



Who can resist baby elephants? Imagine working with them daily! ELI is proud to partner with the Thai Elephant Home, located in the beautiful hills outside of Chiang Mai! The Thai Elephant Home is an organization devoted to elephant and habitat conservation. The camp is broken up into two locations: A camp for larger elephants and day visitors and the nursery, a smaller site created for the care of mother and baby elephants. ELIers spend the vast majority of their time at the adorable nursery.

Elephants used to roam across Asia, but now they are restricted to about 15% of that expanse. Asian elephants are endangered due to this habitat loss, as well as human conflicts and illegal poaching ([learn more here from the WWF](#)). At the camp rescued elephants are provided a safe, caring and ethical environment, while the nursery seeks to preserve Thailand's baby elephants for future generations. The camp is committed to providing education coupled with experiences aimed at helping people understand the realities, challenges and opportunities the Asian elephant faces. In the process the Thai Elephant Home supports the local community through job creation, reforestation efforts and local educational scholarships. There are very few elephants alive in the wild in northern Thailand. Therefore camps such as Thai Elephant Home are the only real place where elephants can find sanctuary from poachers and where people can safely visit.

Objectives

- To provide a safe caring environment for rescued elephants.
- To increase the number of Asian elephants through the breeding program.
- To provide elephant and habitat conservation education.
- To provide educational scholarships for disadvantaged Hill Tribe youth to obtain university degrees.
- To assist with reforestation efforts in the district.



ELI Abroad

Voluntarios Internacionales

Thailand - Elephant Camp

Itinerary

ELIers arrive in Chiang Mai on a Friday. Your volunteer adventure begins with a mandatory 2-day detailed orientation Saturday-Sunday. This is also your opportunity to explore this fascinating city, to visit its gleaming temples, party in its clubs or chill in its many cafes. After orientation you'll travel with the other volunteers to the camp. Then, our team accompanies all of the elephant campers to the mountains on Monday morning. The drive is roughly one hour from the city of Chiang Mai. The last couple of kilometers, to enter the nursery is on a dirt, mountain road – hold on tight. The camp is beautiful, as it is nestled in a mountain valley. During the rainy season, the staff plants rice in the valley. On Friday, elephant campers are brought back to Chiang Mai to spend free time in the city.



What do volunteer do?

Days start at sunrise with elephant baths at 6:30am. Volunteers help themselves to breakfast at 8am, and then morning activities include greeting day visitors and discussing the flight of Asian elephants and deforestation issues (if you feel comfortable), cleaning, manure duty, cutting grass for the elephants, making herbal medicine balls for the elephants, helping to ensure that day visitors are following safety precautions. After lunch is provided, there is a mix of options depending on what is needed at the camp – perhaps more grass cutting or making elephant dung paper. If volunteers would like to teach informal English classes to mahouts (elephant caretakers) and their families this is the perfect time. If you would like to visit the nearby Karen tribe or go trekking be sure to ask your coordinator. The day visitors leave in the early afternoon, leaving a quiet camp for you to spend time with the elephants and mahouts. After dinner, evenings are quiet and the elephants are sleepy. Be sure to bring cards, books etc. Time moves at a slower pace in the jungle, get ready to unwind and get on elephant time.

Accommodations

Accommodation at the Elephant Camp is quaint, but very basic. The rooms are not equipped with air conditioning, but the area of the Camp (because of being in the mountains) gets rather cool at night. Electrical lines do not reach the nursery, therefore electrical appliances are run off solar cells. The energy derived from the solar cells are enough to charge a cell phone, keep a couple light bulbs lit, and that's about it. All the rooms have an attached, shared bathroom with a hot water shower. In most cases volunteers will have private accommodation, unless traveling with a companion. The bathroom in all of the accommodation for volunteers is "Thai style." This means that the shower is attached to wall and the floor of the bathroom is tile. Water goes all over the place. In Thai the word "bathroom" is directly translated as "water room."

The work is outdoorsy and messy: bring quick-dry clothes you don't mind getting wet or dirty, because they will! Ready to get muddy with us in Northern Thailand?!



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Program Includes:

- *Pre-Departure Packet
- *Airport Pick-Up in Chiang Mai
- *2 days of Orientation
- *City Tour
- *Accommodation Provided
- *3 Meals a Day (Monday-Friday)
- *Access to a Travel Nurse and Activities Coordinator
- *24/7 In-Country Support Program

Does Not Include

- *Round-Trip Transportation to Chiang Mai
- *Return Trip to Airport
- *Required Travel and Medical Insurance
- *Visa Fees



All ELI Abroad programs in Thailand have strict start dates and a mandatory orientation before you begin your volunteer work. Be sure to check ELI Abroad's website -- or talk to us in person -- about arrival date requirements. For up-to-date prices please visit our website <https://www.eliabroad.org/volunteer-intern-thailand>

