

White Temple and Black House of Chiang Rai

I've recently written an article about 'Baandam' the Black House which was designed by Thai National Artist Thawan Duchanee. The Black House is located 10km north of Chiang Rai. In point of fact, in Chiang Rai there is also a White Temple (Wat Rong Khun) created by the Thai architect Chalermchai Kositpipat. Thus, White Temple and Black House form a strange juxtaposition to each other since they are both located near Chiang Rai.

The White Temple and Black House in Contrast



White Temple and Black House in Chiang Rai

(photo credit: southeastasiabackpacker.com)

The Black House can be described as dark, macabre and mysterious whereas the White Temple seems to be ethereal, pure and even other-worldly. Thus, the White Temple and the Black House are indeed opposing buildings. In addition, another peculiar coincidence is that the White Temple was built by Chalermchai Kositpipat who was the student of Thawan Duchanee who built the Black House.

In order to demonstrate the juxtaposition of these two places to you, I'd like to show you the following videos:

Here you see a video of the art installation of 'Baandam', the Black House in Chiang Rai. I think it captures the macabre glory of the Black House very impressively.

The following video captures the spirit of the White Temple, it shows how visitors pass over sculptures representing the desire to reach the main building of the temple in order to pay their respects to the Buddha image. Adorned with sparkling mosaics, the structures gleam in the sunlight. There are also other areas which allow visitors to make merit and write their wishes and hopes on medallions to hang around the White Temple.

Which one of the two places do you find more appealing? The White Temple or the Black House?

I find both, the **white temple and black house**, are very impressive and fine examples of Thai architecture. What is more, they also reflect aspects of Buddhist art in different ways and that is what makes them so special in my opinion.

Yours, Sirinya