



## Koh Samui Elephant Care Program



### Quick Overview

Experience the magic of Thailand! Get up close and play a vital role in ensuring the well-being of these majestic creatures.

This program offers the opportunity to work closely with these majestic animals, learning about their behavior, needs, and how to care for them responsibly. The program aims to provide a nurturing environment for the elephants, tailored to their specific needs based on age and health.

### Program Description

Elephants have been helping humans with various tasks for around 5,000 years. However, while people have benefited, the elephants often haven't. In Thailand, elephants are an important part of the culture, myths, and religion. Sadly, this respect

doesn't always show in how elephants are treated. Many face abuse, poaching, deforestation, and loss of habitat, which has led to a sharp decline in their numbers. Today, Asian elephants are an endangered species.

The Elephant Care Program focuses on giving elephants the care they need, depending on their age and health. Throughout the week, you'll help keep their habitat clean and healthy.

On Mondays, you'll get an introduction to Asian elephants and learn how to prepare Thai herbal medicine for them with the help of the I Love Elephant team. This is a great way for new participants to understand the program's goals.

From Monday to Friday, you'll be involved in daily tasks like cleaning the elephant habitat, observing their behaviors, and preparing their food. You'll also help buy food, cut grass, and plant vegetables to provide a healthy diet for the elephants.

By joining the Elephant Care Program, you'll not only support the elephants' well-being but also learn a lot about their care. Together, we can make a difference in the lives of these wonderful animals.

## Add-on: +Learning

There is no +Learning add-on available for this program.

## Aims & Objectives

- To be a part of taking care of elephants so that they are healthy according to their age and in an environment suitable for the context.
- Maintain the cleanliness of the elephants' habitat.
- Learn information about Thai elephants and be able to care for or provide accurate information about elephant care.

## Schedule

### Monday

- Introduction about Asian Elephants
- Learn about and prepare Thai herb medicine for Elephants by the I Love Elephant team (Only for first-time participants)

### Tuesday to Friday

- Clean the elephant habitat and assist the team with the cleanup.
- Take care of the elephants' living conditions by cleaning wells, adding water, and assisting with repairs or construction work.
- Help with the elephants' health by bathing them, observing their eating habits, and monitoring their feces for any signs of parasites or digestive issues.
- Observe and learn about elephant behavior.

- Prepare food for the elephants or assist in purchasing items from the market.
- Plant, water, and maintain the elephant food area by growing grass, vegetables, bananas, pumpkins, squash, cucumbers, or other plants that elephants enjoy.

\*\*\*This schedule can be changed and/or amended depending on weather conditions, local conditions and unforeseen circumstances.\*\*\*

## What is included

- All meals included (during the week 3 meals, during week-end 2)
- Wifi in the public space
- Strongbox
- Locked rooms
- Hot shower
- Laundry
- Occidental toilets
- Air conditioning
- Assistance and on-site supervision
- Emergency line
- Reception to the airport and transfer to the accommodation
- Local transport
- On Monday of your first week at this location, you will join our orientation day, to familiarize you with the surroundings as well as local culture.

## What is not included

- Towel
- Mosquito protection
- No activities scheduled outside the program
- Return transfer to the airport

## The local elephant sanctuary

The sanctuary in Koh Samui is a reputable ethical elephant sanctuary dedicated to the care, conservation, and rehabilitation of elephants. Focused on creating a safe and natural environment for these majestic creatures, the sanctuary promotes responsible tourism and education. Visitors have the unique opportunity to interact with elephants in a humane way, such as feeding, bathing, and learning about their history and habits, all while supporting efforts to protect and conserve Thailand's elephant population. The sanctuary serves as both a haven for elephants and an educational platform to raise awareness about their welfare.

The key difference between wild and domestic elephants lies in their environment and lifestyle.

Wild elephants live in their natural habitat-jungles, forests, and savannahs-where they roam freely, forage for food, and exhibit natural behaviours such as social bonding and migration. They are independent, relying on their instincts for survival, and face challenges like predators, poaching, and habitat loss.

Domestic elephants, on the other hand, have been raised or trained to live in close proximity to humans. Historically, they were used for labour, in logging or tourism, and are often kept in controlled environments like sanctuaries or camps. Unlike wild elephants, they depend on humans for food, shelter, and medical care. While domestic elephants may no longer be subject to hard labour in places like sanctuaries, their behaviours and lifestyle differ significantly from those in the wild due to their long-term interaction with humans.

These differences highlight the distinct needs and challenges each type of elephant faces, whether in the wild or in human care.

Human intervention is crucial in an elephant care camp because domestic or rescued elephants cannot survive on their own, unlike wild elephants. Many of these elephants have been rescued from abusive situations in logging or tourism and often suffer from health issues, trauma, or a lack of survival skills needed for the wild. They rely on humans for food, medical care, and rehabilitation.

In contrast, wild elephants live independently in their natural habitat, following natural behaviours such as foraging, socializing, and migrating. They do not need human assistance unless they face threats like habitat destruction or poaching, in which case care efforts focus on protecting their environment rather than direct care.

A domestic elephant rescue and care camp in Koh Samui, Thailand, is a sanctuary that offers refuge to elephants rescued from a life of labour and mistreatment. These elephants, often formerly used in tourism, logging, or trekking, are given a new life in a safe, natural environment where their well-being is the top priority. The camp's mission is to provide ethical care, rehabilitation, and protection for these majestic creatures, while also educating the public about the importance of care and responsible tourism.

At the camp, visitors have the unique opportunity to observe elephants in a natural setting, free from chains and the demands of work. Instead of offering rides or shows, the camp promotes experiences that emphasize ethical interactions, such as feeding, walking with the elephants, or watching them bathe and play in mud pools. These activities support the physical and emotional health of the elephants, as well as foster a deeper connection between humans and wildlife.

In addition to its rescue efforts, the camp often plays an important role in broader care efforts, working to protect wild elephant populations and their natural habitats across Thailand. It also aims to raise awareness about the challenges elephants face due to habitat loss, poaching, and unethical tourism practices. By supporting such camps, visitors contribute directly to the ongoing care and preservation of these magnificent animals.