Trat: Like No Other

Enjoy a sense of wonder in Trat's greenery and waterways while basking in its warm community spirit.

Story & Images Courtesy of the Tourism Authority of Thailand
Compilation Chusri Ngamprasert

Clockwise from Top
Intricate tree roots at a mangrove forest.

Local weavers skillfully create functional yet artistic-looking baskets.

A tranquil activity involves plying a boat through the still waters past mangrove trees.

An Instaworthy shot of a wooden bridge in Trat.

A tasty Trat dish — Prik Gluea fried rice (rice and seafood with chilli and salt dip).

Tucked away in Thailand's far east, Trat province's fame lies in the uniquely spectacular beaches and islands. Abundant local cuisines and food, ethnic diversity and distinctive cultures mean Trat has more to share with visitors who look for rustic beauty and the warm hospitality that goes beyond its beautiful beach destinations.

Ban Tha Ranae, located around the Trat River estuary, is where past and present are interwoven. For the longest time, the seaside community served as a port for Chinese junks to dock and unload their goods. On their way back to their motherland, the Chinese merchants would load fragrant spices like pepper, Siam cardamom and Bustard cardamom to trade in China. With such brisk trades, the Chinese made the prosperous township their home, and many started pepper plantations for the export market.



When visiting Ban Tha Ranae, an herbal drink believed to be an elixir called "Cha Roi Roo" or ant plant tea, and a boat trip to Lan Taboon mangrove forest define Trat experiences.

At Lan Taboon, which literally means "fields of the cannonball mangrove tree," enjoy the mesmerising view of beautifully intertwined roots of the mangrove trees. Get a crash course on the mangrove forests and ecosystems that provide Trat's abundant marine life.

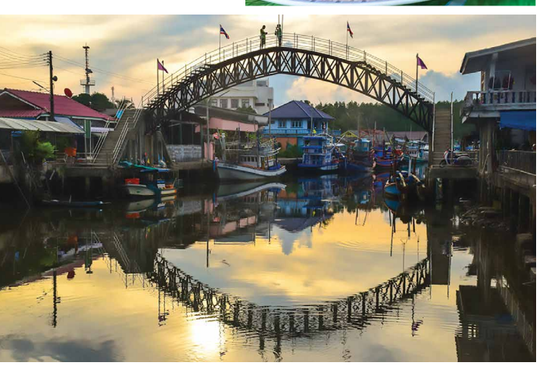
Engage in fun learning followed by sweets with a trip to the village of Ban Tha Ranae where locals teach you how to make a "Muak Bai Kanthong" hat from tree leaves or indulge your sweet tooth as local experts make snacks.

From the estuary, visitors can travel back inland to Baan Nam Chiao in Laem Ngop district and see cultural diversity and natural beauty mingled together. Baan Nam Chiao is a charming community with rustic beauty.

Buddhist Thai, Chinese and the Muslim Cham people from Cambodia have been living together in a peaceful village for more than 200 years. In the close-knitted community, visitors can cherish the cultural diversity as they visit Al-Kubaro Mosque, enjoy a quiet moment in Wat Nam Chiao temple, and appreciate the exotic charm of the Chinese shrine.















The villagers in Baan Nam Chiao appreciate their simple way of living. Simplicity and sincerity are the charms that always draw visitors back to their village for a big dose of rustic beauty. To follow local footsteps to a simple way of life, visitors are advised to forage light shells for dinner. And, seeing everyone plodding through the mud in search of food such as the molluscs creates a strong sense of adventure. Stay overnight in a local home, share their home-cooked meals and exchange laughter with them are the best way to experience heartfelt hospitality.



While in Laem Ngop district, enjoy your stroll in Had Sai Dum mangrove forest trail where birds, crabs, monkeys and mudskippers wander freely. Allow yourself to have a good time when you reach Had Sai Dum, the only black sand beach in Thailand, at the end of the trail. Soothe your tired feet in the warm black sand for a relaxing moment before the start of your new excursion.

Trat is a "Garden of Eden" for fruit lovers since it's abundant with mangosteen, rambutan, salak or snakefruit, and, of course, durian. For the love of salak, don't miss a chance to treat yourself at Somphoch Farm – Thailand's best salak farm. Sala Loy Kaew (seedless salak in cold syrup) is a must.

When in Rome, do as the Romans do. When in Trat eat Prik Gluea – a dip made of chilli and salt.

The fisherman in Thailand's eastern part would pack enough of the Prik Gluea dip while leaving home for fishing for a week or two. Like salt and pepper, chilli and salt make food tasty. Some creative fisherman add garlic and lime juice to make their food even tastier (if not more edible). Today food stalls add shrimp, chunks of fish like snapper and seafood to make chilli and salt a lot more decadent than the original blend.

Clockwise from Top
A boardwalk allows everyone to get closer to the trees.

Trat's richness in flora offers pleasant strolls.

The black sands in Trat offer a natural form of exfoliation.

The salak fruit offers citrus notes and honey sweetness.

Bright red flowers of the salak fruit.

Prik Gluea is now recognised by the Tourism Authority of Thailand as a signature dish of Thailand's East. Your trip to Trat is not complete without having your tongue tingling while having "khao kluk prik gluea" (rice and seafood with chilli and salt dip).
For more information, call the Tourism Authority of Thailand (Trat office) at +66 (0) 39 597 259 or call TAT Contact Centre at 1672.



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