



CREATIVE  
TOURISM  
DISTRICT  
THAILAND  
*Nani*

*Story*

# More Travel, More Fun, Lasting Friendships

## Story

Each place has its own interesting background story. The definition of tourism to some travelers does not only cover eating, sleeping, and traveling to the utmost and take pretty selfies, but also gathering stories and experience, opening and widening their world, getting to know every profound aspect of every place they visit, otherwise it could not be considered fulfilling a truly cherished and unforgettable memory.

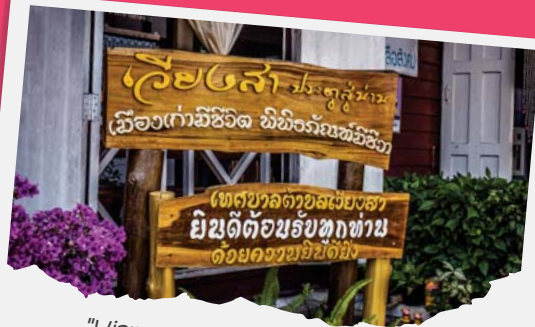


"Bun Yuen Temple"

More than a charming city, more than a living old city, Nan still has various aspects to offer travelers who are determined to explore and discover more than they ever expect. This trip begins by opening this large gate to familiarize yourself with Nan at Wiang Sa, once called Wiang Po, which is dubbed 'The Gate to Nan.' We choose to start this indulgence into the beauty and prosperity of Lan Na culture that are still apparently inherited to these days at Bun Yuen Temple, an ancient temple said to be established by Phraya Po, the founder of Wiang Po. Once, Bun Yuen Temple has been renovated and renamed Pa Sak Ngam Temple after its material, teakwood (sak), before finalizing at the name Bun Yuen after the standing (yuen) posture on a lotus flower of the principal Buddha image with his two hands hanging by his sides, different from other principal Buddha images with are usually in the familiar meditative trance. We specifically choose to visit Bun Yuen Temple in July



*"Buddha image with elegant standing posture"*



*"Wiang Sa, Once call Wiang Po, which is dubbed The Gate to Nan"*

exactly one day after the Buddhist Lent with the determination to participate in the Thailand's only Sai Bat Thian Ceremony, in which monks, along with laity, offer candles as alms, accompanied by flowers, som poi juice or perfume, and food, followed by 'sumakharawa' or 'samichikam' rite, that is the asking for pardons from older senior monks as an ablution to purify one's soul. The ceremony was picturesque and mystical. The venue is jammed with participants but not clamorous. The colorful flowers delicately tied to the candles are simply too photogenic, we could not resist ourselves from going crazy and taking loads of photos



Across Bun Yuen Temple is another location crucial to the hearts of Wiang Sa people, because in front of path to the current building of the Wiang Sa Municipality Local Museum is the first place His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej and Queen Sirikit laid their feet on the 16 March 1958. Let's give an applause to Wiang Sa Municipality that it has tried to simulate the event on day to the very last details, from perforated paper arts, Sa District Office sign, and the royal monogram. The wooden bench His Majesty



*"Wiang Sa Municipality Local Museum"*





*"Ancient boat"*

once sat on was even traced and eventually brought back. The friendly staff would greet us with their smiles and refreshing refreshment, and show us the video file of a film produced during His Majesty's first royal visit to the Northern provinces. Traveling during those years weren't so easy as it is today, yet His Majesty visited the entire region. As we watch the happiness of His Majesty's subjects in the film amidst an ambiance that brought us back to those days, our eyes couldn't help but be overfilled with tears. We miss His Majesty so much. In addition to the story of His Majesty, the place still holds the history of Nan's ancient boat, whose production started from digging up a single large log of 'takian thong' tree for the hull, followed by drawing decorative patterns like 'kanok bait het,' 'kiao,' and 'ko,' patterns on the sides.

The bow or 'hua o' carved into the image of the Naga has many components, including, 'kiao fong,' 'kiao tae,' 'kiao nai,' 'kaem,' 'mok khi ma,' 'ngon,' 'kab rong,' 'dueai khang,' 'madeng,' 'krachok khang,' 'mata,' and 'mok ta.' In addition, there were antique objects set up around the area to excitingly tell us about the lifestyle of the Sa people of the olden times, inviting us to spend a long time there.

Indulge in the past by continuing to Khai Nam School the first Chinese school in Nan Province. The shape of the old building is still preserved with traces that indicate it was once used as an educational

Establishment. Even though, the interior is not open to public, such a beautiful retro architecture is no doubt worthy of taking photos. Now hunger and thirst started to creep in, making our next destination Chang Nan Coffee and Gallery, a once bus garage turned into a café, so in one corner laid an old bus made into laidback seats where you can appreciate the coffee, while admiring the gallery on the second floor at your own pace. Once we got fully energized, it's time to cycle and sightsee the town. Many say Wiang Sa is a cycling-friendly town as there's Huen Rot Tib which is like a mini-museum where many cool bicycle models are collected. Cycling routes can be taken to enjoy scenery of the rice paddies just in season for cultivating and transplanting the seedlings. Though the green rice plants can't be seen yet, there's a refreshing



*"Cycling in the city before sunset"*



*"Huen Rot Tib"*



breeze blowing from the open fields. If this was the time when the rice plants flourish or close to the harvest season, the view would have been even more elegant. There's also scenes of the Sa elderly's lifestyle, going through their daily routine like weaving cotton, spinning cotton, making tungs, and wrapping candles, for us to see and exchange a few words, and ask for a few photos. The cycling routes passed through Don Chai Tai Village to Warapon Fabric Shop, where the owner was more than glad to teach us all about woven fabric.



*"Rice farm morning view"*



The process starts with the elderly spinning the cotton as we have been seeing along the way, removing the black seeds from the fiber until fluffy cotton wool is achieved, then whipping to disintegrate so small bits and pieces could be removed. The resulting wool is rolled into thin straws, then finally spun into scrolls, at which point the cotton should be ready to finally enter the weaving process. Cotton could be either brown or white, pure or mixed with silk. Patterns include traditional ones like 'nam lai' pattern. However, Ms. Warapon integrated it with her own ideas to develop other pretty patterns like 'nam lai son muk,' 'nam lai nan tai,' 'sai fon tin muk,' 'nam lai yok rong,' and 'plong nan bua pan' that is adapted from the arts of Phu Min Temple. The patterns were so beautiful that they are replicated by others. I understand that the patterns are really beautiful, but since this is just not fair, now I'm irate on behalf of her wisdom and ideas.



*"Lai Nam Lai"*



*"Warapon's woven fabric shop"*



"Master Radom"



"Hitting Haloh and feeding the fish"



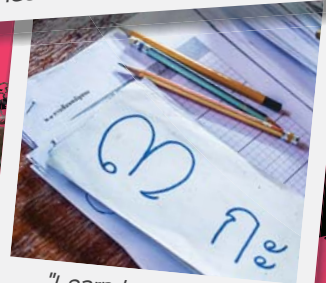
Boat cruise of Nan river



Now my stomach started to growl so, I stopped by at Khao Sai Pa Pit restaurant, where I can sate my gastric juice with plenty of khao soi. The next destination is just adjacent to the restaurant, that is the Ban Kalok, Master Radom's kalae-style house by the Nan River. Once I arrived, he will play you the 'pucha' drum and hit the 'kalok' to feed the fish. In the past, kaloks were used to warn the community of urgent and dangerous matters or to call for assembly, but now he uses it as a communicating signal to make fish that live in the conservation area's water school, so you could feed them by hoisting a baskets of food down to the destination at the pier, or you could shoot the food pellets with a rubber band to



*"Experience the local museum"*



*"Learn how to write like a local"*

test your accuracy instead. Actually, behind all these funs of fish feeding is the motivating idea to conserve fish species so they last. Whoever wishes to support can pitch in a few baht for the fish food, so that Master Radom does not have to take the burden it all by himself. Evening is the just about the time for 'tua mueang' or the Lan Na script lesson for those who are interested, which I didn't waste any time to sign up. Mueang language and Thai language are actually not that different. An example of the few differences is that Lan Na vowels are written below the consonants, not on the same line as in Central Thai language. Once you finishes this 90-minute course, you should at least be able to write your own name in the Lan Na script. Sunlight started to soften and the sun was approaching the horizon, so Master Radom signaled us that it's time to cruise in a wooden boat down the Nan River. This is one of my favorite activities, as it was very relaxed, cool breeze blowing into your face the entire way, bringing along the refreshing ambiance of the river. The riverbanks were as peaceful as they could get. You could see the trees moving under that last sunrays of the day. Along the way, the scenes of the villagers' simple lifestyles can be soon, some casted their rods, some setting up fish traps at intervals. Many were there alone, but many gathered into groups on boats moored here and there. The atmosphere now was perfect and balanced to every one of its component, including the boats, the trees, the stream, the softening sunlight, and riverside huts, as if it was a painting. But what is irresistibly beautiful is the scenery of the sun disappearing behind the bend of the river. It is just purely captivating. Master gestured us to prepare the camera as the sun was dipping itself down between two tree on the west. Just spam the shutter. Ending the day with such once-in-a-lifetime moment, I got a good night sleep at Wiang Kaew Hotel, with a relaxed adapted Lan Na atmosphere.

As morning comes, we will enhance our appreciation of Nan again at Nan Cultural Exhibition Hall, where the rooms are efficiently partitioned in such a way that we can absorb the lifestyle of the local community, the history and origin of the city, and Nan's relations with and significance to other Lan Na major cities and Rattanakosin Kingdom. In the late hours, we will take it easy and take the tram to sightsee Nan's cozy city center, scattered with 12 beautiful temples in close proximity, yet each with its own uniqueness, for examples, the renowned Phu Min Temple, Chang Kham Temple, and Si Phan Ton Temple. Noi Temple, which is the smallest temple, is also in Nan. In addition to temples, the tram will also travel through residential area and



*"Sightseeing Nan's cozy city center by local tramp"*



*"Nan cultural exhibition hall"*



*"Wat Phumin"*

market where we can view scenes of local lives, being greeted with warm smiles throughout the entire route. Afterwards, I would like to put on the spirit of a Lan Na woman and make 'suai dok mai' at Chao Fong Kham Palace. We will first talk a walk and admire the palace, as it is an ancient wooden house where Chao Si Tumma, a descendant of Nan's prince, once resided, who also moved around until he settled down at this current location. The house was build according Lan Na architecture in the style called 'ruean khu,' roofed with tiled called 'pan kled' and 'din kho.' Besides the exhibition of antique household objects to reflect life of the olden times, several demonstrations of regional traditions are also available for you to



try your hands on, like weaving and pillow embroidery. Today we will be making 'suay dok mai,' which is basically flower cones made from banana leaf let to transpire under the sunlight, meaning it requires around two days to prepare, and so reservation needs to be made in advance. The first step is rolling the banana leaf into a cone and clasp it with a wooden pick, which is not hard. However, the leaf broke up a little during the pleating steps, but finally I managed to make a banana leaf cone filled with popped rice, flowers, incenses, and candles to pay respect to the Buddha image. I walked to Suan Tan Temple just nearby to offer the cone, but this time is different than before, because I proudly made the flower cone myself.



"Making flower cones"



"Making flower cones"

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"Chao Fong Kham Palace"

แรกมี...มิชชันนารี ที่น่าน  
The First Missionaries in Nan Province





I heard from Nan people that there's a must-go place, so I had to respond to that. When I arrived there I had to admit that Sut Rit Art Gallery was really to the max (Sut Rit) and very arty. There are a gallery to stroll in, decorated with artworks to view, coffees to sip, fresh and clean vegetable to eat, and vines providing cool shades. So this is Nan hipster lifestyle! Finally, I had to bid farewell to Nan at Rangsi Kasem Building or Nan Christian Sueksa School, whose building is built of red bricks comparted into more than 10 rooms, containing over 100 pictures telling us different stories. Every picture, room, or object tell the story of the missionaries' relationship with Nan people, royal duties of Nan's past princes, and most importantly is the room on the late King Rama 9 that kept me in there for a long time. This place communicates the origin of Nan well, with each piece of furniture under careful preservation. What's different about this place is that everything is tangible, allowing us to vividly imagine scenes of the past. I'm very impressed; the more I get to know Nan, the more I fall in love with it.



*Rangsi Kasem Building*

### *Directions:*



From Nan city center, travel south to Wiang Sa for approximately 25 kilometers.



### *Contacts for tourism:*

Wiang Sa, Master Tone – Tel: 088 407 1740  
Boat cruising, Master Radom – Tel: 085 029 8029  
Chao Fong Kham Palace, Ms. Pat – Tel: 089 560 6988  
Rangsi Kasem Building Master Ton – Tel: 087 178 2588



### *Best time to travel:*

All year around. If you want to participate in Sai Bat Thian Ceremony, you have to come exactly one day after the Buddhist Lent.





## *Target audience:*

Tourists who like traveling to different places to appreciate new lifestyles and cultures different from routine daily life, and have fallen in love with expediting to fulfill inspiration and search for meaning of life through living and exchanging experiences with respective local societies and communities.



## *Trivia:*

Wiang Sa is Nan's largest Amphoe, so called 'the Gate to Nan,' being very abundant in rivers and streams. As for Nan city, it's a cozy small town, complete with charms and living cultures, full of temples to be visited. Other important tourist attractions include Nan National Museum, Phu Min Temple, and Rim Nan Gallery.



## *Activities with local communities:*

Sai Bat Thian Ceremony, Cycling in the city, Boat cruise of Nan River, Writing Muang script, Making flower cones at Chao Fong Kham Palace



## *Preparation:*



Do research on the places you are visiting, without forgetting your camera and diary to record your memories.

## *Values and impression gained:*



You get to appreciate Nan deeper than ever in many aspects, including its origin, history, culture, and lifestyle, that may breed into inspiration to pass on these stories and impressions, and make use of the values you experience in your lifestyle in a meaningful and tranquil way.







## Tourist attractions:

- Bun Yuen Temple: Wiang Sa's important temple since the ancient times. Anyone who comes will have to pay respect to the Buddha image with elegant standing posture.
- Wiang Sa Municipality Local Museum: In addition to being an archive of artefacts of lifestyles and culture of the Nan people, it is also the location of the first footstep His Majesty the King Bhumibol Adulyadej set in the land of Nan.
- Nan Cultural Exhibition Hall: Modern learning center for the history, culture, nature, and geography of Nan and other Lan Na provinces in the North from the past to the present.
- Rangsi Kasem Building, Christian Sueksa School: Building that is an archeological site with exhibitions on Nan in different aspects, told through photos, furniture, and household objects, compartmented into different rooms.



"Woven fabric"



"Nan cultural exhibition hall"



"Local Museum"

## Accommodation:



- Wiang Kaew Hotel

## Souvenirs and must-buys:



- Woven fabric from Warapon's woven fabric shop



# Day 1

In the morning, we will pay respect to the Buddha at Bun Yuen Temple, participating in Sai Bat Thian Ceremony then cross the street to see His Majesty's footprint at Wiang Sa Municipality Local Museum. Then, we will proceed to take photos of beautiful buildings at Khai Nam School, Nan's first Chinese School, and take it easy at Chang Nan Coffee and Gallery. After that, we will cycle around the city center, take a look at the local lifestyle, and stop by Warapon's woven fabric shop to learn about woven fabric, followed by feeding fish and writing Mueang script at Ban Kalok, and finally taking a cruise on a wooden boat down the Nan River in the evening before settling down at Wiang Kaew Hotel

- 01 *Bun yuen temple*
- 02 *Wiang sa municipality local museum*
- 03 *Kainum school*
- 04 *Chang nan coffee and gallery*
- 05 *Huean rot tib*
- 06 *Warapon's woven fabric shop*
- 07 *Kalok homestay*

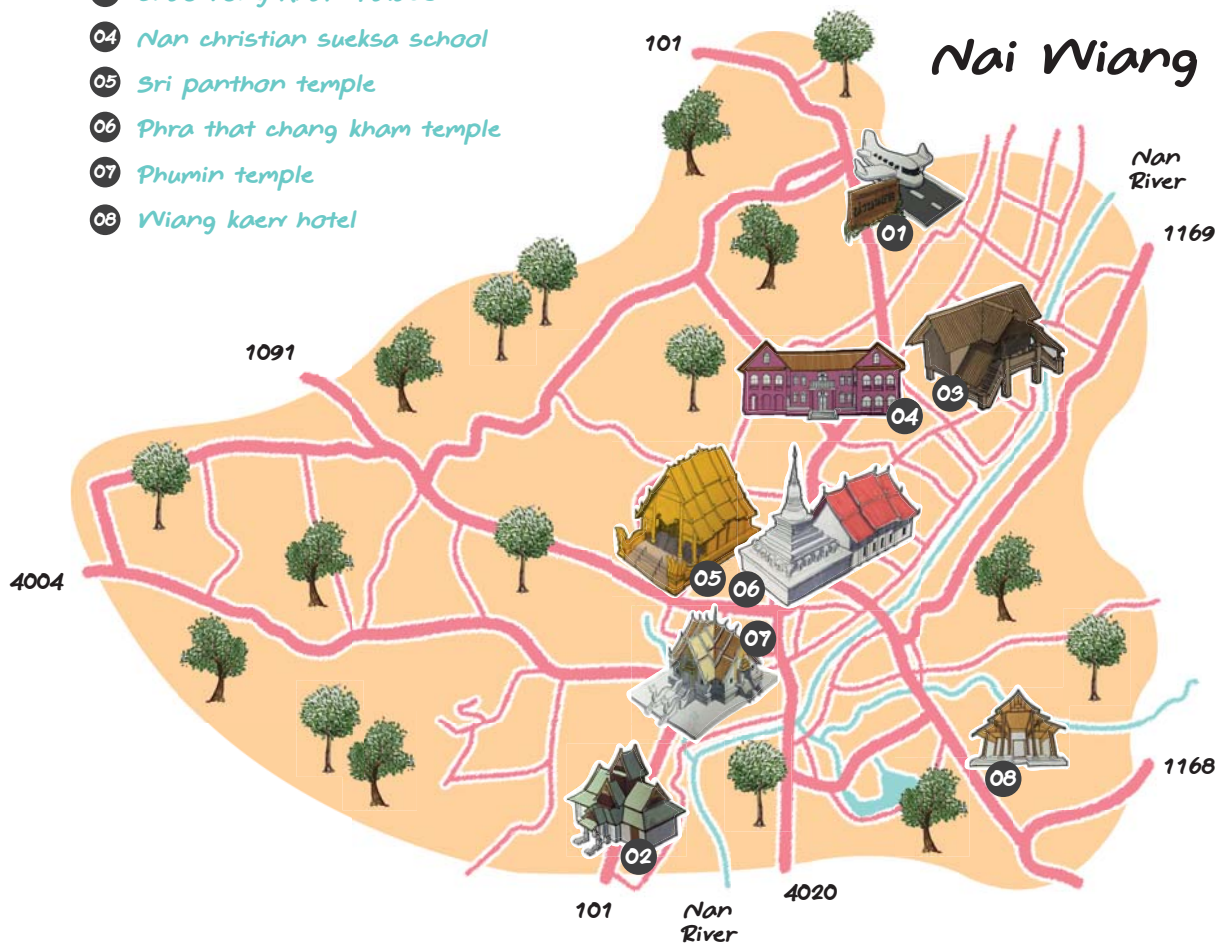




We will head to the first destination at Nan Cultural Exhibition Center in the morning, and then take the sightseeing tram. After that, it will be the time to make flower cones at Chao Fong Kham Palace, then to Sut Rit Art Gallery. We will bid farewell to Nan at Rangsi Kasem Building, Nan Christian Sueksa School.

Day 2

- 01 Nan nakhon airport
- 02 Nan cultural exhibition hall
- 03 Chao Fong Kham Palace
- 04 Nan christian sueksa school
- 05 Sri panthon temple
- 06 Phra that chang kham temple
- 07 Phumin temple
- 08 Wiang kaerv hotel





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