

{gallery}content/whatwedo/golden/royalvilla{/gallery}

Doi Tung Royal Villa, Chiang Rai province, was the former residence of HRH Princess Srinagarindra, the Princess Mother. This was also the base for her work with the Doi Tung Development Project, which she founded to reforest the land and helped to improve the lives of the local ethnic minorities who had previously relied on slash and burn farming, opium poppy cultivation and the drugs trade.

The land has been leased from the Royal Forest Department, since the Princess Mother had refused an offer of ownership on the grounds that she was not more privileged than any Thai who had no right to own land in a forest preserve.

Built in 1988, Doi Tung Royal Villa combines the styles of a Swiss chalet and northern Lanna architecture. The exterior of the Royal Villa decorated with wood slabs cut from discarded teak trees. The interior of the Royal Villa is paneled with recycled pine wood, which came from crates used for imported tools and equipment. The gold teakwood that lines the floor was presented to the Princess Mother by the Forest Industry Organization. The simple interior design exudes elegance and functionality, which reflects the nature of the owner of the residence.

The upper floor of the building accommodates four sections. These include the late Princess Mother's private area, a reception hall and kitchen, and the private quarters for the Princess Mother's daughter, HRH the late Princess Galyani Vadhana and Thanpuying Tasanavalaya Sornsonggram, Princess Galyani Vadhana's only daughter.

The highlight of the Royal Villa is on the ceiling of the main hall. It has hand-crafted wood inlay of the Princess Mother's favourite constellations. Designed by the Astronomy Society of Thailand, installed light bulbs representing the stars in the centre of the ceiling showed the position of the constellations on October 21, 1900, the day the Princess Mother was born.

The Princess Mother first took up residence at the Doi Tung Royal Villa on November 23, 1988.