

## **Ann Amann - A Nomad with home base Chiang Mai**

Having been a nomad of sorts all my life, my husband and I have chosen Chiang Mai as our home.

We settled in Chiang Mai, and whenever we return from our travels somewhere in this world we are eager and excited about our upcoming time here. Chiang Mai is a lovely city: oozing charm with the richness of hundreds of temples, the beautiful tension of old and new - we love all this, coupled with the ease of being part of the Thai culture and the relaxed, kind and welcoming ways of Thai people.



Many years ago, I made a wish, a promise if you like, that life would be perfect if I could live during some summer months in Switzerland and the majority of the year in Thailand. My husband had heard me saying this ever since we met and since he always felt at home when visiting Thailand, and especially in Chiang Mai, we decided to just do it.

There is something magical about Chiang Mai. e. Whereas I always felt that other places in the world were fraught with overburdening, immense practicalities of running one's life, things just seem to fall into place here in Chiang Mai.

Chiang Mai holds this magic: I don't know if it is a state of mind? Perhaps. I suppose I don't need to know as some things are better left to their own flow. It is like seeing everything through a mirror and t's actually the opposite of what you think you see. Everything seems to happen with such ease.

I remember way back when I came to Thailand for the first time, a friend said to me that I should live here; that life was easy here. I laughed and told her that I had to work and live in Switzerland. She responded that while working it's easy to forget what you're working for; easy to forget what the point of it is; to forget why you're working in the first place. I realised that I would rather own little and see the world than to own the world and see little. The only things that will stay with you are feelings, memories, experiences - and good times. No amount of money or material things will protect or shelter you, my friend said.

I always wondered and pondered and thought about what she said, and now, many years later, I go out in Chiang Mai and something amazing happens and it all falls into place as though nature had planned it that way.

Our days here are quite busy and packed with activities and that's the way we like it. We are always in a kind of explorer mode, which I hope we will never lose ;-). A lot of new things come along our way and we are surrounded by and share our lives with wonderful people, who have become our friends.

We are also supporting the work of our close friends Dominique Leutwiler (<http://skills4life-asia.org/>) and Sallo Polak ([www.philanthropyconnections.org](http://www.philanthropyconnections.org)), who established non-profit organisations dedicated to help people in vulnerable situations here in Chiang Mai.

What would I say to someone who is looking for a place to take a timeout or have a sabbatical? Come to Chiang Mai. Just arrive, unwind and enjoy.