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[**Retirement Living In Chiang Rai**](http://www.thailandrelocationservices.com) **Thailand**

You can enjoy your retirement comfortably living in Chiang Rai, Thailand on as little as $1,300, you can live well on $2,000 or you can live very well on $3,000 per month.

**The pros and cons**

Chiang Rai is situated right between Laos and Myanmar, which allows for a perfect opportunity to visit these countries for a weekend retreat etc. This however, means that there is no coast and therefore no beach in Chiang Rai. There is however a river area where locals like to go and it is called Chiang Rai Beach.

In the past 10 years, Chiang Rai has become a modern city in Northern Thailand. One recent addition to Chiang Rai is the Central Plaza, a new multi-story shopping complex offering all kinds of modern amenities. The supermarket, Tops, on the ground floor offers European food which until recently was unobtainable in Chiang Rai but they are considered expensive. We also have 2 BIG Cs (a bit like Walmart) and a Makro which is a bit like Costco.

The airport is close by but the flights are limited. Thailand’s second largest city Chiang Mai is only a 3 hour drive away, which offers a playground of activities for people wanting to get away for the weekend or Xmas etc.

Chiang Rai is a lot cheaper than other parts of Thailand whether renting a property or just going out for a few drinks. However the entertainment is mostly limited to the Jetyod area. There are other bars around the town to be explored but they are few and far between.

**Which part of Chiang Rai province is recommended for retirement living?**

Chiang Rai is a very big province, driving from one end to the other would take up to 2-3 hours. Elderly people should stick close to Chiang Rai city which is convenient for everything such as restaurants, shopping and most importantly hospitals and health services, you won’t want to drive 2-3 hours to the city from a rural part of Chiang Rai province if you are having a heart attack. However, some districts have better facilities than others, big shopping centers are on the rise along with better medical care from local small hospitals.

It’s illegal to work in Thailand unless you possess a current work permit – even NGO work or volunteer work (although this is often ignored). It’s wise to check with a lawyer and play it safe!

**Where to Stay**

Chiang Rai hotel prices have risen over the past 5 years but some remain reasonably priced. Getting long term discounts can vary based on the time of year. Christmas is a busy time and most hotels are full. For the budget conscious travelers living 2-3 km out of the town center in one of the many villages is the best option. The prices are cheaper and a two bedroom bungalow would set you back around 3,000 THB ($90) a month but that is the bottom end. Nicer bungalows can be found for 7,500 THB ($250) a month.

To find houses for rent you need someone who can point you in the right direction. Some landlords will probably be charging you more than if you were Thai but that is unavoidable, unless you can get a Thai person to negotiate the rent for you (we can help you save money on a rental). Most will take you on for a minimum lease of 6 months.

On some residences you might get a special discount because most Thai people don’t want to stay in a house that previously had someone pass away they believe it to be haunted.

Leasing land should be done properly by a reliable lawyer. You then take the lease to the Amphur (or District Office) together with the nor sor sam or Chanote and register it; they then stamp the document on the back. The land cannot then be sold unless the lease is cancelled. A lease without doing this is totally useless. The lawyer would take the title deed to the Amphur and get it legalized. The wife or owner should then sign another 30 years lease dated from the end of the first one (you can renew a 30 year lease). Presently the government is considering allowing 50 year leases.

Most wives would agree to these procedures if you explain to them that if they died, they would not want their husbands thrown out! At the end of the thirty year lease, all you have to do is get a lawyer to take it to the Amphur again. A virtual 60 year lease should cover most peoples lifetime and the wife can leave the property in her will to the children; if you die the lease could be terminated and the property go to your children.

Having someone who speaks the local language is a huge benefit as even Thais who speak reasonable English will misunderstand what you are trying to say a lot of the time, particularly regarding technical information such as computing or building work. Language will be a barrier specifically when it comes to employing tradesman to work on your house or garden etc. They won’t speak English and can often be lazy. A watchful eye is wise to make sure they are not cutting corners. On the good side the charge is often 25% of what it would normally cost in the west and in general they are pretty competent and trustworthy. We can help with these communication issues.

**Things that you should know when living in a Thai village**

Many villages have an appointed president that takes care of “village business” such as street lighting (bulbs) or pot holes etc. Electric bills are normally delivered to your door which has to be paid at your local 7-Eleven store. If your Electric bill is less than 200 THB for the month then it is free! This was introduced to help struggling Thais. Water bills are normally collected by a villager on a motorbike, which can seem a little strange the first time if you don’t know why they are asking you for money. It is normally less than 100 THB for 3 months.

Chickens often roam free in the villages and can be a little bothersome, but soon you’ll hardly even notice the constant blare coming from the horny little cockerels. Most people own at least one dog which has a tendency to bark a lot to keep potential thieves at bay but are no problem once you become familiar.

There are a lot of public holidays in Thailand which normally include festivals or free music events for the villagers. It can be a fun way to spend an evening and also to introduce one’s self to the locals.

Most streets in Thailand have at least one daily speech that is given over very loud speakers by the president. When looking for a place to rent or buy, it is advisable to check how close the loud speaker is to the property as these announcements can be as early as 6am. They are useless to anyone who doesn’t speak Thai but are normally just about local events and council issues.

**Communications**

Getting a pay and go SIM Card for your phone or tablet is cheap and easy to do. 7 Eleven stores are everywhere and sell “One2call” SIM Cards from AIS which is the local mobile phone company, just ask for a “One2call” SIM card and you will be understood.

Top ups can be bought as scratch cards for 50 Baht, or higher denominations can be asked for and a till receipt with a 12 digit code will be given. You simply dial \*120\* the12 digit code# then press call. Providing your phone accepts the SIM you’re away! There is also a package service with AIS, True or DTAC for internet data.

If you can’t live without a bit of Western TV then you are in luck. European and American Television can be received through a satellite dish which can be installed by a company called True Visions. Depending on the package you buy you can have a wide range of viewing from Sport, Movies, American and British TV. But don’t expect it to be cheap.

**Some Thai laws that you should know**

Buying a vehicle and registering it is easy if you read and speak Thai, have a non-immigrant visa and either a work permit, a yellow book, or a proof of address form. Again, Retire In Thailand can help you with that and save you a considerable amount of money on the purchase.

License plates are required by law, they display the name of the province where the vehicle is registered. Owners register in the province they live; this isn’t necessarily that of official residency (as shown on a house registration). If a car is sold or given to someone else (permanently), and the new owner is living in a different province, the number usually changes.

Eight different types of vehicles are officially recognized, and show differences in plate types; some have only one consonant, others another number in different style, and there are diplomatic plates, but unless you’re really into vanity plates and or lucky numbers, you really needn’t worry your pretty head about all that.

If you decide to buy a car in Pattaya or Bangkok but live in Chiang Rai, you need to obtain a letter from immigration before you change the papers stating you live in Chiang Rai.

The Vehicle Registration Office of the Department of Transport must see your original documents, but, rather than let them out of your hands, take copies and the originals to the Registration Office, where they will stamp and certify the copies. The annual vehicle registration fee is governed by the engine size and the type of vehicle, and both the vehicle registration sticker, issued by the vehicle registration office (which shows the year of expiry in large figures) must be displayed on the left hand side of the windscreen. My registration for a 4 door pickup truck is 4,800 Baht ($160) per year.

When a new car is registered, you will be given red license plates until your registration is complete – normally about one or two months. When they’re ready, go back to the dealer to have the permanent plates fitted and collect the registration book. Some dealers can be slow providing new plates. According to the law, you may not drive at night or outside your home province on temporary plates. If you’re buying a car through payments, the lender will hold the registration book until you finish paying, at which time they’ll transfer to your name; but you may need to re-provide all that paperwork. And, to obtain car finance, you’ll need a Thai guarantor.

Some suggestions: Be wary about buying a car other than through a reputable manufacturer’s dealer or a second hand dealer of note. Maybe buy a used pick up first – they’re cheaper as tax on them is lower.

The driving style here can take some getting used to, you might want to teach someone else (i.e. spouse or lover) to drive, and there’s a definite chance of it getting banged up a bit.

Buy a popular make; Toyota, Honda, Mitsubishi, as it is easier getting service for them and reselling them later on.

Automatics are harder to find. Go for a small engine – most likely most of your driving will be in town or on the highway – you don’t need lots of horsepower, or to race kids from Bangkok. Save on gas. Consider LPG – it’s WAY cheaper. As of now there are more than 20 LPG gas stations in Chiang Rai city.

Insurance: There are two types of insurance in Thailand, the Government mandatory 3rd party insurance and the optional insurance which is not mandatory but highly recommended. Both insurance types are arranged by an insurance company and there are many such companies with offices and agents everywhere!

At first, or for the first year with a nice car, you might want a high level of insurance. After a year without any claims, your rates will go down by maybe 10%.

The mandatory liability insurance only costs about 650 Baht/yr. Be aware however, that this insurance will be insufficient to cover you in case of a serious accident where people other than yourself are injured or killed. The maximum payout for a death is only 35,000 baht. If you sell your vehicle before the insurance expires, there’s no refund – the insurance is carried forward to the new owner.

Optional insurance has 3 types.

**Type 1 insurance**

Covers Own Vehicle and Third Party Property Damage and Bodily Injury and loss due to Fire and Theft and Natural Disasters like flood. It also specifically covers collisions, accidents, Window Breakage and Towing expense. This insurance is not sold for vehicles over 14 years old.

**Type 2+ insurance**

A similar cover to Type 1, but with a limit to cover on Own Vehicle Damage and excluding Own Vehicle Damage due to Self-Accident (e.g. driving into a car park wall).

**Type 3+ insurance**

Covers Third Party Property Damage and Excess Third Party Bodily Injury as well as limited coverage for Own Vehicle Damage due to Collisions only.

**Type 2 insurance**

Commonly referred to in other countries as Third Party, Fire & Theft, Type 2 covers Third Party Property Damage, Excess Third Party Bodily Injury and loss due to Fire and Theft.

**Type 3 insurance**

Covers the costs of Third Party Property Damage and Excess Third Party Bodily Injury.

As with the mandatory insurance, if you sell your vehicle before the insurance expires, there’s no refund – the insurance is carried forward to the new owner.

It is unwise to drive without adequate insurance; if you have an accident without insurance, there’s no limit to your liability and as a foreigner you will always be the one at fault. There can also be a fine for driving without insurance (up to 10,000 Baht). After a year, don’t forget to renew! All that applies to motorcycles, too, except that no comprehensive insurance is available for motorcycles. You must though, have the mandatory government insurance.

**Visas**The most common visas are called a Retirement Extension of Stay and a Marriage Extension of Stay.

The requirements for a Retirement Extension are:

You must be 50 years of age or over

You must be holding a 90 day non-immigrant visa

You must have at least one year remaining on your passport.

800,000 baht in a Thai bank account for 3 months before and after you apply for your visa or proof of a monthly income of 65,000 baht or more per month or a combination of both which add up to 800,000 baht. For example, if you have an income of 50,000 baht per month that equals 600,000 per year so you would need to back it up with 200,000 in the bank.

The requirements for a Marriage Extension are:

You must be married to a Thai. This must be a legal registered wedding with a valid marriage certificate. It cannot be a village wedding with no papers.

You must have at least one year remaining on your passport.

Either 400,000 Baht in a Thai bank account or an income of 40,000 Baht per month. Combining income and savings is not allowed on this visa.

# **Four Most Dangerous Things in Chiang Rai**

# Chiang Rai is very safe city. It’s an easy place to travel and is a safe city to visit from both the health and personal safety aspects. However, that doesn’t mean nothing can go wrong here. Like in other cities in the world, there are always dangerous things we need to avoid.

These are the 5 most dangerous things in Chiang Rai based on personal views of local people. Hope it helps you prepare yourself to be safe while traveling in Chiang Rai.

Here they are:

**1. Road accident**

 First thing, in case you don’t know, the road death toll in Thailand is among the highest in the world. Each year up to 22,000 people are killed in road accidents in Thailand.  This number puts the country in the 2nd spot in terms of the world’s road casualties, according to the Thailand Accident Research Centre (TARC). Of those killed, up to 70 or 80 per cent are motorcyclists or their passengers.

The second thing, which you already know, Thais are the worst drivers in the world. We have to admit that a large portion of Thai people are less than responsible when it comes to driving and drink driving is common.

Songkran festival is the peak period for road accidents in Thailand. Chiang Rai from time to time holds the number one city that has the highest number of road accident. Statistics from Road Safety Directing Center shows that Chiang Rai is ranked number ONE for accumulated number of accidents during 7 days for Songkran Days in 2013 with 125 incidents.

What to do to avoid this danger?

* Understand that for foreigners, driving in Thailand can be very different to driving in their home country. Motorbike riders frequently drive on the wrong side of the road and cars do not always respect Thai road rules, they consider the road rules and speed limits as suggestions. Those new to the country will need to take great care to avoid accidents.
* Motorcycle is an easy way to commute. But don’t ride with someone else on a motorcycle unless you completely trust him. Once you’re on the back of the motorcycle, you’ve just put your life in his hands. If you plan to rent a motorcycle, make sure you ride it well. Highways, for example from Phayao to Chiang Rai, or from Chiang Rai to Mae Sai, are very dangerous for motorcycles and bicycles.
* Ride in a safe vehicle such as authorized metered taxis.
* For a short distant, just walk because you can prepare yourself on the ground better than in a vehicle.
* When you’re on the road, don’t expect people on the road to respect road rules. Always be prepared for anything at any moment

**2. Drugs**

Drug use is an extremely serious crime in Thailand. Thailand has a mandatory death sentences for drug smuggling. Recently it is almost always reduced to life imprisonment for foreigners. To be in a Thai prison for the rest of one’s life, the death penalty may be the better option.  The number of prisoners is huge, mostly related to drugs. Now Thai prisons contain a number of travelers sentenced to life who are awaiting either help from their governments or a royal pardon.

Here is the deal. If the police arrest someone with a large amount of any drug, the police will assume he is a dealer. (A large amount in the eyes of the Thai police may seem small to you). That will guarantee at least 10 years minimum in prison or even a death sentence. Even if the police were to catch you with a small amount of any drug, they will not care whether you use it or not, or if it belongs to someone else, or you just happen to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. As long as you’re in the spot where the drugs were found, there would still be big trouble because the police will initially assume you’re using the drug. Even if you can prove yourself innocent on the scene, you wouldn’t get out easily. Most likely you would be locked up and they will demand a large sum of money. That is why you should never get associated with drugs or anybody who uses drug in Thailand.

Despite being illegal, there are some places in Thailand where drugs can be purchased openly, at least by certain groups of people, in many bars on Koh Phangan during Full Moon parties. Take Full moon parties for instance, many travelers might think it is a good place to try something sideways – a bit of weed at the full moon party can’t hurt because everybody else is doing it. Don’t fall for this. From time to time, travelers get caught by undercover police but we don’t normally see them on television or in local newspapers.

How to avoid this danger:

* Never do drugs or associate with people with drugs in Thailand. Dealing with drugs just leads you to associate with bad people, and bad people always get you into bad situations
* Be careful when getting drinks at the bar. If you’re in touristy areas, watch who makes your drinks. There have been many reports of foreigners getting drugged and robbed in popular destinations.
* Be careful for drug scams. The scam starts by the traveler seeking a place to buy common drugs among travelers like marijuana. For some mysterious force, the travelers are often shown the place or bar where to buy the weed. When a traveler asks in a bar to purchase a small amount, the bartender sells it to them.  Immediately after a couple of police officers who may or may not be legitimate officers appear from nowhere and catch the travelers on the spot with the weed they just purchased, and demand a large sum of money in exchange for not being arrested.

**3. Dengue fever**

According to the Public Health Ministry, Thailand could face one of the largest dengue fever epidemics yet anticipating that over 120,000 people could contract the virus this year.

However, if you don’t sleep naked in the jungle, the chance is quite low that you will get dengue fever. This sickness normally occurs in small children in local villages because they get used to spending all day exposed to the local environment and mosquitos are already part of their daily lives. As a result, local people get infected without being aware of it.

How to avoid it:

* Since the virus is transmitted mosquito-to-human, prevention entails both controlling and eradicating mosquitoes and taking action to protect oneself from being bitten.
* Wearing long pants and long-sleeve shirts helps guard against mosquito bites, and consider using a mosquito repellent when visiting places like village houses, woods, waterfalls, etc.
* Avoid areas with standing water and stay indoors in the morning until two hours after sunrise and at sunset to further reduce your risk of being bitten.

**4. Being overcharged**

This is actually not a danger but it is something we should be aware of. Things in Thailand are very cheap, and because of the exchange rate, they are even cheaper for tourists. Because of the low price, tourists have a tendency to over pay for things without even having a second thought. The local people know about this, and there are many store and shop owners, who just sit and wait for foreigners and take advantage of them. Now it becomes part habit for shop owners in Thailand to increase the price for foreigners. You might not know that an item that you bought which you consider cheap might be even cheaper than what you have just paid.

In Chiang Rai, overcharging for foreigners in restaurants and modern markets is very rare. Both locals and tourists know there is standard price for common goods. In local markets, local people are quite nice and friendly to visitors, and normally provide the same rate for both locals and travelers.

However, there are a few occasions that shop owners sometimes find the opportunity to overcharge strangers, especially the places that are geared toward tourists. Mostly they are services or items that don’t have price tags which are put there to sell to tourists especially. There are fares (Tuk-Tuk, Taxi, etc.), souvenir items, gems, silver, local cloths, and handicrafts in tourist destinations. Some items can be genuine but the majority of this stuff is pretty cheap to make but aimed to sell to tourists especially to get a higher price, not to mention some items are fake.

How to deal with overcharge pricing in Chiang Rai

1. Do a little of research before buying anything
2. Practice your smile
3. When it is about the Tuk-Tuk fare, always ask the price first and make sure the driver agrees what amount you’re to pay. Chiang Rai has metered taxis and Grab, these are a better choice as you don’t have to bargain, but only pay based on the meter.
4. Learn a little of the Thai language and ask for a discount. The most famous phrase is “Lod Noi Na” (Give me some discount)
5. Do not show your enthusiasm in buying a particular item. The more you show your excitement of wanting the item, the higher the price
6. When you shop alone, observe other Thai buyers. See how much they pay for the similar items.
7. Be ready to walk away. In most cases, you wouldn’t need that stuff.

**What about tourists getting attacked, assaulted or murdered in Chiang Rai?**

As mentioned earlier, Chiang Rai is very safe. The rate of tourists getting attacked is very, very, low and when it happens, it is normally related to a quarrel or alcohol thing. Then, it comes down to common sense, like everywhere in the world, don’t put yourself in a position of risk. Don’t get involved with alcohol or drugs with local people and don’t get yourself associated with drugs. Local people are very sweet and warm, but for some people, they can get crazy after they have alcohol. Best to avoid locals who’re overly drunk.

Number of tourists getting murdered in Chiang Rai is none in past decades. That’s why we don’t include it in the list. Yes, from time to time tourists die in Chiang Rai, and most of the cases are due to road accidents, especially from motorbikes.

**The Ugliest Part**Every country has its beauty and ugliness. Thailand is a beautiful country. There is so much on offer here like beaches, mountains, culture, and food. Thailand is also at the top of most traveler’s wish lists, and it’s easy to see why it’s grown in popularity with its low cost of living and warm weather. It’s a perfect honeymoon destination for couples, the backpacker party raving destination for young travelers and a great family destination.

Thailand is a country whose economy and infrastructure is focused on tourism. Because of this, many visitors feel frustrated with the atmosphere and often complain that when they are in the country, they feel like walking ATMs. And this is where we come to the ugly part (in fact, the ugliest) of the country – Scams.

Each year Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) spends hundreds of millions of Thai baht to promote Thailand tourism. However, TAT, whose chief responsibility is to provide convenience and benefits to tourists does nothing to prevent scams. They are even denying the existence of scams in the country.

The good news for travelers and expats in Chiang Rai, is that because of the nature of Northern Thai people, there are not many scams here. However, you still have to be cautious and keep your eyes open while you’re travelling and staying in any city.

In addition, if you are a tourist or an expat who lives in Chiang Rai where there are less scams, there is still a 99.99% chance you will go to Bangkok at some point. Without information it is easy to get scammed there.

This article is about one of the ugliest things in Thailand – scams. There is a lot of information about scams available on the Internet. Why bother reading another article about them? The answer is despite the warnings in guidebooks and in websites and in blogs, these scams are still happening every day and tourists keep falling for scams in Thailand every day. Scamming is really a great tragedy for the country because some tourists get hurt so much that they will never return to Thailand. Scams need to be stopped.

So far the government doesn’t care, the police acts like nothing happens, travel agencies are part of the scams themselves. People all over the world start to see the whole country as a scam! The only way to avoid scams from happening to tourists is to spread more information. The more people telling tourists what’s going on, the more tourists will be saved. I hope people who are new to Thailand read articles like this and become more careful when visiting Thailand.

**Why do Scams still exist in Thailand?**Scams started in Thailand many decades ago when tourism become a big business for the country. Because of the exchange rate, Thailand became very cheap for Western tourists and became the most popular in South East Asia. Thai people who had been in contact with foreigners saw that most tourist can afford to buy something they couldn’t afford at home. They began to see that foreigners as wealthy people who had a lot more back home. At some point, a selfish mentality that the foreigners can afford to lose a little had been established. Some people try every trick they know to get money from tourist’s pockets.

Each month there are a large number of scam cases reported to TAT by tourists, but they do nothing about it. When you reach out to them for help about scams, they will respond in a way to get themselves out of the way. They only ask you to take the matter to the police. TAT whose chief responsibility is to provide convenience and benefits to tourists does nothing to prevent scams. For TAT, they only know that their job is to promote beautiful sides of Thailand and sweep everything else under the carpet. So, don’t hope for help from TAT. Millions of dollars is poured in to this organization to help or guide tourists, but it is still unhelpful.

Next, Thai police. Whether you like it or not, here are the truths. Thai police are not willing to solve scam problems. If they were, they would have done something 20 years ago. The evidence is clear, most scammers can be identified easily and with a lot of proof. If the police had done something most scammers would have disappeared by now.

When you run into trouble with scams, basically there are 3 ways to get help from Thai police. First method, you offer something for their effort in solving your problem – usually a percentage of the value of what you lost or an exact amount of cash you can give them. For example, if lose 100,000 Baht because of a scam, and you explicitly offer the police something for their effort or good will or whatever to make it look good. In the Western world, it would be a bribe. But in Thailand, people call it gratification or remuneration (Sin Nam Jai). Whether you like it or not, it is very common in Thailand, and this method will work almost every time. This only works with small and individual thieves, it won’t work with organized gangs. Second, if you really have severe damages, make your case big news – through social media, YouTube, or influential discussion groups. The more media involved and the more social media attention you can get, the more police are willing to work on the problem. Thirdly, you happen to be in the very lucky time when the police are in the mood to help.

What it means is that from time to time the police will do a good job but this doesn’t happen very often. When you contact the police about having a problem with scammers, just hope for the best. Of course, this is generalization but it’s pretty much what happens.

As for the government, they simply do nothing about it. It is hard to believe the government as a whole allow locals to deliberately steer tourists in the wrong direction. It really makes the country look bad. Now you will see that the only one who can save you from scams is yourself. Always be on your guard.

The most common scam in Chiang Rai is the Foreigner’s Price Scam

It is also known as Two-Tiered or Dual Pricing. Some merchants will automatically charge foreign tourists more than they charge local Thais. This scam is normally in major souvenir shops, clothing shops and basically any place full of tourists.

**How to avoid:**   
1. If you like the stuff you’re buying, try to negotiate. Start at 25% of the offered price. Some sellers will get angry because they feel insulted, but who cares. Just walk away. If they really want to sell you, they will call you back.  
2. Learn some Thai words. The most famous word is “Lod Noi Na” (Give me some discount), “Pang mark mark” (Very expensive). This will also alert the sellers that you’re wise in buying.  
3. Unfortunately there is rarely anything to be done about this scam, other than just walking away and finding another person to buy from.

The saying “If something is too good to be true then it probably is” is the best tool to apply when traveling to Thailand.

**Hospitals in Chiang Rai**

Chiang Rai is a small city, but still has reasonably comprehensive medical facilities. The main hospitals are a mix of private, missionary and government facilities. There are also lots of local clinics with various specialties. The doctors at these clinics are usually from the main hospitals, offering private services in their own clinics in the evening. Normally when visiting a clinic they only charge for the medications they sell – the doctor visit is free.

Kasemrad Sriburin Hospital: This is a relatively new (established 1996) and important regional private hospital with a broad range of medical specialties, including a decent dental clinic. In our opinion, it offers the best facilities and doctors in Chiang Rai. English competency is relatively good there. The building is easily visible from the superhighway at the southern end of the city.

Overbrook Hospital: A semi-private missionary hospital well over 100 years old. This hospital enjoys a good reputation with the local population, but in our experience the medical staff are not the best, and they consistently prescribe unnecessary drugs and overcharge for them. Below average English competency. Situated on Singhaklai Road. The hospital's motto is 'God is love', so if you're a believer and member of a local church, this is the place for you also, if you are registered as a member of a local Christian church you are entitled to a 10% discount on some, not all, services.

Inter Hospital: Is the newest hospital in Chiang Rai. It has not been around long enough to rate its reputation but from experience as an outpatient I know they push high priced medicines. High priced for Thailand but you may think they are cheap compared to what you spend in your home country.

Bangkok Hospital opened in January 2019 so at this time I do not have a lot of information to provide.

Chiang Rai Prachanukhro Hospital: This is the public government hospital. Facilities are basic in comparison to the others and it can be very crowded. If you must go to the hospital for a visit with a doctor it is best to go in the evening when there are fewer people waiting. If your situation is an emergency, especially in the evening, this hospital should be your first choice because the other hospitals do not have enough doctors on duty. The staff are capable. Situated on Sathanpayaban Road. If you have an emergency, this is the best place to go.

Ambulance services, though basic are reliable and efficient.

All hospitals have emergency services. For non-emergency treatment, it is sometimes better, or more convenient to use one of the evening clinics, which usually operate from around 5 until 8 in the evening. Traditional Chinese remedies can be found as well as western medical practices.

**Tips and Contact Information**

Chiang Rai is a small city, but still has reasonably comprehensive medical facilities. If you're in need of an MRI scanner though, or similar high end technologies, you'll be heading to Chiang Mai or Bangkok.

The main hospitals are a mix of private, missionary and government facilities. There are also lots of local clinics with various specialties. The doctors at these clinics are usually from the main hospitals, offering private services in their own clinic.

The main hospitals are: Kasemrad Sriburin Hospital, Chiang Rai Regional Hospital, Inter Hospital, Bangkok Hospital and Overbrook Hospital

**Safety Tips**

The standard of hygiene in first class hotels is in general ok., but you should not drink the tap water (though it can be used for teeth brushing). The better hotels provide bottled drinking water for free. You should be careful with the food from food stalls or in simple restaurants. Eat only things that have been thoroughly cooked and are served really hot. The large amounts of chili that are part of nearly every Thai dish may have a disinfecting effect, but you should not rely on this! (The people themselves are nearly always neat and clean, but sometimes they use dirty water for dishwashing, etc.)