

Summer Course in Thailand

Agroecology and Entrepreneurship: Coffee, Chocolate, and Cannabis

A hands-on summer course in Thailand's coffee, cacao, and cannabis industries

Four weeks in Chiang Mai studying three cash crops reshaping Northern Thai agriculture — coffee, cacao, and medicinal cannabis — from farm to business, culminating in an Independent Field Research Project.

MODULE 1

Coffee

Week 1

An overnight stay with a coffee-farming family in the Tepsadet/Doi Saket area grounds a hands-on study of coffee agroecology, harvest, and processing, followed by roasting, cupping, and the business side of specialty coffee.

- Overnight homestay at an upland coffee farm
- Roasting, brewing & cupping workshop
- Guest speakers: local roasters and café owners

MODULE 2

Chocolate / Cacao

Week 2

A cacao farm visit and hands-on chocolate-making workshop — including a case study of Siamaya Chocolate — ground a study of cacao agriculture and the business of small-batch, artisanal chocolate production.

- Cacao farm field visit
- Hands-on chocolate-making, bean to bar
- Case study: Siamaya Chocolate, an artisanal producer

MODULE 3

Medicinal Cannabis

Week 3

Visits to Thailand's largest legal medicinal cannabis production facility, a private farm, dispensaries, and a traditional medicine clinic focus the study of cannabis cultivation, traditional use, and the business and legal landscape of Thailand's emerging cannabis industry.

- Field visit to a leading cannabis research & production program
- Visits to a private farm, dispensary & medicine clinic
- Guest speakers: cannabis entrepreneurs and researchers

MODULE 4

Independent Field Research Project

Week 4

Dedicated time to go deeper on an individual research topic, allowing students to do a deep dive into one crop or a comparative look across all three. Time for follow-up field visits, interviews, and observation, culminating in a final presentation.

- Independent, self-directed field research
- Follow-up farm, café & dispensary visits
- Final presentation to the full group

WHAT MAKES THIS SUMMER COURSE UNIQUE

Three crops, one lens

Coffee, cacao, and cannabis are studied side by side as one connected cash-crop economy.

Independent research

Every module builds toward an Independent Field Research Project, carried out in the final week of Module 4.

Learn from producers directly

Farmers, roasters, chocolatiers, and cannabis entrepreneurs teach in every module.

Chiang Mai as a living lab

Field visits to farms, cafés, and a leading university cannabis program ground each topic in a real, working industry. Hands-on and experiential.

4 credits · 4 weeks · Early Decision: January 31 · Deadline: April 1

Questions? Email us at admissions@isdsi.org

Apply now: isdsi.org/summer/agroecology

