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## 1. DINDANG NATURAL BUILDING&LIVING HOME

In the hilly village of PakSong in Southern Thailand is located our **DinDang Natural Building&Living Home**. The HOME was set up in 2007 with the aim to encourage and spread knowledge on natural building and taking care of the environment by living in a self-sustainable and ecological way. The DinDang (red soil in Thai) HOME occupies a small piece of land nestled between the PakSong River and the Thai Child Development Foundation premises.

We have been building with clay, bamboo, river stones and other natural and recycled materials we find locally. These techniques have proven to be cheap, environmentally friendly, and have positive social impact. It is, however, not a fast way of building. And we build the simple way with simple tools keeping it accessible to all. So, building a natural house is really suitable to organize in a project with a small group of motivated and interested people.

Creating a building out of natural materials is a perfect way to use all your skills, your body and your creativity. **DinDang** strongly believes in the environmental and social benefits of building houses this way. We really want to promote this way of building and the use of natural and local resources for people living in the country side.

### Why natural building?

The many variations of materials and technics to natural building make it possible for anyone with a little corner of available land to build themselves a shelter big or small. Technics can be simplified to adapt to the physical capacity of the labor at hand and time available. For example a young couple can start off with just a little clay hut for privacy, to sleep in, and to keep their valuables. Living and cooking can be done in an outdoor sheltered area with a roof's protection from the rain and some simple counters and platforms to facilitate life. When the family expands it is easy to build another clay hut. There is also the possibility of screening in the covered space below the roof with bamboo slats and when time allows the family can cob over the bamboo with a local mud mix leaving openings for light to enter and with time and minimal expense they will have four wall or more under their roof. The walls can be simple or eloquently decorated as the cob mix easily lends itself to sculpting. The possibilities are many and here in South-East Asia the climate is mostly demanding of a roof -walls are for privacy- and a foundation which is needed to keep the moisture off the mud (cob or adobe), bamboo and wood structures that hold up the roofs. In this way anyone can build their own house.

### The DinDang HOME

DinDang HOME is where Bow, Martha and their family live. The HOME is situated besides a river and surrounded by tropical rain forest. The DinDang HOME contains a dozen of small clay and bamboo buildings which are used to accommodate the family and visitors. There are little gardens scattered across the premises where the family grows food and herbs. Living at DinDang HOME means that you are our visitors and you are expected to be part of our living activities and life style. Cooking, eating, building, gardening, talking, looking or observing closely is a great way to understand it. We strongly believed that you are travelling this far to Thailand for something unforgettable or to find inspirations in life and here we can share that with you.

The DinDang HOME continues to be used as a place of learning (learning by doing) such that we will always be building, improving, maintaining, and experimenting with building on site and in surrounding villages. As such we continue our goals of being a Natural Building learning place and example.



DinDang Natural Building&Living HOME 2014



View from the permaculture land



Chris picking coffee



Volunteers enjoying fresh coconut

## 2. DinDang's PermaCulture Land

A few kilometers from DinDang Center, on a steep hillside, is a piece of land we are setting up as an example of a vernacular permaculture growing way. Permaculture is a cultivation technique that promotes growing many varieties of plants together as a goal of minimizing environmental impact and creating a rotation of crop harvests that compliments each other and supports each other nutritional needs.

When the land came into our hands it consist of mangosteen trees, as well as rambutan, coconut, rubber, durian, coffee, banana, jackfruit and more trees. The goal for the land is to become a sustainable source of food for the center, to bring in a little extra income to support the family home, and to be a good example for others. The land still needs a lot of hands to work planting new trees and plants and building walk ways to ease the caring of the trees, harvesting of the crops and experimenting with more varieties. And eventually a place to live.

We believe that by using the permaculture model a local family living in the PakSong hills can grow most of the food they need year round as well as sell the extras from their bigger crops to bring in a little income to complete their needs. And with the use of natural building technics the family can build a humble home using the soil(with clay content) from the hill side and the bamboo that grows in abundance, keeping cost to a minimum and living a simple healthy life debt free.

To Sum up this chapter, the DinDang family includes the permaculture land to the visitor-volunteer experience . As with everything it depends on the weather and the size of the group but ideally we like to spend **one day out of the five** at the permaculture land with the group. We also have been extra busy with our gardens at the center and have been putting extra pride into developing our 'local vegetable' selections.





### 3. PROJECT INFORMATION FOR VISITOR-VOLUNTEERS

<b>Project name</b>	<b>DinDang</b> , Natural Building&Living HOME
<b>Place</b>	PakSong Village, Phato District, Chumphon Province
<b>When</b>	Ongoing projects
<b>Who can apply</b>	Anybody, who : <input type="checkbox"/> Likes to learn how to build with natural materials. <input type="checkbox"/> Has affinity with gardening, construction, decorating and painting. <input type="checkbox"/> Likes to do physical work. <input type="checkbox"/> Does not mind to get his hands dirty and the rest of his body too (clay fight!). <input type="checkbox"/> Likes children. <input type="checkbox"/> Likes to use his/her organization skills for work for DinDang. <input type="checkbox"/> Can work in a group. <input type="checkbox"/> Wants to experience life in rural Thailand. <input type="checkbox"/> Wants to live and work with international and local people. <input type="checkbox"/> Does not have an alcohol problem or uses drugs.
<b>Age</b>	Anybody from 18 to 80 years is welcome to participate. You should be in good health.
<b>Period work</b>	One week minimum
<b>Participation fee</b>	<b>2.500 Baht per week, to be paid at the start of the project.</b> Participation fee includes: <input type="checkbox"/> Three very good meals per day <input type="checkbox"/> Stay in the DinDang HOME(room- max. 3 people -, showers, western toilet) <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation when needed <input type="checkbox"/> Guidance and mentoring by <b>DinDang</b> . <input type="checkbox"/> Tools and some material for the project (like nails and so on) The fee is used to pay for stay and meals for FIVE working days. If you decide to stay at the Home-stay during the weekends, you are very welcome to do so; There will be no charge for the stay and meals in the weekend then.
<b>Experience, skills</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Volunteers need to be able to speak and understand English language. <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteers must be able to work in a team with international participants, <b>DinDang</b> family and project-leader. <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteers must be flexible and creative. Working in another culture means: Working in a different, unknown way, under unknown circumstances (such as high temperatures or a lot of rain for example). <input type="checkbox"/> No need to be experienced with construction and gardening but should be keen to try. <input type="checkbox"/> Ideas, special skills on construction, gardening and so on to make the clay houses and the Natural Building& Living HOME a beautiful place are more than welcome.
<b>Place to stay</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> The visitor- volunteers will stay at the DinDang Natural Building& Living Home. <input type="checkbox"/> This accommodation is in a collection of huts, rooms and lofts made of Clay and Bamboo You share a room with no more than two other people. The beds have mattresses, covers, mosquito nets and pillows. (Bring your own sheet and sleeping bag if you prefer). <input type="checkbox"/> Three shower rooms and two toilets are available. <input type="checkbox"/> Electricity is available (220V). <input type="checkbox"/> Three very good Thai meals will be provided (3 times a day), Coffee, tea and drinking water are included. <input type="checkbox"/> There is WiFi internet available at the Homestay.
<b>Program to follow</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Wednesday: Arrival of new visitor-volunteers. Check calendar for available weeks. <input type="checkbox"/> Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday: Work on project during daytime.
<b>Free time</b>	Visitor-volunteers have free time in the evening and weekends. During this time they can stay at the DinDang Home or go on a trip.
<b>Visitor-volunteer work</b>	There is always a lot to do at the DinDang Home. Some weeks DinDang is working on a big project and other weeks busy with many small projects, maintenance and repairs.
<b>Contact</b>	Rewat Thongbunchu ( Bow ) Founder of DinDang (+66) 0872872745
<b>Project start</b>	On Wednesdays(check calendar for available weeks). Volunteers will be picked up at the meeting point in PakSong at 11.00 in the morning every Wednesday. On arrival, <b>DinDang</b> will organize an introduction program.
<b>Project finish</b>	Join us for 1 of 2 weeks. Minimum stay is the five working days. Monday and Tuesday are optional.
<b>Additional information</b>	<b>Visa:</b> A tourist visa can be obtained at the Thai embassy in your home country. The length of a tourist visa differs (depending on the embassy and your country). Thailand does not have a visa for visitor-volunteer work such as our program offers. <b>Insurance:</b> <b>DinDang</b> is not insured for the work in the projects. Volunteers join the projects on their own risk and cannot hold <b>DinDang</b> responsible for any damage, accidents and so on. We advise volunteers to take a personal insurance. <b>Money:</b> There are no Banks or ATMs Machines in our village. For financial transactions one has to go to Ranong or Phato (50 km and 10km). <b>Telephone and internet:</b> In the villages there is an internet cafe. One can buy a SIM card for their mobile phone in Thailand (TRUE MOVE is a good one for reception in our area), so contact with family and/or friends is possible. Visits to Phato or Ranong should be planned on your free time.



## 4. PARTICIPATION FEE

Being a Visitor-Volunteering at DinDang is not just helping us with your hands and feet and mental support, but also bringing us financial support for DinDang Home can continue to realize its projects and become the functional building and living home it has set itself out to be. With that said, to be that home it needs people like you to come and give it life, help it breath and flourish and in exchange DinDang attempts to provide you with a setting to experience Thai culture within our small Village nestled into the rainforest (real Thailand as some call it) and become a step more familiar with natural building and sustainable living.

- The participation fee for the **FIVE work day** week is of **2,500 Baht** per person.  
If you decide to stay over during our weekends we offer you your stay and meals for those 2 days for **FREE!**
- Participation fee should be paid on arrival.
- We don't negotiate the fee though it is possible for DinDang to offer a discount to returning or continuing Volunteers who proves to be an exceptional fit for our Home.

## 5. WEEK SCHEDULE

The visitor-volunteers will work on a set schedule, which will be **made by week** (depending on the progress, work that needs to be done, weather conditions etc.), but normally follows the schedules you see below. We try to include cultural activities and learning throughout this schedule.

The visitor-volunteers can work together with other international and Thai volunteers.

The **DinDang** family will coordinate the project and work together with the visitor-volunteers on the projects. Ideas, suggestions, special techniques and skills are appreciated and will be used where possible.

## 6. PREPARATION

Wednesday (refer to calendar)	11.00am to	Pick up in PakSong at the meeting point. You will have a briefing about <b>DinDang</b> . And a tour on the premises will be done. <i>For continuing Visitor-volunteers, Wednesday is a normal work day.</i>
Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday	08.00 09.00-12.00 12.00-14.00 14.00-17.00 17.00-19.00 19.00-20.00 20.00	Breakfast. Work on projects: construction, maintenance and gardening. Lunch and resting time. Work on projects: construction, maintenance, gardening....basket weaving? Free time. Dinner Free evening. (Quiet time at 10pm)
Monday- Tuesday	Free days (DinDang WeekEnd)	

- For information please visit our website: [www.dindang.jimdo.com](http://www.dindang.jimdo.com) And facebook page [www.facebook.com/DinDangNaturalBuildingCenter](http://www.facebook.com/DinDangNaturalBuildingCenter)
- Organize your own (health) insurance. **DinDang** cannot be held responsible for you, your belongings and your health; your stay will be at your own risk.
- Organize a tourist visa for your stay in Thailand.

### What to bring

- Sleeping bag /sheet, pillow case (if you like to use your own).
- Towel, shampoo, soap and so on.
- Flash light.
- Clothes, both work and casual (not too revealing: for ladies, covering shoulders and down to the knees). Your clothes will be extremely dirty after a day of working with clay, so try to bring clothes that can be thrown away after your stay. We have a box of cloths that you are welcome to use.
- Dress shirts and long pants (in case you will attend a formal occasions).
- Clothes for trekking, swimming, free time.
- Rain clothes (if you arrive in the rainy season...).
- Sport shoes or any old pair of shoes for working and trekking, flip flops (sandals), rubber boots (can be bought in the village).
- Working gloves (can be bought in village).
- Sun lotion, hat, sunglasses.
- Medicine and first aid material.
- Insect repellent (mosquitos).
- Traveling papers with a visa for your period of stay.
- Some ingredients to make a meal from your home country (optional). We invite you to give us a taste of your home.
- Maybe a Thai dictionary?
- DinDang** is trying to set up a library on natural building. Of course reading books will be there too as well as books for kids. If you have some books to leave behind in the library, we would appreciate it.



## 7. STAYING LONGER AS A HOME-STAY VISITOR

If you enjoy your stay as a Visitor-Volunteer and want to stay longer you may stay at our Natural Building & Living Home as a visitor.

Fee 500 Baht/day/person including 3 meals per day.

## 8. HOW TO GET HERE

**DinDang** is located in PakSong, a small farming village in the South of Thailand. You will have to travel to Ranong first. In Ranong at the main bus station you take a morning bus (10.00 o'clock) direction Hat Yai. Get out at the **Paksong** intersection (about 1 hour). **This is your pick up point.**

This bus trip will cost around 50Baht, a bus attendant will collect the money once you are on the bus.

**Meeting day:** Wednesday

**Meeting time:** 11.00 o'clock

**Meeting point:** The **PakSong intersection** (bus stop) on the main road Ratchagrod-LangSuan.

### Note:

*Make sure you have everything organized and have sufficient cash money on you when you are at the meeting point. There is no time to go to a bank, once we meet you and transport you to Paksong village. Please, organize this before we meet. ATM machines can be found in Ranong.*

**In SURAT THANI already:** if you are coming from SuratThani you can take an early mini-van in direction of Ranong.

Tell the driver you are getting out in PakSong (45km before Ranong city). The trip takes about 2hours. Mini-vans leave hourly

The trip will cost 200+ Baht. Please advise us if you are coming by mini-van.

To pin point the DinDang HOME here are our coordinates

Latitude:9.75719

Longitude:98.70489

## Travel information to Ranong

### By bus

From	Depart from	Travel time
<b>BANGKOK</b>	Southern Bus Terminal at Nakhorn Chaisri Road. Busses go on regular base. (Many evening Buses (8:30 pm ish) arriving in Ranong early morning (6am ish) leaving you time for a breakfast snack before your 10am bus (Hat Yai) to PakSong. Bangkok-Ranong bus fares are around 500Baht	<b>8-9 hours</b>
<b>Phuket</b>	Phuket bus terminal Busses go on regular base (7 per day). Fare around 260 Baht.	<b>5-6 hours</b>

### By plane

Ranong has an airport. In the high season flights can be planned to go to Ranong. Please check the Ranong airport websites for available companies that will fly and the time schedule.

### By train

There are no trains going to Ranong.

## We are looking forward to meet you!

### Bow and Martha

***DinDang Natural Building&Living HOME***

**Rewat Thongbunchu (nickname Bow)**

(Founder and coordinator of DinDang)

Contact number (+66) 0 872872745

