

It seemed like a good idea at the time



It seemed like a fun idea at the time, but looking back at the photo, you just gotta wonder... I don't think places like Tiger Kingdom (in Thailand) could get insurance in the US. There are probably really good reasons you don't get to do things like this back home. Perhaps best put by a Calvin & Hobbes strip, in which Calvin asks Hobbes "I wonder why man was put on earth. What's our purpose? Why are we here?" To which Hobbes, his pet tiger, responds "Tiger Food."

An interesting day, filled with questionable choices. Not visiting the Tigers; sure, one can easily make arguments about both safety (for people) and conditions (for Tigers), and wonder if maybe they really have been drugged to make them more docile. But that's much less ethically-challenging than visiting the Karen Hill Tribe, where some (not all) of the women wear those rings around their necks, pushing down on their collarbones and weakening their neck muscles in a way that permanently damages them, and one wonders if having a "village" to visit encourages the practice to continue. Or the monkeys trained to play basketball, ride bikes, walk on their hind legs and various other things that monkeys wouldn't be doing out in the wild (and given the way they're all chained, even when doing their shows, makes it easy to believe these monkeys would much rather be someplace else). But the snake place? Aside from the fact that most don't see snakes as being very high on the list of sentient being potential, the conditions of the snake camp were such that I think a snake really inclined to escape wouldn't have much trouble doing so.

This was our first, and likely our only, Disneyland Thai-style sort of day here. Tourist-trap stuff, every minute of it, even the night safari park (the only thing we saw today that remotely resembled modern standards for taking care of animals and people both). Tomorrow it will be a visit to the temple on the hill above Chiang Mai, and an evening visit to the Night Bazaar, apparently one of the best places to shop for local-manufactured product in Thailand. Then Saturday we head back to Bangkok (via plane) for a couple final days in Thailand, leaving Monday evening to come home. Right now I feel like I'm ready, but that's only because I don't know lies ahead. Some interesting and perhaps thought-provoking things, I'm sure.

And yes, I'm dying to get back on my bike!!!