

44th Edition

TENDERFOOT



NUS ROVERS ADVENTURE CLUB

AY2023/2024



About NUS Rovers

NUS Rovers Adventure Club is a society that aims to share our love for outdoor adventures with others. Our long-term vision is to encourage a greater appreciation of the outdoors, through trekking and exploration.

We organise budget, beginner friendly local and overseas trekking trips that are open to all NUS students.

Tenderfoot, our annual magazine, outlines all the treks the planning committee has organised throughout their term during the academic year.

In the spirit of Friendship and Adventure!



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Foreword

“

“Joie de vivre”. French for the Joy of Living. The exuberant enjoyment of life. This phrase left a lasting impression on me when Wei Feng, the Vice-President of the 44th Committee, mentioned it to me as we were trundling along the dusty Laotian mountain roads from Nong Khiaw to Luang Prabang in a 12-seater van. Recalling that moment as I pen down these words, I begun to ponder, “How does one find joie de vivre?” and I couldn't help but recall the journey we have been on thus far.

The 15 of us could not be any different. Spanning all 4 undergraduate years and almost all faculties in NUS. Not to mention the myriad of life experiences and family backgrounds. But yet we hit it off straight away. It felt like yesterday when we were screaming "AYYYYY WANNNA SWING FROM THE CHANDELIEHEEE" in the massive 2 storey Airbnb in Johor Bahru, during our 44th committee bonding hike. Our fondness for ear-drum rupturing karaoke could almost rival our insatiable love for the outdoors.

Picking up from the legacy left by the 43rd Committee, we were excited to go further, climb higher and explore deeper than those that came before us. Our passion for adventure, coupled with the kind guidance from the 43rd Committee, brought us to places we could only dream of going before joining NUS Rovers. Our first 5 proposals, created within 2 months of assuming our new roles, brought us to the lush jungles of Laos, Philippines and Vietnam as well as the vibrant and unending mountains of Taiwan. Despite the fatigue from all the late night proposal calls, the experiences on these trips gave us newfound motivation to do our utmost for the next round of overseas treks. They brought us and our members to Nepal and India, standing amongst the enormous snowy capped peaks of the Himalayas. In all, we managed to execute a total of 11 treks, 9 of which brought us beyond our borders.

As much as we loved experiencing the ethereal views that we were blessed with at these destinations, it was the conversations and unique experiences with our trek participants in a foreign country that bonded an unlikely group of NUS students together. I will dearly remember the heartfelt sharing in the Laotian Hotel, as well as squeezing with one another in a Tuk-Tuk just because we were too lazy to walk 10 minutes back to the hotel. These fond memories will remain forever etched in my mind as I am sure the rest of the committee will as well. So thank you, members and participants, for blessing us all with unforgettable memories and trusting us to bring you on these adventures.

Foreword

“

Yet, as fun as these adventures were, it was the people that were on this arduous journey together with me, that made all the difference.

At the start of the 44th term I remember asking Ni Yuan, President of the 43rd Committee, “Why did you say that the next 1 year is going to be the best year of our university lives?”.

I now know why.

The countless post-trek tea sharing sessions, death-metal-screaming-esque karaoke sessions, last minute proposal / publicity materials rushing, random Wei Feng shenanigans and many other moments. Despite how much we love traveling, somehow we have managed to find a home, a home in each other. 44th, each and everyone of you have been a blessing to my life. You all have shown me what friendship really means. To look past each other's flaws and see the good. To listen and empathise with each other's life's joys and sorrows. To treasure the memories forged by our shared experiences. Thank you 44th, for making the past year the best year of my university life.

Back to that bumpy van ride in Laos. Looks like part of the answer to that question of, “How does one find joie de vivre?” was staring at me all along. In the Spirit of Friendship and Adventure. The NUS Rovers Motto means so much more now. Dear 45th, it is this exact motto that represents what it means to be part of NUS Rovers. I hope that in due time, these words will hold as much weight for you all as it did for us and all that came before. May you all and your future participants, experience a snippet of what that means. 44th Committee, signing off.

Truly,
In the Spirit of Friendship and Adventure,
Amos | 44th Committee | President



44TH COMMITTEE

EXECUTIVE CELL

Amos

President



At the end of 2022, I decided to try something new and joined NUS Rovers on one of their overseas treks (Triple PHeaks by the 43rd committee). It was nothing like I've ever experienced and the seed was sown. This passion for the adventure then grew into the conviction to join the 44th Rovers committee, and how glad I am that I made that decision. Seeing this common passion for adventure work its magic; forging unbreakable bonds, creating beautiful memories, changing lives, has been nothing short of an experience that I will cherish for a lifetime. Through the countless late night meetings, proposal submissions and countless mountain peaks, the 15 of us have somehow managed to conquer all that and emerge as a family that I am so grateful to be a part of. As our journey together in NUS Rovers comes to a close, our journey together as friends has only just begun and I can't wait to see what other adventures await us :)

Wei Feng

Vice-President

If I've learnt anything from Rovers, it is that the silliest of ideas sometimes deserve the most enduring level of commitment. I came into the 44th not knowing what to expect - I'd joined because I liked hiking and wanted to meet people who shared my interests, but also because I wanted to stretch myself. I never thought that I would go to Laos, or that I could hike all the way up to 5000m above sea level, or that our comm of 15 could do so much to bring a sense of adventure and camaraderie to strangers turned friends - and I can't help but feel a sense of pride for the 11 hikes that we've brought to NUS. Our time as a comm may be coming to a close soon, but I'm excited to see what other trips and expeditions await us.



Li Kai

Special Advisor

After my term in 43rd, I made the choice to stay as part of this new committee and I have never been more glad to make this choice. Another year meant new friends, new experiences and new memories. As part of 44th, we have pushed the limits of our treks, going further than we have ever been in recent years. Everyone in the 44th committee is unique and from day 1, it has been an incredible journey with them. From the cohesions, treks and random meals together, the committee has grown closer and turned into a family. The friendships built with the 44th committee holds a special place in my heart and I will forever treasure the time spent here. As we step down, I hope 44th can continue to make new memories together and the next committee will bring Rovers to even greater heights.



44TH COMMITTEE

PROGRAMMES CELL



Wilfred

Programmes Director

A seemingly insignificant decision made at a whim of the moment led to one of the most exciting years of my life. Motivated by a sense of community and a passion for the outdoors, I joined the committee for NUS Rovers. Without fully comprehending what I was signing up for, I was barely prepared for the adventures that awaited me, yet I wholeheartedly embraced them. If you had asked me what my final year would look like, I would have never guessed that I would be trekking in such beautiful locations: The Philippines, Nepal, and India. These countries now hold a special place in my heart not just for their extraordinary landscapes, but for the cherished memories and timeless friendships that have been forged. Shared laughter in homestays, teahouses, and tents, along with the consistent humorous banter on treks are some of the fondest memories that will linger in my mind as a backdrop to the many beautiful sceneries that I have encountered. I have zero regrets about making that decision of joining this committee. Together as the 44th, I am proud of what we have managed to accomplish. Going further and exploring new locations, I know that these adventures that we have planned have brought joy and fulfillment not just among ourselves, but to the many participants that have joined us along the way. I am immensely grateful for those that I have met on this incredible journey and could not have wished for better company. Even though our time as a committee approaches its inevitable end, I know that our time together as friends has only just begun. To new adventures together!

Sorfina

Programmes Director

While searching for a new CCA last year, I discovered NUS Rovers and immediately knew I had to apply! With borders reopening after COVID, I wanted to hike more and explore new places. Joining the club has allowed me to achieve much more than my initial goals. I've met like-minded people who share my passion for adventure and nature. NUS Rovers has become more than just a club; it's a community where I can grow, challenge myself, and make lifelong friends. To new adventures together!



44TH COMMITTEE

PROGRAMMES CELL



Kevin

Programmes Director

Before I entered university, I was on the lookout for a CCA which allowed me the opportunity to explore my newfound interest in hiking, and I stumbled upon Rovers' Instagram page. The look of happiness of the participants inspired me to sign up for the 44th Rovers Committee, and this decision made a lovely and memorable chapter of my life. Signing up was a leap of faith which I'm glad to have taken, as I grew and learnt a lot in the past year. Meeting unique individuals and forging lifelong friendships through our conversations during the hike makes me excited to look forward to every Rovers trip, and I am glad to have spent my Year 1 with such a passionate group of people :)

Yuh Yang

Programmes Director

Trees are green, roses are red, and the sky is blue. What a wonderful world. Where else other than Rovers to experience our beautiful mother earth with other nature and adventure seekers.

From the serene Southeast Asian and Taiwanese plains and mountains, to the treacherous and majestic peaks in Nepal and India, we have seen so much of our magnificent planet. Each trip, we see wide joyous smiles and the feeling of accomplishment as we scale the peaks, and also leave with heavy hearts as the fun and euphoria ends when we land back in Singapore. However, our passion for hiking and hunger for more adventures rages on, and I believe that all 15 of us will carry on our quest for more hikes for years to come. We take pride in the experience that we had over the last year and leave with no regrets.



44TH COMMITTEE

PUBLICITY CELL



Nigel

Publicity Director

In my third year at NUS, I was looking for something exciting to do and stumbled upon NUS Rovers. As someone who loves photography and exploring new places, this CCA seemed like the perfect excuse to travel. While hiking isn't my favourite activity, I enjoy capturing photos of people and scenic locations. Joining NUS Rovers has pushed me out of my comfort zone, allowing me to visit countries I've never been to and hike peaks I never thought I'd conquer. The past year with this amazing group has been truly unforgettable. From the camaraderie we built on our trips to the breathtaking places we explored, every moment has been a cherished memory. The experiences and friendships I've gained have been incredibly rewarding, and I have no regrets :")

Aswin

Publicity Director

Before I joined NUS, I trekked for the first time in the Himalayas in April, right after I finished my national service. There was something so magical about that moment that I could not explain and probably still cannot now in mere words, to the point it made me want to keep traveling to trek overseas again. When I joined NUS, I found the right group of people to do this with under Rovers. Not only was I able to further my passions in trekking, but I was also able to understand what it feels like to curate such an experience, be it in terms of rolling out materials on Instagram pages for pubs, planning out schedules and itineraries for the trips, and even executing them and managing logistics during the journey itself as well. Beyond all this, I have made multiple valuable friendships that I will carry with me forever via working with these amazing lovely individuals, meeting them for meals, studying together.. All in all, I love how I've grown and the numerous priceless things I've gained while in the NUS Rovers Committee :)



44TH COMMITTEE

PUBLICITY CELL



Royston

Publicity Director

I have always been passionate about hiking but never had the opportunity to travel overseas to hike. Before entering NUS, I was eager to find a community that shared the same love for outdoors. That is when I found out about Rovers through my seniors which piqued my interest in the CCA. After hearing about all those memorable experiences by the past committee members, I was committed to join the 44th Committee. I am glad that I made that choice as I got to meet people that shared the same interests as me, forging lifelong friendships that I will truly value in the future. Being part of the 44th Committee has truly helped me grow as an individual. I am glad that my first year in NUS was spent being in a closely bonded committee and I hope that we can continue to forge memories together.

Zi Ting

Publicity Director

I've always had a passion for hiking, but until recently, my experiences were limited to local trails. Joining NUS Rovers opened up a whole new world for me, giving me the opportunity to embark on overseas treks. This not only allowed me to explore breathtaking landscapes but also connect with fellow hiking enthusiasts who share the same adventurous spirit. Through these journeys, I've made incredible new friends, tackled new highs, and explored uncharted territories, making each trek an unforgettable adventure!



44TH COMMITTEE

INTERNAL CELL



Kah Eng

Secretary

After joining one of Rover's treks as a participant in Year 1, I realised how much I truly enjoyed hiking and exploring new places. Wanting to do something meaningful and memorable in my 2nd year of university, I decided to join the 44th Rovers committee. It was a big step for me, as I didn't have any prior leadership experience. However, I have no regrets at all—I'm really glad I did! I traversed peaks and visited countries I never thought I would, discovered an adventurous side of myself I never knew existed, and formed new, interesting, and lifelong friendships which I'll forever cherish and be grateful for <3 looking forward to more memories together~

Sze Yee

Secretary

One of the best decisions of my freshman year was scanning Rovers' QR code at Student Life Fair 2023. I had no experience with outdoor activities and hiking overseas, but I wanted to try new things and meet new friends. Hence, Rovers stood out to me among all the CCAs. However, I didn't want to just stop there. I wanted to develop myself as a person and gain new skills, hence I went a step further and joined the 44th Committee.

My Rovers journey is not defined by our treks, but all the moments the 15 of us have shared throughout the entire year. From the MSL to UTown seminar rooms, to Taiwan and Thailand, and to our dusty locker in the MPSH, I appreciate every interaction we've had.



44TH COMMITTEE

INTERNAL CELL



Sherie

Logistics Director

Being an introverted nature lover, finding and being part of NUS Rovers tight-knitted community was a huge blessing to someone that found it hard to step out of my comfort zone. Despite being someone that finds it hard to open up easily, I found myself having fun while disconnecting from the hustle of cities and connecting on an individual level when on hikes (especially when there is no signal hehe). I was privileged enough to join the Vietnam trek (Enjoy Hanoi) with the 43rd exco as a participant, which sparked my love for multi-day hikes and a passion to fuel this love for other like-minded individuals as well. This led to my decision to join the 44th, and while there may be ups and downs like in any student-led organisation, I am thankful to have a committee that powers through it all with grit and resilience, allowing us to grow alongside one another and witness each other's progress. While our time in the committee has come to an end, I know that more adventures await us.

Dylan

Finance Director

Before embarking on my university journey, I was on the hunt for a club that would cater to my newfound passion for hiking. That's when I stumbled upon the Rovers' Instagram page. The genuine happiness radiating from the participants inspired me to join the 44th Rovers Committee, a decision that marked a delightful and unforgettable chapter in my life. Taking that leap of faith proved to be immensely rewarding as I underwent significant personal growth over the past year. Engaging in conversations and forming lasting friendships during our hikes made each Rovers trip something to eagerly anticipate. I am thankful to have spent my first year alongside such a dedicated and inspiring group of people!!!



44th Committee Bonding Trek



44th Committee Bonding Trek Gunnung Pulai, Kulai, Johor

On the 27th of September 2023, the 44th committee began the first of many adventures together.



Our planning (with the many helpful inputs and comments by the 43rd) had been done; nights of looking up residences, planning transportation, and looking at pictures of mountains was finally over. We were off to Mount Pulai!



Unfortunately, as the 44th lived quite literally all over the island, it was difficult to have everyone meet at a central location - in the end, we would be travelling in 2 cars across the checkpoint to our destination. By the time we gathered, the sun was already up. Luckily for us, we breezed through customs to reach Mount Pulai early, even as we made a brief stop at a gas station in the middle to stock up on breakfast, lunch, and snacks to last us through the hike.

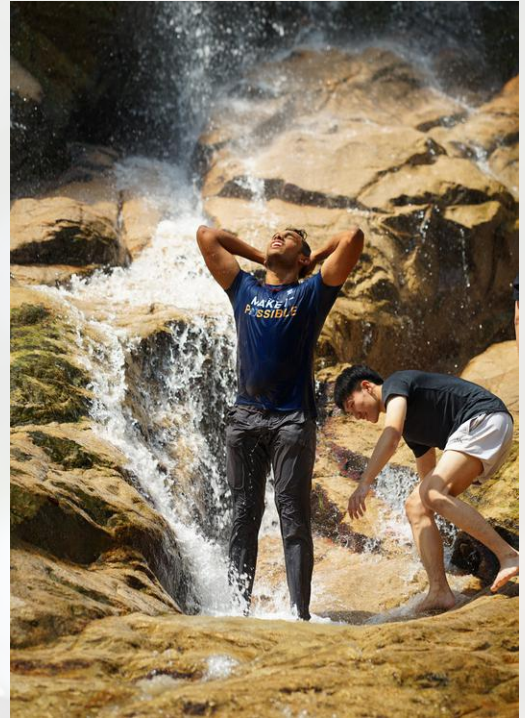
At the start, we were worried that we would not be able to complete the trail fast enough and would end up missing out on some of the sights that Mount Pulai had to offer. The start of the trail didn't do us any favours either. A combination of mud and large steps made for a rough start, with progress slow and spirits not too high.

Bonding Trek

Why were we only an eighth of the way up after 30 minutes!? Rather quickly, though, the ground became level and far more accommodating, and save for some undulations, the climb became an enjoyable walk. We made it up to the summit just after noon, and lunch was accompanied with some picturesque views of the surrounding hills, mountains, and greenery. A pop by a hidden waterfall, soaking in cooling waters, and careful descent down to the main road rounded off our time on Mt Pulai.

A quick but tired check in into our gorgeous accommodations swiftly followed, and then dinner, and finally a long night of talking and laughing with one another ended off the first of our hectic but fulfilling days as a committee together.

As called for by the rich 1-year tradition inherited from the 43rd, the next day began with a late, lazy morning. Comfortable beds and beautiful views made for a slow breakfast and slow checkout. By the time we left, we would be heading out for lunch. Once we'd reached the mall, we homed in onto a place to eat quickly - Hai. Di. Lao.



Bonding Trek

What a lunch, and what a bargain.

The pace of our activities after lunch was just as relaxed as that of before, as we slowly explored the mall, looked at various spots of interest, and hunted for hidden gems and bargains - and before we knew it, our time in Malaysia was almost up. We ate our last meal of the trip together, before heading back to the familiar sight of Singapore - and of exams just around the corner. Oh well.

Our upcoming exams would not keep us down! The trip has ended, but our journey together is just beginning.

**In the Spirit of Friendship and Adventure,
Wei Feng
44th Vice-President**

10th October 2023



Ubin Ventures

RECESS WEEK EDITION



Ubin Ventures Pulau Ubin, Singapore

On November 20th, 2023, we set off on an adventure to Pulau Ubin, an island whose name means "Granite Island" in Malay. This trek was a perfect break from finals prep, offering a chance to relax, connect with nature, and make new friends from various backgrounds and faculties.

Pulau Ubin, a picturesque island just a short bumboat ride from mainland Singapore, promised us diverse scenic spots, from hilltops with stunning views to towertops with breathtaking panoramas. Our journey began with a refreshing 10-15 minute bumboat ride that cost just \$4. The ride was exhilarating, with the sea breeze adding to our excitement as we approached the island. Upon arrival, we couldn't resist taking group photos by the signboard.

The trek's first highlight was the Pekkan Quarry, offering a serene ocean view. A few kilometers in, we reached Puaka Hill, which rewarded us with a spectacular view of Singapore, Malaysia, and Pulau Ubin.

Legend has it that a frog, a pig, and an elephant once raced from Singapore to Johor, failing and turning into stone, forming Pulau Ubin and Pulau Sekudu, the Frog Island, near Chek Jawa, our next destination.





Chek Jawa Wetlands, on Pulau Ubin's western side, offered incredible rewards despite the long walk. We explored a boardwalk trail along the shore and visited House No. 1, a 1930s bungalow built for British Chief Surveyor Landon Williams. We also climbed an impressive tower for another awe-inspiring view.

Encouraging each other through occasional challenges, we bonded and the trek flew by. Afterward, we enjoyed a delicious lunch at Changi Hawker Centre, with some of us planning future meet-ups.

I would rate this trek a 5/10 in terms of difficulty, but a solid 10/10 for the fulfillment it brought.



Aswin
44th Pubs Director
20 Nov 2023



WanderLaos

WINTER SERIES



WanderLaos Nong Khiaw, Luang Prabang, Laos

Kicking off our Summer Series is our adventure in Laos, a landlocked country nestled in the heart of Southeast Asia, boasting a stunning tapestry of natural beauty and cultural richness.



In the late morning of 10th December, we touched down in Vientiane, Laos, and took the Lao-China Railway (LCR) towards Luang Prabang, an ancient town heralded as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, reflecting a fusion of rich architectural and artistic heritage. We were awestruck by how grand and modern the railway station was, something we were not expecting to see in a developing country.



After checking in to our accommodation, we headed to a popular eatery T56 Cafe & Bar for a late lunch where most of us savoured the local delicacies, while some ate western. After fueling up, we strolled along the streets, climbed up Phousi Hill, the highest point in Luang Prabang Town offering a 360 degree panoramic view of the whole town. We admired the golden hue of the sunset in the distant landscape, before hiking down to visit the famous Luang Prabang Night Market which features a sprawling selection of food, gifts, and handcrafted souvenirs. We then had dinner and drinks at the bustling night market, and had our first deep conversations to get to know each other better!

The next morning, we endured a long road trip towards the northern Laotian town of Nong Khiaw. The winding roads were bumpy, and gave us a glimpse of life in the countryside with expansive paddy fields and cattle. In the heat of the afternoon sun, we ascended both Phasomnang Viewpoint and Pha Deng Peak to admire the panoramic spectacle of the lush, undulating hills and the Nam Ou River below us. What a workout it was, with the endless flights of steps up! We stopped by Nong Khiaw Bridge to take in the quaint town of Nong Khiaw one last time, before heading back to Luang Prabang for dinner and bonding talks late into the night.



The next day, we visited Kuang Si Waterfalls, a natural wonder situated in the lush jungles near Luang Prabang that captivates the senses with its ethereal beauty. As we approached the falls, the gentle sound of cascading water became a melodic overture, inviting us into a paradisiacal realm of turquoise pools and verdant surroundings. We indulged in a refreshing dip in the chilly waters and engaged in water activities like frisbee, which we lost into the waterfalls after a couple of throws - oops! After numerous pictures of the mesmerising waterfalls, we had lunch at Carpe Diem, a restaurant situated in the waterfalls, and we dined with the backdrop of the multi-tiered waterfall pools behind us. We visited the Bear Park and Hmong Village, immersing ourselves in the local cultural experience. We spent our last night in Luang Prabang exploring the streets and had a relaxing Lao massage to rest our tired bodies.

Wanderlaos | Winter Series

The next morning, we had breakfast at our accommodation, before taking the LCR to the small tourist town of Vang Vieng, where many tourists engage in activities like kayaking, ATV riding and hot air balloon rides. We arrived in the afternoon and checked into our hotel. We explored the city, stopping by a cafe for lunch, and had dinner in a bar along the streets filled with nightlife.



The next morning, we rode a tuktuk for a half-day tour exploring Nam Xay Viewpoint and Blue Lagoon 1. We ascended the mountain and were greeted with a majestic view of the valley and the paddy fields below us. We took pictures with the iconic motorbikes perched on the rocks which overlooked the view below. After which, we visited Blue Lagoon 1, a lagoon fed by natural springs and earned its name by its vibrant blue water colours. We had a relaxing dip in the refreshing waters and had fun diving into it from a 5 meter jumpboard. We headed back to Vang Vieng for lunch, before taking a minivan ride to Vientiane for our final destination of the trip. As it was our last night together, we had Asian Fusion food in a cosy restaurant tucked away in the corners of Vientiane City, before exploring the night market nearby, and ending off the day with a birthday celebration for our participant and talking late into the night.



The next morning, we explored the malls of Vientiane to purchase souvenirs for our family, before taking a return flight back to Singapore.



Our trip was ending, but our journey together was only starting. We forged friendships that would last a lifetime. The Laos trip is over but the world is awaiting us for more exciting adventures. Till then, we hope to keep on roving!

WanderLaos Committee Members:
Kevin, Wei Feng, Kah Eng, Amos
9-15 Dec 2023

TriumPH at the Peaks

WINTER SERIES



TriumphPH at the Peaks Mt Pulag & Pinatubo, Manila, Philippines

In the second trek of our Winter Series for AY2023/24, NUS Rovers embarked on a thrilling expedition, conquering two magnificent peaks in the Philippines from December 14th to 19th, 2023.



Day 1: Manila Marvels

Our adventure kicked off with an early touchdown in Manila, a city that immediately captivated our hearts with its vibrant energy. Eager to satisfy our hunger, we stumbled upon Kanto Freestyle Breakfast, a 24-hour gem near our hotel, offering our first taste of Pinoy cuisine for some of us. After fueling up, we wandered around our hotel vicinity, indulging in some cafe hopping until the malls opened. Returning for check-in and a much-needed nap after our overnight flight, we rejuvenated ourselves for the escapades to come. As night fell, we shared laughter and stories over plates of the iconic pork sisig at a local eatery, savoring each mouthful as if it were our last. Our unholy sisig addiction probably spiked our cholesterol levels, but every bite was worth it. The flavors sparked our excitement for the adventures yet to unfold, filling us with anticipation for the days ahead.



Triumph at the Peaks | Winter Series

Day 2: Journey to Baguio

We rose at 2:30 AM, checked out, and boarded a minibus bound for Mount Pulag. Leaving Manila behind, we embarked on a picturesque 4-hour journey to the refreshing mountain city of Baguio. The journey was filled with anticipation, each turn revealing more of the lush landscape. The crisp mountain air greeted us as we stopped for a hearty breakfast at the local gem, Solibao. After a short 2-hour drive, we arrived at our cozy homestay nestled at the foot of Mount Pulag, sharing stories and laughter over a humble yet satisfying meal of cup noodles and siew mai, before attempting to rest before our guide woke us up at 12 AM to start our hike.





Day 3: Conquering Mt. Pulag

In the pre-dawn hours, we answered the call of adventure as we set out to conquer the majestic summit of Mt. Pulag. Guided only by the faint glow of our headlamps, we navigated the treacherous terrain with determination and grit. Encouraging each other every step of the way, we laughed and pushed forward, often repeating our favorite inside joke about the summit being "just 15 minutes away," even when it wasn't. As the first light of dawn broke, we stood in awe atop the summit, basking in the breathtaking beauty of the sunrise painting the sky in hues of orange and gold. It was a moment of pure triumph, a testament to our determination and grit. With hearts full of joy and eyes full of awe-inspiring vistas, we descended, each step a farewell to the mountain that had tested and rewarded us. After bidding farewell to Pulag, we made our way back to Manila, our hearts brimming with the day's achievements.



TriumphPH at the Peaks | Winter Series

Day 4: Exploring Mt. Pinatubo

Despite feeling sore from the previous days' adventures, our spirits soared as we set off early for the captivating landscapes of Mt. Pinatubo. The journey began with an exhilarating 4x4 ride through the rugged terrain of Crow Valley, offering us a firsthand encounter with the aftermath of Mt. Pinatubo's powerful eruption in 1991. As we navigated the remnants of this cataclysmic event, the desolate yet hauntingly beautiful scenery spoke volumes about nature's formidable forces. We eagerly embarked on a scenic hike through the ash-covered valleys, where each step revealed the raw beauty sculpted by volcanic forces. Encouraging each other and joking once again about the summit being "just 15 minutes away," we pushed on until our perseverance led us to the stunning crater lake of Mt. Pinatubo. Tucked away in the mountain's core, the tranquil waters reflected the sky, offering a peaceful yet breathtaking sight. This experience left us in awe, pondering the remarkable harmony between nature's destructive forces and its ability to create serene beauty.





Day 5: Farewell and Reflection

As our thrilling adventure came to an end, we savored a final exploration of the storied walls and winding pathways of historic Fort Intramuros. Amidst the centuries-old architecture and echoes of bygone eras, we immersed ourselves in the vibrant tapestry of Philippine history, each corner revealing tales of conquests, resilience, and cultural heritage. Caught in a sudden downpour, we decided to head back to the hotel to rest before our flight the next day.





Epilogue

Our trekking adventures in the Philippines were more than just a physical journey – it was the exploration of the boundless wonders of our natural world. What began as a journey among strangers in Singapore blossomed into a brotherhood forged by mountain peaks and shared adventures over the past five days. Our inside joke about the summit always being "just 15 minutes away" became a symbol of our unyielding spirit and camaraderie. We'll miss the unholy sisig addiction that probably spiked our cholesterol levels, the humor of dropping atomic bombs in every toilet we visited, living up to the good sh*t coffee, and all the adorable doggos and kitties we encountered. As we return home, our hearts are full, our spirits rejuvenated, and our souls forever touched by the magic of the Philippines. Until our next adventure, stay roving, stay exploring.

Triumph at the Peaks Committee Members:

Wilfred, Nigel, Zi Ting, Sherie

14-19 Dec 2023

TAIWANachill

WINTER SERIES



TAIWANachill

Chiaming Lake, Taitung, Taiwan

1 Jan 2024 9:30pm: while most of Singapore was out and about celebrating the New Year's, we were at the airport, with hiking bags half our size. We were as anxious as we were excited, questioning if we made the right choice signing up for this winter's toughest trek.



Fast forward the five sleepless hours on Scoot's flight, we landed in the chilling streets of Taipei. Still trudging with our hiking bags, hungry and sleep deprived, we settled down at a nearby breakfast place. “猪排鸡蛋饼”: the first of many. 15 of us huddled outside the stall, enjoying the steaming pan-fried pancake that gave some respite from Taipei's 13 degree weather. We got on a 4 hour train ride from the bustling city of Taipei to Chishang, a small humble town barely half the size of NUS. We spent the rest of the day packing our bags and resting up for the onerous 3 day climb.



TAIWANachill | Winter Series

An hour's drive from Chishang, we arrived at the foot of Chiaming Lake. As we groggily stepped out of the car, the drop in temperature rudely awakened us. We were 1600m above sea level and surrounded by a sea of clouds. We made steep gains in elevation, often climbing on all fours. Panting and out of breath, we rested every 45 minutes or so, before powering on. The higher we climbed the forest was enveloped by fog, providing a mysterious yet captivating sight. Step by step and hiking stick in hand, we reached our first checkpoint of 2502m. Again we stopped to rest and admire the scenic view, filling the air with our endless chatters. However, we were far from done for the day. It was not another few hours of ascending, descending, and conscientiously crossing a creek before we reached Xinwulu Campsite.



Our tired and beaten bodies were delightfully greeted by the scent of fresh food wafting through the air, and the sight of tentages neatly arranged by the creek. We were ready to settle down for the night. 15 of us gathered around a cave, illuminated by a few small lamps. Our mess tins full of food ranging from stir fried vegetables, meats and calamari, and later servings of piping hot soup and tea. It was an extremely unique and cozy experience as we bonded over this simple and warm meal, sharing our life stories and together questioning why we signed up for this arduous trek. We gradually returned to the comfort of our tents to rest and recharge. However, the day was not over. Now we had to battle the cold as temperatures began to plummet throughout the night.





With some encouragement and assurance from each other, we were again on our way. Approaching the campsite, we were greeted by a beautiful vast open landscape, surrounded by the numerous mountain peaks. The vegetation encapsulating the landscape was painted in vibrant shades of chrysanthemum yellow and green, a stark difference from the brown of Bukit Timah. The difference from yesterday was that now, it was 0 degrees. We huddled like penguins and enjoyed our warm dinner of Mala hot pot soup. With shivering hands, every spoonful of the Mala sent warmth into our stomachs. Night fell and we quickly retreated into our tents. But not before discovering the painting of a sky full of stars above our heads. We stood in 4 layers of clothes outside our tents admiring the breathtaking sky, then retreated into our tents for good. Knowing that the next day's climb would begin at 5am, we battled the freezing winds trying to get as much rest as possible.



TAIWANachill | Winter Series

At 6am, we were awakened by the guide inviting us for breakfast. We begrudgingly stepped out of the warmth of our tents, enjoyed piping hot porridge which warmed us up a little. It was then time to resume the trek. It was another challenging uphill battle before we reached our rest point, Football course. (where is the Basketball campsite?) We sat on logs in the vast open grass patch, enjoying our lunch and basking in the sun. It was a picnic in the mountains: chocolate bread, canned mackerel, cream cheese and ham. Feeling recharged, we continued our push towards Hunter campsite. The uphill climbs constantly drained whatever energy we had left. Some of us began falling victim to altitude sickness and headache began to set in. However, all 15 of us were still determined to make it together. We split the load in our bags and exchanged isotonic drinks.

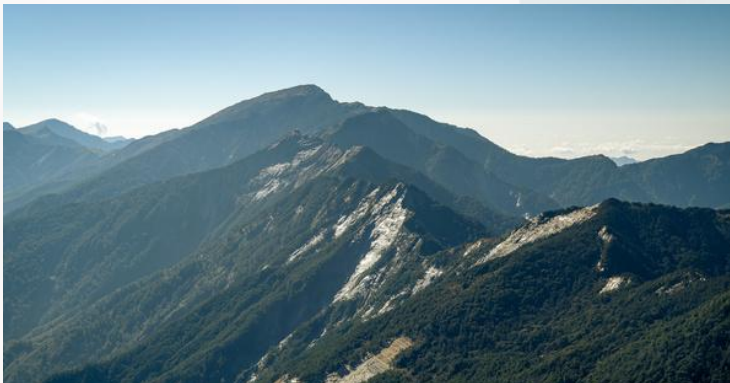


Rinse and repeat. It was another breakfast shivering in the morning cold before we made the final push for the summit. With headlamps illuminating the way in a sea of darkness, we embarked on what felt like the steepest climb yet. From afar, you could see a neat row of 15 lights slowly crawling towards the peak of Chiaming Lake.

TAIWANachill | Winter Series

Gradually, these 15 lights were dimmed out by the sunrise emerging from the horizon. Glancing away from the steep rocks in our face, was the magnificent sunrise of orange and yellow hues above the sea of clouds. It provided us with a sudden burst of motivation and energy as we resumed our final push.

As we approached the summit, there it was: Chiaming Lake. At this point the sun was out, nestled on the mountain peaks. This beautiful scenery almost literally blew us off our feet, as the relentless gusts of wind constantly rained blows on us. However, at this point we felt on top of the world. We had conquered 3500m in near sub-zero temperatures. We celebrated and took numerous pictures on the summit, cementing vivid memories of this trek in photographs.





While immersing in the beauty of Chiameing Lake, we were soon hit with the reality of the 13 km descent. We slung on our hiking bags and dragged our feet, every step a step closer to beneath the sea of clouds. After what felt like an impossible eternity, we eventually reached back to the foot. We were still in disbelief, that we had conquered 33 km in 3 days and the end was indeed in sight. The hike had indeed ended.

We got back into the cars, knocked out like logs and returned to our cozy Airbnb in Chishang. We woke up on day 6 with sore legs but morale sky-high as if we had just conquered the impossible. After a hearty breakfast of the usual egg pancakes, fried dumplings and milk tea, we quickly made our way to Chishang Train Station, excited to turn Taipei upside down for our RnR. We planned to take the 11 am train to Taipei, but it was fully booked and the next earliest was at 2pm. Rather than sitting around for 3 hours, we rented bicycles and explored the county. Zooming down the roads of Chishang, we quickly arrived at Brown Boulevard.





The landscape of Chishang was a stark difference from Singapore. It was surrounded by Taiwan's natural geography of creeks, stone mountains and vast lands of vegetation, rather than the concrete jungle we were familiar with. The ride brought a much-needed sense of peace and tranquility after a semester. After arriving in the bustling city of Taipei, we spent the remaining day exploring the night markets and trying out the different street foods. For us, the 5/5 stars of TAIWANachill represented not the difficulty, but the enjoyment we had and the friendships we made. Stay Roving!

TAIWANachill Committee Members:

Yuh Yang, Amos, Sze Yee, Royston

1-7 Jan 2024

Sapa-stic Adventures

WINTER SERIES



Sapa-stic Adventures Sapa, Hanoi, Vietnam

It all began in the bustling symphony of Hanoi on the 7th of January, where the aroma of sizzling Bún chả danced with the honking rhythm of motorbikes.



After a quick exploration of the Old Quarter's alleys, we boarded a sleeper bus towards Sapa. The next day, we explored Cat Cat Village, nestled amidst emerald rice terraces, whispered tales of Hmong life, their colorful textiles echoing the vibrant blooms adorning the landscape.

Day 3 saw us embarking on the mighty Fansipan, the "Roof of Indochina." Crisp mountain air filled our lungs as we ascended, accompanied by the symphony of chirping birds and the occasional moo of free-roaming cows. Lunch, a heartwarming spread of rice, chicken, and fish, fueled our ascent further, each step drawing us closer to the clouds. By nightfall, we huddled in rustic wooden sheds, the crackling fire and our guides' hearty dinner chasing away the mountain chill.



Sapa-stic Adventures



The next day we woke up early in the morning for the summit push. Pre-dawn darkness cloaked us as we started the final push toward the summit. Finally, around 5 am, we stood triumphant atop Fansipan, the world a hazy canvas beneath a veil of fog. Though sunrise remained hidden, the euphoria of conquest warmed our hearts. Medals and certificates were proudly received, a tangible reminder of our grit. Descending the mountain back to Sapa, the city welcomed us with open arms, a well-deserved rest amidst its charming cafes and bustling markets.



The next day, we took a morning bus back to Hanoi. Delicious street food fuelled our explorations, each bite bursting with flavor and memories. As dusk painted the city gold, we gathered back at the Airbnb, sharing stories and dreams, solidifying the bonds forged on the mountainside. Leaving behind the emerald landscapes and vibrant culture, we carried within us the echoes of laughter, the thrill of conquest, and the warmth of newfound friendships. This wasn't just a trek; it was a journey into the heart of Vietnam, and into the depths of our own resilience and camaraderie.

Sapa-stic Adventures Committee Members:

Sorfina, Aswin, Dylan, Li Kai

7-12 Jan 2024



Respite on Pulau

RECESS WEEK



Respite on Pulau Gunnung Pulau, Kulai, Johor

On the morning of 24th February 2024, brimming with anticipation for our journey, we gathered at Kranji MRT station before departing for Woodlands checkpoint together.

Although we encountered slight delays due to immigration and road congestion, we adapted swiftly, improvising our itinerary with ease. After clearing the customs, we made a brief stop at a petrol station to buy our breakfast, lunch, and water to last us through the hike.

By 12pm, albeit an hour behind schedule, we arrived at the foot of the mountain, where our guides motivated us with determination to reach the summit on time. As we commenced our ascent up the steep paved road, we chatted excitedly, fostering vibrant conversations and newfound friendships. As we ventured to the forest trail, the incline steepened and our steps grew slower, yet our resolve remained unwavering. Halfway through the hike, we encountered and took pictures with the giant stone boulder, whimsically shaped like a frog AKA "batu katak".



Respite on Pulau | Recess Week



Around 3pm, we had summited! Standing at 600m in height, we had an incredible panoramic view of the vast surroundings of the mountain chain. Relishing a well-deserved lunch while enjoying the views, we savoured the fruits of our labour. At last, after taking picture and regaining our energy, we started heading back down. Despite our initial intention to visit a waterfall, time constraints compelled us to forgo our visit to the excursion. Descending proved taxing on our knees due to the steepness, but we persevered, ultimately finding ourselves at the foot of the mountain once again!



Exhausted yet fulfilled, some opted for a refreshing shower, while others settled back onto the bus to rest. Many succumbed to sleep to catch up on some rest as we made our way to our dinner destination, Restaurant Tian Lai, known for its succulent seafood. However, upon arrival, the restaurant was bustling with patrons. Undeterred, we soon found another seafood/zi char restaurant that could accommodate all of us. By 7.30pm, we were indulging in a sumptuous feast. After the satisfying dinner, we witnessed fireworks illuminating the night sky outside the restaurant, what a lovely way to end the night!





As we embarked on our homeward journey in the comfort of the bus, fatigue set in, yet our hearts overflowed with gratitude for the shared experiences. With heavy eyelids and hearts full, we bid fond farewells to one another. A heartfelt thank you to everyone for joining us on Respite on Pulau! Until our next adventure, Stay Roving, Stay Exploring.

In the Spirit of Friendship and Adventure!

Kah Eng
44th Rovers Committee
24 February 2024

Faber-ulous @ Southern Ridges

READING WEEK EDITION



Faber-ulous @ Southern Ridges, Singapore



It was the morning of the 20th of April 2024. It was a bright and cheery morning. The sky was as blue as sapphire and the sun was playing hide and seek with the clouds...at least when we gathered at the start.

It was 0815 on a Saturday morning of reading week. Most NUS students were sound asleep in their homes or hostels, taking a well deserved break from school before the hectic exam season gets under way. Some woke up early to study as they bid for an early head start to their exam preparations, in a hope to retain or achieve a decent grade for their finals. Some woke up early for their morning runs or pilates class. 50 gathered at Kent Ridge MRT station, all donned in their dri-fit shirts.

It was the day for the NUS Rovers: Faber-ulous trek, It is a trek through one of Singapore's famous hiking trails: The Southern Ridges. It comprises 10 kilometers of green, open spaces that connect Mount Faber Park, Telok Blangah Hill Park, Kent Ridge Park, and Hort Park, and rises to over 100 meters above sea level at the Mount Faber peak. The trek is projected to take us a whopping 3 hours in the little red dot we call home.

As the 50 of us finally split into our groups at an open space outside Exit B of Kent Ridge MRT station, each participant was handed one nutritious packet of Milo, as well as one Sunshine bread roll. These are the carbohydrates that will boost our energy as we prepare to commence the trek.

Faber-ulous @ Southern Ridges | Reading Week

Our watches have yet to show 0830 as the first group strutted off slowly towards the first checkpoint. The morning's beauty was enlightening, as birdsong filled the crisp, fresh air, gently pushing the sluggishness out of our minds and bodies as we trekked. A symphony of golden hues unfold as the sun rises above the thin tropical clouds. Light chatter and laughter fill the air as we share our stories with the new friends we made. By 0900 in the morning, all 50 of us were en route to Mount Faber.

Despite Singapore's relatively flat topography, The Southern Ridges is not to be underestimated. There are moderate undulations in terrain, and its peak, Mount Faber, is one of the tallest hills in the country; second only to Bukit Timah Hill.

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Faber-ulous @ Southern Ridges | Reading Week



Next up was Hort Park. It took us at least a good hour before the checkpoint to rest, and at its visitor center, we had a good break. However, a slight problem looms ahead of us. Dark, ominous storm clouds began forming a few hundred feet above us. It was a race against time. We have to complete our trek fast, or risk getting caught in the thunderstorm. With that in mind, we picked up our belongings, and continued down the trail double quick time.

We crossed Alexander Arch, and onto Telok Blangah Hill Park. Temperature dropped as rain was imminent as we trotted through the Forest Walk. As the first group approached Henderson Waves, the heavens opened, and harsh, sparse, swift drops rushed through the leaves and across the ground in a long sigh. We scurried to seek shelter while bringing out our ponchos and umbrellas. Our sweat stained shirts became even wetter, with a mix of rainwater as well.



Luckily, the heavy rain did not last long, and torrential downpour extinguished into light showers, and the dark clouds above dissipated. A few pictures at Henderson Waves, and we are onto Mount Faber Park, the final stint of the Southern Ridges trek. This was the toughest and steepest section of the trail, as we went up a steep incline towards the peak of Mount Faber. We could now see the massive tree planted right at the top of Mount Faber.

Faber-ulous @ Southern Ridges | Reading Week



To the south was the vast Singapore Strait. To the north, there were countless buildings and skyscrapers that accentuated Singapore's city skyline. We stood there to enjoy the magnificent view that we were rewarded with the completion of the trek. By late noon, all 5 groups traversed to the peak of Mount Faber, snapped some photos, and with a heavy heart, we adjourned towards VivoCity for lunch. The walk had used up a bulk of our energy and we could not wait to fill our empty stomach.

As we each devoured our food from various food stalls in VivoCity, one Rovers member came to us and asked: "What are the upcoming hikes I can join?".

"Coming up are four exciting overseas summer hikes..."

Yuh Yang
44th Rovers Committee
20 April 2024

Sapa-Saga

SUMMER EDITION



Sapa Saga Sapa, Vietnam

Our Sapa trip was a blend of delicious food, adventurous hikes, and unforgettable moments, from Hanoi's streets to Sapa's peaks.



Our journey to Sapa began with a flight into Hanoi, followed by a quick 30-minute drive to the welcoming LOC Homestay. Eager to dive into the local cuisine, we lunched at a nearby restaurant, delighting in Bun Cha and beef pho. The famous egg coffee was a treat that lived up to its reputation. With our spirits high, we explored the lively streets, eventually finding ourselves at a sky bar where we enjoyed refreshing drinks and soaked in the cityscape.



Sapa-Saga | Summer Series



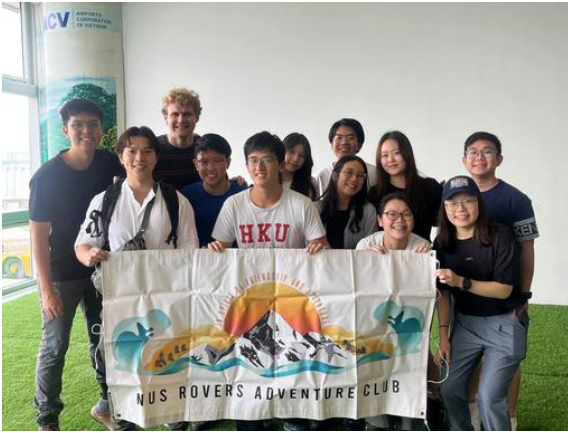
The next morning, we rushed to Banh Mi 25 for breakfast, the delicious banh mi making the early start worthwhile. Our day was packed with adventure as we visited Halong Bay, exploring the stunning Sung Sot Cave and the serene Luon Cave. A bamboo boat ride through Luon Cave's waters was made memorable by our playful captain who rocked the boat to the point we almost fell out. The climb to the peak of Titop Island rewarded us with breathtaking views, and we watched the sunset from our cruise along Halong Bay, a perfect end to the day. Back in Hanoi, we enjoyed a kebab dinner before boarding a sleeper bus for the five-hour journey to Sapa.



Arriving in Sapa, we settled down and packed our bags before fueling up with a hearty breakfast at Viettrekking Hotel. A two-hour journey took us to the base of Ho Thau trekking point, where our hike began. We passed a tiny waterfall, stopping to rest and enjoy lunch consisting of rice balls, chicken, and glutinous rice. Continuing our hike, we reached the Ho Thau Shack, our rest point for the night, where we were treated to a comforting hotpot dinner.



Sapa-Saga | Summer Series



Day four started with a 7am breakfast of hot macaroni soup in the cold, misty morning. We set off for the summit at 8am, passing through a bamboo forest and a ground carpeted with yellow azalea flowers, just missing the full bloom by two weeks. Despite the heavy rain and mist obscuring the views at the peak, the company and the sense of accomplishment made it worthwhile. The descent was wet and muddy, with multiple slips and river crossings, but we eventually arrived at Pu Ta Leng Shack, our second rest point. We soaked in the freezing waters of a nearby lake and ended the day with chicken and vegetables for dinner, brushing our teeth together in the darkness—a true bonding moment.



The next day, we woke at 7am to a breakfast of beef noodle soup before continuing our descent. By 1pm, we reached the base of the mountains and were picked up by a minibus, which took us back to Ta Leng commune. The ride offered fantastic views of the surrounding rice terraces. After lunch, we returned to Sapa by minibus, where we indulged in a hot herbal bath and foot massage to rest our tired bodies. The evening was spent enjoying a hotpot dinner at Viettrekking Sapa Restaurant, visiting Sapa Lake, walking the streets for souvenirs, and renting mini electric scooters to explore the town plaza.





Our final day in Sapa began with a stunning view of the misty mountains. We visited Cat Cat Village, immersing ourselves in the local culture. Some of us bought cute customised phone cases as a souvenir too! We had our final meal with Wout at a restaurant which served fusion asian food. Sadly, it was time to bid farewell to Wout, who continued his exploration of Sapa and the Ha Giang Loop without us, as we boarded the sleeper bus back to Hanoi. Despite arriving late, we managed to squeeze in a full-body massage and a hotplate BBQ for dinner.

On the last day of our trip, we explored the famous Hanoi Railway Cafe before heading to the airport. We landed back in Singapore, sharing one last meal together at Jewel and bidding each other farewell, grateful for the unforgettable memories we had made on our Sapa saga.

Sapa Saga Committee Members:

Kevin, Royston, Zi Ting

10 - 16 May 2024

Ralley In The Valley

SUMMER SERIES



Ralley In The Valley Langtang Valley, Nepal

In the late afternoon of 17th May, we landed in the bustling streets of Kathmandu. After being warmly welcomed with garlands by our guides, we were whisked away to our hotel rooms in the district of Thamel.

Here, we began our adventure with large trays of delicious daal bhat and momos which would become a staple in our diet in the upcoming week before exploring the exciting shops nearby. We then called it a night before our next adventure began.

On the following day, we rose early for our thrilling drive to the town of Syabrubesi where our hike would begin. Driving over sandy, bumpy roads close to the cliff edges was not for the faint-hearted. However, our eyes were rewarded with stunning mountain landscapes which made us even more excited for our hike. Seven hours later, we arrived at our guesthouse in Syabrubesi where we tucked in for the night.



Ralley in the Valley | Summer Series

Finally, the day we have all been waiting for has arrived! Today marks our first day hiking. Lugging our huge hiking bags, we all waited anxiously as our guides snapped a picture before embarking on our hike to Lama Hotel. During our hike, we were greeted by lush green landscapes and crashing waves of the valley. For several hours, we trudged along steep ascents before arriving at our first teahouse at Lama Hotel — a basic but comfortable lodge where we treated ourselves to an assortment of Nepali-style chowmein and fried rice before calling it a night.

For the next two days, we traversed rocky and steep terrain to arrive at our Langtang Valley, and the following day, we reached Kyanjin Gumpa. As we ascended, the temperature began to drop and the air grew thinner, making each step more challenging. Nonetheless, we conquered each day with determination, finding strength in the breathtaking scenery that surrounded us.

After we arrived at Kyanjin Gumpa on the third day of our hike, our guides brought us on a short hike to a nearby glacier lake. Here, we were met with a view of the cold yet pristine water surrounded by snow-capped peaks. After snapping pictures and skipping rocks across the lake, we made our way back to the teahouse. We turned in early, resting up for the big hike ahead of us the next day.



Ralley in the Valley | Summer Series



Finally - the big day! Today, we would be embarking on a 10-kilometre hike, with over a 1000m ascent to arrive at a 4984 metres peak. This will be the highest mountain that any of us has climbed. We began our hike at 5.30 am at the bottom of the mountains, our anticipation palpable as we set foot on the trail. As the hours passed, fatigue threatened to weigh us down, but our determination remained steadfast. Step by step, we pushed forward for several hours before we all reached the summit. Unfortunately, the clouds moved in by the time most of us summited. Nonetheless, despite the obscured views, we celebrated our ascent, joining our guides in a folk dance to commemorate our achievement before making our way down and getting our well-deserved rest.



Ralley in the Valley | Summer Series

For the next two days, we descended the rugged trails back to Syabrubesi before journeying back to Kathmandu. The following day, we embarked on a guided tour of Kathmandu's historic sites, including the Monkey Temple and Durbar Square. Amidst the ancient architecture, we snapped pictures of the playful monkeys while also listening to our guides recount the teachings of both Buddhist and Hindu traditions. After a day immersed in Nepalese culture, we indulged in some souvenir shopping and savoured a hearty bowl of Tibetan noodles before heading back to our hotel for our flight home the next day.

As our Himalayan journey drew to a close, we reflected on the stunning landscapes, the rich cultural experiences, and the spiritual insights gained. Grateful for every moment, we left Nepal with hearts full of memories and spirits uplifted, knowing that its beauty and wisdom would stay with us always.

Ralley in the Valley Committee Members:

Sorfina, Li Kai, Wei Feng, Dylan

17 May - 28 May 2024



In-da Himalayas!

SUMMER SERIES



In-da Himalayas Ali Bedni Bugyal, India

India – known for its rich culture, food, and festivals – is often overlooked for trekking compared to its neighbor, Nepal. However, nestled in the Indian Himalayas are breathtaking destinations like Ali Bedni Bugyal, the largest alpine meadow in Asia. NUS Rovers embarked on a trek to experience this hidden gem and witness the panoramic views of the Himalayas.



Day 0-1: Travelling to Rishikesh

The group met for the first time at the airport, united by a shared passion for hiking. After landing in Delhi's sweltering heat, we journeyed north to Rishikesh, stopping for our first taste of authentic Indian food. In Rishikesh, we enjoyed a rooftop dinner with views of the Ganges River and witnessed the Ganga Aarti, a beautiful fire ritual.



Day 2: Travelling to Lohajung Base Camp

The next day, we endured a gruelling 11-hour van ride to Lohajung Base Camp. With no air conditioning and intense summer heat, the journey was tough, but our arrival in the cool mountain village revived us. After meeting our trek leader, Siddharth, we received a briefing. The day ended with anxious thoughts as thunderstorms rolled in.

In-da Himalayas! | Summer Series

Day 3: Trekking to Gheroli Patal

We woke up to clear skies, lifting our spirits for the trek ahead. After a bumpy ride to the village of Wan, the trek officially began. Despite a lighthearted start with chai and rhododendron juice, heavy rain soon tested our endurance. Soaked and hungry, we pushed through, eventually arriving at a sunny campsite where we played frisbee as the sun set, forgetting the earlier struggles.

Inching our way upwards, the clouds slowly dissipated. We arrived to a sunny campsite. Brought up by our guide, a frisbee glided across our tents. Soon, laughter and cheers filled the air as everyone gathered around, taking turns to throw the disc among each other despite our tiredness. As the sun began to set, rays of sunlight pierced through the trees, casting a magnificent orange hue over the campsite. At that moment, we all forgot the miserable weather we just experienced.



Day 4: Trekking to Bedni Top

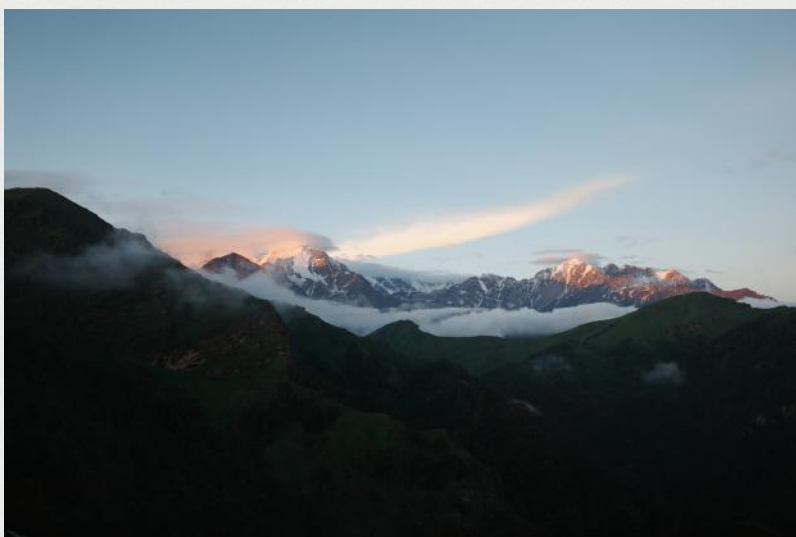
Rain and fog enveloped us as we trekked to Bedni Bugyal, obscuring the grand views of Mt Trishul and Nanda Ghunti. Before heading for the summit at Bedni Top, we stopped at a relatively flat area of the meadow for a break and to wait out the weather. Once again, we played frisbee but this time, with a completely different background and atmosphere. At an altitude of 3500 metres, running around felt especially tiring and with each throw, the disc slowly disappeared into the fog. After a brief stop, we pressed on to Bedni Top, where rain forced us to descend quickly.



In-da Himalayas! | Summer Series

Arriving at the Abin Kharak campsite, we rushed into our tents for shelter and ate our lunch. To the calming sound of the rain hitting our tent, we drifted off to sleep and only woke from our slumber in the late afternoon. Opening our tents, we were met with surprise when we saw that the sky had cleared. No longer were the mountain peaks hiding behind the clouds. We stood on the top of a hill next to our campsite, marvelling at the natural beauty right before us. In such a moment, time passed too quickly. By and by, the sun crept towards the back of the mountains. But before it set for the day, it rewarded us a final time by casting an alpenglow over the peaks, turning the white snow of the mountains into a reddish glow. A sight to behold.

After dinner, once the sky had turned dark, we headed back up the hill to stargaze. Lying down on the grass, our eyes slowly adjusted to the darkness and the stars began to reveal themselves, eventually blanketing the whole sky. Cherished memories from the day lingered in our minds as we lay there admiring the stars.



Day 5-6: Trekking to Ali Top and Descent

With clear skies and no rain, we woke early for sunrise and were treated to perfect views of the lush meadows and snowcapped mountains. Braving the cold wind, we stood on the same hill watching the sun light up the sky. A promising start for the day! Along the way, we took countless photos with grazing sheep and cows, but soon found ourselves engulfed by fog at the summit. While the hard part of the trek was over, all we had to do now was to descend back to base camp. Satisfied with having witnessed the fleeting beauty of nature, we headed down to our final campsite. After a final cup of chai, we finished the trek with feelings of triumph.



In-da Himalayas! | Summer Series

Over the past few days of the trek, we grew familiar with the comfort of drinking a warm cup of chai in the mountains. On the morning of the final day of the trek, it dawned on us that we were drinking our final cup. Bittersweet that the trek was coming to an end but knowing that we would soon have access to our creature comforts, we steadily walked to the endpoint. After a final steep ascent, we stepped foot in the village, marking the end of our 4-day trek. Feelings of triumph and jubilation swept over us as we congratulated each other. We did it.



In-da Himalayas! | Summer Series



Day 7-11: R&R in Rishikesh, Delhi, and Agra

Across the span of two days, we slowly made our way back to Delhi. Along the way, we survived yet another gruelling 11-hour journey to Rishikesh in the summer heat without any air conditioning, and the next day, waited for our van driver who unapologetically arrived two hours late and still had the audacity to try scamming us into paying extra. Our journey back to Delhi was certainly a story-worthy experience for all of us. Having forged our friendships in the mountains, we spent the remainder of our time exploring the cities of Rishikesh and Delhi, as well as experiencing the white marbled beauty of the Taj Mahal.

As we joked around and teased each other, it was funny to think that just a week back, we barely knew each other but now, we were so comfortable in each other's presence. Our adventure through the mountains has not only rewarded us with breathtaking scenes of the Himalayas but also a lifetime of friendships. Despite the weather not always being on our side, it was those who were by our sides, sharing stories and making jokes, that made the whole experience much more enjoyable. Perhaps the mountains have taught us a lesson; it is not the destination, but it is the journey that matters the most.

In-da Himalayas Committee Members:

Wilfred, Aswin, Amos, Sherie

24 June - 04 July 2024

Chiang Mali Chiang

SUMMER SERIES



Chiang Mali Chiang Chiang Mai, Thailand

It was 1 August, about a week before the new academic year started. While most people were gearing up for school, we were gathered at the airport, heading to the outskirts of Thailand.

We shook hands and introduced ourselves, eager to see what the next 8 days had for us. When we landed in Chiang Mai, we were picked up by our guide and we were on our way to our accommodations. Looking out of the window, the landscape of Chiang Mai's vast rice fields and small towns were very different from the cities we were used to. After a long night's sleep, we were ready to take on the mountains of Northern Thailand



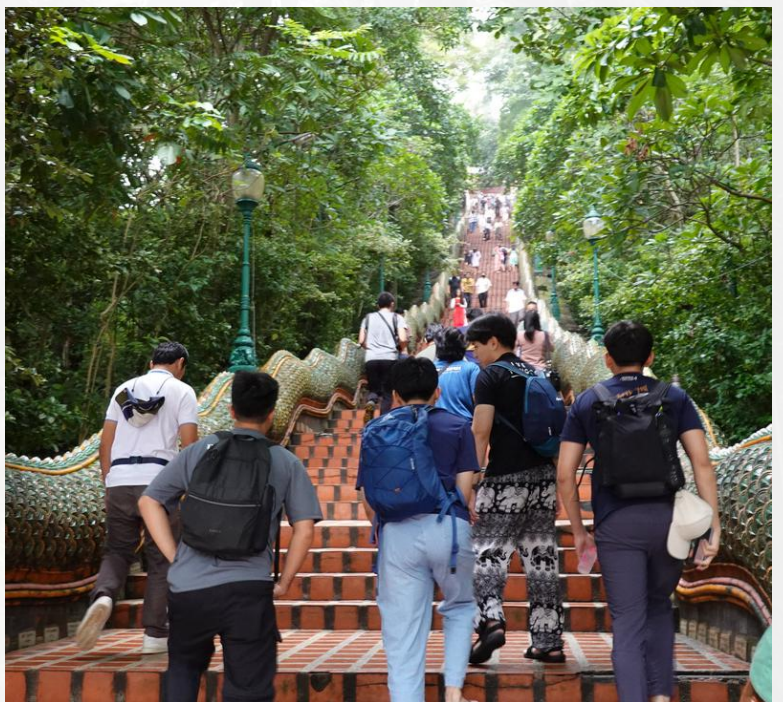
Chiang Mali Chiang | Summer Series



We began with Chiang Mai's natural rock formations in Pha Chor canyon. After an hour's hike and squeezing past canyons, we were greeted by picturesque views of towering rock columns and layered soil cliffs. Journeying on, we headed to Thailand's highest point: Doi Inthanon. Trudging through muddy terrain and humid jungles, we arrived at Wachiratharan waterfalls. As we huddled in front of the 80m high waterfall for a quick picture, its giant waves offered great respite from Thailand's humid weather. Before we challenged Doi Inthanon's 2565m peak, we had a quick stop at a local Karen tribe for a hearty lunch. We were welcomed with free flow aromatic Tom Yum, succulent fried chicken and a variety of greens and herbs. Having eaten to our hearts' content, we journeyed on. As we hiked along the ridges of the mountain, the scenery was breathtaking. Below the blue sky was a sea of green, decorated with vibrant colours from the flowers grown by the farmers, just like a painting. The higher we climbed, the temperature dropped and we were eventually greeted by a sea of fog that surrounded Doi Inthanon's peak. The cooling mist quickly turned into rain and freezing winds, to which our raincoats offered little protection from.

Chiang Mali Chiang | Summer Series

The next day, we travelled 2 hours to the outskirts of Chiang Mai for some adrenaline filled activities. We started with white water rafting. Initially, the waves gently carried our rafts along the river. We huddled in our rafts, peacefully enjoying the view. In a moment, the tide intensified and our rafts accelerated down the river, as we battled the metre high water falls and freezing waves. The rubber rafts offered little protection when the waves came crashing onto us. For something less intense, we transited into riding ATVs. As the engines roared and came to life, we were all eager to see where these machines could take us. Like Fast and Furious but in a very safe manner, we sped down the mud paths, journeying from the city to the jungles. Every turn through the thick mud was a thrilling test of control, as the ATV drifted slightly and sank into the mud. By the end, we were caked in mud but full of adrenaline, a satisfying reminder of the adventure we just had.



Chiang Mali Chiang | Summer Series

Another day, another adventure as we woke up for our final R&R in Chiang Mai. Some of us chose to sleep in, while those early birds went out for a walk, and hunted for nice breakfast places. Once our tummies were full, we headed back to check out of Azz hotel. Our next journey is a long one, spanning over 200 kilometers in a van for about 3 hours, to Chiang Rai.



Fast forward 2 hours, we arrived at our next place of interest, Akha Farmville. At a kilometer up from sea level and cool, windy overcast conditions, the weather was cool and comfortable. At the farm we could see a herd of fluffy white sheep, roaming freely along a vast green grassland. We were able to roam with the sheep, and feel their soft fluffy wool. After an hour of picture taking and enjoying some free drinks and ice cream, we headed off to Doi Chang Viewpoint. There, we were able to enjoy some refreshing food while overlooking a small village in the distance at the foot of the mountains. It was breathtaking. As the rain started to arrive, we quickly headed back to the van to finish off our journey to Chiang Rai. Having checked into Feelathome hotel (which really has a homely feel), we set off to look for dinner late at night. As Chiang Rai is a small town with less than 80,000 inhabitants over a large land space, there were not many places to find food. We settled for a night market, where locals gather to enjoy some local cuisines. Our dinner was scrumptious, with a lot of skewers, pad thais, and we even topped it off with mango sticky rice as dessert. Yummy!



Chiang Mali Chiang | Summer Series

Come morning again, we woke up with heavy eyelids and boarded the van to another distant village near the borders of Myanmar for sightseeing and breakfast. Our first stop of the day is Pha Hi Village, where we stopped over at Pha Hi Cafe for breakfast. The spices and coffee there were authentic, freshly farmed and brewed right outside the cafe. Electricity was down that morning due to heavy rain the previous night, and we had the first hand experience of grinding the coffee beans on our own. We sat down to enjoy our pasta with our coffee which we worked hard to brew amidst the foggy skies outside the open windows of the cafe. The rain slowly stopped, and we moved on to our next checkpoint, Chang Moob Military Viewpoint. We crossed the border of Myanmar for a jiffy, and stopped at the border of Thailand and Myanmar to look at the magnificent border between the 2 countries. Following that, it was another hour of van ride before our next destination, Choui Fong Tea plantation. The plantation was magnificent, with acres and acres of flat land of tea plantations. We got into the factory to purchase some tea products, as well as enjoyed some drinks and food by the hill overlooking the plantations. We set off again after giving our tummies and legs energy and rest.



Chiang Mali Chiang | Summer Series

We headed back towards the town, and stopped by Blue temple, which as its name suggests, is blue. The temple was extraordinary with its intricate architecture and blue overalls. It isn't a common theme or sight for a temple anywhere in the world. After paying our respects to Buddha, we had some delicious coconut ice cream, and got on our way back to Chiang Rai again for dinner. With ample time for R&R, some of us headed to an open concept gym nearby (pretty cool), while the rest of us went to visit Chiang Rai's only air-conditioned multi-storey shopping center. The day ended as we headed back for sleep.

Rise and shine again for the 6th day of the trip, we had our breakfast and boarded the van to Chiang Rai White Temple. This time, instead of seeing a blue temple, we saw a full white temple, which was marvelous and heavenly. After a long walk around the perimeters and taking some instagram worthy pictures, we then headed on our way to Singha Park. There were tons of activities for us to do and explore in the mega park, such as cycling, rock climbing, ziplining, and exploring zoos. After a scrumptious and cheap lunch at the restaurant at the park, we headed over to the entrance to ride a tram into the park. From then we did countless activities, from feeding swans at a lake and feeding animals at the zoo, to ziplining from a 9-storey tower over 300 meters and riding some motor-powered vehicles around the park. Some of us used the remaining time till evening at the park to go for a relaxing run or cycle, while others chose to sit down and enjoy the scenery. By sundown, we all gathered back at the van, ready to head off for dinner, where we found a small local porridge shop which sells filling and scrumptious century egg porridge with minced meat at less than 3SGD! Again, we headed to do some shopping around night markets before heading back early for a mandatory early nights rest in preparation for the next day, where we will be waking up way before the crack of dawn.



Chiang Mali Chiang | Summer Series

The next day was all about exploring some breathtaking mountainous peaks! Despite our sleepy eyes, we woke up at 2:30 AM, excited for the adventure ahead. We had a 2.5-hour drive to Phu Chi Fah, the "mountain that points to the sky." Along the way, we made a quick stop at a convenience store to grab some snacks. When we arrived at the base, the cool weather welcomed us, making the climb much more comfortable. As we ascended, we quickly found ourselves playing a funny game of "avoid the cow dung," hopping around like stepping stones. Eventually, we caught up with the culprits—cows grazing peacefully along the trail. Just when we thought the challenge was over, the path got more and more slippery as we climbed higher. Every few seconds, someone would slip, but the spirit of adventure kept us going. Finally, we reached the summit of Phu Chi Fah, standing tall at 1,628 meters, right on the border between Thailand and Laos. Unfortunately, the rainy season brought with it a thick blanket of clouds, obscuring the view we had hoped for. Still, we weren't disheartened! We spent about 30 minutes at the top, taking fun group photos and enjoying the misty atmosphere before heading to our next destination, Phu Chi Dao.



Chiang Mali Chiang | Summer Series



Phu Chi Dao, or "Reaching the Star Peak," is another hidden gem just a short drive away. After an hour-long hike, we reached a stunning ridgeline trail that led us to the summit, standing even higher at 1,800 meters. Though the fog was thick, we still found the landscape awe-inspiring. We spent around 1.5 hours there, taking it all in before making our way down. By this time, we were starving, and our tour guide brought us to a Chinese restaurant to have brunch. The food was phenomenal and we ordered to our hearts' content. The standout dish was the pig trotter—it was absolutely divine, a must-try for anyone visiting. After a hearty meal, we were energized for our final climb of the day: Doi Pha Tang. This time, the clouds had cleared, revealing the spectacular Mekong River and the rolling landscapes of Laos and Thailand. The views were mesmerizing, and the fresh mountain air made the hike all the more enjoyable. We took our time at the various viewpoints, snapping photos and soaking in the beauty of the region.

Chiang Mali Chiang | Summer Series



Once we had our fill of stunning vistas, we headed back to Chiang Rai in the van, where everyone promptly knocked out after conquering three mountains in one day! By the time we woke up, it was time for dinner—a relaxed and enjoyable meal where we reminisced about the day's highlights and shared laughs over the many slips and near misses on the trails. To wrap up the day, we treated ourselves to a relaxing Thai deep tissue massage—perfect for soothing our tired muscles after all that hiking. It was a much-needed break and a great way to end our adventure before heading back to Singapore the next day.

The next day, after packing up, we checked out of our hotel at 10am and began our journey to Chiang Mai Airport for our 4pm flight. Along the way, we made a quick stop at a convenience store for some snacks and last-minute shopping. Once we arrived at the airport, we had a final meal at McDonald's before checking in for our flight. At 4pm, we were in the air, flying back to Singapore after an unforgettable adventure in Thailand. We touched down at Changi Airport around 8pm, exhausted but content, still soaking in the memories and definitely not ready to return to reality.

These past 8 days were truly sugoi! A heartfelt thank you to everyone who joined us for "Chiang Mali Chiang!" Until our next adventure—Stay Roving, Stay Exploring!

Chiang Mali Chiang Committee Members:

Yuh Yang, Kah Eng, Sze Yee, Nigel

1-8 Aug 2024



Committee Cohesions

44TH COMMITTEE



Cohesions @ Li Kai's House

Before the start of our winter treks, we decided to have a BBQ at my place! It was the perfect way to celebrate the end of the semester and gear up for the exciting treks ahead.

We initially planned to prepare our own food from Cold Storage but were a little taken aback by the prices. So, we improvised, buying some raw meat and essential cooking utensils, and made a quick detour to grab some delicious prata from nearby! As we fired up the grill, the air was filled with laughter and the sizzle of food cooking, creating a lively and celebratory atmosphere. We even experimented with some new recipes, like chicken chop wrapped in egg prata—a unique and tasty twist that everyone enjoyed trying!

In keeping with the festive spirit, we organized a Secret Santa gift exchange. It was heartwarming to see everyone's reactions to the thoughtful and carefully chosen gifts, each one reflecting our close bond and understanding of one another. After exchanging gifts, we settled in to enjoy each other's company, playing games and chatting while festive music played in the background, adding to the cheerful mood of the evening.



Cohesions @ Li Kai's House

As the clock struck 10:30, we had to leave the BBQ pit, but the night was far from over. Not ready to say goodbye just yet, we found another cozy spot in the condo to continue our conversations. We shared stories about life, our dreams, and what we were looking forward to during the upcoming winter treks. It was a moment of connection and reflection, deepening the bonds between us.

Gradually, we began to say our goodbyes, but the anticipation for the next cohesion was palpable. The evening was a reminder of the camaraderie and shared adventures that await us. It was a perfect blend of friendship, food, and fun—an evening that left us all with warm memories and excitement for what's to come.

**In the spirit of friendship and adventure,
Chua Li Kai | 44th Committee | Special Advisor**

Cohesions @ Amos' House

After our winter treks, the committee was itching to meet one another again and have another cohesion. But, with assignments and readings swiftly coming in, it would be difficult to find a common day where we weren't all buried in our textbooks. Thankfully, there was a public holiday coming up - Chinese New Year.

Where would we hold our Chinese New Year gathering? There was some back and forth between the comm - and eventually, we settled on going to Amos' house! (yay) To spice things up, we decided to make it potluck style.

Each of us brought a food that shared the same starting letter as our name, which was easy for some but posed a challenge for others.



Committee Cohesions



As we slowly streamed in one by one, the dining table was slowly occupied by the variety of food that we brought - ice cream, chicken wings, etc. Amos' dad was also kind enough to cook an assortment of Chinese dishes for us - we were so lucky to have a great chef in the house! Steamed fish, chicken, and other dishes soon made their way out of the kitchen, and we soon had a feast before our eyes. It wasn't long before we tucked into our meals wholeheartedly, talking to and updating each other with any updates we had on our lives.

Finally, at around 11 pm, it was time to call an end to the dinner. We said our goodbyes to each other and made our way back (except for Li Kai and Wilfred who made their way to my house, but that's a story for another time). We would have a long but exciting day bringing our participants to Mount Pulai the next day, and we wanted to make sure that we would be well-rested before the trek. Looking forward to the next cohesion!!!

**In the spirit of friendship and adventure,
Wei Feng | 44th committee | Vice president**

Cohesions @ Marina Barrage

The summer holidays were in full swing and with our Vietnam and Nepal trips just completed, in the usual 44th committee fashion, we were eager to catch up with each other, especially to share the exciting experiences on the summer trips.

But this time there was a twist. Instead of going to somebody's house like we have done the past 2 rounds, we decided to try something a bit more fitting for NUS Rovers and we went for an outdoor picnic at The Marina Barrage instead!



Committee Cohesions



Just like every meeting with the 44th, it was filled with food and laughter. This time we were laughing about Kevin's countless falls during the muddy hike in Vietnam and Wei Feng not being able to wear his hiking shoes in Nepal amongst other hilarious stories. Whilst all that was happening, we were busy munching down the food each of us brought along.

Under the golden sunset surrounded by the beautiful Singapore city skyline, we relished in the company of each other, savouring our last few moments as our term as the 44th Committee slowly drew to a close. In the company of each other, time flew by, and it wasn't before long that we realised that the golden sunrays had made way for twinkling stars.

As the day drew to a close, we said our goodbyes and wished Aswin and Wilfred all the best as they were about to embark on the 44th Committee's next big adventure, to India!

**In the spirit of friendship and adventure,
Amos | 44th committee | President**

Cohesions @ Aswin's House

Vietnam, Nepal, and India trips were done! We only had our trip with Thailand left - so why not have one last cohesion before we wrapped things up? Time was short and wasn't easy to schedule - we each were wrapped up with our trips, internships, and the like - but with enough effort (and rescheduling) we finally managed to pull it off. This time, instead of going to Amos' house, we would be going to Aswin's.

It was a bit of a journey to get there, as some of us lived on different ends of Singapore. But eventually, all of us managed to get there. We decided to have our dinner potluck style again. Yakitori sticks, chicken wings, cream puffs, and other foods were laid before us on the table. Once all of us were ready, we began having our dinner together. In true 44th fashion - the dinner would be held at a slow, comfortable pace.



Committee Cohesions



Many things had happened over our respective treks - some good, and some interesting. As we spent our time reminiscing, discussing, and joking with one another about the things that happened in our treks, time just seemed to fly by. Midnight was fast approaching. Sadly, our dinner had to come to an end, and we helped to pack up and clean up our things. Before bidding our farewells to one another.

Thanks for your hospitality, Aswin! It was a great night to remember, and we all had a great time catching up with one another. See ya'll soon :)

**In the spirit of friendship and adventure,
Wei Feng | 44th committee | Vice president**

Afterword

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—
“Why do you go away? So that you can come back. So that you can see the place you came from with new eyes and extra colors. And the people there see you differently, too. Coming back to where you started is not the same as never leaving.” - Terry Pratchett

At the end of the day, what does one take away from an adventure? Some, having conquered remote lands, swell with immeasurable pride when they talk of their expeditions as exploits, far after the last footstep has been taken. Some etch each unique sunrise seen from every distinct peak into their memory. Some capture these memories on film to be reminisced and rediscovered once the dust has settled among companions of old. And some look towards the next adventure before the current one even ends.

For us committee members, Rovers has been an unforgettable adventure. The grace of good weather and circumstance has enabled us to launch a total of 11 treks, 9 of which were incredible expeditions overseas to Malaysia, the Philippines, Vietnam, Taiwan, Thailand, Laos, Nepal, and India. From day hikes in the lush tropics to week-long treks in the breathtaking Himalayas, the committee has been blessed to experience and share these varied landscapes with our participants. I express the following words of gratitude to those who made dreams possible:

To the 43rd, thank you for your patient guidance throughout the academic year. The process of entrusting one's legacy to another is never an easy one - and we owe a debt of gratitude to you all for making this transition as smooth and easy as possible. Thank you for being a pillar of strength, a source of wisdom, and a figure of reassurance. If we've seen any further, it has been by standing on the shoulders of giants.

Afterword

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To all future committees, there's so much more that you can achieve than you realize. Rovers is a special place - the more you give, the more you receive in return. Don't be afraid of making mistakes; do your best. Fly high and roam, venture, and explore the region to your hearts' content. We leave the club in your capable hands.

And finally, to my fellow 44th - thank you. Words fail to capture how grateful I am and how much I cherish your time, effort, and friendship. There have been tears, there has been laughter, there have been trials, and with them, the welcome sight of clear skies once we'd braved those turbulent tides. And finally, memories - enough to last a lifetime. Thank you so much for everything.

But there's no need for such words, is there? It's not the end, but rather the beginning of a new chapter for all of us. After this adventure ends and before a new one begins, though, I know where I'll be resting these tired bones. I'll rest them where I can find my friends and family - a home I've found called the 44th NUS Rovers.

For the last time,
In the spirit of friendship and adventure
Tang Wei Feng | 44th committee | Vice-President



Epilogue

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In the footsteps we've left behind and the trails we've carved together, we've forged more than just memories; we've created a bond that transcends the paths we tread. As we venture onward, let us carry with us the echoes of laughter, the shared moments of triumph, and the enduring camaraderie that define our time together. Know that the spirit of our journey will forever unite us, weaving our stories into a tapestry of adventure that binds us as one family.

In the Spirit of Friendship and Adventure,
Li Kai | 44th Committee | Special Advisor



**IN THE SPIRIT OF FRIENDSHIP
AND ADVENTURE.**