

NAN

Wat Nong Bua

Wat Nong Bua in Nong Bua village of Tha Wang Pha district was built by Thai Lue craftsmen who had early migrated from southern China. Apart from the Vihan which is adorned with elaborate carvings, there are also wall murals painted by Thai Lue artists some one hundred years ago. Their artistic value and degree of perfection equal those at Wat Phumin

Thai Lue Village Ban Nong Bua

This village is about 40 kilometres to the north of the town on Highway No. 1080, with an additional 3 kilometres after the left turn into the village in Tha Wang Pha district. The Thai Lue people living at Ban Nong Bua are noted for producing the traditional tribal fabric, an art handed down from generation to generation. It has also been improved in the designs but still retaining the original patterns. The native woven materials have now become a highly popular buy among

Doi Phu Kha National Park

To the north of Nan along Highway No. 1080 in Nong Bua district and with a further distance of 25 kilometres on the route to Bo Kluea district lies the Doi Phu Kha National Park. The terrain is mainly forested lands on limestone mountain ranges, the source of several streams which merge into the Nan River. The elevation is about 1,900 metres above sea level.

Here are found several rare and near-extinct floras, particularly the Chomphu Phu Kha, whose pink flowers are in full bloom during February. In the morning, a sea of mist can be seen drifting across the valley. There are also several scenic waterfalls. Permits to camp can be applied for.

Alternatively, tourists may choose to utilise the accommodation services in the park

Wat Phumin

A uniquely designed and the most interesting temple in Nan is Wat Phumin, which has a 4-portico, single building housing both the Ubosot and Vihan. Four Buddha statues with their backs against one another are installed in the main hall facing the four directions. The doors are delicately carved in splendid designs by Lanna craftsmen.

Wat Phumin underwent a major restoration in 1867 since it was built some 27 years ago. It is believed that the wall murals were commissioned during this time. The wall paintings, in Thai Lu style are considered highly valuable and depict legends concerning the Lord Buddha as well as local legends and the local way of life, which include native attires, weaving and commerce with foreign countries

Wat Phrathat Chae Haeng

Wat Phrathat Chae Haeng is a sacred place of worship, situated on a mound on the eastern side of the Nan River, at the former centre of the Nan town after moving from Pua town. Wat Phra Borommathat Chae Haeng was constructed during the rule of Chao Phraya Kanmueang (the Feudal Lord of Nan during 1326 – 1359) as an enshrining venue of 7 Buddha relics, silver and golden votive tablets presented by King Maha Thammaracha Lithai on the occasion that Chao Phraya Kanmueang assisted in the construction of Wat Luang Aphai (Wat Pa Mamuang in Sukhothai Province at present) in 1354.

It features a chedi in a bell shape. The pattern of Phrathat Chae Haeng is assumed to have been influenced by the chedi of Phrathat Hariphunchai. It is plated with Thong Changko or Thong Dok Buap – a combination of brass and copper. The staircase up to the Phrathat is in a Naga shape,

while the gable above the entrance gate to the wihan is the stucco relief depicting intertwined Nagas, the unique characteristic of Nan fine art.

Wat Phaya Wat

This temple is located just before reaching the town on Highway No. 101. An ancient religious site, it has rectangular Chedi bases on which Buddha statues are placed around the Chedi structure. Combined artistic influences of Lanna, Lan Chang and native Nan can be detected

Nan National Museum

The building of the Nan National Museum was actually constructed in 1903 and once the residence of a ruler of Nan. It displays exhibitions concerning the town's history and major structures, evolution of arts in different ages, and numerous ancient objects, the most eminent of which is the Black Ivory. It also provides anthropological information on the northern indigenous people including the several minorities residing in Nan. The museum is open Wednesday-Sunday from nine in the morning until four o'clock in the afternoon

Nam Wa Rafting

This exciting activity waits for tourists who like to shoot many rapids. Rafting can be accompanied by elephant riding. The suitable time for rafting is from September to February. Visitors can contact travel agencies in the town.

The routes of rafting are as follows:

White-water Rafting along the Middle Part of the Wa River The rapids are of level 3 to 5 difficulty with a length of 100 kilometres. It takes 3 days and 2 nights passing the Doi Phu Kha National Park and the Mae Charim National Park.

White-water Rafting along the Lower Part of the Wa River It was originally a transporting route for teakwood, which was illegally cut from the forest in Mae Charim and Wiang Sa districts. The Wa River runs through the valleys. On both sides are high undulating mountains, and more than 22 rapids. The level of difficulty is at level 3 - 5 (level 3 is medium, level 4 is difficult, and level 5 is very difficult). The biggest and the most difficult one is Kaeng Luang. Some parts of the stream are sandy beach where a raft can be stopped, and it is suitable for swimming. Some parts are the location of elephant camps where visitors can take an elephant to Ban Hat Rai. The period when the tide is the highest is during August, while the lowest one is in April. The most suitable time for white-water rafting is from November to January.

There are 2 routes for rafting along the Wa River as follows:

- Sailing route by inflatable rubber dinghy: It starts from Ban Nam Pu, Nam Phang sub-district, Mae Charim district, and ends at Ban Hat Rai, San Na Nong sub-district, Wiang Sa district, being a total distance of 19.2 kilometres or takes 4 hours. However, if visitors start in front of the Office of the National Park, the total distance will be only 15 kilometres.

- Bamboo rafting route: It starts from Ban Nam Wa up to Ban Nam Pu for a distance of 4 kilometres or takes approximately 4 hours.

Contact the Nan Pang Chang Company, Tel. 0 5478 1316, the River Raft Company, Tel. 0 5471 0940, 08 9835 1506, and the Inter Tour, Tel. 0 5471 0195 for information of the Wa River Tour and elephant riding

Mae Charim National Park (white-water rafting along the Wa River)

The national park is in Mae Charim district, 60 kilometres from Mueang Nan along Highway 1168 and 1243, covering an area of 270,000 rai or 432 square kilometres. Geographically, they are

undulating mountain ranges, an origin of a tributary flowing into the Nan River at Wiang Sa district. It comprises hill evergreen forest, deciduous dipterocarp forest, and mixed deciduous forest, as well as, various kinds of wildlife.

Interesting Attractions within the National Park are as follows:

Rock Paintings at Pha No The trip starts at Ban Nam Pu. In the first part, visitors will have to cross the Wa River and walk along the mountain ridge, passing the deciduous dipterocarp forest and the mixed deciduous forest, and later climb the steep limestone mountain. The most appropriate season to visit is winter. The rainy season might be too dangerous due to a collapse of soil and very slippery route. Contact the National Park officers for a leader. The total distance is 8.7 kilometres and takes 8 - 9 hours.

The Trekking Route along the Paeng River is a route connecting Ban Rom Klao – Ban Huai Sai. It is a local route for gathering wild products from the forest, starting from Ban Rom Klao – Pak Nam Paeng at the Kaeng Luang area. Visitors will pass through various kinds of forest for a distance of 9 kilometres, taking approximately 4 hours.

The Route to Admire the Sea of Fog of Ban Nam Phang – Ban Rom Klao is on Highway No. 1259 between the Nam Phang and Rom Klao villages. It is suitable for mountain biking or driving and sightseeing the scenery on both sides of the route, especially in winter when there is a sea of fog and sunrise to be admired. The first 10 kilometres is an asphalt road, while the rest is a laterite one cutting across the steep shoulders of the mountains.

Ban Rom Klao Trekking Route Visitors have to walk for 3.8 kilometres, starting from Ban Nam Phang. Then they have to walk along the shortcut up to the mountain ridge, passing through many forests at different levels from the sea; namely, deciduous dipterocarp forest, a mixture of deciduous dipterocarp forest and pine forest, hill evergreen forest, and mixed deciduous forest. The condition of the forests along the route is still perfect. The total distance from Ban Nam Phang to Ban Rom Klao is 9.6 kilometres or takes 5 hours. However, it takes only 3 - 4 hours if using a car to the crossroad into the forest. The route is not very difficult to access, but visitors have to be healthy. The most appropriate seasons are winter and summer. Contact the National Park officers for a leader.

Various activities to experience the nature at the Mae Charim National Park are as follows:

White-water Rafting along the Middle Part of the Wa River The rapids are of level 3 to 5 difficulty with a length of 100 kilometres. It takes 3 days and 2 nights passing the Doi Phu Kha National Park and the Mae Charim National Park.

White-water Rafting along the Lower Part of the Wa River It was originally a transporting route for teakwood, which was illegally cut from the forest in Mae Charim and Wiang Sa districts. The Wa River runs through the valleys. On both sides are high undulating mountains, and more than 22 rapids. The level of difficulty is at level 3 - 5 (level 3 is medium, level 4 is difficult, and level 5 is very difficult). The biggest and the most difficult one is Kaeng Luang. Some parts of the stream are sandy beach where a raft can be stopped, and it is suitable for swimming. Some parts are the location of elephant camps where visitors can take an elephant to Ban Hat Rai. The period when the tide is the highest is during August, while the lowest one is in April. The most suitable time for white-water rafting is from November to January.

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- Bamboo rafting route: It starts from Ban Nam Wa up to Ban Nam Pu for a distance of 4 kilometres or takes approximately 4 hours. Contact the Nan Pang Chang Company, Tel. 0 5478 1316, the River Raft Company, Tel. 0 5471 0940, 08 9835 1506, and the Inter Tour, Tel. 0 5471 0195 for information of the Wa River Tour and elephant riding.

Mountain Bike – Trekking along the Paeng River – White-water Rafting along the Wa River The trip starts at the Mae Charim National Park Ranger Station (Ban Mai) in the area of Ban Nam Phang. Cycle along Highway No. 1259 to Ban Rom Klao for 2 hours and walk along the Paeng River to the Wa River in the area of Kaeng Luang, taking 4 hours. Then, take a raft from Kaeng Luang to Ban Hat Rai for a distance of 15 kilometres or 2 hours. The total trip can take 1 day or visitors can stay overnight at Ban Rom Klao and start trekking along the Paeng River early in the morning and do white-water rafting along the Wa River in the afternoon.

Sightseeing – Trekking along the Paeng River – White-water Rafting along the Wa River The starting point is at the Mae Charim National Park Ranger Station (Ban Mai) within the area of Ban Nam Phang. A sightseeing tour can be done along Highway 1259 to Ban Rom Klao for 1 hour. Then, walk along the Paeng River to the Wa River in the Kaeng Luang area. The total time is 4 hours. Then take a raft from Kaeng Luang to Ban Hat Rai for 15 kilometres or 2 hours. The total time estimated for this trip is 7 hours.

Trekking from Ban Nam Phang to Ban Rom Klao – Trekking along the Paeng River – White-water Rafting along the Wa River The starting point is at the Mae Charim National Park Ranger Station (Ban Mai) in the area of Ban Nam Phang. Take Highway 1259 to Ban Rom Klao for a distance of 3.8 kilometres or 5 hours. Then, walk along the Paeng River to the Wa River in the Kaeng Luang area, which takes 4 hours. Then, continue by rafting from Kaeng Luang to Ban Hat Rai for 2 hours. The total time estimated for the trip is 11 hours. This activity takes 2 days and 1 night.

Climbing at Pha No – Admiring the Rock Paintings – White-water Rafting along the Wa River The starting point is at Ban Nam Pu to the No Cliff. Then, walk to the Kaeng Luang for 8 hours and do rafting along Kaeng Nam Wa to Ban Hat Rai, which takes 2 hours. The total time might be 1 day or visitors can stay overnight in the forest area of Ban Huai Hat Khom at the foot of the No Cliff.

Accommodation and Facilities: Contact Mae Charim National Park, 35 Mu 5, Ban Huai Sai Mun, Nam Pai Sub-district, Mae Charim District, Nan 55170, Tel. 0 5477 9402-3 or e-mail: reserve@dnp.go.th

Khun Nan National Park

Khun Nan National Park is within the compound of the Doi Phu Kha and Doi Pha Daeng National Forest Reserves, Phu Fa sub-district, Bo Kluea Tai sub-district and Dong Phaya sub-district, covering important mountain ranges such as Phu Fa, Khun Nam Wa Noi, Nam Wa Klang and Phi Pan Nam mountain ranges. The summit of the Phi Pan Nam mountain in Dong Phaya sub-district is the highest point, with an approximate height of 1,745 metres above sea level. The waterfall is full of water throughout the year.

Interesting Attractions within the National Park are as follows:

Namtok Sapan is at Mu 1, Ban Sapan, Dong Phaya sub-district, 1 kilometre from the Office of the National Park. Take Highway No. 1081 and turn right for 2 kilometres. It is a medium-size waterfall with a height of 3 tiers with a stream throughout the year. It is a shady, beautiful, and abundant forest, 10 kilometres from the Bo Kluea District Office. It is conveniently accessible by car. Continue with a walk for 700-800 metres.

Namtok Huai Ha is at Mu 14, Ban Na Bong, Bo Kluea Tai sub-district. It is a medium-size waterfall. The first, second and third tiers are approximately 8, 12 and 50 metres high, respectively. There is

water throughout the year. The third tier (Pha Daeng) consists of various beautiful cascades.

To get there:

By Bus: From Mueang Nan district, take the Nan – Pua bus and continue with the Pua – Bo Kluea bus. Get off at Bo Kluea district and continue with the Bo Kluea – Chaloe Phra Kiat bus. The bus will pass the entrance of the National Park. Continue with a walk for 500 metres.

By Car: From Bo Kluea T-junction, turn left into Highway No.1081 for around 5 kilometres. The park is on the right side. Proceed further for 500 metres. The entrance is a laterite road. The viewpoint spot is 2 kilometres from the park.

The Khun Nan National Park provides accommodation and a camping area for tourists. Contact Dong Phaya Sub-district, Bo Kluea District, Nan 55220, Tel. 08 1960 5507 or www.dnp.go.th or e-mail: reserve@dnp.go.th

Sin Thao or Rock Salt Pits

It is hard to believe that an area on the mountain summit reaching up to the cloud in Bo Kluea district has been an important salt production venue from ancient times. Nan has been a large exporting source of rock salt in the north. Salt was a product exchanging with other things that the community could not produce by themselves. The exchange was conducted with the caravan of the Haw People from Yunnan, Guangxi and other provinces in China by taking the route from Xishuangbanna, Shan State to Chiang Rai, Chiang Mai, Nan, Mueang Sa (Wiang Sa District nowadays) and Phrae, as well as, the Thai Khoen sellers from Keng Tung and the Thai Lue cow traders from Tha Wang Pha district. In the past, rulers in the Northern administrative circle got a part from the salt levy apart from other fees and fines. Phraya Tilokkarat of Chiang Mai also led the troops to invade Nan with an aim to possess the salt pits which were a significant military factor during that time.

There are 2 important salt production venues in Nan. The first one is in the Wa River watershed area, consisting of 2 large pits, while the second one is at the Nan River watershed area, where there are 5 large pits and many tiny ones. At present, the locals still boil the salt by using the traditional method. Saline water will be brought from the pits and pass along the bamboo sticks to the storage ponds. Then, it will be boiled in large woks until the water evaporates, leaving only the dry salt. The salt will be put into bags and sold in front of the houses. Salt of Nan does not contain iodine like that from the sea. Therefore, iodine has to be added before offering to consumers. The Rock Salt Pits are 80 kilometres from Mueang Nan. Apart from agriculture and farming, people of Bo Kluea district also produce salt. The source of the rock salt is on the mountain. (The salt pits are usually closed during Buddhist Lent due to the rainy season.)

Ban Huai Kon Border Market

Ban Huai Kon Border Market is in an area of the Ban Huai Kon Checkpoint, opposite Mueang Nam Ngoen, Sayaboury province, Lao PDR., 138 kilometres from Mueang Nan district. The market is open on Saturdays from early morning until nearly noon. Offered products are woven fabric in the Nam Lai design, the handicraft of the Thai Lue people, consumer products such as things from forests, Luk Tao or Luk Chit - *Arenga pinnata*, etc. The Thai and Laotian people are allowed to visit this checkpoint everyday from 8.00 a.m. – 5.00 p.m

Ban Huai Kon Kao Battlefield Memorial

Ban Huai Kon Kao Battlefield Memorial was originally an operational base of the Third Infantry Battalion. The condition within the compound has remained as in previous times, so that the

younger generation would have a chance to study it. There are trenches, minefields, an arsenal, and spots where Thai soldiers passed away.

In the similar area stands the Battle Base of the Braves which is an old military base located at Ban Huai Kon, Huai Kon sub-district. It was a battlefield in the past. On 9 April, 1975, the Communist Insurgents (Pho Ko Kho) attacked 69 soldiers under the supervision of the 21st Infantry Battalion, the King's Guard, who conducted their operation at this base, causing 17 deaths, while a large number of attackers were injured and died. The soldiers successfully protected this operational base. At present, the base has been renovated and become a tourist attraction and a significant historical memorial on the fight of different administrative ideologies

Thung Chang Sacrificial Monument and Thung Chang Military Museum

Thung Chang Sacrificial Monument and Thung Chang Military Museum were constructed to commemorate the heroes who sacrificed their life for the country. Their Majesties the King and the Queen attended and conducted the opening ceremony, as well as, placed the wreaths at the monument on 10 February, 1976. Therefore, this date of every year is considered the memorial day when wreaths have been presented and a merit making ceremony has been organised for the heroes up until at present. The monument is located on Highway 1080, Nan – Thung Chang Route, at Km. 84. Moreover, the Thung Chang Military Museum displays military weapons for further knowledge and study

Wat Nong Daeng

Wat Nong Daeng in Puea sub-district was constructed in 1787 by the Thai Lue and Thai Phuan people. The main Buddha image was cast by Khruba Sittikan. The first renovation of the assembly hall was done in 1949 and again later in 1995. It was completed in 1996. Within the compound of the temple is a large shady terrace. The Chofa – gable finial decoration of a Buddhist temple's roof – is engraved into the sculpture of Nok Hatsadiling (Hastilinga) – a mythical bird in the literature whose tip of the beak is an elephant's trunk. The Thai Lue people believe that it is a high-ranked animal from heaven. At the same time, the eaves boards are embellished with wooden fretwork, the unique ones of the Thai Lue people. The Buddha image is enshrined on the Chukkachi base – a masonry base of intertwined Nagas, called Naga Throne. It has been believed that the Naga is a symbol of gracefulness, goodness, and a protector of Buddhism. Wat Nong Daeng was granted the Award of Outstanding Performance in the category of Cultural Attraction in Northern Thailand in the 5th Thailand Tourism Awards 2004.

To get there: From Mueang Nan district, take Highway 1080 to Chiang Klang District Office. Pass the District Office for 2 kilometres to the Ratchada Intersection. When seeing the Ban Ratchada Police Booth, turn left for 1 kilometre

Wat Phrathat Beng Sakat

Highway 1256 until reaching the entrance opposite Woranakhon School. Enter the entrance for 200 metres and turn left for another 200 metres. It is situated at Ban Kaem, Mu 5, Woranakhon sub-district. Its location is assumed to have been an area where Phraya Phukha had the ancient Pua town or Woranakhon town constructed to be governed by Chao Khunfong, his adopted son. At present, it is the Pua District Office. The word "Beng Sakat" means a miracle at a soil pit. When putting a wooden stick into the pit, the stick will be torn into pieces as though something bites it off. Moreover, a light appeared from the pit during the celebration.

The Phrathat and Wihan - assembly hall - were completed in 1283. Inside the chedi is enshrined the Lord Buddha relics which is considered as the centre of faith of the community. This Phrathat also represents the architecture of the Nan craftsmen. It is located on a high rise where a village below can be seen. Its surroundings is a grove, while its back side is a mountain. Therefore, the location influences the uniqueness and grandeur of the temple. During the rainy season, visitors will be able to see the green rice fields at the villages below.

The architectural characteristic of the assembly hall is its roof which is very sloping and low, presenting the Thai Lue local style of art or called "Tia Chae" shape. The hall is covered with 2 tiers of 2 series of shingle roof, made of golden teakwood, a local Thai Lue style of architectural art. The entrance gate represents the Lan Chang art style. Its renovation was conducted during the rule of Phraya Anantayot. Moreover, the Phra Kaeo image, whose hair was in gold, was enshrined in the Phrathat. The main Buddha image is in the local art style, on a masonry base known as Chukkachi base. Mirrors are attached at the back of the image according to the Thai Lue belief, while the engraved wooden doors are the local Nan art style

Ton Dik Diam

Ton Dik Diam is at Wat Ban Prang, Pua sub-district. It is a plant with a special characteristic. Every time it is touched, its leaves will shake. It has many local names such as Di Diam, Dip Diam, and Dik Doi. It can also be used as a medical herb.

To get there: From Nan, take Highway 1080 and 1256 to Pua district. Slightly prior to the centre of the district is a crossroad opposite the Thetsaban 1 Market. Turn left for 1 kilometre into Wat Ban Prang

Sao Din Na Noi or Hom Chom and Khok Suea

Sao Din Na Noi or Hom Chom and Khok Suea is located in Chiang Khong sub-district, 60 kilometres from Mueang Nan. From Na Noi district, there is a crossroad. Go along Highway No. 1083 for approximately 6 kilometres. It is a soil formation into strange shapes, similar to the "Phae Mueang Phi" of Phrae Province. From geological evidence, it appears that Sao Din Na Noi occurred from the movement of the earth's crust during the late Tertiary Period and the natural erosion of water and wind. Geologists assume that it might be aged during 10,000 – 30,000 years and was once the bottom of the sea. There have been discoveries of stone bangles and ancient axes at this place, which are currently preserved at the Nan National Museum. It reflects that this area was once a habitation place of human beings in the Palaeolithic Age.

However, there are other interesting attractions. For example, Kaeng Luang is 35 kilometres from Na Noi district. The entrance route to Kaeng Luang is very difficult to travel because there are natural islets and cataracts caused by the stream of the Nan River, flowing pass the rocks scattered in the river. During the season of a rushing torrent, there are echoes of water smashing against the rocks, while during the dry season, rocks and white sandy beaches along the Nan River can be seen. Swimming can be done during the dry season in April only because during the rainy season, the stream will be vigorous and dangerous. Pha Hua Singand Doi Samoe Dao is situated at Km. 16, the Na Noi – Pang Hai route. It is a viewpoint spot on the summit of the high cliff from which the 360° of scenery can be admired. At the spot, a wide terrace suitable for relaxation, star observation and sunset viewing, is located. Visitors who would like to go to Pha Sing (meaning a cliff with a strange shape similar to the head of a lion) will have to contact an official from the National Park. The total distance is 2 kilometres. Along the way, the Chan Pha Tree - *Dracaena loureiri* Gagnep., the unique tree will be seen. Moreover, when the sky is clear, Na Noi and Wieng Sa districts, as well

as, the Nan River can be viewed from the cliff.

Accommodation and Facilities: There are bungalows and tents for rent. However, visitors have to prepare their own food. For further information, please contact the Si Nan National Park, P.O. Box 14, Si Sa Ket sub-district, Na Noi district, Nan 55150, Tel. 0 5470 1106, 08 1224 0800 or the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Flora, Tel. 0 2562 0760 or www.dnp.go.th.

To get there: Si Nan National Park is 20 kilometres from Na Noi district. Proceed along Highway No. 1083, the Na Noi – Pang Hai route. Along the way, there is a viewpoint spot where the scenery of the mountain ranges within the National Park and the curving Nan River can be clearly seen. The Nan River flows through the National Park to Pak Nai district. The forests in the park are mostly mixed deciduous ones. Therefore, during February, there is usually a beautiful change of the colours of the shedding forests. Otherwise, travel by bus along the Bangkok – Nan route to Wiang Sa district and continue with the Wiang Sa – Na Noi – Na Muen Bus to the Ban Mai T-junction and rent a Song Thaeo further to the National Park

Tham Pha Tup Forest Park

Tham Pha Tup Forest Park is in Pha Sing sub-district, 12 kilometres from the province on Highway No. 1080, Nan – Pua – Thung Chang route, at Km. 9-10. It is accessible in every season.

Interesting Attractions within Tham Pha Tup Forest Park are as follows:

Nature Study Route There are various kinds of plants that should be studied and rarely seen such as Chan Pha - *Dracaena* spp. - and Ueang Phueng - *Dendrobium lindleyi* Steud., which are usually in bloom during the end of the rainy season. There are overall many routes starting from the walking trail to Tham Bo Namthip, the route from the Office of the Forest Park to the viewpoint spot, and the route around the Office.

Tham Phra is a large cave, covering an area of 50 square wa. There is a chimney letting in the breeze and the sunshine passing through and beautiful stalactites in the cave. It is located 200 metres from the Office of the Forest Park.

Tham Bo Namthip has a large room with a width of approximately 30 square wa and a chimney letting the sunshine penetrate the cave. At a side of the cave wall are stalactites and a deep tunnel where an oval basin containing water throughout the year is located. The water is considered as sacred and the symbol of this cave. Visitors have to climb up the rocky cliff all the way to the cave which is 1,200 metres from the Office of the Forest Park. During the rainy season, there is water in the cave making it not accessible.

Tham Khon is a cave with a long shape similar to a log. The cave houses a splendour of stalagmites and stalactites. At the front of the cave entrance stands a cliff. It is suitable for relaxation and admiring the view of the Nan Swamp.

Tham Chedi Kaeo is a small cave whose front houses a rock similar to a chedi.

The Viewpoint Spot is in a bamboo forest, next to Khao Bo Namthip in the southern side. At this spot the surrounding scenery and Mueang Nan district can be clearly seen. It is 1 kilometre from the Office of the Forest Park or takes 2 hours for a round trip on foot.

Activities: On the full moon day of the fifth lunar month (of the North) the Ban Pha Tup people usually organise a ceremony of gilding the Buddha image of Khao Tham Phra, called “Tham Pha Tup Fair”. In the morning, there is a ceremony of giving alms to the monks, while during the day are music and performances of students from Ban Pha Tup School. The fair takes place annually at the cave.

To get there: From Mueang Nan district, take Highway No. 1080 for 10 kilometres until reaching the

crossroad to the entrance of the Pha Tup Forest Park for 200 metres. Otherwise, take a Nan – Pua Bus or Nan – Thung Chang Bus passing the Tham Pha Tup Forest Park

Wat Phrathat Khao Noi

Wat Phrathat Khao Noi is situated at Tambon Chai Sathan. The Buddha relic is enshrined in the chedi on the summit of Khao Noi on the western side of Nan town on a similar route as Wat Phaya Wat at Km. 2. It was constructed during the reign of Chaopu Khaeng in 1487. The Phrathat is a chedi made of bricks and cement reflecting a combination of Burmese and Lanna arts. It contains Buddha's hair and was under major renovation during the reign of Phrachao Suriyaphong Pharitdet during 1906 - 1911 by Burmese craftsmen. The wihan was constructed during this similar period as well. From Wat Phrathat Khao Noi, the surrounding scenery of Nan can be seen. At present, at the viewpoint spot is "Phra Phuttha Maha Udom Mongkhon Nanthaburi Si Nan", a 9-metre Buddha image in the giving blessing posture on a lotus base. The head finial of the image was made of gold with a total weight of 27 Baht. It was cast on the auspicious occasion of His Majesty the King's 6th Cycle Birthday Anniversary on 5 December, 1999

Wat Phrathat Chang Kham Worawihan

Wat Phrathat Chang Kham Worawihan is on Suriyaphong Road, opposite the Nan Municipality Office. It was previously called "Wat Luang" or "Wat Luang Klang Wiang", constructed during the reign of Chaopu Khaeng in 1406. It is a royal temple within the compound of Nan town for the ruler to conduct Buddhist ceremonies and the Oath of Allegiance Ceremony in accordance with the 74th stone inscription which was discovered within the temple. The inscription mentioned that Phaya Phonlathep Ruechai, a Nan ruler renovated the main wihan in 1548.

The architectural characteristics of the temple reflect the influence of the Sukhothai arts such as the chedi in the Lankan style (a bell shape) whose base is surrounded by sculptures of the front half of elephants made of bricks and cement. Five elephant sculptures are on each side and 1 at every corner. It looks as though they use their back to support or "Kham" the chedi, similar to the characteristic at Wat Chang Lom in Sukhothai province. Within the wihan, "Phra Phuttha Nanthaburi Si Sakkayamuni" is enshrined. It is a bronze Buddha image, with 65% pure gold, in the posture of forgiveness with a height of 145 centimetres. It is aged around the 14th century or during the late Sukhothai Period. The main Buddha image is very beautiful and large. It was made of lime, representing the Chiang Saen style of art and the skills of Nan craftsmanship

Wat Suan Tan

Wat Suan Tan, built in 1230, features an old, beautifully-shaped Chedi and houses a huge bronze Buddha statue, Phra Chao Thong Thip cast by a king of Chiang Mai in 1450

Si Nan National Park

Si Nan National Park covers an area of approximately 583,750 rai or 934 square kilometres in Wiang Sa, Na oi and Na Muen districts. The undulating mountain ranges line up from the north to the south, paralleling on both the western and eastern sides. They divide the area into the west and the east. Along the riverside are mixed deciduous and deciduous dipterocarp forests. Within the compound of the ranges, there are hill evergreen forest, dried evergreen forest and pine forest. Rare animals that can be found are many flocks of peacocks, leopards, panthers, bears, deer, wolves and Asiatic wild dogs. Moreover, many important wild animals are wild elephants, bantengs, and gaurs, which usually migrate in and out the frontier between Thailand and the Lao People's

Democratic Republic.

Interesting Attractions in the National Park are as follows:

Pha Chu's foot is where the Office of the National Park is located. In winter, the sea of fog can be admired from the top of the cliff. When the fog is disappearing, the Nan River curving at the end of the forest can be seen. It is also a spot to view the sunrise. The distance to the spot is approximately 2 kilometres. The way near the summit is full of pointed rocks; therefore, a pair of sneakers should be prepared for the convenience of climbing. It takes 1 hour for a round trip. Those interested in climbing up to the summit of the cliff have to contact the park official.

According to legend, Chao Ueang Phueng, the lover of Chao Chan Pha had to get married to Chao Chuang, making Chao Ueang Phueng upset for not being able to marry the man she loved.

Therefore, she decided to commit suicide by jumping off the cliff. Chao Chan Pha later followed her and found out about her death. Chao Chan Pha; therefore, killed himself by jumping off the cliff as well. The bodies of Chao Chan Pha and Chao Ueang Phueng were next to each other. At the same time, Chao Chuang saw the woman he loved jumping off the cliff. He was very sad and decided to follow her as well. However, his body hurtled away. With the true love between Chao Ueang Phueng and Chao Chan Pha, in the next life, Chao Ueang Phueng was born as an orchid hanging under the Chan Pha Tree - *Dracaena loureiri* Gagnep., while Chao Chuang was born into a pine tree at the spot of his death. (Chuang in northern dialect means a pine tree, while "Ueang Phueng" refers to an orchid). This cliff has, thus, been called "Pha Chu"- the lovers' cliff - since then

Ban Pak Nai Fisherman Village

Pak Nai was originally a village by the Nan River. After the construction of the Sirikit Dam, the village became a part of the water reservoir above the dam with characteristics similar to a large lake surrounded by green mountain ranges. The locals of Pak Nai village are fishermen. There are also restaurants on rafts providing fish from the dam to be tasted such as Pla Kot - catfish, Pla Bu - gobies, Pla Khang – Giant Catfish, Pla Raet - giant gourami, Pla Thapthim - Thai Red Tilapia, etc. Some rafts also provide accommodation for tourists. From Ban Pak Nai, visitors can rent a boat to travel along the Nan River to the Sirikit Dam and admire the scenery of beautiful mountainous forests, islets, and fisherman's raft houses. Out of the rainy season, there will be a pulled-raft service to Wat Pak Nai, where visitors can enjoy their meal on board. The trip takes approximately 2 hours. Moreover, there is a ferry service to Nam Pat District, Uttaradit province.

To get there: The village is in Na Thanung sub-district, 96 kilometres from the centre of the province. Take the Nan – Wiang Sa – Na Noi route. From Na Noi district, there is a crossroad to Na Muen district for 20 kilometres. Then, turn left into Highway No. 1339. It is an asphalt curving road along the shoulder of the mountain. Continue for approximately 25 kilometres to Ban Pak Nai

Wat Chang Kham

Opposite the Nan National Museum is Wat Chang Kham. Its main features are the sculpted upper halves of elephants adorning around the Chedi, a Sukhothai influence. Here have been found stones with ancient Thai scripts relating the alliance between the kings of Nan and Sukhothai when Nan was still an independent state. An ancient golden Buddha is enshrined in the Vihan

Ban Mani Phruet Security Development Project of Nan

Ban Mani Phruet Security Development Project of Nan is an agro-tourism attraction where there is an experimental project for growing temperate plants. Moreover, there is Siao Khao or mountain

ebony tree – *Bauhinia variegata*., the symbolic flower of the province, and Nang Phaya Suea Khrong – *Prunus cerasoides* D.Don. Inside the project are the Hmong and Lua hill-tribe villages. What is interesting is that the project is located on the Doi Phu Kha Mountain Range, where many groups of Chomphu Phu Kha – *Bretschneidera sinensis* Hemsl. are standing. However, the ones in perfect condition and location for visitors to pay a visit is 3-4 kilometres from the Tourist Information Centre. There is transportation to its entrance. Then, visitors have to walk further for 30 metres. Interesting Attractions within Ban Mani Phruek are as follows:

Tham Pha Phueng is on the way to Mani Phruek 1 Village, 1 kilometre from the Office of the Security Development Project (Pho Mo Pho) and 100 metres from the road. The condition of the forest along the walking trail is still perfect. It is an evergreen forest, with a lot of Tao Rang – fishtail palms standing. The entrance of the cave is 40 metres wide and 20 metres high. Visitors have to descend for 25 metres to the cave floor. The first part of the cave is a spacious hall with a height of 20 metres with water dropping from the ceiling and creating stone layers, similar to the waterfall continuously running down. Moreover, there are beautiful stalactites. The distance to the deepest part of the cave is 400 metres. There is still air for breathing. At the end of the cave is a channel with a width of 20 -30 centimetres. Underneath the channel, visitors will be able to hear the sound of running water to the deeper part, creating a very strange phenomenon. In the past, this cave was a refuge for villagers with a containing capacity for hundreds of people.

Doi Pha Phueng is situated in Mani Phruek 3 Village. It is a limestone mountain with a height of 1,600 metres above sea level. There is not many trees, but mostly a Ya Kha or lalang field. Its characteristics are similar to Doi Phu Wae, where the atmosphere of the sunrise and sunset can be admired. Moreover, the scenery of Bo Kluea district and the ridge of Doi Phu Wae and Doi Cho can be seen. From the entrance, visitors have to walk for 20 minutes along the shoulders of the mountains amidst the beautiful nature.

Furthermore, at Phu Hua Lan Viewpoint Spot, various districts can be viewed such as Chiang Klang, Thung Chang and Chaloe Phra Kiat districts.

Tham Phu Hua Lan was also a habitation site of Thai soldiers in the past, located near the Operational Base.

To get to the Office of the Security Development Project: Take Highway 1080 from Ban Na Nun, at Km. 77 - 78. Turn right into the route to Mani Phruek Village. The road is curving along the shoulder of the mountains. It is also a laterite road alternating with the asphalt one. A four-wheeled-drive vehicle in good condition is recommended. It takes 2 hours for the trip

Nanthaburi National Park

Nanthaburi National Park covers an area of Mueang district and Ban Luang district, as well as, a compound of the Nam Yao – Nam Suak and Tham Phu Toei National Forest Reserves. It comprises mixed deciduous forests, dried evergreen forest, and hill evergreen forest with various kinds of plants such as teaks, Pradu – Burma Padauk, Tabaek – *Lagerstroemia*, etc. The national park is also a habitation area of the Mlabri or Tong Lueang Tribe.

Interesting Attractions in the National Park are as follows:

Doi Pha Chi From Nan, take Highway No. 1091 for 40 kilometres until reaching Ban Luang district. Take Highway No. 1172 to Ban Phi Nuea to Doi Pha Chi for 30 kilometres. Doi Pha Chi can be accessed by walking from the Nanthaburi National Park at the connection point between Nan and Phayao provinces. Doi Pha Chi is a beautiful mountain with abundant waterfalls and various kinds of plants. Doi Pha Chi was once a stronghold of the Pho Ko Kho – communist insurgents. At present, equipment such as the electricity generator and water pipes still remain in the area.

Moreover, nearby are villages of the Hmong and Mien hill-tribes.

Doi Wao is under the supervision of the Nam Khang Watershed Development Unit. It is a nice viewpoint spot to admire the sea of fog and the sunset. The area was once a very declined forest. However, at present, it has been revived by the Watershed Development Unit by growing the original plants such as wild apples, maples, and *Pinus kesiya*. Prior to Doi Wao, visitors will pass Doi Tio which is a very well-known tourist attraction of Nan, Nanthaburi National Park, and the Hmong villages at Ban Doi Tio and Ban Sop Khun.

Doi Wao is 4 kilometres from the Office of the National Park. It is accessible by car to the Watershed Development Unit. Continue by walking to the mountain summit. Along the way is an abundant forest, and a habitat of highland birds such as - grey-cheeked fulvetta, long-tailed sibia, yellow-cheeked tit, white-browed shrike-babbler, red-billed scimitar-babbler, etc. During winter, these birds usually migrate into the area.

Other interesting attractions are the Santi Suk Waterfall, Song Khwae Waterfall, Huai Phrik Waterfall, Tat Fa Rong Waterfall, Doi Mok Waterfall, and hot springs.

Accommodation: The National Park provides tents for tourists. Contact P.O. Box 3, Tha Wang Pha district, Nan 55140, Tel. 08 1602 7286.

To get there: From Tha Wang Pha district, take Highway No. 1082, Tha Wang Pha – Sop Khun for approximately 27 kilometres. Turn right at a crossroad and go further for 500 metres to the Office of the National Park. Otherwise, take Highway 1080 from Mueang Nan district to Tha Wang Pha. Then, take Highway 1148, the Tha Wang Pha – Song Khwae Route for 1.5 kilometres. Turn into Yai Nun – Sop Khun Road to Km. 27 and turn right further for 500 metres

Ban Bo Suak Kiln Site and Glazed Ceramics

Ban Bo Suak in the past was an important production venue of glazed ceramics in Nan province. The production pattern and process of this place are unique.

It is assumed that the ceramic products from Ban Bo Suak were once popular due to their discoveries in the burial grounds of the people in the past, especially along the mountain ridges from Omkoi district in Chiang Mai to Tak and Kamphaeng Phet provinces. It is assumed that the production of the Bo Suak ceramics was originated and developed during the reign of Phraya Phonlathep Ruechai (1528-1559) which was the glorious period of Nan. The knowledge of kilns and glazed ceramics of Nan was influenced from Lanna such as San Kamphaeng Kilns and Kalong Kilns which are kiln sites near Chiang Mai.

Since 1984, the Archaeology Division has conducted a preliminary research and study of the kilns in this area. The “Community Archaeological Site” is located at Ban Bo Suak Phatthana, Mu 10, Suak sub-district, 17 kilometres from the centre of town. The location where the kilns were discovered in October 1999 was by the river within the area of the residence of Police Sergeant Major Manat and Khun Sunan Tikham. The kilns face the Chao Phraya River for the convenience of transportation. Inside is a large firing chamber where a person can enter. The kilns are sloped and possess a chimney on the top. Two ancient kilns have been reconstructed and sheltered within a permanent building. At the basement of Pol.Sgt.Maj. Manat’s house is an exhibition of artefacts from the kilns. The excavation of Nan’s kilns at Ban Bo Suak is considered as a new vision on the “Community Archaeology” research by cooperating with the locals, private organisations, local governmental sector, and researchers from universities to sprout the knowledge and increase the strength of the community at the same time. In the future, a Ban Bo Suak Community Archaeology Fund will be established. Money from the fund will be utilised in community development such as a revival of the pottery profession, construction of the village museum, and training of community tour guides

Wat Ming Mueang

Wat Ming Mueang is on Suriyaphong Road. It was constructed in 1857. Its distinguishing point is the stucco reliefs on the outer wall of the ubosot, presenting the skill of the Chiang Saen craftsmen. The patterns are very exquisite. Within the ubosot are mural paintings depicting the lifestyles of the Nan people by present-day local craftsmen. Moreover, within the compound of the temple stands the city pillar in a cruciform-plan pavilion at its front. The city pillar is 3 metres high. Its base is decorated with engraved and gilded wooden design. The top of the pillar was engraved into 4 faces of the Brahma God, representing Phrom Wihan (Brahmavihara) 4 – the four sublime states of mind; namely, Metta - kindness, Karuna - compassion, Mudita – sympathy, and Upekkha - equanimity

Nan Prison

Prison is previously well-known among people that it is a frightful place. In fact, the prison is recently developed to be a peaceful and beautiful place. It absolutely seems to be a place for a new trend travel. Let's explore this kind of travel at the prison in Nan Province.

Nan Prison is located at a center of Nan Province over an area of almost 7 rais. The prison is decorated into many untitled areas to serve its prisoners such as library. It is a 2-floors building style which has been established for over 100 years since the period of King Rama 6. This library was previously served as a sleeping hall with 12 rooms, and then it was changed to be utilized as a multi-purpose building for 500 prisoners. The studying is provided by lecturers from the Center of Non-formal Education under many subjects such as Thai, Computer, Music, etc. The prison also provides the prisoners the library service. In the prison, there are an exhibition room, which is exhibited history of ancient prisoners, a praying room, and a working room of HRH Princess Mahachakri Sirindhorn. Besides, the prison here also outstandingly provides the prisoners for occupation practice support such as wood furniture skill, hair cut service and cloth weaving as well as sports and exercises areas for Thai boxing and takraw. Moreover, there are also beautiful park, clinic and store for prisoners.

The second prison is located at Khao Noi. It occupies over an area of 85 rais. The prison here is not featured in a high-wall style as the others. Also, the prisoners are dressed as normal people. They are functioned in agricultural areas such as mulberry growing, silk worm and pig feedings called "Moo Lum", wild boar culture, fertilizer production, cat fish feeding in a bamboo and the highlight one is hydroponics vegetable growing based on a local wisdom method. These methods use local receiving the same quality with a modern method. These income generating programs are amazingly originated from the prison's officer Mr. Apisith Muenthina. The Khao Noi Prison is now proclaimed among Thais and foreigners for its outstanding prisoner's activities.

For more information please contact Khao Noi Prison at least 3 days early. The office opens daily from 08.30 to 16.30 hr. Tel : 0 5471 0275