EXPERIENCE

In a working day a skilled mahout can guide his elephant using around 70 commands and light touches behind the ear. While such a strong bond and mutual understanding takes years, anyone can learn the basics. As a mahout trainee you'll learn to drive an elephant, trek along beautiful nature trails on the neck of your trusty steed, and take part in the river bathing ritual.

Our mahouts ride in bare feet, soft shoes or flip flops, though you may also opt for walking boots.

Please note that we provide you with a basic mahout uniform and soft flip flops. Please check with the Discovery Desk to find out about the different times that the Mahout Experience is available.



THIRTEEN GOLDEN SAFETY RULES FOR A NEW MAHOUT

1. Never approach any elephants without a mahout present.
2. Please say hello and talk to your elephant, let it know you are there and let it know your voice.
3. Never tease your elephant with food.
4. Touch your elephant a lot but do not hug the trunk.
5. Be careful when an elephant stands up, it swings its legs and rolls its body a lot.
6. Never climb on or jump off your elephant when it is moving.
7. Be alert and sensitive to your elephant.
8. Never walk directly behind an elephant because it has small eyes and big ears, it can't see you and may be startled.
9. Never walk underneath your elephant's belly, neck or trunk without the mahout's permission.
10. In the water, stay away from the legs and the trunk – if you fall off in deep water, swim away from your elephant.
11. Avoid sudden movements and loud noises close to your elephant.
12. The mahout's instructions are to be followed at all times, without question.
13. Never approach elephants outside the elephant camp without the presence of a mahout – elephants have downtime too!

SOME ELEPHANT COMMANDS

Mahouts can control their elephant with a series of physical commands and around seventy verbal commands. In northern Thailand these are a mixture of pure Thai, northern Thai and an elephant language.

These are the basic commands needed to navigate your elephant. These need to be delivered in a loud and commanding voice.

Lift leg high (to get on)	–	Song Soong
Lift leg high (to get off)	–	Hab Soong
Go forwards (nudge behind both ears)	–	Pai
Stop (squeeze knees together)	–	How
Turn (nudge behind opposite ear)	–	Baen
Walk backwards (rock and kick feet backwards)	–	Toi
Sit down (tap the back)	–	Map Lung
Lower head (put feet over the head)	–	Tak Lung
Stand up	–	Look Eun
Follow me	–	Pae

Here are some others you might like to try!

Slow down	–	Goy
Lie down	–	None Lung
Lie down fully	–	None Dee
Submerge head in water	–	Dum Lung
Drink	–	Bong
Spray	–	Bone



E.L.E. ELEPHANT LEARNING EXPERIENCE

This fun, educational and interactive experience commences with a presentation by one of our onsite elephant experts about elephant biology, conservation and research conducted on site into elephant cognition and behavior. Next, stroll down to Thida Camp and make friends with some of the members of our rescued herd. Spend time feeding them and taking photos. Observe their behavior as a scientist would and learn about elephant society and communication. Finish by helping to give your elephants a well deserved shower. For each participant of this activity Anantara Golden Triangle Elephant Camp & Resort donates THB 2,000 to the Golden Triangle Asian Elephant Foundation.



GET TO KNOW YOUR ELEPHANT BETTER!

Guests, who have enjoyed the Mahout Experience and or Elephant Learning Experience three times in total, qualify for a certificate and a unique mahout shirt.







MORE UNIQUE ELEPHANT ADVENTURES

ELEPHANT & YOGA EXPERIENCE

Let your gentle giant's rhythmic pace clear your mind as you trek along forest trails. Leave your companion to graze while you learn yoga in a rice paddy sala. Ride back through countryside, connecting with nature.

ELEPHANT PICNIC

Let the Anantara culinary team prepare a gourmet hamper that can be personalised to suit your savoury and sweet desires. Mount one of our friendly and well trained elephants for a leisurely trek to your chosen setting. Then savour a picnic in scenic seclusion, surrounded by the stunning landscapes and unforgettable views of the fabled Golden Triangle.



ELEPHANT SUNSET EXPERIENCE

Set out on a romantic elephant ride, sauntering along forest trails at a serene and relaxing pace. Arrive at our private hilltop in time for sunset to find a beautifully decorated sala. Toast three country and Mekong River views at the most romantic time of day with your chosen beverages and canapes, before riding back to the resort.

DINING BY DESIGN AT THIDA CAMP

Dining by Design offers the ultimate in tailor made, private dining, Thida Camp provides a naturally intimate setting. Choose from a collection of fine dining menus, or fine tune the ideal culinary sequence with your very own chef. Dine in a private sala at the mahout village with personal butler service, watching our elephants play with one another then (hopefully) doze as you dine past their bedtime.





FACTS ABOUT ELEPHANTS





- Fully grown Thai elephants can weigh between 2.5 and 4 tonnes.
- Their average height is between 2 and 3 metres at the shoulder.
- They are vegetarian and especially enjoy bamboo and sugar cane.
- An elephant's trunk is an elongation of the upper lip, containing 30 – 40,000 muscles but no bones.
- Elephants only sleep for three to four hours a night – most of the time they sleep standing up, only lying down for about one hour.
- Elephants are highly social and communicate through sound, both audible and sub-sonic, as well as touch and smell.
- Young elephants are very tactile and enjoy rough games with one another.
- Gestation period is between 18 and 22 months.
- Elephants, especially babies, are hairier than you think!
- In Asian elephants, only the males grow tusks – the females have smaller ivories called 'tushes' or 'kanai' (in Thai language). In Thailand, many males do not have tusks either.
- In the wild, mature males tend to be solitary. Females live in herds governed by a matriarch in a strong social and friendship based society.
- 'Mahout' is an Indian word used in Thailand for convenience, while the actual Thai phrase used for someone who has control of his own elephant is 'Kwann Chang'.

HOW CAN I HELP?

The onsite Dara Camp operates in conjunction with our Golden Triangle Asian Elephant Foundation (GTAEF) - a charity designed to help elephants that are incapable of earning a living in a safe and sustainable manner. Our first rescued street elephant, Pang Kam Sao, joined us in November 2005, and we have been working to rescue others ever since.

You are already helping simply by staying, since we donate THB 40 per room per night to the GTAEF. Since Anantara pays for the fodder, veterinary care, sundry expenses, mahout wages and benefits of the working elephants, the best way to support us is to book an elephant activity. You are also welcome to tip the mahouts to reward their efforts and top up their recreational funds!

For guests who would like to make a further donation to the GTAEF, this can be made through the Front Desk or online at www.helpingelephants.org/donate. To keep up to date with our projects, as well as camp and elephant news, please like us on Facebook: GTAEF Helping Elephants or follow us on Twitter: @elehelp.



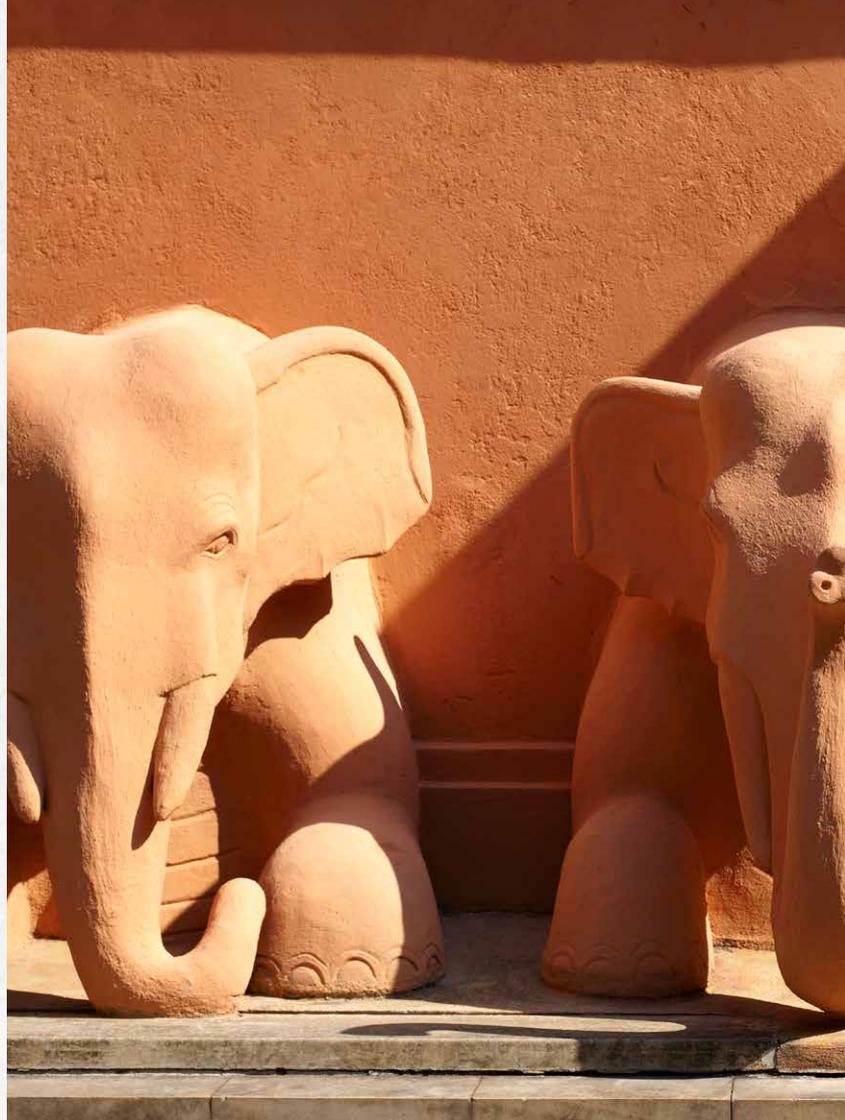


DARA CAMP READING LIST

The following six books are all non-scientific accounts of outsiders who have lived amongst elephants and the people who care for them in their native land. We hope you enjoy reading these tales of intelligence, loyalty and immense strength.

Elephant Bill; Lt. Col. J.H. Williams; Heinemann Educational Secondary Division; ISBN 0435120344 This book is about an Englishman sent to Burma to work in the teak forests, and includes the amazing story of an elephant back evacuation from the advancing Japanese army during WWII.

Travels on my Elephant; Mark Shand; Penguin Books; ISBN 0140166807 An Englishman buys an elephant named Tara and treks across northern India. Along the way he falls in love with her, and begins a campaign to save the species.





Queen of the Elephants; Mark Shand; Vintage; ISBN 0099592010 The same Englishman returns to India to learn to be a mahout from a Maharaja's daughter. To Tara's relief he uses another elephant, leaving her free to enjoy a well fed retirement!

To the Elephant Graveyard; Tarquin Hall; Grove Press; ISBN 0802138357 A skeptical journalist rushes to report an elephant hunt, only to discover elephant human conflict and a kind hunter willing to give the murderous rogue giant every chance to reform.

Elephant Kingdom; H N Marshall; Robert Hale; Out of print but well worth searching for! A book containing the impressions, anecdotes and stories of a 'Teak Wallah' in the forests of northern Thailand in the 1950s.

Lord of the Grassland; Nirmal Ghosh; Landmark Books; ISBN 9813002743 This riveting short story is told from the perspective of a wild elephant growing up in the forests of Assam and Burma in the early part of the 20th century.

LIFE IS A JOURNEY. Visit anantara.com

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