TREKKING & SERVICE IN SE ASIA
Adventure and Service-Learning
Through Northern Thailand & Laos

2015 Enrolment
St Margaret’s and Berwick Grammar School
Welcome to Rustic Pathways in Thailand and Laos

Hello and welcome! Rustic Pathways is delighted to offer this journey to students and staff of St Margaret’s and Berwick Grammar School(s). The program offers a wonderful fusion of adventure, service and cultural exploration in Thailand and Laos, providing students with a well-balanced insight into life in Southeast Asia while empowering them to positively impact their world.

Rustic Pathways has been operating student travel and community service programs in Thailand and Laos for well over a decade. With 60 full-time local employees from incredibly diverse backgrounds, our connections in these countries ensure access to places that are not open to most visitors. Our Southeast Asian administrative headquarters is based outside of Chiang Mai, and our regional directors also have homes there. With our legendary Ricefields International Service Base in Thailand, our Children’s Home in Mae Sariang, our Luang Prabang Service Base in Laos, and a number of other bases throughout the Hill Tribe region, our year-round facilities and staff demonstrate our commitment to the communities and people we love and support in these countries.

BACKGROUND ON RUSTIC PATHWAYS

Rustic Pathways provides superior quality community service, education, and adventure travel programs to students around the world. For the past 32 years, we’ve been widely viewed internationally as the world leader in our field, and our programs have been available to Australian schools since 2011.

MISSION

We empower students through innovative and responsible travel experiences to positively impact lives and communities around the world.

VISION

Rustic Pathways is committed to creating a world where:

- Travel is accepted as an essential part of every education
- Travel is a model of sustainable development
- All people are connected by a shared humanity and all decisions are made with a global perspective

VALUES

- **Integrity** - We demand all actions be guided by an ethical code of dignity, honesty, and fairness.
- **Excellence** - We hold ourselves to the highest standard of quality in everything we do. We are committed to constant improvement through diligence and determination.
- **Pioneering Spirit** - We are free-thinkers, trendsetters, and boundary-pushers. We praise critical thought, curiosity, and creativity. We believe change stems from the power of ideas.
- **Passion** - We infuse energy and joy into everything we do. We create positive energy. Our passion is genuine and contagious. We believe in what we do.
- **Teamwork** - Together we overcome challenges and accomplish the extraordinary. We are better as a team than as individuals.
- **Community** - We are a family. We cherish diversity and inclusivity. We actively connect people from across the world to create a shared humanity.
- **Global Responsibility** - We always consider the impact of our actions on people, the
planet, and our future. We all have a duty to create positive change in the world.

- **Safety** - We strive to protect the safety and health of our students and staff through proper planning, prevention, and coordinated response.

**HISTORY AND OVERVIEW**

For the past 32 years, Rustic Pathways specialized in providing sustainable and meaningful education programs to students around the world. By attending our programs, students engage with the world’s diverse cultures, question the meaning of global citizenship, and participate long-term, sustainable community service projects.

From 1983 to 1991, Rustic Pathways only offered one style of program, an 8-week, four-wheel-drive expedition across the Outback of Australia. These were high-intensity, exploratory, adventure travel programs that defined our pioneering spirit. From 1992 to 2001, Rustic Pathways expanded operations into Fiji, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, and Laos. During this time period, we focused on perfecting the high school community service model, realizing the life-changing power of connecting students to remote villages around the world. Between 2001 to present, Rustic Pathways grew 30 times in size, became an industry leader in student travel, and expanded into Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ghana, India, China, Mongolia, Peru, Tanzania, Morocco, Burma, and the United States. We achieved this sustainable and organic growth through a laser focus on program quality and student/parent experience.

Rustic Pathways’ competitive advantage comes from three key areas. First, we have a highly qualified full-time team of international staff who weave our programs into the fabric of the local society. Unlike almost every other travel company, we run all of our own programs on the ground in the countries where we travel – we don’t farm them out to third party operators. Second, we built a variety of unique accommodation facilities that perfectly fit our student body. This gives us the ability to customize the experience to the group of students, the school, or the family. Third, Rustic Pathways leaped head and shoulders above other organizations in the area of Safety and Risk Management. We understand that a child is the most important part of any parent’s life. Sixty-five percent of our students come directly from word-of-mouth sources, a testament to the trust our clients have in Rustic Pathways.

In this past year, Rustic Pathways employed roughly 500 full-time and seasonal staff around the world. We provide fair wages, an engaging work environment, job trainings, and other career development opportunities that make the company a desirable place to work. Moreover, we invest heavily in our local staff, prioritizing hiring from the communities we travel in. As a result, students are able to form relationships with local communities and develop a more authentic understanding of local culture.

Travel opens people’s minds making them creative thinkers, problem solvers, and real world collaborators. Our clients regularly find themselves sharing meals with local families, telling stories around the bonfire, and hearing firsthand about the challenges and opportunities within each of these communities. We enrich the lives of our students and staff, benefit the parts of the world we serve, and build cultural bridges that lead to greater global understanding and cooperation.
SAFETY AND RISK MANAGEMENT

Philosophy Of Risk
Rustic Pathways understands that risk is an inherent aspect in any student travel program. We travel to remote destinations, many of which have limited access to the definitive medical care and emergency systems that are commonly found in the developed world. However, risk is an essential component of personal growth. Taking risks such as trying new foods, summing a demanding peak, journeying through undeveloped areas, and challenging existing world-views, are all part of the learning process while traveling. We believe that the positive transformations our students undergo are a direct result of carefully managed risk.

Our Approach To Risk Management
Risk management begins with a process of identifying potential risks, then evaluating their potential outcomes and likelihoods. We use this information to formulate a management plan to mitigate risk through prevention and to outline appropriate response measures. Risk Management at Rustic Pathways occurs on three levels: company-wide, country operation, and program management.

1) Company-Wide
At the Company-Wide level, Rustic Pathways employs a Director of Safety and Risk Management who oversees the implementation of the Company Risk Management Plan and the Critical Incident Protocols. The Director of Safety and Risk Management is also charged with the review of all Country Risk Management Plans (CRMPs), Program Risk Management Plans (PRMP), and Natural Disaster Plans. Moreover, the Director is responsible for conducting safety audits both in documentation and in the field; reviewing incident reports; ensuring medical screening and student forms are at or above the relevant industry standard; and providing Country Directors with resources such as our established Activities Standards and Program Protocols and Procedures and guidance in the area of Safety and Risk Management.

2) Country Management
The next layer of risk management occurs at the destination country level and is overseen by each of our full-time Country Directors. Our Country Directors, in conjunction with our country management teams, develop Country Risk Management Plans and Natural Disaster Plans. These plans evaluate potential risks, identify precautionary measures, detail management procedures, and provide contingency or evacuation strategies. Country Directors are furthermore charged with developing and maintaining an intelligence network to monitor on-the-ground conditions by utilizing local staff knowledge, and international reporting agencies. Country Directors also oversee the hiring and training of staff with certain company requirements for quality and professionalism including but not limited to background checks, age minimums, medical certifications, and in-country training workshops specific to safety and risk management.

3) Program Operations
On a third and independent level, the management of risk occurs on each of our programs through the leadership and professionalism of our guides. Our guides are well-trained and have excellent local knowledge in the regions they lead students.
St Margaret’s and Berwick Grammar School
28th December 2015 to 16th January 2016

Summary of Itinerary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Daily Itinerary</th>
<th>Overnight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday 28th Dec</td>
<td>Depart Melbourne and Fly to Bangkok/Thailand</td>
<td>Phoenix Hotel, Bangkok</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 29th Dec</td>
<td>Up to The North, Chiang Mai Tour</td>
<td>Mercure Hotel, Chiang Mai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday 30th Dec</td>
<td>Into Scenic Northern Thailand on Your Bike!</td>
<td>Guesthouse, Chiang Mai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 31st Dec</td>
<td>Chiang Dao – New Year’s Eve Lantern Celebration</td>
<td>Pink Lotus Resort, Chiang Dao</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday 1st Jan</td>
<td>Trek to a Hill Tribe Village</td>
<td>Homestay, Hill Tribe Village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday 2nd Jan</td>
<td>Village to Village – Learn While Trekking</td>
<td>Homestay, Hill Tribe Village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun-Tues 3rd-5th Jan</td>
<td>Service Projects in the Village</td>
<td>Homestay, Hill Tribe Village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday 6th Jan</td>
<td>Down From the Mountains and Into The Pai Valley</td>
<td>Guesthouse, Pai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 7th Jan</td>
<td>The Caves of Soppong</td>
<td>Guesthouse, Pai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday 8th Jan</td>
<td>The Pai River Expedition!</td>
<td>Riverside Huts on Pai River</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday 9th Jan</td>
<td>The Rustic Pathways Children’s Home</td>
<td>RP Children’s Home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday 10th Jan</td>
<td>Let’s Go to Laos!</td>
<td>Guesthouse, Luang Prabang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday 11th Jan</td>
<td>Luang Prabang Tour</td>
<td>Guesthouse, Luang Prabang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 12th Jan</td>
<td>Lao Elephant Conservation Centre - Orientation</td>
<td>Bungalows, Elephant Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed-Thurs 13th-14th Jan</td>
<td>Service at The Lao Elephant Conservation Centre</td>
<td>Bungalows, Elephant Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday 15th Jan</td>
<td>Farewell and Departure</td>
<td>Inflight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday 16th Jan</td>
<td>Arrival Back to Melbourne</td>
<td>In your own bed 😊</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Detailed Itinerary

Day 1: Monday 28th December
Melbourne to Bangkok, Thailand.

Today your group will meet at Melbourne airport no later than 11.55am. After a final farewell to Australia, you’ll pass through immigration and fly to the capital of Thailand, Bangkok. Sit back, watch a movie, and enjoy the world-class service of Thai Airways - your adventure begins!

- Thai Airways flight TG466
  Depart Melbourne 1:55pm
  Arrive Bangkok 8:25pm
  Duration: 9h 30m

Sawat dee and welcome to Thailand! Upon your arrival into one of the world’s most modern airports, you will immediately get the feeling that you have arrived in a place that is far different from Australia. Thailand is known as one of the most welcoming countries in the world and is affectionately nicknamed the ‘Land of Smiles.’

As you exit the arrival hall with your teachers, you will meet your team of Rustic Pathways leaders. Then you’l
transfer by private van to your hotel for the evening and enjoy a Thai meal with your program leaders. Tonight there’ll be a short orientation before resting after a long day of travel.

**Overnight:** Phoenix Hotel, Bangkok

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**Day 2: Tuesday 29th December**

**Up to The North, Chiang Mai Tour**

In the morning, we’ll head back to the airport for a short flight up to the north of Thailand. Chiang Mai, the “Emerald of the North”, is the former capital of the Lanna Kingdom. Chiang Mai is considered one of the most liveable cities in Asia; not too big, not too small, with a unique culture, pleasant atmosphere and surrounded by lush forested mountains. You will notice the charm and attraction of Chiang Mai as soon as you step off the plane.

→ Thai Airways flight TG102  
  Depart Bangkok 8:00am  
  Arrive Chiang Mai 9:20am  
  Duration: 1h 20m

After checking into your hotel, we’ll head out to explore Chiang Mai and the sights, smells and tastes that make Thailand wonderful. Our staff will give students an introduction to Thai culture and introduce you to many of our friends and family in Chiang Mai.

Enjoy your tasty lunch in of the many friendly local restaurants and then head up Chiang Mai’s incredible mountain to visit the most famous temple in the region, Wat Prathat Doi Suthep. Listen closely to the amazing story of how a white elephant marked the spot for the temple to be built – then head up the dragon-guarded staircase to check it out for yourself, and enjoy one of the best views of Chiang Mai and the surrounding valley. After being blessed by a monk, ringing bells, burning incense for good luck and getting your fortune told, you’ll take in the incredible view of the Chiang Mai valley below.

After your traditional Thai-BBQ style dinner, go and discover the famous Night Bazaar. This is Chiang Mai’s cultural highlight of the week, as the main street through the old city is blocked off and vendors selling all sorts of handicrafts and local delicacies set up stalls. This is a popular event for locals and tourists alike, musicians play traditional music and artists sell their paintings as the throngs of people pass by. Peruse the many stalls or get a foot massage and people watch to your heart’s content before heading back to the hotel for a good night’s rest.

**Overnight:** Mercure Hotel, Chiang Mai

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**Day 3: Wednesday 30th December**

**Into Scenic Northern Thailand on Your Mountain Bike!**

The journey begins! Today, we will wake up early, eat a big breakfast, get on our bikes and head north. As we leave the city of Chiang Mai, we will pass through freshly planted rice patties and head up into the mountains. Not long after we enter the mountains, we will stop at a beautiful waterfall where we will have a chance to take a rest and cool off. Here, we will have a picnic lunch and spend some time swimming and playing in the waterfall. Back on the bikes, we will head to our guesthouse, have a good dinner and get a good night sleep.

**Overnight:** Guesthouse, Chiang Mai
Day 4: Thursday 31st December
To Chiang Dao - “Village of The Stars” & New Year’s Eve Lantern Celebration
First thing in the morning, we’ll hit the road again on our bikes. Our next stop will be a quaint little mountain town north of Chiang Mai called Chiang Dao, or “Mountain of the Stars”. The village sits in the shadow of one of Thailand’s highest peaks, also known as one of the best places for bird-watching in the region.

Here, we’ll arrive at our home for the night, the Pink Lotus resort. Located in a small village near a famous cave, a beautiful temple, and a nature trail, the Pink Lotus is half resort and half organic rice farm. Before getting ready for the exciting night, listen to the owner, P’Koko, as he explains the Pink Lotus’ mission and the importance of introducing organic and sustainable rice production practices across Thailand, the world’s leading rice exporter. Rustic Pathways has a meaningful and long-term relationship with P’Koko and his family. He was a Rustic employee for more than 7 years but now he spends most of his time taking care of his animals and farm in Chiang Dao.

Chok dee ka! HAPPY NEW YEAR! Tonight will be one of those special moments in your life, you will surely never forget! Here is a once in a lifetime opportunity to celebrate New Year’s Eve in a unique style and welcome 2016 with a release of dozens of glowing lanterns into the sky in a company of the elders and families of the village. The disappearing lanterns into the dark sky symbolize the people letting go of their past and starting fresh.

After the final countdown of 2015, you’ll better go and get tucked into bed, because a big and challenging adventure is ahead of you tomorrow!

Overnight: Pink Lotus Resort, Chiang Dao

Day 5: Friday 1st January 2016
Trek to a Hill-Tribe Village
After a long night of celebration, enjoy a freshening breakfast with P’Koko’s home made orange juice and get ready for your trek today! Trekking starts heading west into the remote mountains! We will venture off the back side of Doi Luang (or Doi Chiang Dao) enjoying amazing views of the surrounding peaks. Along the way, we’ll stop in different villages to say hello and rest our tired feet. The terrain varies greatly from thick bamboo groves to pristine rainforests. We’ll pass Hill Tribe peoples on the path off to work in far away fields, and stumble upon beautiful waterfalls about every couple of hours.

Tonight you will sleep in a Hill Tribe home-stay arrangement with boys in one house and girls in another house to get a real feel for what life is like in a traditional village! Enjoy hearty cooking, hot tea around the campfire, and some of the freshest air in the country as it spills down from the Thailand’s third highest peak.

Overnight: Homestay, Hill-Tribe Village

Day 6: Saturday 2nd January
Village to Village
Today you will be trekking from village to village and learning about life in the mountains. This is some of the most beautiful scenery in Thailand, and you can expect to meet plenty of friendly people along the way. Our expert guides will teach you some jungle survival skills, and you’ll get a nice taste of what life is like high in the mountains of Thailand.

This afternoon you will reach a village where you will be doing your service work. You will be welcomed in like family upon arrival, and this evening you will get to know the villagers that you’ll be supporting over the next two days.
Days 7 & 8 & 9: Sunday 3rd & Monday 4th & Tuesday 5th January

Service Projects in The Village

Over the next three days, your group will get to work on a service project in the village. These projects are designed to address the most pressing needs of the village at that time. Here you will meet with village leaders, stay with residents in their bamboo homes, and coordinate activities for children who may have never seen foreigners before. Get your hands dirty working to help alongside the betel-nut stained smiles of the locals. Your project will be determined closer to the time, but as an example, in 2012, Rustic students built a kindergarten in Baan Mae Ga Nai village; in 2013, they completed a library in Baan Mae Lai village; and Doy Liam Village has a new playground for the kindergarteners and a brand new library built by Rustic students in 2014.

You will be contributing to the ongoing infrastructure projects that Rustic Pathways facilitates in this region and expect to share your positive energy at local schools, learn how farmers work the land, and create one substantial project as a group for the benefit of the village. During this home stay experience you will live, cook and eat right alongside your host family, providing you with a genuine glimpse into the lives of these indigenous people.

Overnights: Homestay, Hill-Tribe Village

Day 10: Wednesday 6th January

Down From The Mountains & Into The Pai Valley

This morning we will say farewell to our new friends and hosts. We’ll walk out to the road, where our VIP vans will pick the group up and we’ll make our way down from the mountains. Today there is about a 2-hour drive to the town of Pai. Here, you’ll have the chance to rest, peruse local markets, get an optional Thai massage, or visit some natural hot springs. Pai has a great assortment of restaurants where you’ll be able to eat some comfort food that you may have been missing while trekking through the mountains.

Overnight: Guesthouse, Pai

Day 11: Thursday 7th January

The Caves of Soppong

This morning we’ll drive about an hour north to the town of Soppong, and here we’ll hike and explore some of the longest caves in Southeast Asia. Later, you’ll have the option to go on a caving adventure! We’ll return to Pai in the later afternoon.

Overnight: Guesthouse, Pai

Day 12: Friday 8th January

The Pai River Expedition!

First thing in the morning, grab a helmet and paddle and embark on an overnight white-water rafting trip! This is one of the area’s best rafting trips, and a great way to cap off your experience in Thailand. After a solid day of paddling through the valley, you’ll stop off and set up camp at riverside huts in a small village.

Overnight: Riverside Huts on Pai River
Day 13: Saturday 9th January
Mae Hong Son and Mae Sariang

Once you’ve had a satisfying breakfast, it’s time to hit the river again and continue paddling towards our final destination, Mae Hong Son. Once there, we’ll have a nice look around town and some of the city’s beautiful temples.

Our vans will meet us in Mae Hong Son and we’ll travel for one-hour to Mae Sariang, the home of the Rustic Pathways Children’s Home. Established in 2007 by David Venning – the Chairman and Founder of Rustic Pathways - this is an establishment that houses dozens of Karen children who we have welcomed in to provide them with food and essential needs, education, and a home.

After meeting everyone at this special facility, your new friends will take you out into the rice paddies to capture some imagery of what makes Thailand so unique. These hills are ripe with culture, beauty and colour, which will make for unique photographs and an unforgettable learning environment. After lunch the group will head to some bright blue waterfalls and take a dip in its inviting waters. During the evening, we will have a meeting with our amazing team of staff at the RPCH to discuss everything that you have seen and experienced, and learn how our project fits into picture of helping disadvantaged youth in the region have the best chance possible at a bright future.

Overnight: Rustic Pathways Children’s Home

Day 14: Sunday 10th January
Baan Raai School Then Return to Chiang Mai & Fly to Luang Prabang, Laos

After breakfast you will change into appropriate attire for a visit to the Baan Rai School, where over 300 young Karen students study each day. Providing these students with better resources and a better quality of living is one of the main goals of the Hill Tribe Orphanage. You will experience a Thai school and have the opportunity to teach some basic English classes if you are game!

In the later morning, we’ll drive back to Chiang Mai and make our way to the airport to catch your short flight to your new destination, LAOS!

✔️ Lao Airlines flight 636  
Depart Chiang Mai 3:20pm  
Arrive Luang Prabang 4:20pm  
Duration: 1h 00m

SABAI DEE! Welcome to Luang Prabang, Laos, where ancient temples, colonial architecture, rich history, and unmatched beauty have earned the entire town UNESCO World Heritage Site status.

You will meet your team of Rustic Lao leaders as you enter the arrival hall. Then you’ll transfer by private van to your hotel and head out to grab your first traditional Lao dinner to this little unique restaurant, Lao Lao Gardens.

Overnight: Guesthouse, Luang Prabang

Day 15: Monday 11th January
Luang Prabang Tour

You will rise early to the sound of the gong calling the monks to morning prayer. This morning’s cultural experience will entail heading out to the main street to give morning alms (offerings) to the monks. Each day, hundreds of Buddhist monks that live in the many temples of Luang Prabang file around town to collect offerings from townspeople looking to receive some good merit. This is an incredible sight!
Continue your real Lao adventure with discovering the beautiful and historical pebble streets and hidden temples of the small French colonial town, Luang Prabang. Get familiar with the history and the traditional Lao culture while sipping a freshening fruit smoothie.

After finishing lunch in the town’s famous local deli, hop on a boat down the Mekong River to the Pak Ou caves. These ancient Buddhist caves date back almost six hundred years, and over that time, pilgrims to the site have left more than 4,000 images of the Buddha in the area. As you float along, watch fisherman casting their nets off the riverbank, excited children plunging from rocks into the chilly waters, and women paddling boats to their villages carrying vegetables for the day. This is also a wonderful place to view the incredible landscape of Laos. Relax while the river carries you downstream where life has remained almost completely unchanged by outside influences for generations.

Tonight you will get the chance to scroll around Luang Prabang’s world famous local markets, where you can indulge yourself with traditional hand-made goods from sellers of the Lao hill tribe villages.

**Overnight:** Guesthouse, Luang Prabang

**Day 16: Tuesday 12th January**

**Lao Elephant Conservation Centre & Orientation**

After your morning coffee and croissant, set out for the Lao Elephant Conservation Centre. A couple of hours by VIP van over craggy mountain passes on misty jungle roads, followed by a boat ride over a stunning lake will bring you to this remote elephant sanctuary in Xayaboury Province.

Once you arrive at the camp, meet the entire staff - including the elephants. The senior staff will give you a hearty welcome over traditional pho soup and introduce the plan for the next few days.

The Elephant Conservation Centre takes a completely different approach to conservation than many other centres in the region. With their small herd of elephants and a very concentrated focus on conservation practices, basic veterinary training, and responsible elephant handling, you won’t be riding the elephants too often. Instead, you will be learning how to care for them and helping this amazing species to thrive in Southeast Asia.

Your first order of business will be to look the part - everyone will receive a custom mahout (or elephant trainer) suit. Once you are comfortable in your fashionable new attire, you will be assigned an elephant to work with for the next few days. This afternoon you will work with the mahouts to learn elephant safety and basic commands, before giving the elephants some exercise on a ride around the ECC grounds. Every afternoon, the elephants are taken to bathe in Namtien Lake, where the centre is located. You will be delighted at how playful and fun they are in the water! Then, it is time to trek the herd into the forest, where they sleep for the night and forage in their natural habitat. After dinner, you can relax, play cards or write your journal before falling asleep in your bungalow.

**Overnight:** Bungalows, Elephant Centre

**Day 17 & 18: Wednesday 13th & Thursday 14th January**

**Service in The Lao Elephant Conservation Centre**

The morning is truly a special time in the jungle of northern Laos. The birds bring the forest to life and the sun cuts bright rays through the fresh morning air. Rising very early, head deep into the forest to retrieve the elephants from their sleeping area. Once they are fed and cared for, you will head back to the camp for a satisfying meal.
In the afternoon, meet the veterinary care team and learn the role they play in the evolving relationship Laotians have with elephants. Meet the centre’s on-site veterinarian who will give you a brief tour of the hospital and the centre. Begin your training with the hospital’s veterinarians by learning to develop a diet plan, how to assess your elephant’s health, and how to understand and communicate with your elephant. Next will be time to practice basic commands, mounting and dismounting, and riding the elephant, working closely with the elephant’s mahout to learn about their close, life-long bond with their elephant. Again, with the Lao Elephant Conservation’s focus primarily on the best care for their small herd of elephants, you won’t be riding the elephants as often as you will be learning how to care for them.

This afternoon you will also get the opportunity to visit the nursery, where mother elephants and their babies are cared for. The baby elephants are absolutely adorable - you may get to see try to bath in the lake, or feed themselves awkwardly with their trunks! You will work with the centre’s staff to prepare a routine health check of the nursery, discussing the specifics of reproduction, artificial insemination, pregnancy, and neonatal care.

Many people don’t know that elephants are a matriarchal species. Male elephants will stay with their mothers until they are at least 16 years old, and females will stay with mom their entire lives, even as they raise their own young. Today, discuss the implications of poaching on this close-knit society and how the centre is acting to combat that.

When you return to the elephant camp for the evening, finish up your daily duties by assisting your mahout to find a suitable place in the jungle for the elephants to eat wild vegetation and sleep for the night. Heading back to the camp on jungle paths, arrive in time to take a swim, relax with your friends and get ready for dinner. In the evenings, you are invited to help the kitchen staff and learn some Lao cooking skills while preparing delicious fresh meals with locally grown tropical fruits, vegetables, and rice.

**Overnight:** Bungalows, Elephant Centre

**Day 19: Friday 15th January**

**Drive Back to Luang Prabang & Departure**

On your final morning at the centre, you will retrieve your elephants and bathe them in the river one last time. Then, you will have the opportunity to engage in a fun and helpful service project - making elephant dung paper! This sustainable practice results in homemade recycled paper, which is used in a number of ways!

After an emotional goodbye from your best friends in the jungle, you will make your way back to Luang Prabang for a final lunch and a debrief discussion with your Rustic leaders, before you head to the airport to catch your flight back home to Melbourne.

- **Bangkok Airways flight PG946**  
  Depart Luang Prabang 5:20pm  
  Arrive Bangkok 6:50pm  
  Duration: 1h 30m

- **Thai Airways flight TG465**  
  Depart Bangkok 12:15am  
  Arrive Melbourne 1:05pm (tomorrow)  
  Duration: 8h 50m

**Overnight:** Inflight
Day 20: Saturday 16th January
Arrival Into Melbourne
After an overnight flight from Bangkok last night, your flight will land back in Sydney at 7:10am this morning. Welcome home! We hope you have had a wonderful experience in Thailand & Laos © See you again!

An Important Note about Schedule Changes:
Rustic Pathways reserves the right to change, alter, or amend the daily itinerary for this trip at any time. Changes can be made for various reasons including changes in flight or program schedules, changes in the schedules of various external tours incorporated in our trips, the addition of new activities into a trip, or the substitution of an old activity for a new activity. The itinerary shown here provides a good outline of the anticipated daily schedule for this program. As with any travel program, some changes may occur.

PROGRAM DETAILS

PRICE PER STUDENT: $4,995 per student

Inclusions:
• International flights to/from Melbourne on Thai Airways
• Internal Thailand and Laos flights as listed on itinerary, or similar
• Rustic Pathways leaders and multi-lingual Thai and Lao guides in Thailand & Laos (ratio 1:5
• Breakfast, lunch, dinner each day
• All accommodation, as listed in itinerary
• Private transportation
• Service projects and materials
• All activities, and associated entry fees, as listed in the itinerary except any labelled as “optional”
• Community service donations and guide tips
• Single point of contact at Rustic Pathways before, during and after the program
• Rustic Pathways 24-hour emergency support throughout program
• Medical and security evacuation assistance from International SOS
• Pre-departure preparation sessions at St Margaret’s and Berwick Grammar, hosted by Rustic Pathways

Exclusions:
• Passport application or renewal fees (if required)
• Visa for entry into Laos (approx. $35)
• Costs of any medical treatment arranged by International SOS (travel insurance required)
• Travel insurance (can be provided through QBE for $136 p.p)
• Immunizations (if required)
• Personal expenses such as snacks, souvenirs, internet, phone calls
• Transfers to/from Melbourne Airport
• Optional/extra activities