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Brushing up fitness on a bike tour

Menu offers training rides for triathlons southbound and cyclo-tours in the North.

Phuket-based Siam Bike Tours is offering three new signature programmes to Phuket, Chiang Mai, Mae Hong Son right through 2009.

Trips focus on routes in northern and southern Thailand. Southern



routes from Bangkok to Phuket take cyclists through rural scenes dotted with temples, palaces, rivers, limestone mountains, villages and coastal resorts. Prices start at Bt39,500, available all year round except in September.

The northern Chiang Mai-Mae Hong Son-Chiang Mai programme is scheduled for 9 to 18 November 2009, starting at Bt47,500 for a 10-day trip excluding airfare. The programme includes a tough climb of Doi Inthanon, Thailand's highest mountain at 2,595 metres.

There are easier routes such as a Chiang Mai to Bangkok that follows roads close to the Ping and Chao Phraya rivers south to the central region to end the ride in Bangkok. Cyclists visit historical towns along the way such as Sukhothai, Kamphaeng Phet and Ayutthaya, a UNESCO's world heritage site. The programme will

run from 20 to 30 November 2009 starting at Bt52,500.

Siam Bike Tours mainly operates programmes from Bangkok to southern Thai provinces such as Phuket and Samui Island. It also offers cycle routes, with full support, from Phuket to Ranong and Khao Sok National Park. Most of the long-distance rides suit road cyclists who are training for amateur races or triathlons, and require routes over varied terrain to build endurance.

Company owner, Martin Brot, says the northern routes are designed for cyclo-tourists, where they gain a different perspective than the southern rides offer. The main targets are Europeans and Australian riders for the cyclo-tours.

The three packages include accommodation with breakfasts, full service and bike maintenance, English speaking guide and insurance. Tours require a minimum of four cyclists to go and a maximum of 16.

Most cyclists bring their own cycles, but the company does provide cycles at an additional rent starting at Bt3,000 a week. Participants bring their own helmets cycle clothes and specialised shoes with cleats to fit rode bike pedals. www.siambiketours.com

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