

Day Ten: Chiang Mai – Twin Temples

As today is my birthday I am expecting great things! It's our final day for sightseeing in Thailand as we leave for Cambodia tomorrow. We set off at 8am to see the twin temples. Seems like back in the 14th Century Northern Thailand was a separate Kingdom with its own King and Chiang Mai was the capitol city. There was a bad storm and lightning struck the temple breaking the Buddha's bowl into two pieces.

The King took this as a sign from Buddha to separate the temple into two different temples, but he didn't know where to build the other one, so he strapped one of the pieces of the broken bowl onto an elephant and said wherever the elephant stops is where they will build the 2nd temple. Unfortunately for the King, the elephant took off into the mountains and only stopped when he got to the top. The king had no choice but to build the new temple at the top of the mountain and to this day the two pieces of the broken bowl are in each temple.



This is the original temple down in the city. The gold you see is not paint – it is real hammered gold plate.



This temple also has a monk school where student monks come to learn about Buddhism. They also learn to speak the ancient Indian language Pali, as monks are only allowed to pray in Pali (perhaps Buddha does not understand Thai???)



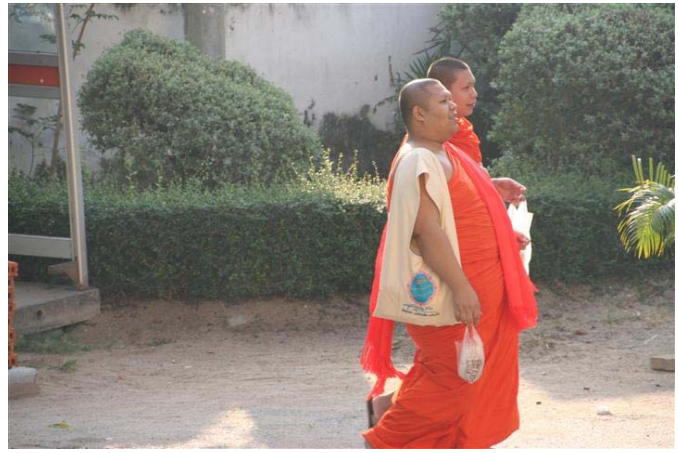
If you look in the middle of the picture to the right of the tree you can see some white spots on the Mountain – this is the other temple!!



I honestly thought the ENTIRE point of meditation was to be quiet....



Even monks have FaceBook pages they need to check...



This monk has been carrying way too many bowls around the neighborhood!



Now here's the temple at the top of the mountain, took 40 minutes in the bus and a vernacular ride to get here. Also gold plated.



Here is the senior monk splashing our tour group with holy water.



There is a great view of the city from the mountain – or so we were told – we saw smog!!



Going back down we decided to take the stairs instead of the vernacular – all 300 of them!



We also visited a jade factory which was very interesting – I had NO idea how expensive jade is, nothing in the store is less than a grand! This piece you're looking at would be about \$10,000.

We returned at lunch time and being my birthday I got to choose what I wanted for lunch. I chose something you cannot find anywhere in the United States – Steak and Kidney Pie found at a British pub down the road!!



Typical blue collar neighborhood – note picture of King and Queen – every neighborhood has one.



I am not saying whose mother this is...



It's my birthday and I can drink Guinness if I want to!



This dude kept buzzing past the bar where we were sitting – he is moving roller cart display cabinets for a night market nearby. Like everything else in Thailand they do it by scooter. The fancy headdress he is wearing is simply a t-shirt wrapped around his head. ????? Whatever....

We got back to the hotel and Wendy went for an hour long foot massage and I am...writing the travelogue!

A few hours later....

After a few happy hour / birthday drinks with our group at the hotel bar, we decided to go to the Night Market. This is where every vendor sells the same exact China-made crap as the vendor before him. Wendy found a skirt she liked and Chocolate Roti! Roti is an Indian Crepe filled with whatever you want and fried.



The Night market became busier and busier with tourist and locals as the evening progressed. After two hours of mulling around we decided to call it a night. However...Wendy did find something on her bucket list she HAD to try – A FISH PEDICURE!!!



Tomorrow we are off to Cambodia to see Angkor Wat. We'll be travelling all day to get there so no travelogue. Be prepared for some awesome ancient temple pics on Thursday.

I'll stop Monk –ying around after these last two pics...



"Yes, Mom. They are feeding me well here at the monastery, and no, I don't have clean underwear – we're not allowed to wear any, remember!"



They need to give this dude some more food from the bowl, that fat monk has been hogging it all!