

#TRAVEL

CHASING HORIZONS IN THAILAND:

A month of marvels and mishaps



Dhaka. The city where honking is the language of the roads, and the heat is a constant companion like that one clingy friend we all have. So, what happens when five Dhakaites decide to swap this chaos for the tropical allure of Thailand? Let's just say, it involves more than our usual dose of adrenaline and an unexpected culinary plot twist.

The great Thai escapade

One fine morning, fuelled by our indomitable spirit (and way too much caffeine), Adity, Rakib, Mithila, Zulfikar, and I embarked on what would be a whirlwind 30-day adventure through Thailand. Our ambitious plan? To conquer 70 per cent of the country, island by island. From the popular shores of Koh Samui to the serene secrets of Koh Yao Noi, we hopped, skipped, and jumped our way through paradise.

But don't be fooled—this was not your average lazy beach holiday. Oh no. This was a full-blown, action-packed saga of dawn flights we nearly missed (thanks, Rakib's alarm), hostel hopping as frequent as changing clothes, and a four-day road trip in Chiang Mai that saw us cover a thousand kilometres in an SUV that was more temperamental than Dhaka's weather in April.

A dose of reality amid paradise

As much as the islands were a visual feast, the real eye-opener was the vibe. There's this incessant buzz around "losing yourself" that seems to permeate the young traveller circles. After a month of relentless movement, I found that most praise heaped on Thailand felt as overstuffed as our backpacks. Sure, the landscapes are postcard-perfect, but where was the warmth—the famed Thai hospitality? Lost, perhaps, in translation.

And what about the succulent

THAI food? It is now tailored to suit the bland palates of tourists rather than preserving the fiery zest of authentic Thai street food. It was such a let-down.

Solo journeys and new discoveries

Midway through, drained from what felt suspiciously like work, we decided on a pact. We split up for solo journeys—a personal quest for each to rediscover the joy of travel on our own terms. Zulfikar turned chef in a local cooking class, probably trying to find the lost spices of Thai cuisine. I plunged into the deep, quite literally, earning my stripes as a certified diver.

Mithila wandered, perhaps in search of something that could not be found on a map. Adity, ever the introverted butterfly, finally fluttered around making friends from Russia. And Rakib? He embraced the poetic solitude of a motorbike ride, one that he claims was as hauntingly beautiful in the hilly roads at 3 AM forgetting the notoriously soul-crushing traffic jams of Dhaka.

The grand finale

Reunited at Krabi, we exchanged tales that were as varied as the flavours of our last supper in Dhaka before the trip. Exhausted yet exhilarated, we returned to the cacophony of our beloved city, only to cap it all off with a magical Coldplay concert in Bangkok—because nothing says "epic trip" like swaying to "Fix You" with thousands of other souls, equally lost and found.

And so, back to the grind in Dhaka, as we sit amidst yet another traffic jam, it's these memories that remind us—life is not about escaping from the chaos but diving right into it. And sometimes, a month in Thailand is all it takes to appreciate the chaotic beauty of our own Dhaka, where every heartbeat and honk resonates with the rhythm of survival and zest for life. Trust me, Thailand was not just a trip; it was an eye-opener.

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