



Celebrate the Loy Krathong Festival of Thailand

Visit Thailand during the biggest and most colorful of Thai Festivals: Loy Krathong. In the city of Chiang Mai, its houses, businesses, temples, streets, canals, moats and the Mae Ping River are decorated with lights and lanterns. Krathongs are crafted of banana leaves, holding a candle, joss sticks, flowers and coins, and are sent down the river with a personal wish. Fireworks, cultural performances, parades, and the launching of thousands of hot-air lanterns (Kom Loy) into the night sky add to the festivities—a most beautiful and memorable experience for visitors and locals alike.

Be a part of Loy Krathang this November 12—stay three nights in a deluxe room at the lovely Chedi, Chiang Mai hotel, an elegant retreat in the heart of this historical city. Enjoy a special festival dinner on the hotel’s terrace overlooking the river, then launch your own krathong for its journey down the river. Private check in, breakfast, and evening cocktails at the Club Lounge, private airport transfers and more. Prices start at \$1095 per person for the three-night package (upgrade to a Chedi Club Suite for \$75 more/room/night). To book, contact **Dianna Upton** at 1-800-999-1758. Also see our Signature Travel Journey [Thailand: Land of Smiles](#), or Private Travel Journey [Northern Thailand & Krabi](#).





Special Group Departure for Ecuador and the Galapagos — July 29–Aug 9, 2008

In Ecuador, visit the home and studio of artist Oswaldo Viteri, and lunch at a private hacienda followed by a tour of a rose farm. Enjoy private visits to the San Francisco and La Compañía churches. And, of course all the Galapagos-style adventure one could ask for in the islands.

Launched in late 2006, the MV Journey is a 16-passenger catamaran, boasts nearly a one-to-one crew to passenger ratio. All eight cabins have A/C, private bathrooms with full shower, hot water and ocean view picture windows. Each room is located above the water level, allowing you to open the windows and enjoy the fresh sea breeze.

Prices start at \$4985 per person double occupancy, adult, \$3295 per child under 12 years old, double occupancy (sharing with an adult). Airfare roundtrip Quito/Galapagos \$445 per person. Based on minimum 10 people. For more information, contact **Rachel Robar at 1-800-999-1758**.

Also: Very limited availability for a seven-night Galapagos cruise, Dec 23-30, 2008. Contact **Rachel Robar at 1-800-999-1758**.

Cooking on the Cape — South African Style

Spend a day on a private cooking excursion in and around Cape Town, South Africa. Learn about local ingredients and the unique cooking styles of the Cape, then participate in the preparation of a meal. Your expert guide and chef will take you through the steps of a truly remarkable seafood lunch while enjoying the magnificent views of mountains and ocean. Shop for spices in the Malay Quarter, stop at a fishing harbor along the coast, then on to an exclusive location overlooking the ocean to prepare, and finally, enjoy your meal, accompanied by local wines, and followed by coffee and cheese. \$595 per person based on 2 persons (7 persons maximum). To book, contact **Jeanie Fundora at 1-800-999-1758**.



Falling in Love — with India

Anne and Jim recently traveled with friends (and Cox & Kings) to northern India. Read about the [highlights of their trip](#). View our Signature Escorted Travel Journeys [Splendors of the North](#) or [Imperial India](#). To book your journey, contact **Nicole Beattie at 1-800-999-1758**.

Summer Olympics, China — Superior Hotel Available

Need a great hotel to stay while you're at the Summer Olympics in Beijing, China? Five Superior rooms just became available for the [Grand Mercure Xidan Hotel, Beijing](#). Dates are August 6-14, 2008 (8 Nights), \$950/room/night, inclusive of taxes and American daily breakfast. Tickets for Olympic events during the Games are available from various companies in the U.S. To book your rooms, contact **Dianna Upton at 1-800-999-1758**.

World Heritage Sites — China, Part One China's UNESCO sites number 35. Here are just a few.

Imperial Palaces of the Ming and Qing Dynasties in Beijing and Shenyang:

Seat of supreme power for over five centuries (1416-1911), the Forbidden City in Beijing, with its landscaped gardens and many buildings (whose nearly 10,000 rooms contain furniture and works of art), constitutes a priceless testimony to Chinese civilization during the Ming and Qing dynasties.

Summer Palace, an Imperial Garden in Beijing:

First built in 1750, it is a masterpiece of Chinese landscape garden design. The natural landscape of hills and open water is combined with artificial features such as pavilions, halls, palaces, temples and bridges to form a harmonious ensemble of outstanding aesthetic value.

Temple of Heaven: an Imperial Sacrificial Altar in Beijing:

The Temple of Heaven, founded in the first half of the 15th century, is a dignified complex of fine cult buildings set in gardens and surrounded by pines. In its overall layout and that of its individual buildings, it symbolizes the relationship between earth and heaven.

The Great Wall:

In c. 220 B.C., under Qin Shi Huang, sections of earlier fortifications were joined together to form a united defense system against invasions from the north. Construction continued up to the Ming dynasty (1368–1644), when the Great Wall became the world's largest military structure.

Mausoleum of the first Qin Emperor (Terracotta Warriors), Shaanxi Province:

Not discovered until 1974. Qin (d. 210 B.C.), the first unifier of China, is buried, surrounded by the famous terracotta warriors, at the center of a complex designed to mirror the urban plan of the capital, Xianyan. The small figures are all different; with their horses, chariots and weapons, they are masterpieces of realism and of great historical interest.

Classical Gardens of Suzhou:

Classical Chinese garden design, which seeks to recreate natural landscapes in miniature, is nowhere better illustrated than in the nine gardens in the historic city of Suzhou. They are generally acknowledged to be masterpieces of the genre.

Our Signature Travel Journey [Classic China](#) includes visits to all the above sites. Our Signature Travel Journey [Journey on the Silk Road](#), includes all the above sites except Suzhou. To book your trip, contact **Dianna Upton at 1-800-999-1758**.

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