

THAILAND

Tak Province

**Interactive
Travel
Guides**

**Plus
Umphang
District**

MWA



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FOREWORD



Thanks for downloading this FREE interactive travel guide. You've made an excellent choice if you plan on **GETTING OFF THE BEATEN TRACK** in THAILAND. Before you delve into the content of this travel guide, please take a few minutes to read this foreword. It outlines how to make the best use of the information contained within.

First-hand experience: This travel guide has been put together using first-hand experience gained from traveling to, and exploring, all the locations presented within. The information and photos featured in my travel guides, have been collated over years of putting boots on the ground. There is no second-hand information, or information which is plagiarized from other travel sources, within this guide. Every cave, waterfall, river, viewpoint, jungle trail, temple site, guesthouse and restaurant presented, or promoted, I have been to and seen and/or experienced myself.

Getting off the beaten track: The primary focus of my travel guides is **ADVENTURE TRAVEL** (and activities) to locations which are non-mainstream tourist destinations. As an example, there is no information for the mainstream tourist locations of Thailand (except as transit hub's before heading off to a more remote location) listed in this travel guide. As such, the information in this guide is directed towards travelers (not tourists) who are keen for a bit of adventure - caving, climbing, jungle

trekking, kayaking - in an off the beaten track location, of South East Asia. If these types of activities aren't to your liking, then this travel guide won't be much use to you. There's no information in here about the party towns in South East Asia.

Budget travel: Knowing the importance of making the most of your hard-earned currency, my travel links ([12GO ASIA](#)) and accommodation links ([AGODA](#)) are predominantly budget oriented. They provide a range of options for getting to a central hub, or base, from which you can make your daily explorations.

Independent sightseeing: Instead of going on group tours, I strongly promote the idea of renting your own vehicle (car or motorbike) and venturing out yourself. To help you get to the exact location, there's always a [GOOGLE MAPS](#) link to show the route from a hub (hotel or guesthouse) to the sightseeing attraction. If there's a local tour operator offering excellent adventure type tours, or activities, I'll provide links to their website. A good example of a great adventure tour operator is [GREEN DISCOVERY LAOS](#), who offer excellent caving, kayaking and trekking tours throughout Laos.

The Table of Contents: This is page four of the travel guide and has a sequential list of sections, which you can go to directly by clicking on the [GREEN](#) numbered tab.

YouTube Links: These take you directly to my YouTube Vlog ([Megaworld Asia](#)) where you can see short, high quality travel videos of the numerous attractions listed in my travel guides. If you enjoy the videos, please hit the like button and don't forget to subscribe to see my upcoming adventures.

Your next adventure is just one click away

Safe travels,

MEGA

Tak Province

Table Of Contents

General Info = Getting There, Accommodation, Transport & Dining

1: Foreword.....	Page	3
2: Table of contents.....	Page	4
3: How to use this interactive travel guide.....	Page	5
4: Tak Province - General info.....	Page	6
5: Mae Sot to Umphang.....	Page	7
6: Blue Cave - Photos & video link.....	Page	8
7: Umphang District - General info.....	Page	9
8: Umphang Wildlife Sanctuary.....	Page	10
9: Thi Lo Su Waterfall.....	Page	11
10: Thi Lo Su Waterfall - Photos & video link.....	Page	12
11: Takhobi Cave.....	Page	13
12: Northern Tak Province.....	Page	14
13: Mae Usu Cave.....	Page	15
14: Mae Usu Cave - Photos & video link.....	Page	16
15: The road to Mae Sariang.....	Page	17



**It's Time To Get
Off The Beaten Track**

How To Use This Interactive Travel Guide

The Table Of Contents: To effortlessly move from the TOC to the page you want to view, simply click on the **page number**: **1**

YouTube Links: These will take you to a short highlights video, of the sightseeing attraction, in the section you're looking at:



Other Links: These take you to ancillary services such as recommended restaurants, or car and motorbike rental agencies, in the location you're traveling to:

ANCILLARY SERVICES

Travel Links: This takes you to **12GO ASIA**, an excellent travel group which provides a range of options for getting around the region:



The Table Of Contents: To move back to the TOC, click on the **yellow arrows**, at the bottom of each Page: 

Google Maps Links: These provide a route from a designated location (e.g., a hotel) to a particular sightseeing attraction:



Information Links: These links take you to information sites, such as Wikipedia or Wiki-voyage, to provide more in-depth info on a particular subject or location:



Accommodation Links: This takes you to the Agoda website to check accommodation availability and make bookings:



It's Time To Get Off The Beaten Track



TAK PROVINCE - GENERAL INFO

About: Tak Province is a lesser known, and visited, area on Thailand's western border. It is one of Thailand's largest provinces and has a number of excellent sightseeing attractions, including the country's largest waterfall. Due to its remoteness, and rugged terrain, it receives significantly less tourists than the rest of Thailand. However, for those who make the effort of going there, you will be rewarded for your efforts with picturesque landscapes, magnificent waterfalls and a number of impressive cave sites.

Getting there: The easiest way to get there is to fly with a local carrier to the provincial capital of MAE SOT. For those who have more time available, a better option is to drive there with your own transportation. Once you arrive in Mae Sot you'll need your own method of transport to get to the various sightseeing locations in the south of the province. **For transportation options from Bangkok, click the following link:**



Car Hire: If you choose to fly into Mae Sot, it's recommended you rent a car at the airport for the duration of your stay in Tak. If you opt to drive up from Bangkok, vehicles can be hired at reasonable rates from BANGKOKRENTACAR. **Click the following link for booking inquiries:**

BANGKOKRENTACAR

Travel to Umphang: The distance from Mae Sot to Umphang Township is approximately 165 km; most of it on a single lane highway which winds through some of the most rugged, mountainous terrain in Thailand. According to local information sources, there's just over 1200 mountain road curves to negotiate to get to Umphang.

Note: If you arrive in Mae Sot in the afternoon, it's **highly recommended** you overnight there before setting out on the arduous drive down to Umphang.

Mae Sot Accommodation: An excellent budget accommodation choice in Mae Sot is the HOP INN. The hotel is right next to the main highway and room rates are approximately 600 THB per night. A basic breakfast is also provided with the room rate. **Click the following link for booking inquiries:**



Mid-range Accommodation: If you're looking for something a bit more comfortable, or want to spend more than one night in Mae Sot, a good choice is the IRAWADEE RESORT. **Click the following link for booking inquiries:**



Mae Sot Sightseeing: The RIM MOEI MARKET, along the border fence, is still open and worth checking out for some cheap local produce.



Rim Moei market

MAE SOT TO UMPHANG

Mae Sot to Umphang: As mentioned the road down to Umphang (hwy 1090) has some of the most rugged mountain terrain in all of Thailand. The mountain road is a challenge with a significant number of precipices dropping away to deep, jungle filled valleys below. The narrow road is hazardous, with many sections recently having had large slips of earth and rocks from the cliffs above. Caution is advised if you're taking this road because there's normally a good number of lorries making the journey to, or from, Umphang during daylight hours. **Click the following link for directions from Mae Sot to Umphang Township:**



Sightseeing attractions: If you've got time there's a couple of interesting attractions worth stopping at (before getting into the arduous mountain section of the drive).

Blue Cave: The first is a site called the BLUE CAVE, situated just a few km off highway 1090. This is a newly developed attraction, located near a Buddhist temple, which

has some unusual blue colored rock strata within the cave passages. The penetration is fairly short, only a couple of hundred meters, but the blue rock strata is an interesting feature worth checking out. As with most Thai caves, on temple grounds, there's a nice reclining Buddha just inside the entrance. **Click the following link for directions from Mae Sot:**



Pha Charoen National Park: A few kilometers further south of the Blue Cave, on highway 1090, is the Pha Charoen National Park. Interestingly there was no entry fee for a visitation here. The main feature of the site is a picturesque waterfall which has a number of steps, all the way up to its highest level. There's also a nature trail which runs up the left side of the falls, and further on to a giant forest tree. **Click the following link for directions from Mae Sot:**



Pha Chareon National park

BLUE CAVE - PHOTOS & VIDEO



Blue Cave Reclining Buddha

Click the link to the right to see video highlights of the BLUE CAVE:



Blue Cave Entrance

UMPHANG DISTRICT - GENERAL INFO

About: Umphang District is in the south of Tak Province and is quite possibly one of the remotest and most difficult places in Thailand to get to. The 120 km of winding mountain roads certainly make it seem that way and the fact it's the only way in and out, even more so. The district is characterised by large tracts of jungle covered, karst terrain and more specifically the UMPHANG WILDLIFE SANCTUARY, in which Thailand's largest waterfall is situated. **Click the following link for directions from Mae Sot:**



Umphang Township: This picturesque township, nestled in amongst surrounding peaks, should be used as a base for trips into the surrounding area. There are a number of guest-houses and bungalow style accommodation to choose from. If you're keen on doing the rafting trip, then PHU DOI RESORT CAMPSITE is a good option as you can book the tour at the reception desk when you check in. Phu Doi has bungalow rooms for 500 - 600 THB per night.

Click the following link for booking inquiries at the Phu Doi Resort Campsite:

PHU DOI RESORT CAMSITE

Where to eat: Unfortunately, there's not much of a choice when it comes to getting something to eat in Umphang Township. Most of what's available is local food at restaurants along the main street (nearby the only 7/11 shop in town). If you're after a morning caffeine hit then the 7/11 is the only place where you can get a reasonable latte or cappuccino. **Click the following link for the location of the 7/11:**

UMPHANG 7/11 STORE

Rafting Tour: As mentioned, the rafting tour can be booked at the Phu Doi Resort Campsite. The price of the tour is approximately 1500 THB per person, which includes the national park entrance fee and visitation to THI LO SU WATERFALL.



At Phu Doi Resort Campsite

UMPHANG WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

About: The primary sightseeing attraction in Umphang is THI LO SU WATERFALL, which is currently listed as Thailand's largest. The waterfall site is located approximately 42 km to the south west of Umphang Township, in a jungle covered area known as UMPHANG WILDLIFE SANCTUARY. It is possible to drive directly to the waterfall campsite area (if you have a 4 x 4 vehicle). However, caution is advised if you decide on this option as the 27 km access road, from route # 1288, is a rugged track with quite a number of steep sections. Additionally, there's an entrance fee of 2000 THB to take a vehicle down to the camping area.

Campsite: The camping area is well set-up with showers, toilets and a covered area if you want to pitch a tent, and stay out of the rain.

Note: There's no restaurant there of facilities for cooking. **Click the following link for directions from Umphang Township to the camping grounds:**



The rafting tour: The best way of seeing the waterfall is to do the rafting tour which takes you through 18 km of fantastic jungle covered, karst terrain. The tour departs from Phu Doi Resort Campsite at 0800 and after a short drive, you are taken to the rafting start point, just outside Umphang Township. While the guides quickly inflate the raft, you'll have time for some selfies at the riverside HQ.

The Mae Khlong River: This is the river which takes you through some amazing wilderness area, on your way to the waterfall. The flow is quite strong in places and as such will see you complete the 18 km journey in around four hours.

Two Stops: The first stop is a beautiful section of the river where small waterfalls drop down the cliff faces. This location is called THI LO CHO WATERFALL. The second stop is the HOT WATER SPRINGS. In this location you'll be given the opportunity to disembark from the raft and walk around for thirty minutes, or so. The primary attraction here is the hot water, flowing from subterranean sources, which has been dammed to form small pools you can take a soak in.



Thi Lo Cho Falls area

THI LO SU WATERFALL

Thi Lo Su Waterfall: As mentioned, this is the primary sightseeing attraction in the Umphang Wildlife Sanctuary. The waterfall is spectacular in size and flow (even in the dry season) and is currently listed as Thailand's largest. The waterfall site is located approximately 42 km to the south west of Umphang Township, and is accessed over another winding mountainous road. The best way of seeing the waterfall is to do the rafting tour which takes you through 18 km of fantastic jungle covered, karst terrain. The rafting tour starts just outside Umphang Township and terminates at a forest park HQ, some 14 km from the waterfall. From there a 4x4 pick-up transports you to the camping area, and access point to the falls. From the camping ground there's an easy 1.5 km walk, along a well-constructed pathway, to a sightseeing platform at the base of the falls. Unfortunately, there's currently a ban on swimming, and climbing up to the higher levels of the falls. After you've completed viewing the falls the pick-up truck will transport you all the way back to your guesthouse in Umphang Township.



The 2nd level



Thi Lo Su Waterfall

THI LO SU WATERFALL - PHOTOS & VIDEO



Click the link to the right to see video highlights of THI LOR SU FALLS:



TAKHOBI CAVE

Takhobi Cave: Another interesting sight-seeing attraction, nearby Umphang Township, is Takhobi Cave. The site is located very near route # 1167 and is on the grounds of the TAKHOBI FOREST PARK. Click the following link for directions from Umphang Township:



On Site: The site is easy to access as the cave entrance is only 300 meters from the highway. There is currently no entry fee for this site. The cave is a typical Thai river cave, meaning penetration is only recommended during the dry season. The cave interior has a reasonable sized volume and is filled with a nice array of concretions (stalactites and stalagmites). The authorized penetration distance without a guide is 500 meters. However, if you're a keen spelunker and would like to do the full 7 km cave distance then a guide can be hired from the forest park HQ. **Note:** It is possible to stop at this site on the way back from your outing to Thi Lo Su Waterfall. You just need to make arrangements with the booking office when paying for the trip.



NORTHERN TAK PROVINCE

Heading North: If you have the time, and the budget, the area in the north of Tak Province (above Mae Sot) is well worth checking out. Once again, it's recommended you have your own vehicle to travel through this area, as there's very little in the way of public transport available. Additionally, most of the sightseeing attractions are some distance off the highway.

Highway 105: This magnificent scenic stretch of road, between Mae Sot and Mae Sariang, is quite possibly the best kept secret in Thai Tourism right now. It's off the beaten track and doesn't see a high flow of traffic simply because the majority of people going to Mae Sariang come from Chiang Mai or Mae Hong Son, on highway 108. There's also an absence of lorries along this picturesque 233 km stretch of road. Along the way there's some notable sightseeing locations which include MAE USU CAVE, MAE MOEI NATIONAL PARK, MAE TAWO PIER and the TWO COLOURS RIVER VIEWPOINT.



MAE USU CAVE

About: This excellent large volume cave is located approximately 98 km NORTH of Mae Sot, just off route 105. **Click the following link for directions:**



On site: This cave is quite possibly one of the best of its type in Thailand, with three massive internal rooms filled with a fantastic array of large concretions (stalactites and stalagmites). The cave is on a developed forest park grounds and as such, there's an entry fee of 200 THB for foreigners. For those who may feel indignant about the entry fee, it's definitely worth the price.

Local Guides: Additionally, it's recommended making use of one of the guides who are normally standing around the ticket office. The cave is seriously large and the guides can keep you on the correct trail through the three cave rooms. There's no set fee for the guide but a payment of 200 THB is normally sufficient.



Cave entrance

Doing the cave tour: The entry point into the cave has a small river flowing from it and sightseers are required to do a bit of wading (calf deep water) before eventually arriving at stairway up into the cave. The best time to visit the cave is in the late afternoon. At around 4 pm, the sun streams through the skylight in the second cave room. The shafts of light illuminate the cave room and create an orange glow on the concretions.



Afternoon Highlights

MAE USU CAVE - PHOTOS & VIDEO



Click the link to the right to see video highlights of MAE USU CAVE:



THE ROAD TO MAE SARIANG

Extended Mae Hong Son Loop: This is also an excellent option for doing an extended tour up into Mae Hong Son Province, as Tak Province is at the southern border of Mae Hong Son.

Mae Tawo Pier: An interesting aspect of travel along certain sections of highway 105 is how close you are to Myanmar. In places the road hugs the MOEI RIVER and in a number of places you can see across the river to Myanmar. At a location called MAE TAWO PIER, you can drive right down to the river's edge for a splendid view across the Myanmar. It's a beautifully scenic location with rugged jungle covered peaks on the Myanmar side and a good number of small, white pagodas along the river's edge. It's only a short diversion of highway 105 and a great spot to take a rest from the drive.

Two Colours River: At the provincial border of Tak and Mae Hong Son Provinces there's an interesting viewpoint worth checking out. This is the junction of two rivers, the Yuam and Ngao, where the mixing of the two water-flows occurs. From a viewing platform you can observe the muddy waters of the Yuam River mixing with the green of the Ngao.



Mae Tawo Pier



Mae Sariang



Two Colours River Viewpoint

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