

AMAZING NEW CHAPTERS



Mukdahhan



Mukdahan

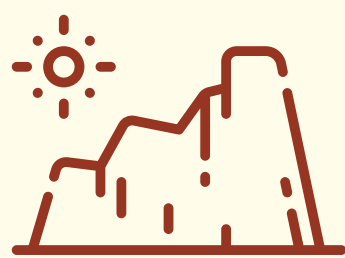
Scale the sky-scraping Ho Kaeo Tower on the scenic Mekong's banks, explore eight ethnic groups, taste sweet tamarinds, check out ancient kettledrums and the origins of Lam Phaya at the gateway to Indochina

Mukdahan's history dates back to the late Ayutthaya era. Originally, on the left bank of the Mekong River, there was a large community called Ban Luang Phon Sin, located around Phrathat Ing Hang, which currently lies in Savannakhet Province of Lao PDR. The community was ruled by Chao Chan Suriyawong, who also had a son named Chao Kinnari, and he later built a new town at the mouth of Huai Muk on the right bank of the Mekong River in around 1767AD. The city was completed in 1770AD and named "Mukdahan" (moonstone or pearl) according to a heaven-sent sign which occurred to Chao Chan while the town was still under construction. It is for this reason that the villagers refer to the town as 'Mueang Muk.'

During the reign of King Taksin the Great, Chao Kinnari was promoted and given the title of Phraya Chanthon Si Surat Upparacha Manthaturat as he became the first ruler of Mukdahan in 1778AD. Originally, Mukdahan was a colonial part of 'Monthon Udon Thani' or Udon county. In 1907, the county was dissolved and Mukdahan became a district of Nakhon Phanom province. In 1982, the government announced Mukdahan as Thailand's 73rd province.

Mukdahan Map





Phu Pha Thoep National Park

Mueang Mukdahan, Mukdahan



Phu Pha Thoep National Park

Mueang Mukdahan, Mukdahan



Covering a total area of 48.4 square kilometres in Amphoe Mueang Mukdahan and Amphoe Don Tan, the park's geography features undulating sandstone mountains that form the edge of the Phu Phan Range. Many of the peaks are between 170-420 metres above sea level, with Phu Chom Si being the highest among them. Deciduous dipterocarp and mixed deciduous forest cover most of the surrounding area. The mountain slopes are dotted with wildflowers in the late rainy season and early winter.

Interesting attractions in the Park area include:

Hin Thoep Rocks. Situated within the vicinity of the visitor centre, this is a complex of naturally sculpted rocks caused by erosion from rain, wind, and sun over a period of 95-120 million years. The transformation has caused these rocks to form various shapes, such as cacti, crowns, crocodiles, conch shells and mushrooms.



Lan Mutchalin is an expansive flat stone courtyard surrounded by a dwarf deciduous dipterocarp forest, located right next to the Hin Thoep Rocks. In the late rainy season and early winter, groups of tiny ornamental grasses, such as Dusita, Saratchan, Soi Suwanna, Thipkeson, Mani Dheva, Yat Namkhang, and Noa Duean Ha, bloom here in abundance.

Wang Duean Ha Waterfall is a small but incredibly pretty waterfall amid green forests where water flows only during the rainy season.

Pha Ut (Camel Cliff) features rock sculptures in the shape of desert camels. From the ariel viewpoint, you can see spectacular Phu Tham Phra, Phu Phak Wan, and Pha Khee Mu. The landscape beneath Pha Ut consists of widespread, vast valleys and verdant forests.

Pha Ngoi is a group of rocks shaped like turtles with a cliff viewpoint ideal for watching the sunrise.

Phu Tham Phra Waterfall formed by streams running down from the cliff above, flowing to the bottom of the basin below, which can only be played in during the rainy season.

At the top of the waterfall stands a natural large rock chamber and century-old Buddha images carved from wood.



Pha Manao is a smooth cliff with a waterfall cascading down to the fertile forest below in the rainy season. The ridge overlooks the expansive sight of Hin Thoep and the Mekong River.

Pha Sai is a viewpoint on the south side where visitors can enjoy the panoramic scenery, including the Mekong River, the natural border between Thailand and Laos.

Tham Lot looks like a narrow rock chamber where visitors can walk through the small gap down the middle.

Tham Fa Mue Daeng houses red-colored, pre-historical palm prints and other cave wall paintings dating back around 3,000 years. To reach the cave, visitors have to walk an uphill 1.8 km nature trail.



National Park's Entrance Fee: Adults 200 baht / Children 100 baht
A tourist service centre, bungalows, camping area, camping equipment, restrooms, and cooperative store are provided here for visitors.

For further details contact, Tel. : 0 4531 1677 ext. 701 and the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation in Bangkok Tel. : 0 2562 0760 or www.dnp.go.th



Phaya Si Mukda Maha Muni Nilapala Nakharat

Mueang Mukdahan, Mukdahan



Phaya Si Mukda Maha Muni Nilapala Nakharat

Mueang Mukdahan, Mukdahan



Located in Na Si Nuan sub-district inside Wat Roi Phra Phutthabat Phu Manorom, Phaya Si Mukda Maha Muni Nilapala Nakharat is Thailand's largest giant Naga statue, slithering across the rocky area on the left side of the path up to Phrachao Yai Kaeo Mukda Sitirait and magnificently raising its head to face the Mekong River below. This majestic, turquoise scaled Naga statue is 122 metres long, 20 metres high and 1.5 metres in diameter and looks unquestionably striking. One of three significant Naga statues in the Mukdahan Province, it was built to act as a guardian of Phrachao Yai Kaeo Mukda Sitirait and a focal point for worship from devotees, according to the beliefs of the settlers in the Mekong River Basin.



Phaya Anantanakharat

Mueang Mukdahan, Mukdahan



Phaya Anantanakharat

Mueang Mukdahan, Mukdahan



Located at the viewpoint of the 2nd Thai-Laos Friendship Bridge on the Mekong River, legend has it that this area houses a cavern which is connected to a mythical underground city. According to the tale, the Naga is considered the king of all serpents and lord of the ocean. Mukdahan province is home to Phya Anantanakharat - a giant Naga statue wrapped around a golden pillar above the Friendship Bridge. The body of the serpent figure has black scales which contrast with gold panels, while his head turns towards the Mekong River. This Naga statue is one of the trio of enormous serpents of Mukdahan.



Ho Kaeo Mukdahan

Mueang Mukdahan, Mukdahan



Ho Kaeo Mukdahan

Mueang Mukdahan, Mukdahan



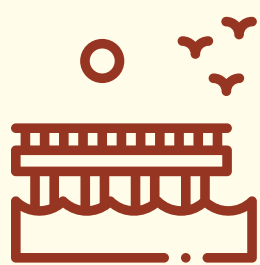
This iconic tower is located in Si Bun Rueang sub-district in Mukdahan. The history of the former Mueang Mukdahan, the precious antique objects of the Kingdom, and the different clothing worn by the eight tribes of the Thai Mukdahan people are collected and exhibited in this 65.5-metre-high tower. Inside the tower's glass dome Buddha images for the seven days of the week and that of Phra Buddha Navaming Mongkol Mukdahan are enshrined; the latter being made of a silver/gold mix with a lap width of 20 inches. The peak of Ho Kaeo Mukdahan is decorated with Mukdahan or moonstone beads, one of the nine native gems in Thailand, and stretches up about 15 metres from the viewpoint. Climbing up to the sixth floor and standing on the observation deck, visitors can get a great view overlooking the city of Mukdahan, the Mekong River, Savannakhet Province Laos PDR, and the 2nd Thai-Lao Friendship Bridge.



Open daily: between 08.00 – 16.00 hrs.

Entrance fee: 50 baht. Monks, disabled people, and persons aged 60 years and over are free.

For further details contact, Tel. : 0 4263 3211.



The Second Thai-Lao Friendship Bridge Viewpoint

Mueang Mukdahan, Mukdahan



The Second Thai-Lao Friendship Bridge Viewpoint

Mueang Mukdahan, Mukdahan



The Second Thai-Lao Friendship Bridge Viewpoint at Ban Song Pueai, Chayangkun Road (Highway No. 212) in Bang Sai Yai sub-district is seven kilometers north of Amphoe Mueang Mukdahan. Located near the 2nd Thai-Laos Friendship Bridge (Mukdahan-Savannakhet), the landscaped viewpoint sits on a walkway along the Mekong River. There are lighting poles at intervals allowing visitors to walk, sit and admire the bridge and the Mekong River scenery, and stairs leading down to the riverside. In the evening, there is a small walking street with street food and funky souvenirs on sale.

The Bridge, with a length of 1.6 kilometres and width of 12 metres, connects Mukdahan district on the Thai side and Savannakhet Province in Laos. It is a part of the East-West Economic Corridor (EWEC) route, which starts in Myanmar, passes through Thailand and Lao PDR, and ends in Vietnam. The Bridge's construction began in January 2003 and its official grand opening ceremony was held on 20 December 2006.





Wat Si Mongkhon Tai

Mueang Mukdahan, Mukdahan



Wat Si Mongkhon Tai

Mueang Mukdahan, Mukdahan



The temple is located on Samran Chai Khong Road by the Mekong River. Its main ordination hall, or Ubosot, houses a concrete Buddha image, considered a sacred item of Mukdahan. The Buddha image is 2.2 metres wide and 2 metres high.

The history of this ancient Buddha image remains vague; however, legend says that two Buddha images were found in 1767 when Chao Kinnari was constructing Mukdahan city by the seven-branched sugar palm tree. The large image was cast from concrete, while the smaller one, found underneath a Pho or Bodhi tree, was made from steel. A temple was built to house both Buddha images. The smaller Buddha image subsequently mysteriously disappeared and was found buried under the Bhodi tree where it had been originally found, with only the top of the statue emerging above the ground. Chao Kinnari had an altar built there and named the smaller Buddha image “Phra Lup Lek” and the larger one ‘Phrachao Ong Luang.’ From that day on, both images became sacred for the province of Mukdahan.



Phu Sa Dok Bua National Park

Don Tan, Mukdahan



Phu Sa Dok Bua National Park

Don Tan, Mukdahan



The park covers areas in three provinces, including Amphoe Nikhom Kham Soi and Amphoe Don Tan of Mukdahan, Amphoe Loeng Nok Tha of Yasothon, and Amphoe Chanuman and Amphoe Senangkhanikhom of Amnat Charoen. The terrain primarily consists of deciduous and dry evergreen forests and complex mountain ranges covering a total area of 321 square kilometres. Its highest peak, Phu Krasae, is approximately 491 metres above sea level.

The Park attractions include:

Phu Pha Team, an ideal spot to watch the sunrise in the morning. The cliff overlooks some beautiful scenery and houses 3,000-year-old palm prints and symbolic paintings which are presumed to stem from the same era as the those at Pha Taem National Park in Ubon Ratchathani Province. A total of 98 paintings can be seen at a height of 3-5 metres from the cavern floor.

Huai Hin Kho is a small reservoir located in the area of the National Park. The site is suitable for relaxation. There are lodging services, camping grounds, and facilities for tourists who want to stay overnight.



Flower Field on Phu Wat During the late rainy season, the stone courtyard is painted with colorful wildflowers, such as En A, Kradum Ngoen, and Dusita.

Phu Pha Hom is 386 metres above sea level. The most beautiful sunset viewpoint is located about 4 kilometres from Ban Phu Pha Hom to the west.

Phu Sa Bua is a hill with a height of about 423 metres. There are a total of 11 rock pools near the summit which never dry up. These pools are fascinating as there are many diminutive beautiful pale pink lotus flowers on the surface. According to the locals, these native blooms have been present for many generations, giving the site its name, Phu Sa Dok Bua, literally meaning the hill of lotus pools. Tourists who wish to see the flowers will have to trek for one whole day to get there. Huai Hin Kho Reservoir, Pha Maklua, Flower Fields on Phu Wat, Phu Pha Hom, and Phu Pha Taek are also within reach for sightseeing.

Getting to Phu Mai Sang from Ban Khok Kham Lian requires a four-wheel-drive vehicle to travel up to the summit, and the journey takes about 3 hours. From the west side of Pha Lap Fa cliff, you can watch the sun set and admire the expansive scenery which stretches as far as Phu Phaeng Ma and Phu Mu.



National Park's Entrance Fee: Adults 200 baht / Children 100 baht. A tourist service center, accommodation, camping site, and restrooms are provided here.

For further details contact Tel. : 0 4261 9077, 0 4267 6742, 08 9032 5369 or www.dnp.go.th.





Ban Phu Cultural Village

Nong Sung, Mukdahan



Ban Phu Cultural Village

Nong Sung, Mukdahan



Ban Phu Cultural Village in Ban Pao sub-district, surrounded by mountains and enchanting nature, is a Phu Thai village that has impressively retained its traditions and culture. Tourists can experience homestay accommodation and many cultural activities where they can learn about the villagers' way of life and customs. Learn the Phu Thai dialect through local games, dress like a villager in 'Sin Thiew' sarongs and 'Sabai' cloth sashes or even a hand-made shirt dyed with indigo and decorated with red trim.

Other exciting activities are available, such as giving alms to Buddhist monks in the morning and learning how to weave cotton fabric by hand. Visitors can join in with authentic rice farming and harvesting methods or spend the afternoon observing the drum parade, Baisi Sukhwan (wrist-binding ceremony), artisans working on their woodcarving and bamboo basketry, etc.



Tourists who would like to stay overnight at the village's homestay accommodation, take part in the enjoyable mentioned activities, or organize any study visits should contact the Ban Phu Homestay Village in advance at Tel. 08 1047 4218.



Phaya Si Phuchong Mukda Nakkharat

Wan Yai, Mukdahan



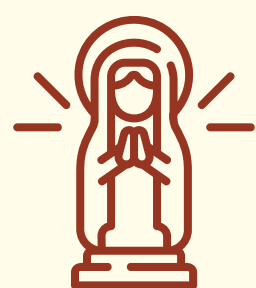
Phaya Si Phuchong Mukda Nakkharat

Wan Yai, Mukdahan



Phaya Si Phuchong Mukda Nakkharat is Thailand's largest marble-adorned Naga statue, decorated with beautifully hazy white marble scales. It is 11.11 metres high and 51.40 metres long with a diameter of 1.50 meters and is situated in the Kaeng Kabao Park in Pong Kham sub-district.

The name Phaya Si Phuchong Mukda Nakkharat, means the Naga who brings prosperity and glory to Mukdahan Province. The Naga is curved and features three arches; the first signifying good health, the second, located directly under the Naga body represents wealth, while the third represents success. This ground Naga is one of the three mighty Nagas of Mukdahan, and people believe anyone who comes to worship this Naga and walks through its belly will be blessed with a happy life and have their hopes fulfilled accordingly.



Wat Ban Song Khon or Our Lady of the Martyrs of Thailand Shrine

Wan Yai, Mukdahan



Wat Ban Song Khon or Our Lady of the Martyrs of Thailand Shrine

Wan Yai, Mukdahan

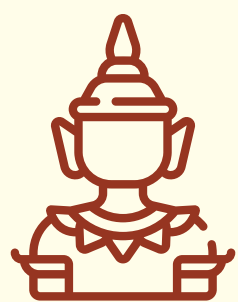


This massive Roman Catholic Church in a modern architectural style is located at Ban Song Khon in Pong Kham sub-district, by the Mekong River. The church was built to commemorate the seven martyrs who sacrificed their lives to proclaim their belief in God during the Franco-Thai dispute in World War II. In 1996, the church won the Architectural Design Award 1996 from the Association of Siamese Architects under Royal Patronage. Celebrations are held twice annually, on October 22 and December 16, by the Boonrasri Committee.



Wat Ban Song Khon is open for visit and worship every day for free from 9 am. to 12 pm. and 1 pm. to 5 pm. Visitors are required to behave and dress appropriately. Devotees can join the Mass celebration on Sundays at 7 am.





Wat Phra Si Mahapho

Wan Yai, Mukdahan



Wat Phra Si Mahapho

Wan Yai, Mukdahan



Wat Phra Si Mahapho has been accredited and registered as an archaeological site by The Fine Arts Department of Thailand. Located in Ban Wan Yai, Wan Yai sub-district, beside the Mekong River, the temple is unique with some incredible ancient architecture. The old “Sim” or Ubosot was built by a Vietnamese craftsman in 1916 in the northeastern folk style with beautifully carved wooden brackets supporting the roof. The interior murals feature the Vessantara Jataka and depict Prince Damrong Rajanubhab riding a cart during his inspection trip around Isan. There is also a 2-storey building of old European architecture that was used as the headquarters for the Wan Yai Minor District almost a hundred years ago.





Wat Pa Wiwek Watthanaram

Khamcha-i, Mukdahan



Wat Pa Wiwek Watthanaram

Khamcha-i, Mukdahan



Wat Pa Wiwek Watthanaram or Wat Luang Pu Cham is located in Ban Huai Sai in Kham Cha-I sub-district. Luang Pu Cham Mahapunyo was one of the Buddhist masters who strictly adhered to the Dharma and discipline of Vipassana meditation right up until he passed away on 19 January 2013, aged 104 years. Inside the temple is a section displaying his personal history and teachings in a serene ambience. Another distinctive feature is the applied art of Chedi Bu Thong Kitt, a 45-metre-high pagoda with five spires built on a 13-metre square base. The pagoda was constructed in 1987 to contain the relics of the Lord Buddha and his disciples who became Arhats (monks who have gained insight into the true nature of existence and achieved Nirvana); namely, Phra Siwali (Sivali), Phra Uppakhut (Upakut), and Phra Ongkhuliman (Angulimalaya). Grand bathing ceremonies are held on Makha Bucha Day and Visakha Bucha Day every year.



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