March 8–21, 2020

The Cultural Treasures of Thailand & Bali

with Rice Professor Dr. Lisa Balabanlilar

Wat Rong Khun / White Temple
Thailand is a land of dazzling variety.

From the lush forested hills of the north to dynamic modern Bangkok in the south, the Kingdom offers a kaleidoscope of spellbinding sights. In northern Thailand, visit splendid temples, Chiang Mai’s famous night bazaar, an elephant rehabilitation center, and the remarkable Mae Fah Luang Arboretum. In the dynamic Golden Triangle, take a long-tail boat ride on the spectacular Mekong River crossing the border into Laos. In Bangkok, see the most beautiful remnant of the ancient Siamese court at the Grand Palace, visit the city’s oldest Buddhist temple, and cruise up the Chao Phaya River, the pulsing artery of this historic city.

Though a tiny island famous for its beautiful beaches, Bali is rich with natural and cultural treasures.

Bali’s exotic temples accentuate stunning landscapes, while haunting Gamelan music permeates the air. Spend five nights in Bali’s cultural capital—Ubud—located in the island’s scenic central highlands with their terraced rice fields and forested rivers. Interact with locals and learn about famous Balinese traditional dance, foods, and an array of artisanal crafts. Be introduced to local customs and traditions shaped by Balinese Hinduism during visits to a women’s center, a local village community center, a Legong dance performance, and dinner with a Balinese prince in his family’s private palace.

Travel with Lisa Balabanlilar

Dr. Lisa Balabanlilar serves as Associate Professor in the Department of History at Rice University and joined the faculty in 2007. She is a scholar of the Mughal dynasty, and her research focuses on Islamic kingship among Turks. In 2012, she published her book Imperial Identity in the Mughal Empire: Memory and Dynastic Politics in Early Modern South and Central Asia and has had other articles appear in various academic journals. At Rice, she has been awarded the 2016 George R. Brown Prize for Excellence in Teaching. Dr. Balabanlilar has led Traveling Owls journeys to Turkey, India, Morocco, and the Silk Road, and is looking forward to leading this program.
Sunday, March 8 / Monday, March 9, 2020

Departures
Depart the United States on an overnight flight to Chiang Mai, Thailand, and cross the International Date Line.

Tuesday, March 10, 2020
Welcome to Thailand
Arrive at Chiang Mai International Airport (CNX) and meet your ISDI tour manager and local Thai guide. Transfer by private coach to the five-star Na Nirand Romantic Boutique Resort, located on the banks of the Mae Ping River in central Chiang Mai. Be treated to a guaranteed early-morning check-in with free time to settle in, relax, and enjoy a late-morning breakfast. Set out in the afternoon to explore Chiang Mai, a remarkable city of great artistic, cultural, and political power hidden among vast tropical forests and rice paddies. Visit the 14th-century Wat Phra Singh Temple renowned for its intricate carvings. At the sacred mountaintop Wat Phrathat Doi Suthep temple, take in gorgeous views of the city. Sample delicious Thai cuisine during a welcome dinner together. Na Nirand Romantic Boutique Resort (B, D)

Wednesday, March 11, 2020
Local Life in Chiang Mai
Following Lisa Balabanlilar’s first lecture, visit the home of a renowned singer and teacher who preserves Thai Lanna music. Next discover the architecture of a traditional Thai house and rice barn during a cooking class with a Thai family. Help select fresh ingredients from the family’s garden, learn to cook traditional Thai home-cooked recipes, and dine on the dishes that you have just prepared! Walk through Chiang Mai’s famous night bazaar, overflowing with textiles, silk embroideries, jewelry, and handicrafts. Na Nirand Romantic Boutique Resort (B, D)

Thursday, March 12, 2020
Elephant Conservation & the White Temple
Check out of your hotel and enjoy a magnificent four-hour drive into the mountainous north to Chiang Rai. At a conservation center, observe elephants feeding, bathing, and interacting with one another in a stunning forest environment. After lunch, continue to Wat Rong Khun, better known as the White Temple, a contemporary, unconventional, privately owned art exhibit in the style of a Buddhist temple. Check into the four-star Le Patta, and enjoy dinner together. Le Patta (B, L, D)

Friday, March 13, 2020
The Golden Triangle
Spend the morning at the Mae Fah Luang Arboretum, which at 5,000 feet above sea level showcases diverse native flora and fauna. En route to the Golden Triangle—where the borders of Laos, Thailand, and Myanmar meet—stop at the bustling border town of Mae Sai. Take a long-tail boat trip along the Mekong River to Chiang Saen, the first capital of Northern Thailand. Visit the Hall of Opium, an excellent museum focusing on the history of the Golden Triangle and the opium trade. Back in Chiang Rai, enjoy a lecture by Lisa Balabanlilar followed by an evening at leisure. Le Patta (B, L)

Saturday, March 14, 2020
Bangkok
Fly to Bangkok and visit the Grand Palace, the most beautiful remnant of the ancient Siamese court, including Wat Pra Keaw (Temple of the Emerald Buddha), and Wat Pho, the oldest and largest Buddhist temple in Bangkok. Following lunch at a riverside restaurant, cruise the Chao Phaya River by private long-tail boat, glimpsing
the bustling activity along Bangkok’s waterways and canals.

**Chatrium Riverside, Bangkok (B, L)**

**Sunday, March 15, 2020**

**Urban Bali**

Check out of the hotel and spend the morning exploring the historic Jim Thompson House, a combination of six traditional Thai teak buildings in which his incomparable collection of antiques and art is exhibited. Fly nonstop to Denpasar, Bali, and transfer to the five-star Kamandalu Resort in Ubud, Bali’s cultural capital. Ubud is a thriving arts and crafts hub and ceremonial center with remarkable architecture, historical museums, galleries, temples, shops, and restaurants. Be treated to your first taste of Balinese cuisine during dinner together.

**Kamandalu Ubud (B, D)**

**Monday, March 16, 2020**

**Balinese Art & Music**

Meet Agung Rai, founder of the ARMA Museum, who will introduce you to Balinese culture and art during a personal tour of his fascinating museum followed by lunch. Learn about traditional Gamelan music, Legong dance, and Balinese woodcarving from local teachers at the village banjar (community center), followed by Lisa Balabanlilar’s third lecture.

**Kamandalu Ubud (B, L)**

**Tuesday, March 17, 2020**

**Kintamani Excursion**

On a morning walk through rice paddies, learn about the rice growing process, the preservation of traditional irrigation systems in Balinese communities, and native plants and their use in traditional medicine and food. Drive to the Tirta Empul Holy Spring Temple, one of Bali’s sacred sites where you are invited to experience or admire the cool, fresh sacred spring waters. At Kintamani take in panoramic views of the Mt. Batur volcano and beautiful Lake Batur, the largest lake in Bali, and have lunch in one of the most beautiful spots of the entire island. At an impactful women’s center, learn about the center’s job skills and healthy living programs over dinner conversation with Balinese women. Close out your day attending a Balinese Legong dance performance.

**Kamandalu Ubud (B, L, D)**

**Wednesday, March 18, 2020**

**Mengwi Excursion**

Enjoy a full-day excursion to Mengwi, a town nestled in shady coconut groves surrounded by rice fields and rivers with a rich history associated with one of Bali’s main ancient kingdoms. Explore the 17th-century Pura Taman Ayun, one of Bali’s most beautiful temples, with beautiful fountains, sculptures, ancient shrines, and towers in the distinct Balinese-style architecture. Visit the fascinating Museum Manusa Yadnya, which focuses on the life-cycle rites and rituals of the Balinese people. At the Ogoh-ogoh Museum, examine its fascinating large-scale sculptures of gods and monsters from Balinese folklore. After a sunset visit to Tanah Lot Temple, return to Ubud for an evening at leisure.

**Kamandalu Ubud (B, L)**

**Thursday, March 19, 2020**

**Cuisine, Art Market & the Peliatan Palace**

Head to the market and pick out fresh ingredients with a renowned local chef who will share methods for creating authentic Balinese and Indonesian dishes such as lumpia (spring rolls) and sate ayam (chicken skewers with peanut sauce). Savor the dishes that you’ve prepared for lunch, then visit the Sukawati Art Market. Following Lisa Balabanlilar’s last talk, attend an exclusive visit to the royal Peliatan Palace and dine with one of the royal family princes, who will shed insight on Bali’s traditional culture and modern-day challenges.

**Kamandalu Ubud (B, L, D)**

**Friday, March 20, 2020**

**Seaside Sanur**

Spend the morning relaxing or enjoying optional activities such as hiking, yoga, or spa treatments. After check-out drive to the seaside town of Sanur for a visit to the serene Pura Blanjong temple, home to the island’s oldest surviving inscriptions. Take an afternoon stroll on the beach followed by a farewell dinner at a delightful beachfront restaurant. Continue to the Denpasar airport (DPS) for return flights back to the United States.

**Aloft (B, D)**

**Saturday, March 21, 2020**

**Return to the U.S.**

Return on independent flights to the United States.
TOUR COST
Land Only .................................................. $6,495
Single Supplement ...................................... $1,095

Tour price is per person based on double occupancy, with a minimum of 15 paying participants. Land price is calculated as of April 2018 and is subject to change.

DATES | March 8–21, 2020

ACTIVITY LEVEL | Moderate standing and walking for up to three hours at a time and motorcoach rides up to four hours (with breaks)

DEPOSIT & FINAL PAYMENT | A deposit of $1,000 per paying participant is required to guarantee participation in the program. This deposit may be paid by check or by Visa or MasterCard. Final payment balance will be invoiced and is due on October 31, 2019 and must be paid by check to International Seminar Design, Inc. Registrations will be accepted beyond this date on a space-available basis with payment in full by check only.

FLIGHTS | Participants are responsible for all aspects of their air arrangements to Chiang Mai (CNX) and from Denpasar (DPS). Participants who are unable to take the group airport transfers are responsible for their own airport transfers. Flights during the tour from Chiang Rai to Bangkok on 3/14 and from Bangkok to Denpasar on 3/15 are included in the tour package.

TERMS & CONDITIONS | International Seminar Design, Inc. (ISDI) acts only as an agent for the participant with respect to transportation, accommodations, and all other services relating to this tour. ISDI, the Association of Rice Alumni, and/or their agents assume no responsibility or liability for any act, error or omission, or for any injury, loss, accident, delay or irregularity, which may be caused by any defect in any aircraft, ship, train, bus, or other carrier, or through neglect or default of any subcontractor or other third party, which may be used wholly or in part in the performance of their duty to the participants of the tour. ISDI and the Association of Rice Alumni reserve the right to cancel any tour prior to departure for any reason including insufficient numbers of participants, as well as the right to decline to accept or retain any person as a member of the tour at any time. If bookings fall below the minimum required, passengers will be advised of additional costs or itinerary alterations before departure date.

CANCELLATIONS & REFUNDS | All cancellations must be received in writing by ISDI, and charges are calculated as of the day notification is received in writing by ISDI. If a tour member cancels, the following scale of charges is incurred: There is a non-refundable administrative fee of $500 per person. Written cancellation received by ISDI on or before October 31, 2019: full refund minus $500 per person administrative fee. Written cancellation received by ISDI between November 1, 2019 and January 23, 2020: full refund of any recoverable land costs, less $3,250 per person cancellation charge (includes administrative fee). Written cancellation received by ISDI on or after January 24, 2020: no refund. After the tour has commenced, it is not possible to issue any refunds. No refunds are issued for any unused portion of the tour including, but not limited to, occasional missed meals or sightseeing tours. Costs for promotion, staff, and other group expenses are not refundable. If due to weather, flight schedules, or other uncontrollable factors you are required to spend an additional night, you will be responsible for your own hotel, transfers, and meal costs.

In the case of cancellation, substitutions are not accepted. The tour cost is non-transferable. Tour cancellation, baggage, and medical insurance is strongly recommended. A confirmation letter and travel insurance application will be mailed to you upon receipt of your deposit.

TRAVEL INSURANCE | The purchase of trip cancellation insurance is strongly recommended for coverage of expenses in conjunction with cancellation due to illness or accident. Baggage insurance is also recommended. In the event that you must cancel your participation in a travel package, your travel insurance may be the only source of reimbursement. Travel insurance information will be emailed to you from the Traveling Owls upon receipt of your registration.

TOUR PRICE INCLUSIONS | Eleven (11) nights’ accommodations; breakfast daily, 7 lunches, 7 dinners; services of an ISDI tour manager; land transportation by private motorcoach, minivans, and 4x4 vans, as needed; group airport transfers to and from the hotel upon arrival and departure; two one-way economy flights: from Chiang Rai to Bangkok on March 14 and from Bangkok to Denpasar on March 15; expert, local English-speaking guides throughout planned activities; services of an ISDI tour manager; gratuities to local guides and drivers; entrance fees to sites per itinerary; bottled water daily; taxes, services, and portage fees.

TOUR PRICE EXCLUSIONS | International airfare into Chiang Mai and out of Denpasar, airline taxes, and fuel surcharges; individual transfers to and from the hotel for those not using the group transfers; airport portage; gratuities for hotel housekeeping; excursions, activities, or meals during traveler’s free time; personal items; personal services; taxis; travel extensions; personal insurance for health, baggage, and tour cancellation; passport fees; visa fees.

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Thailand & Bali · March 8–21, 2020

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Learn traditional recipes with a Thai family in their home and with a local Balinese chef.

Walk through rice paddies in Bali to learn about the rice growing process, irrigation systems, and use of native plants in traditional medicine and food.

Observe the importance of waterways to Thai daily life during long-tail boat cruises along Bangkok’s Chao Phaya River and the Mekong River.

ROOMING OPTIONS: (please select)
○ Double Occupancy, ○ We prefer separate beds
○ Single Supplement ($1,095)
○ I will share a room with:
○ I would like a roommate but will pay the price of the single supplement if one cannot be found.

The undersigned has read the tour itinerary and recognizes and accepts any risks therein. The undersigned also understands and hereby agrees for and on behalf of his/her dependents, heirs, executors, administrators and assigns to abide by the conditions set forth in the terms and conditions listed in this brochure and to release and hold harmless International Seminar Design, Inc. (ISDI), the Association of Rice Alumni, and any of their officers, trustees, agents, licenses, or representatives from any and all liability for delays, injuries, or death or for the loss of and/or damage to his/her property however occurring during any portion of, or in relation to, this tour.

EACH PARTICIPANT MUST SIGN
Registration invalid without signature

Signature             Date

Signature             Date

COMPLETE AND RETURN TO:
Rice Alumni Traveling Owls
MS-520, P.O. Box 1892
Houston, TX 77251
Tel: 713-34-TRIPS, Fax: (713) 348-5210
Email: travelingowls@rice.edu