

Holidays that help



Shocking images of poverty, war-torn countries, and destroyed ecosystems are shown on the news every day. Many of us empathise but we hardly go out of our way to try to help out. Whether it is laziness, or lack of time or knowledge, we simply never get around to it.

So why not, the next time when you plan an adventure, look at what Hands On Holidays have to offer. Their new eco-tours in India and Thailand allow you to immerse yourself among the locals to help you really make a difference in other people's lives.

The Community Development Project in India is set within the Sunderbans Jungle Camp on Bali Island, where you assist with the maintenance and repair of clay embankments, the construction of a hospital and other general duties around the camp.

It's not all work: the first two days you tour the city of Calcutta, visiting museums and

monuments, soaking yourself into the country's heritage and history which helps set everything that comes after in context. You also experience some of the natural side of the Sunderbans with an excursion to the world's largest estuarine forest, home to diverse wildlife including tigers.

The Thai eco-adventure focuses on the ethnic hill tribe community in Mae Hong Son and requires you to help in tasks such as construction and maintenance work, teaching English or sports, beautifying shrines or temples and conducting environmental surveys with the local youth. The precise mix of tasks depends on the situation and current needs.

As well as the time in the village, you will have time to visit Bangkok, Chiang Mai, and areas of Mae Hong Song Province, and your stay includes activities such as trekking, white water rafting, swimming and camping.

www.handsupholidays.com

Treetop trekking

A new canopy adventure centre has opened on the banks of Bedok Reservoir in Singapore, one of the few of its type in Asia.

Forest Adventure has two courses – one for children and the Grand Course for adults – both comprising different sorts of challenge including bridges and ladders, zip lines, trapezes, slide and nets. The Grand Course features 32 different challenges split into four sections.

At the end of each section is a zip line to take you back to ground level, with the longest being 176m long. Total time to complete the Grand Course is estimated to be around 1.5-2 hours.

www.forestadventure.com.sg

