

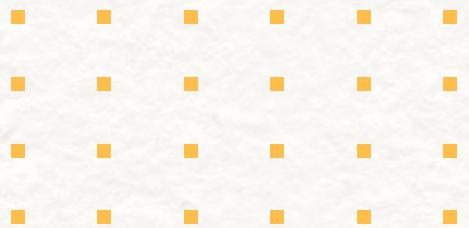


# THAILAND

## TRAVEL MANUAL

### 2012 - 2013

# AN INTRODUCTION TO AMAZING THAILAND



Thailand has long been known for the rich diversity of its attractions; nevertheless, the continuing development of the kingdom's tourism product means that there are still more waiting discovery. From dazzling temples and palaces to awe-inspiring World Heritage Sites; from timeless rural settlements to vibrant resort towns; from idyllic beaches to national parks where wild nature rules, the choice of where to go and what to see is limitless.

From this profusion of locations and activities, the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) is initiating new attractions and promoting niche markets, special programmes with appeal to special interests and needs: to younger travellers, to families, to honeymoon couples, to cultural travellers, to voyagers seeking health and wellbeing holidays. And the best part of it is Thailand offers this wealth of diversity with the legendary Thai smile, which is one of the genuine delights of discovering Thailand.





In realising the needs of today's tourists, we have compiled and arranged the 2012-2013 Travel Manual to be a sales tool full of complete and supporting information for your sales marketing efforts. This has been divided into 4 sections:

**PART 1 : Discovering Thailand** – This provides information on general information that your clients would need to know before travelling to our country, as well as money matters, communications, cultural dos and don'ts, visa details, plus more.

**PART 2 : Destinations** – Provides up-to-date information on various recommended places of interest and related aspects; such as, places to visit, shopping, entertainment and dining.

**PART 3 : Special Products** – Gives details of highlighted niche products. These include:

- **Beaches & Diving** that features selected beaches and outstanding dive spots in both the Gulf of Thailand and the Andaman Sea.
- **History & Heritage** from the past down to the present of dinosaur sites, ancient cities and World Heritage.
- **Weddings & Honeymoons** focusing on what Thailand has to offer for couples planning on tying the knot.

- **Health & Wellness** in which Thailand has become renowned as the medical and spa hub of Asia.
- **Golf** all year round on more than 250 courses throughout the country.
- **Green Escapes** for those clients wanting something new in their life that are environmentally-friendly.
- A variety of **learning experiences**.
- **Festivals and events** - There are numerous festivities held throughout the year in which your clients would wish to experience as part of their holiday.

**PART 4 : Useful Addresses** – Has an up-to-date listing of all TAT offices, both international and domestic, as well as those of tourism-related associations that visitors may need to contact.

We hope that the 2012-2013 Travel Manual will provide your clients with the utmost benefits in their diligent endeavours, and will also enhance the further promotion of Thailand's tourism.

In concluding, we would like to offer our sincere gratitude to all tour business stakeholders for their continuous support and devotion from the past to the present and into the future.

If you need any further information, please don't hesitate to contact your nearest TAT office.

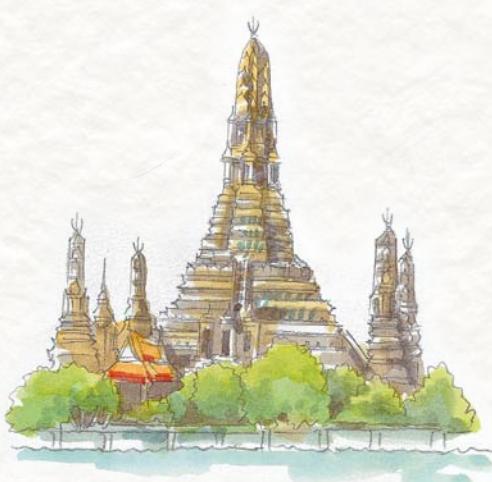
# CONTENTS



## PART I: **THAILAND FACTS**

7

- Discovering Thailand
- Knowing More about Thailand
- Communication in Thailand
- Culture & Traditions
- Tips
- Planning Your Trip
- Health & Customs
- Arriving In Thailand &  
Getting Around
- Suvarnabhumi Airport



## PART II: **THAILAND DESTINATIONS**

29

### MAIN CITIES

- Bangkok
- Chiang Mai
- Pattaya
- Hua Hin – Cha-Am
- Phuket
- Hat Yai
- Ko Samui

### ALTERNATIVE DESTINATIONS

- Kanchanaburi
- Suphan Buri
- Khao Yai
- Chiang Rai: Chiang Saen &  
Golden Triangle
- Mae Hong Son: Pai
- Nan
- Loei: Chiang Khan
- Krabi
- Trang





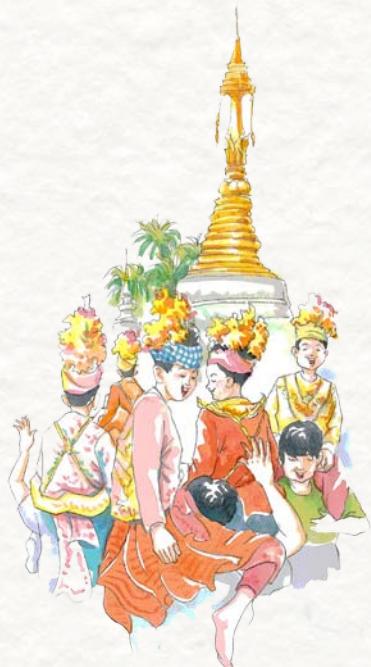
## PART III: 107 THAILAND SPECIAL PRODUCTS

- Beaches & Islands
- Diving & Snorkelling
- History & Heritage
- Wedding & Honeymoon
- Health & Wellness
- Golf
- Green Escapes
- Learning Experiences
- Gateway to The Mekong Region
- Festivities & Major Events



## PART IV: 211 USEFUL ADDRESSES

- TAT Head Office
- TAT Overseas Offices
- TAT Local Offices
- Tourism-Related Associations





*Chao Phraya River, Bangkok*



# PART I

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# THAILAND

# FACTS

## DISCOVERING THAILAND

8

- The Country
- Central Region
- East Coast
- The North
- The Northeast
- The South

## KNOWING MORE ABOUT THAILAND

12

- The People
- Language
- Climate
- Clothing
- Time
- Business Hours & Money Matters
- Electricity
- Tap Water
- Weights & Measures

## COMMUNICATION IN THAILAND

15

- Postal Services
- Internet Services
- Telephone Services & Mobile Phone Services
- International Roaming Mobile Phone

## CULTURE & TRADITIONS

16

- Dos & Don'ts
- Thai Classical Music & Dance
- Thai Calendar
- National Public Holidays

## TIPS

19

- Special Advice
- Shopping Tips
- VAT Refunds

## PLANNING YOUR TRIP

20

- Visa Matters

## HEALTH & CUSTOMS

21

- Health Regulations
- Customs

## ARRIVING IN THAILAND & GETTING AROUND

22

- By Air
- By Road
- By Rail
- By Sea

## SUVARNABHUMI AIRPORT

26

- Transportation
- Accommodation
- Sightseeing around Suvarnabhumi Airport

# DISCOVERING THAILAND



## THE COUNTRY

Officially known as the Kingdom of Thailand and formerly known as Siam, Thailand is the world's 50<sup>th</sup> largest country with a surface area of approximately 513,000 sq. km (198,000 sq. mi.). Located in the heart of Southeast Asia, Thailand shares common borders with Malaysia, Myanmar, Lao PDR. and Cambodia, and is the natural gateway to ASEAN and the Greater Mekong Subregion. The country consists of 77 administrative provinces or changwat each of which is divided into districts or amphoe, sub-districts or tambon and villages or muban. Bangkok is the capital city and centre of politics, commerce, and finance. It is also the seat of Thailand's revered Royal Family.

Thailand has a constitutional monarchy with His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej, or King Rama IX, the ninth king of the Chakri Dynasty, the present king. His Majesty is recognised as Head of State, Head of the Armed Forces, Upholder of the Buddhist religion and Upholder

of all religions. The Parliament is composed of two houses, the House of Representatives and the Senate, and both representatives and senators are elected by the people. A prime minister elected from among the representatives leads the government.

Thailand is unlike anywhere else in the world, as the country has a myriad of natural and cultural treasures waiting to be discovered. These tourism resources offer tremendous diversity and choice to enjoy a culturally enriching holiday

in each region. While travelling, tourists want to gain knowledge about the authenticity of a destination's lifestyle, culture, and traditions when travelling. Whether trekking in the forested hills of the North, observing the rice paddies of the Central Region, exploring the timeless villages of the Northeast, or lazing on a tropical isle of the South, Thailand has it all no matter what age or interest, as each region has its own unique charm different from the other that we know you will be amazed by all that you see and experience.



- **National flag:** Horizontal red, white, and blue stripes symbolizing the nation, Buddhism, and the monarchy.



- **National flower:** Ratchaphreuk – the Golden Shower Tree (Scientific Name: Cassia Fistula).



- **National animal:** Elephant



- **National architecture:** The Sala Thai, an open-sided pavilion that is found in various locations throughout the country, and is distinctively recognisable as Thai architecture with its simple yet elegant form.



## CENTRAL REGION

Defined by the fertile plain of the Chao Phraya River, the Central Region is the agricultural heartland of the country with a network of rivers and canals where the lifestyle based on water activities occurs. This is also where Bangkok, the capital of Thailand is located as well as the ancient capital of Ayutthaya, the legendary Bridge over the River Kwai, in Kanchanaburi and many other well-known cultural attractions like the Ancient City, Samut Prakan. This region of the country has had a dramatic history and is full of heritage of ancient temples, battlefields and ruins, and the renowned floating markets of Damnoen Saduak and Amphawa that draw tourists to visit our country.

## EAST COAST

The East Coast with 400 kilometres of coastline extending from Chon Buri to Trat has some of the finest beaches in Asia. Pattaya, with an enormous range of resorts, hotels and guest houses, is its centre. For those seeking a more relaxing experience, travel further down the coast to Rayong or Ko Samet and the lovely islands of Ko Chang National Park and Ko Kut in Trat province near the Cambodian border. All of this is within easy reach of Bangkok; thus, it is a popular region amongst local and foreign travellers. This region is also renowned for its fruit orchards and plantations.

## THE NORTH

Famous for its long history and exotic traditional culture of the Lanna Kingdom, and with Chiang Mai as its centre, the North also has unique nature full of forests, rivers, towering waterfalls, and spectacular mountain ranges enveloped in mist that covers almost the entire region. This region is the birthplace of the earliest Thai civilisation and has many sites of archaeological



*Wat Suan Dok, Chiang Mai*

and cultural interest; for example, Sukhothai and Si Satchanalai. It is also the home of many ethnic hill tribes who have settled in villages on the mountainsides in Mae Hong Son, Chiang Rai, and Nan to name a few and are a great attraction for travellers to the North.

## THE NORTH-EAST

Also known as I-san and as the ‘Cradle of Civilization’, the Northeast is famed for its most intriguing

destinations with many Stone Age and Bronze Age dwellings and artefacts, especially at Ban Chiang in Udon Thani province, dinosaur fossils in Kalasin and Khon Kaen, as well as several stone sanctuaries that are a legacy of the great Khmer Empire of the past at Phimai, Nakhon Ratchasima province and Phanom Rung in Buri Ram province. The pace of life is slow, but this is made up for with the colourful fun-filled festivals that reflect this region’s culture and traditions. It also has very distinctive



Phanom Rung, Buri Ram



Ko Hong, Krabi



Satun Province

cuisine and a unique dialect. In recent years, the Northeast has risen to become a useful starting point for adventurous journeys to destinations along the mighty Mekong River; such as, Lao PDR. and Vietnam in which there have been important developments in infrastructure to accommodate tourism.

### THE SOUTH

The South extends southward along a narrow peninsula lying between the

Andaman Sea with its rugged and strange limestone rock formations and cliffs on the west and the Gulf of Thailand with its wide bays and calm seas on the east. It is a rich land in terms of the abundance of its natural resources, the fertility of its soil, the diversity of its people and its commercial viability. Phuket is the tourist capital of the South, and other popular locales include Nakhon Si Thammarat, Trang, Phang-nga, and Krabi. The region is also famous for its international beach resorts, and is

full of white sandy beaches and exotic islands with rich underwater life. Thus, it is a big hit with people who love sun, sea, and sand.

For information on individual provinces in each region, please visit [www.tourismthailand.org/where-to-go/](http://www.tourismthailand.org/where-to-go/)

# KNOWING MORE ABOUT THAILAND



## THE PEOPLE

There are approximately 67 million people in Thailand comprising 75% ethnic Thais, 14% Chinese, 11% Malays plus Lao, Indians, Burmese and ethnic hill tribes reflecting the country's long history at the crossroads of Southeast Asia. However, the country is firmly united culturally and socially. Buddhism is the most important religion with 95% of the population. Four per cent of Thais are Muslim with one per cent Christian and other faiths. And wherever one travels in Thailand, they will always be greeted by the warm smiles and generous hospitality that is renowned worldwide.

## LANGUAGE

The rhythmical Thai language is pleasant to the ear as it consists of five tonal characteristics – middle, high, low, rising and falling. Spoken and written Thai is largely incomprehensible to the casual visitor. However, English is widely understood, particularly in Bangkok where it is almost the major commercial language. English and some other Asian and European languages are spoken in most hotels, shops and restaurants in major tourist destinations, and Thai-English road and street signs are found nationwide. Each region of Thailand has its own dialect, and visitors can enjoy learning a few basic phrases from the locals who will enthusiastically share their unique identity.



### CLIMATE

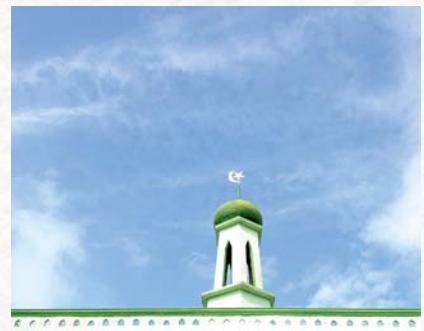
Thailand enjoys a tropical climate with 3 distinct seasons --- summer from March to May with average temperatures of 34 degrees Celsius and 75% humidity, monsoon with plenty of sunshine from June to September with an average daily temperature of 29 degrees Celsius and 87% humidity, and cool from October to February. Temperatures then range from 32 degrees Celsius to below 20 degrees Celsius with a drop in humidity. At night, much lower temperatures are experienced in the North and Northeast. The South has a tropical rainforest climate with temperatures averaging 28 degrees Celsius almost all year round.

### CLOTHING

The best thing is light cool clothing and a jacket may be needed for formal meetings and dining in certain restaurants. However, please note that shorts (except knee length walking shorts), sleeveless shirts, tank tops and other beach-style attire are considered inappropriate dress when entering a religious place of worship, Royal Palaces, or government offices. Although it is hot, jeans or slacks can still be packed and in the cooler season a sweater is necessary if travelling in the North or Northeast.

### TIME

Thailand is seven hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (+7 hours GMT).





## BUSINESS HOURS & MONEY MATTERS

Thailand is not any different from many other countries when it comes to business hours or exchanging currency, and tourists will find they have a number of options when travelling, shopping or enjoying the diversity of the tourism products and services that our country has to offer.

### • Business Hours

Most commercial concerns in Bangkok operate on a five-day week, usually from 8.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. Many stores open seven days a week from 10.00 a.m. to 10.00 p.m. Government offices are generally open between 8.30 a.m. and 4.30 p.m. Monday to Friday except on public holidays. Banks are open Mondays to Fridays from 8.30 a.m. to 3.30 p.m. except on bank holidays and public holidays.

### • Credit Cards & Currency Exchange

Foreign currency notes of all major currencies can be exchanged at any commercial banks, most hotels, and

airports, as well as authorised money changers, but the best rates can be obtained in Bangkok. Furthermore, most Thai banks can be found in major department stores and are open from 10 a.m. until 7 p.m., and Automatic Teller Machines (ATM) can also be found throughout the country. Hotel rates are usually lower than those offered by banks and authorised money changers, and traveller's cheques are still generally accepted at all hotels although it is not popular nowadays.

Major credit cards (VISA, Master Card, American Express, Diners Club, and JCB) are accepted at all major banks, restaurants, hotels, department stores, and shops.

### • Currency

The Thai currency called Baht is based on the decimal system. One Baht is divided into 100 Satang. Coins consist of 25 Satang, 50 Satang, one Baht, 2 Baht, 5 Baht and 10 Baht. Notes are in 20, 50, 100, 500 and 1,000 Baht denominations.

## ELECTRICITY

The electric current is 220 volt AC (50 cycles) throughout the country. There are many plugs and sockets in use. Travellers with shavers, hair dryers, IT gadgetry, and appliances should carry a plug adapter kit. Usually large hotels will have 110-volt transformers available for guests.

## TAP WATER

Do not drink tap water, but you can use it for showering and brushing your teeth or cooking. Bottled water can be bought everywhere. Also if you go to someone's home or eat at a street stall or restaurant and are offered water, don't worry as the Thais are aware of hygiene.

## WEIGHTS & MEASURES

The metric system is used throughout Thailand, and numerals on speedometers, highway markers and speed limits are all in kilometres.

# COMMUNICATION IN THAILAND

## POSTAL SERVICES

Thailand's mail service is reliable and efficient with major hotels providing basic postal services on their premises as well as major department stores and some private companies also have postal service outlets on offer. Bangkok's Central Post Office on Charoen Krung Road is open from 8.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m.

Monday to Friday, and from 9.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. on Saturdays, and provincial post offices are open from 8.00 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. Monday to Friday and from 9.00 a.m. to midday on Saturdays.

For more information about postal services, see [www.thailandpost.com](http://www.thailandpost.com)

For those tourists wishing to send goods back to their home country by freight or courier, DHL, FEDEX, and UPS offer very quick and efficient services from various locations around Thailand.

## INTERNET SERVICES

Thailand is continually expanding its IT services for residents and tourists, and now many accommodation establishments, coffee shops and fast-food outlets have WiFi. For those, who don't carry a laptop with them, there are numerous cybercafe nationwide.

## INTERNATIONAL ROAMING MOBILE PHONE

A Subscriber Identity Module Card (SIM Card) is available for Thai and foreign customers from mobile phone shops as well as at Suvarnabhumi Airport at the AIS, DTAC, and True counters between Gates 5-7, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor of the Arrivals Hall. The SIM Card must be used in conjunction with a Digital GSM mobile phone within the 900- MHz range or a Digital PCN mobile phone within the 1800-MHz range.

### TELEPHONE SERVICES & MOBILE PHONE SERVICES

Home telephone numbers for local calls and long distance calls within the country have nine digits while mobile phone numbers have 10 digits.

- Bangkok calls are prefaced by the numbers 02; e.g. 0 2123 4567.
- Provincial calls have an area code added to the telephone number. For example, the area code for Chiang Mai is 053 followed by the number e.g. 0 5312 3456.
- Mobile phone number example: 08 9123 4567.

International phone calls can be made easily from almost every hotel in Thailand with direct dialling to and from more than 80 countries across the globe. There are special booths for making overseas calls at post offices as well as international phone booths in Bangkok and other tourist areas where debit cards can be purchased for use.

- The international dialling code for Thailand is +66. When making an international call to Thailand add 66 and omit the leading 0.
- For international calls from Thailand, dial 001 then the country code, area code and the telephone number.
- For directory assistance, call 1133 for local numbers; 100 for overseas.



# CULTURE & TRADITIONS

## DOS & DON'TS

The Thai people are known for their warmth and hospitality, and this has become Thailand's cultural icon. However, Thai culture is very different from the West and with any inter-cultural relationships, there is a need for common mutual respect, courtesy, and good manners. Therefore, there are some distinct aspects that are worthy of special mention.

### • Respect for the Monarchy

Woven deeply into Thailand's culture is high reverence and respect for Their Majesties the King and Queen of Thailand and the Royal Family. One important example is to stand at attention whenever the national or royal anthem is played at any public gathering including in a cinema.

### • Religion

The main religion of the Thai people is Buddhism. However, there are also other faiths accepted and practiced in Thailand. Therefore, tourists should have respect for places and objects of worship of the various religions, and observe peace and order during religious assemblies or ceremonies. Also dress neatly - shorts, mini-skirts and sleeveless T-shirts, and tops, and sundresses are not considered appropriate. While it is alright to

wear shoes and sandals around the compound of a temple, these must be removed when entering the sanctuary or chapel. Also all Buddha images are considered as sacred; hence, show respect and reverence in public places where these images are present and especially when taking photographs of them.

### • Etiquette

Traditionally, Thai people do not shake hands. They greet each other by putting their palms together in a prayer-like gesture called a 'wai'. A younger person would 'wai' an older person first and the latter will respond. It is also good to bear in mind that the 'wai' symbolizes the paying of respect, and it follows that where one is meeting more senior people, regardless of their age, one would start the 'wai' first.

It is also perfectly acceptable to address your Thai host, guest or associate by his/her first name instead of his/her family name. The salutation in a Thai greeting is Khun and is not gender specific.

Some traditional Thai meals are served with guests sitting on the floor. While sitting on the floor, do not point

your foot toward another person but keep your feet nicely tucked away as you sit. In the Thai culture, the foot represents the lowest part of the human anatomy and using it to point to someone is interpreted as a rude gesture.

Whilst the foot is considered the lowest part of the human anatomy in Thai culture, the head is considered the most revered. Thus, it is considered impolite to touch someone's head, even if the gesture is considered friendly in some cultures. Further to this, when in a group, young people will make an effort to lower their heads when passing by the more elderly ones. This is to avoid the implications that the younger ones are 'looking down' on the more elderly ones. It may be an effort, but it is the attitude that counts.

Frowns, grimaces, loud voices and 'loosing your cool' in public places interpret a departure from good public behavior.

Women should not get close to Buddhist monks, as they are forbidden to touch or be touched by a woman. When a woman needs to present anything to a monk, she



should first hand it to a man who will then hand it onward to the monk. Another alternative is that she will be given a saffron robe or a handkerchief on which she will place her present, which will then be handed over to the monk.

In Bangkok – as with any modern cities around the world – there are rules and regulations pertaining to health and sanitation, especially

in the proper disposal of garbage including cigarette butts and spitting. In natural environments – beaches, mountains, etc. – responsibility over the disposal of garbage is highly appreciated, to help Thailand maintain its natural beauty and environment. In some places, there are penalties for littering or other similar practices that may have an effect on a particular location's environment.



## THAI CLASSICAL MUSIC & DANCE

- **Thai Classical Music** originated in the Sukhothai era, and consists of three different ensembles, namely, Pi Phat, Khruang Sai and Mahori. Pi Phat is a tuned percussion ensemble which accompanies theatre performances and boxing matches whereas Khruang Sai is the percussion and wind instrument ensemble mainly used for indoor performances. Mahori is the combination of instruments from the Pi Phat and Khruang Sai ensemble. It includes the delicate three string fiddle or So Sam Sai and is often accompanied by a vocalist.

- **Khon:** The unique classical masked dance requires great skills and extensive training. It was originally performed only in the royal court, proving the exclusiveness of this type of dance. The scenes of the traditional Khon are from the episodes in Thai literature based on the Indian Ramayana epic.

- **Nang Yai:** Nang Yai is a shadow play originated from the South and the puppets are made of leather pierced with a decorative pattern to depict a particular scene in the story. The story is told by singing, reciting, and by moving the puppet figures.

- **Nang Talung:** Another version of the shadow play similar to Nang Yai but using smaller puppets. Nang Talung is accompanied by a folk ensemble of oboe, drums and gongs.

- **Hun Lakhon Lek:** The traditional Thai small puppets that are rarely seen today. The elaborate puppets and their handlers dance

in synchronized movements and communicate with the audience in a playful manner.

- **Li-ke:** The folk performance with uncomplicated story lines which is often performed at villages as community gatherings. The performance is accompanied by traditional music, dance, and comedy.





### THAI CALENDAR

Thailand has adopted the Western calendar dividing the year into days, weeks and months and using Thai names for days and months. Years may be numbered according to the Buddhist era (BE) or Christian era (CE). The Buddhist era began 543 years before the Christian era; therefore, 2012 (CE) is BE 2555 and 2013 is BE 2556.

### NATIONAL PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

Throughout the year, there are numerous national holidays that are linked to religious or agricultural traditions. They follow the lunar calendar and therefore the dates for some of the holidays change each year. For the precise dates of the lunar holidays and festival locations, please check [www.tourismthailand.org](http://www.tourismthailand.org). The followings are national public holidays in Thailand:



- 1 January : New Year's Day
- Late January to early March : Makha Bucha Day
- 6 April : Chakri Day
- 13-15 April : Songkran Day (Thai New Year)
- 1 May : National Labour Day
- 5 May : Coronation Day
- May : Visakha Bucha Day
- May : Royal Ploughing Ceremony
- July : Asalha Bucha Day
- July : Khao Phansa Day (Buddhist Lent)
- 12 August : H.M. the Queen's Birthday
- 23 October : Chulalongkorn Day
- 5 December : H.M. the King's Birthday
- 10 December : Constitution Day
- 31 December : New Year's Eve

# TIPS

To enjoy your time in Thailand even more, here is some special advice, shopping tips and information on how to obtain a VAT refund when departing the country.

## SPECIAL ADVICE

- Beware of unauthorised people who offer their services as guides.
- Observe all normal precautions regarding personal safety and the safety of your belongings.
- Walking alone on quiet streets or deserted areas is not recommended.
- Be sure that all your valuables, money, jewellery and airline tickets are properly protected from loss.
- While walking in the city, put food wrappers or anything you wish to discard into a waste bin. There are anti-litter regulations in Bangkok. Fines will be imposed on anyone caught spitting throwing away cigarette stubs or dropping litter in public places.
- Penalties for drug possession are very severe in Thailand.



- Never buy any products made from wild animals including reptiles like snakes or monitor lizards, or turtle shells and ivory.
- Avoid local restaurants serving wild animal delicacies, as killing wildlife for food is illegal in Thailand.
- Expect a 10% service charge added to the bill at most larger hotels and restaurants.
- Taxi drivers do not expect a tip, but the gesture is always appreciated.
- A tip of 20-50 Baht is acceptable for hotel porters.
- For all tourist information, contact the Tourism Authority of Thailand's Call Centre Tel.: 1672 (8 a.m. - 8 p.m. seven days a week); Email: info@tat.or.th; Website: www.tourismthailand.org
- For information about Bangkok, contact the Bangkok Metropolitan Tourist Bureau Tel.: +66 (0) 2225 7612-4.
- Visitors needing assistance should contact the Tourist Police Centre or call Tel: 1155. Website: www.thailandtouristpolice.com

## VAT REFUNDS

Visitors entering the Kingdom on a tourist visa are entitled to a refund of 7% VAT on goods purchased at registered retail outlets. To obtain this, tourists must do the following:

- Spend at least 2,000 Baht per store per day but a minimum of at least 5,000 Baht.
- Complete a P.P 10 form that the store staff will give you.
- The goods must be taken out of Thailand within 60 days of purchase.
- The goods must have been purchased from stores displaying the "VAT Refund for Tourists" sign.

- At the airport, present the VAT forms and receipts at the VAT Refund Desk on the 4<sup>th</sup> Floor of the Departures Hall – do this before checking in. N.B. Jewellery, watches and gold purchases over 10,000 Baht must be inspected.
- After going through Immigration, go to the VAT Refund Counter and present the forms for the refund.

## For further information, please contact:

- VAT Refund Office, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Suvarnabhumi Airport  
Tel.: +66 (0) 2535 6576-79.  
E-mail: vrefund@rd.go.th  
Website: www.rd.go.th

## SHOPPING TIPS

Thailand is a shopper's paradise with bargains galore, so here are some tips for visitors.

- Fixed prices are the norm in department stores, but at most other places bargaining is to be expected.
- Usually you can obtain a final price of between 10-25% lower than the asking price. Much depends on your skill and the shopkeeper's mood, but remember that Thais appreciate a sense of humour.
- Providing you have the time, it is best to shop around at different places selling the kind of items you want before making a final decision.

# PLANNING YOUR TRIP



## VISA MATTERS

Foreign nationals wishing to visit the Kingdom of Thailand need a valid passport and must obtain the appropriate visa for the purpose of their visit from the nearest Thai Embassy or Consulate.

## TOURIST VISA EXEMPTION

Tourists from several countries do not require a visa to enter Thailand if their stay does not exceed 30 days. They must have minimum living expenses of 10,000 Baht per person or 20,000 Baht per family.

The address and contact numbers of Thai embassies and consulates abroad can be obtained from the Department of Consular Affairs, Visas and Travel Documents Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Website: [www.mfa.go.th](http://www.mfa.go.th),  
[www.thaiembassy.org](http://www.thaiembassy.org)

## VALIDITY OF VISA

All visas are valid for up to 90 days from the date of issue.

- Transit Visa: 30 days
- Tourist Visa: 60 days
- Non-Immigrant Visa: 90 days

## VISA ON ARRIVAL

Citizens of some countries can apply for a "Visa on Arrival" that allows them to stay for a period of 15 days. They must have minimum living expenses of 20,000 Baht per person or 40,000 Baht per family, and must produce a fully paid air ticket valid up to 15 days from the date of entry.

A visa on arrival is provided at 25 designated international checkpoints:

1. Suvarnabhumi Airport, Samut Prakan
2. Don Mueang International Airport, Bangkok
3. Chiang Mai International Airport, Chiang Mai
4. Phuket International Airport, Phuket
5. Hat Yai International Airport, Songkhla
6. U-Taphao Airport, Rayong
7. Mae Sai Immigration Checkpoint, Chiang Rai
8. Chiang Saen Immigration Checkpoint, Chiang Rai
9. Chiang Khong Immigration Checkpoint, Chiang Rai
10. Betong Immigration Checkpoint, Yala
11. Sadao Immigration Checkpoint, Songkhla
12. Samui Airport, Surat Thani
13. Sukhothai Airport Immigration Checkpoint, Sukhothai
14. Tak Immigration Checkpoint, Tak
15. Bangkok Harbour Immigration Checkpoint, Bangkok
16. Sri Racha Immigration Checkpoint, Chon Buri
17. Mabtaput Immigration Checkpoint, Rayong
18. Nong Khai Immigration Checkpoint, Nong Khai
19. Samui Immigration Checkpoint, Surat Thani
20. Phuket Immigration Checkpoint, Phuket
21. Satun Immigration Checkpoint, Satun
22. Krabi Immigration Checkpoint, Krabi
23. Songkhla Harbour Immigration Checkpoint, Songkhla
24. Mae Fah Luang-Chiang Rai Airport Immigration Checkpoint, Chiang Rai
25. Surat Thani Airport Immigration Checkpoint, Surat Thani

Applicants must have a passport, which should be valid for at least six months, complete an application form and submit it with a recent visa size photograph attached. The application fee is 1,900 Baht.

Visitors who enter the Kingdom with a visa on arrival cannot apply for an extension of stay except in cases of illness that prevents them from travelling.

Visitors wishing to stay longer than 30 or 90 days in the Kingdom are advised to apply to Thai diplomatic missions in their home countries. Where there are no Thai diplomatic missions, they may apply in neighbouring countries.

## LONG STAY VISA

This is a special visa for Temporary Residents under the O-A Code for retirees which may be issued to applicants aged 50 years and above. Holders of this type of visa will be permitted to stay in Thailand for one year, but may not take employment during their stay.

## ADVICE TO ALIENS STAYING IN THE KINGDOM

When you have stayed in Thailand for 90 days, you should report to the competent authority: the immigration office in the area where you live, or report to the police station if there is no immigration control in your home area. Another option is by sending by registered post no later than seven days before the date due to the Immigration Bureau.

## VISA EXTENSIONS

Application for a visa extension can be made at the Immigration Bureau.

## RE-ENTRY PERMITS

- Application fee for a single re-entry permit is 1,900 Baht.
- A multiple re-entry permit per visa is 3,800 Baht.

For more information about visas and re-entry permits, please contact:  
Immigration Division 1  
120 Moo 3, Chaeng Wattana Road,  
Soi 7 Laksi, Bangkok 10210  
Tel: +66 (0) 2141 7881  
Website: [www.immigration.go.th](http://www.immigration.go.th)



# HEALTH & CUSTOMS

## HEALTH REGULATIONS

**A**s in most other countries, visitors do not require vaccinations unless coming from or passing through a designated contaminated area. Yellow fever certificates are required for arrivals from the following countries: Angola, Bolivia, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Nigeria, Peru and Sudan.

It is important to check the current regulations with your nearest Thai Embassy or Consulate.

## CUSTOMS

Customs regulations allow visitors to bring in the following items duty-free:

- A reasonable amount of personal effects including clothing and toiletries not exceeding 10,000 Baht in value.

- A total of 200 cigarettes or 250 grams of cigars or smoking tobacco.
- One litre each of wine or spirits.

the importation of firearms or other types of weaponry, ammunition, fruit, vegetables and plants, and animals.

## Other items:

- Please contact your nearest Thai Embassy or Consulate regarding

*N.B. Narcotics and pornography are strictly prohibited and offenders face severe penalties.*



# ARRIVING IN THAILAND & GETTING AROUND





**D**ue to its geographical location, travelling to China, India and the countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) from Thailand is simple and speedy. Myanmar borders Thailand to the west, Lao PDR. to the north and northeast, Cambodia to the east, and Malaysia to the south; all have land and water access points where visitors can enter or leave Thailand. The train is also a convenient means of travel, with connections from Chiang Mai in the North to Bangkok then southward across the border to Malaysia and on to Singapore. Also tourists can travel by road from northern Thailand to southern China with the R3A Highway, or from northeastern Thailand to Vietnam via Route 9 through Lao PDR.

#### BY AIR

Bangkok is Thailand's major gateway with Asia's biggest and most modern airport, Suvarnabhumi that is capable of handling 45 million passengers per year. Flights belonging to the world's major airlines arrive daily from Europe, Asia, North America and Australia with further international flights, mainly from Singapore, Malaysia and Hong Kong, landing at Phuket and Hat Yai International Airports in the South and Chiang Mai in the North.

Domestic airports have also grown in number, all with connecting flights to Bangkok and at least one other destination; for example, from Chiang Mai to Phuket .

## INTERNATIONAL & DOMESTIC AIRPORTS IN THAILAND

### Airports of Thailand Public Company Limited (AOT)

Tel: +66 (0) 2535 1111  
Fax: +66 (0) 2535 4061  
Email: [aotpr@airportthai.co.th](mailto:aotpr@airportthai.co.th)  
Website: [www.airportthai.co.th](http://www.airportthai.co.th)

### Suvarnabhumi Airport

Tel: +66 (0) 2132 1888,  
+66 (0) 2132 1111-2  
Fax: +66 (0) 2132 1889  
Website:  
[www.suvarnabhumiairport.com](http://www.suvarnabhumiairport.com)

### Don Mueang International Airport

Tel: +66 (0) 2535 1111  
Fax: +66 (0) 2535 1065  
Information: +66 (0) 2535 1254  
Website: [www.airportthai.co.th](http://www.airportthai.co.th)

### Chiang Mai International Airport

Tel: +66 (0) 5327 0222-33,  
+66 (0) 5392 2100  
Fax: +66 (0) 5327 7284  
Information: +66 (0) 5392 2100  
Website: [www.airportthai.co.th](http://www.airportthai.co.th)

### Mae Fah Luang-Chiang Rai International Airport

Tel: +66 (0) 5379 8000  
Fax: +66 (0) 5379 3071  
Information: +66 (0) 5379 3071,  
+66 (0) 5379 8171

### Phuket International Airport

Tel: +66 (0) 7632 7230-7  
Fax: +66 (0) 7632 7478  
Information: +66 (0) 7635-1166  
Website: [www.airportthai.co.th](http://www.airportthai.co.th)

### Hat Yai International Airport

Tel: +66 (0) 7422 7000  
Fax: +66 (0) 7422 7050  
Information: +66 (0) 7422 7131-3  
Website: [www.airportthai.co.th](http://www.airportthai.co.th)

### Krabi International Airport

Tel: +66 (0) 7563 6541-2  
Fax: +66 (0) 7563 6549  
Website: [www.krabiairport.org](http://www.krabiairport.org)

### Mae Hong Son Airport

Tel: +66 (0) 5361 2057

### Sukhothai Airport

Tel: +66 (0) 5564 7224

### Khon Kaen Airport

Tel: +66 (0) 4324 2295

### Nakhon Ratchasima Airport

Tel: +66 (0) 4425 9524,  
+66 (0) 4425 9534,  
+66 (0) 4425 9686-7

### Udon Thani Airport

Tel: +66 (0) 4224 4426,  
+66 (0) 4224 6804

### U-Tapao Airport

Tel: +66 (0) 3860 1533,  
+66 (0) 3860 5325  
Fax: +66 (0) 3869 5090  
Website: [www.utapao.com](http://www.utapao.com)

### Trat Airport

Tel: +66 (0) 3952 5767-8  
Fax: +66 (0) 3952 5769

### Nakhon Si Thammarat Airport

Tel: +66 (0) 7536 9541

### Narathiwat Airport

Tel: +66 (0) 7356 5122,  
+66 (0) 7356 5111,  
+66 (0) 7356 5061

### Surat Thani Airport

Tel: +66 (0) 7744 1231

### Samui Airport

Tel: +66 (0) 7742 5011-4

### Trang Airport

Tel: +66 (0) 7521 8224,  
+66 (0) 7521 1150  
Fax: +66 (0) 7521 8224

There are a number of airlines that operate regular domestic flights throughout the country. Advance booking is necessary during the high season and public holidays. These include:

### Thai Airways

Tel: +66 (0) 2545 1000  
Hot line: 1566  
Website: [www.thaiairways.com](http://www.thaiairways.com)

### Bangkok Airways

Tel: +66 (0) 2265 5678  
Website: [www.bangkokair.com](http://www.bangkokair.com)

### Nok Air

Tel: 1318  
Website: [www.nokair.com](http://www.nokair.com)

### AirAsia

Tel: +66 (0) 2515 9999  
Website: [www.airasia.com](http://www.airasia.com)

### Orient Thai Airlines

Tel: 1126  
Website: [www.flyorientthai.com](http://www.flyorientthai.com)

### Siam Land Flying Company Limited

Hotline: +66 (0) 2535 6784-5,  
+66 (0) 81 807 8642  
Website:  
[www.aircharterthailand.com](http://www.aircharterthailand.com)

### Jetstar

Website: [www.jetstar.com](http://www.jetstar.com)

### THAI Smile Air

(Will start its domestic operations in July 2012 and international flights in 2013.)

Check-in time for all domestic flights is one hour prior to departure time.

## BY ROAD

### From Malaysia

- It is possible to enter Thailand through a number of crossings in the southern borders of Songkhla, Yala, and Narathiwat provinces.

### From Lao PDR.

- Visitors can enter Thailand via Chong Mek, Ubon Ratchathani province, Mukdahan, Nakhon Phanom, Bueng Kan, and Nong Khai provinces, and Chiang Khong and Chiang Saen in Chiang Rai province.

### From Cambodia

- It is possible to enter Thailand through Aranyaprathet in Sa Kaeo province and Ko Kong in Trat province.

### From Myanmar

- Visitors can enter Thailand through Mae Sai, Chiang Rai province and Mae Sot, Tak province.

Within Thailand, buses are probably the most common form of getting from A to B, as they pretty much go everywhere throughout the country and are quite comfortable. If leaving from Bangkok to other provinces, you need to go to one of three bus terminals depending on your destination:

### Southern Bus Terminal (Sai Tai Mai) Borommarat Chonnani Road, Talingchan

Tel: +66 (0) 2422 4444,  
+66 (0) 2422 4400

### Eastern Bus Terminal (Ekkamai)

#### Sukhumvit Road, Ekkamai

Tel: +66 (0) 2391 2504,  
+66 (0) 2391 6846

### Northern and Northeastern Bus Terminal (Mo Chit) Kamphaeng Phet 2 Road, Chatuchak

- Northern/Central Line  
Tel: +66 (0) 2936 2841-48,  
+66 (0) 2936 2852-66  
Ext. 311, 442
- Northeastern Line  
Tel: +66 (0) 2936 2841-48,  
+66 (0) 2936 2852-66  
Ext. 448, 611

Hotline: 1490

Website: [www.transport.co.th](http://www.transport.co.th)

## BY RAIL

Trains are slower than buses, but can be a lot more comfortable. There is a regular train service linking Bangkok with Singapore via Kuala Lumpur and Butterworth in Malaysia connecting with many major southern Thai towns. For these long journeys, air-conditioned first-class and second class sleepers are ideal and provide the necessary comfort for travelers.

For luxury travel, there is one direct through train, the Eastern and Oriental Express service that runs from Chiang Mai in the North to Bangkok then southward across the border to Malaysia and on to Singapore. For more information, please visit [www.orient-express.com](http://www.orient-express.com)

For travelling around Thailand, there are 7 rail lines running from the North to the South to the Northeast, East and the West, and depending on the distance, there are various options for passengers.

- First-class** has private cabins that are air-conditioned with a wash basin and mirror, a small table and long bench seat that converts into a bed. Drinking water and towels are provided free of charge. First-class is available only on express and special express trains.

- Second-class** offers 2 options:  
**Seating:** Is similar to those on a bus with pairs of padded seats in which the passenger sits upright for the entire journey.

**For longer or overnight trips, a second-class sleeper:** Has 2 rows of facing seat pairs; each pair is separated from the next by a dividing wall. A table folds down between each pair and at night seats convert into 2 fold-down berths, one over the other. Curtains provide some privacy and fresh linen is provided.

- Third class** is generally clean, not usually crowded outside the commuter peak times, unbelievably cheap, and sitting next to an open window as the

train goes through the countryside is a very pleasant experience. Third class usually has wooden or padded seats, is normally non-air-con, so it can be a good option for very short distances. Air-con may exist on a few long distance routes.

Tickets can be purchased on the day or months in advance for anywhere in Thailand. For more information or making reservations, please contact:

Hua Lamphong Railway Station (This is accessible by the MRT Hua Lamphong Station)

Tel: +66 (0) 2220 4334,  
+66 (0) 2220 4444

Call Centre: 1690

Website: [www.railway.co.th](http://www.railway.co.th)

## BY SEA

There are no regular steamship connections to Thailand, though cargo ships calling at Bangkok's Khlong Toei Port may occasionally have passenger facilities. Yachts and other kinds of marine craft call at one of two modern deep-sea ports, Laem Chabang between Bangkok and Pattaya, and the island resort of Phuket. Cruise liners, come to berth at all 3 ports on a regular basis.

### List of cruise operators

Destination Asia: [www.destination-asia.com](http://www.destination-asia.com)

Regale: [www.regaleintl.com](http://www.regaleintl.com)

SEA Tours: [www.seatoursthai.com](http://www.seatoursthai.com)

Star: [www.starcruises.com](http://www.starcruises.com)

Or contact a local travel agent for more details.

# SUVARNABHUMI AIRPORT



Suvarnabhumi Airport is Thailand's premier international air travel gateway and a regional centre for aviation that links all aspects of air travel and transport. It has a total of 120 parking bays, five of them capable of handling Airbus A380. The main passenger terminal building can handle 76 flight operations an hour, and 45 million passengers and three million tonnes of cargo per year.



## ACCOMMODATION

Within the Airport and the surrounding environs, there are a number of accommodation options on offer to tourists that can suit every budget and need with high international standards of facilities, services and amenities in every respect that provide a refreshing perspective to the visitor on Thai hospitality.

### **Novotel Suvarnabhumi Airport Hotel**

- Is a five-minute walk from the Airport along a 300-metre underground walkway.
- The hotel has 612 rooms, four restaurants, two bars, a swimming pool, business centre, fitness centre and health spa.

999 Suvarnabhumi Airport Hotel,  
Mu 1, Nongprue, Bang Phli,  
Samut Prakan 10540  
Tel: +66 (0) 2131 1111  
Fax: +66 (0) 2131 1188  
Website: [www.novotel.com](http://www.novotel.com)

### **The Louis Tavern Transit Hotel (Dayrooms)**

- Is a boutique hotel conveniently located within the Suvarnabhumi Airport.
- Has Standard, Superior and Suite rooms , massage, saunas, Barber and beauty salon, 24-hour service restaurant

Level 4, Concourse G, Suvarnabhumi Airport  
Tel: +66 (0) 2551 2191-9  
Fax: +66 (0) 2521 3534  
E-mail: [reservation@louistavernhotel-bkk.com](mailto:reservation@louistavernhotel-bkk.com)



## TRANSPORTATION

There are also a number of options for visitors to get from Suvarnabhumi Airport to downtown Bangkok.

### Airport Rail Link

Bangkok has a 26.6-km high-speed rail link from the airport to the City Airport Terminal in Makkasan. The City Airport Terminal network is connected to the BTS Bangkok Mass Transit System (BTS) Sukhumvit Line at the Phayathai Station and within walking distance of the Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) Blue Line at the Phetchaburi Station. The total journey to the airport takes approximately 15 minutes, and the cost is: Express Service - 150 Baht; City Line – 15-45 Baht depending on distance.

For more information, visit  
<http://airportraillink.railway.co.th>

### Taxis

Metred taxis are available outside the exit on the 1<sup>st</sup> Floor. There is a 50 Baht surcharge on the metre and the journey to the city will cost approximately 300-400 Baht plus

## SIGHTSEEING AROUND SUVARNABHUMI AIRPORT

Suvarnabhumi Airport is approximately 25 kilometres from the heart of Bangkok, and for those waiting for a connecting flight or wanting a couple of days stopover, there are some interesting attractions and tour packages on offer. For more information, please contact the Association of Thai Travel Agents (ATTA)'s tour counter in the Arrivals Area of the airport.

### Stopover Project

Having a short stopover in Bangkok before heading onto your planned destination? Then make the most of your stay by getting a taste of what Bangkok and its nearby environs, and more importantly what Thailand, has to offer you. Experience Bangkok for a few days and your next planned destination may be Thailand, where you will further enjoy more of our amazing country and go beyond Bangkok to the mountains in the North or the islands and beaches in the South.

Be enchanted by a wide selection of remarkably unique experiences in Bangkok which will surely enthrall visitors of all ages and interests. Stopover in Bangkok and fall in love with this dazzling city that will charm you back for a fully-fledged holiday in Thailand tomorrow.

Please check for more information at [www.stopoverbangkok.com](http://www.stopoverbangkok.com)

### Transfer Passenger Project

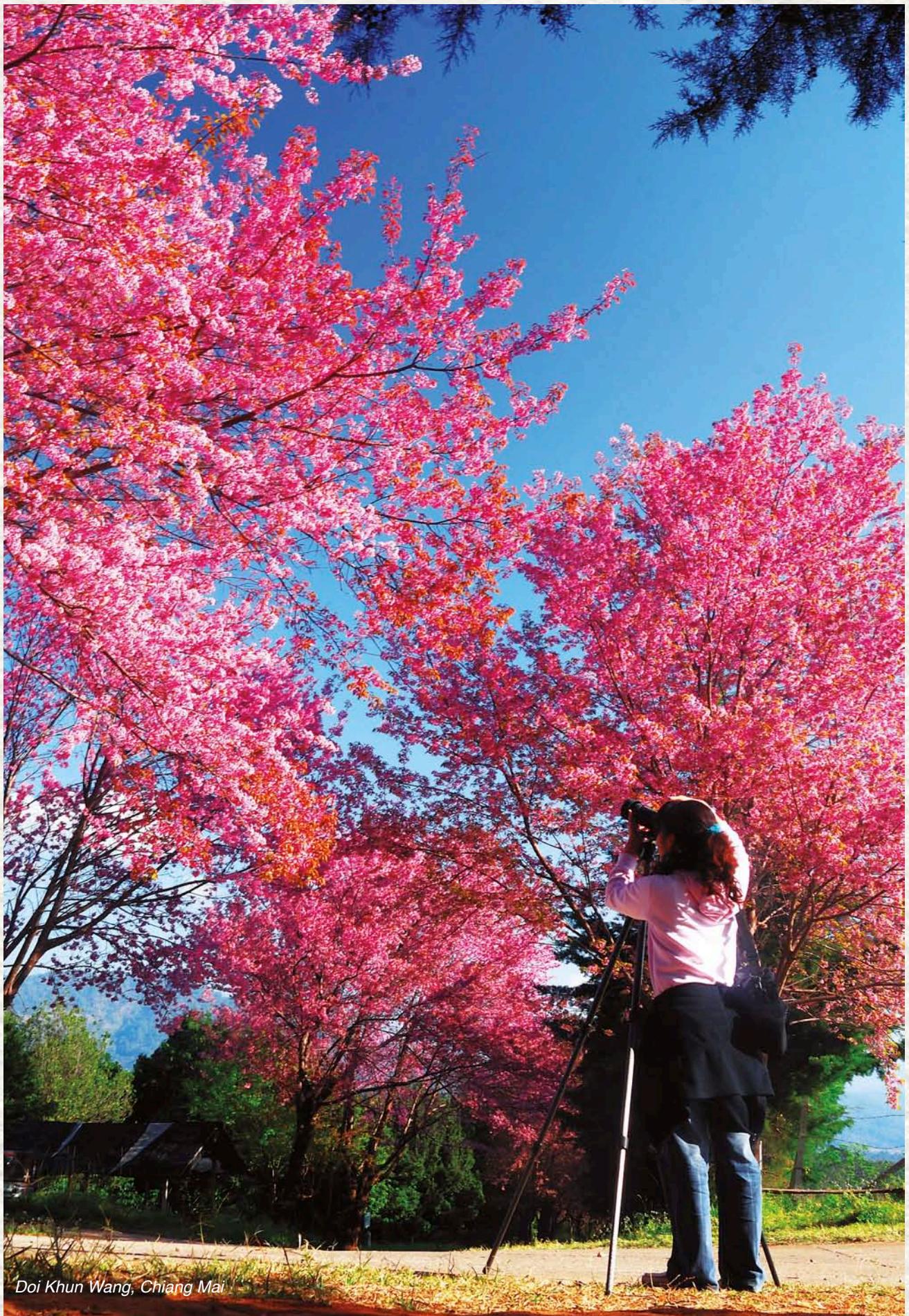
There are a number of tourist options for transfer passengers at the Suvarnabhumi Airport depending on the length of their time in transit. These include duty-free shopping, eating at outstanding restaurants, some general sightseeing to cultural and historical sites, or a round of golf or rejuvenating with a Thai traditional massage and spa.

- Excludes airport fees for international transfer passengers who wait for a transit flight more than 6 hours but not over 12 hours.
- Buying a tour programme which is arranged under the project.
- The Immigration Bureau facilitates international transfer passengers who participate in the project by accepting the application form TM 6 at the checkpoint.
- Arranging a privilege fast track. International transfer passengers can ask for a VAT refund after shopping inside Suvarnabhumi Airport at the customs counter.
- International transfer passenger of any nationality can participate in the project without a Thai visa.

For more information, please contact the Transfer Passenger Counter in Concourses C and F in the Departures Area, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Suvarnabhumi Airport from 5.00 a.m. - 11.00 p.m.

### Limousine Services

These are provided from Thai Airways International and the Airports of Thailand (AOT) on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Arrivals Hall.



*Doi Khun Wang, Chiang Mai*



**PART II**

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# THAILAND DESTINATIONS

## MAIN CITIES

• Bangkok	31
• Chiang Mai	56
• Pattaya	60
• Hua Hin – Cha-Am	66
• Phuket	70
• Hat Yai	78
• Ko Samui	80

## ALTERNATIVE DESTINATIONS

• Kanchanaburi	84
• Suphan Buri	86
• Khao Yai	88
• Chiang Rai: Chiang Saen & Golden Triangle	92
• Mae Hong Son: Pai	96
• Nan	98
• Loei: Chiang Khan	100
• Krabi	101
• Trang	104



Thailand is unlike anywhere else in the world. It's a tourist destination where strong emotions of culture and history enrich the spirit and soul, smiles and friendliness reflect natural charm and hospitality, and the world's longest-serving monarch enjoys the love and respect of the whole nation. With a mix of cultures, rich blend of colourful festivities, reminders of past glories and new innovations, join us on a journey into the heart of one of the most loved regions on Earth with its inspiring local traditions, ancient cities, breathtaking sites, amazing scenery, and opportunities to shop and dine at prices everyone can afford. The diverse attractions will awaken visitors' senses and provide them with endless chances to explore and discover new experiences.



In the last decade, Thailand's capital city for 245 years, Bangkok, has secured its place as a vibrant, sophisticated modern metropolis thus making it the unmatched jewel of Southeast Asia. First-class luxury and boutique hotels ranked among the best in the world, chic and ultra-modern shopping malls ablaze with international brands, convenient and comfortable choices of transportation, new dimension gourmet dining restaurants, international fast-food outlets and all the other amenities of a 21<sup>st</sup> century city on the move can be found.

This is all intertwined with the Bangkok of old with golden-spired temples and saffron-robed monks, bustling markets and narrow lanes where small communities have lived for generations, various forms of marine craft plying the Chao Phraya River and offshoot canals. Consequently, this metropolis of diversity that is the hub of Thai society is able to cater to all interests, and has done so by continually welcoming visitors from all corners of the world and enthralled them with its age-old Oriental culture and mystique blended with present-day modernity. This has been topped off with providing them with the opportunity to experience the element of unique "Thainess", a sense of style found nowhere else in the world awaiting to engulf visitors.

So whether for business, shopping or sightseeing, Bangkok is a very magnetic destination.

## RECOMMENDED PLACES OF INTEREST



*Grand Palace and Wat Phra Kaeo*



*Phra Thinang Chakri Maha Prasat*

### GRAND PALACE AND TEMPLE OF THE EMERALD BUDDHA

On any visit to the 'Land of Smiles' the two attractions in the heart of Rattanakosin Island that are a definite must-see for everyone is the Grand Palace and Wat Phra Kaeo or Temple of the Emerald Buddha. The Grand Palace has always been the major architectural symbol of the Thai royal family. Wat Phra Kaeo, is located in the grounds of the Grand Palace and is the most revered Buddhist shrine in Thailand. Both structures contain some of the finest examples of Buddhist sculpture, architecture, and decorative craft in Thailand.

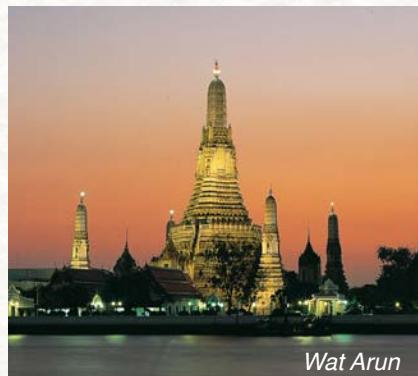
#### Highlights

- Phra Thinang Chakri Maha Prasat (the Royal Residence): This magnificent building is the most highly recognised architectural landmark of the Nation. The central Throne Hall, which was formerly used to receive royal guests who were monarchs or heads of state, is flanked by reception areas decorated with galleries of portraiture. The central room on the second floor is used as a shrine for the reliquary ashes of Kings Rama IV, Rama V, Rama VI, Rama VII and Rama VIII.
- The Emerald Buddha, the most sacred Buddha image in Thailand that sits atop a huge gold altar in the centre of the temple. The mural paintings inside the Ubosoth portray scenes of the Buddhist cosmology on the western wall and the Enlightenment of the Lord Buddha on the eastern wall.
- Galleries of Phra Rabiang: These galleries are the original enclosure for the compound and are decorated with murals that portray the "Ramakien" which is the Thai version of the Hindu epic "Ramayana". It is a superb example of the traditional Thai art style.
- The Seated Hermit: King Rama III commissioned this sculpture of a seated hermit who was supposed to be a great physician. The grinding stone and a mortar were placed before the figure so that people could come to worship and grind their medicine.

**N.B.:** Visitors should dress appropriately: shirts with sleeves, long pants or skirts, no see-through shirts and blouses and no sandals (without ankle or heel straps).  
Website: [www.palaces.thai.net](http://www.palaces.thai.net)



Wat Pho



Wat Arun



**WAT PHO (Temple of the Reclining Buddha)**  
(*2008 Thailand Tourism Award Winner of the Cultural Tourist Site*)

It is considered as one of the most interesting temples in Thailand, as it combines history, medical science and is a centre for meditation and traditional massage training. It is also known for the Reclining Buddha image.

**Highlights**

- Pay homage to the 46-metre Golden Reclining Buddha that has feet inlaid with mother-of-pearl pearl.
- The main chapel constructed in the reign of King Rama I in the Ayutthaya style.

• Phra Maha Chedi Si Rachakan, a group of four pagodas surrounded by a white wall with Thai-Chinese style sheltered gates decorated with colour-glazed tiles.

- The historic marble inscriptions showing various aspects of Thai massage that have been honoured as UNESCO's Memory of the World (MOW) documentary heritage for Asia and the Pacific Region in 2008.
- Relax with a Thai massage at a very reasonable price, or take Thai traditional massage/medicine/meditation classes at the Wat Pho Thai Traditional Massage School (open daily 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.) or at the Chetawan Health School (open 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Monday – Saturday).

Website: [www.watpho.com](http://www.watpho.com)

**WAT ARUN (Temple of Dawn)**

Located on the west bank of the Chao Phraya River, this temple has a splendid central prang (Khmer-style tower) rising 86 metres, surrounded by 4 satellite prangs. It serves as a perfect backdrop for royal barge processions and adds fascination to a night-time cruise on the Chao Phraya with the shimmering reflections of its illuminated structure on the water's surface.

Website: [www.watarun.org](http://www.watarun.org)

**VIMANMEK MANSION**

Travel back into time and behold a rare insight into the lifestyle of Thai royalty in this royal mansion that was built in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by King Rama V.

**Highlights**

- A three-storey mansion that is the largest golden teak building in the world.
- 31 exhibition rooms, including a silverware room, ceramic display room, glassware and precious ivory display; some of the rooms have been preserved to retain the atmosphere of the earlier era.
- Guided tours are provided.
- Enjoy Thai traditional dance shows available at 10:30 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.

**N.B.:** Visitors should dress appropriately, and the taking of photos is not allowed.

Website: [www.vimanmek.com](http://www.vimanmek.com)



Vimanmek Mansion

## CHINA TOWN

Best explored on foot, Bangkok's China Town is a bustling maze of teeming streets and alleys crammed with shops and stalls where one can buy just about anything day or night. It is also the location of 'the Golden Road, the Land of the Siamese Dragon' or the renowned Yaowarat Road that is full of gold shops. Also for those who are into alternative medicine, look no further than China Town where they can find Chinese herbal medicine shops as well as a wide range of Chinese cuisine.

### Highlights

- A network of streets and alleys lined with shops selling all sorts of things on each side of the road.
- Goldsmith shops offering many beautiful souvenirs.
- See the lifestyle of Bangkok's largest Thai-Chinese community.
- Visit the old fresh food market called "Trok Isaranuphap", where leading chefs from all over Bangkok shop for the finest ingredients for their restaurant menus.
- Come and celebrate Chinese New Year at China Town's square.



China Town

## KHLONG TOUR

Cruising along a canal or a khlong as it is called in Thai, takes visitors on a journey of contrast back in time to present-day Bangkok. They will see the connection between water and the Thai way of life when passing the homes of the canal-dwellers.

### Highlights

- See the local way of life along the canals of both Bangkok and Thonburi.
- Visit the Royal Barge Museum to see the boats used by various kings of the reigning Chakri Dynasty, Wat Suwannaram that has one of the finest remaining collections of Thai classic style murals, Wat Si Sudaram, and the colonial-style Thonburi Railway Station, a historic, elegant station that was the original starting point for heading South.
- Visit Wat Inthararam, the location of the King Taksin the Great Shrine; Wat Paknam that is best known for meditation classes for foreigners in Bangkok, and Wat Ratcha Orasaram known for its mixture of Thai and Chinese architecture.
- Connect to the Taling Chan Floating Market.



## PHAHURAT

Is the city's Indian quarter where it is possible to get great deals on affordable clothes and shoes. This area is also where the smells of

Indian spices and curries waft out of restaurants along with traditional tunes that visitors might think they are actually in an Indian city. Phahurat Market is full of colourful lush saris and fabrics, shoes, and shiny Indian bangles.

## FLOWER MARKET

Located on the Chao Phraya Riverbank a short distance away from the Grand Palace and China Town is Pak Khlong Talat or the "Flower Market", which is the largest flower Market in Bangkok. Every day, this area transforms into a kaleidoscope of bright, blooming colour of flowers that come from all over the country. This is the place where tourists can especially see various species of orchids. The market is open 24 hours 7 days per week.

## I OTHER PALACES & TEMPLES

### WAT SUTHAT & THE GIANT SWING

A visit to Wat Suthat Thepwararam, situated in the centre of old Bangkok on Bamrung Muang Road, gives visitors an opportunity to see both the Giant Swing and one of the first-class Royal temples.

#### Highlights

- One of the most beautiful chapels in Thailand, and the largest measuring 72.25 metres in length and 22.6 metres in width.
- Phra Wihan Khot terrace, which houses 156 Buddha images.
- Phra Si Sakkayamuni, Phra Buddha Trilokkachet, and Phra Buddha Setthamuni.
- Pay homage to the sacred sanctities inside the temple.
- See the elaborate wood carved door panels and superb murals inside the main hall created during the reign of King Rama II.
- Explore many shops selling religious items in the surrounding area.

### WAT BENCHAMABOPHIT DUSITWANARAM

Built in the reign of King Rama V, Wat Benchamabophit is known to foreigners as "The Marble Temple" as its exterior is clad in Carrara marble, the best marble from Italy.

#### Highlights

- Site of the Temple of Five Kings in which its perfect symmetry and proportions inspires admiration of this architectural masterpiece.
- See the interior crossbeams decorated with lacquer and gold, and the walls of the spacious inner courtyard lined with a large collection of bronze Buddha images.
- Worship the main Buddha image, the replica of Phra Buddha Chinnarat in Phitsanulok.



*Wat Suthat & The Giant Swing*



*Wat Benchamabophit*

### SUAN PAKKAD PALACE

A visit to this exquisite collection of traditional Thai homes, set in beautiful gardens, gives visitors an insight into the appreciation of art and gardening by members of the Royal Family.

#### Highlights

- Collections of royal personal items, Thai musical instruments, niello ware and ceramics, exhibited in the traditional-style Thai houses or Reuan Thai.
- Examples of Ban Chiang pottery and earthenware from the Sukhothai era.
- Khon Museum

Website: [www.suanpakkad.com](http://www.suanpakkad.com)



*Suan Pakkad Palace*



*Wat Trai Mit Withayaram*



*Wat Ratchanatdaram Worawihan*

### **WAT TRAI MIT WITTHAYARAM**

Wat Trai Mit, near Hua Lamphong Railway Station and China Town is home to the famous 3-metre-high 5.5 tonne golden Buddha image.

#### **Highlights**

- 800-year old Golden Buddha of the Sukhothai Era style.

### **WAT RATCHANATDARAM**

#### **WORAWIHAN**

Built in the reign of King Rama III in 1846, the Loha Prasat on the roof-top of Wat Ratchanatdaram is the only one of its kind left in the world.

#### **Highlights**

- See the Loha Prasat, the temple's main attraction, standing 36 metres high with 37 surrounding spires that represent the 37 virtues that lead to enlightenment.
- A memorial statue of King Rama III.

### **WAT SA KET & THE GOLDEN MOUNT**

Built during the reign of King Rama I, this landmark is a great attraction for all tourists. 320 stairs take you up to the top for panoramic views of Rattanakosin Island.



*Wat Sa Ket & The Golden Mount*

#### **Highlights**

- The Golden Mount on a man-made hill with a diameter of 500 metres and rising 100 metres up to the sky.
- Buddha relics enshrined in the pagoda on top of the Golden Mount.

- Pay homage to the sacred sanctities inside the temple.
- Join the annual 7-day festival at Wat Sa Ket in November (during Loi Krathong) including a climb to the top of the Golden Mount.



### **WAT MANGKHON KAMALAWAT (Wat Leng Nei Yi)**

At the heart of Bangkok's China Town is the Chinese-Buddhist temple of Wat Mangkon Kamalawat, known as Wat Leng Nei Yi. The temple is the centre of festivities during important Chinese festivals.

#### **Highlights**

- Low rambling structure with the requisite dragons playing with a pearl on the roof.
- A labyrinth of passages connecting various alters to Buddha as well as Taoist deities.
- Pay homage to the Chinese sacred sanctities inside the temple.

### **SRI MAHA MARIAMMAN TEMPLE (Wat Khaek)**

Built in 1879 and located in the Silom area, Wat Khaek is the showcase of the Hindu faith and the contribution the Indian culture has made to Bangkok.

#### **Highlights**

- The Goddess Uma, consort of Shiva.
- The Dushera Festival or the Navaratri Festival is held every year for a total of 10 days, culminating in a procession along Silom Road.
- Pay worship to the sacred sanctities inside the temple.

**N.B.:** Taking photos and bringing food is strictly prohibited.

### **ASSUMPTION CATHEDRAL**

The Assumption Cathedral is the principal Roman Catholic church of Thailand. It is the main church of the Archdiocese of Bangkok.

#### **Highlights**

- An impressive tall rectangular structure designed by a French architect with material imported from France and Italy.

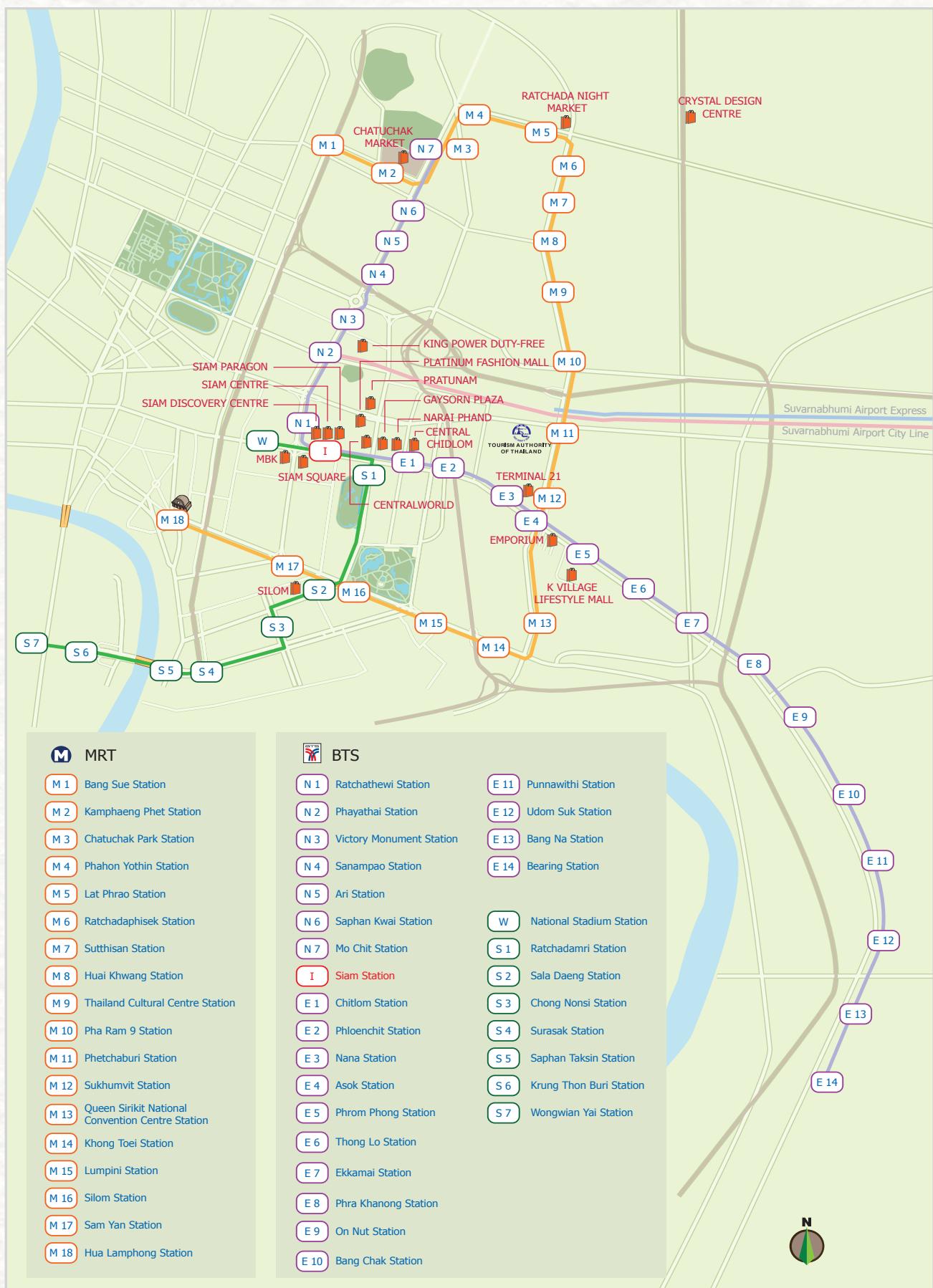
#### **ERAWAN SHRINE**

Built in 1956, the Erawan Shrine is a Hindu shrine in Bangkok that houses a statue of Phra Phrom, the Thai representation of the Hindu creation god Brahma.

#### **Highlights**

- Performances by Thai dance troupes, hired by worshippers as a return for seeing their prayers at the shrine answered.
- Worship the Phra Phrom with floral garlands, joss sticks, and candles sold around the shrine.

## SHOPPING & ATTRACTIONS ALONG THE BTS - MRT RAIL LINES



Bangkok has a distinctive shopping route going across the city along the BTS Skytrain. Starting from the end of the line at Mo Chit to the Chatuchak Weekend Market, a large market that is divided into many different zones, head south to the King Power Complex near Victory Monument, onto the trendy Siam area and the upscale Siam Paragon, the legendary MBK to the fabulous CentralWorld and luxurious Gaysorn Plaza to the modern, multi-storey Emporium in the Sukhumvit area. Alternatively switch trains at the Siam BTS to the Silom line for Silom Road. The MRT interlinks with the BTS at Chatuchak, Sukhumvit and Silom, and for those looking to shop along the MRT, there are various places like the Ratchada Night Market.

But no matter what shoppers are looking for, all of this can accommodate every taste, pocket, and style.



### CHATUCHAK

One of the world's largest open-air markets, Chatuchak Weekend Market is known to visitors and Bangkok residents alike as the place where anything can be found. Covering an area of 35 acres and with more than 15,000 shops and stalls that welcome more than 200,000 visitors each day, the market comes alive each Friday afternoon with an extensive range of products on sale including household items, accessories, handicrafts, religious artefacts, art objects, antiques, live animals, books, music, clothes, food, plants, and flowers. Open: Friday-Sunday 7.00 a.m. – 6.00 p.m.

**Nearest BTS/MRT:** Mo Chit BTS & Chatuchak MRT

### KING POWER DUTY-FREE

King Power Downtown Complex is a major new attraction for sophisticated shoppers. This two-storey retail store is a place where art and culture perfectly

combine with the fun of shopping, dining and entertainment. There is a wide range of duty-free luxury items, watches and jewellery, leather goods, perfumes, skincare products and cosmetics, electrical appliances, plus more on offer, so it is a place that no holidaymaker should miss.

**Nearest BTS:** Victory Monument

Website: [www.kingpower.com](http://www.kingpower.com)

### MBK

Is an enormous mall that is a popular paradise with shoppers on a tight budget and those with money to burn. The Mahboonkrong shopping mall or MBK boasts a fascinating array of Thai and Western goods in which shoppers can bargain unless the prices are fixed. Go to this modern shopping centre with thousands of shops known for electronics and mobile phones that also includes hot fashion, jewellery, health and beauty products as well as a fun food centre.

**Nearest BTS:** National Stadium

Website: [www.mbk-center.co.th](http://www.mbk-center.co.th)

### SIAM SQUARE

Visit this so called Thai Harajuku where local teens like to hang out and shop. Divided into several small jam-packed alleys, Siam Square is a great place to walk about and where it's possible to find leather goods, bags, jeans, T-shirts, etc. Shops usually open around 11 a.m. and close at 9 p.m. The Scala and Lido cinemas can also be found in Siam Square. These old movie theatres with their charm are still one of the few places around Bangkok that regularly screens award-winning international and Thai films. This area is also a centre of local and international cuisine with numerous food shops and restaurants that can cater to all tastes.

**Nearest BTS:** Siam



### SIAM DISCOVERY CENTRE

Connected to Siam Centre by an enclosed walkway, this shopping plaza has some international brands as well as home décor and specialty shops. Open daily: 10.00 a.m. – 9.00 p.m.

#### **Nearest BTS:** Siam

*Website: [www.siamdiscovery.co.th](http://www.siamdiscovery.co.th)*

### SIAM CENTRE

Next door to Siam Paragon, it features 40 famous top Thai designers and 250 international brands ranging from leather goods to trendy cosmetics and even extreme sports apparel and accessories all under one roof. And while shopping, enjoy the savoury local and international culinary delights at one of the many restaurants. Also enjoy free concerts, fashion shows and entertainment that are held nearly every weekend. Open daily: 10.00 a.m. – 9.00 p.m.

#### **Nearest BTS:** Siam

*Website: [www.siamcenter.co.th](http://www.siamcenter.co.th)*

### SIAM PARAGON

One of the majestic upscale malls in Bangkok directly opposite the Siam BTS Station, Siam Paragon houses more than 250 flagship stores of leading international and local fashion labels, some of the world's finest jewellers and watchmakers, lifestyle and leisure products, bookshops, IT gadgetry, as well as home décor that will definitely satisfy any shopaholic's

desires. Have a unique dining experience at one of the many Thai and international restaurants within an ambient atmosphere. It is also where Siam Ocean World is found as well as many other entertainment venues.

Open daily: 10.00 a.m. – 10.00 p.m.

#### **Nearest BTS:** Siam

*Website: [www.siamparagon.co.th](http://www.siamparagon.co.th)*

### RATCHAPRASONG

This is only a short walk from Siam Square and full of glitzy malls where high-end shoppers prefer to go.

### CENTRALWORLD

A one-stop destination for shopping, dining, and entertainment. This classy ultra-modern mall is located right in the vibrant heart of Bangkok at the Ratchaprasong Intersection. CentralWorld's success is due to its expert mix of world-class brands of fashions, furniture, as well as Thai arts and crafts. Alongside all of this, there are cinemas and the award-winning Central Food Hall and numerous restaurants where shoppers can explore cuisines from around the world, relax with a coffee, or just enjoy the breathtaking view of the city from the upper floors.

Open daily: 10 a.m. – 10 p.m.

#### **Nearest BTS:** Chit Lom

*Website: [www.centralworld.co.th](http://www.centralworld.co.th)*

### AMARIN PLAZA

This shopping complex offers a fresh and new shopping experience with its fashion mall, food hall, and office complex. Shopping at Amarin meets the various needs of chic, urban living and offers world fashion trends in more than 300 first-class shops.

#### **Nearest BTS:** Chit Lom

*Website: [www.amarinplaza.com](http://www.amarinplaza.com)*

### GAYSORN PLAZA

Is located across from CentralWorld and sports a lavish façade of white marble and gleaming chrome.

Gaysorn is laden with luxury goods and designer labels providing the benchmarks of highest quality, as well as a variety of fantastic dining experiences from stylish cafes to luxury restaurants. Its exclusivity means that there is a lot of space to roam, which gives it a tranquil shopping experience away from the hustle and bustle of the world outside.

Open daily: 10 a.m. – 8 p.m.; restaurants stay open until 9 p.m.

#### **Nearest BTS:** Chit Lom

*Website: [www.gaysorn.com](http://www.gaysorn.com)*

### NARAI PHAND

Located in the President Tower of the Intercontinental Bangkok Hotel, the Narai Phand Royal Thai Government Handicrafts Centre is home to the largest collections of Thai handicrafts including many five-star OTOP products. High quality items to be found in this treasure house of handicrafts include basketry, bronze, glass, pewter, ceramics, cottons and silks, lacquer and niello ware, traditional musical instruments, Thai dolls, wood carvings, Thai-designed household goods and decorative items of all kinds. It's a splendid place to immerse oneself in the historical legacy of local arts and crafts.

#### **Nearest BTS:** Chit Lom

*Website: [www.naraiphand.com](http://www.naraiphand.com)*

## CENTRAL CHIT LOM

Central is one of the most popular department stores in the country. With easy accessibility and a huge range of products, Central Chit Lom has an assortment of exclusive services for tourists including a One Point Payment Service, Delivery and Pick-up Services, Translator Service, and more. Plus don't miss out the Food Loft on the 7<sup>th</sup> floor with its wide variety of top quality Thai and international food.

Open daily: 10.00 a.m. – 10.00 p.m.

### **Nearest BTS:** Chit Lom

*Website: [www.central.co.th](http://www.central.co.th)*

## TERMINAL 21

The newest lavish all-in-one complex with more than 600 shops that brings a whole new experience of shopping with a Market Street Style. Enjoy the perfect combination of recognized brand and trendy fashions, great selection of food, and up-to-date cinemas, beauty salons and spas, plus all the other necessities in a modern ambience.

Open daily: 10 a.m. – 10 p.m.

### **Nearest BTS/MRT:** Asoke BTS &

Sukhumvit MRT

*Website: [www.terminal21.co.th](http://www.terminal21.co.th)*

## EMPORIUM

The first-ever luxurious fashion and lifestyle shopping complex, the Emporium shopping complex is filled with hip designer labels, state-of-the-art cinemas, and its own exclusive department store. On the top floor, there is a wide selection of international cuisine situated in an elegant environment as well as an extensive supermarket. All of this is in a warm and relaxed atmosphere. Open daily: 9 a.m. – 9 p.m.

### **Nearest BTS:** Phrom Phong

*Website: [www.emporiumpthailand.com](http://www.emporiumpthailand.com)*

## SILOM

During the day, Silom Road is a bustling area full of office workers;

however, at night, it suddenly transforms and becomes alive with street stalls full of various goods that are also great bargains for tourists looking for something reasonably priced to take home. This is especially so in the area of the Patpong Night Bazaar that opens from the early evening to around midnight.

### **Nearest BTS/MRT:** Sala Daeng BTS & Silom MRT

## RATCHADA NIGHT MARKET

Ratchada Night Bazaar formerly known as Ratchada-Lat Phrao Junction Night Market is where shoppers can find reasonably goods like leather bags, shoes, jeans, books, CDs, antiques, furniture, home decorative items, and an assortment of knick-knacks. Although most of the goods are second-hand, there are also new items on sale. Also there are food stalls selling various delicacies. This is a must-see when shopping in Bangkok.

Open: Every Saturday from 6:30 p.m. to 2:00 a.m.

### **Nearest MRT:** Lat Phrao

## PRACHANARUEMITR WOOD STREET

In 1979, Thai-Chinese from various parts of Bangkok moved here to settle. Woodcraft was their specialty, so every house has created products all by hand to meet the highest quality standards. With over 200 shops, it has now become known as "Furniture Road".

## K VILLAGE LIFESTYLE MALL

This hip shopping arcade fulfills city dwellers every need with over a hundred shops, some of them belonging to celebrities with a myriad of activities offered. Moreover, there are several first-class gourmet markets offering imported foods.

### **Nearest BTS:** Phrom Phong

*Website: [www.kvillagebangkok.com](http://www.kvillagebangkok.com)*

There are also some well-known shopping areas that are not on the BTS/MRT rail lines. These include:

## CRYSTAL DESIGN CENTRE

The first of its kind in Thailand, this is the most comprehensive and integrated design centre in Asia showcasing architectural, interior, decorating and construction products. CDC facilities include Product Showrooms, Architecture and Decorative Resource Centre, Exhibition and Conference Facilities, Business Lounge, Design Library, Office Spaces, and Meeting Facilities housed in several distinctive designed buildings integrated within a posh landscape design.

*Website: [www.crystaldesigncenter.com](http://www.crystaldesigncenter.com)*

## PRATUNAM

The Pratunam area boasts a number of malls and large hotels within the nearby vicinity. However, it is known as Bangkok's garment zone with the main attraction being a vast bazaar, jam-packed with stalls and countless vendors selling a variety of goods with great deals that draws in large crowds.

## PLATINUM FASHION MALL

Located on Phetchaburi Road, the shiny silver exterior tempts tourists to take a peek inside where there are five floors of more than 3,000 shops selling clothing at reasonable prices. It has been designed under the national wholesale shopping concept. Thus, it offers great opportunities for both consumers and wholesale buyers, as many items can be bought in bulk for a large discount, so it's very popular.

Open daily: 9 a.m. – 8 p.m.

### **Nearest BTS:** Chit Lom 1.1 km./ 0.7 mi. distance)

*Website: [www.platinumfashionmall.com](http://www.platinumfashionmall.com)*

## VAT REFUND FOR TOURIST

Please refer to the section on 'Tips' (page 19).

## MUSEUMS



### ARTS OF THE KINGDOM MUSEUM AT THE ANANTA SAMAKHOM THRONE HALL

With the vision of H.M. the Queen, who encourages restoration and maintenance of traditional arts in each region of the kingdom, the Support Training Centre which was initiated by H.M. the Queen, exhibits Thailand's masterpieces at the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall.

#### Highlights

- Masterpieces of Thailand's national heritage created by skillful Thai artisans from all over the country; such as, the Sapphabag Thomthong, the Gold Niello Ware Bowl, and the Gold Damascene Bhudthan Throne
- Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall.

**Open:** 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Tuesday – Sunday. Closed on public holidays.

**N.B.:** Visitors should dress appropriately: shirts with sleeves, and long pants or skirts.

*Website: [www.artsoftheinfinity.com](http://www.artsoftheinfinity.com)*



### NITASRATTANAKOSIN EXHIBITION HALL

This exhibition hall allows visitors to learn, appreciate and take pride in Thailand's artistic and cultural legacies of the Rattanakosin Era. The building has two storeys comprising 4,800 sq.m. of floor space with advanced technology; such as, presentation devices, models, four-dimensional multi-media techniques, multi-touch and multi-media animation technologies that are used in presenting exhibitions about Rattanakosin City through interactive self-learning devices. The content is divided into nine topics in nine halls.

Besides the nine exhibition halls, the building also has a 300-sq.m. Event Hall on the ground floor for artistic and cultural events organised by

educational institutions and private agencies. There is also a library, a souvenir shop and a coffee shop.

*Website: [www.nitasrattanakosin.com](http://www.nitasrattanakosin.com)*

### KING PRAJADHIPOK MUSEUM

This three-storey neo-classical building, near Phan Fa Bridge, was built in 1906. It is decorated with Greco-Roman motifs with a dome above its front hall. The royal regalia can be seen here, with photographs, documents and films concerning the life of King Rama VII, and the two historic events in which he played a leading role: the 1932 Revolution and the adoption of the first Constitution of Thailand.

**Open:** 9.00 a.m. - 4.00 p.m.

Tuesday - Sunday



### NATIONAL MUSEUM

The National Museum collection encompasses a wide range of religious and secular art found throughout the country. It gives you a view through the windows of the past. The Museum reveals the history of Thailand and how people lived during the different periods.

#### Highlights

- Items from pre-historic times, through the Srivijaya, Dvaravati, Khmer Kingdoms and the Sukhothai, Ayutthaya and Rattanakosin periods of Thai history.
- A large collection of antique items; such as, Thai and Chinese ceramics, theatrical costumes, palanquins, weapons, and assorted items used in royal households.

**Open:** 9.00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Wednesday – Sunday.



### NATIONAL SCIENCE MUSEUM

The National Science Museum is considered as a display venue for exhibitions and scientific activities and providing knowledge to visitors to better understand science and technology as well as applying them in daily life for the sustainable development of the country.



### NATIONAL GALLERY MUSEUM

The National Gallery Museum or Chao Fa Gallery is the first and only visual art museum in Thailand.

#### Highlights

- Traditional and contemporary works of art created by Thai artists.
- Beautiful classic Neo-Palladian architecture built in the 1800s.

**Open:** 9.00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Wednesday – Sunday.

#### Highlights

- See displays of science exhibitions through modern technology that create fun at the same time as learning.
- See a life-like reconstruction of "Lucy" fossils presenting the creation of the first human being.
- Walk through a shadow tunnel and a wooden house presenting information on lights.
- Study human anatomy and daily life utensils

*Website: [www.nsm.or.th](http://www.nsm.or.th)*



## MUSEUM SIAM

The Museum serves as a learning centre on ethnology, anthropology, and other fields related to Thai society and Southeast Asia. Visitors will gain knowledge by visiting each exhibition room.

### Highlights

- New methods of a display with modern media, which enable participation of visitors in learning and understanding historical stories of the Thai nation.
- Join learning activities organised for youth and aficionados of museums.

**Open:** 9:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Tuesday – Sunday

Website: [www.museumsiam.com](http://www.museumsiam.com)



## ROYAL BARGE NATIONAL MUSEUM

The Royal Barge Procession is one of the most spectacular events in the world. At the Royal Barge National Museum, visitors can see close up the most important boat of H.M. the King and other impressive vessels used in the ceremony.

### Highlights

- H.M. the King's personal barge, Suphannahong, which was built in 1911. It is 46 metres in length hewn from a single tree and covered with intricate gilt carvings and colourful pieces of glass.
- 52 vessels of the Royal Barge fleet; each is a masterpiece of marine and traditional craftsmanship.

**Open:** 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. daily.



Bangkok Art &amp; Culture Centre



Ancient City



Jim Thompson's Museum

### JIM THOMPSON'S MUSEUM

This exquisite collection of traditional Thai houses stands as a museum to the man who revived the Thai silk industry after the Second World War.

#### Highlights

- Collection of antiques and artefacts.
- Impressive gardens with a lush tropical jungle imitating nature's inspiring beauty right in the centre of the city

**Open:** 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. daily.

**Website:** [www.jimthompsonhouse.com](http://www.jimthompsonhouse.com)

### BANGKOK ART & CULTURE CENTRE

This is a contemporary art museum located in the centre of downtown Bangkok. The Centre has a modern interior with a round centre space in the main entry hall and several glass enclosed spaces.

#### Highlights

- A centre for cultural dialogue, networking, and creating new resources from both the public and the private sectors.
- Enjoy various programmes of art, music, theatre, film, design, and cultural/educational events in a friendly and recreational atmosphere.
- Visit this centre of cafes, restaurants, bookshops, and an art library.
- Meet and chat with various artists about their works.

**Website:** [www.bacc.co.th](http://www.bacc.co.th)

### ANCIENT CITY

The Ancient City, located in nearby Samut Prakan province, is the world's largest open-air museum comprising 200 acres. It is the open door to the heritage of Thai wisdom with a wide range of architectural symbols, fine arts and craftsmanship integrated harmoniously with the natural environment.

#### Highlights

- See the scaled-down and actual-size replicas of important historical sites of various provinces throughout Thailand; such as, Prasat Hin Phnom Rung, Wat Mahathat Sukhothai, Phraphuttabat Saraburi, Phrathat Mueang Nakhon, and Phrathat Chaiya.
- Take a tram ride or a bicycle trip to explore the architecture and landscape.
- Shop for souvenirs like people did in the past.
- Have a relaxing lunch by the lake at the floating market.

**Website:** [www.ancientcity.com](http://www.ancientcity.com)



### KHON MASKED DANCE AT THE SALA CHALERMKRUNG THEATRE

Khon is Thailand's classical masked dance that is one of the most refined performing arts, originally limited to the Royal Court. Performances utilise lavish costumes, elaborate masks and headgear, and stage accessories that require highly-skilled craftsmen to create.

#### Highlights

- The scenes performed in traditional Khon are taken from the Ramakien, the Thai literature based on the Indian Ramayana that has greatly influenced the literature of almost all nations in Southeast Asia.

Website: [www.salachalermkrung.com](http://www.salachalermkrung.com)

### HUN LAKHON LEK AKSRA THEATRE

Home of the Aksra Hun Lakhon Lek puppets, this medium-sized theatre with 600 seats luxuriously built in a baroque style has been decorated to be more exquisite with beautiful, gentle and prestigious Thai art and architecture. Audiences can build on their great experiences by also visiting the Theatre's Scene Shop of specially designed and selected souvenirs. The Scene Bar serving light food and beverages complements city views in front of the theatre.

#### Highlights

- See various performances of Thai puppets together with a Thai orchestra with sophisticated stage techniques and brilliant classical dances with elaborate scenes that tell diverse stories taken from the Ramakien epic.

Website: [www.aksratheatre.com](http://www.aksratheatre.com)





### DREAM WORLD

Dream World is an amusement park and a relaxing venue where various kinds of entertainment are put together in an area of more than 160 rai.

#### Highlights

- Enjoy the various aspects of this huge entertainment park with the beautiful and elegant architecture of Dream World Plaza, Dream Garden, Fantasy Land, and Adventure Land.
- Walk along a nice garden in a relaxing atmosphere around a giant lake with a panoramic view of the cable car from the sky.
- Take adventurous rides including space train and Viking ship.

*Website:* [www.dreamworld-th.com](http://www.dreamworld-th.com)

### ASIATIQUE THE RIVERFRONT

This is Asia's newest and largest waterfront themed retail and entertainment centre created through the renovation of real historical buildings. Witness and discover real history of King Rama V's golden era with a breathtaking panoramic view of the Chao Phraya River and a synthesis of cultures, East and West, resulting in a variety of gastronomical delights of more than 40 restaurants, over 1,500 places to shop for souvenirs, clothing and decor items, fantastic extravaganza shows including the Joe Louis Puppet Theatre, Winner of the 2006 World Puppet Contest, and amazing costumes and special effects of the Calypso Cabaret plus lots more to experience that will cater to everyone's taste.

*Website:* [www.thaiasiatique.com](http://www.thaiasiatique.com)

### MADAME TUSSAUDS

One of Bangkok's newest world-class attractions, Madame Tussauds is the first of its kind in Southeast Asia. Located on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor of Siam Discovery, it has nearly 100 wax figurines of well-known people in history, sports, music, and movies with more being added.

*Website:* [www.madametussauds.com](http://www.madametussauds.com)

### FLOW HOUSE BANGKOK

This is Bangkok's most exciting lifestyle venue that features a FlowRider simulated wave machine perfect for surfing and bodyboarding. Discover an amazing urban beach club environment suitable for the whole family with fully air-conditioned bar, restaurant and beach lifestyle shop; all in a convenient downtown location.

*Website:* [www.flowhousebangkok.com](http://www.flowhousebangkok.com)



*Siam Niramit*



### SIAM NIRAMIT

(2008 Thailand Tourism

Award Winner of the

Recreation Tourist Sites &

2010 Thailand Tourism Award Winner  
of the Recreational Attractions For  
Entertainment)

Siam Niramit Theatre offers a world-class spectacular show of Thailand's arts and cultural heritage in a 2000-seat theatre. The show is lavish with ornately designed sets and costumes, special effects and the world's most advanced technology that creates a stimulating, realistic and inspiring state-of-the-art experience. This is a "Journey to the Enchanted Kingdom of Thailand" that no one wants to miss.

### Highlights

- An 80-minute show featuring three episodes of Thailand's cultural heritage: Journey Back into History, Journey beyond Imagination (The Three Realms), and Journey through Joyous Festivals.
- Enjoy outdoor entertainment; such as, elephant feeding and Thai music and dance.
- Take a guide tour to the Thai village.
- Relax with traditional Thai massage.

Website: [www.siamniramit.com](http://www.siamniramit.com)



*Siam Ocean World*



### SIAM OCEAN WORLD

(2008 Thailand Tourism

Award Winner of the

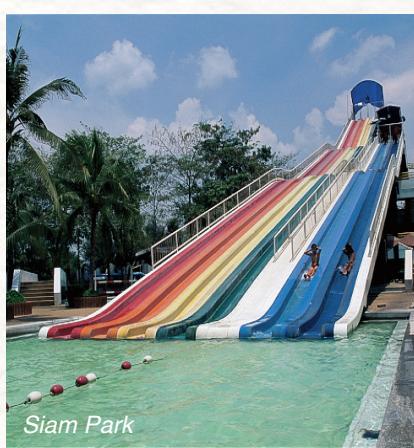
Recreation Tourist Sites &

2010 Thailand Tourism Award Winner  
of the Recreational Attractions For  
Learning)

Siam Ocean World is the largest aquarium in Southeast Asia. The area of the aquarium spans over 10,000 square metres, and uses world-class advanced technology to provide a rewarding underwater experience to visitors. A visit to Siam Ocean World is truly a memorable experience and a must-do when you are in Bangkok.

### Highlights

- See international standard exhibits and features: the aquarium comprises a 270-degree acrylic under ocean tunnel, a panoramic oceanarium with a 360-degree view through a 10.5-metre diameter fishbowl, an 8-metre deep reef tank and a rainforest display.
- Be amazed by more than 400 species or 30,000 marine animals including Penguins, Blue Ring Octopus, Gray Nurse Sharks, Elephant Nose Sharks, Leafy Sea Dragons and Giant Spider Crab.



*Siam Park*

- Join the "Dive with the Sharks Programme", "Ocean Walker", "Glass Bottom Boat" and "Sanyo 4D Xventure" that will excite your senses with unexpected surprises.

Website: [www.siamoceanworld.co.th](http://www.siamoceanworld.co.th)



### SIAM PARK

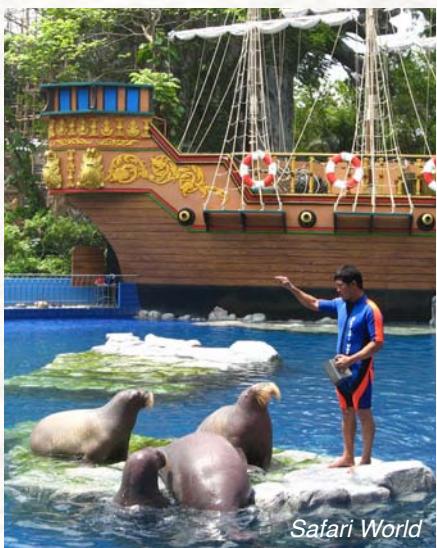
(2010 Thailand Tourism Award

Winner of the Recreational

Attractions For Entertainment)

The main attraction of this park is a large artificial seaside area complete with waves. There are waterfalls, towering slides, whirlpools and an assortment of water-based activities. Other attractions include a children's playground, an aviary, an open zoo and a botanical garden. Great for the family!

Website: [www.siamparkcity.com](http://www.siamparkcity.com)



Safari World



Rose Garden Riverside



Muay Thai (Thai Boxing)

## SAFARI WORLD

This 170-acre park offers many opportunities for fun and excitement as you get close to wild animals roaming free or see other performing tricks.

### Highlights

- Enjoy close encounters with the animal kingdom through an 8-kilometre journey of the natural habitat of various species of wild animals.
- See the feeding of lions and tigers.
- Visit other attractions, including the Safari Park, Marine Park, Spy War, Hollywood Cowboy Stunt Show, Egg World, Bird Show, and Orangutan Boxing Show
- Take a boat ride through the mangroves and a walk through the jungle.

Website: [www.safareworld.com](http://www.safareworld.com)

## MUAY THAI (Thai Boxing)

For many visitors of Thailand, a night watching Muay Thai is the highlight of their stay. Bouts can be seen at either the Ratchadanoen Boxing Stadium or Lumpini Boxing Stadium. Thailand's national sport has now stretched all over the world, in which over 80 countries have national associations and its popularity is never stronger than in Bangkok itself.

### Highlights

See an original fight with the excitement from the boxing itself to the atmosphere built up by the crowd.

*For more information about Muay Thai, please refer to page 188.*



## ROSE GARDEN RIVERSIDE

(2008 Thailand Tourism Award  
Winner of the Recreation Tourist Sites)

Set on an area of 70 acres on the Nakhon Chaisi River, the Rose Garden provides a multitude of beautiful floral displays of great variety and Thai-style houses.

### Highlights

- Experience and learn about various aspects of traditional Thai living.
- See cultural performances from the 4 regions of Thailand.
- Stroll through the botanical garden along the Nakhon Chaisi River.
- Take a boat ride on the river.
- Visit the organic farm and learn about this method of farming as well as enjoy a meal made of organic products.
- Experience a traditional Thai massage and spa.
- Learn how to prepare and cook Thai cuisine.
- Enjoy a game of golf.

Website: [www.rosegardenriverside.com](http://www.rosegardenriverside.com)

## DINING & HANGING OUT

### CHINA TOWN (Yaowarat)

Yaowarat, Bangkok's China Town contains some of the best, and also the most expensive Chinese restaurants in the city, along with many of the good and cheapest food stalls, especially at night. Large restaurants line the bustling Yaowarat Road, but venture into side streets to find less impressive yet equally enjoyable establishments. At night, the neon glow from hundreds of stalls electrifies the atmosphere of the streets. The street-side seafood stalls draw such crowds that late-comers have to wait for seats.



### PAHURAT

Known as Bangkok's Little India, the alleyways of the Pahurat area are home to many authentic Indian and Pakistani restaurants. The atmosphere is less chaotic than neighbouring Yaowarat, yet the vivacity can still be felt in this small, thriving community.

### KHAO SAN ROAD

The most famous street in the world in Bangkok for backpackers, Khao San Road has now transformed into a place with a colourful range of bars and restaurants. It is still young, still very lively but with many more choices and rewards awaiting the bold explorer.

### RIVERSIDE

Dining on a bank of the Chao Phraya River is always a memorable experience. There are many riverside eateries along the river bank, from Rama 9 Bridge to Sathon Bridge and King Rama I Memorial Bridge to Phra Nang Kiao Bridge in Nonthaburi. For more luxurious dining in an elegant setting, Bangkok's famous riverside hotels are some of the finest in the world. From The Oriental, Royal Orchid Sheraton and Shangri-La on



the Bangkok side to the Peninsula and Hilton Millennium on the opposite bank, they provide a magical dining out experience.

### SUKHUMVIT

This is a cosmopolitan thoroughfare with restaurants to match. Italian, American, French, German, Japanese, Indian and Thai restaurants many of good quality line the road. Sukhumvit 55 (Thong Lo) and its environs is a culinary fantasy world; Sukhumvit Sois 23, 24, 31, 38, 49 and 63 are also all good restaurant streets.

### SILOM

Several food streets are linked to this road in Bangkok's busiest area. As if awakened by the street lights, seafood stalls sprout along the section near Saladaeng after sunset until late at night. Nearby Convent Road offers French, Italian, Swiss, Californian and an Irish pub. Opposite, a crush of Japanese restaurants makes Soi Thaniya into a lively walkway for Japanese visitors and sushi lovers of all nationalities. And everywhere, Thai food is available in palace style and street style, side by side.



### NARATHIWAT-RATCHANAKHARIN

One of the most lively after-dark strips in Bangkok, Narathiwat-Ratchanakharin Road attracts bar-hoppers, after work drinkers and restaurant hunters. The strip, which runs from Surawong to Silom to Sathon and ends at Rama 3 Road, is a fairly new addition to the urban dining scene, and to most Bangkokians it is a great alternative to the traffic-clogged Sathon/Silom area nearby. Many appealing dining venues line up the Narathiwat-Ratchanakharin area both on the main street and in small sois, packed every night with business execs, expats and local office workers from around the area.

### LANG SUAN

This is a boulevard of smart new restaurants in an upmarket residential and commercial area. Cool places occupy both the main road and the small sois that branch off. Like Sukhumvit Road, Lang Suan offers a diverse mix of Thai, Asian, and European cuisines; such as, the classy Calderazzo, No. 43 and Ma Be Ba Italian restaurants and the chic French Cafe Lenotre.



### DINNER CRUISES

Sightseeing and fine elegant dining can be combined together in Bangkok with a dinner cruise along the Chao Phraya River. Enjoy the savoury tastes of traditional Thai and international cuisine and see numerous views of the capital city of Thailand while the vessel navigates this bustling waterway. Here is a list of some of the cruise operators:

**Apsara:** [www.banyantree.com](http://www.banyantree.com)

**Chaophraya:** [www.chaophraycruise.com](http://www.chaophraycruise.com)

**Chaophraya Princess:** [www.thaicruise.com](http://www.thaicruise.com)

**Grand Pearl:** [www.grandpearlcruise.com](http://www.grandpearlcruise.com)

**Horizon:** [www.shangri-la.com](http://www.shangri-la.com)

**Manohra:** [www.manohracruises.com](http://www.manohracruises.com)

**Wanfah:** [www.wanfah.in.th](http://www.wanfah.in.th)



## PANORAMIC RESTAURANTS

Bangkok has a number of options in which tourists can enjoy a meal with a great panoramic vista of the city.

- Arun Residence**

This is a remarkable historic 17<sup>th</sup> century Sino-Portuguese riverside house, which has been restored. The restaurant presents an unforgettable panorama of one of Asia's finest views, the Rattanakosin skyline.

Website: [www.arunresidence.com](http://www.arunresidence.com)

- Crystal Grill**

Enjoy dining with a choice of buffets or a la carte at the top of the Baiyoke Sky Hotel, Thailand's tallest building, and take in the sparkling city lights and expansive views of Bangkok. And after eating, go up to the Observation Deck and the Revolving Viewpoint.

Website: [www.baiyokehotel.com](http://www.baiyokehotel.com)

- Mezzaluna**

Named 'Hot Tables' by Condé Nast Traveller in the year 2005, and located atop a mesmerizing height of 65 floors above Silom Road, this restaurant offers some of the most hypnotizing views of the Chao Phraya River and the city of Bangkok. Attention is paid to every detail to ensure authenticity of the menu, which is why only the best ingredients from different regions of Italy are brought in and cooked by the Master Italian Chefs.

Website: [www.lebua.com](http://www.lebua.com)

- Panorama Restaurant**

This restaurant in the Pan Pacific Hotel encompasses an atmosphere of grandeur and allows for a panoramic view of Bangkok that stretches ahead for miles. With a deep understanding of the stories behind every dish served from the kitchen, the chefs at Panorama constantly strive to create 'The Best of the Best' concept by gathering the finest ingredients from around the world

Website: [www.panoramabangkok.com](http://www.panoramabangkok.com)

- Prime Steakhouse**

Named one of 'Thailand's Best Restaurants' by Thailand Tatler Magazine for three consecutive years (2007-2009), this award-winning restaurant at the Millennium Hilton has a seal of guarantee with its tempting aromas of meat sizzling over a beech wood-fired grill meticulously prepared to showcase their quality and natural flavours. This is offset with delightful views over the glittering Chao Phraya River.

Website: [www.bangkok.hilton.com](http://www.bangkok.hilton.com)

- Rang Mahal**

Serving authentic Indian cuisine right in the heart of Bangkok, Rang Mahal's exceptional location on the 26th floor of the Rembrandt Hotel is a synergy of Indian culture and stunning views of the city skyline. The menu offers authentic North Indian cooking at its finest.

Website: [www.rembrandtbkk.com](http://www.rembrandtbkk.com)

- Red Sky**

Located on the 55<sup>th</sup> floor of the Centara Grand at CentralWorld, this restaurant offers chic urban bistro dining with breathtaking al fresco vistas of Bangkok.

Website: [www.centarahotelsresorts.com](http://www.centarahotelsresorts.com)

- Vertigo & Moon Bar**

For a special dining experience to remember, try Vertigo, a trendy sky-high alfresco restaurant perched 61 floors above the streets of Bangkok. The combination of the restaurant's towering height and the open-air works together to create a surreal effect of pure enchantment with a delectable list of tender steaks. Before or after, stop at the Moon Bar next door to enjoy drinks while gazing at the most beautiful sunset in the city.

Website: [www.banyantree.com](http://www.banyantree.com)



#### ● Three Sixty Jazz Lounge

Featuring a style and personality of its own, this lounge offers an all around view over the entire dazzling Bangkok metropolis and the nearby Chao Phraya River. Here, guests can feast on a range of miniature culinary experiences or sip fine wines and cocktails as the sun sets in a blaze of colour behind Wat Arun, the Temple of Dawn. As the evening progresses, soft lounge lights come on to create an atmosphere of casual intimacy while a live Jazz band livens up the ambience with their mellow tunes nightly.

Website: [www.bangkok.hilton.com](http://www.bangkok.hilton.com)

#### ● Shanghai 38 Chinese Restaurant

High up on the 38<sup>th</sup> floor of the Sofitel Bangkok Silom, this restaurant offers panoramic views overlooking the bustling surrounding business district and the nearby Chao Phraya River. It is the ideal place for the All You Can Eat Dim Sum lunch or traditional Chinese dinners with a selection of 50 of the best of Cantonese specialties.

Website: [www.sofitel.com](http://www.sofitel.com)

#### ● Sirocco

Located on the 63<sup>rd</sup> floor of the Dome at Lebua, it is the world's highest al fresco restaurant and one of Bangkok's most coveted dining choices. There is also an amazing Skybar and Mediterranean fair with ingredients from the world's best markets.

Website: [www.lebua.com](http://www.lebua.com)

#### ● The Roof at Siam@Siam

Providing a rooftop experience with remarkable angles of Bangkok by night, this is Thailand's first stone grill al fresco restaurant. Diners can cook the food by themselves and enjoy the sumptuous taste immediately. The Roof at Siam@Siam is designed to accommodate private dining and various parties or functions of up to 130 seated guests.

Website: [www.siamatsiam.com](http://www.siamatsiam.com)



Zense Gourmet Deck & Lounge Panorama

#### ● Top 10 Restaurant

Offering 360-degree panoramic vistas of downtown Bangkok and its vivacious energy, this venue features an outdoor dining area ideal for private functions, parties, and gatherings between 25 and 200 persons. Top 10 features contemporary cuisine from around the globe with highlights and infusions of Asia that create exquisite a la carte dining. Every dish is artistically presented in a contemporary style, delighting guests both in vision and taste.

Website: [www.top10bkk.com](http://www.top10bkk.com), [www.hiresidence.com](http://www.hiresidence.com)

#### ● V9 Wine Bar & Restaurant

With cleverly integrated stunning views, guests may feel free to prop at the long bar, sink into a soft chair, or simply take a table for some excellent food and admire Bangkok's skyline from the 37<sup>th</sup> floor of the Sofitel Bangkok Silom. The menu includes the best of New World cuisine with a French background with highlights on the quality of the produce.

Website: [www.sofitel.com](http://www.sofitel.com)

#### ● Zense Gourmet Deck & Lounge Panorama

Up on the 12<sup>th</sup> floor of the Zen World @ Zen Department Store is where diners will find a combination of the best of Italian, Japanese, Indian, Thai, fusion, contemporary European, and a bar makes it convenient for guests to choose their favourite cuisine from a wide range. Zense offers both indoor seating and a spacious outdoor deck with a great view of metropolitan Bangkok.

Website: [www.zensebangkok.com](http://www.zensebangkok.com)



For further information about what to see and do in Bangkok, please check [www.thailand72hrsamazing.com](http://www.thailand72hrsamazing.com)

# GETTING AROUND



Visitors can enjoy numerous ways of getting around Bangkok that is also very convenient.

## BUSES

Each bus has a number like No. 53 that is shown on the front of the vehicle that corresponds to its route. Fares range from 7 - 34 Baht depending on the type of bus and distance. It is possible to get a bus map with all routes from bookshops or the Tourism Authority of Thailand. *For more information, call Tel.: 184.*

## BTS SKY TRAIN

Is one of the fastest ways of getting about Bangkok. With 2 lines: Sukhumvit running from Mo Chit to Bearing; Silom operating from the National Stadium to Wong Wian Yai – providing services from 6.00 a.m. to midnight. Fares range from 15 - 40 Baht depending on distance. Also commuters can purchase a variety of passes; such as, Single Journey Pass, Daily Pass, or Smart Pass. Several stations like Siam, Nana, and Saphan Taksin have BTS Tourist Information

Centres operating from 8.00 a.m. to 8.00 p.m. with English speaking staff. *For more information, check [www.bts.co.th](http://www.bts.co.th)*

## BANGKOK METRO (M.R.T)

Operates from Bang Sue to Hua Lamphong Railway Station with services from 6.00 a.m. to midnight. Fares range from 16-41 Baht depending on distance. Commuters can also purchase a variety of passes; such as, Single Journey Token, Stored Value Card, or Period Pass.

*For further details, take a look at [www.bangkokmetro.co.th](http://www.bangkokmetro.co.th)*

## THE CHAOPHRAYA EXPRESSBOAT

Is another way of getting from the north of Bangkok or adjoining Nonthaburi province to downtown Bangkok as long as you are near the Chao Phraya River. Services: Weekdays: 6.00 a.m. - 8.00 p.m.; weekends: 6.00 a.m. - 7.00 p.m. Fares: 10 - 32 Baht depending on distance.

*Website: [www.chaophrayaexpressboat.com](http://www.chaophrayaexpressboat.com)*

## TAXIS

Are metred with an initial charge of 35 Baht for the first 3 kilometres and approximately 5 Baht for every kilometre after that. If using an expressway, the passenger is responsible for the toll.

## MOTORCYCLE TAXIS

Are for those adventurous or brave enough and go where other forms of transport don't go. Fares depend on the distance and may have to be bargained.

## TUK-TUKS

Or 3-wheeled taxis are good for short journeys inside Bangkok with the fare being bargained in advance.



The Chao Phraya River

# CHIANG MAI



Magical history, spectacular architecture, and a fascinating way of life combined together make Chiang Mai a centre for tourism. The North's largest city and once the capital of the ancient Lanna Kingdom, this city is a showcase of indigenous cultural identity that includes diverse dialects, delectable cuisine, distinctive architecture, traditional values, lively festivals, and classical dances. The city features old-world beauty and charm as well as modern luxury and convenience coexisting side by side.

In addition, Chiang Mai is also known for its outstanding handicrafts that illustrate the people's exquisite culture; such as, woodcarvings, Thai silk, silverwork, delicate embroidery, and hand-painted umbrellas. These are still made by traditional methods handed down over generations and can be seen in close proximity to the city. Challenging golf courses with stunning background are also available around Chiang Mai city. Those who love nature will enjoy the pristine natural resources amid wonderful scenery. The presence of numerous hill tribes that feature a wealth of unique cultures, and hill tribe trekking often combined with river rafting and elephant riding has also always been one of Chiang Mai's greatest tourist attractions.



## WAT PHRATHAT DOI SUTHEP

A sacred Buddhist temple to the Thais and the distinctive landmark of this northern city is the golden pagoda of Wat Phrathat Doi Suthep where holy relics have been enshrined since 1429. Doi Suthep is at an elevation of 950 metres above sea level, so visitors can enjoy a panoramic view of Chiang Mai with the Mae Ping River running through it.

### Highlights

- See the gold-plated Chedi in the middle of a square marble-tiled courtyard, and the famous steep Naga staircase comprising 290 steps.
- Pay homage to the Buddha relics inside the temple.
- Enjoy a bird's eye view of Chiang Mai city.

Website: [www.doisuthep.com](http://www.doisuthep.com)

## WAT PHRA SING WORAMAHAWIHAN

Wat Phra Sing is one of the most important sites in Chiang Mai. Built in 1345, it houses the North's most revered Buddha statue, Phra Buddha Sihing.

### Highlights

- Pay homage to Phra Buddha Sihing, enshrined in Wihan Lai Kham, an ancient gilded chapel that features exquisite woodcarvings and northern style murals

## WAT CHEDI LUANG

Wat Chedi Luang is a 14<sup>th</sup> century temple situated where the City Pillar Shrine is located. It houses a 500-year-old Buddha image.

### Highlights

- See the largest Chedi in Chiang Mai with a pair of magnificent Naga staircases at the front porch of the chapel.
- Pay homage to the sacred objects inside the temple.

## WAT SUAN DOK

The 14<sup>th</sup> century temple of Wat Suan Dok is located west of the old city walls on Suthep Road. The name of the temple roughly translates to 'the field of flowers'. It houses a 500-year-old Buddha image.

### Highlights

- Pay homage to the bronze Buddha image, which is one of Thailand's largest metal images.
- See several white Chedis around the temple containing ashes of Chiang Mai's former royal family.
- Learn more about Buddhism through the 'Monk Chat' programme.

## WAT CHIANG MAN

The oldest temple in Chiang Mai is located in the northeast corner of the old city. Wat Chiang Man was built in 1296 by King Mengrai, the founder of Chiang Mai.

### Highlights

- See the Lanna-style Chedi, supported by rows of elephant-shaped buttresses.
- Pay homage to the ancient Buddha image named Phra Kao Khao.

## BAN TAWAI (Woodcarving Village)

Woodcarving is a traditional northern Thai art, and the most well-known place to see this is at Ban Tawai, 20 kilometres south of Chiang Mai, where visitors can get the best quality and bargains. Showrooms display fantastic collections of antiques, woodcarving handicrafts and other decorative items made from teak, rosewood and rattan.

Website: [www.ban-tawai.com](http://www.ban-tawai.com)

## BAN BO SANG (Umbrella Village)

Bo Sang-San Kamphaeng is famous for its silk and a cotton-weaving village. On the way from Chiang Mai, there are factories and souvenir shops that sell hand-painted umbrellas, woodcarving, silverware, earthenware, lacquer ware, Thai silk and cotton fabrics.

### Royal Projects

Please refer to page 183.

### Elephant Holidays in Chiang Mai

Please refer to page 191.

## PRODUCT UPDATES



*Flight of the Gibbon*



*Chiang Mai Night Safari*



### FLIGHT OF THE GIBBON

This is Chiang Mai's thrilling rainforest canopy eco-adventure that is located on the edge of a national park outside of Chiang Mai City.

#### Highlights

- Enjoy the great opportunities to move through the trees with the speed and grace of a young gibbon with 18 platforms, sky bridges and lowering stations connecting kilometres of zip lines and taking you through different layers of the rainforest canopy.
- Go ecotour hiking, rock climbing, mountain biking, or white-water rafting.
- Relax with a traditional Thai massage after the activities.
- Stay overnight in a Thai village homestay.

Website: [www.treetopasia.com](http://www.treetopasia.com)

### CHIANG MAI NIGHT SAFARI

This is located in Doi Suthep-Pui National Park covering an overall area of approximately 819 rai. Visitors can see various kinds of animals; such as, elephants, giraffes, zebras, lions, Asiatic black bears, tigers, hyenas, crocodiles, etc. by open-air tram. There is also a trekking route to see the wild animals surrounded by a beautiful atmosphere on the lake's bank that is full of various trees.

**Open:** Monday - Friday 1.00 - 4.00 p.m. and Saturday - Sunday 10.00 a.m. - 4.00 p.m.; evenings daily between 6.00 - 11.30 p.m.  
Website: [www.chiangmainightsafari.com](http://www.chiangmainightsafari.com).

### HOT AIR BALLOONING

Have the experience of a lifetime with an early morning adventure by taking a hot air balloon flight of breathtaking panoramic views of Chiang Mai, the mountains, terraced rice paddies, the lush green Ping River valley and rural villages, that are sure to take visitors' breath away.

**N.B.:** Only operates between November-February depending on weather conditions.

Website: [www.wind-and-fire.com](http://www.wind-and-fire.com), [www.balloonadventurethailand.com](http://www.balloonadventurethailand.com)



## SHOPPING

Whether it is luxurious products or local delicacies, visitors will get to enjoy looking for bargains in various types of shopping paradises throughout Chiang Mai. Modern malls are available as well as the Night Bazaar on Chang Khlan Road, and besides these, there are some new hip and chic shopping locales that are true bliss for shoppers. A wide range of local arts, handicrafts, souvenirs, clothing and accessories are presented with a touch of Lanna culture, giving visitors a different shopping experience.



### WUA LAI WALKING STREET

Is the street that shoots off at an angle just outside the Chiang Mai gate on the south side of the old city. A market is held on Saturday evenings covering three kilometres of Wua Lai Road, the old silver-making district. Here shoppers will find silver and lacquer wares as well as many other local handicrafts, and there are plenty of food and drink vendors along the street. The Wua Lai community has been long known for its fine silver and lacquer wares. On Saturday evenings, it is closed to traffic making it an open-air showcase for the area's authentic northern silver and lacquer wares as well as other unique handicrafts. Opening hours: the road is closed to cars every Saturday evening and the market officially opens from 4.00 - 11.00 p.m.



### NIMMANHEMIN ROAD

Is the trendiest street in Chiang Mai and caters to the many needs of contemporary urban life. If shoppers like to see the modern side of Chiang Mai, then they should visit this street. Here, they will see everything from uniquely designed fashion and coffee shops to book stores, art galleries, boutique hotels, and stylish condominiums. Also, there are many fashionable restaurants for every taste and international entertainment venues. Don't forget to walk down Soi 1 of Nimmanhemin Road where the traditional Lanna art and cultural style still remains. This road has become one of the most important commercial areas in Chiang Mai over the past 50 years, including retail shops and many kinds of services. Opening hours: morning until evening.



### THA PAE SUNDAY MARKET

Is a well-known street market located in the historical city centre featuring a great selection of handicrafts, clothing, art and paintings, as well as food. It begins at Tha Pae Gate and covers most of Ratchadamnoen Road. This street is blocked off to traffic from late Sunday afternoon to midnight. It is filled with colourful stalls selling goods ranging from hill tribe crafts and blinking lights to wooden bangles and tasty treats. Opening hours: Sunday afternoon until midnight.

# PATTAYA



One of the hottest beach resort destinations in Thailand, Pattaya offers the best of everything with a vast range of accommodation and a broad range of things to see and do during the day and night that draws hundreds of thousands of visitors each year. Another major draw for visitors to this popular beach resort on the Gulf of Thailand is the extensive selection of restaurants serving some of Thailand's freshest seafood as well as an excellent assortment of authentic foreign eateries serving a variety of Asian and European cuisine. With activities that include an array of water sports, golf, shopping, cabaret shows, an elephant village, and a Ripley's Believe it or Not Museum, it is impossible not to have an action-packed Pattaya holiday.

Also within a short distance of the city, there is a selection of golf courses for golfers wanting a challenge, or other activities including bungee jumping, cycling, skydiving, go-karting, and Muay Thai. Or for those who love the sea, there is windsurfing, water skiing, swimming, sunbathe, snorkelling, or taking a trip to nearby islands.

## RECOMMENDED PLACES OF INTEREST



Nong Nooch Garden and Resort



Khao Khieo Open Zoo



### NONG NOOCH GARDEN AND RESORT

(2008 Thailand Tourism Award Winner of the Recreation Tourist Sites & 2010 Thailand Tourism Award Winner of the Recreational Attractions for Entertainment)

Nong Nooch Garden and Resort is a sprawling recreation park in a typical Thai setting. A group of traditional Thai pavilions and gardens of different flowering plants are positioned around the beautifully landscaped site.

#### Highlights

- See the Thai cultural performances and elephant shows.
- Enjoy walking through the sky walk to see a bird's eye view of the garden with the different kinds of flora.

Website: [www.nongnoochtropicalgarden.com](http://www.nongnoochtropicalgarden.com)

### KHAO KHEIO OPEN ZOO

Khao Khieo Open Zoo covers a vast tract of forest land with more than 200 species of domestic and imported wildlife living in a natural habitat.

#### Highlights

- See different species living in their natural habitat in which visitors can stroll around the grounds and observe the animals close up.
- Have a close view of hundreds of varieties of birds covering an area of around 5 rai.
- Take a night safari tour by tram.

Website: [www.kkopenzoo.com](http://www.kkopenzoo.com)



### RIPLEY'S WORLD OF ENTERTAINMENT

(2008 Thailand Tourism Award Winner of the Recreation Tourist Sites & 2010 Thailand Tourism Award Winner of the Recreational Attractions For Entertainment)

First introduced in USA, Ripley's is the world-class unusual entertainment attraction where everyone can enjoy and experience the collections of wondrousness from all over the world. Situated in the Royal Garden Plaza on Beach Road, this "odditorium" has a large collection of stories of oddities from every corner of the globe.

#### Highlights

- A museum of the incredible "Ripley's Believe It or Not!" with the main attractions including "Ripley's Haunted Adventure", "Ripley's Infinity Maze", and "Ripley's 4D Moving Theatre".

Website: [www.ripleysthailand.com](http://www.ripleysthailand.com)

### SRIRACHA TIGER ZOO

This zoo on the outskirts of Pattaya has hoards of crocodiles, Bengal tigers, camel, deer, and more. There are four different shows at various times during the day, including crocodile and tiger shows. Visitors also see how friendship can be possible among tigers, pigs and dogs that live together.



*The Sanctuary of Truth*



### THE SANCTUARY OF TRUTH (Prasat Satchatham)

(2008 & 2010 Thailand

Tourism Award Winner of the  
Historical and Cultural Attraction)

The Sanctuary of Truth is a very large wooden structure that rises 105 metres high and is situated on over 32 acres of beautiful land in Pattaya. The stunning building is covered inside and out with elaborate and beautiful wood carvings that pay homage to the ancient vision of: Earth, Knowledge and Philosophy (Eastern).

#### Highlights

- Visitors are surrounded by visions that awaken them to ancient life, human responsibility, cycle of living, basic though, life relationship and common goals of life towards utopia.
- See the gigantic temple-like structure entirely made of wood that has been constructed to withstand wind and sunshine on the seashore.
- Watch the dolphin training show.
- Go horse riding.
- Take a speedboat around the castle.

Website: [www.sanctuaryoftruth.com](http://www.sanctuaryoftruth.com)

### WAT YANASANGWARARAM WORAMAHAWIHAN

The temple was built in 1976 to pay respect to Somdet Phra Yanasangwon, the present Supreme Patriarch and was later graciously admitted to be under the patronage of His Majesty the King.

#### Highlights

- See the international pavilions, at the entrance, presenting each country's national architectural style around the pond.
- Visit the Mondop where a replica of the Buddha's footprint is enshrined as well as a large Chedi containing the relics of the Lord Buddha.



*Wat Yanasangwararam  
Woramahawihan*

### MINI SIAM PATTAYA

As its name suggests, the Mini Siam Pattaya is a scaled down version of the wonders, culture, important places and attractions of Thailand. Before entering the Thai section of the park, there are also various well-known monuments from around the world.

Website: [www.minisiam.com](http://www.minisiam.com)

### BEACHES

Please refer to the section on 'Colourful Beaches' (page 115).



*Mini Siam Pattaya*

## PRODUCT UPDATES



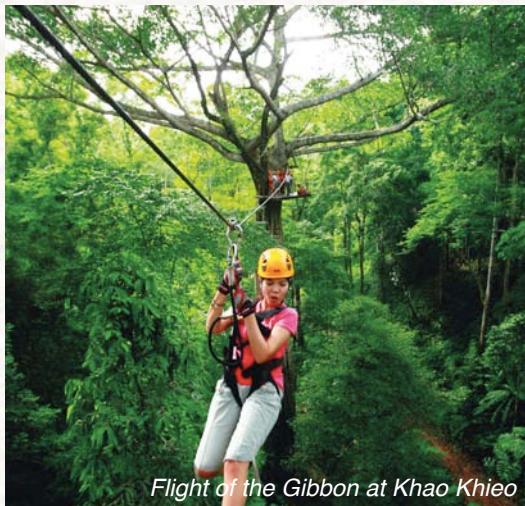
### FLOATING MARKET PATTAYA

The Pattaya Floating Market, also called the Four Regions Floating Market, is a new attraction in Pattaya. It is located on Sukhumvit Road near the Lakeview Restaurant and the Alangkarn Theatre, about 2 kilometres past the Underwater World, on the way to Sattahip.

#### Highlights

- Enjoy shopping at more than 100 shops selling food and specialties from all parts of the country.
- Take a boat around the compound linked by a network of canals.
- After dark, see performances of Thai classical dances native to the four regions of the country.

Website: [www.pattayafloatingmarket.com](http://www.pattayafloatingmarket.com)



### FLIGHT OF THE GIBBON AT KHAO KHIEO

Experience the beauty, magic and adventure of Thailand's rainforest like never before on the world's largest canopy zip line adventure. High in the treetops of a pristine forest and wildlife park, visitors glide through the jungle canopy on thrilling zip lines, scenic sky bridges and adrenaline-inducing abseils. Along the way, guides will share their local knowledge of the flora and fauna that inhabits this biodiverse wonderland. Flight of the Gibbon is an educational adventure guests will never forget, and will certainly be a highlight of their trip to Thailand!

Website: [www.treetopasia.com](http://www.treetopasia.com)

## SHOPPING

### CENTRAL FESTIVAL PATTAYA BEACH

Is Asia's largest beachfront shopping complex on the beach road of Pattaya. Full of brand-name stores as well as small local handicraft stands, this shopping mall has everything a shopping fanatic could wish for. There is also a vast choice of restaurants, fast-food outlets, as well as a large food court selling local and international cuisine.

Website: [www.centralfestival.co.th](http://www.centralfestival.co.th)

### THE AVENUE PATTAYA

Approximately 40,000 sq. m., the Avenue Pattaya is one of the newest department stores in Pattaya. Popular with the hip and trendy younger

crowd, but attractive to every shopper, it is the perfect place to peruse chic boutiques and well-known stores. Its design is quite different from other shopping centres as the walkway is quite large, so visitors will feel relaxed when shopping or just browsing. Also every evening, there is a night market at the open area in the front.

### PREMIUM OUTLET

With Mediterranean-style landscaping, cafés, and more, the Outlet Mall Pattaya on Tepprasit Road near Tesco Lotus in South Pattaya was opened in 2001 and is the first mall of its kind in Pattaya. This is a large retail area where over 200 selected international leading brand-name fashion products

are sold at prices discounted 30-70%; thus, it has become a major shopping destination for travellers, and its sales area has even been extended because of its increasing popularity. Open Daily 10 a.m. - 10 p.m.

Website: [www.outletmallthailand.com](http://www.outletmallthailand.com)

### WORLD GEMS COLLECTION

Located on an area of 8 rai in Pattaya City, World Gems sells jewellery and decorative items that are up to international standards. Visitors can see specialists demonstrating how to cut and lay ruby. It is also Asia's largest museum of gems and stones; thus, it is well known among both Thais and foreigners.

Website: [www.worldgemscollection.co.th](http://www.worldgemscollection.co.th)

## ENTERTAINMENT



Alangkarn

### ALANGKARN

On an area of 80 rai, this entire project includes a prototype Hexa Stage Theatre, Cultural Rostrum and restaurant. Alangkarn offers a new concept of presenting Thai culture in a state-of-the-art panoramic style venue to tourists instead of the standard Thai traditional dances that can easily be found elsewhere.

Website: [www.alangkarnthailand.com](http://www.alangkarnthailand.com)



Tiffany



### TIFFANY

(2010 Thailand Tourism Award Winner of the Recreational Attractions For Entertainment)

Voted No.4 in the Top Ten Best Shows in the world in 2001, Tiffany

is a world-class display of incredible talented transvestites who put on a performance full of exotic extravagant scenes with the most up-to-date technical lighting and sound. A definite must on any tourist itinerary!

Website: [www.tiffany-show.co.th](http://www.tiffany-show.co.th)

### ALCAZAR

This is a must-see for people visiting Pattaya. Extravagant costumes, convincingly stunning transvestites, spectacular stage sets that are all part of a very colourful cabaret show of non-stop fantastic entertainment.

Website: [www.alcazar-pattaya.com](http://www.alcazar-pattaya.com)



# HUA HIN – CHA-AM



Hua Hin and Cha-am are two of Thailand's premier beach resort towns on the Gulf of Thailand. Equally popular with young couples, retirees, family tourists and Thais, both locales feature beautiful, powdery sand beaches, numerous seaside seafood restaurants, numerous beach activities, and some great inland activities. Accommodation along the beach and on the streets leading away from the sea range from simple guesthouses to luxury resorts, and includes some of the finest spa retreats in the world.

Just down the coast from Hua Hin at Takiab Bay, visitors can take seaside horseback rides and visit a hilltop Buddhist temple with a spectacular view. In addition to beach activities, this area is also well known for having some of the finest golf courses in Thailand.

## RECOMMENDED PLACES OF INTEREST

### MARUEKHATHAIYAWAN PALACE

The summer seaside palace, often referred to as the "Palace of Love and Hope" is located midway between Cha-am and Hua Hin. It was built in 1923 under the royal command of King Rama VI using golden teakwood from the demolished Hat Chao Samran Palace.

#### Highlights

- Visit this Italian architecturally designed palace with its dazzling composition of verandahs and latticework in regal proportions, a two-storeyed wooden pavilion with a series of connecting halls and a long corridor leading to the sea.
- See the two-storey open pavilion next to the central hall once used as a royal meeting place and theatre.
- Relax and ride a bicycle or a golf cart around the sylvan well-designed compound.

**N.B.:** Visitors should dress appropriately: shirts with sleeves, and long pants or skirts. Taking photos is also strictly prohibited in the building area.



### WAT HUAY MONGKON

This Buddhist temple is home to the world's largest statue of Luangpho Thuat, a legendary southern Thai monk born in the late Ayutthaya period revered for his enlightenment and ability to perform miracles. Many believe that the amulets created in his image guarantee safety in times of distress. Surrounding the statue is a Thai-style pavilion dedicated to the spirits of teak trees, behind which visitors will see an enormous fallen teak tree believed to have magical powers. Worshippers gather here, pray with incense sticks and ask for their wishes to be fulfilled.

### KHAO TAKIAP

One of the biggest attractions in the province, Khao Takiap translates as 'Chopstick Mountain' although it is also referred to as Monkey Mountain due to the monkeys that inhabit it. The mountain is home to a hilltop temple giving way to a sensational view of Hua Hin. The start of the hike up to the temple is marked by a large bell and a flight of stairs up to the main shrine, a pagoda-like structure.

Once at the top hang out with the monkeys, take a few photographs, shop at numerous stalls or admire the Buddhist shrine.

**N.B.:** Keep all bags zipped and under no circumstances give the monkeys any food.



### CHA-AM ATV PARK

(*2008 Thailand Tourism Award Winner of the Recreation Tourist Sites & 2010 Thailand Tourism Award Winner of the Recreational Attractions for Adventure*)

This is a place where the whole family can enjoy paint-ballting and the adrenaline rush of an ATV race.

#### Highlights

- Ride an ATV in fast and furious rice paddies or on high and steep climbs.
- Enjoy paint-ballting in a stadium in shady surroundings which can accommodate up to 16 people.

Website: [www.cha-amatvpark.net](http://www.cha-amatvpark.net)

### BEACHES

Please refer to the section on 'Family Beaches' (page 114).

### SPA

Please refer to the section on 'Wellness & Spa' (page 147).

### GOLF

Please refer to the section on 'Golf' (page 152).

## PRODUCT UPDATES



Plearn Wan



Hua Hin Night Market

### PLEARN WAN

Not just a themed open-air mall, Plearn Wan feels more like a living museum where visitors can experience a slice of life in 1950s Hua Hin. Plearn Wan's two-storey courtyard-style building, an architectural statement in itself, houses a community of period-style shops selling everything from liquor, inexpensive plastic-and-tin toys, snacks as well as a beauty salon, photo studio, outdoor cinema screen and a 20-room guesthouse or 'Piman Plearn Wan'. Stepping through the entrance is like stepping into a time machine – suddenly, visitors will find themselves surrounded by all things vintage. When it's crowded, usually at night, the festive atmosphere resembles that of a well-organised temple fair from decades ago.

Website: [www.plearnwan.com](http://www.plearnwan.com)

### HUA HIN NIGHT MARKET

Situated in the Hua Hin Centre between Phetchakasem Road and the railway line, the market basically encompasses one street that comes to life from 6:30 p.m. onwards, when vendors line the street with their stalls selling various apparel, crafts, art, CDs, and DVDS. Also this market has a great choice of seafood restaurants that encourages wanting to try quality dishes on offer.



Cicada Market

### CICADA MARKET

This aims to provide tourists with an additional attraction in Hua Hin. Situated on 16,000 sq. m of land and based on the theme of "Open Mind and Open Mat", it's a mixture of local arts and handicrafts, food and entertainment.

### Highlights

- Stroll through the park and stop by the open-air amphitheatre to listen to some music.
- Buy second-hand clothes or a handmade notebook.
- See the photo and painting exhibitions.

Website: [www.cicadamarket.net](http://www.cicadamarket.net)

### HUA HIN WINERY

Hua Hin Hills Vineyard is built on an old elephant corral where these large animals were domesticated. The makeup of the soil and sea breeze is ideal for growing various kinds of grapes that has resulted in the production of award-winning wines. Visitors are welcome to come for a tour around the vineyard as well as enjoy tasting wine and do other activities.

Website: [www.huahinhillsvineyard.com](http://www.huahinhillsvineyard.com)

## I SHOPPING

### PREMIUM OUTLET

Located on Phetchakasem Road (Highway No. 4) and with its green spaces and wide selection, it is a place where everyone in the family can either relax or hunt for bargains. Travellers are often impressed by the building's architecture and especially by its orange colour. This mall offers guaranteed brand-name clothing at savings of up to 70%. It is open daily from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

*Website: [www.outletmallthailand.com](http://www.outletmallthailand.com)*

### FN OUTLET

FN Factory Outlet features a new outlet store concept in Thailand offering affordable and original fashion products with exceptional quality standards. Outstanding features of FN are the modern design, stylish decoration, and the vast retail

space. This outlet provides a relaxed shopping atmosphere. In every branch, there is also a Ton Kla shop selling OTOP products like desserts or souvenirs.

**Open:** 9:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.

*Website: [www.fnoutlet.com](http://www.fnoutlet.com)*



For further information about what to see and do in Hua Hin and Cha-Am, please check  
[www.thailand72hrsamazing.com](http://www.thailand72hrsamazing.com)



# PHUKET



Hat Patong



Often referred to as the 'Pearl of the Andaman', visitors can explore the cultural background of Phuket at the Old Town Phuket, which features elegant Sino-Portuguese-style buildings built nearly 100 years ago, and there's also a vibrant nightlife for those wanting to have party fun. The island also has many temples with the most prominent one called Wat Chalong, which houses a pagoda that contains the Buddha's relics.

Phuket is also equipped with, astonishing beaches, excellent offshore dive sites, and superb sailing opportunities. Patong, Kata and Karon are the most popular beaches facing the Andaman Sea because of their white sand and many recreation activities they have to offer. Other activities on Phuket as well as the offshore islands include world-class golf, sea canoeing, and windsurfing. Environmentalists can find trekking trails and relax in the greenery atmosphere of forests, mountains, waterfalls, and parks; such as, Kratu Waterfall and Khao Phra Thaeo National Park, while Laem Promthep offers the most spectacular scene of the sun setting over the Andaman Sea.

There is also a wide variety of offshore diving areas, including the Surin, Similan and Racha island groups that are rated world-class for their beauty onshore, colourful corals, clear waters and myriad of sea creatures.



### WAT CHALONG

The largest among the 29 Buddhist temples of Phuket, Wat Chalong has been extending a warm welcome to visitors for over a century. Locals come to pray and Westerners come to learn something about Buddhism.

#### Highlights

- See Po Than Chao Wat one of the more important Buddhist statues located in the westerly old hall of the temple.
- See a gilt-covered statue of Luangpho Cham as well as statues of Luangpho Chuang and Luangpho Kleum, all ex-abbots of the temple.
- Visit the Grand Pagoda that has a splinter of the Lord Buddha's bone and is officially named Phra Mahathat Chedi Chomthaibarami Phrakat.
- See the wall paintings depicting the Buddha's life story and also various Buddha images.

### WAT PHRA THONG

This houses a museum, exhibiting historical items and a collection of unique crafts.

#### BIG BUDDHA

Phuket's Big Buddha, known among Thais as Phra Phutthaminingmongkon Akenakkiri Buddha, is one of the island's most important and revered landmarks. It is 45 metres high and 25 metres across the base. The whole body is layered with beautiful white Burmese marble that shines in the sun making it a natural symbol of hope. The huge image sits on top of Khao Nakkerd between Chalong and Kata, and it is easily seen from far away. The top of the hill offers the best 360-degree breathtaking views of the island. It's a must-visit island destination.





### PHUKET FANTASEA

(2008 Thailand Tourism Award  
Winner of the Recreation  
Tourist Sites)

Phuket's FantaSea is the island's biggest show. With trapeze artists, a cast of hundreds, performing elephants and other animals and an exotic storyline that blends tradition with fantasy visitors will have a wonderful evening out. But the extravaganza doesn't stop there as FantaSea also hosts one of the biggest buffets in Asia and is set in a theme park that offers carnival-like games, lots of shopping opportunities, a Palace of the Elephants, a Similan Adventure Centre, and several other food outlets. It's spectacular, it's extravagant, it's impressive and great entertainment value for all.

Website: [www.phuket-fantasea.com](http://www.phuket-fantasea.com)

### THE TWO HEROINES MONUMENT

As the centrepiece to the Tha Rua Roundabout, the life-size Two Heroines Monument was built to commemorate two sisters, Thao Thep Kasattri and Thao Sri Soontorn, who were leading figures in the defeat of the Burmese Army in 1785.

### LAEM PROMTHEP

This outcrop of land offers exceptional views of the surrounding sea and

coastline, especially Ko Kaeo and Nai Han Beach. Sunset is when the cape provides its most magical moments.

### PHUKET BUTTERFLY GARDEN & INSECT WORLD

With over 6,000 butterflies from 40 different species set in a tropical garden, the Phuket Butterfly Garden and Insect World is one of the world's leading butterfly gardens.

Website: [www.phuketbutterfly.com](http://www.phuketbutterfly.com)



Laem Promthep

## PRODUCT UPDATES



### PHUKET OLD TOWN

(2010 Thailand  
Tourism Award Winner of  
the Tourism Development &  
Promotional Organisations)

Unlike many Thai provincial capitals, Phuket Town fairly shines with personality and nowhere more so than its Old Town. In this historically rich part of town, tourists will find shrines, temples (Buddhist and Chinese), ornate and beautifully preserved 'shophouses', quaint cafés, tiny printing shops, grandiose Sino-colonial mansions, impromptu private and public museums and even a mini ex-red light district.

Phuket Old Town is compact enough to stroll around in. The best time to do this is early in the morning or at the end of the day when it's not so hot.



### SPLASH JUNGLE WATER PARK

Come and experience Phuket's first water park for a wet and wild day that can't be matched anywhere else in Southern Thailand. The water park offers fun for all the family with thrills and spills in various pools. Whether relaxing after a day in the water or an adrenalin rush, Splash Jungle has it all.

Website: [www.splashjunglewaterpark.com](http://www.splashjunglewaterpark.com)

### SIAM NIRAMIT PHUKET

Featuring all of the attractions of Siam Niramit Bangkok, including the 'Village of the Four Regions', as well as present the Phuket Floating Market.

Website: [www.siamniramit.com](http://www.siamniramit.com)

## ACTIVITIES



**P**huket offers tourists the opportunity to indulge in an assortment of water-based and beach activities.

### • Swimming & Snorkelling

Sandy beaches, warm clear water and mild currents make Thailand a swimmers' paradise. Completely free with no equipment needed, swimming makes a great workout and is 100 percent environmentally friendly. But anywhere where the beach is suitable for swimming, visitors will probably find masks, snorkels and flippers to rent or borrow. Many of Thailand's coral reefs, tropical fish and other marine life live in shallow water near to the shore, and are accessible to snorkellers. Friendly snorkelling trips and basic lessons are easily available around Phuket. Snorkelling is also a great activity when there are younger children in the group, as there is practically no risk of accident. Tour operators provide life vests for those who are not strong swimmers, and thanks to life vests, even non-swimmers have found that they can enjoy snorkelling.

### • Windsurfing

Windsurfing has become one of Thailand's most popular water sports in the last two decades, and it is practised on all of Thailand's beaches. It is exhilarating and an excellent way to get fit, requiring strength, dexterity and coordination. It is also quiet and environmentally friendly. Tourists can learn windsurfing on all major beaches in Phuket. Once mastering the basic skills, they will find boards and sails available everywhere. They need the wind for windsurfing, but not when it is too high. Be mindful, too, of tides and weather conditions which change quickly during the monsoon season. Wear a life jacket, watch out for speedboats and swimmers, and use a protective sun block as the sun's rays combined with the wind and the salty sea burn exposed skin.

### • Jet-skiing

Jet-skiing has been taken up with enthusiasm all over Thailand, with jet-skis available for hire at all major beaches on Phuket. Despite its speed, jet-skiing in Thailand is a safe sport, if one keeps their head and watches out for other sea traffic, especially swimmers and snorkellers. Rocks are usually marked, but take care, especially at low tide. Visitors should also be careful as they are open to the full force of the sun, and should use sun block before starting.

### • Wakeboarding

Wakeboarding, a cross between water-skiing and snowboarding, is the latest extreme sport to take the beach scene by storm. Wakeboarders are strapped at 90 degrees onto a shortened, double-ended surfboard, and towed at high speed behind a special speedboat. The boat is designed and weighted to create a heavy wake behind it, and the wakeboarder speeds along the sea at 30 kilometres an hour, cutting in and out of the wake, using it to jump, turn, swivel and somersault. Wakeboarding is fast, exhilarating, a fantastic spectator sport, and rapidly gaining popularity in Thailand. Boats and boards can be hired at main beaches of Phuket.

### • Sailing & Yachting

Phuket is Thailand's premier sailing destination, attracting Thai society and the international sailing crowd. From September to May when the weather is at its best, there is always a fleet of yachts anchored at Nai Han Bay at the southern end of the island and Chalong Bay to the southeast. Phuket's marinas have a wide variety of vessels for charter, from wooden schooners to fibreglass cruisers and state-of-the-art powerboats. They can be found at Laem Phrao Yacht Marina, Phuket Boat Lagoon and the Yacht Haven. The island has the best facilities, most scenic sights and breathtaking islands in

crystal clear waters. Visitors can charter a yacht, join a crew or sail a vessel of their own. Every year racing events are also held on the island, with the annual King's Cup Regatta as the largest and established to mark the birthday of His Majesty the King of Thailand and is now held in December as part of the Omega Asian Yachting Circuit. Another annual yachting event, the Phuket Invitational Superyacht Rendezvous, is also held in December at the Amanpuri Resort in every year. Other events include the Andaman Sea Rally, the Phang-nga Bay Regatta and Phuket Race Week.





### ROYAL PHUKET MARINA

This is Phuket's waterfront living at its finest with an award-winning state-of-the-art marina that accommodates sailing, sports and leisure, with luxury residences and shopping facilities set amidst landscaped parks and gardens. Launch your yacht from its berth and in moments sail among the calm waters off the sheltered east coast of Phuket.

*Website: [www.royalphuketmarina.com](http://www.royalphuketmarina.com)*

### PHUKET BOAT LAGOON

This circular, 168-berth lagoon development on the east coast of Phuket comprises residences, full service marina, resort hotel, commercial plaza, restaurants and other sporting facilities. Services in the lagoon are comparable with marina services elsewhere in the world.

*Website: [www.boatlagoonproperty.com](http://www.boatlagoonproperty.com)*

### • Fishing

Phuket provides opportunities for exciting game fishing. Marlin, sailfish, tuna, huge grouper and many kinds of shark are a boat ride from the shore. Major game fishing contests are also run according to the rules of the International Game Fishing Association which insists on 'catch and release' for sharks, underweight fish, and billfish; such as, marlin and sailfish. The twin islands of Racha Yai and Racha Noi 50 minutes out of Phuket, offer some of the best local fishing to be had. Power boats equipped with fighting chairs and heavy tackle can be chartered for deep-sea fishing out of Phuket. For those who prefer just to go along for the ride, the scenery can be as breathtaking as the fishing.

### BEACHES

Please refer to the section on 'Family Beaches' and 'Colourful Beaches' (page 114-115).

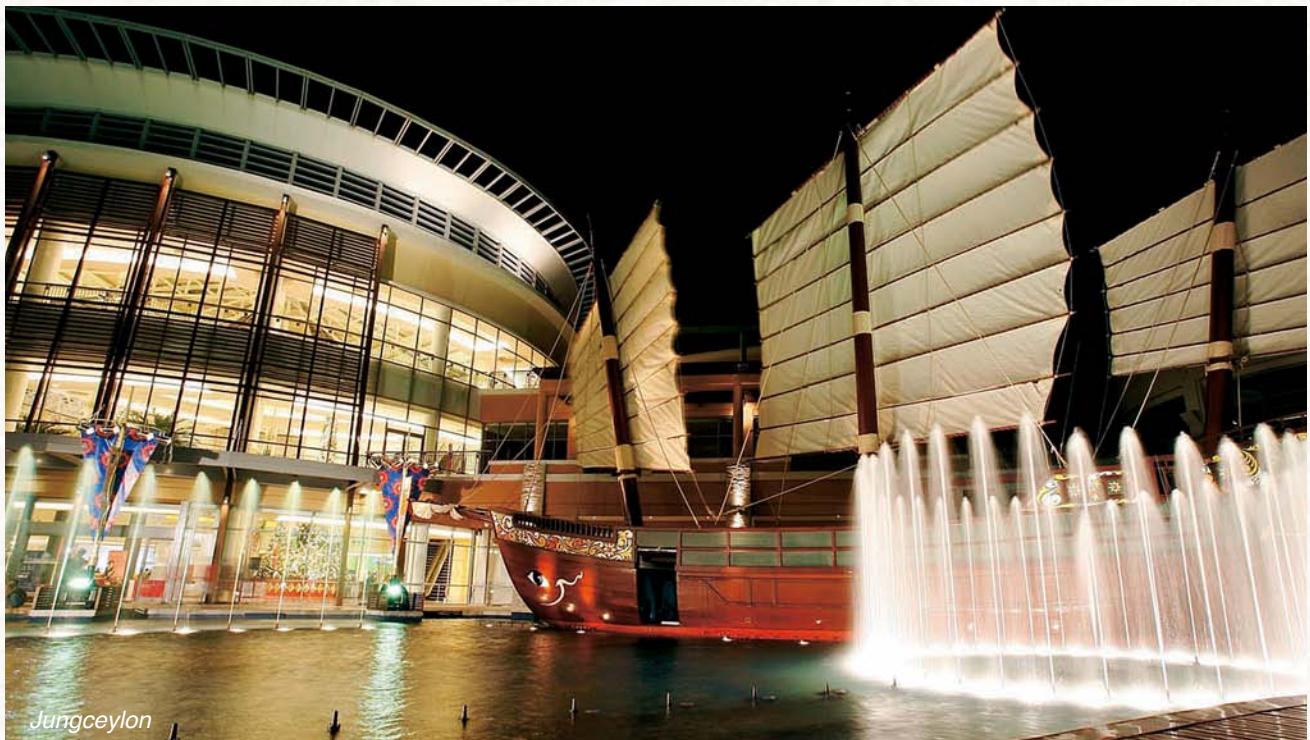
### SPA

Please refer to the section on 'Wellness & Spa' (page 147).

### GOLF

Please refer to the section on 'Golf' (page 152).

## SHOPPING



### PREMIUM OUTLET

Premium Outlet Phuket is located on the bypass road (Chalermphrakiat Rama 9 Road). If going from Phuket International Airport to the city, it is located on the left side. Tourists will notice the blend of modern and traditional architectural design that makes this mall a landmark in Phuket. It's the biggest outlet mall with 300 brand names and over 18,000 sq. m. of retail space where they will find discounts of up to 80 %.

**Open daily from** 10:00 a.m. - 9.00 p.m.

**Website:** [www.outletmallthailand.com](http://www.outletmallthailand.com)

### JUNGCEYLON

This is an international shopping and leisure destination that will revive Phuket's great history and reputation and make it known around the world.

#### Highlights

- Right on famous lively Patong Beach, the prettiest beach in Phuket.
- A centre for shopping, drinking, dining, entertainment and leisure that will impress all visitors and make them want to come back again and again.
- Variety of shops, entertainment venues, and restaurants.

**Open:** May - October: 11.00 a.m. till 10.00 p.m. daily.

**November - April:** 11.00 a.m. till 11.00 p.m. daily.

**Website:** [www.jungceylon.com](http://www.jungceylon.com)

### DÉCOR MART

This is the leading retailer in Thailand for upscale home interiors and decorative products ranging from bathroom items to furniture with an assortment of exclusive brands from Ralph Lauren, Versace Home, Armani/Case, and Fendi Casa.

**Website:** [www.decormart.com](http://www.decormart.com)

### CENTRAL FESTIVAL PHUKET

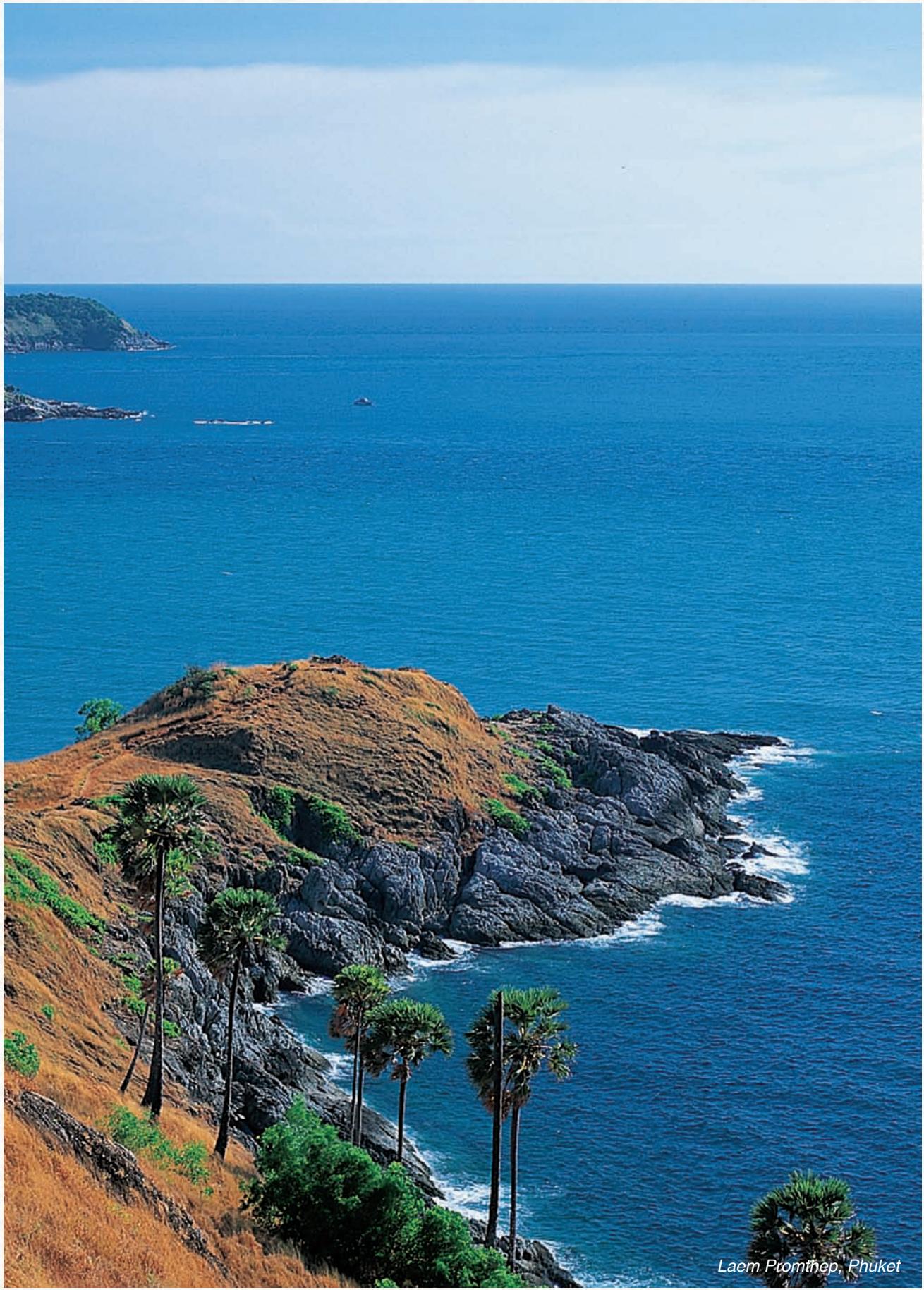
120,000 square metres bursting with world-class products, Central Festival Phuket is the consummate one-stop shopping, non-stop entertainment complex for visitors. Enjoy the newest, largest, most complete shopping and entertainment complex in the South of Thailand.

**Website:** [www.centralfestivalphuket.com](http://www.centralfestivalphuket.com)



For further information about what to see and do in Phuket, please check

[www.thailand72hrsamazing.com](http://www.thailand72hrsamazing.com)



*Laem Promthep, Phuket*

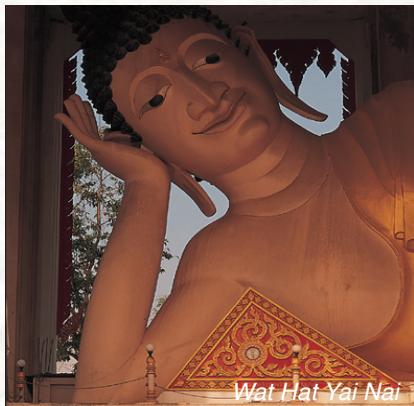
# HAT YAI



Hat Yai is the largest city in Southern Thailand and is also the jump-off point to Malaysia and Singapore. As the region's commercial, shopping, and entertainment centre, Hat Yai is a popular destination for visitors, who enjoy dining on its outstanding seafood, which is served in various styles thanks to the city's diverse population of Chinese, Malays, and Thais. Hat Yai also features a multitude of markets, both local and international in style.

Nearby city attractions include Songkhla Lake, the largest in Thailand; an enormous reclining Buddha that visitors can walk inside, the Bhasawang Big Splash, a 15-metre long water slide, and the region's most popular spectator sport, bullfighting.

## RECOMMENDED PLACES OF INTEREST



### WAT HAT YAI NAI

This temple houses Phra Phuttha Mongkhon, the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest reclining Buddha in Thailand and the largest in southern Thailand. Go around behind and inside the large reclining Buddha, there is an interesting shrine and mausoleum.

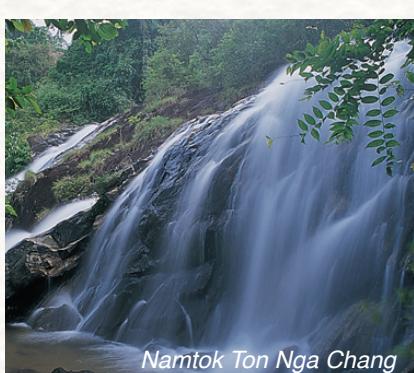
### HAT YAI MUNICIPAL PARK

Is on the Hat Yai-Songkhla Highway. It is the major recreation area for the people of Hat Yai and surrounding areas as well. The Park is full of beautiful flowering plants, with a pavilion in the middle of the pond and food stalls. There is a statue of King Rama V and a Brahman shrine at the hilltop. At the southern foothill stands the jade statue of Kuan-Yin, the Chinese Goddess.

## OUT-OF-CITY ATTRACTIONS

### NAMTOK TON NGA CHANG (Elephant Tusk Falls)

This waterfall of 7 tiers is located in the Ton Nga Chang Wildlife Sanctuary, about 26 km. from Hat Yai. The third tier is where the waterfall gets its



Namtok Ton Nga Chang

name, as the stream separates into two, resembling an elephant's tusks. Adventurous tourists can take treks.

### AMPHOE SADAO

This district borders Malaysia's state of Kedah, about 60 km. south of Hat Yai, and includes the border trading post and railway station of Padang Besar.

### KHAO NAM KHANG HISTORIC TUNNEL

Situated in Khao Nam Khang, about 90 km. from Hat Yai, this tunnel was once known as Piyamit Village 5, run by the Communist insurgents. It is the largest and longest man-made tunnel

in Thailand. It has three corridors and three levels with a conference room, sick bay, radio transmission room, kitchen, firing range and other facilities.

### SONGKHLA LAKE

This lake is the largest and only natural, freshwater lake in Thailand covering an area of approximately 80 kilometres long and 20 to 25 kilometres wide in Songkhla and Phatthalung provinces. Several islands across from its mouth; namely, Ko Yai, Ko Si, Ko Ha, Ko Kaeo, Ko Mak, Ko Rai, and Ko Yo are worth visiting for relaxation. Boat services are available for touring the lake.

## SHOPPING

Clothes, shoes, bags, fruits and other goods are cheap here. So why not shop till you drop! Some places of note include:

- The Weekend Night Market (Talat Paet Thai) which only opens from Thursday - Sunday from 6.00-10.00 p.m.
- Plaza that is open daily from 8.00 a.m.-5 p.m.

• Kim Yong Market is the most attractive and famous place for shopping. There is plenty of food, home electricity appliances, watches, etc.

• Suntisook Market is another famous place which sells products similar to Kim Yong Market.

• ASEAN Market (Poet Thai) is next to Hat Yai Bus Station. This market

is famous for second-hand brand clothes, bags and shoes, but interesting local design new clothes and some vintage decorative stuff can be found here as well with lots of food stalls. It is open Wednesday to Sunday 5.00 - 10.00 pm.

Central Department Store offers a large range of high-end products of comestics, clothing, leather goods, sports goods, accessories, etc.

# Ko SAMUI



Hat Lamai



Ko Samui is a premier island destination in the Gulf of Thailand roughly 80 km from the mainland in Surat Thani province. It is easily accessible, features spectacular beautiful beaches, has outstanding dining, and a comprehensive array of activities including cooking courses, yoga instruction, Muay Thai training, scuba diving, and even golf that can cater to visitors on any budget.

The beaches of Chaweng and Lamai are bustling beach towns with fabulous beach resorts, internationally acclaimed restaurants, and world-class nightclubs; While there are a few quieter beaches that are ideal for relaxation, particularly those that feature some of the finest luxury 5-star resorts in the world, and some that exude old world charm, Samui is far from the unspoiled island it was a few decades ago. Nonetheless, Ko Samui has developed into its own style of island paradise, retaining much of its natural beauty while offering nearly every imaginable activity or service for the ultimate beach holiday.



Hin Ta Hin Yai



### FISHERMAN'S VILLAGE

Though its glory days as a fisherman's village and busy port are long gone, the area is still bustling with life thanks to its rows of shophouses, cafes and pubs that still retain its olden charms. Sitting in the heart of Bo Phut, Fisherman's Village is now a favourite among tourists and locals alike for its beautiful Chinese-style buildings that seem to take one back in time. The area makes a great sanctuary for peace loving night owls who want to get away from the commotion of the island's more populated beaches.

### PARADISE PARK FARM

To fully appreciate the non-beach side of Samui, head to the greenish highlands of Khao Pom for a hidden animal haven, Paradise Park Farm. It is one of the most picturesque places to be during sunset. Visitors can hike up the hills for a scenic walk tour, which takes about 20 minutes to an hour depending on the ruggedness of the routes. At the park are friendly iguanas and talkative parrots, along with a number of horses, rabbits, gibbons, goats, peacocks, and deer, who call this vast 50-rai property home.

*Website: [www.paradiseparkfarm.net](http://www.paradiseparkfarm.net)*

### CROCODILE FARM

Don't forget to stop by at the famed Crocodile Farm near Chaweng beach. Among the numerous animal shows in Samui, this one has to be the most spectacular. A team of monkeys greet visitors with their naughty tricks, like snatching sunglasses and hats. The real highlights though have to be the primordial creatures roaming about in their pits. There are six shows daily, alternating between crocodile and king cobra shows.

### HIN TA HIN YAI

Lamai Beach's famed rock formations, the Hin Ta or Grandfather rock and Hin Yai, or Grandmother rock, always provoke a chuckle and naughty thoughts from curious visitors. According to a local tale, an old couple was shipwrecked in the area, and their bodies were washed up ashore, creating the rocks that mark their fate. These natural formations bear uncanny resemblances to male and female genitalia, making this site one of the most photographed spots on Samui.

### BIG BUDDHA (Wat Phra Yai)

Located near the airport, the 12-metre tall statue visible from afar is known as a landmark of Ko Samui. The temple that houses the statue was built in 1972 as a place for locals and visitors to pay respect to the Lord Buddha and as such it has a rather modern feel; the temple is decorated with murals of the Buddha in different poses, with some depicting stories from Siamese mythology.

### HIN LAT WATERFALL/ NA MUEANG WATERFALL

Not too far from Nathon Beach, there are two waterfalls on Ko Samui worth checking out. Instead of cascading from high cliffs, Hin Lat is full of low ridge waterfalls, rendering it to be more tranquil. The more popular waterfall, Na Mueang, is a favourite among tourists as there are two places where they can get a glimpse of these tumbling waters. This waterfall is much higher and has a large basin for visitors to swim. For a more fun and entertaining means of traversing the waterfalls, go elephant trekking, where trusty pachyderms take visitors on a ride around the peaceful surrounding groves.

## I OTHER ISLAND ATTRACTIONS

Samui is also an embarkation point for various nearby islands and the Ang Thong National Marine Park.

### KO PHANGAN

Located 20 kilometres north of Ko Samui, it takes about 30 minutes to an hour to reach by boat. The island is famously known for the Full Moon Party, but is covered in natural terrain and preserved as a national park, so rich wildlife and beautiful flora can still be witnessed. For those looking to relax, Ko Phangan is also home to luxurious resorts offering world-class spa and health treatments. Divers and snorkellers can also explore the underwater world, as the coastline is surrounded by coral reefs waiting to be visited.

### KO TAO

Lying 45 kilometres north of Ko Phangan or taking a night boat from Surat Thani directly to Ko Tao, this island offers visitors with a choice of fishing and diving. Interested persons can learn how to dive here and be able to see numerous marine wonders.

### ANG THONG NATIONAL MARINE PARK

Spanning over 250 sq. km., this cluster of 40 or so islands of different shapes and sizes, with the must visit being Mae Ko Island for its emerald seawater lake that lies in the middle of the island, is a picturesque attraction. Ang Thong is also a favourite dive spot thanks to underwater scenery with caves and rock formations highlighting the marine life. Coral reefs surrounding the beaches are also ideal for snorkelling. The best way to experience Ang Thong is on a private one-day speedboat tour that also includes a snorkelling stop.

### KO NANG YUAN

Located to the north of Ko Tao, in Surat Thani, this island has crystal clear sea that visitors can see schools of fish directly under the pier. Its rich marine life is similar to that of Ko Tao with a wide variety of coral formations making it an ideal diving and snorkelling spot. There is a daily boat service to and from Ko Tao.

### BEACHES

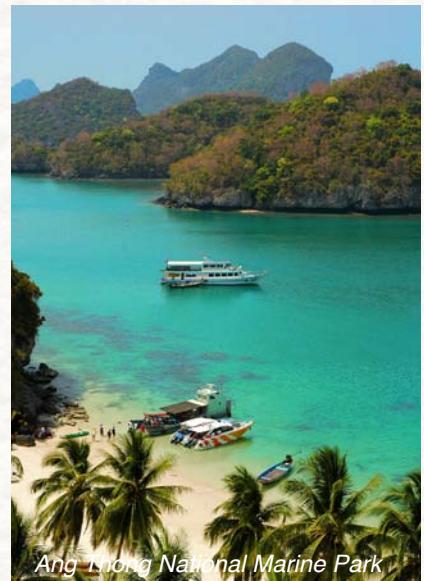
Please refer to the section on 'Family Beaches' and 'Colourful Beaches' (page 114-115).

### SPA

Please refer to the section on 'Wellness & Spa' (page 147).

### GOLF

Please refer to the section on 'Golf' (page 152).



Ang Thong National Marine Park



Ko Nang Yuan

## ACTIVITIES

Besides water-based activities, Ko Samui also offers a variety of alternative ones.

### ROCK CLIMBING AT LAMAI BEACH

Lamai Beach isn't just about leisure and lounging away on a sunbed. Walk along the beach road and tourists will come across a gigantic wall of nubby concrete. This is a practice climbing cliff for adventurous visitors to take a few prep courses before heading to the real rocky cliff on Ang Thong Island for some adrenaline-soaked activity. Of course, for the less bold and daring, sticking to this mock cliff is already an enough of a heart pumping experience.

### CANOPY ADVENTURES

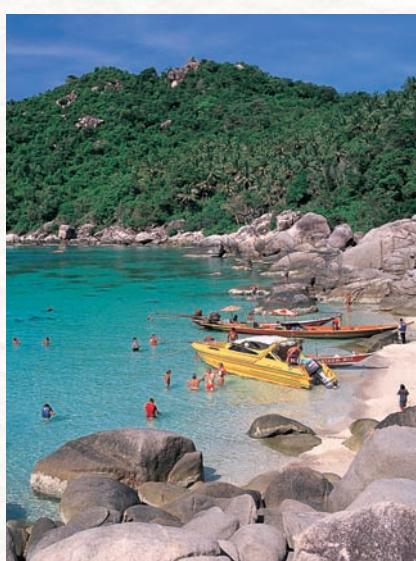
Not for the faint of heart, the Secret Falls Canopy Tour offers adventurous travellers an adrenaline pumping experience. Just getting to the drop sites is already heartpounding, with trekking over steep mountain trails before reaching the 175 metre-above-sea-level site. Descend from a wooden platform, glide over the luscious groves and forests, taking in one of the most secretive spots on the island, before reaching the other end on a waiting platform.

### KITEBOARDING

Samui is an island full of adventure, and to experience the adrenaline-pumping side of this southern island, gear up for a kiteboarding session at the Ko Samui Kiteboarding School. One of the most popular water sports on the island, kiteboarding requires stamina and courage to manoeuvre the gigantic sail around the deep blue sky and sea. Not a sport for amateurs, the school does offer classes for beginners to help you get started, ranging from short 3-hour course to intensive 13 hours. Upon finishing a course (and thereby hooked on the thrills), receive an International Kiteboarding Organisation certification so you can practice this thrilling sport anywhere in the world.

### ELEPHANT TREKKING

One popular activity that tourists who come to Ko Samui have to do at least once in their trip is sight-seeing on the back of a pachyderm. This is a feeling and experience distinctive from any other form of travelling, where one feels up close to nature. A popular route takes you through the forest and past waterfalls, the most famous of which is Na Mueang Waterfall.



## HOW TO GET THERE

### By Boat

There is a daily ferry service and an express boat service from the Don Sak Pier, Tambon Don Sak, to Ko Samui.

### By Air

Thai Airways International ([www.thaiairways.com](http://www.thaiairways.com)) and Bangkok Airways ([www.bangkokair.com](http://www.bangkokair.com)) have daily return flights (Bangkok - Ko Samui). A flight takes a little over an hour. Furthermore, there are other flights on different routes: Phuket - Ko Samui, U-Tapao - Ko Samui, Ko Samui - Krabi, Ko Samui - Singapore, and Ko Samui - Phnom Penh.



For further information about what to see and do in Samui, please check [www.thailand72hrsamazing.com](http://www.thailand72hrsamazing.com)

## ALTERNATIVE DESTINATIONS : KANCHANABURI



River Kwai Bridge



Kanchanaburi, the third largest province of Thailand after Nakhon Ratchasima and Chiang Mai, is the last bastion of pristine nature with the majestic Thanon Thongchai Mountain Range as a natural border between Thailand and Myanmar. The magnificent landscape of Kanchanaburi creates major tourist attractions, including historical sites, several waterfalls, national parks, rivers, and reservoirs. Whether it is fishing, rafting, canoeing, mountain biking, bird-watching, golfing, jungle trekking, or living in bamboo rafts, Kanchanaburi has them all to offer.

### RIVER KWAI BRIDGE

Thanks to several films and books, the River Kwai Bridge, which is on a branch of the Mae Klong River has become notoriously famous and attracted both Thais and foreigners to the site. If an ordinary black iron bridge can tell a story, you can be sure it's a dramatic one.

#### Highlights

- Recall the past of the dramatic iron bridge architecture assembled by the Allied prisoners of war under Japanese supervision during World War II.
- Visit the small shops and food-stalls selling local products.
- See the festival of the River Kwai Bridge Week during late November to December of every year.



*Hellfire Pass Memorial Museum*

### KANCHANABURI WAR CEMETERY

This war cemetery rests peacefully within the area of the city centre of Kanchanaburi.

#### Highlights

- Reminisce about the prisoners of war of World War II and see the cemetery that is decorated with various kinds of plants and flowers.

### HELLFIRE PASS MEMORIAL MUSEUM

This Australian built complex consists of a memorial site located within Hellfire Pass, a Memorial Walking Trail and a modern museum exhibiting artefacts and the true story about the Thai-Burma Railway.

#### Highlights

- See outdoor and indoor exhibits of World War II memorials.

- Visit the mini theatre showing a video made from war footage of the construction of the railway.
- Trek along the Museum's walking trail.

### MUEANG SING HISTORICAL PARK

Mueang Sing was built between 857 and 1157 when the Khmer Kingdom was still prosperous. The important archaeological site located in the middle of the city is Prasat Mueang Sing (Tower of the City of Lions).

#### Highlights

- Visit the rectangular laterite city walls believed to be the westernmost outpost of the Khmer empire.
- See the remains and artefacts including temple carvings, religious statuary and pottery shards of the 12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> centuries.



*Mueang Sing Historical Park*

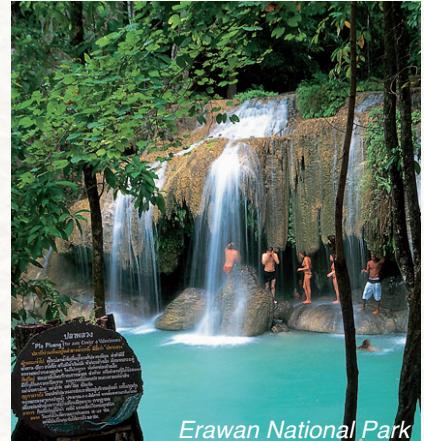
### ERAWAN NATIONAL PARK

The Park, covering an area of 550-sq.m., is the site of the seven-tiered Erawan Waterfall, one of Thailand's most beautiful waterfalls.

#### Highlights

- See the seven-tiered Erawan Waterfall full of emerald green water and beautiful falls.

- Visit Phrathat Cave with its strange shaped stalactites and stalagmites.
- Visit Mee Cave rumoured among local villagers that it used to be the home of a bear.
- Enjoy trekking, swimming, and camping.



*Erawan National Park*

## ALTERNATIVE DESTINATIONS : SUPHAN BURI



Dragon Descendants Museum



Just a hundred kilometres north from Bangkok, Suphan Buri is an ancient town rich in natural and historical heritage. Take a trip down the memory lane through historical evidence; such as, Don Chedi Monument, various temples, U Thong National Museum, natural wonders like Phu Toei National Park, Bueng Chawak Aquarium, and the 100-year-old market with delightful delicacies and souvenirs to choose from.

### DRAGON DESCENDANTS MUSEUM

This museum was built by Mr. Banharn Sila-archa, former Prime Minister of Thailand, with the aim to celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Diplomatic Relations between the People's Republic of China and Thailand that have been ongoing since 1995.

#### Highlights

- Be attracted by a gigantic brightly coloured dragon, which looks alive as if it had just descended from heaven.
- Visit the multimedia rooms showing the history of the Chinese civilisation and the migration of Chinese clans.
- Take a guided tour through 5000 years of Chinese history.

### LJIANG VILLAGE

The Heaven Dragon Village is an old Chinese community in the area of the City Pillar Shrine.

#### Highlights

- See the water flowing through the old Chinese windmill.
- Enjoy the view from the top of the viewpoint.
- Visit the teashop, massage parlour, theatre.
- Try and buy tasty Chinese food as well as souvenirs to take home.



### SAMCHUK MARKET

(100-Year-Old Market)

This Chinese old market with wooden shop-houses retains in its original way of life.

#### Highlights

- Visit the old photograph shop, herbal drugstore, and other outstanding landmarks.
- See old photos and antiques at the Khun Chamnong Chenarak Museum.
- Go shopping for souvenirs and enjoy various kinds of local specialties.

### BUENG CHAWAK AQUARIUM

Bueng Chawak is a part of the Tha Chin River which branched off to form a crescent shaped lake. The lake was excavated to dam up 10 million cubic metres of fresh water to irrigate 6,500 rai of agricultural land. The surrounding area has been developed into the Wildlife Extension Centre, a Garden of Indigenous Vegetables, and an exhibition centre for aquatic animals.

#### Highlights

- See the exhibits of various species of fresh-water fish that are kept in 2 buildings. The first building exhibits fish; such as, the giant Mekong catfish, clown feather back, bony tongue, tiger perch, etc. The second building is a large aquarium with a tunnel where visitors can walk through to see the underwater world.

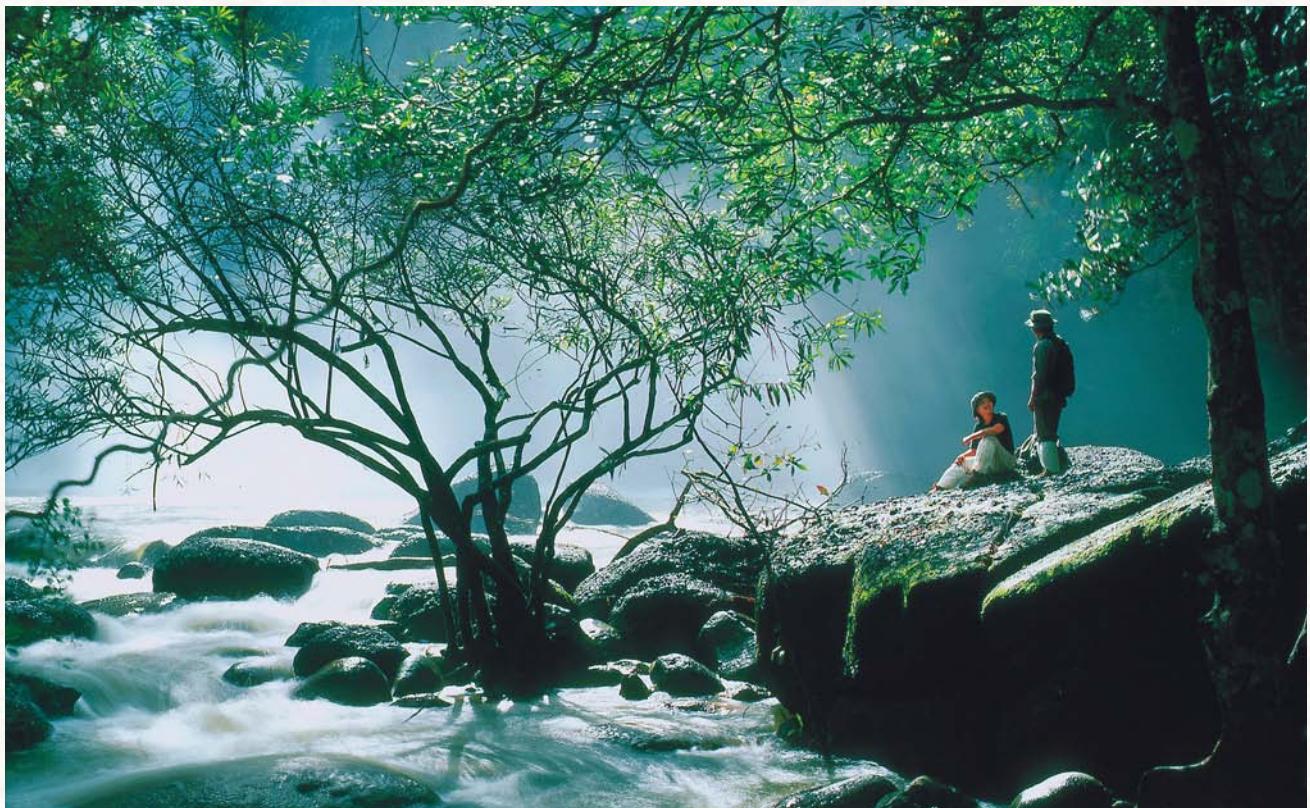


Bueng Chawak Aquarium

**For further information about what to see and do in Suphan Buri,**

please refer to details of the TAT Suphan Buri Office (page 216)

## ALTERNATIVE DESTINATIONS : KHAO YAI



The abundance of natural resources and livestock makes agriculture the main source of income of the Northeastern region. People who search for a relaxing holiday while being surrounded by nature in a slow and friendly pace of life would enjoy an agro tour in this region. A visit to an amazing vineyard brings the opportunity for the visitors to taste fine wines and enjoy the natural beauty while a farm tour will let visitors enjoy feeding animals, milking cows and other activities. With all of this on offer, in recent years, Khao Yai has become a tourist hot spot and luxury hotels and resorts have sprung up in the area providing all the necessary facilities to enjoy this part of the country.



### WINERY ROUTE

The mild, temperate climate of the Korat Plateau is a suitable environment for vineyard growing, and for those who love wine, there are a number of vineyards that will tempt your tastebuds.



### PB VALLEY

(2008 Thailand Tourism Award  
Winner of the Agro Tourism Attraction)

This vineyard is located on the edge of the Khao Yai National Park. It is the birthplace of the Khao Yai wine region. It is a world-class wine producer for Thais, as well as for exports, and one of the leading wineries in Thailand and Southeast Asia.

#### Highlights

- Enjoy vineyard and winery tours.
- Watch a harvest demonstration.
- Have lunch or dinner at the Great Hornbill Grill restaurant enjoying a glass of wine while dining.

Website: [www.khaoyaiwinery.com](http://www.khaoyaiwinery.com)



### VILLAGE FARM & WINERY

The farm and winery, which is at the same time a classy resort and a wellness spa, is located in a green field of vineyards.

#### Highlights

- See the cultivation of Shiraz, Cabernet-Sauvignon, Syrah and Chenin grapes.
- Participate in handpicking the grapes that must be completed in one night in order to avoid the heat of daytime and preserve the quality of the fruit.
- See how the crushing is completed in 1 hour, and how the fermentation process is started before dawn of the following day.
- Take a tour of the winery during which grape varieties, the functioning of presses, the use of stainless steel and oak barrels, bottling machines and wine making in general are shown and explained.

Website: [www.villagefarm.co.th](http://www.villagefarm.co.th)



### GRAN MONTEVINEYARD

(2010 Thailand Tourism Award Winner of the Agro Tourism Attraction)

This is uniquely located in Asoke Valley, Khao Yai and conveniently lies adjacent to Khao Yai National Park. This provides a perfect environmental setting for the Gran Monte Vineyard.

#### Highlights

- Take a tour of the vineyard and learn about the different varieties of grapes used for producing wine.
- Enjoy the beautiful natural surroundings.
- Taste and buy wine and grape juice.

Website: [www.granmonte.com](http://www.granmonte.com)

## JIM THOMPSON FARM

Situated in the Pak Thong Chai district of Nakhon Ratchasima province, the Jim Thompson Farm covers an area of 600 rai and is one of the Northeast's most popular agro and ecotourism attractions.

### Highlights

- Take a farm tour to observe up close the full life cycle of silkworms and the silk farming process.
- See mushroom cultivation, hydroponic flower gardens, decorative plant nurseries and large fields of colourful flowers.
- Try milling rice using antique hand-operated wooden rice grinders then winnow the rice, and take home "your own rice crop".
- Visit the Northeast villages featuring antique houses unique in architecture and in pristine condition.
- Go shopping at the Farmer's Market where a large selection of fresh pesticide-free fruits and vegetables and a variety of farm-made snack foods are on sale, as well as an interesting assortment of selected merchandise and traditional hand woven textiles from the Jim Thompson factory.

**N.B.:** Open December only.

Website: [www.jimthompsonfarm.com](http://www.jimthompsonfarm.com)



## CHOKCHAI FARM

(2010 Thailand Tourism Award  
Winner of the Agro Tourism  
Attraction)

This integrated farm on an area of 100 acres is the largest dairy farm in Southeast Asia where visitors can learn about milking, making of fresh milk ice cream, animal feed plant, and other several activities with superb tourist facilities.

### Highlights

- Take a farm tour.
- Enjoy an outdoor experience of a cooking workshop and ice cream workshop.
- Enjoy boutique camping in one of 50 tents set up for individuals or groups.
- Buy fresh milk or icecream or some cowboy souvenirs.

Website: [www.farmchokchai.com](http://www.farmchokchai.com)





### PRIMO POSTO

This stylish Italian complex with several restaurants and shops offers delicious cuisine, great wine, tasty icecream and good coffee. With the spectacularly designed building and garden in the traditional Italian style, this is a great place for families, for holding meetings or seminars, or other social events like weddings and birthday parties.

*Website:* [www.primo-posto.net](http://www.primo-posto.net)

### PALIO

This has been built like a small Italian village with small narrow streets filled with an assortment of shops including restaurants, coffee shops, and souvenir shops. There is also a bakery, beauty and nail salon, wine cellars and more. Palio also has areas for holding various events and provides catering with bed and breakfast facilities as well as boutique hotel accommodation. Every weekend, there is a weekend market and street shows in the evening.

*Website:* [www.palio-khaoyai.com](http://www.palio-khaoyai.com)

### PREMIUM OUTLET KHAO YAI

Is located on Mitraphap Road (Highway 2), 5 kilometres after Chokchai farm (if coming from Bangkok). Its architecture resembles a Western-style farm and the colourful painted cow statues have become a noticeable feature of the Outlet, reflecting its location at the gateway to the rural Northeast of Thailand. This outlet mall showcases merchandise from many renowned local and international fashion brand names where you will find clothing discounted up to 70% off the retail price. Open Daily 10 a.m. - 8 p.m.

*Website:* [www.outletmallthailand.com](http://www.outletmallthailand.com)



For further information about what to see and do in Khao Yai, please check

[www.thailand72hrsamazing.com](http://www.thailand72hrsamazing.com)

## ALTERNATIVE DESTINATIONS : CHIANG RAI : CHIANG SAEN & GOLDEN TRIANGLE



Chiang Rai town, which tends to be a little more laid back, now competes with Chiang Mai as a tourist attraction and is fast becoming a popular escape for tourists wanting a more quiet travel destination and to be within close proximity to nature.

Chiang Rai, the former capital of the great Lanna Kingdom, is a fascinating province filled with cultural and natural wonders. Attractions range from ruins of ancient settlements and Buddhist shrines to magnificent mountain scenery and hill tribe villages. It is where the famous tourist attraction called the "Golden Triangle" lies, and for those interested in social development, Chiang Rai is also a centre for community development projects, helping rural villagers develop their attractions without adversely affecting their natural and cultural assets.



### HALL OF OPIUM & GOLDEN TRIANGLE PARK

A trip to Chiang Rai province would not be complete without seeing the notorious Golden Triangle first hand. This famed border location where Thailand, Lao PDR., and Myanmar meet on the Mekong River was once supposed to be the centre of all the poppy cultivation in Thailand. The Hall of Opium at the Golden Triangle Park houses various exhibitions to be explored. It is a modern edutainment multimedia museum, built in 1988 with the help of the United Nations.

#### Highlights

- See the exhibition of the 5,000-year history of opium told through a series of interactive multimedia.
- Hire a boat to view the upstream scenery of the Golden Triangle and to travel downstream to Chiang Khong.



### RAI MAE FAH LUANG

This is one of Chiang Rai's major attractions, as it is a showcase of Lanna art and culture that is dedicated to the conservation and promotion of Lanna heritage of Northern Thailand.

There are 5 exhibit areas, namely:

- a. The Botanical Gardens and Nature Park;
- b. The Ho Khum (Golden Pavilion);
- c. The Ho Khum Noi (Small Golden Pavilion);
- d. Sala Kaeo, a ceremonial space for rituals;
- e. Ho Kaeo, a gallery of Lanna cultural arts.

**Open:** 10.00 a.m. - 6.00 p.m. daily except Monday.



### DOI TUNG

This is located in Mae Fa Luang District and has many interesting sites including the Doi Tung Palace, Mae Fa Luang Garden, the beautiful landscaped gardens filled with hundreds of different kinds of plants and flowers. In addition to scenic lookouts, the most notable attraction is the Phra That Doi Tung Holy Relic, an old religious site on top of the mountain.



Doi Mae Salong



*Ancient City of Chiang Saen*

### DOI MAE SALONG

Santi Khiri village is a community settled by the former Chinese 93<sup>rd</sup> Division, who moved from Myanmar to reside on Thai territory in 1961. The village has become well known for its enchanting scenery and tranquil atmosphere.

#### Highlights

- Experience the small-town ambience and enjoy delicious native Chinese dishes and sipping on locally grown tea or coffee.
- Visit tea, coffee and fruit tree plantations to see the tea production and taste various kinds of specialties made from local ingredients, especially Green Tea and Oolong Tea.

- See the world's three largest teapots at the Wang Phut Tan Tea Plantation.
- Trek around the area that is scattered with many hill tribe villages and see the beauty of the pink Thai cherry blossoms that are in full bloom in winter.
- Enjoy the picturesque scenery of the 'Nang Phaya Sua Khrong' blossoms in January-February.

**Open:** Daily all year round (best time to visit is during November - February).

### ANCIENT CITY OF CHIANG SAEN

It is recorded that an ancient community was founded in the north of Chiang Rai province more than 2,000 years ago. Chiang Saen has both scenic natural attractions and an

impressive cultural heritage, making it a peaceful tourist attraction for everyone.

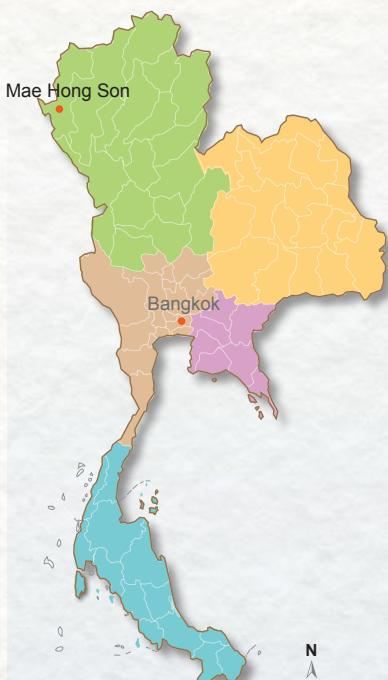
#### Highlights

- Visit the many ancient ruins, graceful stuccos and splendid craftwork found in the area in which the Buddha images showcase Lanka, Sukhothai and Ayutthaya art and techniques.
- Relax with the charming and serene atmosphere on the banks of the Mekong River.

### CHIANG RAI NIGHT BAZAAR

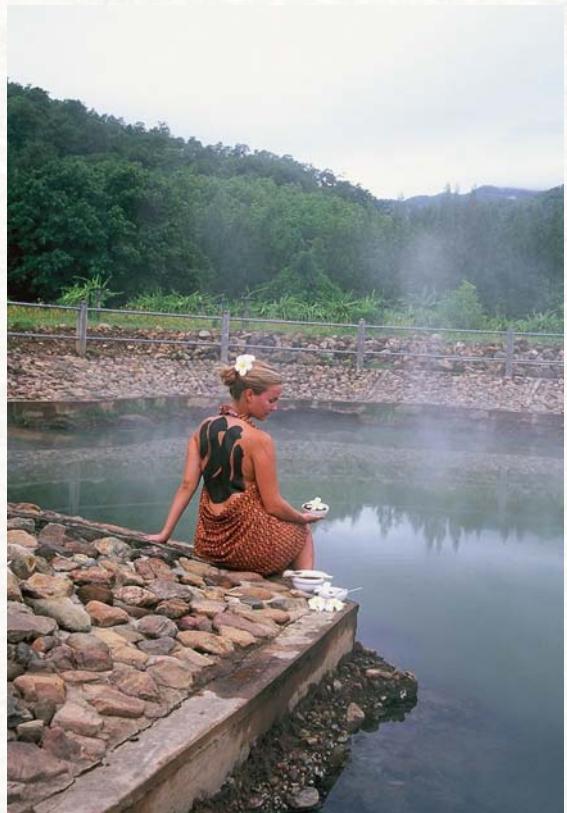
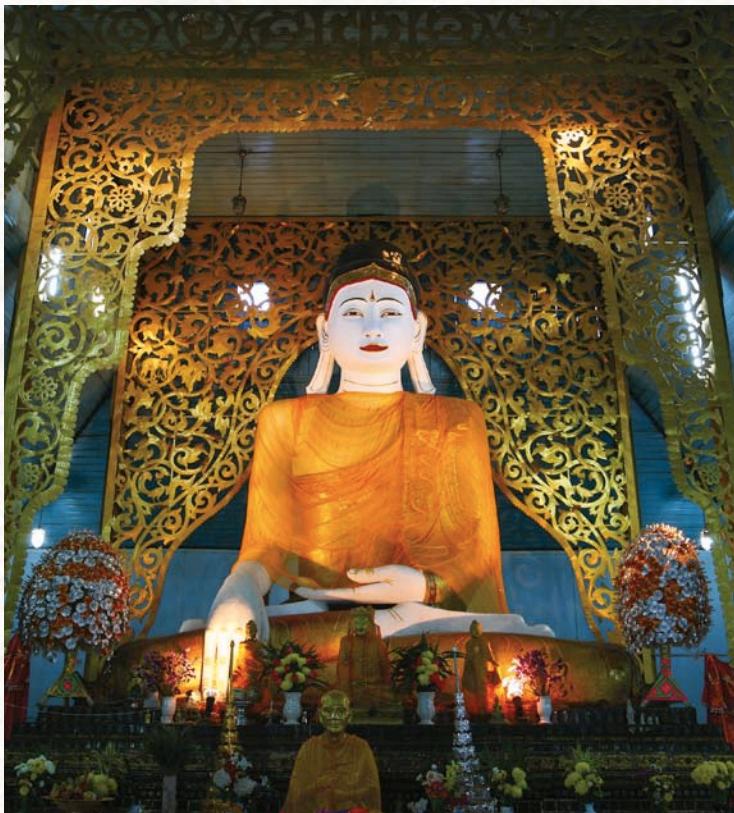
This displays everything from silk ready-made garments to tattoo etching with hill tribes selling an amazing selection of woven needlework and other products.

## ALTERNATIVE DESTINATIONS : MAE HONG SON: PAI



Nestled in a deep valley hemmed in by high mountain ranges, Mae Hong Son town has long been isolated from the outside world. Mae Hong Son is a fascinating province of Burmese and Lanna style temples, hot springs, hill tribe villages, trekking, rafting, and national parks. In addition, 111 kilometres from Mae Hong Son and 138 kilometres from Chiang Mai is the town of Pai, also a traveller's favourite. Comprising houses and shops of golden teak wood, Pai also offers other items of interest; such as, Wat Nam Hu, the historical World War II Bridge, Mo Paeng Waterfall, rafting along the Pai River and cycling to see the scenery around Pai.

Besides this, many people come to Mae Hong Son and Pai to experience the natural beauty of northern Thailand or witness one of the many festivals that are celebrated in Mae Hong Son, especially the annual novice ordination ceremony for young men declaring their intentions to become Buddhist monks.



### PHU KHLON HEALTH TREATMENT

Phu Khlon' geographically means a mud source and natural mineral spring. Now the area has been developed to be a spa resort. Natural black mud which has skin care and therapeutic benefits has been discovered. The boiling black mud is clean, free from the smell of sulphur and full of healthy mineral for the skin and blood circulation.

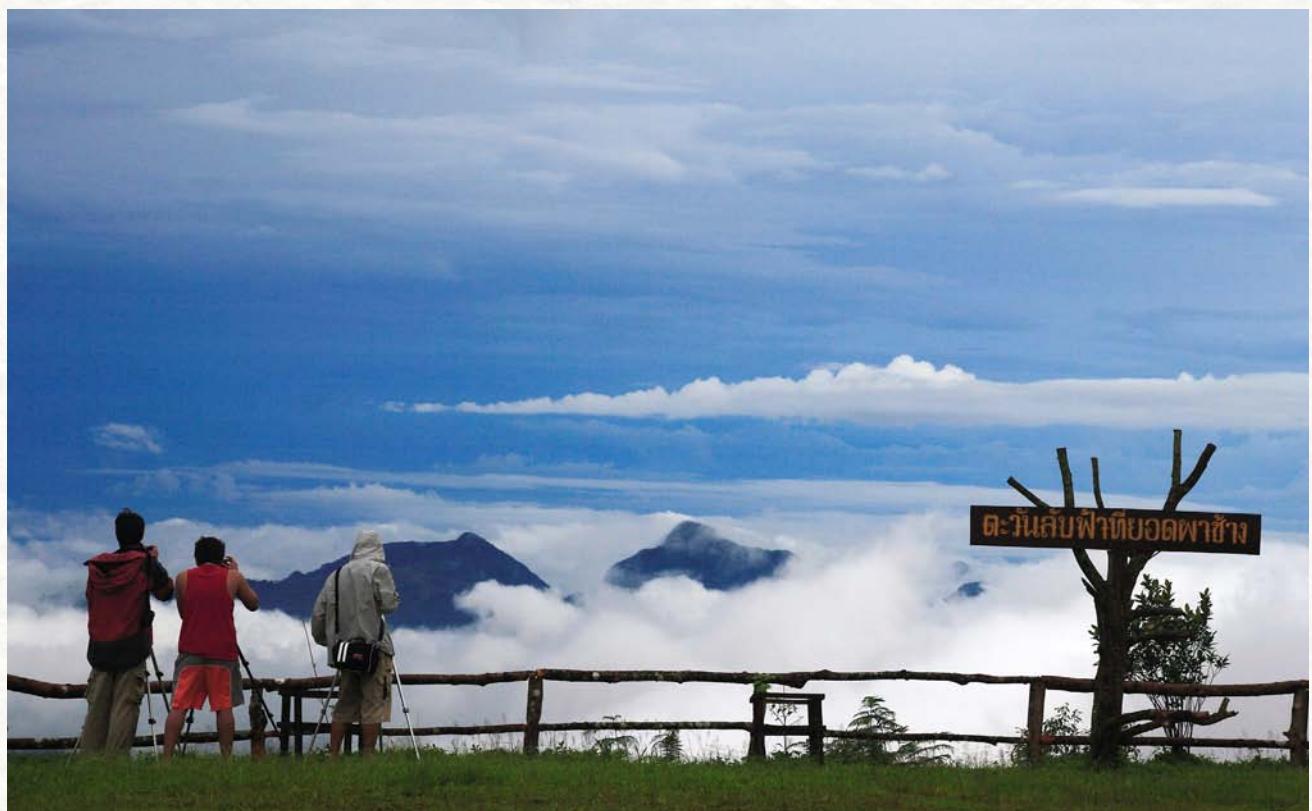
#### Highlights

- Have a face and body mud spa.
- Take a mineral water bath and herbal sauna.
- Relax with a Thai traditional massage
- Play golf.

Website: [www.phuklon.co.th](http://www.phuklon.co.th)

**For more on Pai,** please refer to the section on 'Green Activities' (page 163).

## ALTERNATIVE DESTINATIONS : NAN



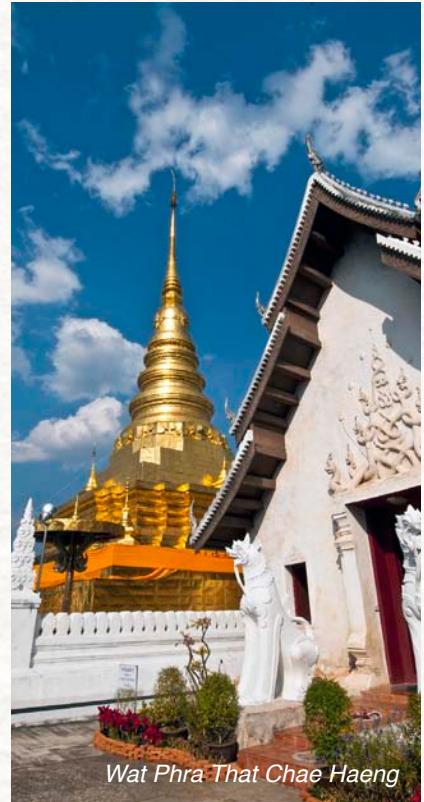
The rural province of Nan, which is 668 kilometres from Bangkok, is an attractive region of northern Thailand home to numerous Thai Lue and other hill tribes who retain many of their fascinating customs and traditions.

For those tourists who are looking for a unique combination, Nan has it all – rich natural beauty for ecotourism, Buddhist religious sites, cultural traditions, local wisdom, and more. Thus, this province has established a community network in which tourists can learn about the way of life of this province. Also visitors can enjoy a variety of activities including the thrill of rafting down the Namwa River, trekking to study the local nature, camping, cycling along nature trails, or exploring caves.

The provincial capital of Nan also has a relaxed charm, an interesting history, some impressive temples, and a good museum. There are a number of quality restaurants along the town's riverfront to plan your adventures into the countryside or relax after sightseeing in the town.



Wat Phumin



Wat Phra That Chae Haeng

## Highlights

### NAN NATIONAL MUSEUM

Is located in the palace of the last 2 feudal lords of Nan and displays exhibitions of the town's history, arts of different ages, numerous ancient objects, about the province's various ethnic groups, and a rare black elephants' tusk.

### WAT PHUMIN

This is the city's most renowned temple and a good example of Thai Lue architecture with well preserved murals of the Buddhist Jatakas on the walls.

### WAT PHRA THAT CHANG KHAM

This is the second-most important temple in the city and has a huge seated Buddha image and faint murals. Also in the main hall is a set of Lanna period scrolls inscribed in Lanna script that not only have the usual Buddhist scriptures but also the history, law and astrology of the time.

### WAT PHRA THAT CHAE HAENG

Two kilometres heading southeast out of town, this is the most sacred temple in Nan province. It is set on top of a hill with a view of Nan and the valley.

### THE THAI LUE VILLAGE-BAN NONG BUA

The Thai Lue people living at Ban Nong Bua produce traditional tribal fabric, an art handed down from generation to generation.

### NAN LONG-BOAT RACES

This colourful event is held annually around September/October and is one of the traditional rites which commemorates the end of the Buddhist Rains Retreat. The festival attracts hundreds of spectators with trophies and prizes given to the winning teams.

### DOI PHUKHA NATIONAL PARK

To the north of Nan in Nong Bua district and on the route to Bo Kluea district lies the Doi Phu Kha National Park. The terrain is mainly forest on limestone mountain ranges, the source of several streams which merge into the Nan River. This is the location of several rare and near-extinct flora species, particularly the Chomphu Phu Kha, whose pink flowers are in full bloom during February. In the morning, a sea of mist can be seen drifting across the valley. There are also several scenic waterfalls. Permits to camp can be applied for. Alternatively, tourists may choose to utilise the accommodation services in the Park.

## ALTERNATIVE DESTINATIONS : LOEI: CHIANG KHAN



Located 597 kilometres from Bangkok on the northern tip of Loei province, Chiang Khan is one of the few regions in Thailand to experience near-freezing temperatures at night during winter. However, it's just as beautiful year-round, surrounded by luscious vermillion rice paddies and rolling tree-covered hills. It is also a destination that portrays the intriguing combination of the powerful Mekong River and the simple way of life, culture and traditions of the local people.

The town centre is abundant with old wooden houses that would appeal to tourists looking for the original Northeastern Thai style. This is part of what gives the area its charm, a place of serenity and uniqueness. Visitors have the opportunity to immerse themselves in the local culture by tasting homemade Thai food and experiencing life in a wooden home. Visit the daily morning market, featuring fresh farm-grown produce, local specialty snacks, and buy crafts made by Chiang Khan artisans.

Apart from this, there are ecotourism activities like cycling around this ancient community and the surrounding area, see the art of the old temples that also illustrate the original Vientiane architecture that cannot be seen in Vientiane anymore like Wat Sri Khun Mueang, Wat Thakhok, and Wat Mahathat. Go to Kaeng Khutkhu, one of the most beautiful places to witness the mesmerising sunrise by the Mekong River.

With its unique identity, Chiang Khan will always be a special place to visit at least once in your life.



Krabi Town is a somewhat sleepy provincial capital located along the banks of a river that leads to the Andaman Sea. Few tourists spend time in this charming town, whose hilly streets feature a number of cozy cafes in which inexpensive and authentic Thai cuisine is served at an outdoor, riverside evening market. However, it is an important port city for both local fisherman as well as boats ferrying visitors to nearby attractions.

With attractions including hot springs, a wildlife sanctuary, sea caves, flourishing coral reefs and exotic marine life, limestone cliffs that draw rock climbing enthusiasts from around the world, and national parks that include the island paradises of Ko Phi Phi, Ko Lanta and Railey Beach, one could easily spend weeks in Krabi and leave yearning for more.

If that wasn't enough, Krabi features some of the most photogenic sunsets in Thailand, often accompanied by spectacular displays of cloud to cloud lightning, that are best enjoyed from a beachside bar or restaurant.



## ALTERNATIVE DESTINATIONS : KRABI

### EMERALD POOL

This hot spring originates from a warm stream in the lowland forest of Khao No Chuchi which is supposedly Thailand's last piece of virgin and fertile forest. The intensity of the pool's turquoise coloured water varies according to the light and time of the day, so visitors determined to see the real emerald colour should visit at dawn or early in the morning. The pool can be visited all year round.

### THAN BOK KHORANI NATIONAL PARK

This is a beautiful national park covering 104 sq. km in the northern region of Krabi. The landscape is dominated by limestone mountains, mangrove and evergreen forests, and numerous islands



### THA POM KHLONG SONG NAM

Tha Pom is called Khlong Song Nam by the locals, which in Thai literally means "two water canal", because of its special featured location where crystal clear freshwater in which the pool's floor and the roots of Lumphi palm (*Eleiodoxa conferta*) are virtually visible meet seawater from the mangrove forest. Tha Pom features a natural trail made of wooden boards for nature lovers to walk and enjoy the local environment.

### AO THA LEN

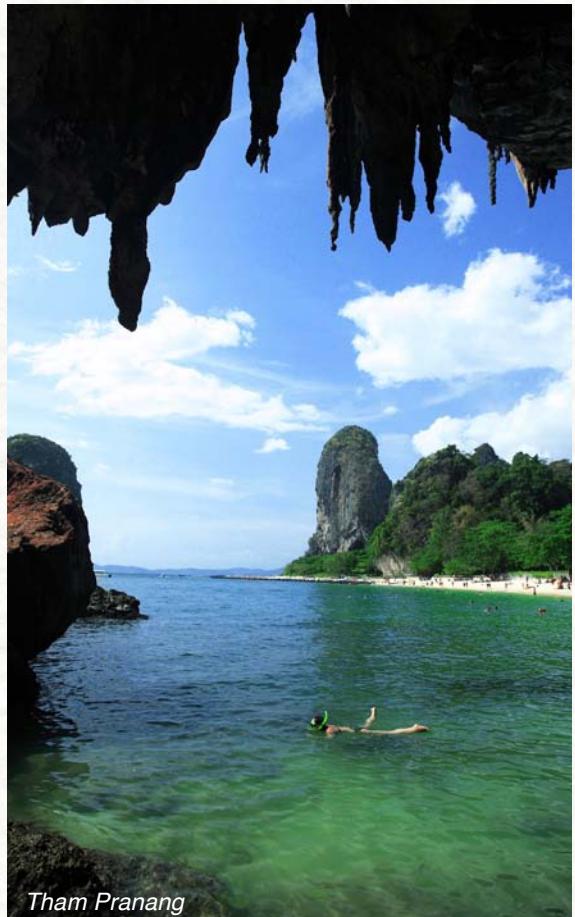
Located in the west of Krabi and recently discovered, this setting is superb for having a first time encounter with a unique ecosystem. The bay has narrow channels cutting through two towering karst complexes which is passable during all but extreme low tide periods.

### Highlights

- Go sightseeing by canoe or kayak through the majestic cliffs and the quiet nature.
- Explore the mangrove forest to see several animals; such as, the crab-eating macaques and various species of birds.
- Visit the natural lagoons and sea caves to see the ancient rock paintings
- Visit the traditional villages.

### THAM PRANANG

Is located near Hat Tham Pranang. This secluded beach, accessible only by boat, is considered one of the most beautiful in the region and offers spectacular views and world-class diving.



Tham Pranang

## ACTIVITIES



### ROCK CLIMBING

Apart from marine sports, Krabi is also an ideal place for rock climbing. Lines of sheer limestone cliffs along Tham Phranang and Rai Le Beaches have challenged thousands of climbers from all over the world every year. The levels of difficulty of the various routes vary, so even

the most inexperienced climbers can experiment. Equipment, instruction and guides are available at most accommodation premises.

### BIRD WATCHING

A trip to Krabi can be a very rewarding visit for any bird lovers. With easily accessible mangroves

and low lying forests, there are many places to spot rare birds. Two excellent locations are Khao Kanat Nam, close to Krabi Town, and Khao No Chuchi Forest Preserve. For more information about birdwatching, please refer to "Green Activities" page 163.

### ELEPHANT TREKKING

There is no better way to discover the mangrove forests of Krabi or amble down the banks of a river though the jungle than on the back of an elephant. *For more information about 'Elephant Holiday in Thailand', please refer to page 191.*

## SHOPPING

### OUTLET VILLAGE KRABI

Is located on Phetchakasem Road. It is on the way from the city to the local airport and features a tall lighthouse near the entrance and 6,000 sq. m. of retail space. Throughout the year, many Thai and foreign travellers visit this outlet which offers over 100 selected leading brands for all ages. Clothing discounted up to 70% is available here. It is open daily from 11:00 a.m. - 9.00 p.m.

Website: [www.outletmallthailand.com](http://www.outletmallthailand.com)

### BEACHES

Please refer to the section on 'Romantic Beaches', 'Colourful Beaches' and 'Natural Beaches' (page 110, 115, 117).

### SPA

Please refer to the section on 'Wellness & Spa' (page 147).



For further information about what to see and do in Krabi, please check

[www.thailand72hrsamazing.com](http://www.thailand72hrsamazing.com)

## ALTERNATIVE DESTINATIONS : TRANG



Emerald Cave



Trang city, the provincial capital, is a centuries-old seaport with a multicultural population of Thai, Malay, and Hokkien Chinese residents, a mixture that is best appreciated while dining on the local cuisine or mingling with the locals at a local coffee shop. Or why not take a tuk-tuk (a 3-wheeled vehicle) ride around the city to see the local way of life.

As a province, it has a long, beautiful shoreline that stretches 199 kilometres along the Andaman Sea, as well as two major rivers flowing through it. Trang has geographical advantages similar to that of Krabi and Phang Nga. This includes breathtaking islands with an archipelago consisting of more than 46 islands and beaches along the coast as well as awe-inspiring inland limestone mountains. Visitors interested in light-adventure activities can cruise the coastal waters and visit notable sights; such as, the enchanting Emerald Cave. Additional attractions include the nearby Mu Ko Petra National Park, where idyllic beaches and islands are perfect places to enjoy the warm, clear waters of the Andaman Sea and world-class dive sites. There are also wildlife sanctuaries like Namtok Khao Chong and Khlong Lamchan Park where waterfalls, nature trails, and caves are awaiting exploration. And for couples wanting a different kind of wedding, they can get married in the annual Underwater Wedding Ceremony in February.



Ko Libong

### THAM KHAO KOP

Is an ecotourism and adventure tourism attraction concealed under a huge single limestone mountain with a stream running through it. Inside the cave are spectacular stalagmites and other naturally formed attractions.

### PENINSULAR BOTANIC GARDEN (Thung Khai)

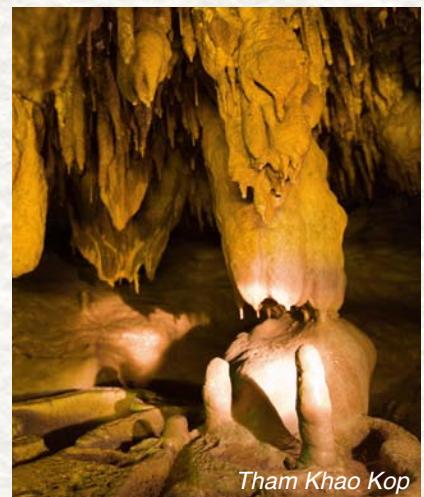
Established in 1993, the Garden has been built following the idea of Chuan Leekpai, a former Prime Minister, from the concept to build a botanical garden on the peninsula of Thailand of an international standard.

### WATERFALLS, BIRD WATCHING & FOREST TRAILS

There are eight spectacular waterfalls, all in relatively close proximity to one another in the Palian area and many more in the Trang region. Trang is also a haven for birdwatchers and offers diverse trekking.

### ISLAND HOPPING

A unique way to explore the countless islands off the Trang coast is on a traditional long-tail boat. Visit Ko Ngai, Ko Muk, Ko Sukron, Ko Chuek, Ko Libong, etc. that have accommodation intended to keep you close to nature. Watch the sea cows at Ko Libong or observe thousands of migrating birds stopping for a rest on their way south.



Tham Khao Kop

### EMERALD CAVE

Is one of Trang's highlights. Enter by swimming or just floating with your life jacket through a small tunnel that zigzags through solid rock before emerging into an enchanting small lagoon totally surrounded by towering cliffs with abundant vegetation and a small beach.

### BEACHES

Please refer to the section on 'Romantic Beaches' and 'Natural Beaches' (page 110, 117 ).



Hua Hin, Prachuap Khiri Khan Province



## PART III

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# THAILAND SPECIAL PRODUCTS

### BEACHES & ISLANDS

108

- Romantic Beach
- Family Beach
- Colourful Beach
- Natural Beach

### DIVING & SNORKELLING

120

- Gulf of Thailand (East)
- Gulf of Thailand (West)
- Andaman Sea
- Dive Operators

### HISTORY & HERITAGE

130

- World Heritage
- Khmer Route
- Dinosaur Route

### WEDDING & HONEYMOON

138

- Wedding Styles
- Honeymoons

### HEALTH & WELLNESS

146

- Wellness & Spa
- Medical Tourism
- Beauty, Nail Spas & Hair Salons

### GOLF

152

- The North
- The Central
- The South
- The East
- The Northeast

### GREEN ESCAPES

158

- Green Attractions
- Green Activities
- Green Communities
- Green Services

### LEARNING EXPERIENCES

183

- Royal Initiative Projects
- Thai Cooking Class
- Muay Thai (Thai Boxing Class)
- Thai Traditional Massage School
- Meditation Class
- Elephant Holidays in Thailand
- Voluntourism

### GATEWAY TO THE MEKONG REGION

196

- By Air
- Overland Routes
- Travel Along the Mekong River

### FESTIVITIES & EVENTS

202

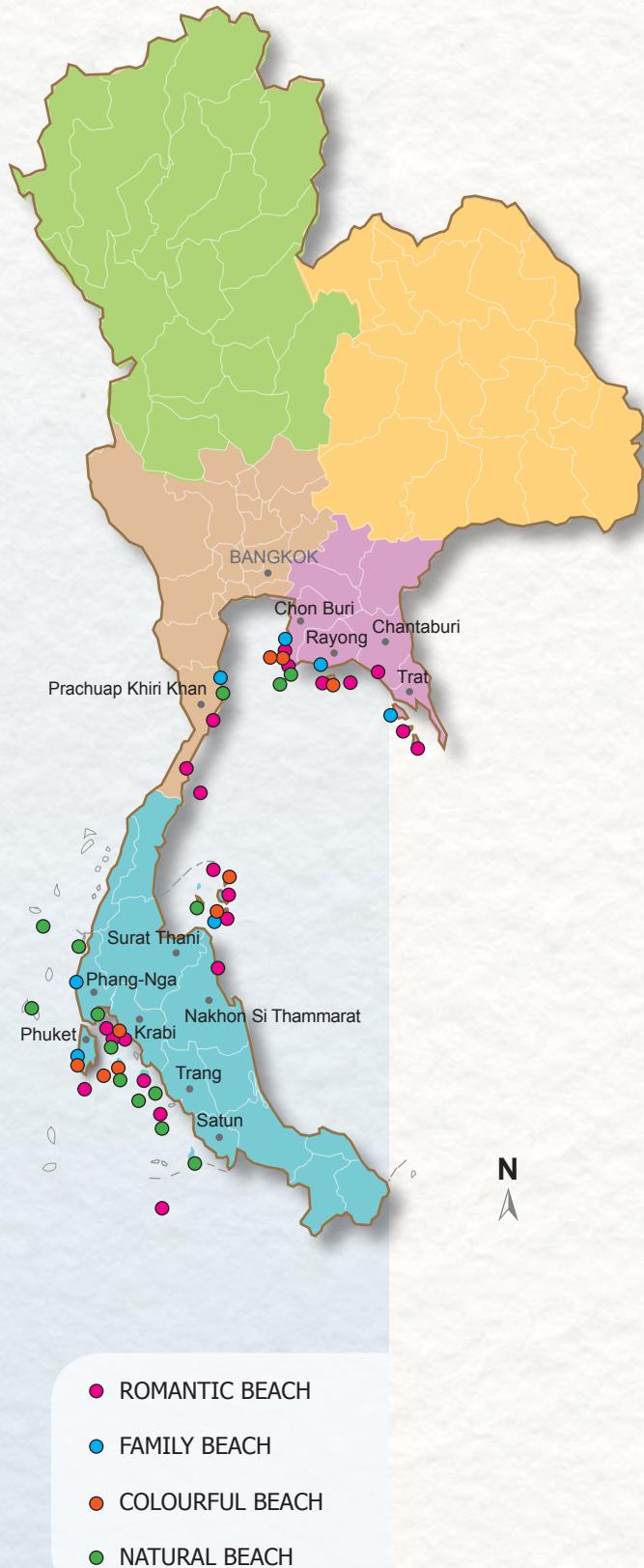
- Nationwide Festivals
- Major Events
- Other Festivals & Events

## BEACHES & ISLANDS



With a 2,500-km. coastline, Thailand offers such a profusion of sandy beaches, sheltered bays, quiet coves and idyllic islands that the choices for a holiday in the sun are near limitless. From the southern islands of Phuket and Samui, internationally renowned resorts boasting some of the world's finest beaches and most luxurious accommodation, to a fun playground like Pattaya or a classic family retreat such as Hua Hin, visitors to Thailand will find their kind of beach. Complementing the well-known resorts are beautiful coastal stretches where sheer cliffs, offshore islands, sea caves and marine national parks are simply breathtaking. If looking for seclusion, there are many opportunities for them to get off the beaten track and discover pristine beaches as yet unexplored by world travellers. Such topographical variety is marvellously matched by differences in ambience and the style of beach holiday.

Each location has its own distinct character, and whether the choice is for an action-packed vacation, a fun-filled party scene, or a lazy escape into a serene tropical paradise, all dreams of the perfect beach are wonderfully fulfilled. What remains constant is the year-round sunshine. Complementing the unparalleled natural advantages of Thailand's beaches and islands are world-class facilities that make all the difference to a holiday in the sun. Accommodation is nothing short of superb, both in quality and variety. With every option, from the unsurpassed luxury of distinguished 5-star resorts to the simple charms of a beachfront bungalow, visitors are perfectly placed whatever their preference and budget. Adding additional dimensions to a beach holiday are tropical spas for relaxing and rejuvenating body and mind; a whole host of sporting options, from scuba diving and yachting to golf at championship-standard courses, and not least superb dining that includes the fresh seafood dishes for which Thailand is famous. Finally, whichever beach or island they choose, visitors will always find that legendary Thai hospitality that ensures the ultimate enjoyment of a tropical escape.



## I ROMANTIC BEACH

In this category, there are 20 beaches that have been selected for their serenity. They also have all the required facilities; i.e., hotels and resorts with the perfect atmosphere and quality restaurants that lovers look for.

### TRAT

#### Ko Kut

Only an hour by plane from Bangkok to Trat and located 80 km. off the mainland, Ko Kut is Thailand's easternmost island in Trat waters. The resorts here are very romantic, as they are built out on the water bringing guests to be close up with the marine world. Also the beaches are charming and not overcrowded that is ideal for lovers. The best period to visit is from November to May with boats leaving from Laem Ngop (17 kms from Trat) to the island. The journey takes approximately 2½ hours.

#### Ko Mak

With romantic-style accommodation, Ko Mak is blessed with great resorts, scenic bays, and beautiful quiet sandy beaches embracing crystal clear water all around the island. It is very accessible by plane from Bangkok to Trat with boats departing from Laem Ngop (17 kms from Trat) for the 3-hour journey to the island.

### CHANTABURI

#### Hat Kung Wiman - Chao Lao

There's nothing that can beat Hat Kung Wiman and Hat Chao Lao in terms of romantic beauty and scenery that lovers would want for some private time together. Both have medium to standard seaside accommodation and restaurants available. The best period for visiting either of these beaches is between November – May.



### RAYONG

#### Ao Kui Na Nok, Ko Samet

Ao Kui Na Nok is a very nice small get-away beach that is different from other beaches on Ko Samet because of the peaceful serenity. Accommodation ranges from cottage-style bungalows and luxury resorts. Ban Phe is only a 2-hour drive from Bangkok from where couples can get the 45-minute boat ride across to Ko Samet.

#### Ko Man Nok

This small island is separated away from the hustle and bustle of the outside world and has private resorts in an atmosphere most fitting for lovers. The resort here is isolated with villa-style accommodation.

### CHON BURI

#### Hat Tawan Ron, Satthahip

This is a very quiet beach near Pattaya, and it has a number of romantic resorts offering an idyll holiday lifestyle.

#### Hat Sai Thong, Chomthien

Hat Sai Thong is another choice of a very calm beach and is more romantic with a variety of accommodation and facilities that is perfect for couples wanting peace and quiet even though it is in the vicinity of Pattaya.

## PRACHUAP KHIRI KHAN

### Hat Pranburi

This beach is 30 kms from Hua Hin, but is very private. There are resorts of various styles and especially fitting for lovers.

### Hat Ban Krut

Is located in the Ban Krut area, Thong Chai Sub-district. It is a place where tourists can experience the lifestyle of fishermen and stay in reasonably priced accommodation.

### Ko Thalu

This small island has clear water, white sandy beaches and private accommodation. All of this has created a relaxing romantic atmosphere. Travelling by boat from Ban Nong Samet takes 30 minutes, while travelling by speedboat will take 15 minutes.

## SURAT THANI

### Hat Maenam - Bo Phut, Ko Samui

Ko Samui is a world-renowned island situated in the Gulf of Thailand, 84 km to the east of Surat Thani.

The best time to visit is from January to May when the sea is calm. These beaches have 4-5 star accommodation. *For getting there, please refer to the section on 'Samui' (page 80).*

### Ao Thong Nai Pan, Ko Phangan

Ko Pha-ngan is around 20 km from Ko Samui to the north and 100 km from the town of Surat Thani. Ao Thong Nai Pan is a peaceful white sandy beach and inviting crystal-clear sea as well as all the necessary amenities. During the monsoon from October to January, it is not suitable for travelling. There is a daily ferry

service and an express boat service from the Don Sak Pier, Tambon Don Sak, to Ko Phangan. From Ko Samui, it is also possible to take a speedboat or catamaran to Ko Pha-ngan.

### Ko Nang Yuan

Even if it is an island with crystal clear water, white sand, and beautiful coral reefs, Ko Nang Yuan still has private resorts with all the necessary facilities. This makes this island have an even more romantic atmosphere, especially in the evening when guests can see 3 islands linked together in a row. Access to the island is easy with boats either leaving from Thung Makam Noi Pier, Chumphon (approximately 3 hours), or alternatively from Ko Tao (about 15 minutes).



Ko Nang Yuan



*Ko Lipe, Satun Province*

## NAKHON SITHAMMARAT

### Hat Nadan- Hat Nai Phlao

These feature the perfect palm-fringed white beaches conducive to a relaxing day in the sun. Various kinds of accommodation, restaurants and other facilities are available.

## PHUKET

### Ko Racha

With its gleaming beaches, this is a large island in the archipelago south of Phuket that can be reached by boat from Ao Chalong, Phuket. The island does not have too much accommodation, but is a pleasing atmosphere for lovers.

## PHANG-NGA

### Ko Yao Noi – Ko Yao Yai

Accessible by boat from Phuket, Phang-nga, or Krabi provinces, the islands offer a peaceful atmosphere and the lovely lifestyle of the local community. There are just a few places for accommodation from a budget to high price as well homestay; however, the thing that is the same is they are private covered with forest scenes in the evening and

morning that create an unforgettable impression.

## KRABI

### Hat Khlong Muang

This beach is not too far from Ao Nang, which is a well-known place of Krabi province; however, it is completely different as this beach is peaceful and has quality luxurious hotel, resort spa, and bungalow accommodation.

### Hat Ba Kun Tieng, Ko Lanta

Ko Lanta is known among European tourists as a romantic island, and Hat Ba Kun Tieng is the beach that is the most romantic of the island. It also has a very beautiful curved bay and a variety of romantic resort accommodation. High season is from November to May. Getting there is not difficult, as a number of ferries depart daily from Chao Fa Pier in Amphoe Mueang to Ko Lanta.

### Ko Hong

This large island in the middle of the Krabi-Trang sea has a variety of romantic accommodation to select

from. An evening on Ko Hong staying in tropical luxury will create many wonderful memories for lovers. Ko Hong is an hour away by chartered boat from Ao Nang.

## TRANG

### Ko Kradan

This island is the most beautiful island in Trang province and is also the location for the underwater wedding. The island offers good restaurants and an assortment of accommodation for tourists of all budgets.

*To get there:* Visitors can take a boat from Pak Meng Pier or Chao Mai Pier to Ko Kradan. The trip takes 1½ hours.

## SATUN

### Ko Lipe

On the same boat route as Tarutao National Park and Ko Adang, this island is located about 60 km from the town of Satun. There is a community of Chao Le or sea dwellers here who earn a living by fishing. Serene peaceful accommodation run by private operators is available on the beaches.



Ko Hong, Krabi

## I FAMILY BEACH

Visitors don't need to travel very far from any major airport that has direct flights from abroad. There are convenient transportation networks as well as tourist attractions with accommodation suitable for families at a reasonable price.

### TRAT

#### **Khlong Phrao Beach, Ko Chang**

Ko Chang is very appropriate for the family because it is very accessible with daily flights from Bangkok to Trat. This is followed by a boat ride across to the island from Laem Ngop (17 kms from Trat). Ko Chang has roads for touring around to the different sights, and Hat Khlong Phrao is a unique beach in that it is not overcrowded and offers a large selection of accommodation to choose from close to other tourist attractions.

### RAYONG

#### **Hat Mae Ram Pheung**

Some 11 kilometres from Rayong town, this beach has various forms of accommodation and water-based activities for visitors along this clean beach.

### CHON BURI

#### **Hat Chomthien-Ban Amphoe**

This beach is only 4 kilometres from Pattaya that is another choice for families, as it has an abundance of hotels and restaurants as well as good swimming and water sports ideal for this tourist group.

### PRACHUAP KHIRIKHAN

#### **Hat Hua Hin**

Hua Hin is a large town filled with various kinds of hotel and resort accommodation, restaurants, and souvenir shops. It is easily accessible by train (4 hours) or bus from the Southern Bus Terminal in Bangkok (2½ hours). Hat Hua Hin is suitable for all ages, as there are lots of tourist attractions, restaurants, and accommodation.

### SURAT THANI

#### **Hat Lamai, Ko Samui**

Ko Samui has numerous features, but Hat Lamai is the most suitable for families because there is a variety of accommodation to select from and it is not too overcrowded. It is also near various tourist attractions. The best time for a visit is from January to May when the sea is calm. Please refer to the section on 'Samui' (page 83) for information on how to get there.

### PHANG-NGA

#### **Hat Khao Lak**

A beautiful, long beach that is also a location of many hotels and resorts with designs of accommodation and landscapes that blend harmoniously with the seaside ambience: serene and shady with pine trees and coconut groves on the beach. The atmosphere is relaxing and suitable for swimming or undertaking other beach activities. Visitors can fly to Phuket or Krabi and then drive onto Khao Lak. It is about a 1½-hour drive from Phuket to Khao Lak, and 2 hours from Krabi.

### PHUKET

#### **Hat Karon - Kata**

Situated 17 and 20 kilometres, respectively from Phuket town, beautiful Hat Kata and Hat Karon are scenic gems with their clear water flanked by hills and picturesque Ko Pu sits offshore. Kata retains a village feel at its northern and southern ends and is perhaps more family-oriented. Karon, on the other hand, has large resort complexes lining the road behind the shoreline. Restaurants, bars, tour companies and other non-hotel businesses can be found on both beaches.



Hat Hua Hin, Prachuap Khirikhan



Hat Khao Lak, Phang-Nga

## I COLOURFUL BEACH

These beaches have numerous land and water activities including adventure as well as colourful shops, restaurants, nightlife, and bars that can be accessed by public transport.

### RAYONG

#### Sai Kaeo Beach, Ko Samet

With shuttle boat services available around the clock from Ban Phe Pier to Ko Samet, this is the most spectacular beach on the island that offers a variety of accommodation ranging from bungalows, cottage style villas to luxury resorts. Visitors are also able to enjoy an assortment of water sports and great nightlife.



*Sai Kaeo Beach, Ko Samet*

### CHON BURI

#### Hat Pattaya

Just a 2-hour drive from Bangkok, the amazing aspect of Hat Pattaya is the land and water activities with restaurants, department stores, souvenir shops, and wide range of accommodation for tourists who like to have fun along with the dazzling nightlife.

#### Hat Ta Waen, Ko Lan

This island is 7.5 kilometres from South Pattaya, or about 45 minutes by ferry or 15 minutes by speedboat. Hat Ta Waen on Ko Lan has a large number of water sports activities to

choose from, as well as a bustling atmosphere, aquatic sports gear, souvenir shops, restaurants, and accommodation.

### SURAT THANI

#### Hat Chaweng, Ko Samui

A beach that is full of colour on Ko Samui and is very well-known for its wide range of accommodation, amenities and tourist activities both during the day and night that can facilitate everyone's holiday's needs. The best time for a visit is from January to May when the sea is calm. *To know how to get there, please refer to the section on 'Samui' (page 83).*

#### Hat Sai Ri, Ko Tao

Hat Sai Ri is the longest beach and the hub of fun on Ko Tao, an island in the Gulf of Thailand, 45 km to the northwest of Ko Pha-ngan. Speed boats and catamarans leave from Ko Samui and Ko Phangan to Ko Tao daily. The best time for a visit is from February to April. Many types of bungalows are on offer at different prices for visitors to choose. The island is always full of spectacular colour from the early morning on its beautiful beaches, in the afternoon with various activities, and in the evening the fun atmosphere of nightlife.



*Hat Chaweng, Ko Samui*



Ko Phi Phi Don, Krabi

## PHUKET

### Hat Patong

15 kilometres from Phuket town, Patong is Phuket's most developed beach which offers numerous leisure, sporting, shopping and recreational options along its 3-kilometre long crescent bay. Windsurfing, snorkelling, sailing, swimming, and sunbathing number among the many popular daytime activities. Patong is equally well known for its vibrant nightlife, among which seafood restaurants feature prominently.

### Ko He (Coral Island)

Off Phuket's south coast, boats depart from Hat Rawai and Ao Chalong to this island. Ko He is well known for the coral reefs that it is often referred to simply as Coral Island. The island is part of a marine preserve, but accommodation, restaurants, various water sports and diving are all available.

## KRABI

### Ao Rai Le

A beautiful charming curved bay that has the adventure of cliff climbing and kayaking during the

day and enjoyable fun at night.

Accommodation comprises luxury resorts and beach bungalows.

### Ko Phi Phi Don

Located 42 kilometres from the mainland, ferries depart from Pak Khlong Chilat Pier to Ko Phi Phi. This is the place for those who like the sea, as there are numerous activities like kayaking, cliff climbing, and abseiling. There is a variety of accommodation and restaurants that can cater to various budgets. At night, there are pubs and bars where tourists can listen to music or the sound of the sea.

## I NATURAL BEACH



Tham Lot, Ao Phang-Nga



Mu Ko Angthong

**T**hese are beaches whose unspoiled nature has been preserved. This includes the coral, sandy beaches, forest, and other aspects of the ecosystem that generates interest among tourists.

### CHON BURI

#### Ko Kham

It is an island situated in the area of the Royal Thai Navy in which the abundant nature, both on land and underwater, has been continually preserved. On the island is a fishing village with homestay accommodation, as well as, visitors can enjoy various activities of fishing, collecting oysters and catching squid. The ferry to Ko Sichang will stop at Ko Kham Yai.

#### Hat Luk Lom, Ko Saem San

This island is under the responsibility of the Naval Special Warfare Group, Royal Thai Fleet, the Royal Thai Navy. It is an ecotourism attraction ideal for a 1-day excursion. This is the most beautiful beach on Ko Saem San in which its nature has been preserved, and has a forest for those interested in nature study as well as snorkelling.

### PRACHUAP KHIRI KHAN

#### Hat Sam Roi Yot

This beach is located at Khao Daeng Sub-district, and is a very serene with nice surroundings. The water is shallow and it is good for swimming. Visitors can take a boat travelling around the nearby islands and do snorkelling. There are resorts and accommodation on the beach provided.

### SURAT THANI

#### Mu Ko Ang Thong

A fantastic natural landscape of about 100 islands and turquoise lagoons set amidst mountains that is located around 20 km from Ko Samui to the west. From Ko Samui, a passenger boat departs from the Na Thon Pier for the 2-hour trip to the Ang Thong Islands. The Mu Ko Ang Thong National Park has only 5 houses for rent or a tent service is available; therefore, it is recommended that group tours take a day excursion.

### PHANG-NGA

#### Ao Phang-Nga

A marine national park that covers a total area of approximately 250,000



Khao Tapu, Ao Phang-Nga

rai and is approximately 8 kilometres from the provincial town. It is renowned worldwide that presents a new image of ecotourism. December to April is the most appropriate period to visit the Park whereas May to October is the period of heavy rainfalls and strong waves. Ao Phang-nga has numerous interesting attractions comprising islands, waterfalls, caves, and limestone mountains

#### Hat Ko Ra-Ko Phra Thong-Ko Kho Khao

A group of islands near the Andaman coast with fishing villages and interesting nature of savanna and forest, but there are few facilities in this national park.



*Ao Maya, Krabi*

### **Mu Ko Surin**

This archipelago in the Andaman Sea is located approximately 70 kilometres off the west coast. It offers ideal spots for snorkelling to admire coral reefs in the shallow and for scuba diving at Richeliu Rock. The most suitable period for a visit is between November and April whereas from May to October is the monsoon period. Accommodation consists of bungalows or a tent for rent. There is a ferry or charter boat that leaves from the Khura Buri Pier, Amphoe Khura Buri, or the Thap Lamu Pier, Amphoe Thai Mueang.

### **Mu Ko Similan**

A beautiful world-class archipelago comprising a total of 9 islands lying in the North – South direction. This archipelago is renowned for its on land and underwater beauty and offers ideal spots for both snorkelling and scuba diving. The most suitable period for visiting the national park is between November and April. May to November is the season of the Southwest Monsoon when the area is

very windy and wavy and dangerous for sea transportation. The Park provides 5 bungalows as well as a row house or a tent for rent.

### **KRABI**

#### **Ao Maya, Ko Phi Phi Le**

Ko Phi Phi Don is a bustling tourist community, but Ko Phi Phi Le is still very much in an unspoiled natural state, especially in the early morning when there are very few tourists. No accommodation is available.

#### **Ko Hong**

Located 46 kilometres from the provincial town of Krabi, Ko Hong is an amazing island with beautiful hidden lagoons in the midst of a mountain environment.

#### **Ko Rok**

This is an island in a national park that can be reached from Ko Lanta or Pak Meng Pier, Krabi. Its turquoise sea, unspoiled coral, and hermit crabs along the beach are only a few of the appeals of Ko Rok. Accommodation is only limited to camping.

### **TRANG**

#### **Hat Farang, Ko Muk**

Ko Muk is renowned for its Emerald Cave, but there is another aspect of the island that is a beautiful, tranquil, natural beach. There is very little accommodation, and it offers a new opportunity to visit the Emerald Cave when there are no people on the island. Accommodation provided by private operators is available on Ko Muk.

#### **Ko Lao Liang**

This island of bird's nest concessions is now open to ecotourism, and has various fun activities on offer like kayaking, diving, cliff climbing, etc.

### **SATUN**

#### **Ko Tarutao-Ko Khai-Ko Adang-Rawi**

While Ko Lipe is the most romantic place in the sea around Satun, Ko Tarutao, Ko Khai, Ko Adang-Rawi are a national park that have preserved their unspoiled nature.



## DIVING & SNORKELLING



**S**wim alongside the world largest fish - the whale shark - and be awed by the haunting underwater flight of the giant manta ray! This is what visitors to our country can expect in the waters of the Andaman Sea and the Gulf of Thailand.

For those who don't already know, Thailand is THE diving school destination for rookies. Why? Mainly because the Gulf of Thailand has relatively calm waters and good visibility all year round as well as unbeatable dive packages. Most dive operators also incorporate interesting activities and stops into a dive package to make a trip even more interesting.

Snorkelling is also a great activity for those who have younger children accompanying the group as the risk of an accident is almost non-existent. Friendly snorkelling trips and basic lessons are available throughout Phuket, Ko Samui, Pattaya and all other beach destinations in Thailand. They are usually combined with great sea kayaking experiences and picnics on isolated islands and at marine national parks.

For exclusivity, live-aboard dive and snorkelling trips are available.

November to May is the season for diving in the Andaman Sea. If visitors would like to fully experience the tropical skies, sunlight and clear undisturbed waters, February to April is best. April to October is the dive season in the Gulf of Thailand, and the best time is between August and September.



# DIVE DESTINATIONS

## GULF OF THAILAND (EAST)

Pattaya is just 150 km southeast of Bangkok and the beach resort town of Chon Buri, the country's premier dive destination for wreck and technical diving, with diving activities planned by the local dive community all year round. Off its shores are scatterings of small islands which can be explored in combination with dive trips.

Close to Pattaya is Ko Chang, the country's second largest island, with an abundance of natural underwater treasures that are yet to be discovered.

### PATTAYA, CHON BURI PROVINCE

Approximately 2 hours by car from Bangkok, Pattaya has been a world-famous seaside resort for more than 40 years, and has a well-developed tourism industry. So visitors can choose from food and accommodation in a wide range of styles and prices to suit every budget. It is said that diving in Pattaya is the most inexpensive in Thailand or even the world.

#### Dive sites in Pattaya fall into one of 3 groups:

- Near-shore islands; such as, Ko Lan and Ko Sak. Visibility is not that good but the sites are accessible within 20-40 minutes, and at low cost. The coral reefs are also not that diverse but by following the sandy floor, divers may encounter strange marine life; such as, sea horse, sea moth, indian walkman, and crocodile fish.
- Offshore islands; such as, Ko Rin. Although costing more in terms of time and money, this site has the best visibility in the area.
- This area has 3 shipwrecks. The most famous is the Hardeep, a ship bombed during World War II. Another is the H.M.S. Kram, a Royal Thai Navy warship that was intentionally sunk in order to create a new dive site in the area.

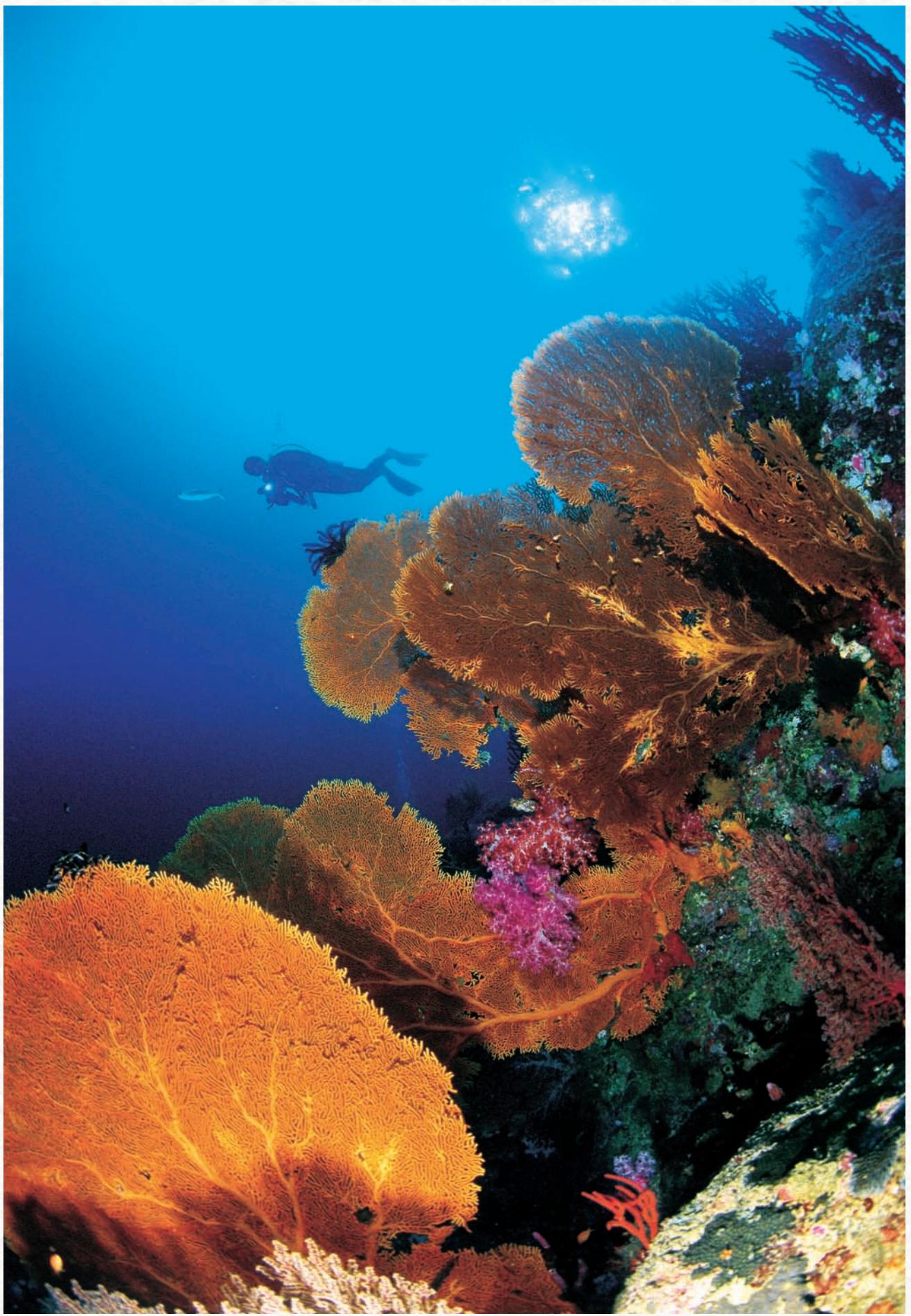
**Time to Visit:** Year-round, though best from March to September.

### KO CHANG, TRAT PROVINCE

Ko Chang is just 5 hours from Bangkok by road, or alternatively visitors can take a 1-hour flight to Trat and then a boat from Laem Ngop. On this second largest island of Thailand, there is an abundance of forests in the national park areas. Resorts and restaurants are located in tourist areas; such as, Sai Khao Beach, as well as at other sites on the other 52 islands and islets of the archipelago. Diving in Ko Chang is possible on the shallow coral reefs, but the visibility is quite poor. The diversity of fauna is average. If visitors would like to enjoy a more beautiful underwater environment, they should dive at the rocks located to the south of Ko Chang; such as, Hin Sam Sao and Hin Luk Bath. This area is open sea, and the visibility is better than in any other part of the East. For aquatic scenery, there are hard corals, sea whips, and a few species of soft corals. A greater diversity of fish can be found here, especially reef fish; such as, damselfish and angelfish, as well as larger pelagic fish like barracuda, trevally, or even shark. Diving in Ko Chang is still expanding, and the costs are reasonable and the standard of service is increasing.

**Time to Visit:** Year-round, though best from March to September.





## GULF OF THAILAND (WEST)

Diving and snorkelling in the west part of the Gulf of Thailand is a joy as the waters are still pristine and rich in marine life. Although the waters are usually not as clear as the Andaman Sea due to the high amount of plankton, divers dive at both destinations as the experience at either of them is just incomparable and definitely worth the effort.

### CHUMPHON PROVINCE

Chumphon is a quiet seaside town about 6 hours travelling time from Bangkok and has not yet been developed as a large tourism destination. Those who come to Chumphon can admire the more than 40 islands, as well as enjoy the dive sites that are far from shore, but are still accessible by boat within one hour. Visibility is better here than at dive sites in the east part of the Gulf. The most abundant growth of black corals in Thailand and the Whale Shark, which always visits at the beginning of summer, attract divers to Chumphon.

**Time to Visit:** Almost all year, except November and December.

### KO SAMUI, KO PHA-NGAN AND KO TAO, SURAT THANI PROVINCE

More than 70 islands, including the 3 world-famous islands of Ko Samui, Ko Phangan and Ko Tao make this area one of the most famous dive sites in Thailand. Access is very convenient by plane or can be arranged more cheaply by taking the bus and a speedboat. Thousands of hotels and restaurants, and almost a hundred dive shops make planning your scuba adventures easier. Ko Samui and Ko Pha-ngan are recommended if visitors' emphasis is not specifically on diving. However, if they especially enjoy the underwater world, Ko Tao should be their first choice for learning how to dive. Experienced divers, meanwhile, can encounter large creatures like the



Whale Shark, Manta Ray, Potato Cod, and so on. Please refer to the section on 'Samui' (page 80).

**Time to Visit:** Almost all year, except November and December.

## ANDAMAN SEA



The Andaman is admittedly the more dazzling of the two destinations as it holds some of the best coral formations and reefs as well as ocean drops and submerged pinnacles. Within the Andaman, where Phuket is located, popular dive sites include Phang-nga Bay, Krabi, Ko Phi Phi, Ko Lanta and Mu Ko Surin and Similan National Parks.

**PHUKET PROVINCE**

Phuket, the 'Pearl of the Andaman', is the centre of the South and an island where travellers the world over wish to visit at least once. Its dive sites can be reached so easily, quickly and conveniently that more than 300,000 divers come here every year. Diving can also be combined with other activities very easily. Ko Racha and the underwater rocks around Phuket are full of soft corals and sea fans. Sometimes more than ten leopard sharks can be encountered in a single dive. The dive operators on Phuket provide high standards, and the creation of a diving association

has helped promote environmentally friendly activities. Phuket is accessible by both international and domestic flights. The journey from Bangkok to Phuket takes 13 hours if travelling by car or bus (depart from the Southern Bus Terminal).

**Time to Visit:** Year-round, though best from December to April.

**RICHELIEU AND MU KO SURIN NATIONAL PARK, PHUKET PROVINCE**

If heading north of Phuket by boat for 3-5 hours, there can be very few divers who have never heard of Richelieu, a world-famous site for seeing the world's biggest fish: the whale shark. These pinnacles, which cover an area of less than 1 sq. km. can be reached on a day trip or by a live-aboard. The whale shark is most often found during March and April, and sometimes, as many as three can be found nearby. Richelieu also has the most abundant soft corals of any site in Thailand. Fourteen km. to the west is Mu Ko

Surin National Park, with the largest and most developed coral reefs in the Andaman Sea. Although there are not so many soft corals or sea fans, other corals, fish, sharks and sea turtles are so plentiful that nowhere else in Thailand can compare to this thriving underwater environment. The National Park has been praised as having the best resources management policy in Thailand and has been used by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) as a case study in world marine resources management. The shallow-water coral reefs of the islands are beautiful and very diverse, and also suitable for snorkellers. The deep-water areas of the reef slopes are the habitat for several rare creatures; such as, ribbon eels, crocodile fish, leaf fish, and so on. To the west of the islands is Decom Rocks, a new dive site in the Andaman.

**Time to Visit:** December to April only.





### MU KO SIMILAN NATIONAL PARK, PHANG-NGA PROVINCE

"Similan" means nine. It refers to the nine islands that are lined up from north to south about 70 km. from the mainland. These islands can be accessed by taking a 3-hour boat trip from the Tha Mueang Pier, Phang-nga to the National Park. Very clear water from the Indian Ocean bathes these granite islands, and provides the islands with the most beautiful beaches and underwater tourist attractions in Thailand. The marine environment is well protected by the National Park. The charm of the soft corals and sea fans make the area one of the top ten most beautiful dive sites in the world. It also has the greatest diversity of marine life with many species of fish being only found here, and with over 100 convenient live-aboard boats ready to serve divers. The most interesting dive sites are the underwater rocks; such as, Shark Rock where silvertip sharks are often found; this site also has a beautiful and exciting wall dive. Christmas Point is another site, and its large overlaid rocks form crevices that are full of beautiful sea fans and soft corals; it's another world. For those who love big fish the choice must be Hin Pusar; its underwater rocks are at a depth of 70 metres, a

very challenging site. For those who prefer something more relaxing, the soft corals and sea fans at East of Eden and Island No. 5 should not be missed.

**Time to Visit:** December to April only.

### KO BON AND KO TACHAI, PHANG-NGA PROVINCE

Ko Bon and Ko Tachai are actually located in Mu Ko Similan National Park, and hundreds of divers per day may head out to Ko Bon in order to have an unforgettable experience of seeing the manta, the largest ray in the world. Most divers, if visiting between December and April, are not disappointed. When comparing the expense, time and convenience of other sites, very few places in the world are comparable to Ko Bon. Ko Tachai is an island surrounded by a vast expanse of sea. Underwater rocks are one of the most diverse habitats for soft corals and sea fans in Thailand. whale sharks and manta rays also often visit. The beauty of the 20-metre-deep underwater rocks is a sight not to be missed. To get to these islands, refer to Mu Ko Similan National Park in this section.

**Time to Visit:** December to April only.





#### KO PHI PHI, KRABI PROVINCE

With accessibility by boat from Phuket or Krabi, Ko Phi Phi are islands formed of limestone, which creates a very odd-looking geography, made famous in the movie "The Beach". Rock climbing is a popular activity but the world beneath the waves of Phi Phi is no less enchanting than the mainland. Divers can dive alongside limestone cliffs and into underwater caves, and encounter large and small marine creatures; such as, leopard shark, frogfish and ghost pipefish. Dive sites can be found almost everywhere around Phi Phi, and they can be easily reached by taking a long-tailed boat from a beach resort. If divers want more excitement, the King Cruiser wreck is one of the most famous wreck dives in the Indian Ocean. And Ko Ha Yai is a unique dive site due to the incomparable beauty of its underwater caves and strangely shaped island.

**Time to Visit:** Year-round, though best from December to April.

#### HIN MUANG – HIN DAENG, MU KO LANTA NATIONAL PARK, KRABI PROVINCE

In the midst of the Andaman Sea and many kilometres from the mainland are located two adjacent rocks, "Muang" - Purple and "Daeng" - Red, indicating the colours of the soft

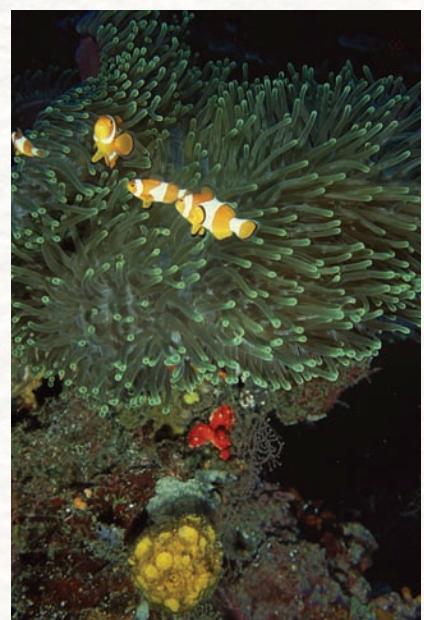


Hin Muang – Hin Daeng

corals that adorn them. There are also sea fans, large black corals, fish that range in size from tiny to enormous; such as, whale sharks, manta rays and great barracudas, and small rare animals like the harlequin shrimp.

Hin Muang – Hin Daeng is also the best wall dive site in Thailand. It is also the most gorgeous dive site in the South Andaman and one of the most gorgeous. Flights depart from Bangkok to Phuket or Krabi (1½ hrs.), or 12 hours by bus from the Southern Bus Terminal in Bangkok from where boats go onto Ko Lanta.

**Time to Visit:** December to April only.





### KO ADANG & KO RAWI, TARUTAO NATIONAL MARINE PARK, SATUN PROVINCE

Take a flight from Bangkok to Hat Yai and then continue by road to Satun at the southern tip of Thailand to where some remote dive sites are located that few people have visited. However, the beauty and diversity of the underwater world here is not inferior to others. It is one of the three most diverse dive sites in the Thai sea, being comparable to the Mu Ko Surin and Similan National Parks. Ko Adang - Rawi is also blessed with many beaches. It is also an interesting historical site for both Sea Gypsies, who consider the sea as their home, and for the legendary pirates of Tarutao. Eight-mile Rock is the best dive site in the area. Apart from soft

corals and large schools of fish, whale sharks and manta rays often visit. Boats leave from the Pak Bara Pier, Satun to the islands.

**Time to Visit:** December to April only.

### KO LIPE, TARUTAO NATIONAL MARINE PARK, SATUN PROVINCE

This small island in the Southern part of the Andaman Sea in Satun province has white sandy beaches and crystal clear waters. The waters around Ko Lipe house a wide variety of marine life and are also great for snorkelling and diving; thus, it receives the highest number of tourists in the area. For getting there, refer to Ko Adang & Ko Rawi in this section.

**Time to Visit:** December to April only.



### LINKS TO DIVE OPERATORS

Information about Tha-le Thai  
[www.talaythai.com](http://www.talaythai.com)

Planet Scuba Dive Operator  
[www.planet-scuba.net](http://www.planet-scuba.net)

Resort Diving in Chumphon  
[www.cabana.co.th](http://www.cabana.co.th)

Big Blue Diving  
[www.bigbluediving.com](http://www.bigbluediving.com)

Siam Dive 'n' Sail  
[www.siamdivers.com](http://www.siamdivers.com)

Ocean Divers Phuket  
[www.oceandiversphuket.com](http://www.oceandiversphuket.com)

Sea World Dive Team Phuket  
[www.seaworld-phuket.com](http://www.seaworld-phuket.com)

Fantasea Divers  
[www.fantasea.net](http://www.fantasea.net)

Xsitediving and Travelling  
[www.xsitediving.com](http://www.xsitediving.com)

Aquamarine Divers  
[www.philkade.com](http://www.philkade.com)

Asia Diving  
[www.asia-diving.com](http://www.asia-diving.com)

Bangkok Dive  
[www.bangkokdive.com](http://www.bangkokdive.com)

Blue Marine Divers  
[www.bluemarine-divers.com](http://www.bluemarine-divers.com)

Ko Tao Dive  
[www.dive-careers-thailand.com](http://www.dive-careers-thailand.com)

Dumnam-Diving  
[www.dumnam.com](http://www.dumnam.com)

Freedom Dive  
[www.freedomdive.com](http://www.freedomdive.com)

Offspray Leisure  
[www.offsprayleisure.com](http://www.offsprayleisure.com)

Panda Dumnam Diving  
[www.pandadumnam.com](http://www.pandadumnam.com)

## HISTORY & HERITAGE

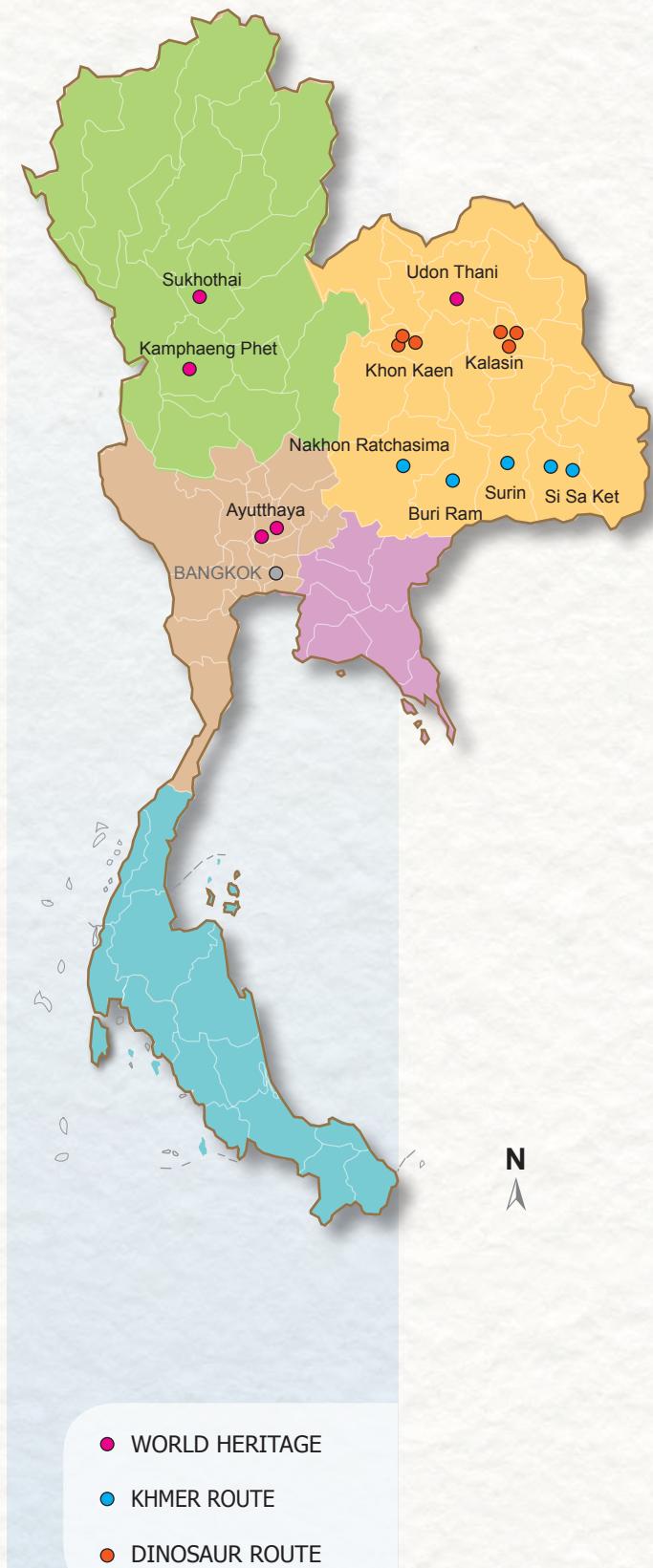


*Wat Si Chum, Sukhothai*

Thailand prides itself on its peacefulness and its gentle, contented people who have lived in harmony for hundreds of years. Explore the golden treasures of Thailand and be captivated by the rich history that lies behind them. Visit the UNESCO World Heritage Sites, protected historical sites, ancient capital cities, the reminders of the dinosaur world, and more.

## I WORLD HERITAGE

The UNESCO World Heritage Committee designated three historical sites in Thailand as World Heritage Sites. They are the 'Historic Town of Sukhothai and Associated Historic Towns' and 'Historic City of Ayutthaya and Associated Historic Towns' in 1991; and 'Ban Chiang Archaeological Site' of Udon Thani in 1992.





Sukhothai Historical Park

## SUKHOTHAI HISTORICAL PARK, SUKHOTHAI PROVINCE

Sukhothai Historical Park, Sukhothai is located 450 km. north of Bangkok and some 350 km. south of Chiang Mai. The province is noted as the centre of the old Thai kingdom of Sukhothai, with major historical remains at Sukhothai and Si Satchanalai. This city can be reached by bus departing from Bangkok, Chiang Mai or other major cities, train from Bangkok or Chiang Mai, or by plane from Bangkok.

Ruins of the royal palaces, temples, the city gates, walls, and other aspects of this former capital of ancient Siam are now preserved and have been restored by the Fine Arts Department with the cooperation of UNESCO. Sukhothai Historical Park is one of the finest examples that

shows Thailand's national identity and mankind's cultural heritage.

### Highlights

- Enter inside Park where there are 35 Buddhist temples and many other structures like the Royal Palace and Wat Mahathat, King Ramkhamhaeng the Great's Monument, Ruins of the Old Celadon Factory (Thuriang Kiln), Wat Chana Songkhram, Ramkhamhaeng National Museum
- Visit the ancient handicraft village.
- Ride a bicycle or take a tram service to explore around the historical park.
- Learn Thai history through the stunning picturesque of Sukhothai at night.
- Participate in the Sukhothai Loi Krathong and Candle Festival that is held annually in November.

## KAMPHAENG PHET HISTORICAL PARK, KAMPHAENG PHET PROVINCE

Kamphaeng Phet Historical Park is an archaeological site that is only 64 kms from Sukhothai or 358 km. north of Bangkok. It was an important city of the Sukhothai Kingdom from the 8<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> century. It was declared as a part of the UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1991. Major features of Kamphaeng Phet Historical Park include archaeological remains of ancient sites.

### Highlights

- Visit Mueang Chakangrao, on the east bank of the Ping River and Mueang Nakhon Chum, on the west bank in which there are many ancient temples including Wat Phra Kaeo, Wat Phrathat, Wat Phra Si Iriyabot, Wat Chang Rop, and Kamphaeng Pom Thung Sethi.
- Take a bicycle tour or a mini-tram ride around the park.



Kamphaeng Phet Historical Park

### AYUTTHAYA HISTORICAL PARK, PHRA NAKHON SI AYUTTHAYA PROVINCE

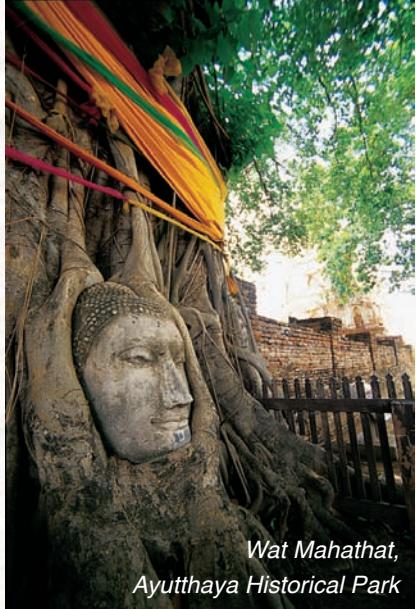
Only 76 km. from Bangkok, a former glorious royal capital of 417 years and major trade and port centre in its heyday, Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya or Ayutthaya is one of Thailand's historical and majestic highlights. Today, it is a historical park and UNESCO World Heritage Site. The Park is strewn with ruins of various Royal Palaces, temples, and monuments.

#### Highlights

- Enter inside the Park where there are numerous Buddhist temples and many other ancient structures like the Royal Palace and Wat Phra Mahathat, Wat Phra Si Sanphet, and Wat Yai Chaimongkhon
- Take a bicycle or tricycle tour, which is a great way to explore the areas around the Historical Park. With the

ruin sites relatively close to each other, peddling on two or three wheels is a pleasant and enjoyable experience.

- Enjoy an elephant ride around the ruins and see the sights in an alternative way.
- Take a tour of the outlying ruins along the river by a chartered long-tail boat.
- See the spectacular light and sound show in early December of every year.
- Visit the Elephant Kraal that is a replica of one used to train wild elephants in the past.



## BANG PA-IN SUMMER PALACE, PHRA NAKHON SI AYUTTHAYA PROVINCE

This was first used by the Royal court as a summer retreat in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. However, the Palace was destroyed with the fall of Ayutthaya and restored by King Rama IV in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. It is only about a 45-minute drive (60 km.) north from Bangkok.

### Highlights

- See the palace's structures representing a variety of architectural styles in a large park surrounded by waterways.

Website: [www.palaces.thai.net](http://www.palaces.thai.net)



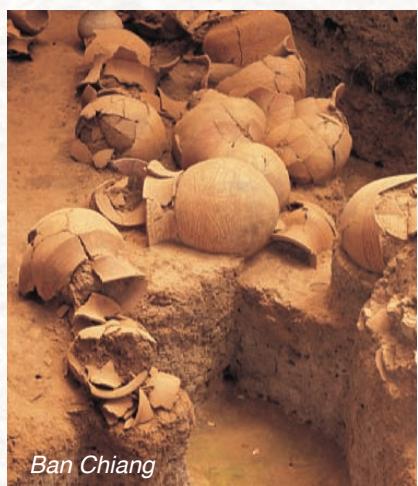
*Bang Pa-In Summer Palace*



The Chao Phraya River affords a different style of cruising, totally relaxing with all the luxurious trimmings, while offering charming glimpses of rural Thailand, its exotic temples, ancient ruins and scenes of traditional waterside lifestyles. Of several options available, the Manohra and Mekhala are two of the most romantic cruises. Teakwood rice barges converted into luxury river cruise while retaining all its traditional character, they offer two-day, one-night cruises from Bangkok to the ancient capital of Ayutthaya.

### Here is a list of some of the cruise service providers:

Chao Phraya Princess	:	<a href="http://www.thaicruise.com">www.thaicruise.com</a>
Grand Pearl	:	<a href="http://www.grandpearlcruise.com">www.grandpearlcruise.com</a>
Horizon	:	<a href="http://www.shangri-la.com">www.shangri-la.com</a>
Manohra	:	<a href="http://www.manohracruises.com">www.manohracruises.com</a>
Mekhala	:	<a href="http://www.asian-oasis.com/mekhala-cruise">www.asian-oasis.com/mekhala-cruise</a>
Mit Chao Phraya	:	<a href="http://www.mitchaophraya.com">www.mitchaophraya.com</a>
Pearl of Siam	:	<a href="http://www.grandpearlcruise.com">www.grandpearlcruise.com</a>
River King	:	<a href="http://www.riverkingcruise.net">www.riverkingcruise.net</a>
River Sun	:	<a href="http://www.riversuncruise.co.th">www.riversuncruise.co.th</a>



*Ban Chiang*

## BAN CHIANG, UDON THANI PROVINCE

The Ban Chiang Archaeological Site that is 564 kms from Bangkok has remnants dating back more than 5,000 years that may well be among the oldest in the world. As such, it is considered to be the cultural property of outstanding universal value and was nominated as a World Heritage Site of major significance in December 1992.

### Highlights

- See old artefacts, ancient Ban Chiang culture, tools and utensils that showcase ancient technology and surroundings, as well as earthenware pots from 4,000 to 7,500 years old.
- Visit the museum in the compound of Wat Po Si Nai.
- Learn the Ban Chiang story of how this site was discovered.

## KHMER ROUTE: NAKHON RATCHASIMA - BURI RAM - SURIN - SI SA KET



Phimai Historical Park



Phimai Historical Park

Once part of the Khmer Kingdom, many magnificent historical sites that show the richness of Khmer influences are present throughout the southern part of Northeast Thailand.

### PHIMAI HISTORICAL PARK, NAKHON RATCHASIMA PROVINCE

Within the Park is the Phimai Sanctuary, one of the grandest and most important Khmer historical sites in Thailand.

#### Highlight

- Visit this ancient historical site and see the Naga Bridge, Gopura with the wall around the sanctuary and the four entering porches, as well as the main Prang or pagoda with an open area in a curved walkway.
- See the light and sound presentation at the Phimai Sanctuary in November.

### PRASAT HIN PHANOM RUNG HISTORICAL PARK, BURI RAM PROVINCE

This is a grand and majestic Khmer site over a thousand years old. Built on an extinct volcano, it is originally a Hindu religious site and later became a Buddhist one.

#### Highlights

- Take the grand stairway from the foot of the hill up to the top.
- Visit the sanctuary buildings, made of laterite and sandstone and all with elaborate designs full of exquisite, Hindu gods story-telling designs on the pagoda, columns, doorway, and lintels.
- Participate in the Khao Phnom Rung Festival in April in which there is a procession to pay homage to the gods and celestial beings, the Phnom Rung Devalai light-and-sound presentations, traditional cultural performances and sales of a range of local handicrafts and products plus more.



### **PRASAT SIKHORAPHUM, SURIN PROVINCE**

The prasat was formerly known as Prasat Ban Ragnang and has been the symbol of Surin. The sanctuary was constructed according to Hinduism beliefs and dated back to the 12<sup>th</sup> century A.D.

#### **Highlights**

- Visit the finely constructed group of five brick prangs standing on the same base.
- See the carved lintel found in the central tower, which depicts Shiva performing the cosmic dance.

### **PRASAT WAT SA KAMPHAENG YAI, SI SA KET PROVINCE**

These are the largest and most perfect Khmer ruins comprising three Stupas on the same base lining in a North-South direction and facing east.

#### **Highlights**

- See the main Stupa, made from sandstone and bricks, which houses a carved lintel depicting the God Indra on the back of the Heavenly Erawan Elephant above the Kiattimukha.
- Visit the other two Stupas with sandstone decorations on the lintel, gable frame and door frame.

### **BAN PRASAT SANCTUARY, SI SA KET PROVINCE**

These Khmer ruins were adapted in a later era like the Sikkoraphum Khmer Ruins in Surin. It comprises 3 brick Stupas on laterite bases in a North-South direction standing in the laterite walls with arch gates. It seemed to have had 4 gates in the past; however, today only the southern gate remains.

#### **Highlights**

- See the main Stupa with the only gate at the east with a sandstone frame decorated with an unfinished carved lintel depicting a man standing above the Kiattimukha with a floral frame.
- Learn about the ancient Khmer way of life.

# DINOSAUR ROUTE: KALASIN - KHON KAEN

## KALASIN

### SIRINDHORN MUSEUM & PHU KUM KHAO DINOSAUR EXCAVATION SITE

The Museum, a 2008 and 2010 Thailand Tourism Award Winner, was named by Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn. The Siridhorn Museum is a research centre as well as the most complete and largest dinosaur museum in Southeast Asia.

#### Highlights

- Visit the exhibition of life-sized skeletons of many significant dinosaur species discovered in this area; such as, Phuwiangosaurus sirindhorae, Siamosaurus suteethorni and Siamotyrannus I-Sanensis.
- See the actual archaeological dig-site, where fossils of six dinosaurs were unearthed from the same bedding-plane.
- Visit various exhibition halls on geology, the beginnings of the Earth, its formation and the evolution of living creatures; such as, dinosaurs and humans.

Website: [www.dmr.go.th](http://www.dmr.go.th)

### WAT SAKKAWAN

The temple stands at the foot of Phu Kum Khao where dinosaur fossils were found that are now on display in the temple. Nearby is a covered area with fossils in their original place of discovery.

### PHU FAEK FOREST PARK

Located in the Dong Huai Fa National Reserve Forest, the area is covered with high mountains. It is also the site where some footprints of large carnivore dinosaurs were found. It has been estimated that the footprints belonged to hind-legged walking dinosaurs that were over two metres in height.



Sirindhorn Museum

## KHON KAEN

This province is 445 kms from Bangkok and approximately 80 kilometres from Kalasin. It is located in the Upper Northeast part of Thailand. It is also a major source of dinosaur fossils in this part of the country.

### PHU WIANG DINOSAUR MUSEUM

The Phu Wiang Dinosaur Museum is a geological learning source and dinosaur and fossil museum.

#### Highlights

- Visit the excavation sites including one with a partial skeleton of Siamotyrannus isanensis, an early ancestor of Tyrannosaurus Rex, which can be easily reached by a trail from the visitor centre or nearby

parking areas. Park guides (some speak a little English) offer free tours of the bone sites if visitors call in advance.

- Explore further (best done by car or mountain bike) to see dinosaur footprints, waterfalls and prehistoric cave paintings.
- See the geology and palaeontology displays including full-size models of the dinosaur species that have been found in the area.

Website: [www.dmr.go.th](http://www.dmr.go.th)

### PHU WIANG NATIONAL PARK

This national park that is the source of various rivers in Northeast Thailand is also the location of key learning centres of dinosaur fossils in the

area. There are also attractions for palaeontological and archaeological studies, as well as ancient cave paintings.

### SIWIANG DINOSAUR PARK

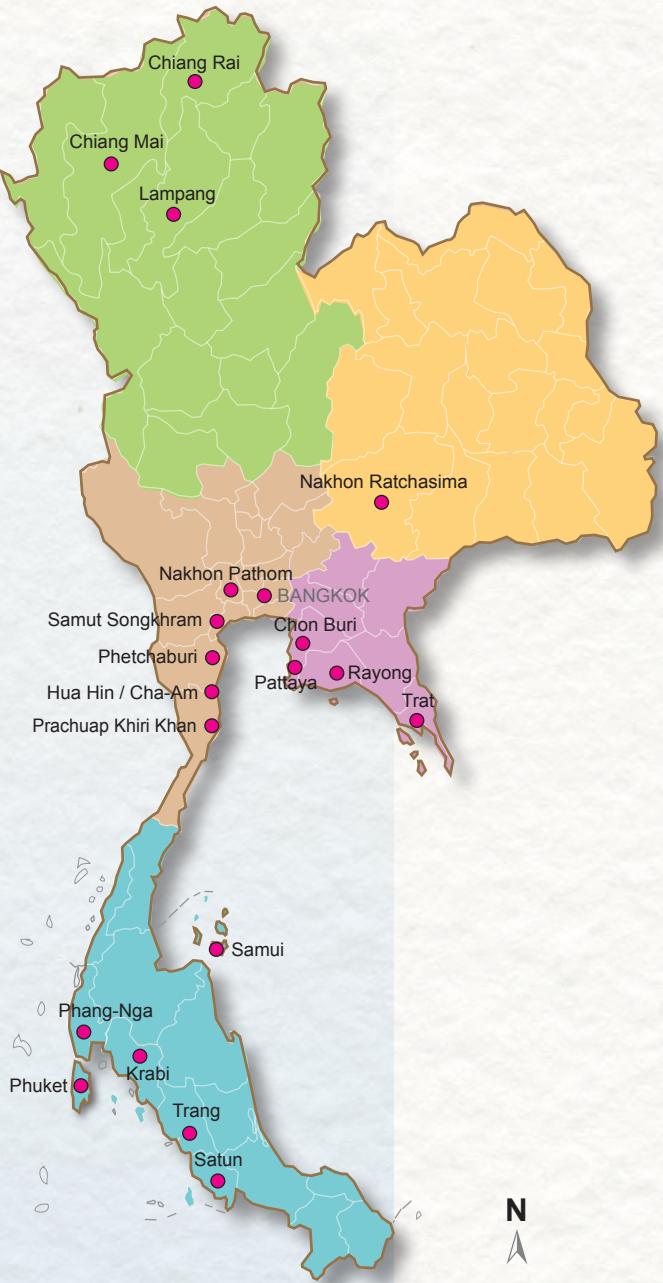
This public park is for recreation and photography with the key attraction being the life-like model of the 15-metre tall, long-necked and long-tail herbivore dinosaur called Phuwiangosaurus sirindhorae that was discovered at Phu Wiang in 1981.

## WEDDING & HONEYMOON



Thailand is a country that is entwined with romance. Exotic and alluring, it is a tropical paradise where love blossoms as sensually as the orchids that flower so profusely; an idyllic destination in which to tie the knot and then linger for a honeymoon that will keep the flame of love burning brightly till the end of time.

Thailand's pleasant year-round climate, welcoming atmosphere, dramatic scenery and resplendent architecture are deservedly famous; its friendly people and exuberant culture are fascinating. The country's reputation as the "Land of Smiles" is thoroughly deserved, and a wedding and honeymoon in our captivating Kingdom will provide lovers with many happy memories for years to come.



● WEDDING & HONEYMOON

## WEDDING STYLES

In Thailand, there is no limit to the spectacular locations and manner in which couples can pledge their love. Valentine's Day in the Kingdom is celebrated by hundreds of happy couples from around the world coming together for an unforgettable wedding experience.

### CLIFF WEDDING

What could be more exciting than scaling a rocky cliff-face with one's loved one beside them, exchanging vows 20 metres above the sea as a courageous civil official hangs over the cliff edge to present the bridal couple with their marriage certificate? This is what many adventurous couples choose at the annual Cliff Wedding at Railay Beach in Krabi Province.

### UNDERWATER WEDDING

Equally thrilling as ascending to heights for love is plummeting to depths of the sea for the Trang Underwater Wedding ceremony ([www.underwaterwedding.com](http://www.underwaterwedding.com)). This annual event takes place off Trang's Pak Meng Beach at a decorated seabed altar 10 metres under the sea. Scuba-diving couples receive their waterproof marriage certificates, blowing kiss bubbles and swimming with hundreds of colourful marine creatures as guests. Its growing popularity has made the underwater wedding ceremony a popular annual event, and Trang is on record in the Guinness Book of Records as the location of the biggest Underwater Wedding Ceremony of them all.

Website: [www.underwaterwedding.com](http://www.underwaterwedding.com)

### HOT AIR BALLOON WEDDING

If a wet wedding doesn't appeal to the bridal couple, then how about marrying aboard a hot air balloon? In Chiang Mai, Oriental Balloon Flights organises daily tours above the city, and a wedding if they don't mind heights. The balloon holds the captain, the fully outfitted couple plus

the district officer and registrar. At the appropriate moment they begin their ascent and at a given altitude, the ceremony is performed.

Website: [www.orientalballoonflights.com](http://www.orientalballoonflights.com)

### LOVE TREE WEDDING

At Phuket's Dusit Laguna, couples plant their own "Love Tree", which will grow and bloom for years to come just as their matrimonial union.

### WEDDING TUK TUK

Also on Phuket, the Club Andaman's customized three-wheel "Wedding Tuk Tuk" is a Thai-styled wedding carriage to begin the marital journey. For a truly endearing wedding escort, the JW Marriott on Phuket will arrange a cute baby elephant to accompany the couple to the altar.

### HORSE & CARRIAGE WEDDING

In Thailand's North, the legendary Chiang Mai wedding ceremony is always popular with couples from overseas. The wedding ceremony includes a romantic horse and carriage drive through the old city of Chiang Mai.

### LANNA WEDDING ON ELEPHANT BACK

Another wedding ceremony is the magnificent Lanna Wedding on Elephant Back held in Lampang with more local tradition than any other ritual. The Thai Elephant Conservation Centre (TECC) and the city of Lampang have revived this old custom. Part of the wedding fees will go to help the valuable work of the TECC. For more information, contact the Thai Elephant Conservation Centre.

Website: [www.thailandelephant.org](http://www.thailandelephant.org)

### THAI TRADITIONAL WEDDING AT THE ROSE GARDEN

Close to Bangkok, the Rose Garden Country Resort in Nakhon Pathom province is famous for its cultural shows that highlight unique local customs. Surrounded by beautiful tropical gardens, the resort arranges the Seven Days in Paradise wedding and honeymoon package in traditional costumes, with the groom arriving on elephant back, and a beach honeymoon in Krabi.

Website: [www.rosegardenriverside.com](http://www.rosegardenriverside.com)



## I WEDDING HOTELS

Plans for tying the knot begins with finding that supreme 5-star venue with guaranteed impeccable first-class services and facilities assured to make the nuptials a most unforgettable day in the life of the bridal couple. Here are some options in various destinations around Thailand.

### BANGKOK

**Bangkok Hotel Lotus Sukhumvit**  
Website: [www.hotelotussukhumvit.com](http://www.hotelotussukhumvit.com)

**Bangkok Marriott Resort & Spa**  
Website: [www.marriott.com](http://www.marriott.com)

**Dusit Thani Bangkok**  
Website: <http://bangkok.dusit.com>

**Four Seasons Hotel Bangkok**  
Website: [www.fourseasons.com](http://www.fourseasons.com)

**Grand Hyatt Erawan Bangkok**  
Website: [www.bangkok.grand.hyatt.com](http://www.bangkok.grand.hyatt.com)

**Holiday Inn Bangkok Silom**  
Website: [www.holidayinn.com/silom](http://www.holidayinn.com/silom)

**Indus**  
Website: [www.indusbangkok.com](http://www.indusbangkok.com)

**Plaza Athénée Bangkok**  
Website: [www.lemeridien.com/bangkokplazaathenee](http://www.lemeridien.com/bangkokplazaathenee)

**Rembrandt Hotel & Towers**  
Website: [www.rembrandtbkk.com](http://www.rembrandtbkk.com)

**Renaissance Bangkok Ratchaprasong Hotel**  
Website: [www.renaissancebangkok.com](http://www.renaissancebangkok.com)

**Royal Orchid Sheraton Hotel & Towers**  
Website: [www.sheraton.com](http://www.sheraton.com)

**Sheraton Grande Sukhumvit**  
Website:  
[www.sheratongrandesukhumvit.com](http://www.sheratongrandesukhumvit.com)

### HUA HIN / CHA-AM

**Alila Cha-Am**  
Website: [www.alilahotels.com](http://www.alilahotels.com)

**Asara Villa & Suite**  
Website: [www.asaravillaandsuite.com](http://www.asaravillaandsuite.com)

**Evasion & Six Senses**  
Website: [www.evasionresorts.com](http://www.evasionresorts.com)

**Hilton Hua Hin Resort & Spa**  
Website: [www.hua-hin.hilton.com](http://www.hua-hin.hilton.com)

**Holiday Inn Resort Regent Beach**  
Website: [www.chaam.holidayinn.com](http://www.chaam.holidayinn.com)

**Hua Hin Marriott Resort & Spa**  
Website: [www.marriott.com](http://www.marriott.com)

### PATTAYA

**Centara Grand Mirage Beach Resort**  
Website: [www.centarahotelresorts.com](http://www.centarahotelresorts.com)

**Dusit Thani Pattaya**  
Website:  
<http://dusitthanipattaya.dusit.com>

**Royal Cliff Beach Resort**  
Website: [www.royalcliff.com](http://www.royalcliff.com)

### PHUKET

**Jungceylon**  
Website: [www.jungceylon.com](http://www.jungceylon.com)

**Blue Elephant Phuket**  
Website: [www.blueelephant.com](http://www.blueelephant.com)

**Cape Panwa Hotel**  
Website: [www.capecanwa.com](http://www.capecanwa.com)

**Dusit Thani Laguna Phuket**  
Website:  
<http://dusitthanilagunaphuket.dusit.com>

**Evasion Phuket & Bon Island**  
Website: [www.evasionresorts.com](http://www.evasionresorts.com)

**JW Marriott Khao Lak Resort & Spa**  
Website: [www.jwmarriottkhaolak.com](http://www.jwmarriottkhaolak.com)

**JW Marriott Phuket Resort & Spa**  
Website:  
[www.jwmarriottphuketresort.com](http://www.jwmarriottphuketresort.com)

**Katathani Phuket Beach Resort**  
Website: [www.katathani.com](http://www.katathani.com)

**Laguna Phuket**  
Website:  
[www.lagunaphuketweddings.com](http://www.lagunaphuketweddings.com)

**Le Meridien Khao Lak Beach & Spa Resort**  
Website: [www.lemeridien.com](http://www.lemeridien.com)

**Le Meridien Phuket Beach Resort**  
Website: [www.lemeridien.com](http://www.lemeridien.com)

**Maiton Private Island**  
Website: [www.maitonprivateisland.com](http://www.maitonprivateisland.com)

**Renaissance Phuket Resort & Spa**  
Website: [www.renaissancephuket.com](http://www.renaissancephuket.com)

**Royal Phuket Marina**  
Website: [www.royalphuketmarina.com](http://www.royalphuketmarina.com)

**Sheraton Grande Laguna, Phuket**  
Website: [www.starwoodhotels.com](http://www.starwoodhotels.com)

**The Palm Beach Club**  
Website: [www.thepalmbeachclub.com](http://www.thepalmbeachclub.com)

For other hotels, please visit the website of the Thai Hotels Association ([www.thaihotels.org](http://www.thaihotels.org)).



# HONEYMOONS

## HONEYMOON BY THE SEA

What could be more romantic than walking hand in hand along a white sandy beach with a golden sun setting on the horizon and the gentle lapping of waves upon the shore? With 2,500 kilometres of coastline, Thailand offers a seemingly endless series of sandy beaches, sheltered bays, quite coves and idyllic islands for a perfect honeymoon by the sea. The southern islands of Phuket and Samui are internationally renowned resorts combining some of the world's finest beaches with luxurious accommodation. Alternatively, the island-dotted bay of Phang-nga or the soaring cliffs of Krabi offer breathtaking coastal scenery.

Different again is the fun playground of Pattaya, with day and night action at sea and on shore, or the peaceful royal resort of Hua Hin with its luxury resorts amid a leisurely village ambience.

Complementing these remarkable resorts and their natural beauty are marine adventures awaiting honeymoon couples: sea canoeing through enchanted, subterranean caves, diving into the colourful realms of some of the world's best dive sites, or sailing aboard a luxury yacht to romantic tropical isles. Those who prefer their adventure a little more extreme, perhaps rock climbing together in southern Thailand, particularly the cliff stacks around Krabi is another choice. And all the while, spend evening together, star-gazing beside the campfire or cuddled up in a cosy forest lodge



## ROMANTIC RETURN TO NATURE

Chiang Mai and Chiang Rai's green landscape provides ideal settings for a romantic return to nature. In the north and the west around Kanchanaburi are forested mountains and river valleys where adventurous honeymooners can discover lost worlds of picturesque waterfalls, caves and lakes. Here, too, are traditional villages of colourful hill tribes providing fascinating insights into their traditional customs and lifestyles.

What makes a back-to-nature honeymoon so memorable are the many adventures to enjoy. Drift downriver on a bamboo raft, gliding past waterfalls tumbling headlong over rocks; thrill to the excitement of canoeing through rapids and surging whitewater; hold each other in a love seat for two atop an elephant ambling along jungle trails; or surge along impossible paths in 4WD safaris. Moments like this add spice to the romance of travel. Going back to nature does not automatically mean roughing it and living in tents. Luxurious mountain resorts and log cabins abound, places where exhilarating days end with a cool shower, dinner under the stars and a romantic glass of wine together in the moonlit stillness of the night.



### SPA SERENITY

A honeymoon is a time for the happy couple to be immersed in indulgence, in the luxurious pleasures of Thailand's world-class health spas. These opulent oases offer the most refreshing, relaxing, invigorating health and beauty treatments amid exotic surroundings. Choose from exclusive spa hideaways beside the River of Kings in Bangkok, the leisurely tranquility of a classic beach resort, the tropical greenery in the northern mountains, or the simplicity of a tropical island paradise. The couple will be bathed in sensual aromatic oils, enveloped in perfumed creams and pampered as never before, all in total privacy. With its ancient traditions of massage, meditation and herbal medicine, Thailand is a natural place to escape the hectic pace of daily life and rejuvenate their mind and body. Leave modern-day stress behind, but enjoy the modern-day luxury and stylish elegance that transforms Thai spas into five-star retreats with exclusive treatments drawn from the wisdom of the past that soothe, relax, revitalise the mind and body. Many spas offer exclusive packages for honeymooners, enabling couples to share the blissful sensation of physical well-being. Extensive menus of spa treatments mean that honeymooners can spend days indulging themselves. All leading hotels in Bangkok and major tourist destinations have their own spa facilities offering specially designed treatment menus, spa cuisine, and support programmes for the inner self; such as, meditation, yoga and tai chi.

*For further information, please refer to the section on Spa (page 147).*

### CULINARY COUPLES

A happily domesticated way to start a marriage would be learning the art of Thai cooking together at one of the many day-long cooking schools



in Bangkok and leading tourist destinations. Newlyweds can take turns in the kitchen, practicing the art of fruit and vegetable carving as well as discovering the delicious variety of regional dishes that will add spice and flavour to their kitchen and union. Returning home as a couple, they can invite their family and friends over to sample the newly gained expertise in the delights of Thai gastronomy.

*For further information, please refer to the section on Thai Cooking Class (page 187).*

### LOVE CRUISES

Cruise liners and yachts never fail to spin a web of romance, and cruising the sea or journeying along rivers allows couples to enter a restful world around Thailand's Andaman Sea on the west or the Gulf of Thailand on the east. Their days will be spent lounging on the ship's deck perusing the undulating marine

panorama, before heading ashore to swim with curious marine life and laze on the picturesque beaches of Phuket, Krabi, Ko Samui and more.

For travelling in a manner more evocative of Asia, try an intimate liveaboard cruise on a lovely renovated Chinese junk as it meanders through the towering rocky pinnacles of Phang-nga Bay. The Chao Phraya River affords a different style of cruising, totally relaxing with all the luxurious trimmings, while offering charming glimpses of rural Thailand, its exotic temples, ancient ruins and scenes of traditional waterside lifestyles. Besides enjoying the ever-changing views of the river from the comfort of their deck chair, couples can also relish a superb candlelight Thai dinner on board and be lulled to sleep by the gentle lapping of water. In the morning, join the people making merit by presenting offerings to Buddhist monks at a riverside temple.

# HONEYMOON HOTELS

Honeymooners can be enamored by some of the world's best accommodation, all enriched with the finest contemporary and traditional designs, and be pampered by the incomparable hospitality of the Thai people whose affection for love is totally astounding. Here are some of the premises catering to honeymooners needs.

## BANGKOK

Banyan Tree Bangkok  
Website: [www.banyantree.com](http://www.banyantree.com)

Centara Grand at CentralWorld  
Website: [www.centarahotelsresorts.com](http://www.centarahotelsresorts.com)

Eastern & Oriental Express  
Website: [www.orient-express.com/web/eoe/eastern\\_and\\_oriental\\_express.jsp](http://www.orient-express.com/web/eoe/eastern_and_oriental_express.jsp)

The Peninsula Bangkok  
Website : [www.peninsula.com](http://www.peninsula.com)

Siam Kempinski Hotel Bangkok  
Website: [www.kempinski.com/bangkok](http://www.kempinski.com/bangkok)

Sofitel Centara Grand Bangkok  
Website : [www.centarahotelsresorts.com/scp](http://www.centarahotelsresorts.com/scp)

VIE Hotel Bangkok  
Website : [www.viehotelbangkok.com](http://www.viehotelbangkok.com)

## CHIANG MAI

Four Seasons Resort Chiang Mai  
Website: [www.fourseasons.com/chiangmai](http://www.fourseasons.com/chiangmai)

Khum Phaya Resort & Spa, Centara Boutique Collection  
Website : [www.centarahotelsresorts.com/kpc](http://www.centarahotelsresorts.com/kpc)

Mandarin Oriental Dhara Dhevi,  
Chiang Mai  
Website: [www.mandarinoriental.com](http://www.mandarinoriental.com)

Ping Nakara Boutique Hotel & Spa  
Website : <http://pingnakara.com>

RarinJinda Wellness Spa Resort  
Chiang Mai  
Website : [www.rarinjinda.com](http://www.rarinjinda.com)

Veranda Chiang Mai : The High Resort  
Website : [www.verandaresortandspa.com](http://www.verandaresortandspa.com)

Siripanna Villa Resort & Spa, Chiang Mai  
Website: [www.siripanna.com](http://www.siripanna.com)

## CHIANG RAI

The Legend Chiang Rai Boutique River  
Resort & Spa  
Website: [www.thelegend-chiangrai.com](http://www.thelegend-chiangrai.com)

## CHON BURI

Chic + Chill @Ervana  
Website: [www.chicchill.com](http://www.chicchill.com)

Palm Grove Resort  
Website: [www.palmgroveresort.com](http://www.palmgroveresort.com)

## KRABI

Anantara Si Kao Resort & Spa  
Website: <http://sikao.anantara.com>

Nakamanda Resort & Spa  
Website: [www.nakamanda.com](http://www.nakamanda.com)

Pimalai Resort & Spa  
Website: [www.pimalai.com](http://www.pimalai.com)

The Tubkaak Krabi Boutique Resort  
Website : [www.tubkaakresort.com](http://www.tubkaakresort.com)

## NAKHON RATCHASIMA

Muthi Maya Forest Pool Villas Resort  
Website: [www.muthimaya.com](http://www.muthimaya.com)

## PHANG NGA

Borsaen Villa & Spa  
Website: [www.borsaenvilla.com](http://www.borsaenvilla.com)

Khao Lak Seaview Resort  
Websit: [www.khaolak-seaviewresort.com](http://www.khaolak-seaviewresort.com)

Ramada Resort Khao Lak  
Website: [www.ramadakhaolak.com](http://www.ramadakhaolak.com)

Wanakarn Beach Resort & Spa  
Website: [www.wanakarnresort.com](http://www.wanakarnresort.com)

## PHETCHABURI

Alila Cha-am  
Website: [www.alilahotels.com](http://www.alilahotels.com)

Springfield@Sea Resort & Spa  
Website: [www.springfieldresort.com](http://www.springfieldresort.com)

## PHUKET

Aleenta Resort & Spa  
Website: [www.aleenta.com](http://www.aleenta.com)

Anantara Phuket Villas  
Website: <http://phuket.anantara.com>

Banyan Tree Phuket  
Website: [www.banyantree.com](http://www.banyantree.com)

The Baray Villa by Sawasdee Village,  
Phuket  
Website: [www.phuketsawasdee.com](http://www.phuketsawasdee.com),  
[www.thebarayvilla.com](http://www.thebarayvilla.com)

The Bell Pool Villas Resort  
Website: <http://thebellphuket.com>

The Cape Panwa Hotel  
Website: [www.capecpanwa.com](http://www.capecpanwa.com)

Cape Sienna Hotel & Villas Website:  
[www.capesienna.com](http://www.capesienna.com)

Evasion Phuket & Bon Island  
Website: [www.sixsenses.com](http://www.sixsenses.com)

Impiana Private Pool Villas  
Website:  
<http://phuketprivatevillas.impiana.com>

Indigo Pearl  
Website : [www.indigo-pearl.com](http://www.indigo-pearl.com)

La Flora Resort Patong  
Website: [www.laflorapatong.com](http://www.laflorapatong.com)

Malisa Villa Suite  
Website : [www.malisavillas.com](http://www.malisavillas.com)

Mom Tri's Villa Royale  
Website : [www.villaroyalephuket.com](http://www.villaroyalephuket.com)

The Pavilions Phuket  
Website: [www.thepavilionsresorts.com](http://www.thepavilionsresorts.com)

Radisson Plaza Resort Phuket Panwa Beach Website: <a href="http://www.radissonblu.com">www.radissonblu.com</a>	Haven Resort Hua Hin Website : <a href="http://www.haven-huahin.com">www.haven-huahin.com</a>	Kirikayan Luxury Pool Villas & Spa Website: <a href="http://www.kirikayan.com">www.kirikayan.com</a>
Renaissance Phuket Resort & Spa Website: <a href="http://www.renaissancephuket.com">www.renaissancephuket.com</a>	The Hen Website: <a href="http://www.thehenhuahin.com">www.thehenhuahin.com</a>	Koh Tao Cabana Resort Website: <a href="http://kohtaocabana.com">http://kohtaocabana.com</a>
The Residence Phuket & Spa Retreat Website: <a href="http://www.theresidenceresort.com">www.theresidenceresort.com</a>	Keeree Waree Seaside Villa & Spa Website: <a href="http://www.keereewaree.com">www.keereewaree.com</a>	Mai Samui Beach Resort & Spa Website : <a href="http://www.maisamui.com">www.maisamui.com</a>
The Shore at Katahanni Website: <a href="http://www.theshore.katahanni.com">www.theshore.katahanni.com</a>	Putahracsra Website: <a href="http://putahracsra.com">http://putahracsra.com</a>	Melati Beach Resort & Spa Website: <a href="http://melatiresort.com">www.melatiresort.com</a>
Sala Phuket Website: <a href="http://www.salaresorts.com/phuket">www.salaresorts.com/phuket</a>	Six Senses Website: <a href="http://www.sixsenses.com">www.sixsenses.com</a>	New Star Beach Resort Website: <a href="http://newstarresort.com">http://newstarresort.com</a>
Sawasdee Village & The Baray Villa, Phuket Website : <a href="http://www.phuketsawasdee.com">www.phuketsawasdee.com</a>	Sofitel Centara Grand Resort & Villas Hua Hin Website: <a href="http://www.centarahotelsresorts.com">www.centarahotelsresorts.com</a>	Renaissance Koh Samui Resort & Spa Website: <a href="http://www.marriott.com">www.marriott.com</a>
Six Senses Sanctuary Website: <a href="http://www.sixsenses.com">www.sixsenses.com</a>	Vartika Resovilla Kuiburi Website: <a href="http://www.vartikakuiburi.com">www.vartikakuiburi.com</a>	Sala Samui Resort & Spa Website: <a href="http://www.salaresorts.com">www.salaresorts.com</a>
Sri Panwa Website: <a href="http://www.sripanwa.com">www.sripanwa.com</a>	Veranda Resort & Spa, Cha Am/Hua Hin Website: <a href="http://www.verandaresortandspa.com">www.verandaresortandspa.com</a>	Santhiya Resort & Spa Website: <a href="http://www.santhiya.com">www.santhiya.com</a>
Twinpalms Website: <a href="http://twinpalms-phuket.com">http://twinpalms-phuket.com</a>	V Villas Website: <a href="http://www.v-villashuahin.com">www.v-villashuahin.com</a>	Sareeraya Villas & Suites Website: <a href="http://www.sareeraya.com">www.sareeraya.com</a>
Two Villas Holiday Website: <a href="http://www.twovillasholiday.com">www.twovillasholiday.com</a>	<b>RAYONG</b>	Six Senses, Samui Website: <a href="http://www.sixsenses.com/">www.sixsenses.com/</a> <a href="http://SixSensesSamui/">SixSensesSamui/</a>
The Vijitt Resort Website: <a href="http://www.vijittresort.com">www.vijittresort.com</a>	Paradee Website: <a href="http://www.samedresorts.com">www.samedresorts.com</a>	The Tongsai Bay Website: <a href="http://www.tongsaimbay.co.th">www.tongsaimbay.co.th</a>
The Village Coconut Island Website: <a href="http://www.thevillage-coconutisland.com">www.thevillage-coconutisland.com</a>	<b>SAMUT SONGKHRAM</b>	Zazen Boutique Resort & Spa Website: <a href="http://www.samuizazen.com">www.samuizazen.com</a>
<b>PRACHUAP KHIRI KHAN</b>	Baan Amphawa Resort & Spa Website: <a href="http://www.baanamphawa.com">www.baanamphawa.com</a>	<b>TRAT</b>
Asara Villa & Suite Website: <a href="http://www.asaravillaandsuite.com">www.asaravillaandsuite.com</a>	<b>SURAT THANI</b>	Soneva Kiri by Six Senses Website: <a href="http://www.sixsenses.com">www.sixsenses.com</a>
Baan Talay Chine Boutique Resort Website: <a href="http://www.baan-talay-chine.com">www.baan-talay-chine.com</a>	Banyan Tree Samui Website : <a href="http://www.banyantree.com">www.banyantree.com</a>	<b>For more information on honeymoon packages in Thailand, please check</b> <a href="http://www.honeymooning-in-thailand.com">www.honeymooning-in-thailand.com</a>
Baan Talay Dao Hua Hin Resort Website : <a href="http://www.baantalaydao.com">www.baantalaydao.com</a>	Chaweng Regent Beach Resort Website : <a href="http://www.chawengregent.com">www.chawengregent.com</a>	
Cape Nidhra Hotel Website: <a href="http://www.capenidhra.com">www.capenidhra.com</a>	The Kala, Samui Website : <a href="http://www.thekalasamui.com">www.thekalasamui.com</a>	
Dhevan Dara Resort & Spa Website: <a href="http://www.dhevan-dara.com">www.dhevan-dara.com</a>	Kanok Buri Resort & Spa Website : <a href="http://www.kanokburiresort.com">www.kanokburiresort.com</a>	
	KC Resort & Over Water Villas Website: <a href="http://www.kchotelsresorts.com">www.kchotelsresorts.com</a>	



## HEALTH & WELLNESS

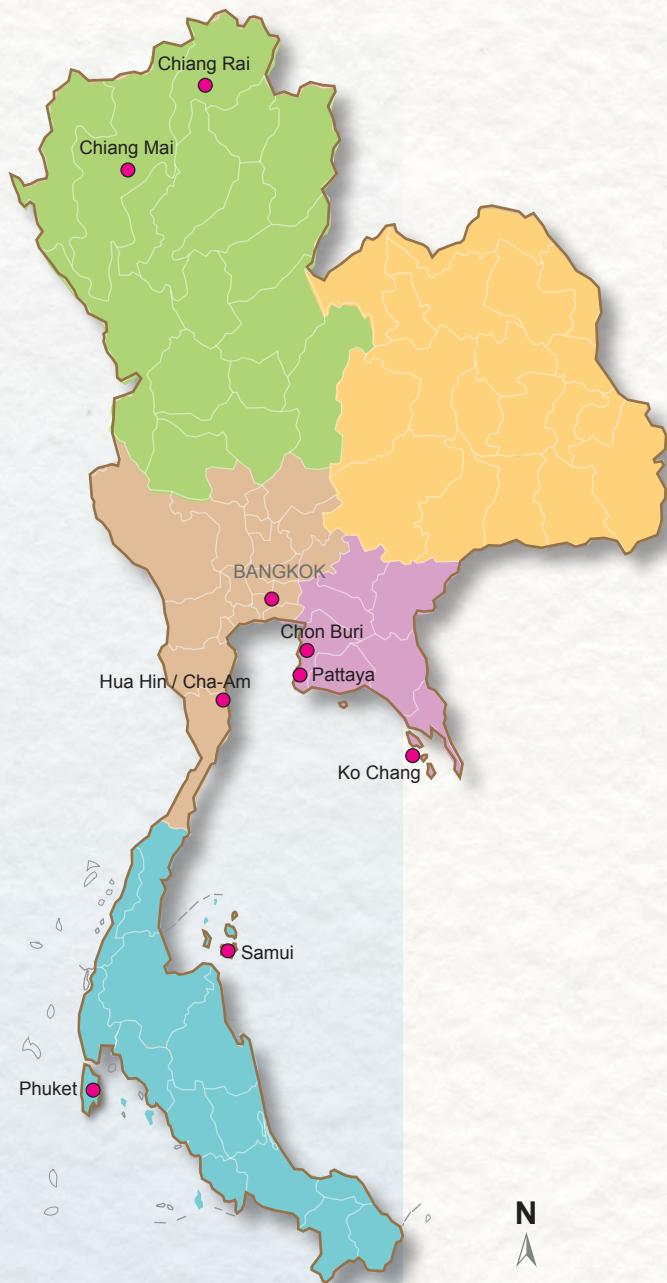


## WELLNESS & SPA

A harmonious blend of cultural heritage and destination diversity has made Thailand an infinitely attractive wellness and spa destination that has gained popularity among visitors. From chic contemporary Thai spas, to luxurious hotel spas, lovingly converted traditional teak homes, medical spas, garden style spas, plus, Thailand offers an amazingly diverse range of spas catering to all. Thai spa treatments feature a comprehensive but balanced range of revitalizing holistic healing approach and therapeutic techniques with an abundance of natural resources and herbs and extensive option of treatments; such as, aromatherapy, reflexology, hydrotherapy and traditional Thai massage. The variety and healing power of treatments along with the hospitality and caring nature of the personnel in the industry, make a trip to a spa in Thailand a total blissful experience.

### THE 4 KINDS OF THAI SPA

- **Destination spa:** One whose purpose is to provide guests with lifestyle improvement and health enhancement through professionally administered spa services, physical fitness and educational programmes, and on-site accommodation. Spa cuisine is served exclusively.
- **Resort/hotel spa:** A spa owned by and located in a resort or hotel providing professionally administered spa services, fitness and wellness components and spa cuisine menu choices.
- **Medical spa:** Individuals, groups and institutions of medical and spa professionals who provide comprehensive medical and wellness care in an environment which integrates spa services with complementary conventional therapies and treatments.
- **Day spa:** A spa offering a variety of professionally administered spa services to clients on a day-use basis.



● SPA DESTINATION

## HERE ARE SOME OF THE VARIOUS SPAS AROUND THAILAND:

### BANGKOK & NEARBY

Ananda Spa, President Solitaire  
Website: [www.anandaspa.net](http://www.anandaspa.net)

Bangkok Marriott Resort & Spa,  
Website: [www.mandaraspasia.com](http://www.mandaraspasia.com)

Banyan Tree Spa, Banyan Tree Bangkok  
Website: [www.banyantreespa.com](http://www.banyantreespa.com)

Centara Spas  
Website: [www.centralhotelsresorts.com](http://www.centralhotelsresorts.com)

Chuan Chom Health Club & Spa,  
Website: [www.hilton.co.th](http://www.hilton.co.th)

Como Shambhala, The Metropolitan  
Website: [www.metropolitan.como.bg](http://www.metropolitan.como.bg)

Devarana Spa at the Dusit Thani  
Website: [www.devaranaspa.com](http://www.devaranaspa.com)

Grande Spa, Sheraton Grande  
Sukhumvit  
Website: [www.starwood.com/bangkok](http://www.starwood.com/bangkok)

i.sawan, Grand Hyatt Erawan  
Website: [www.bangkok.grand.hyatt.com](http://www.bangkok.grand.hyatt.com)

JW Marriott Spa, JW Marriott Hotel  
Website: [www.marriotthotels.com](http://www.marriotthotels.com)

Mandara Spa-Royal Orchid Sheraton  
Hotel  
Website: [www.mandaraspasia.com](http://www.mandaraspasia.com)

Oasis Spa  
Website: [www.oasisspa.net](http://www.oasisspa.net)

Rarinjinda Wellness Spa  
(2010 Thailand Tourism  
Award Winner of the  
Day Spa)  
Website: [www.rarinjinda.com](http://www.rarinjinda.com)

Seasons Spa, The Conrad Hotel  
Website: [www.ConradHotels.com](http://www.ConradHotels.com)

Secret Garden Spa, Rose Garden  
Riverside  
Website: [www.rose-garden.com](http://www.rose-garden.com)

Sivara Spa, Amari Hotels & Resorts  
Website: [www.sivaraspas.com](http://www.sivaraspas.com)

### S Medical Spa

Website: [www.smedspa.com](http://www.smedspa.com)

### Panpuri Organic Spa

Website: [www.panpuriorganicspa.com](http://www.panpuriorganicspa.com)

### Photalai Spa

Website: [www.potalai.com/wellness](http://www.potalai.com/wellness)

### St.Carlos Medical Spa

Website: [www.stcarlos.com](http://www.stcarlos.com)

### The Peninsula by ESPA

(2010 Thailand Tourism  
Award Winner of the

Hotel & Resort Spa)

Website: [www.peninsula.com](http://www.peninsula.com)

### TRIA Integrative Wellness and Medical Institute

Website: [www.traintegrativewellness.com](http://www.traintegrativewellness.com)

### The Grande Spa

Website: [www.starwood.com/bangkok](http://www.starwood.com/bangkok)

### The Oriental Spa,

Website: [www.mandarinoriental.com](http://www.mandarinoriental.com)

### CHIANG RAI / CHIANG MAI

### Ban Sabai Spa

Website: [www.ban-sabai.com](http://www.ban-sabai.com)

### Bussaya Spa, Chiang Mai Plaza Hotel

Website: [www.cnxplaza.com](http://www.cnxplaza.com)

### Devarana Spa

(2010 Thailand Tourism  
Award Winner of the

Hotel & Resort Spa)

Website: [www.devaranaspa.com](http://www.devaranaspa.com)

### Jirung Spa

[www.spafeternity.com](http://www.spafeternity.com)

### Lanna Come Spa

(2010 Thailand Tourism  
Award Winner of the

Day Spa)

Website: [www.lannacomespa.com](http://www.lannacomespa.com)

### Mandara Spa, Anantara Resort & Spa

Golden Triangle  
Website: [www.baanboran.com](http://www.baanboran.com)

### Oasis Spa

(2010 Thailand Tourism  
Award Winner of the

Day Spa)

Website: [www.oasisspa.net](http://www.oasisspa.net)



### Phu Chaisai Spa

Website: [www.phu-chaisai.com](http://www.phu-chaisai.com)

### Rarinjinda Wellness Spa

Website: [www.rarinjinda.com](http://www.rarinjinda.com)

### Tao Garden Health Spa and Resort

(2010 Thailand Tourism  
Award Winner of the

Destination Spa)

Website: [www.tao-garden.com](http://www.tao-garden.com)



### The Spa, Four Seasons Chiang Mai

Website: [www.fourseasons.com](http://www.fourseasons.com)

### HUA HIN / CHA-AM

#### Anantara Spa Hua Hin

(2010 Thailand Tourism  
Award Winner of the

Hotel & Resort Spa)

Website: [www.spa.anantara.com](http://www.spa.anantara.com)



#### Barai Spa

(2010 Thailand Tourism  
Award Winner of the

Hotel & Resort Spa)

Website: [www.thebarai.com](http://www.thebarai.com)



#### Chiva-Som International Health Resort

Website: [www.chivasom.com](http://www.chivasom.com)

#### Devarana Spa, Dusit Resort & Polo Club

Website: [www.devarana.com](http://www.devarana.com)

#### Mandara Spa, Anantara Resort & Spa

Website: [www.mandaraspasia.com](http://www.mandaraspasia.com)

#### Mandara Spa, Hua Hin Marriott

Resort & Spa

Website: [www.mandaraspasia.com](http://www.mandaraspasia.com)

#### Six Senses Spa at the Evason Hua Hin

Website: [www.six-senses.com](http://www.six-senses.com)

#### Sky Spa, Aleenta Resort

Website: [www.aleenta.com](http://www.aleenta.com)



**S'Mor Spa Village**  
Website: [www.smorspa.com](http://www.smorspa.com)

**Springfield Village Spa**  
Website: [www.springfieldresort.com](http://www.springfieldresort.com)

**The Spa, Hilton Hua Hin Resort & Spa**  
Website: [www.huahin.hilton.com](http://www.huahin.hilton.com)

### PATTAYA

**Cliff Spa, Royal Cliff Beach Resort**  
Website: [www.royalcliff.com](http://www.royalcliff.com)

**Devarana Spa, Dusit Resort Pattaya**  
Website: [www.devarana.com](http://www.devarana.com)

**Hard Rock Spa, Hard Rock Hotel Pattaya**  
Website: [www.hardrockhotels.net](http://www.hardrockhotels.net)

**Mandara Spa, Pattaya Marriott Resort & Spa**  
Website: [www.mandaraspaspa-asia.com](http://www.mandaraspaspa-asia.com)

### PHUKET

**Aman Spa**  
Website: [www.amanresorts.com](http://www.amanresorts.com)

**Angsana Spa**  
Website: [www.angsana.com](http://www.angsana.com)

**Banyan Tree Phuket**  
(2010 Thailand Tourism Award Winner of the Destination Spa)  
Website: [www.banyantree.com](http://www.banyantree.com)

**Cool Spa, Sri Panwa**  
Website: [www.coolspaphuket.com](http://www.coolspaphuket.com)

**Layan Spa**  
Website: [www.layanphuket.com](http://www.layanphuket.com)

**Mandara Spa, JW Marriott Phuket Resort and Spa**  
Website: [www.marriotthotels.com](http://www.marriotthotels.com)

**Six Senses Spa at the Evason Phuket**  
Website: [www.six-senses.com](http://www.six-senses.com)

**Sukko Cultural Spa and Wellness**  
(2010 Thailand Tourism Award Winner of the Day Spa)  
Website: [www.sukkospa.com](http://www.sukkospa.com)

**The Chedi Spa**  
Website: [www.gnmhotels.com](http://www.gnmhotels.com)

**The Royal Spa, Le Royal Meridien Phuket Yacht Club**  
Website: [www.lemeridien-yachtclub.com](http://www.lemeridien-yachtclub.com)

**Adora Spa, Maritime Park & Spa Resort**  
Website: [www.maritimeparkandspa.com](http://www.maritimeparkandspa.com)

**Mandara Spa, Sheraton Krabi Beach Resort**  
Website: [www.sheraton.com/krabi](http://www.sheraton.com/krabi)

**Pimalai Spa, Pimalai Resort**  
Website: [www.pimalai.com](http://www.pimalai.com)

**Rayavadee Spa, Rayavadee Resort**  
Website: [www.rayavadee.com](http://www.rayavadee.com)

**Wana Spa, Phi Phi Island Village Beach Resort & Spa**  
Website: [www.ppisland.com](http://www.ppisland.com)

### SAMUI

**Absolute Sanctuary**  
Website: [www.absolutesanctuary.com](http://www.absolutesanctuary.com)

**Ban Sabai Spa**  
Website: [www.ban-sabai.com](http://www.ban-sabai.com)

**Ban Taling Ngam Spa**  
Website: [www.lemeridien\\_kohsamui.com](http://www.lemeridien_kohsamui.com)

**Centara Spa, Central Samui Beach Resort**  
Website: [www.centaraspa.com](http://www.centaraspa.com)

**Chedi Spa**  
Website: [www.iwaraspa.com](http://www.iwaraspa.com)

**Kalamaya Wellness Sanctuary and Holistic Spa Resort**  
(2010 Thailand Tourism Award Winner of the Destination Spa)  
Website: [www.kamalaya.com](http://www.kamalaya.com)

**Living Senses Spa, Living Square Plaza**  
Website: [www.livingtropical.com](http://www.livingtropical.com)

**Natural Wing Health Spa and Resort**  
Website: [www.naturalwing.com](http://www.naturalwing.com)

**Prana Spa Ban Tong Sai**  
(2010 Thailand Tourism Award Winner of the Hotel & Resort Spa)  
Website: [www.tongsaimbay.co.th](http://www.tongsaimbay.co.th)



**Santiburi Spa, Santiburi Resort**  
Website: [www.santiburi.com](http://www.santiburi.com)

**Silarom Spa**  
Website: [www.silaromspa.com](http://www.silaromspa.com)

**Six Senses Ko Samui**  
(2010 Thailand Tourism Award Winner of the Hotel & Resort Spa)  
Website: [www.sixsenses.com/sixsensessamui](http://www.sixsenses.com/sixsensessamui)



**Tamarind Retreat**  
Website: [www.tamarindretreat.com](http://www.tamarindretreat.com)

**The Iyarase Spa & Health Club, Chaweng Regent Beach Resort**  
Website: [www.chawengregent.com](http://www.chawengregent.com)

### TRAT

**Sivara Spa Amari Ko Chang**  
(2010 Thailand Tourism Award Winner of the Hotel & Resort Spa)  
Website: [www.amari.com/emeraldcove/sivara-spa.aspx](http://www.amari.com/emeraldcove/sivara-spa.aspx)



### For more information, please contact:

**Thai Spa Association**  
Website: [www.thaispaassociation.com](http://www.thaispaassociation.com)

**Thai Spa Operators Association**  
Website: [www.thaispaoperators.com](http://www.thaispaoperators.com)

**Thai Lanna Spa Association**  
Website: [www.thailannaspaassociation.com](http://www.thailannaspaassociation.com)

**Phuket Spa Association**  
Website: [www.spaphuket.org](http://www.spaphuket.org)

**Samui Spa Association**  
Website: [www.samuispaassociation.com](http://www.samuispaassociation.com)



## MEDICAL TOURISM

Having been recognised as the "Health Capital of Asia", Thailand is full of state-of-the-art internationally accredited health facilities which are equipped with the most advanced equipment, and providing expert treatments from highly trained professionals. Visitors are offered various types of packages from comprehensive medical check-ups to major medical professional procedures and cosmetic surgery. Many hospitals have specialised medical centres for cancer, ear nose and throat, neurosurgery, urology, diabetes, endocrinology, and all other key medical disciplines. In addition to the medical excellence, language is not a barrier as many hospitals provide personnel who speak English as well as other languages. Foreigners choose Thailand as their medical tourism destination because of the experienced professionals with leading edge technology and the level of service which is comparable to that of five-star hotels. Many leading hospitals in Bangkok also provide airport transfer, international insurance coordination, and visa extension facilities to assist those who have to overstay their visas while undergoing medical treatment.

### 9 REASONS TO COME TO THAILAND FOR MEDICAL SERVICES & TREATMENT

- Internationally accredited medical facilities.
- 14 hospitals with JCI accreditation.
- 285 hospitals certified with ISO standards.
- Highly qualified medical treatment.
- Approximately 500 Thai doctors practicing are American Board certified.
- Cost saving.
- No wait lists.
- State-of-the-art technology.
- Excellent service.



### JCI ACCREDITED HOSPITALS IN THAILAND

#### The North

- Chiang Mai Ram Hospital, Chiang Mai  
Website: [www.chiangmairam.com](http://www.chiangmairam.com)

#### The Central Region

- BNH Hospital, Bangkok  
Website: [www.bnhhospital.com](http://www.bnhhospital.com)
- Bumrungrad International, Bangkok  
*(2010 Thailand Tourism Award Winner of the Health Tourism Hospital (Private))*  
Website: [www.bumrungrad.com](http://www.bumrungrad.com)
- Nonthavej Hospital, Nonthaburi  
Website: [www.nonthavej.co.th](http://www.nonthavej.co.th)
- Praram 9 Hospital, Bangkok  
Website: [www.praram9.com](http://www.praram9.com)
- Ramkhamhaeng Hospital, Bangkok  
Website: [www.ramhospital.com](http://www.ramhospital.com)
- Samitivej Srinakarin Hospital, Bangkok  
Website: [www.samitivejhospitals.com](http://www.samitivejhospitals.com)
- Samitivej Sukhumvit Hospital, Bangkok  
Website: [www.samitivejhospitals.com](http://www.samitivejhospitals.com)
- Synphaet Hospital, Bangkok  
Website: [www.sunphaet.co.th](http://www.sunphaet.co.th)
- Vejthani Hospital, Bangkok  
Website: [www.vejthani.com](http://www.vejthani.com)
- Yanhee Hospital, Bangkok  
Website: [www.yanhee.net](http://www.yanhee.net)



#### The East

- Bangkok Hospital Pattaya, Chon Buri  
Website: [www.bangkokpattayahospital.com](http://www.bangkokpattayahospital.com)
- Samitivej Sriracha Hospital, Chon Buri  
Website: [www.samitivejhospitals.com](http://www.samitivejhospitals.com)



#### The South

- Bangkok Hospital Phuket  
*(2010 Thailand Tourism Award Winner of the Health Tourism Hospital (Private))*  
Website: [www.phukethospital.com](http://www.phukethospital.com)

For more information, please check  
[www.thailandmedtourism.com](http://www.thailandmedtourism.com)



#### CHAOPHRAYA ABHAIBHUBEJHR HOSPITAL



#### MUSEUM OF THAI HERBAL HEALING

(2010 Thailand Tourism Award)

*Winner of the Health Tourism Hospital (Government)*

Located about 135 km from Bangkok in Prachinburi province, the Chaophraya Abhaibhubejhr Hospital is a pioneer in introducing Thai herbal products used in modern medicine hospitals in Thailand. The hospital has developed to become a large-scale facility that can accommodate the public with all aspect of health services. In addition, there are various Thai traditional medicine activities including a botanical garden, herbal product research and development, Thai massage and herbal sauna, promotion of herbal medicine in communities and schools, collection of herbal species. It also comprises a traditional Thai medicine museum, which welcomes many visitors each day for Thai herbal wisdom and traditional healing. Traditional Thai medicine at this hospital is cited as an example of Thailand's creative economy and culture.

Health tours at Chao Phraya Abhaibhubejhr Hospital have become popular in response to the province's vision of promoting Prachinburi as a medical hub of Thailand. Visitors can buy a number of herbal products, foods, drinks, and cosmetics that are marketed under the Abhaibhubejhr brand name.

Website: [www.Abhaibhubejhr.org](http://www.Abhaibhubejhr.org)

## BEAUTY, NAIL SPAS & HAIR SALONS



In Thailand in general, and especially in Bangkok and other major tourist destinations, hair salons are of the very highest standard and offer hair dressing, styling, cutting, shampooing, colouring, perming, eyelash and eyebrow colouring, and various other treatments. Such establishments can often be found in leading department stores and shopping complexes while most stand-alone salons are located in busy business districts. Stylists and barbers are highly experienced and are often graduates of well-recognised institutions both within the country and abroad.

Other pampering options that have recently become popular

among visitors to Thailand include the wonderful manicure and pedicure services that are available. Lots of nail spas and salons have mushroomed in Bangkok and leading tourist destinations and most of them feature a comforting, tranquil environment with soothing music and an extensive selection of wonderful nail and foot products that together provide the ultimate care for hands and feet. Nail specialists deliver the very best nail care; all backed by the highest standards of health and sanitation with expert application of soft colour combinations in accordance with the customer's particular style and preferences.

# GOLF



With over 250 world-class standard golf courses scattered around the country, mostly located close to major tourism destinations with incredible mountain range or views of the ocean as the background, playing golf in Thailand is definitely a dream come true for golfers.

They have the opportunity to enjoy their golf and have a good holiday at the same time, as the tropical climate allows visitors to enjoy playing golf all year round.

Many golf courses in Thailand have been developed by leading professionals, including Jack Nicklaus, Nick Faldo and Greg Norman using the best grasses and latest techniques. Other impressive courses have been designed by famous course architects; such as, Pete Dye and Robert Trent Jones Jr, as well as leading Japanese architects. Furthermore, Thailand has been host to numerous tournaments including the Asian Tour International, Honda LPGA Thailand, Thailand Open, Volvo Masters of Asia, and PGA Thailand.



● GOLF DESTINATION



## THE NORTH

### CHIANG MAI

- Alpine Golf Resort Chiang Mai  
*Website: [www.alpinegolfresort.com](http://www.alpinegolfresort.com)*
- Chiang Mai Green Valley Country Club  
*Website: [www.cmgreenvalley.com](http://www.cmgreenvalley.com)*
- Chiang Mai Highlands Golf and Spa Resort  
*Website: [www.chiangmaihighlands.com](http://www.chiangmaihighlands.com)*
- Chiang Mai Inthanon Golf and Natural Resort  
*Website: [www.chiangmaiinthanongolfresort.com](http://www.chiangmaiinthanongolfresort.com)*
- Gassan Khuntan Golf and Resort  
*Website: [www.gassangolf.com](http://www.gassangolf.com)*
- Gassan Lake City Golf Club and Resort  
*Website: [www.gassangolf.com](http://www.gassangolf.com)*
- Gassan Marina Golf Club  
*Website: [www.gassangolf.com](http://www.gassangolf.com)*
- Mae Jo Golf Club  
*Website: [www.maejogolfclub.com](http://www.maejogolfclub.com)*
- Royal Chiang Mai Golf Club and Resort  
*Website: [www.royalchiangmai.com](http://www.royalchiangmai.com)*
- Summit Green Valley Chiang Mai Country Club  
*Website: [www.summitgreenvalley.com](http://www.summitgreenvalley.com)*

### CHIANG RAI

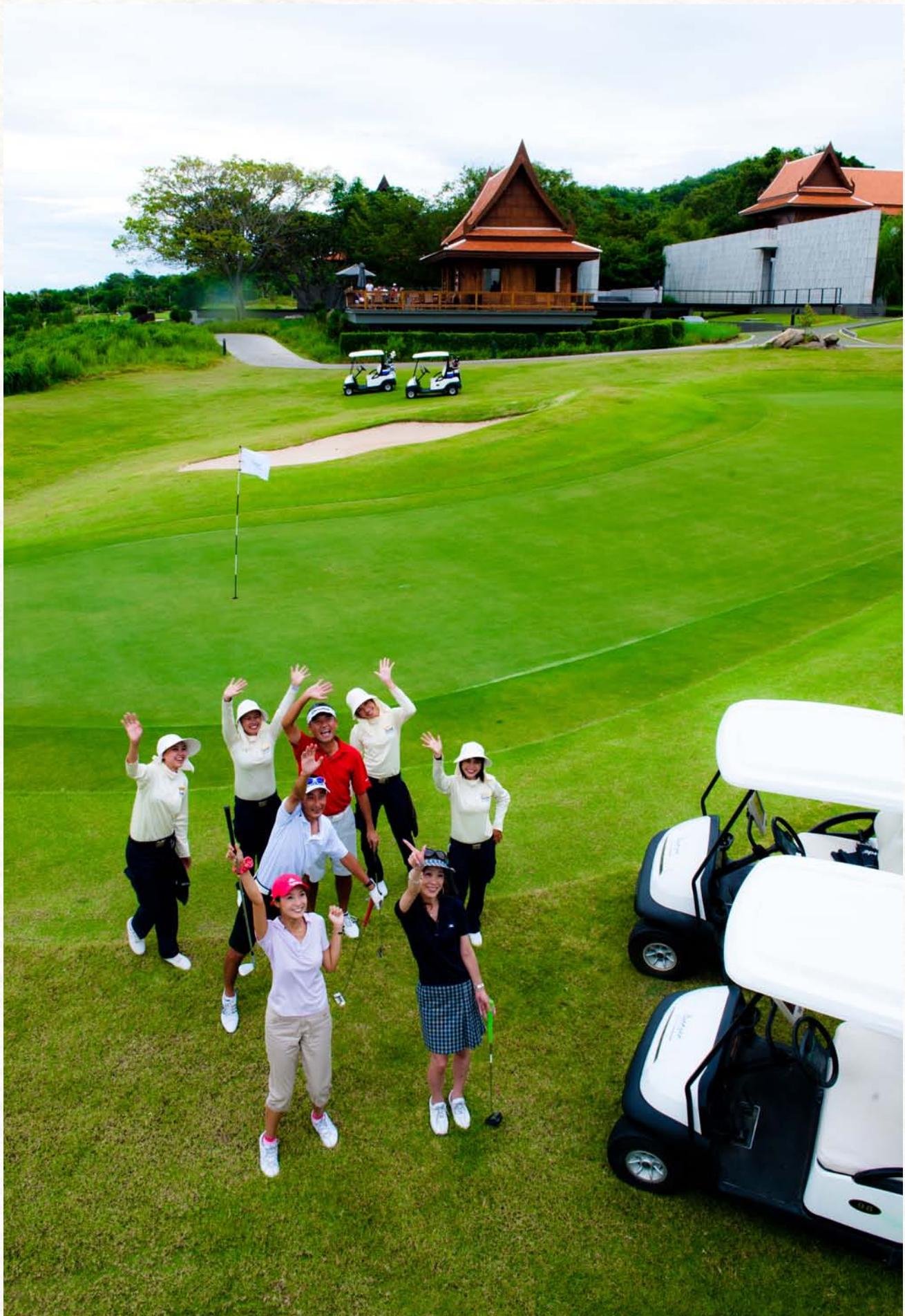
- Santiburi Chiang Rai Country Club  
*Website: [www.santiburi.com](http://www.santiburi.com)*
- Waterford Valley Golf Club & Resort  
*Website: [www.waterford.co.th](http://www.waterford.co.th)*

### LAMPANG

- Mae Moh Golf Course  
*Web: [www.maemohgolfcourse.com](http://www.maemohgolfcourse.com)*

### LAMPHUN

- Chiang Mai Lamphun Golf Club  
*Website: [www.chiangmaigolf.com](http://www.chiangmaigolf.com)*



**AYUTTHAYA**

- Bangsai Country Club  
Website: [www.bangsaicountryclub.com](http://www.bangsaicountryclub.com)
- Northern Rangsit Golf Club  
Website: [www.northernrangsit.com](http://www.northernrangsit.com)
- Rachakram Golf Club  
Website: [www.rachakramgolfclub.com](http://www.rachakramgolfclub.com)

**BANGKOK**

- Krungthep Kreetha Sports Club  
Website: [www.krungthepkreeta.co.th](http://www.krungthepkreeta.co.th)
- Navatanee Golf Course  
Website: [www.navatanee.com](http://www.navatanee.com)
- Panya Indra Golf Club  
Website: [www.panyagolf.com](http://www.panyagolf.com)
- President Country Club  
Website: [www.president.co.th](http://www.president.co.th)
- Rajpruek Golf Club  
Website: [www.rajpreuk.com](http://www.rajpreuk.com)
- Thanont Golf View and Sports Club  
Website: [www.thanontgolf.com](http://www.thanontgolf.com)
- Windsor Park and Golf Club (Panya Park)  
Website: [www.windsorgolf.co.th](http://www.windsorgolf.co.th)

**CHACHOENGSAO**

- Lotus Valley Golf Resort  
Website: [www.lotusvalley.co.th](http://www.lotusvalley.co.th)
- Royal Lakeside Golf Club  
Website: [www.royallakeside.com](http://www.royallakeside.com)
- Thai Country Club  
Website: [www.thaicountryclub.com](http://www.thaicountryclub.com)

**KANCHANABURI**

- Blue Sapphire Golf and Resort  
Website: [www.bsgolfclub.com](http://www.bsgolfclub.com)
- Evergreen Hills Golf Club and Resort  
Website: [www.evergreenhillsgolfclub.co.th](http://www.evergreenhillsgolfclub.co.th)
- Mission Hills Golf Club  
Website: [www.golfmissionhills.com](http://www.golfmissionhills.com)
- Nichigo Golf Resort and Country Club  
Website: [www.nichigoresortcc.com](http://www.nichigoresortcc.com)

**NAKHON NAYOK**

- Cascata Golf Club  
Website: [www.cascata.co.th](http://www.cascata.co.th)
- Royal Hills Golf Resort and Spa  
Website: [www.royalhillsresort.com](http://www.royalhillsresort.com)

**NAKHON PATHOM**

- Krisda City Golf Hills  
Website: [www.krisdagolf.com](http://www.krisdagolf.com)
- Rose Garden Golf Club  
Website: [www.rosegardencountryclub.com](http://www.rosegardencountryclub.com)
- Suwan Golf and Country Club  
Website: [www.suwangolf.com](http://www.suwangolf.com)
- Royal Gems Golf and Sports Club  
Website: [www.royalgemsgolf.com](http://www.royalgemsgolf.com)
- Uniland Golf and Country Club  
Website: [www.unilandgolf.com](http://www.unilandgolf.com)

**PATHUM THANI**

- Alpine Golf and Sports Club  
Website: [www.alpinegolfclub.com](http://www.alpinegolfclub.com)
- Bangkok Golf Club  
Website: [www.golf.th.com](http://www.golf.th.com)
- Krung Kavee Golf and Country Club Estate  
Website: [www.krungkavee.com](http://www.krungkavee.com)
- Lam Luk Ka Country Club  
Website: [www.lamlukkagolf.net](http://www.lamlukkagolf.net)
- Pinehurst Golf and Country Club  
Website: [www.pinehurst.co.th](http://www.pinehurst.co.th)
- Riverdale Golf Club  
Website: [www.riverdalegolfclub.co.th](http://www.riverdalegolfclub.co.th)
- Tanyatanee Country Club  
Website: [www.tanyatanee.com](http://www.tanyatanee.com)

**PHETCHABURI**

- Palm Hills Golf Club and Residence  
Website: [www.palmhills-golf.com](http://www.palmhills-golf.com)
- Sawang Resort and Golf Course  
Website: [www.sawangresortgolf.com](http://www.sawangresortgolf.com)
- Springfield Royal Country Club  
Website: [www.springfieldresort.com](http://www.springfieldresort.com)

**PRACHUAP KHIRI KHAN**

- Banyan Golf Club  
Website: [www.banyanthailand.com](http://www.banyanthailand.com)
- Black Mountain Golf Club  
Website: [www.bmghuahin.com](http://www.bmghuahin.com)
- Milford Golf Club  
Website: [www.milford.co.th](http://www.milford.co.th)

**RATCHABURI**

- Dragon Hills Golf and Country Club  
Website: [www.dragonhillsgolf.com](http://www.dragonhillsgolf.com)
- Rachaburi Country Club.  
Website: [www.rachaburicountryclub.com](http://www.rachaburicountryclub.com)
- Royal Ratchaburi Golf Club  
Website: [www.royalratchaburi.com](http://www.royalratchaburi.com)

## THE EAST

**SAMUT PRAKAN**

- Bangpoo Golf and Sports Club  
Website: [www.bangpoogolf.com](http://www.bangpoogolf.com)
- Green Valley Country Club  
Website: [www.greenvalleybangkok.com](http://www.greenvalleybangkok.com)
- Kiartithanee Country Club  
Website: [www.kiartithaneecountryclub.com](http://www.kiartithaneecountryclub.com)
- Lakewood Country Club  
Website: [www.lakewoodcountryclub.co.th](http://www.lakewoodcountryclub.co.th)
- Muang Kaew Golf Club  
Website: [www.muangkaewgolf.com](http://www.muangkaewgolf.com)
- Subhapruek Golf Club  
Website: [www.subhaprukekgolf.com](http://www.subhaprukekgolf.com)
- Summit Windmill Golf Club  
Website: [www.summitwindmillgolfclub.com](http://www.summitwindmillgolfclub.com)
- Thana City Golf and Country Club  
Website: [www.thanacitygolf.com](http://www.thanacitygolf.com)
- Royal Golf and Country Club  
Website: [www.royalgolfclubs.com](http://www.royalgolfclubs.com)
- The Vintage Club  
Website: [www.vintagethaigolf.com](http://www.vintagethaigolf.com)

**SAMUT SAKHON**

- Best Ocean Golf Club  
Website: [www.bestoceangolf.co.th](http://www.bestoceangolf.co.th)

**SARABURI**

- Forest Hills Country Club (Sir James)  
Website: [www.sirjamesresort.com](http://www.sirjamesresort.com)

## THE SOUTH

**PHUKET**

- Blue Canyon Country Club  
Website: [www.bluecanyonclub.com](http://www.bluecanyonclub.com)
- Laguna Phuket Golf Club (Banyan Tree)  
Website: [www.lagunaphuketgolf.com](http://www.lagunaphuketgolf.com)
- Loch Palm Golf Club  
Website: [www.lochpalm.com](http://www.lochpalm.com)
- Mission Hills Phuket Golf Resort and Spa  
Website: [www.missionhillspuket.com](http://www.missionhillspuket.com)
- Phuket Country Club  
Website: [www.phuketcountryclub.com](http://www.phuketcountryclub.com)
- Red Mountain Golf Club  
Website: [www.redmountainphuket.com](http://www.redmountainphuket.com)

**SURAT THANI**

- Santiburi Samui Country Club.  
Website: [www.santiburi.com](http://www.santiburi.com)

**SONGKHLA**

- Southern Hills Golf and Country Club.  
Website: [www.southernhillgolf.com](http://www.southernhillgolf.com)

**CHON BURI**

- Amata Spring Country Club  
Website: [www.amataspring.co.th](http://www.amataspring.co.th)
- Bangpra International Golf Club  
Website: [www.bangpragolf.co.th](http://www.bangpragolf.co.th)
- Burapha Golf Club  
Website: [www.buraphagolfthailand.com](http://www.buraphagolfthailand.com)
- Khao Kheow Country Club  
Website: [www.khaokheowgolf.com](http://www.khaokheowgolf.com)
- Laem Chabang International Country Club  
Website: [www.laemchabanggolf.com](http://www.laemchabanggolf.com)
- Pattaya Country Club and Resort.  
Website: [www.pattayacountryclub.net](http://www.pattayacountryclub.net)
- Pattaya Golf Resort and Sports Club  
Website: [www.pattayasports.org](http://www.pattayasports.org)
- Siam Country Club, Old Course  
Website: [www.siamcountryclub.com](http://www.siamcountryclub.com)
- Siam Country Club, Plantation Course  
Website: [www.siamcountry.com](http://www.siamcountry.com)
- Sriracha Golf Club  
Website: [www.srirachagolf.com](http://www.srirachagolf.com)

**RAYONG**

- Eastern Star Country Club and Resort  
Website: [www.easternstargolfcourse.com](http://www.easternstargolfcourse.com)
- Rayong Green Valley Country Club  
Website: [www.standrews2000golf.com](http://www.standrews2000golf.com)
- St. Andrews 2000 Golf Club  
Website: [www.standrews2000golf.com](http://www.standrews2000golf.com)

## THE NORTHEAST

**NAKHON RATCHASIMA**

- Kirimaya Golf Club  
Website: [www.kirimaya.com](http://www.kirimaya.com)
- Mission Hills Golf Club and Resort.  
Website: [www.golfmissionhills.com](http://www.golfmissionhills.com)
- Toscana Valley Country Club  
Website: [www.toscanavalley.com](http://www.toscanavalley.com)

## | GOLF ACADEMIES

For those who are not yet adept at golf but would like to learn this sport, or would like to improve their swing, Thailand also has a number of golfing academies with a range of programmes at reasonable prices.

For a full up-to-date listing of schools, please check [www.thaigolfer.com](http://www.thaigolfer.com)

## GREEN ESCAPES



*Doi Chiang Dao, Chiang Mai*

Go green and come to enjoy Thailand's diversity of ecotourism in programmes that also enhance the cultural integrity of the local people by making them become caretakers of their own environment. These programmes include community-based tourism, watching wildlife, cycling, trekking and more that allow tourists to not only see nature that is very different to their own country close up, but also provides a new, thrilling experience with very minimal effect on the environment. Also enjoy being pampered by staying in one of the numerous Green Hotels that can be found all over Thailand and knowing that you are helping to conserve the local nature for the future.

## GREEN ATTRACTIONS

### THE NORTH

#### DOI CHIANG DAO, CHIANG MAI PROVINCE

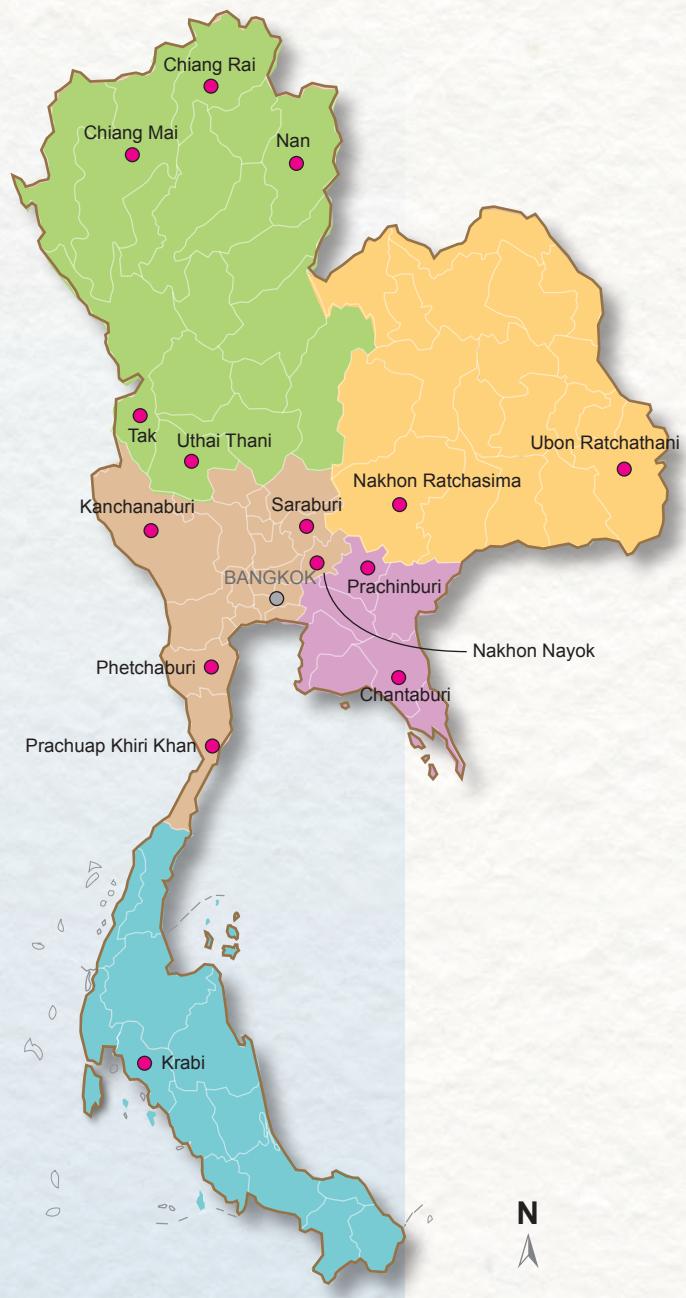
This is the third highest peak, and the only place where a sub-alpine ecosystem can be found in Thailand.

- Is home to more than 340 species of wildlife, of which some 206 are birds, including the near-extinct Hume's Pheasant (*Syrmaticus humiae*, found only here and in Pai). It is also the only home in the world to the newly discovered orchid *Sirindhornia pulchella*, as well as approximately 110 other orchid species.
- Chiang Dao Wildlife Sanctuary is devoted strictly to conservation, so it is open for trekking only from 1 November - 31 March, is suitable only for highly-devoted nature enthusiasts.
- For others still wanting to get a glimpse of its glory, there is a 2-km nature trail, at the foot of the mountain, accessible all year round.

#### THI LO SU WATERFALL, TAK PROVINCE

Located in the Umphang Wildlife Sanctuary, the majestic Thi Lo Su Waterfall is ranked in the Top Ten Waterfalls of Asia. It is only open from November till May in which visitors will see this gigantic waterfall spanning 500 metres turn into numerous small cascades separated by rocks and trees, making it appear as a patchwork of verdant gardens.

A typical 2-3 day tour programme, which begins in Umphang district, 164 kms from Mae Sot, Tak province will combine rafting on the Mae Klong River, visits to Thi Lo Su and Thi Lo Cho Waterfalls, trekking, stays in Karen villages, and total forest immersion via elephant back.



● GREEN ATTRACTIONS



#### BAN SOP KAI, CHIANG MAI PROVINCE

Nestled atop a hillside characterised by the untouched beauty of its rivers and mountains, Ban Sop Kai is a small village where adventure awaits. Rafting in either inflatable boats or traditional bamboo rafts will give visitors access to unprecedented views of stunning scenery with a rocky and curving shoreline along the Mae Tang River.

#### DOI MAE SALONG, CHIANG RAI PROVINCE

Here visitors will find an array of teashops, from which the aroma fuses with cool fresh air. Almost all teashops will happily let guests sample their tea. To maximize the fun, visit a tea plantation on horseback. Also try Yunannese food that is rather spicy with its star ingredient - mushroom. Four kilometres from the village, at the end of a climb to the highest point of the hill, there is a temple dedicated to H.M. the King's Mother, Princess Srinagarindra. From there it is possible to see the Burmese border, another excellent viewpoint, especially at sunset. The best time to visit Santi Khiri Village is between December and February, when the road uphill is dazzlingly lined with Himalayan Wild Cherry trees (*Prunus cerasoides* D. Don) and the weather is especially cool.

#### DOI PHU KHA, NAN PROVINCE

This is a great destination for those wanting to combine laid-back relaxation with moderate exploration of nature. On arrival in the Park area in which most of its forest remains intact, visitors can view the exhibition in the Visitor Centre. Here, guests will learn that besides the star attraction, Chomphu Phu Kha flowers, there is also a chance to see a living fossil, *Caryota gigas*. Also known as Hahn ex Hodel, or Tao Rang Yak in Thai, this giant palm has a height of 40 m and is endemic to the area. The Park also offers the possibility of spotting a myriad of wild animals, ranging from rare birds (the most remarkable one being *Sitta formosa*) deer, and gibbons to bears, wild elephants, or even tigers.



Chomphu Phu Kha flowers

Trekking should be avoided during the rainy season, as leeches are quite brutal. Doi Phu Kha offers other activities the whole year round. From August to December, the river Nam Wa, with its 20 rapids, provides good rafting (contact the Visitor Centre to arrange a trip). Bird and butterfly lovers should visit between November and June. During February and March, the forest will be tinted with the pink blossoms of Chomphu Phu Kha. There are also a number of caves and waterfalls that can be explored from October to May.

## THE NORTHEAST



**PHA TAEM, UBN  
RATCHATHANI PROVINCE**  
(2008 Thailand Tourism  
Award Winner of the Natural  
Tourist Site)

This historical site in the easternmost part of the country is both a cultural attraction and a pleasant escape, especially for those enjoying breathtaking views over the Mekong River's banks. The three-kilometre hike following the sandstone path that crisscrosses Pha Taem Mountain has evidence of Thailand's prehistory of pigment paintings vividly depicting the life led by the Mekong Basin's inhabitants some 3,000-4,000 years ago.

**BAN DAN KWIAN, NAKHON  
RATCHASIMA PROVINCE**

Step into the middle of Thailand's northeast countryside, where farmers substitute their livelihood as pottery makers. Ban Dan Kwian offers a good introduction to the Northeastern lifestyle, roving around the cultivation and harvesting of rice, as well as the unique pottery art heritage formed of the clay found at the nearby Mun River.



Pha Taem, Ubon Ratchathani



Phraya Nakhon Cave, Prachuap Khiri Khan

## THE CENTRAL REGION



**KAENG KRACHAN  
NATIONAL PARK,  
PHETCHABURI PROVINCE**  
(2008 & 2010 Thailand  
Tourism Award Winner of the Natural  
Attractions)

Visiting Kaeng Krachan National Park, Thailand's largest national park brings visitors to discover the region's immense diversity of wild fauna which include elephants, deer, and leopards, as well as an equally impressive troupe of birdlife. The best way to discover the Park is a day or two of hiking walking up to the top of Kaeng Krachan peak, at an altitude of 1,200

m, where they will have a superb view of Kaeng Krachan that is located on the eastern slope of the Tenasserim Mountain Range constituting the border with Myanmar. Bird watching, rafting, hiking and camping are a must-do in this well-preserved natural environment.

**PHRAYA NAKHON CAVE,  
PRACHUAP KHIRI KHAN PROVINCE**

Since its discovery over two centuries ago, this enormous cave has merited visits from several kings including H.M King Bhumibol Adulyadej. Nearly as wide as it is tall, the interior chamber

of Phraya Nakhon is massive. Its limestone walls are adorned with stalactites and stalagmites that range in size from minuscule to gargantuan with a naturally formed skylight letting in fresh air, rainwater, and sunlight, allowing for the thriving plant life inside. There is also a royal pavilion that was built for King Rama V's visit in 1896. The way up to the cave is lined with interesting sights including small streams, beautiful plants, birds, and steep bluff faces.

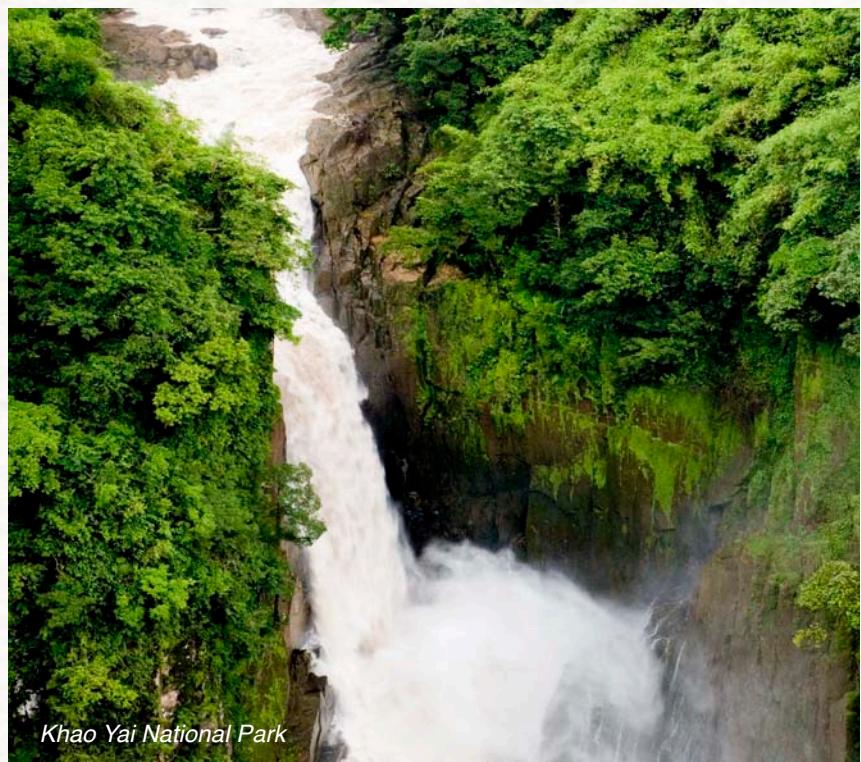
## THE EAST

### KRUNG KRABEN MANGROVE FOREST, CHANTABURI PROVINCE

The Kung Kraben Mangrove Forest Study Walkway, Chantaburi is a 1,600-metre-long bridge passing through unspoiled mangrove forest with various kinds of fauna and flora along the way suitable for studying about the mangrove forest ecological system.

### HUAI KHA KAENG WILDLIFE SANCTUARY, UTHAI THANI, KANCHANABURI AND TAK PROVINCES

The Thungyai Naresuan Wildlife Sanctuary and Huai Kha Khaeng Wildlife Sanctuary are adjacent parks in the Uthai Thani, Kanchanaburi and Tak provinces of Western Thailand. With a total area of 5,775 sq. km., they form the largest protected area in Southeast Asia, and are a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The reserves consist of almost every kind of forest found in Thailand, including mountain virgin forest, dry virgin forest and pine forest. The unspoiled nature of the reserve makes it an ideal home to various rare and endangered animals; such as, wild buffalo, rhinoceros, wild elephant, tapir, leopard, wild bull, etc. They are best visited from Uthai Thani. *For more information, please refer to the contact details of the TAT Uthai Thani Office (page 215).*



*Khao Yai National Park*

### KHAO YAI NATIONAL PARK, NAKHON RATCHASIMA, SARABURI, PRACHINBURI, AND NAKHON NAYOK PROVINCES

The Park, the second largest in Thailand and designated a natural World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 2005, covers an area of 2,168 sq. km. with evergreen forest and grassland and is situated in Nakhon Ratchasima, Saraburi, Prachinburi, and Nakhon Nayok provinces. It has 3,000 species of plants, 320 species of birds, and 67 species of mammals. Also the Haeo Narok and Haeo Suwat Waterfalls are other places that attract tourists. There are over 50 km of hiking trails from easy to hard taking a one-hour to three-day walk, as well as night-time wildlife spotlighting, kayaking and rafting.



*The Emerald Pool, Krabi*

## THE SOUTH

### THE EMERALD POOL, KRABI PROVINCE

Very often, natural attractions are named in a way related to their description or to tease the imagination. However, in the case of the Emerald Pool, the water in the naturally sunken pools varies from sapphirine blue to emerald green due to its chemical compositions. Since the water in this terrain comes seeping from under the ground and is heated by magma, the temperature of the water is about 30-50 degrees Celsius, so is suitable for swimming. There are also short, easy nature trails cutting through the tropical rain forest that is the only place in Thailand the near-extinct bird Gurney's Pitta is found.

## GREEN ACTIVITIES

### THE NORTH

#### DOI INTHONON, CHIANG MAI PROVINCE

The highest peak in Thailand, Doi Inthanon has 1,274 plant species, 90 of which are orchids (31 of which are found uniquely there), and is home to 466 animal species, 385 of those being birds (including the Green-tailed Sunbird). The area is also dotted with a number of waterfalls of various sizes, as well as offers an array of treks that mostly run all year round. Consequently, Doi Inthanon has something for everyone, whether day-trippers or those planning to thoroughly explore the Park.



#### HUAI TUENG THAO, CHIANG MAI PROVINCE

This is one of urban Thailand's most enjoyable cycling experiences. The route has been chosen from an interminable range of others for its flexibility to both novices and experts, and its extremely convenient location just outside of Chiang Mai at the break between Huai Tueng Thao and Doi Suthep National Park.

The route has mountainous forests and lychee orchards. For the romantics, Huai Tueng Thao Lake is an ideal place where they can enjoy stunning sunsets over Chiang Mai's mountains. There are a range of inoffensive activities here, from fishing to windsurfing and rafting.

#### KHEK RIVER RAFTING, PHITSANULOK PROVINCE

Snaking peacefully from its origin on a mountaintop in Phetchabun province, the Khek River is one of the best sites for rafting in Thailand. The waterway is blessed with a number of rapids ranging from Levels 1 to 5. A typical rafting trip will take you through 8 km of river peppered with 13 rapids amidst stunning scenery. The best season for the adventure starts from June and ends in October.

#### PAI, MAE HONG SON PROVINCE

This small riverside town in Mae Hong Son province is a popular escape from the hustle and bustle of the big city, close to the border with Myanmar. For seasoned motorbike travellers, this makes a picturesque journey, as motorcycles and bicycles can be rented locally although Pai is explorable on foot or from the back of an elephant, too. Pass by waterfalls and dense flora and fauna for a truly memorable northern experience.



● DESTINATION FOR GREEN ACTIVITIES



## THE CENTRAL REGION

### ROSE GARDEN HERB GARDEN, NAKHON PATHOM PROVINCE

This is an organic farm project that the Rose Garden Riverside initiated with the local community. The farm grows fruit, vegetables, herbs and lotus with fertiliser made from natural waste materials. Water buffaloes are also being trained to plough paddy fields. The produce is used in the Rose Garden's restaurants as well as at the Rim Khlong Market.

Website: [www.rosegardenriverside.com](http://www.rosegardenriverside.com)

## THE EAST



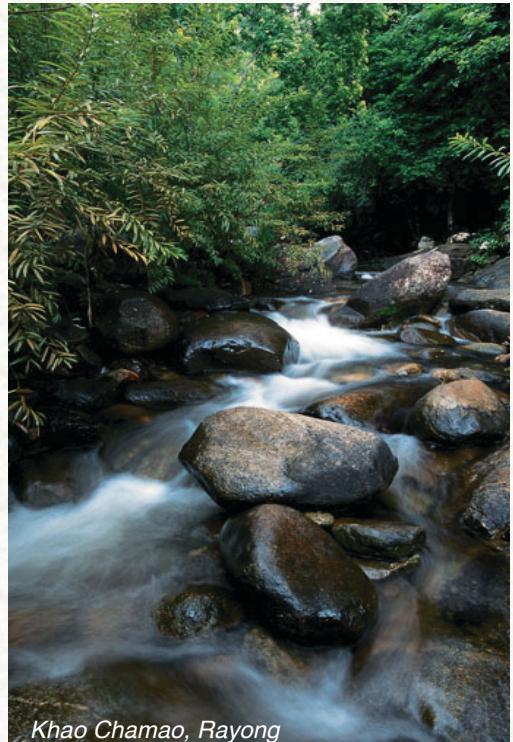
### TREE TOP ADVENTURE PARK, TRAT PROVINCE

(2010 Thailand Tourism Award  
Winner of the Recreational Attractions for Adventure)

Tree Top Adventure Park, Ko Chang offers a new exciting fun adventure by swinging from tree to tree with breathtaking views in which visitors will experience new sensations never felt before; such as, rope bridges, Tarzan swings, flying skateboards, and giant zip lines. No matter how old they are, participants will enjoy hours of fun and excitement.

**N.B.:** Parent supervision is required for children under 12 years. Also for one's own safety, please prepare suitable shoes for the activities.

Website: [www.treetopadventurepark.com](http://www.treetopadventurepark.com)



### KHAO CHAMAO, RAYONG PROVINCE

Enjoy the 1.6-km trail up the seven tiers of the waterfall on this mountain that cuts through a tropical broad-leaved evergreen forest and mixes exercise with relaxation. The name of each tier is descriptive to its characteristic. For example, the second level is known as "Wang Matcha" or the Palace of the Fish where there is a large school of Soro Brook Carp. Along the way trekkers will see colourful butterflies and big dipterocarp trees more than a hundred years old.

## THE SOUTH

**RAKSAWARIN HOT SPRINGS, RANONG PROVINCE**

Here hot springs gush 65 degrees Celsius mineral water to the surface year round. There are three separate pools in which to enjoy the healthful minerals contained in the spring water- the Mother Pool, the Father Pool, and the Child Pool. When submerging in the water, note the lusciousness of the emerald green mountains, which is greatly amplified by the cool misty rains that are present 8 months of the year. Wat Tapo tharam, a small temple dedicated to the spirit of the hot spring, also offers hot and cold mineral showers for a small donation. For those in search of a spa experience, visit the Raksawarin Park Arboretum, a private health club that offers a variety of treatments.

**THALE NOI,  
PHATTHALUNG PROVINCE**

The Waterfowl Reserve at Thale Noi is the largest of its kind in Thailand, covering 450 sq. km of wetland territory. The Reserve is a designated IUCN Ramsar wetland site and has become an important national wildlife study centre, where more than 187 species of birds can be found. Some live here throughout the year and some migrate only in winter from October to March when the population density is at its highest. The low season is June-September, which is the nesting period. Species that are prevalent here are those of the heron and stork family, rails; such as, white-browed crake, white-breasted water hen or the bronze-winged jacana. This is a real delight for nature photographers!



## FLORA ROUTE

For those people who are interested in the beauty of various species of flowers, Thailand has fields of flowers in various parts of the country all year round. One particular flower of note is the Golden Shower Tree (Ratchapreuk), which is Thailand's national flower that can especially be seen in Khon Kaen province.

### FLORA ROUTE

#### THE NORTH

##### THAI CHERRY BLOSSOM (PRUNUS CERASOIDES)

- **Ban Khun Chang Khian**, Doi Suthep, Amphoe Mueang, Chiang Mai province.
- **Doi Khun Mae Ya**, Amphoe Mae Taeng, Chiang Mai province: Highway No. 1095 (Mae Malai – Pai route) and Amphoe Pai, Mae Hong Son.
- **Doi Mae Salong**, Amphoe Mae Fah Luang, Doi Chang, Amphoe Mae Suai, Chiang Rai province.
- **Khun Sathan National Park**, Nan province.

##### MEXICAN SUNFLOWER (TITHONIA DIVERSIFOLIA (HEMSL.) A. GRAY.)

- **Ban Hua Mae Kham**, Amphoe Mae Fah Luang, Chiang Rai province.
- **Doi Mae U-kho**, Amphoe Khun Yuam / Doi Mae Hao, Amphoe Mae Sariang (18 Km from Amphoe Mae Sariang, or Km 84 – 86 on Highway No. 108, Mae Hong Son province).

##### SUNFLOWERS (SUNFLOWER HELIANTHUS ANNUUS LINN.) / SUNFLOWER FIELDS

- **Ban Khao Luang**, Tambon Pakyang, Amphoe Beung Samphan, Phetchabun.
- **Amphoe Takfa**, Nakhon Sawan province.

#### THE NORTHEAST

##### SIAM TULIP (PATUMMA CERCUMA ALISMATIFOLIA GAGNEP)

- **Hin Ngam**, Pha Hin Ngam National park, Chaiyaphum province.

##### GOLDEN SHOWER TREE (CASSIA FISTULA LINN.)

- **Golden Shower Tree Park**, Beung Kaen Nakhon, Khon Kaen province.
- **Maliwan Road** (the route to Khon Kaen Airport for about 1 kilometre).

##### LOTUS OR WATER LILY (NYMPHAEA LOTUS LINN.)

- **The Water Lily Festival**, Nong Han Kumphawapi, Udon Thani province.

#### THE CENTRAL REGION

##### TULIP (TULIPA SPP.)

- **Suphan Buri Amazing Tulip Festival** (1-10 January of each year)
- **Agricultural Vocational Development and Promotion Centre (Breeding Species)**, Tambon Phlap Phla Chai, Amphoe U-thong, Suphan Buri province.

##### RHODODENDRON (RHODODENDRON SIMSII PLANCH)

- 1 - 15 February of every year at the Versailles Rose Garden, Agricultural Vocational Development and Promotion Centre (Breeding Species), Tambon Phlap Phla Chai, Amphoe U-thong, Suphan Buri province.

##### SUNFLOWERS (SUNFLOWER HELIANTHUS ANNUUS LINN.) / SUNFLOWER FIELDS

- Border of Lop Buri and Saraburi provinces along the Phattana Nikhom-Wang Muang route.



MONTH												
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	
												
												
												
												
												
												
												
												
												
												
												
												
												
												
												
												
												
												
												
												
												
												
												
												
												
												
												
												
												
												
												

## BIRDWATCHING

Birdwatching can be interesting part of a tour involving jungle trekking and camping. Currently with 102 national parks, 48 wildlife sanctuaries and non-hunting areas, watershed reserves, forest parks and biosphere reserves, Thailand is a leading destination for birdwatching, and many bird varieties can be seen all year round.



● DESTINATION FOR BIRDWATCHING

December to February is the best time for birdwatching, with not only native species, but also migrating birds. March to May is also a good time as it is the breeding season for native species. April to May is Thailand's hottest period and a good time to sight birds on their spring return passage. June to August is Thailand's wettest season and a time when the forest is most lush. During this period most resident birds are breeding and migration is largely over, though it is still possible to sight rare species. September to November is a good time to observe the autumn migration of waders and raptors.

Website: [www.thailandbirdwatching.com](http://www.thailandbirdwatching.com),  
[www.thailandbirding.com](http://www.thailandbirding.com)



## I CYCLING

With the focus on sustainable environmentally-friendly tourism, cycling is one of the best ways to experience a different place and pace, listen to a different story, and to write a different page in your life. Cyclists will see a unique country full of enthralling destinations, an incredible heritage, and a captivating culture. Cycle through the clouds in the mountains, pick out the patches of green and the tiny houses below, fall in love with the country's natural beauty, listen to a quiet symphony played by magical waves, share a smile with new friends, and drink fresh coconut juice straight from the tree. These are some of the attractions that Thailand has to offer to those who take up the challenge of exploring its hidden treasures on two wheels.



### THE NORTH

This is a challenging region of remote forests and mountains, rivers and waterfalls, limestone cliffs, scenic backdrops of swirling mist, and expanses of rice fields - some of the best sights in the kingdom. In addition to this stunning scenery, there are many villages of the hill tribe communities; such as, Akha, Karen, Hmong, Lisu, and Musur. These groups have distinctive lifestyles and heritages that differ from mainstream Thai culture.

### THE CENTRAL REGION

This region forms the heart of the kingdom, being a fertile agricultural basin regarded as the rice bowl of the country. It is a region that combines land and water in its many different forms - rivers, canals, and sea. It boasts the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Ayutthaya Historical Park. In the southwest of this region, traditional local lifestyle is well preserved, illustrated by typical Thai-style pavilions, teakwood houses, riverside temples, paddleboats, and floating markets like Damnoen Saduak.

### THE EAST

Trips in this part of Thailand usually go to the beach towns of Bang Saen and Chon Buri, or even to some of the larger islands like Ko Chang. Cyclists can see the countryside of fruit orchards and plantations, as well as fishermen's way of life.

### THE SOUTH

This region is endowed with a wealth of natural beauty in the forms of beautiful, white, sandy beaches, dramatic coastlines, crystal-clear waters, limestone islands, wild jungles, waterfalls, and marine national parks, and a fascinating mix of people with rich, historical cultural backgrounds.

### LINKS TO BIKE TOUR OPERATORS

**ABC Amazing Bangkok Cyclist**  
[www.realasia.net](http://www.realasia.net)

**Action Holidays Phuket**  
[www.biketoursthailand.com](http://www.biketoursthailand.com)

**Active Thailand**  
[www.activethailand.com](http://www.activethailand.com)

**Ayutthaya Boat & Travel**  
[www.ayutthaya-boat.com](http://www.ayutthaya-boat.com)

**Bangkok Travelbike**  
[www.bkk-travelbike.com](http://www.bkk-travelbike.com)

**Bike & Travel**  
[www.cyclingthailand.com](http://www.cyclingthailand.com)

**Chiang Mai Mountain Biking**  
[www.mountainbikingchiangmai.com](http://www.mountainbikingchiangmai.com)

**Click and Travel**  
[www.clickandtravelonline.com](http://www.clickandtravelonline.com)

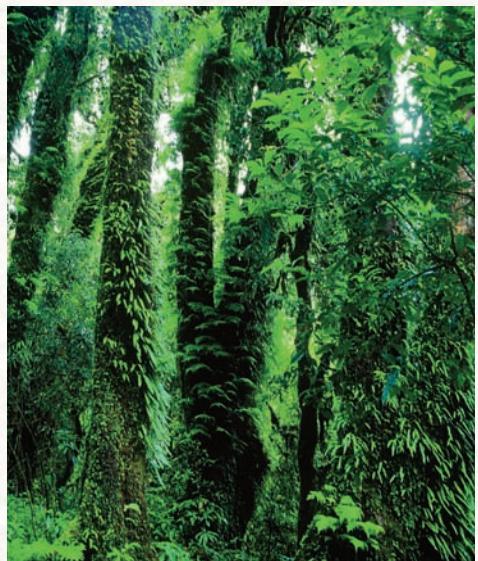
**SpiceRoads**  
[www.spiceroads.com](http://www.spiceroads.com)

## GREEN COMMUNITIES

In recent years, travellers have become more informed about various niche forms of tourism that involve local communities and the environment. As such, Community-Based Tourism programmes have been developed throughout Thailand in which visitors are able to experience and learn about the community and the environment through a variety of hands-on activities that are local to that particular area or province. Tourism services and activities have been planned and managed by the local people with programmes being especially designed to support community and environmental projects that create a sense of pride as well as generate employment and income for the community.



● GREEN COMMUNITIES



## THE NORTH

Small and quiet villages located amidst mountain ranges and encircled by lush forests with undamaged ecological system, these communities boast unique culture and traditions as reflected in the traditional merit making ceremonies, welcoming ceremonies, cultural dances and performances.

### HUAI KHI LEK, CHIANG RAI PROVINCE

Be prepared to enjoy community-based tourism at its best and experience the Akha hill tribe's lifestyle in Huai Khi Lek. See how the people have preserved their cultural identity and participate in various festivals as well as other activities.

### MAE KAM PONG ECOTOURISM GROUP, CHIANG MAI PROVINCE

Explore the nature, tour to nearby attractions; such as, Mae Kam Pong Waterfall and Mae Mon Waterfall, touch the sea of mist on Doi Mon Lan, relax with a traditional massage, stay

in homestay accommodation, learn the local way of life, visit local herb gardens, and shop for local products.

### BAN MAE KAMPONG, CHIANG MAI PROVINCE

Winner of the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA)'s Gold Award in 2010 in the culture category, visitors can see the production of tea locally called "Miang" as well as the coffee plantation, visit the various training programmes under the community's ecotourism concept, overnight in a homestay, enjoy sightseeing and learn the local way of life, culture and traditions, as well as trek in the jungle and enjoy bird watching.

Website: [www.mae-kampong.com](http://www.mae-kampong.com)

### MAE KLANG LUANG ECOTOURISM COMMUNITY CENTRE, CHIANG MAI PROVINCE

Trek, learn more about the Pakakoyo's way of life, stay in homestay accommodation or in a tent provided, tour to nearby attractions like Doi Inthanon National Park, Pha Dok Sieo Waterfall, Doi Hua Seau etc.

### BAN DOI PUI, CHIANG MAI PROVINCE

Ban Doi Pui is a hill tribe village where the Hmong have made their home. These people are best known for their magnificent embroidery and silver jewellery in which tourists can buy Hmong handicrafts and other souvenirs. The village also has a pleasant terraced flower garden where opium poppies as well as other flowering plants are grown purely for display. There is also a hill tribe museum.

### BAN PHA MON COMMUNITY BASED TOURISM CENTRE, CHIANG MAI PROVINCE

This provides an excellent opportunity to appreciate and discover the Karen hill tribe's traditional way of life. Take a tour through the natural beauty of the landscape including paddy fields on terraced hillsides and through local villages to observe and be immersed in the local customs and culture

### BAN PONG ECOTOURISM COMMUNITY, CHIANG MAI PROVINCE

Explore the forest, birdwatching, study the community, stay in homestay accommodation, relax with a traditional Thai massage, explore the local way of life, tour to nearby attractions, visit high altitude plantations, and explore herb gardens.

### BAN PA MIANG ECOTOURISM VILLAGE, LAMPANG PROVINCE

Admire local orchid trees in their full bloom, learn the local way of life, tour to nearby tourist attractions, savour local dishes, trek, stay in homestay accommodation, etc.



*Ban Pha Mon Community, Chiang Mai*



### BAN MAE LANA, MAE HONG SON PROVINCE

(2010 Thailand Tourism Award, Winner of the Community-based Tourism Attractions)

The village consists of traditional wooden homes and a few small shops hidden in a sunken valley below steep limestone karsts and lush mountain peaks. It was once a collection point for the opium trade, but today it is an entrancing cooperative with a simple, sustainable lifestyle surrounded by fertile plains of rice paddies.



### BAN HUAI HI, MAE HONG SON PROVINCE

(2010 Thailand Tourism Award, Winner of the Community-based Tourism Attractions)

This village gives the outside world a glimpse of life in the forest and day-to-day activities; such as, rotating crops, which they are doing to preserve it.

### BAN HAT PHA KHON ENVIRONMENTAL PRESERVATION GROUP, NAN PROVINCE

Stay in homestay accommodation, tour to various nearby attractions, discover Nan's way of life, cycle or take a study tour to see the community, etc.

## THE NORTHEAST

### BAN PRASAT HOMESTAY, NAKHON RATCHASIMA PROVINCE

Recipient of the PATA GOLD AWARDS in 1994 (Asia – Pacific Region), and ASEANTA GOLD AWARDS in 1996 (ASEAN), visitors can explore archaeological sites dating back to 2,500 – 3,000 years, visit museums exhibiting the history of the archaeological sites, visit the handicraft group as well as the silk and cotton weaving group to see demonstrations on how to make various products, see the Thai classical instrument group, and experience the Ban Prasat's way of life and stay with a host family.

### BAN THA SAWANG, SURIN PROVINCE

This Northeastern village became famous for its silk and for the quality of its weaving when it was commissioned to produce the silk outfits worn by leaders for the APEC Summit in Bangkok in 2003. Visit the weavers' open-air workshop, watch the extraction of silk fibre and other processes of silk production, and enjoy a night at a homestay.



### BAN THA PA PAO, LAMPHUN PROVINCE

Trek, tour to the Tha Pa Pao Local Wisdom Museum, learn the Thai Lu's way of life, stay in homestay accommodation, ride in a local cart to explore a demonstration village of Sufficiency Economy, visit a Learning Centre to learn how to grow chemical-free vegetables and bio-fertiliser.

### NONG MAE NA COMMUNITY, PHETCHABUN PROVINCE

Cycle around the community, trek, birdwatching and butterfly watching in Thung Salang Luang National Park, explore the site where members of the Communist Party of Thailand once lived, tour to nearby attractions; such as, Thung Nang Phaya, Kang Wang Nam Yen, the communist rice field, Thung Non Son, Songkran Waterfall, etc.



## THE CENTRAL REGION

This region of the country is the agricultural heart, but at the same time it has a variety of farming activities that have been conducted side-by-side with the environment of each locality.

### SANGKHLABURI, KANCHANABURI PROVINCE

Located less than 20 km away from the Thai-Burmese border, this is a little town that has much to offer in terms of culture, landscape, and activity. Get a glimpse of the culture of the Mon people, an ethnic group originally from Myanmar. See the "Uttamanusorn" Bridge, the longest wooden bridge of Thailand spanning over 800 metres, the submerged Wat Wang Wiwekaram, and the Bodh Gaya pagoda.

### KO KRET, NONTHABURI PROVINCE

Experience the lifestyle of the local Mon as well as Ayutthaya's arts and architecture, visit the Mon-style pagoda of Wat Poramai Yikawat (Wat Pak Ao) and various other temples of the Ayutthaya period, see Kwan A-man, the earthenware museum, bike around the Island, as well as cruise around Ko Kret to Khlong Khanom Wan and shop for souvenirs and enjoy demonstrations on how to make Thai desserts.

Website: [www.chaophrayaboat.co.th](http://www.chaophrayaboat.co.th)

### BAN BANG CHAO CHA, ANG THONG PROVINCE

Enjoy a pleasant homestay, join in the activities organised by the community and make bamboo products, take an E-tan (motorised farm cart) tour around the village, and visit seasonal fruit orchards: grape (May) and santol (July).



### BANG PLUP, SAMUT SONGKHRAM PROVINCE

(2010 Thailand Tourism Award, Winner of the Community-based Tourism Attractions)

Stay in a Thai-style house in the middle of a pesticide-free fruit orchard and learn about the orchardist's lifestyle, enjoy the cozy atmosphere of the evening floating market, and take a cruise along the canal to see 'Lamphu' trees filled with the light of fireflies at night.



## THE EAST

Known for its variety of fruits, the East is also a region that offers an insight into green communities living within close proximity to the sea.

### BAN HUAI RAENG, TRAT PROVINCE

Visitors can experience the serenity of local life by the water, reminisce the traditional Thai lifestyle in the Ayutthaya Era by staying in a homestay. See the treasures of art, handicrafts, and delicacies made by the locals from the Nipa palm harvested here, as well as take an evening cruise to see fireflies. Watch the manufacturing process and also shop for mangosteen soap fresh out of their bamboo molds.



### BAN NAM CHIAO COMMUNITY, TRAT PROVINCE

(2010 Thailand Tourism Award, Winner of the Community-based Tourism Attractions)

Take a boat trip to explore mangrove forests, go fishing, dive to discover awesome coral reefs, stay overnight in homestay accommodation, tour around to see the local way of life where Buddhists and Muslims living in harmony, shop for local products; such as, processed seafood, bamboo hats, etc.

### KHLONG BANG PHRA COMMUNITY, TRAT PROVINCE

Take a boat trip to explore the local way of life, discover fireflies during the night, stay at homestay accommodation or a guesthouse, relax with a traditional Thai massage, shop for a wide range of local products, etc.

This part of Thailand is predominantly Muslim with a mixture of Buddhism. Thus, the lifestyles have been living in sync with each other for hundreds of years, which have resulted in a different perspective on the Thai way of life.

#### BAN KHIRI WONG, NAKHON SI THAMMARAT PROVINCE

Ban Khiri Wong is better known for its exemplary, award-winning management of community-based tourism. The secret of their success lies in the serene atmosphere amid the backdrop of the majestic Khao Luang (1,835 m), as well as the variety of activities that allows visitors to understand the local way of life where villagers make a living selling produce from their fruit orchards. Visitors can stroll among the aromatic fruit trees, swim in the cooling stream and waterfall, and be taken to see demonstrations at several handicraft cooperatives of the making of batik and tie-dye cloths, herbal cosmetic products, and the weaving of jewellery from cords and natural materials; such as, dried fruit shells and river stones. For the travellers interested in a botanical quest, try climbing to the top of Khao Luang mount, the highest peak of the South of Thailand, which will take three days.



Ko Yao Noi Ecotourism Community, Phang-Nga



Ban Khiri Wong, Nakhon Si Thammarat



#### KO YAO NOI ECOTOURISM COMMUNITY, PHANG-NGA PROVINCE

*(2010 Thailand Tourism Award  
Winner of the Community-based  
Tourism Attractions)*

Recipient of the Conservation of the World Heritage Award from National Geographic magazine, this island community located in the Andaman Sea in Phang-nga Province has welcomed both Thai and foreign visitors to see the various programmes that preserve the community's resources and culture.

Visitors can experience homestay accommodation, mingle with the people and share their lifestyle, learn how to trap crab and shrimp, discover how to do rice farming, visit rubber tree plantations, gain more knowledge on the local ecosystem, trek, go bird watching, diving, cycling, canoeing, etc.

Website: [www.kohyao-cbt.com](http://www.kohyao-cbt.com)

*For those communities that do not have websites, please refer to the contact details of the TAT office in the respective province for further information (page 215).*

## FLOATING MARKETS



Apart from the shopping arcades, malls and antique shops in Bangkok, visitors can also experience traditional Thai floating markets in many provinces near Bangkok. This alternative way of shopping has been part of Thai culture for centuries in which vendors paddle their boat full of food, fresh fruits, and Thai desserts to sell to the residents who live along the canals. Some of them are provided below:

### KHLONG SUAN OLD MARKET, CHACHOENGSAO PROVINCE

This market dates back to the reign of King Rama V, and still retains the quaint charm of the old days.

**Open:** 7:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. daily.

### TALING CHAN FLOATING MARKET, BANGKOK

Cross the Chao Phraya River to the Thonburi side of Bangkok and go to the front of the Taling Chan District Office. This market is in close proximity to Bangkok, and so makes a nice weekend trip if looking for a new shopping experience. A strew of canals around the market can be visited by hired boat where small villages are revealed along the way. Homestays are also available for a truly Thai experience.

**Open:** 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
(weekends only)

### BANG KHU WIANG FLOATING MARKET, NONTHABURI PROVINCE

One option is to take a boat from the Tha Chang Pier in Bangkok. This is perhaps the best choice to enjoy a traditional Thai floating market without the touristy push is Bang Khu

Wiang. Monks arrive by boat in the early morning on their daily 'tak bat' (alms round) and a variety of farm-fresh produce is offered.

**Open:** 6:00 – 8:00 a.m. daily.



### BANG NAMPHEUNG FLOATING MARKET, SAMUT PRAKAN PROVINCE

*(2010 Thailand Tourism Award, Winner of the Community-based Tourism Attractions)*

The charms of this new floating market are the canal-side lifestyle of the Thai - Mon community, local products and famous food.

**Open:** 7:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.  
Saturday and Sunday.

### DAMNOEN SADUAK FLOATING MARKET, RATCHABURI PROVINCE

The Damnoen Saduak Floating Market, situated 110 kms west of Bangkok, is a very attractive must-see destination for tourists to see the old style and traditional way of selling and buying fruits, vegetables, etc., from small boats. It's colourful, noisy, touristy but great fun.

**Open:** 6:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. daily.

### AMPHAWA FLOATING MARKET, SAMUT SONGKRAM PROVINCE

At Amphawa Floating Market in Samut Songkram province, visitors can see people going about selling their fresh produce, seafood dishes, cool beverages, etc. Along the canal banks, the houses are built from the old to contemporary style in which many of them are shops and restaurants.

**Open:** 2:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.  
Friday - Sunday.

## GREEN SERVICES



In 1996, the Tourism Authority of Thailand set up the Thailand Tourism Awards, which are held every 2 years. One of the categories is accommodation for hotels and resorts that meet the criteria of the required environmental standards.

In its efforts to reduce global warming and the effects of climate change, in 1998, Thailand's tourism industry established the Green Leaf Foundation. One of the programmes initiated by the Foundation is the Green Leaf programme for hotels in which hotels are assessed for their efficiency in saving energy, water and other resources.

Enclosed herewith is a listing of some of the hotels and tour operators by region who are winners of the Thailand Tourism Awards.

### THE NORTH



**Anantara Golden Triangle Resort and Spa, Chiang Rai**  
(2010 Resort Hotel category)  
Website: <http://goldentriangle.anantara.com>

**Peak 4x4 Off-Road Centre Company Limited**  
(2008 Inbound Tour Programme)  
Website: [www.thepeakadventure.com](http://www.thepeakadventure.com)

**Ratilanna Riverside Spa Resort**  
(2008 & 2010 Boutique Hotel category)  
Website: [www.ratilannachiangmai.com](http://www.ratilannachiangmai.com)

**SpiceRoads Company Limited**  
(2008 Inbound Tour Programme)  
Website: [www.spiceroads.com](http://www.spiceroads.com)

**Tour Merng Tai**  
(2010 Inbound Tour Programme)  
Tel.: +66 (0) 5361 1979



### THE NORTHEAST

**Dusit Princess, Nakhon Ratchasima**  
(2010 City Hotel category)  
Website: [www.dusitprincesskorat.dusit.com](http://www.dusitprincesskorat.dusit.com)

**Dusit Princess Korat**  
(2010 City Hotel Category)  
Website: [www.dusit.com/](http://www.dusit.com/)

### Pochai Travel Company

(2010 Inbound Tour Programme)  
Tel.: +66 (0) 4241 2590

### Pullman Khon Kaen Raja Orchid

(2010 Convention Hotel Category)  
[www.pullmanhotels.com](http://www.pullmanhotels.com)

### Taksila Hotel

(2008 City Hotel category)  
Website: [www.taksilahotel.com](http://www.taksilahotel.com)



### CENTRAL REGION

**Amari Watergate Hotel, Bangkok**  
(2008 City Hotel category)  
Website: [www.amari.com](http://www.amari.com)

### Ayutthaya Boat and Travel Limited Partnership

(2008 Inbound Tour Programme)  
Website: [www.ayutthaya-boat.com](http://www.ayutthaya-boat.com)

### Baan Amphawa Resort and Spa, Samut Songkhram

(2010 Resort Hotel category)  
Website: [www.baanamphawa.com](http://www.baanamphawa.com)

### Ban Laem Sai Beach Resort & Spa

(2008 Resort Hotel category)  
Website: [www.banlaemsai.com](http://www.banlaemsai.com)

### Bangkok Marriott Resort and Spa, Bangkok

(2010 City Hotel category)  
Website: [www.marriott.com](http://www.marriott.com)

### Banyan Tree, Bangkok

(2008 & 2010 City Hotel category)  
Website: [www.banyantree.com](http://www.banyantree.com)

### Bike and Travel

(2008 Inbound Tour Progamme)  
Website: [www.cyclingthailand.com](http://www.cyclingthailand.com)

### Comsaed River Kwai Resort

(2008 Resort Hotel category)  
Website: [www.comsaed.com](http://www.comsaed.com)

### Educational Travel Centre Limited Partnership

(2008 Inbound Tour Programme)  
Website: [www/etc.co.th](http://www/etc.co.th)

### Iyara Park Hotel and Resort

(2010 Convention Hotel Category)  
Website: [www.iyarapark.com](http://www.iyarapark.com)

**Siam City Hotel, Bangkok**

(2010 City Hotel category)

Website: [www.siamhotels.com](http://www.siamhotels.com)**The Metropolitan Bangkok**

(2008 Boutique Hotel category)

Website: [www.metropolitan.como.bz](http://www.metropolitan.como.bz)**The Peninsula Hotel Bangkok**

(2008 City Hotel category)

Website: [www.peninsula.com](http://www.peninsula.com)

## THE EAST

**Amari Emerald Cove Resort, Trat**

(2008 Resort Hotel category)

Website: [www.amari.com](http://www.amari.com)**Dusit Thani Pattaya**

(2008 &amp; 2010 City Hotel Category)

Website: [www.dusit.com/dusit-thani/dusit-thani-pattaya.html](http://www.dusit.com/dusit-thani/dusit-thani-pattaya.html)**Pattaya Marriott Resort and Spa, Chon Buri**

(2008 &amp; 2010 City Hotel category)

Website: [www.marriott.com/pyxmc](http://www.marriott.com/pyxmc)**Royal Cliff Beach Resort Pattaya**

(2008 &amp; 2010 Convention Hotel Category)

Website: [www.royalcliff.com](http://www.royalcliff.com)**Siam Bayview Hotel Pattaya, Chon Buri**

(2008 City Hotel category)

Website: [www.siamhotels.com](http://www.siamhotels.com)

## THE WEST

**Asara Villa and Suite**

(2010 Resort Hotel category)

Website: [www.asaravilla.com](http://www.asaravilla.com)**Baan Talay Dao**

(2010 Resort Hotel category)

Website: [www.baantalaydao.com](http://www.baantalaydao.com)**Hua Hin Marriott Resort and Spa**

(2010 Resort Hotel category)

Website: [www.marriott.com](http://www.marriott.com)**Sofitel Centara Grand Resort and Villas Hua Hin**

(2008 &amp; 2010 Resort Hotel category)

Website: [www.centarahotelsresorts.com/chbr](http://www.centarahotelsresorts.com/chbr)

## THE SOUTH

**Bor Saen Villa and Spa, Phang-nga**

(2008 Pool Villa Hotel category)

Website: [www.borsaenvilla.com](http://www.borsaenvilla.com)**Dusit Thani Laguna, Phuket**

(2008 Resort Hotel category)

Website: [www.dusit.com](http://www.dusit.com)**Fair House Villas and Spa, Surat Thani**

(2010 Resort Hotel category)

Website: [www.fairhousevillas.com](http://www.fairhousevillas.com)**Kata Thani Phuket Beach Resort, Phuket**

(2008 &amp; 2010 Resort Hotel category)

Website: [www.katathani.com](http://www.katathani.com)**Khanom Fishing and Tour Company**

(2010 Inbound Tour Programme)

Tel.: +66 (0) 7532 6573

**Novotel Centara Hat Yai, Songkhla**

(2010 City Hotel category)

Website: [www.centarahotelsresorts.com](http://www.centarahotelsresorts.com)**Phuket Sealand Company Limited**

(2008 Inbound Tour Programme)

Website: [www.phuketsealand.com](http://www.phuketsealand.com)**Royal Paradise Hotel and Spa Phuket**

(2010 Resort Hotel category)

Website: [www.royalparadise.com](http://www.royalparadise.com)**Santhiya Resort and Spa, Surat Thani**

(2010 Pool Villa Hotel category)

Website: [www.santhiya.com](http://www.santhiya.com)**Sheraton Krabi Beach Resort**

(2010 Resort Hotel category)

Website: [www.starwoodhotels.com/sheraton](http://www.starwoodhotels.com/sheraton)**Sealand and Trek Company Limited**

(2010 Inbound Tour Programme)

Tel.: +66 (0) 7563 7364

**Thumrin Thana Hotel**

(2010 Convention Hotel Category)

Website: [www.thumrin.com](http://www.thumrin.com)**The Imperial Samui Hotel**

(2008 Resort Hotel category)

Website: [www.imperialhotels.com](http://www.imperialhotels.com)

Also take a look at the website of the  
Thai Hotels Association  
[www.thaihotels.org](http://www.thaihotels.org)

and the Green Leaf Foundation  
[www.greenleafthai.org](http://www.greenleafthai.org)

## NEW SUGGESTED GREEN ROUTE

The sustainability of all the routes lies in their essences of cultural heritage and the preservation of traditional Thai life, supporting communities' natural resource management, art, wisdom, architecture, agriculture, gastronomy and wellness. These programmes have been introduced by the Thailand Ecotourism and Adventure Travel Association (TEATA). A list of TEATA members can be found at [www.teata.or.th](http://www.teata.or.th)

### ROUTE I: THE FLAVOURS AND FRAGRANCES OF CENTRAL THAILAND (SAMUT SONGKRAM – PHETCHABURI)

#### Day 1: Amphawa / Samut Songkram

Arrive at Samut Songkram, visit [Mae Klong Market](#) and then travel on to coconut plantations at Amphawa to see how villagers produce traditional coconut sugar which is a main ingredient for Thai desserts and a natural condiment in authentic Thai cooking.

Next, visit [Wat Phummarin Kudi Thong](#), located on the bank of the Mae Klong River. The remarkable attraction is the Kudee Thong (Golden Hermitage) built by the father of Khun Nak, Queen of King Rama I, the founder of the present Chakri Dynasty and mother of King Rama II. Board a boat to see agricultural villages along the Mae Klong River, passing various kinds of tropical fruit orchards and ancient style Thai houses rarely seen nowadays in the communities of Amphawa.

Next, visit [Ban Khanom Thai community](#) (literally the sweets village) where guests will see demonstrations of how to make traditional Thai desserts. Proceed onto the community of Bang Phlap, well known for its sweet, organic pomelo orchards. Learn how to plant organic pomelos and produce organic fertiliser, burn unused fruits into charcoal and produce wood vinegar, preserve fruits and produce a variety of interesting products.

#### Day 2: Samut Songkram – Phetchaburi

Offer alms to [Buddhist monks](#) at the resort. Start the journey along the "Salt Road" to visit the Salt Learning School and learn about traditional methods of producing salt from sea water. Proceeding along the "Salt Road", see lots of salt farming, local food stalls, dried fish and strange multi-storey buildings which are homes for thousands of swiftlets whose nests are "nest soup" an expensive favourite dish for Chinese. Stop at [Wat Nai Klang](#) where visitors will see a beautiful Thai style House assembled here by the command of King Taksin the Great in order to thank the people of Ban Laem who looked after his Royal Mother during the war. Proceed to Ban Lat district in Phetchaburi, famous for traditional Thai desserts.

#### Day 3: Phetchaburi

Depart for the [Wild Animal Protection Centre](#) to see a Wildlife Hospital. See how officers work to rescue wildlife injured by people who captured them as pets. Depart for [Wattana Garden](#) in Cha-Am to see a variety of flowers in culinary art and drinks, and enjoy a short course of cooking with freshly picked flowers, tasting drinks and various products from fruits and flowers.





## ROUTE 2: THE CHARM OF ISAN LIFE (NAKHON RATCHASIMA – KHAO YAI)

### **Day 1:** Nakhon Ratchasima

Proceed to [Ban Prasat Community-based Tourism Community](#). Visit famous local archaeological sites as well as see silk weaving, local reed products and survey the homestays. In Nakhon Ratchasima, visit Khunying Mo's Monument situated in front of the old gate of "Pratu Chumphon" on the west side of the city. Then take a tricycle for a city tour.

### **Day 2:** Thai silk – Korat Fossil Museum – Pak Chong

Visit the morning market to learn about the local people's life. Then continue to Matchada Thai silk factory at [Pak Tong Chai](#), which is a very famous district for good quality handwoven Thai silk. See all the processes of making Thai silk here. Visit the [Korat Fossil Museum](#) where visitors will be amazed by ancient petrified wood, ancient elephant and dinosaur fossils. Visit the Elephant Conservation Centre to learn about elephants, and see the various activities at the centre.

### **Day 3:** Khao Yai

Visit [Khao Yai National Park](#), a World Heritage Site, because of its rich biodiversity. Stop at the visitor centre to learn about the Park. Enjoy trekking from Pa Kluai Mai Waterfall to Haeo Suwat Waterfall which is about 3 kilometres.

## ROUTE 3: THE SPIRIT OF LANNA (LAMPHUN – LAMPANG – CHIANG MAI)

### Day 1: Lamphun – Ban Ta Pa Pao

Arrive in Chiang Mai and transfer by van to [Ban Ta Pa Pao](#) Community-based Tourism community. Join the community in their daily activities; such as, making rice cakes, folding banana leaves, etc. Explore the community, including a small temple and museum on the hilltop with a panoramic view over the village. Then visit the local village school. Here the young generation learns about recycling waste plastic bags and papers as well as helping to conserve the local culture. Continue to explore the fascinating community forest and learn about medicinal plants and herbs. Meet with the villagers and participate in their welcome ceremony called "Bai Si" which is a traditional welcome ceremony of the North, continued by a traditional Kantoke dinner accompanied by northern style music and dances performed by the villagers.

### Day 2: Lampang

Offer morning alms to the monks. After breakfast, drive to Lampang. Visit a centre for coconut shell products at [Hang Chat](#) district which are produced by the villagers including bags, lamps, mobiles, accessories. Continue to visit the Lampang Herb Conservation Assembly and listen to a briefing about the activities of the assembly as well as its health and spa services including herbal steam and Thai massage. Enjoy an hour's Thai massage with herbal compress.

Visit a home factory producing Lampang's famous rice crackers made of sticky rice and watermelon juice called "Kao Tan NamTaeng Mo". Taste the delicious rice crackers and see the production process before continuing to the Patamasevee Learning Centre and learn about the production process of beautiful paper

lanterns made of bamboo sticks and colourful hand-made paper that are used in religious and traditional ceremonies. Visit [Wat Pong Sanuk](#), which won international plaudits for its inspirational model of community-led conservation in saving a unique form of Lanna architecture. The temple received a Heritage Award of Merit in 2008 from the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) for its inspiring restoration efforts.

Transfer to the city centre to board a horse carriage to explore Lampang city passing by well-conserved old wooden houses and buildings built in the traditional northern style along

Forestry Lane and Kat Kongta Old Market.

### Day 3: Lampang – Chiang Mai – Bangkok

Depart for the Thai [Elephant Conservation Centre](#) and have a short briefing about the conservation activities of the Centre. Enjoy a ride on elephant back passing by the elephant nursery. Stop at the elephant hospital to see how sick or wounded elephants are cured by the veterinary team. See how elephants are bathed and trained by the mahout to work in the forest. The clever elephants here are also enthusiastic to play some musical instruments and even to paint a picture!



Wat Pong Sanuk

## ROUTE 4: AT THE CULTURAL CROSSROAD (CHIANG RAI)

### Day 1: To Chiang Rai – Doi Tung

After arriving in Chiang Rai, transfer to Doi Tung to visit the royal project and see the beautiful Mae Fah Luang Botanical Gardens. Travel to visit Wat Rong Kun, the amazing white temple. Then, travel to the township of Chiang Rai to explore by tricycle or walk to observe the lively market. Visit Wat Phra Kaeo and listen to the monks chanting.

### Day 2: Huai Khi Lek Community-based Tourism

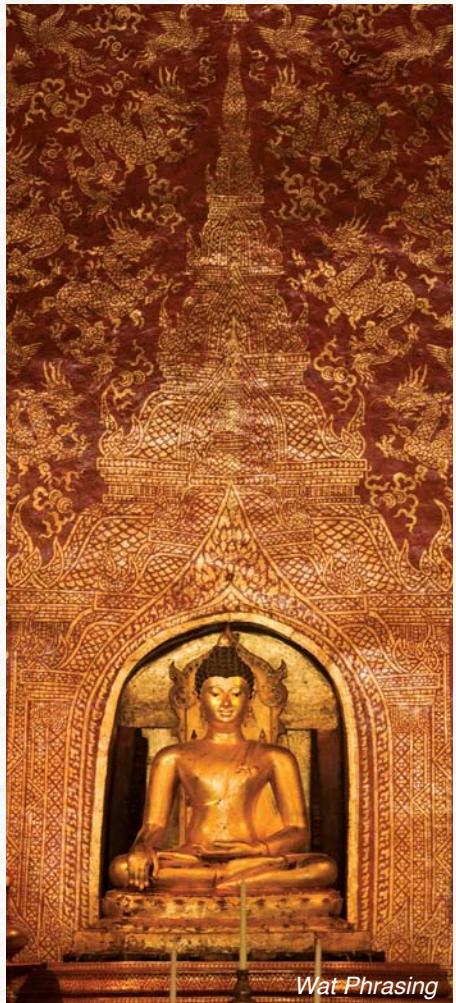
Travel to Ban Huai Khi Lek Akha village that is perched on the top of a mountain with fantastic views of Chiang Rai province. Be welcomed by the community and see the local culture and way of life. Explore Ban Huay Khi Lek, visit the village school, and enjoy a soft nature trek in the community forest.

### Day 3: Chiang Mai–Bangkok

Travel to Chiang Mai and visit Wat Phrasing that has the most beautiful mural painting in the Northern style of arts.



Wat Rong Kun

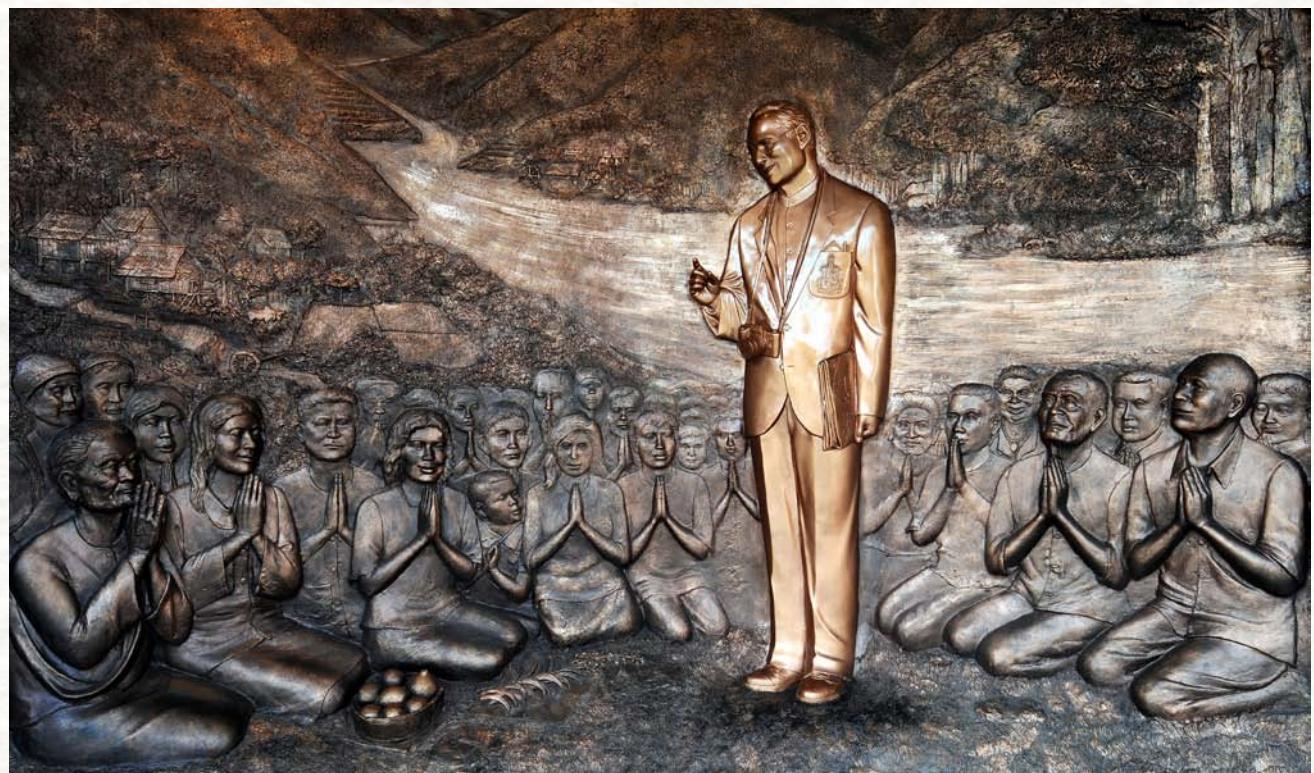


Wat Phrasing



## LEARNING EXPERIENCES





In 2007, Thailand celebrated the 80<sup>th</sup> birthday of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej. Throughout the year, there were numerous events to celebrate this auspicious occasion. Among them was the "Royal Initiative Discovery" jointly arranged by the Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB), the Tourism Council of Thailand (TCT), the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), and Thai Airways International.

Under the Royal Initiative Discovery campaign, a number of rural development and poverty-alleviation projects created by Their Majesties the King and Queen and other members of the Royal Family were opened to the public in the form of unique travel packages. These projects, located in remote parts of the Kingdom, are in line with His Majesty's philosophy that poverty can best be eradicated through improved health, steady income through honest work, and knowledge and understanding through education.

Visitors have the opportunity to see and learn about the many successful royal projects covering a wide range of agricultural development activities from organic farming and sustainable fisheries to reforestation. Not only do these royally-initiated projects enable people in remote areas to stand on their own feet, they also give rise to new tourist attractions which in turn enable local people to raise their income levels. At these royally- initiated projects, visitors can appreciate and gain insights into local crafts while also enjoying beautiful scenery. They can also tour plantations and buy fresh vegetables, fruits and flowers that are grown and cultivated there. A visit to the projects in the northern provinces of Chiang Mai and Chiang Rai also presents opportunities to understand the lifestyles of hill tribe minorities.

Some popular projects include:

## THE NORTH

### DOI INTHON ROYAL PROJECT, CHIANG MAI PROVINCE

This project is near the Doi Inthanon National Park headquarters, and was initiated to help the hill tribes to cultivate cash crops other than opium and train them in modern agricultural practices.

#### Highlights

- Visit the plantations of cash crops, which include coffee, cold-climate fruits, and cut flowers.
- Learn about the local hill tribe lifestyles and cultures.
- Trek to nearby waterfalls and bird watching

**Open:** Daily; the best period for viewing the waterfalls is May–November, for wild flowers is December–February, and for ornithologists is November–March.

### ANG KHANG ROYAL AGRICULTURAL STATION, CHIANG MAI PROVINCE

Located in the Doi Ang Khang valley, Mae Ngan district, the Station is designated for experimenting with temperate plants that might be grown in Thailand. The experiments are aimed at promoting cultivation of cash crops to replace opium cultivation.

#### Highlights

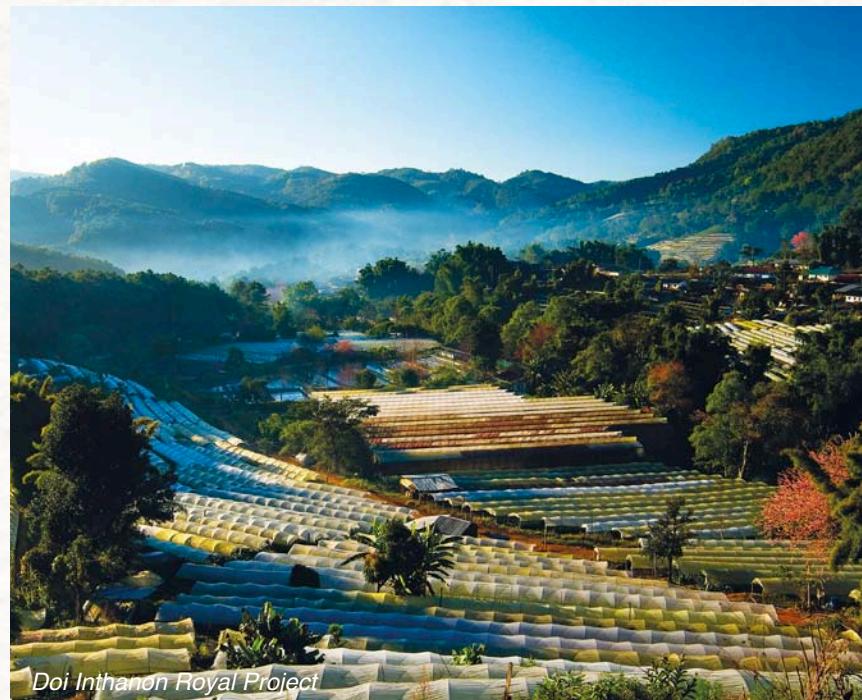
- See beautifully landscaped flower gardens and plantations.
- Visit some of the hill tribe villages along the way to the Station.

### BAN HMONG MAE SA MAI, CHIANG MAI PROVINCE

This Hmong village in the Mae Sa valley is one of the closest Hmong settlements to Chiang Mai City that has preserved their simple but splendid traditions and lifestyles.

#### Highlights

- See the various methods of cultivation on the steep slopes surrounding the village.



*Doi Inthanon Royal Project*

- Visit the museum, which is filled with farming and weaving artefacts.
- Buy some Hmong fabric produced by the hill tribe women.

**N.B.:** Only four-wheel vehicles in good condition can make the trip to the village.

### MAE FAH LUANG ART AND CULTURAL PARK, CHIANG RAI PROVINCE

This Park is the region's largest collection of art items from the Lanna culture. Open to tourists, the Mae Fah Luang Art and Culture Park features not only artefacts but beautiful Lanna architecture like the "Ho Kham" (Golden Pavilion), Ho Kaeo with permanent exhibitions on teakwood are featured, and a botanical collection of indigenous plants from the northern region.

*Website: [www.maefahluang.org](http://www.maefahluang.org).*

### DOI TUNG DEVELOPMENT PROJECT, CHIANG RAI PROVINCE

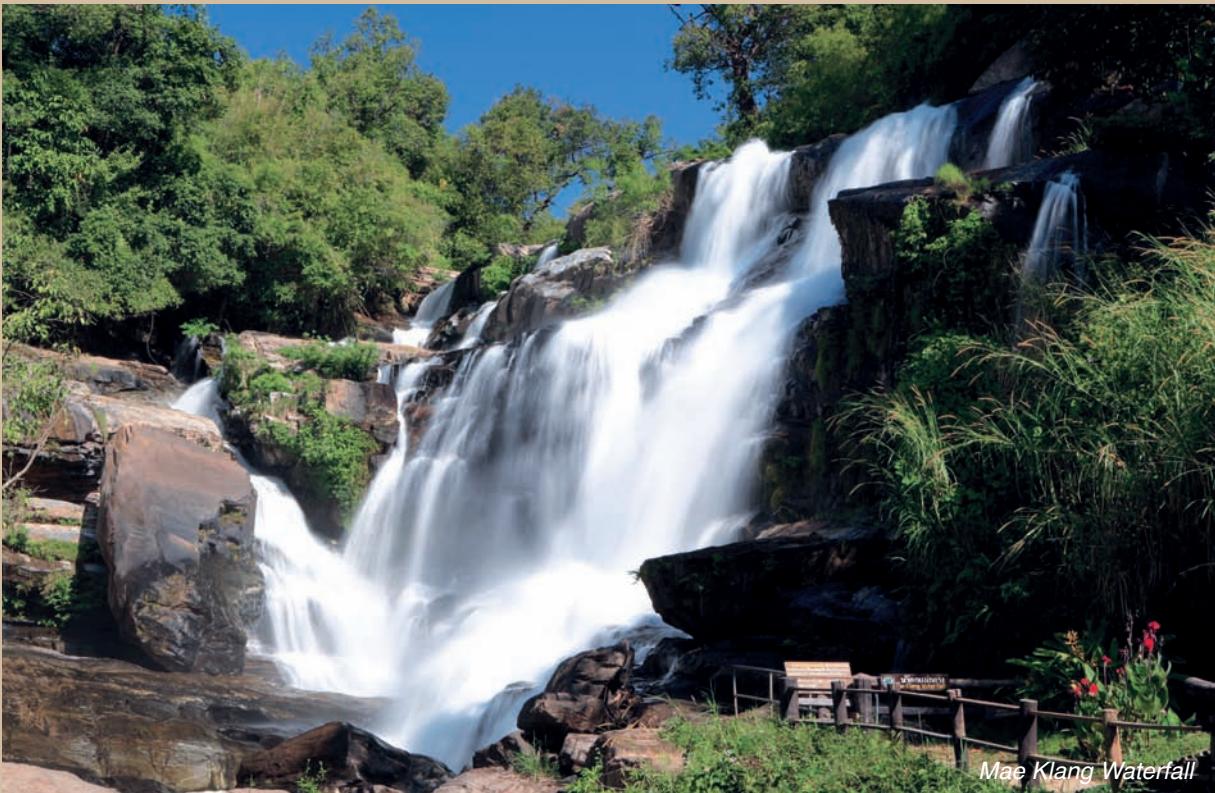
This Project is an initiative established by H.R.H. the Princess Mother's lifelong dedication to development



*Ang Khang Royal Agricultural Station*

work through creating viable and sustainable livelihood options. This has helped the local hill tribe people to earn a living through their traditional dyeing and weaving skills, growing of various crops, etc. in which the produce is now being sold in numerous outlets in Thailand.

*Website: [www.doitung.org](http://www.doitung.org)*



## TOUR ROUTES (ONE DAY)

### **Programme 1: The Pang Sung Nature Trail and Royal Projects**

Depart from the hotel in Chiang Mai and drive northeast from the city into the mountains that separate the Chiang Mai and Lampang valleys home to the "Khun Muang" – the original farmers of the Chiang Mai valley. Set off along the trail towards Pang Sung Lodge and follow the paths, steps cut into the side of the riverbank, through the river bed, over small waterfalls scaled by ladders, and assisted by hand rails where they are needed, as trekkers climb from 1,000 to 1,450 metres, the guide will help them to identify birds, trees and insects.

Have lunch at the base of the waterfall next to a pool big enough to swim in, and then return back down the trail to Pang Sung Lodge. Walk from the lodge, back through the Khun Muang village of Ban Pang Mano and board the vehicle to return to the valley floor. Have a guided tour of the Mae Tha Nier Centre, a Royal Project showcasing dragon fruit, Arabica coffee, and vanilla. Then visit the nearby "Thin Tok Centre" a Royal Project specialising in the development of Arabica coffee. Following this, return to Chiang Mai.

### **Programme 2: Doi Inthanon National Park and Royal Horticultural Project**

Depart from Chiang Mai heading south on Highway 108, before branching off at Chom Thong along Route 1009 leading to the summit of Doi Inthanon, the highest mountain in Thailand at 2,330 metres above sea level. Stop at the Mae Klang Waterfall, a very popular and easily accessed scenic spot. Continue onto the National Park Headquarters. The route to the top winds through two distinct climatic zones, from tropical jungle to deciduous oaks and evergreen firs. Stop at the royal horticultural project for lunch.

Continue to the summit a further half-hour drive away, and stop to enjoy the views. From the summit, return down the mountain by the same route and turn right onto Highway 1192 to the textile village of Mae Chaem. The views of the Doi Inthanon and valley paddies and orchards are spectacular. In Mae Chaem, visit one of the local households where textiles are still created on ancient looms. From Mae Cham, return to Chiang Mai

## THE CENTRAL REGION

### BANG SAI ARTS & CRAFTS CENTRE, AYUTTHAYA PROVINCE

Located on the left bank of the Chao Phraya River in Tambon Bueng Yai, Amphoe Bang Sai, the Centre is under the Promotion of Supplementary Occupations and Related Techniques (SUPPORT) which was established under Royal Patronage. Farmers from Ayutthaya as well as from other provinces undergo training in folk arts and crafts here.

#### Highlights

- Get a glimpse of how farmers in the four regions live and work.
- View the exhibits of the Centre's masterpieces of arts and crafts products.
- See demonstrations of how various products of arts and crafts are produced.
- Buy some products to take home as souvenirs.
- See Thai classical dances and folk entertainment of the 4 regions.



## THAI COOKING CLASS

Thai food is one of the most famous cuisines in the world, and Thai dishes are a sight to behold. In addition, the ingredients are good for health ranging from various Thai herbs; such as, basil, ginger, lemongrass, galangal, kaffir, turmeric, and pepper.

Learn the secrets of Thai cooking from various cooking schools and courses around the country that can be found quite easily. Most of the major hotels have their own Thai restaurants which also offer cooking classes. The hotels and resorts in major tourist destinations; such as, Chiang Mai, Phuket, Krabi, Samui, Hua Hin and Pattaya offer hands-on cooking classes, too. In addition there are cooking schools that provide the basic skills sufficient to prepare a Thai meal in one's own home, or even training to professional standards.

Here are some of the places where interested persons can learn to cook the Thai way:



### THE CENTRAL REGION

#### BANGKOK

Amita Thai Cooking Class  
Website: [www.amitathaicooking.com](http://www.amitathaicooking.com)

Bai Pai Thai Cooking School  
Website: [www.baipai.com](http://www.baipai.com)

Benjarong Cooking Class at the Dusit Thani  
Website: [www.dusit.com](http://www.dusit.com)

Blue Elephant Bangkok Cooking School and Restaurant  
Website: [www.blueelephant.com](http://www.blueelephant.com)

Landmark Hotel Cooking School  
Website: [www.landmarkbangkok.com](http://www.landmarkbangkok.com)

Oriental Thai Cooking School  
Website: [www.mandarinoriental.com](http://www.mandarinoriental.com)

Suan Dusit International Cooking School  
Website: [chefschool.dusit.ac.th](http://chefschool.dusit.ac.th)

UFM Baking and Cooking School  
Website: [www.ufmeducation.com](http://www.ufmeducation.com)

### THE NORTH

#### CHIANG MAI

Chiang Mai Thai Cookery School  
Website: [www.thaicookeryschool.com](http://www.thaicookeryschool.com)

Lanna Cooking School, Four Seasons Resort Chiang Mai  
Website: [www.fourseasons.com](http://www.fourseasons.com)

UFM Baking and Cooking School  
Website: [www.ufmeducation.com](http://www.ufmeducation.com)

### THE SOUTH

#### PHUKET

Culinary Workshops at the Boathouse  
Website: [www.boathousephuket.com](http://www.boathousephuket.com)

Ginja Cook at the JW Marriott Phuket Resort and Spa  
Website: [www.jwmarriottphuket.com](http://www.jwmarriottphuket.com)

Phuket Thai Cooking School  
Website: [www.phuketthaicookery.com](http://www.phuketthaicookery.com)

#### SAMUI

Samui Institute of Thai Culinary Arts  
Website: [www.sitca.net](http://www.sitca.net)



## I MUAY THAI (Thai Boxing Class)

Probably the most instantly recognised Thai ancient sport throughout the world and a national form of martial art is Muay Thai or Thai boxing. Bouts are five, three-minute rounds separated by two-minute breaks.

Nowadays, matches take place on a 7.3-square-metre canvas floor with rope retainers supported by four padded posts. As an athletic activity, Muay Thai demands fighters to strengthen their body, develop their speed and control, and their kicking and punching skills which are an integral part of the sport by using their knees, elbows and feet to fend off or attack opponents. As a performance art, Muay Thai requires each fighter to perform a dance — the Wai Khru or Ram Muay before the commencement of the contest to honour the participants' teachers, parents, and ancestors that shows respect for the spirits of Muay Thai.

### THE MUAY THAI INSTITUTE

Muay Thai courses at the Muay Thai Institute ([www.muaythai-institute.net](http://www.muaythai-institute.net)) are accredited by the Thai Ministry of Education and the World Muay Thai Council. The length of courses starts from 10 days to several months and the course generally takes place in English and Thai.

Besides these, there are other training courses available at Muay Thai camps nationwide.

The camps can be divided into five categories:



### MUAY IN LUXURY

The Fairtex Muay Thai Camp in Pattaya, Chon Buri province has been training champions for 40 years. The state-of-the-art training centre accommodates the needs of interested persons at all levels of fitness and ability in the art of Muay Thai.

Website: [www.fairtex-muaythai.com](http://www.fairtex-muaythai.com)

### MUAY FOR CHAMPIONS

For those intent on fighting for real in the ring, two "no frills" camps with a very Thai atmosphere and tiptop trainers that are worth checking out are Jitti Gym and Kaewsamrit Gym, both in Bangkok.

Jitti Gym

Website: [www.jittigym.com](http://www.jittigym.com)

Kaewsamrit Gym

Website: [www.kaewsamritgym.com](http://www.kaewsamritgym.com)

### MUAY FOR FITNESS

Two major Bangkok facilities cater for those interested in Muay Thai for fitness and at very low prices. The National Sports Stadium's Martial Arts Centre is affiliated to the Department of Physical Education while the Bangkok Youth Centre (Thai-Japan) offers 3-month courses for members.

### MUAY FOR TRADITIONALISTS

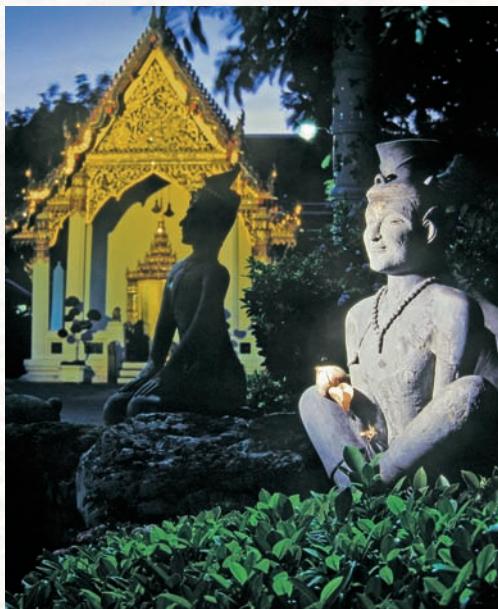
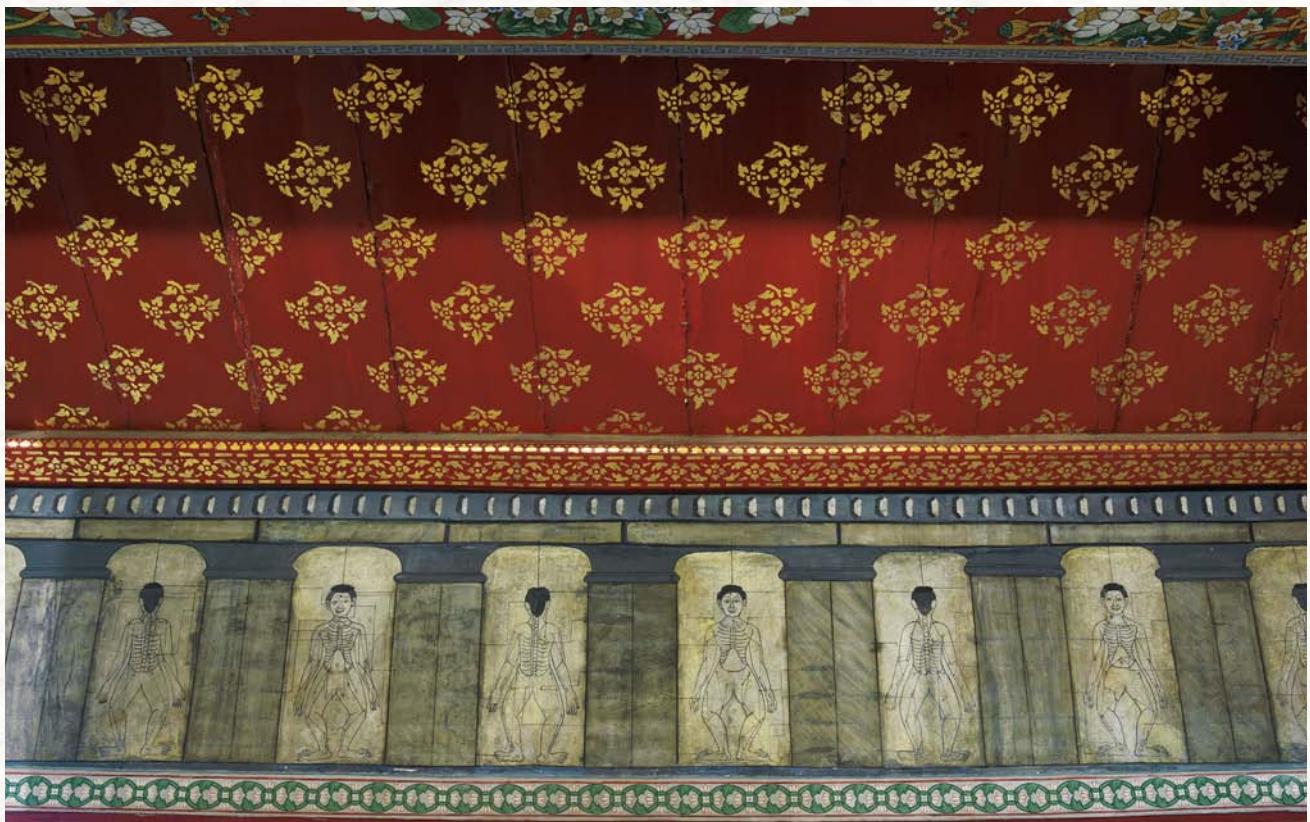
Those wishing to train in Muay Thai as a pure martial art can go to camps specialising in the various forms of Muay Boran (Ancient Muay). Khru Lek (Ban Chang Thai: [www.samkhum.com](http://www.samkhum.com)) and Khru Praeng (Muay Chaiya Siam Youth Centre: [www.muaychaiya.com](http://www.muaychaiya.com)) teach Muay Chaiya in Bangkok, while Muay Korat is taught by Khru Amnat in Bangkok ([siamyuth@hotmail.com](mailto:siamyuth@hotmail.com)) and by Khru Chao in the northeastern town of Khon Kaen ([Khruchao\\_muaykorat@hotmail.com](mailto:Khruchao_muaykorat@hotmail.com))

### MUAY FOR BEACH BUMS

Inexpensive beachside Muay Thai camps proliferate along Thailand's tropical shores, catering for those who want a "sea and sun" vacation with a difference. The worldfamous resort islands of Phuket and Samui are popular destinations: check out [www.muaythai-camp-thailand.com](http://www.muaythai-camp-thailand.com), [www.tigermuaythai.com](http://www.tigermuaythai.com), and [www.lamaimuaythaicamp.com](http://www.lamaimuaythaicamp.com).

Visitors interested in seeing the spectacular dynamism of Muay Thai can go to either the Ratchadamnoen or Lumpini Boxing Stadiums in Bangkok that hold fights nightly.

## THAI TRADITIONAL MASSAGE SCHOOL



Thai traditional massage is an ancient wisdom which will never go out of date. Take the opportunity to study Thai massage. The instruction focuses on mind and body, dynamic flowing and rhythmic movements, full body manipulation, and acupressure techniques. Students are given opportunities to practice the massage skills – how to press, roll, squeeze, pull, draw, twist, bend, pound, and tread – and to learn about energy lines, pressure points, and the human anatomy.

Wat Pho, close to the Grand Palace, is the centre of Thailand's traditional medicine and houses the Institute of Massage. Visitors are invited to experience a traditional Thai massage and learn the art through a 10 - 15 day course conducted in Thai and English.

Also Wat Pho has established the Chetawan Traditional Thai Massage School in Nonthaburi and Chiang Mai. The School offers a variety of courses in each location.

Website: [www.watpho.com](http://www.watpho.com)

### BANGKOK

- The WATPO Thai Traditional Medical School and Massage School  
Website : [www.watpomassage.com](http://www.watpomassage.com)

### NONTHABURI

- CHETAWAN Thai Traditional Massage School (Chaeng Watthana)  
Website : [www.watpomassage.com](http://www.watpomassage.com)

### CHIANG MAI

- CHETAWAN Thai Traditional Massage (Chiang Mai)  
Website : [www.watpomassage.com](http://www.watpomassage.com)

# MEDITATION CLASS

Meditation teaching is widely available in Thailand for Thais and visitors alike, ranging from English language day classes in Bangkok through to intensive month-long Vipassana courses at remote retreats in the provinces.

## THE CENTRAL REGION

Buddhamonthon  
Website: [www.onab.go.th](http://www.onab.go.th)

International Buddhist Meditation Centre  
Website: [www.vipassanathai.com](http://www.vipassanathai.com)

Maya Cotomi Foundation  
Website: [www.watpahsunan.org](http://www.watpahsunan.org)

The House of Dhamma  
Website: [www.houseofdhamma.com](http://www.houseofdhamma.com)

Wat Luangpho Sodh Dhammakayaram  
Website: [www.meditationpark.org](http://www.meditationpark.org)

Wat Mahathat Yuwaratrangsarit  
Website: [www.centermeditation.org](http://www.centermeditation.org)

Wat Neranchararam  
Website: [www.watneranchararam.com](http://www.watneranchararam.com)

Wat Pah Sunan  
Website: [www.watpahsunan.org](http://www.watpahsunan.org)

Wat Pathumwanaram Ratchaworawihan  
Website: [www.thavorn.net](http://www.thavorn.net)

Wat Phummarin Kudi Thong  
Website: [www.watphummarin.com](http://www.watphummarin.com)

Wat Sai-ngam Meditation Centre  
Website: [www.watsai.net](http://www.watsai.net)

Wat Sanghathan  
Website: [www.vimokkha.com](http://www.vimokkha.com)

Young Buddhists Association of Thailand under Royal Patronage  
Website: [www.ybat.org](http://www.ybat.org)

## THE NORTH

Dhamma Abha Thailand Vipassana Centre  
Website: [www.abha.dhamma.org](http://www.abha.dhamma.org)

The Middle Way Meditation Village  
Website: [www.meditationthai.org](http://www.meditationthai.org)

Wat Phrathat Doi Suthep  
Website: [fivethousandyears.org](http://fivethousandyears.org)

Wat Ram Poeng  
Website: [www.watrampoeng.com](http://www.watrampoeng.com)

Wat Umong  
Website: [www.watumong.org](http://www.watumong.org)

## THE EAST

Boonkanjanaram Meditation Centre  
Website: [www.meditationboonkan.org](http://www.meditationboonkan.org)

Dhamma Kamala Thailand Vipassana Centre  
Website: [www.kamala.dhamma.org](http://www.kamala.dhamma.org),  
[www.thaidhamma.net](http://www.thaidhamma.net)

Khao Din Nhong Sang Meditation Centre  
Website: [www.nhongsang.com](http://www.nhongsang.com)

Wat Bhaddanta Asabharam  
Website: [www.bhaddanta.com](http://www.bhaddanta.com)

Wat Boonyawad  
Website: [www.watboonyawad.com](http://www.watboonyawad.com)

Wat Khao Sukim  
Website: [www.khaosukim.org](http://www.khaosukim.org)

Wat Marjan  
Website: [www.watmarjan.org](http://www.watmarjan.org)

Wat Phra Dhammajak Chaloem Phra Kiat  
Website: [www.watpradhammajak.org](http://www.watpradhammajak.org),  
[www.buddhaviharn.info](http://www.buddhaviharn.info)

Wat Tham Yai Prik  
Website: [www.wat-thamyaprik.com](http://www.wat-thamyaprik.com)

## THE SOUTH

Dipabhavan Meditation Centre  
Website: [www.dipahpavan.com](http://www.dipahpavan.com), [www.samui-light.com](http://www.samui-light.com)

Suan Mokkhaphalaram  
Website: [www.suanmokkh.org](http://www.suanmokkh.org)

## THE NORTHEAST

Dhamma Suvanna – Khon Kaen Vipassana Centre  
Website: [www.suvanna.dhamma.org](http://www.suvanna.dhamma.org)

Himavan Retreat Centre  
Website: [www.meditationthai.org](http://www.meditationthai.org)

Sang Dham Song Chevit Meditation Centre  
Website: [www.sangdhamsongchevit.com](http://www.sangdhamsongchevit.com)

Wat Kao Sala Atul Thanajaro  
Website: [www.kaosala.geranun.com](http://www.kaosala.geranun.com)

Wat Pa Nana Chat  
Website: [www.watpahnachat.org](http://www.watpahnachat.org)

Wat Tham Krissanadhammaram  
Website: [www.vimokkha.com](http://www.vimokkha.com)





Thailand offers a unique holiday experience with elephants, the world's largest land animal. This not only includes learning about elephants, but also touching, feeling, feeding, walking trunk-in-hand, and even riding these magnificent creatures. We would like to introduce these elephant holidays through 4 different themes that will also let visitors explore the beauty of the country from their perspective, discovering their charm, intelligence, and friendliness.

- ELEPHANT HOLIDAYS DESTINATION



### THE LEGEND OF THAI ELEPHANTS

Elephants are not just ordinary animals to the Thai nation, but represent royal power and independence, as many have sacrificed their lives alongside Thai kings. A journey to Ayutthaya traces the glorious history of Thai elephants and gives the impression that the size of these giants is only dwarfed by the strength and loyalty of their hearts.

### ROYAL ELEPHANT KRAL, AYUTTHAYA PROVINCE

A visit to the Royal Elephant Kraal in Ayutthaya will let tourists learn about everything they ever wanted to know about elephants and how they have played a major role in Thai history and the country's development.

#### Highlights

- Ride an elephant to get an idea of the past glory of Ayutthaya.
- Learn to be a mahout.
- See how baby elephants are trained.
- Watch the elephant taking a bath.
- See how they perform various skills.

Website: [www.elephantstay.com](http://www.elephantstay.com)



### LIVE AND LEARN THE ELEPHANTS' WAY OF LIFE

Elephants have a grace that belies their size and fascinates people. The mahouts understand these gentle creatures and are willing to share their lives and their invaluable experiences with everyone. An inspiring journey to understand this relationship between human and beast is the beginning to the conservation of elephants for the future.



### THAI ELEPHANT CONSERVATION CENTRE, LAMPANG PROVINCE (NATIONAL ELEPHANT INSTITUTE)

(2010 Thailand Tourism Award  
Winner of Recreational Attractions For Learning)

The Thai Elephant Conservation Center (TECC) is Thailand's only government-owned elephant camp. Besides being an exciting tourist experience, the TECC is also known for its pioneering work in conservation and science.

#### Highlights

- Enjoy a show featuring traditional logging techniques, elephants painting pictures, making music, demonstrating agility, and more.
- Visit the world's only elephant hospital to see how sick animals are given medical treatment.
- Take a ride or trek through the forest.
- Enjoy a homestay programme and learn how to handle and care for an elephant.
- Hang out with mahouts and their families.

Website: [www.thailandelephant.org](http://www.thailandelephant.org)



### ELEPHANT LIFE EXPERIENCE(E.L.E), CHIANG MAI PROVINCE

This is the only tailor-made boutique elephant camp in Thailand that is situated among a marvellous natural setting with the river flowing gracefully and close by the Mae Taman Valley, Chiang Mai.

#### Highlights

- Have the experience of building closeness to an individual elephant in their natural environment.
- Frolic, ride and play freely with the camp's nine elephants to your heart's content.
- Learn about being a mahout (Elephant keeper) and also the techniques in controlling an elephant.

- Enjoy being a painter with these world famous elephant artists and take home an elephant painting as a unique gift.

Website: [www.elelife.com](http://www.elelife.com)

### PATARA ELEPHANT FARM, CHIANG MAI PROVINCE

A 100% Thai owned and managed farm in Mae Hia district with a focus on the conservation of elephants.

#### Highlights

- Be "Elephant Owner for a Day", a special programme created for everyone to learn and interact with elephants as what an owner would do daily.
- Enjoy the chance of bare-back riding to visit forests, waterfalls or local temples.

Website: [www.pataraelephantfarm.com](http://www.pataraelephantfarm.com)



### A UNIQUE BOND

The relationship between elephants and people is an extraordinary one, especially when the animals are treated with love and respect as part of the family. Living together harmoniously and sharing a love of nature creates an exclusive link that illustrates that genuine friendship and compatibility can truly exist between humans and animals.

### ELEPHANT STUDY CENTRE, SURIN PROVINCE

This Centre was set up to pass onto future generations the Kui ethnic group's culture and their knowledge of elephants.

#### Highlights

- Learn about the Kui way of life and their culture.
- Explore the extraordinary talents of the elephant.
- Learn to be a mahout the Kui way.
- Witness the Pakam Spirit House Worshipping Ceremony.
- Offer alms to monks on elephant back.

*For more information, contact the TAT Surin Office.*



Mae Sa Elephant Camp, Chiang Mai

### AMAZING ELEPHANT SHOWS.

Thai elephants possess an interesting history and a special way of life, but they are also performers who love to show off their abilities. Some of these talents have a traditional background in heavy industry; such as, lifting and carrying logs, but other involve fine motor skills that spectators find hard to believe can be performed so delicately by such large animals.

### MAE SA ELEPHANT CAMP, CHIANG MAI PROVINCE

This is home to one of the largest assembly of elephants in the north of Thailand. It is also renowned for creating a painting by elephants, which received recognition by Ripley's Believe It Or Not and the Guinness Book of World Records as "The Largest Painting by a Group of Elephants" and "The Most Expensive Painting by a Group of Elephants", respectively.

Website: [www.maesaelephantcamp.com](http://www.maesaelephantcamp.com)

### CHIANG DAO ELEPHANT TRAINING CENTRE, CHIANG MAI PROVINCE

At the Chiang Dao Elephant Training Centre, each elephant has his or her own mahout to care for on a one-on-one basis. Elephants are only worked during the mornings, with their afternoons and nights free to roam the surrounding natural forest.

#### Highlights

- Get a real feel for the enchanting elephants in their natural habitat.
- Get away from the hustle and bustle of life and experience a unique and memorable time with the local ecotourism as well as homestay programmes, both of which showcase the simple and traditional ways of life of Thailand's elephants and their human companions.
- Learn all about elephants – their nature, their individual traits, their lifestyles, their talents and their charms.

Website: [www.chiangdaoelephantcamp.com](http://www.chiangdaoelephantcamp.com)

### TAWEECHAI ELEPHANT CAMP, KANCHANABURI PROVINCE

Taweechai Elephant Camp is one of the most exciting elephant camps in Kanchanaburi with awards of Excellent Elephant Camp and International Elephant Embryo Study Centre in Thailand.

#### Highlights

- An exclusive elephant camp for Hollywood and Hong Kong film stars to visit.
- See the Karen village and mahout lifestyle.
- Take an exciting Elephant Night Trek with an electric spotlight through the jungle.
- Enjoy bamboo rafting and sightseeing along the Kwai River and see the natural wildlife.

Website: [www.taweechaielephantcamp.com](http://www.taweechaielephantcamp.com)

## VOLUNTURISM



Voluntourism takes the travelling, learning and interacting concept one step further by aiming to improve the lives of people in local communities all over the country over periods of time ranging from a couple of days to several months. As a result, Thai tour operators have developed several innovative programmes that offer visitors not only quality holiday time in the Kingdom but also the opportunity to engage in hands-on teaching and other volunteer activities.

### Where to Go and Who to Contact?

#### THE NORTH

##### **Track of The Tiger**

This company located in Chiang Mai, Northern Thailand offers a variety of tourism-related services aimed at showcasing the culture, people and natural environment of the North. Volunteers can participate in team building activities in the Upper North; for example, teach English, build dams for the hill tribes, plant trees, and more.

Website: [www.track-of-the-tiger.com](http://www.track-of-the-tiger.com)

##### **Trekking Collective**

Learn about the local wisdom of the people as well as the environment of the Upper North by staying in a homestay.

Website: [www.trekkingcollective.com](http://www.trekkingcollective.com)

##### **The Mirror Foundation**

Based in the Mae Yao sub-district of Chiang Rai province, this NGO works directly with the hill tribe communities of the area. Volunteers can help as well as learn about the communities' way of life by staying in a homestay and teaching English to the people as well as help to develop the villages in various needed ways.

Website: [www.mirrorartgroup.org](http://www.mirrorartgroup.org),  
[www.hilltribetour.com](http://www.hilltribetour.com),  
[www.bannok.com](http://www.bannok.com)

#### Boutique Travel Service

Participate in team building activities in the Upper North; for example, teach English in local schools, build dams for the Maeo hill tribes, plant trees, and enjoy nature study treks.

Website: [www.btsthailand.com](http://www.btsthailand.com)

#### THE CENTRAL REGION

##### **Wildlife Friends of Thailand**

This foundation, located in Amphoe Tha Yang, Phetchaburi province, has several projects from hands-on wildlife rescue, medical care, wildlife rehabilitation, research on wildlife and marine mammals as well as

the release of wild animals back to the wild. Volunteers can help the Foundation at its various centres and at the same time learn about the natural character and behaviour of wildlife in Thailand.

Website: [www.wfft.org](http://www.wfft.org)

##### **R.S.P Jumbo Travel Centre**

Located in Amphoe Tha Muang, Kanchanaburi province, this company offers volunteers the opportunity to learn about the traditional customs and lifestyle of the local community in a homestay with a family, as well as teach English in the local school.

Website: [www.jumboriverkwai.com](http://www.jumboriverkwai.com)

##### **Green Lion**

Based in Singburi, this provider for several well-known organisations and youth networks covers a wide range of programmes for volunteers from teaching to working in orphanages, or building projects.

Website: [www.thegreenlion.net](http://www.thegreenlion.net)

#### THE SOUTH

##### **Andaman Discoveries**

Located in Tambon Kura, Kuraburi, Phang Nga province, this community has established a homestay and ecotourism activities. Volunteers can teach English to the local children in the school, plant trees to help the environment, and develop the village.

Website: [www.andamandiscoveries.com](http://www.andamandiscoveries.com)

##### **Ko Yao Community**

The award-winning community of Ko Yao, Phang-nga province provides volunteers with an opportunity to learn about the lifestyle and culture of the local fishing community in a homestay environment. Experience traditional river and prawn farming, extracting rubber from rubber trees, catching crabs, plus more. At the same time, teach English to the local children.

Website: [www.kohyao-cbt.com](http://www.kohyao-cbt.com)

# GATEWAY TO THE MEKONG REGION



Located in the heart of the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS), Thailand is also the ideal base for exploring this area that is rich in culture, age-old traditions, fascinating architecture, scenic landscapes, and flourishing ways of life. The mysterious and majestic Mekong at 4,200 kms is Southeast Asia's longest river, and one of the last great rivers to retain a near-pristine condition that continues to inspire a sense of wonder.

With its snow-fed headwaters lying higher up in China's Qinghai Province, near the Tibetan Plateau, the Mekong crosses Yunnan Province, an area of mountains and fertile valleys inhabited by colourful tribal communities, then forms the border between Myanmar and Lao PDR. before flowing into the Golden Triangle. After forming most of the border between Thailand and Lao PDR., the Mekong crashes over the spectacular Khone Falls, then passes into Cambodia where it enters a broad floodplain to flow by Phnom Penh, the main stream forks into two broad arms, the Mekong Proper and the Bassac, and then enters Vietnam, forming a classic delta of nine streams that fan out and drain into the South China Sea.

To travel the Mekong countries is to journey through time, as well as to discover the timelessness of nature's ever-varied grandeur, and each of the GMS countries is unique in its own way.

#### BY AIR

As the gateway to the GMS, from Bangkok's Suvarnabhumi Airport over 40 flights depart daily for the Mekong capitals and other important cities. These include:

- China: Beijing, Chengdu, Guangzhou, Guilin, Jinghong, Kunming, Shanghai, Shenzhen, Xi'an, and Xiamen.
- Lao PDR: Vientiane and Luang Prabang
- Myanmar: Yangon
- Cambodia: Siem Reap and Phnom Penh
- Vietnam: Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City and Da Nang

#### OVERLAND ROUTES

To the north and northeast, Thai provinces like Chiang Rai, Udon Thani, and Ubon Ratchathani, are being linked to the Mekong countries through a multi-billion dollar network of roads, highways and bridges that is making the entire region easy for travel.

#### THAILAND TO CHINA

- Covering some 2,000+ kilometres, the R3A Highway connects up Chiang Khong in Chiang Rai province, northern Thailand with Lao PDR. and Xishuangbanna Prefecture in Yunnan province, Southern China.

**The route:** Chiang Khong in Thailand, Bokeo – Luang Namtha – Boten in Lao PDR., and Bohan – Jinghong – Kunming in Yunnan, Southern China.

#### THAILAND TO LAO PDR.

- Nong Khai is accessible from Vientiane via the first Friendship Bridge.
- There is now a rail service between Nong Khai, Thailand and Tha Na Laeng, Lao PDR.

- The third Mekong Bridge links Nakhon Phanom, Thailand with Tha Khaek, Lao PDR.
- The northeastern Thai province of Mukdahan and western Laotian province of Savannakhet are linked by the second Mekong International Bridge.
- Ubon Ratchathani can be reached from Southern Lao PDR.

#### THAILAND TO VIETNAM

- Crossing the bridge from Mukdahan to Savannakhet, travellers can continue their journey along Route No. 9 to major cities in central Vietnam; such as, Quang Tri, Hue and Danang.

#### THAILAND TO CAMBODIA

- From Aranyaprathet, Sa Kaeo province, travellers can cross over to Poipet, Cambodia and continue onto Siem Reap and Phnom Penh.
- At Hat Lek, Trat province, travellers can cross to Koh Kong, Cambodia and continue onto Sihanoukville and Phnom Penh.

#### THAILAND TO MYANMAR

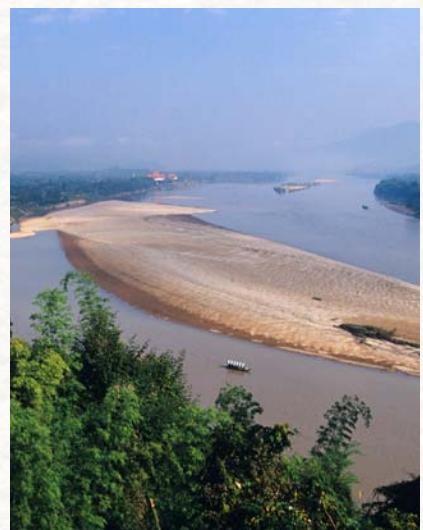
- From Mae Sai, Chiang Rai province, it is possible to cross into Tachilek, Myanmar.

#### VIETNAM TO THAILAND & MYANMAR

- From Danang to Savannakhet across the second Mekong International Bridge, travellers will have direct access to the Thai provinces of Kalasin, Khon Kaen, Phetchabun, Phitsanulok, Sukhothai and Tak, eventually reaching Myawaddy in Myanmar before entering Yangon.

All of these developments are key components of a major infrastructure plan to facilitate transport, trade, investment, and tourism in the Greater Mekong Subregion.

## TRAVEL ALONG THE MEKONG RIVER



### THE GOLDEN TRIANGLE, CHIANG RAI PROVINCE

The Mekong River first enters Thailand in Chiang Rai province at Sop Ruak joining the Ruak River and marking the meeting place of Thailand, Myanmar, and Lao PDR., the junction of the three countries forming the Golden Triangle, which is approximately 800 kms north of Bangkok. This area was known for its opium production and trade, activities now prohibited and replaced with a thriving tourist industry discovering the crossroads of the three cultures. Here tourists get a great view of the 3 countries separated only by the river.

A long-tail boat trip along the Mekong River takes visitors to enjoy

the beautiful scenery of the meeting place of Thailand, Lao PDR., and Myanmar and to witness the way of life of the local people who live by the river. The one-hour journey starts by cruising along the border of Myanmar and taking a turn to continue the trip along the Lao border. There is a stop to explore the duty-free products at Don Sao, the Lao duty-free market, before returning to the pier at Sop Suak.

### CHIANG SAEN, CHIANG RAI PROVINCE

About 15 kilometres from the Golden Triangle is Amphoe Chiang Saen, one of the major ports in the northern region of Thailand. The Chiang Saen Port plays an important

role in transport, specifically as part of an international shipping route between Thailand and its neighbouring countries. Among the major tourist attractions in Chiang Saen are Wat Phrathat Pha Ngao, Wat Phrathat Chom Kitti, and Chiang Saen National Museum, established as the centre of arts and history of Chiang Saen city.

Opposite Tambon Ban Saeo in Amphoe Chiang Saen is Suwan Khom Kham in Lao PDR., to which visitors can cross the river to by boat to explore the connection between Thailand and Lao PDR. by viewing archaeological objects and ruins similar to the ones in Chiang Saen.

### CHIANG KHONG, CHIANG RAI PROVINCE

Situated around 60 kilometres to the south of Amphoe Chiang Saen is Amphoe Chiang Khong, a small town sitting on the banks of the Mekong River known amongst tourists as the gateway to Lao PDR., China, and Vietnam. The journey from Amphoe Chiang Saen to Amphoe Chiang Khong provides splendid views of the river with stunning mountain ranges in the background. Along this route is a Thai Lue village where visitors can observe the ancient craft of making hand-woven fabric.

Amphoe Chiang Khong is the location of the 4<sup>th</sup> Thai-Lao Friendship Bridge to Houayxay district of Bokeo province in Lao PDR. This Friendship Bridge plays an important role as it links to the R3A route leading to several districts in Lao PDR. as well as Jinghong and Kunming in China. It is also a tranquil gateway for Thai and foreign travellers who wish to go to Luang Prabang in Lao PDR.

A boat trip from Buck Pier in Chiang Khong to Ban Houayxay introduces visitors to this small but lively town in Bokeo Province, Lao PDR. Here, visitors can experience the similarities and differences between the 2 countries.

The Mekong River continues as the international border from Amphoe Chiang Khong to Amphoe Wiang Kaen. Here, there are views of the highlands on the Lao side and the steep cliffs of Thailand on the other. The road leads to the much-visited Doi Pha Tang, Doi Pha Mon, and Phu Chi Fa, passing through several hill tribe villages of the Hmong, Akha, and Khamu ethnic groups, and an old settlement of the former Kuomintang Chinese 93<sup>rd</sup> Division. Once the Mekong River reaches Kaeng Pha Dai at Ban Huai Luek, it enters Lao PDR.

### CHIANG KHAN, LOEI PROVINCE

The journey along the Mekong River resumes at Amphoe Chiang Khan, Loei province, a place where visitors can enjoy the slow-paced lifestyle and the friendliness of the locals as they stroll along the road by the Mekong River. It is places like Chiang Khan that make this journey a memorable experience that warms your heart. Let your mind and soul drift freely along with the flow of the Mekong River on a boat excursion and enjoy the river-based way of life that dances in harmony with nature around the Kaeng Khutkhu Rapids, a large cataract in the middle of the Mekong River, revealing magnificent landscapes and an idyllic river-based way of life of the local people. The rapids are also one of the most beautiful places to witness the

mesmerising sunrise by the Mekong River.

A boat trip along Kaeng Khutkhu is also available for visitors to get a closer view of this amazing natural phenomenon.

### CHIANG KHAN, LOEI PROVINCE – AMPHOE SI CHIANG MAI, NONG KHAI PROVINCE

The Mekong River is a symbol of peace and happiness and the journey from Amphoe Chiang Khan to Amphoe Pak Chom, Amphoe Sangkhom, Amphoe Si Chiang Mai, and Amphoe Tha Bo is a path that allows visitors to discover the breathtaking views and tranquility of nature. The lively locals' way of life by the river also makes the journey a pleasant travelling experience.



## **AMPHOE SI CHIANG MAI - NONG KHAI, NONG KHAI PROVINCE**

In Nong Khai province, the Mekong River separates Amphoe Si Chiang Mai from Vientiane, the capital city of Lao PDR., clearly visible from the Thai side. From here, the river flows through Amphoe Tha Bo heading towards Amphoe Mueang of Nong Khai province, the location of the 1<sup>st</sup> Thai-Lao Friendship Bridge.

A trip to Nong Khai would not be completed without taking a visit to Vientiane, Lao PDR. Visitors can cross the 1<sup>st</sup> Thai-Lao Friendship Bridge and explore the historical sites of this city; such as, Phrathat Luang Vientiane, the Victory Gate, Wat Phra Kaeo, etc.

## **NAKHON PHANOM, NAKHON PHANOM PROVINCE**

The river enters Nakhon Phanom at Amphoe Ban Phaeng and Amphoe Tha Uthen. Nakhon Phanom is a city that is important for trade across the river, and is the location of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thai-Lao Friendship Bridge. It is a place full of intriguing local customs and distinctive ways of life; such as, the unique culture of the Renu Phu Thai community in Amphoe Renu Nakhon. There is also evidence of the strong relationship between Thailand and Vietnam at the Thai-Vietnamese Friendship Village and at Ban Na Chok, Once a safe house for Ho Chi Minh, the former president of Vietnam. The road that runs along the Mekong River at this point not only presents the beauty of nature, but also a trace of French colonial architecture in several buildings; for example, Saint Joseph's Church or Wat Kham Koem.

Visitors can also take a boat trip across the river to Tha Khek, Lao PDR. to see various sites like Wat Si Kottaboun. Alternatively just taking a short boat cruise along the Mekong to see the stunning sunset is another choice.



*Thai-Lao Friendship Bridge*



*Renu Phu Thai community*

## **MUKDAHAN, MUKDAHAN PROVINCE**

Onto the province of Mukdahan, which welcomes the Mekong River at the beautiful rapids of Kaeng Kabao. Amphoe Mueang Mukdahan is the location of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thai-Lao Friendship Bridge connecting Tambon Bang Sai of Mukdahan province and Savannakhet, the third largest

province of Lao PDR. Visitors can cross the bridge to explore this city by visiting ancient temples; such as, Wat Xayaphoum, Wat Lattanalangs, and Wat Chao. There is a French colonial atmosphere to the centre of the city and also much shopping to be done on Si Mueang Road and at the Savanxay Market.

## MUKDAHAN PROVINCE – UBON RATCHATHANI PROVINCE

The natural surroundings of the Mekong River change as the river flows out of Mukdahan and heads towards Ubon Ratchathani. The terrain becomes steep cliffs and the river is studded with stunning rock platforms. The fascinating attractions; such as, Pak Bong, Hat Salueng, Sam Phan Bok, Pha Chana Dai, and Pha Taem National Park provide visitors with spectacular rock formations, cool and relaxing waterfalls, beautiful wildflowers, and the constant flow of the river.

From Mukdahan, take the road to Amphoe Chanuman in Amnat Charoen province where the winding road starts to follow along the Mekong River from Amphoe Chanuman to Amphoe Khemarat, Ubon Ratchathani province and provides a pleasant view of the simple way of life amidst the natural surroundings by the Mekong River. Here enjoy the sheer beauty of Kaeng Chang Mop when the water level drops, beautiful shallow basins are revealed in the river. Ubon

Ratchathani is the place where the Mekong River will depart Thailand. The route along this part of the river has all the elements to make this journey a memorable one, whether it is the people you meet along the way, the amazing natural attractions you see, or the extraordinary cultural experiences you discover.

The Mekong River meets the Mun River at Amphoe Khong Chiam in Ubon Ratchathani, the combination of the two large rivers providing an abundant source of food for fish and

consequently a great place for fishing. The meeting place of the rivers has a magnificent view of the mountains in the background, especially captivating at sunrise when the sunlight shines on the surface of the water.

A little further south is a huge bend in the river called ‘Woen Buek,’ the place where the Mekong River leaves Thailand and is replaced by the Phanom Dong Rak Mountain Range as the Thai-Lao border.



# FESTIVITIES & EVENTS

Another highlight for Thailand in attracting tourists to visit our country is the uniqueness of our history, culture, and traditions that are reflected through our magical array of festivals and events held throughout the year. Also the integration of Indian and Chinese culture has made some of these events more interesting to experience.

## I NATIONWIDE FESTIVALS

### CHINESE NEW YEAR (JANUARY / FEBRUARY)

Come to celebrate the Chinese New Year at the biggest China Town in Thailand, Yaowarat Road renowned as the Golden Road, the Land of the Siamese Dragon. Watch the beauty, treasure the Chinese cultural demonstrations and experience a wide range of Chinese cuisine available at famous restaurants as well as fashion show depicting ancient Chinese attire from various regions. The goldsmith shops offer you beautiful souvenirs. Last but not least, Chinese movies are sure to fascinate you.



Chinese New Year



Loi Krathong Festival



### SONGKRAN FESTIVAL (13-15 APRIL)

Held nationwide and renowned worldwide, this ancient traditional Thai custom of merry-making that is also the Thai New Year and known as the 'Water Festival' is Thailand's most fun-filled event. It is celebrated with tremendous enthusiasm, and in most parts of the country, Songkran extends over a period of three days. The cultural values of Songkran are expressed through various ceremonies and rituals; such as, paying respect to elder members of the family by gently sprinkling of water over their hands and asking for their blessing, making merit at the temple and bathing Buddha images, building elaborate chedis out of sand, as well as the fun of splashing water to celebrate the New Year. Visitors can participate in and experience this great event firsthand for themselves.



### LOI KRATHONG FESTIVAL (NOVEMBER)

A spell-bounding event that is one of the kingdom's oldest and best-preserved festivals and known as the "Festival of Lights" held on the full-moon night of the twelfth lunar month or in November nationwide. Hundreds of thousands of ornately-decorated krathong or traditional banana leaf floats are set adrift in rivers and waterways throughout the Thai kingdom to ask for forgiveness to Mae Khongka and wash away bad luck. Loi Krathong traditions reflect local beliefs and cultural evolution, and there are plenty of interesting regional variations to be seen.

### LOI KRATHONG SAI FESTIVAL (NOVEMBER)

Floating of coconut shell Krathongs (Krathong Sai) on the Ping River in Mueang district, Tak province, which is the only place to see this special event in Thailand. A Krathong Sai competition will be promoted with the aim of winning the Royal Trophy of H.M. King Bhumibol Adulyadej, floating of Krathongs, and various forms of entertainment.



### YI PENG FESTIVAL (NOVEMBER)

This festival is held in Chiang Mai as part of Loi Krathong. Activities include a procession and Yi Peng Khom Contest as well as various Krathong designing contests. Lanterns will be posed and decorated around the temples and houses. Arches will also be set up. In addition, various fun fests will be arranged to participate in; for example, Lanna cultural performances, light and sound presentation, boat racing on the Ping River, and floating of Krathongs.

### COUNT DOWN (31 DECEMBER / 1 JANUARY)

Help ring in the New Year and have a great time with traditional Thai activities by making New Year wishes in Bangkok or elsewhere throughout the kingdom with a roster full of entertainment and activities; such as, cultural performances, laser shows, and fireworks - free!! Then on 1 January, the Thai people will make merit at the temple, which is a tradition of requesting for a prosperous year ahead.



*Loi Krathong Sai Festival*

## MAJOR EVENTS

### PATTAYA INTERNATIONAL MUSIC FESTIVAL (MARCH)

Beat the summer heat at the Pattaya International Music Festival, which is held in March of every year with its spectacular lighting and sound systems on 3 stages in the coastal city of Pattaya. Singing artists and groups, both local and international, provide 3-days of various forms of musical entertainment ranging from Pop, Hip Hop to Jazz and Indi Rock for avid fans. So music lovers should make a note in their travel plans for the biggest and most happiest music event in Thailand. And what's more, it's free!

Website: [www.tourismthailand.org](http://www.tourismthailand.org)



Pattaya International Music Festival

### RAYONG, CHANTABURI, TRAT FRUIT FESTIVAL (MAY - JUNE)

The annual "Fruit Festivals" of Chanthaburi, Rayong and Trat feature a vast array of quality local produce considered to be the provinces' "best" and are the perfect place to savour the very best of a great variety of fresh Thai fruits like durian, rambutan, mangosteen, as well as locally

processed fruit. This also provides a welcome opportunity to taste and shop for products of exceptional quality, at truly bargain prices. Colourful entertainment presents an added plus with the Fruit Festival Parade featuring a procession of floats decorated with fruit, demonstrations of food-processing, fruit-eating contests, and more.



Fruit Festival

### THAILAND TRAVEL MART & THAILAND TOURISM FESTIVAL (JUNE)

The Thailand Travel Mart Plus Amazing Gateway Mekong Sub region (TTM+) in conjunction with the annual Thailand Tourism Festival (TTF) is held in June in Bangkok. This is the country's largest travel and showcase event that includes inviting buyers from all over the world to trade and make business deals with their Thai counterparts, many activities to promote the preservation of Thai culture, traditions and local lifestyle with stage performances and demonstrations of local arts and craft.

Website: [www.thaitravelmart.com](http://www.thaitravelmart.com)

### HUA HIN JAZZ FESTIVAL (JUNE)

Jazz enthusiasts can chill out for a weekend on Hua Hin Beach, Prachuap Khiri Khan and appreciate the sound of jazz music of various styles from Thai and international musicians.



### LAGUNA PHUKET INTERNATIONAL MARATHON (JUNE)

The marathon has 5 different events for participants to choose from depending on their age and fitness level. The course takes them to see a variety of places on Phuket comprising a typical Thai village market, a rubber plantation, beach and sea views before finishing in the resort of Laguna Phuket in the northwest of this tropical island paradise.

Website: [www.phuketmarathon.com](http://www.phuketmarathon.com)

### AMAZING THAILAND GRAND SALE (JUNE-AUGUST)

The Thailand Grand Sale starts in June for 2 months. Organised by the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) in conjunction with selected department stores, restaurants, hotels plus other retail outlets throughout the country, this event offers a range of discounts on purchases and happiness is found in getting bargains galore.



*King's Cup Elephant Polo Tournament*

### KING'S CUP ELEPHANT POLO TOURNAMENT (SEPTEMBER)

The highly popular King's Cup Elephant Polo Tournament is held in the beachside resort town of Hua Hin. The event is a charitable event that raises money for the benefit of Thailand's elephants, and has a number of teams go trunk to trunk to win the coveted King's Cup trophy. [www.anantaraelephantpolo.com](http://www.anantaraelephantpolo.com)

### CANDLE FESTIVAL (JULY-AUGUST)

This event is held nationwide, but Ubon Ratchathani province has an event that is the only one of its kind in the world. This is held in Mueang district at the beginning of Buddhist Lent or "Khao Phansa" in which there are spectacular candle processions, cultural performances, as well as candle artisans from around the world along with their Thai counterparts are invited to participate in the International Candle Carving Competition to sculpt various imaginative and abstract designs that stand three metres tall and are made from wax along with various other activities. The candles are later taken to temples for the monks to use during Buddhist Lent.





Pattaya International Marathon



#### **LAGUNA PHUKET TRIATHLON (NOVEMBER)**

The Laguna Phuket Triathlon is Asia's premier destination triathlon featuring a unique 1.8 kilometre swim, 55 kilometre bike ride, and 12 kilometre run through spectacular tropical scenery. Also, there are activities to encourage the participants to experience the adventure routes along Phuket's tourist attractions.

Website: [www.lagunaphukettriathlon.com](http://www.lagunaphukettriathlon.com)

#### **PATTAYA INTERNATIONAL MARATHON (JULY)**

This annual event consists of a 10 kilometre quarter-marathon race, 21-kilometre half-marathon race, 42.195-kilometre marathon race, along with sales of sports products and equipment. The marathon attracts much interest from both locals and international runners.

#### **BANGKOK INTERNATIONAL DANCE & MUSIC FESTIVAL (SEPTEMBER – OCTOBER)**

Held annually for more than 10 years, it is the largest annual performing arts festival in Thailand. With the splendid venue of the Thailand Cultural Centre in Bangkok, the event presents artistes and theatres from around the globe in a balanced programme of classical concerts, operas, classical ballets, contemporary and world dances – and the occasional less common genre; such as, fado and ballet on ice.

Website: [www.bangkokfestivals.com](http://www.bangkokfestivals.com)

#### **THAILAND RAPTOR WATCH FESTIVAL (October)**

Birdwatching enthusiasts flock to Chumphon every year to observe the migrating raptors that fly through Thailand onto Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia or to Australia. Besides observing these magnificent birds, there are also exhibitions displaying the various species of raptors as well as talks given by experts within the field of ornithology.



#### **ROYAL FLORA RATCHAPHREUK (NOVEMBER-FEBRUARY)**

Experience the grandeur of the momentous occasion of the "Royal Flora Ratchaphruek" that will be held to celebrate His Majesty the King's 84<sup>th</sup> Birthday, Her Majesty the Queen's 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday, and His Royal Highness the Crown Prince's 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday. This event represents a concerted effort of the Thai people to create one of the world's most beautiful international horticultural expositions. Situated on 80 hectares of land, this will present to the world the marvels of plants and breeds of over 2,200 species of tropical plants and flowers. So mark your calendar and join us in Thailand for this historic event not to be missed.

Website: [www.royalflora.com](http://www.royalflora.com)



*Phuket King's Cup Regatta*

#### BANGKOK MARATHON

**(NOVEMBER)**

This event is a world standard athletic sport, which is popular among Thai and foreign runners and tourists just as much as well-known marathons in other cities in the world. The marathon is a distance of 42.195 km. *Website: www.bkkmarathon.com*

#### SURIN ELEPHANT ROUND-UP AND RED CROSS FAIR

**(NOVEMBER)**

This annual event shows how the Kui ethnic group would capture and round up elephants. Other highlights

include an elephant procession, elephant racing, elephant football competition, and other related elephant activities.

#### RIVER KWAI BRIDGE WEEK

**(NOVEMBER-DECEMBER)**

Enjoy visiting the miniature "Ancient Town of Kanchanaburi", a historical and lifestyle presentation of Kanchanaburi province, have fun in a fair atmosphere with lots of entertainment, see the light and sound presentation on "The River Kwai Bridge and the Death Railway" at the River Kwai Bridge, and enjoy

shopping for local and OTOP products.

#### PHUKET KING'S CUP REGATTA

**(DECEMBER)**

The King's Cup Regatta in Phuket is Asia's biggest and most popular regatta. Inaugurated in 1987 to celebrate the 60<sup>th</sup> birthday of His Majesty the King of Thailand, the event has been held every year during the first week of December. Participants come from around the globe to race their boats of various diverse classes.

## OTHER FESTIVALS & EVENTS

Besides the nationwide festivals and major events, Thailand also has numerous other festivals and events throughout various parts of the country during the year. These comprise traditional, religious, sports or other aspects that have become enveloped as part of the Thai way of life.



	FESTIVALS & EVENTS	VENUE	DATE	
			2012	2013
JANUARY	Mini Light and Sound Presentation 7 Areas	Bangkok, Sukhothai, Chiang Rai, Chiang Mai, Nakhon Si Thammarat, Nakhon Ratchasima, Ayutthaya	Throughout the Year	Throughout the Year
	Chinese New Year Festival	Nationwide	23 Jan	Feb
	The Royal Trophy Europe Vs Asia Golf Championship	Chon Buri	Jan	Jan
FEBRUARY	Chiang Mai Flower Festival	Chiang Mai	3-5 Feb	Feb
	PTT Pattaya Open	Chon Buri	5-12 Feb	Feb
	Thailand Ladies Open	Samut Prakan	8-10 Feb	Feb
	Trang Underwater Wedding Ceremony	Trang	11-13 Feb	Feb
	Krabi Unseen Wedding	Krabi	13-14 Feb	13-14 Feb
	Songkhla Flower Festival	Songkhla	14 Feb	14 Feb
	Phuket Blues Festival	Phuket	Feb	Feb
	Bangkok Gems and Jewellery Fair	Bangkok	Feb	Feb
MARCH	Makha Puja Festival – Lord Buddha's Robe Procession	Nakhon Si Thammarat	7 Mar	Feb
	Thai and International Kite Festival	Phetchaburi	9-11 Mar	-
	Pattaya International Music Festival	Chon Buri	16-18 Mar	Mar
	World Thai Martial Arts Festival and Wai Khru Muay Thai Ceremony	Ayutthaya	17-18 Mar	Mar
	Phuket International Marine Festival	Phuket	Mar	Mar
	ASEAN Barred Ground Dove Festival	Yala	Mar	Mar
	Swatch FIVB Beach Volleyball World Tour	Chon Buri	Mar	Mar
APRIL	Thailand Grand Songkran Festival	Bangkok, Chiang Mai, Sukhothai, Chon Buri, Ayutthaya, Samut Prakan, Khon Kaen, Nong Khai, Songkhla, Nakhon Si Thammarat, Nakhon Phanom	13-15 Apr	13-15 Apr
	Samila Asian Tour Beach Volleyball Championship	Songkhla	14-16 Apr	Apr
	Magic Moments in Khmer Heritage	Buri Ram	Apr	Apr
	Tarutao – Adang Fishing Cup	Satun	Apr	Apr

	FESTIVALS & EVENTS	VENUE	DATE	
			2012	2013
MAY	Sawasdee Dot Com Regatta Samui	Surat Thani	28 May-2 Jun	Jun
	Yasothon Bun Bangfai Rocket Festival	Yasothon	May	May
JUNE	Amazing Thailand Grand Sale	Nationwide	1 Jun-31 Aug	1 Jun-31 Aug
	Laguna Phuket International Marathon	Phuket	8-10 Jun	July
	Thailand Tourism Festival	Nonthaburi	Jun	Jun
	Hua Hin Jazz Festival	Prachuap Khiri Khan	Jun	Jun
	Phi Ta Khon Festival	Loei	Jun	Jun
JULY	Pattaya International Marathon	Chon Buri	15 Jul	Jul
	Ubon Ratchathani Candle Festival and Thailand International Wax Sculpture	Ubon Ratchathani	20 Jul-12 Aug	Jul-Aug
	Bangkok Film Festival	Bangkok	Jul	Jul
	Sakon Nakhon Wax Castle Festival	Sakon Nakhon	Jul-Aug	Jul-Aug
AUGUST	Cha-am and Hua Hin Golf Festival	Phetchaburi – Prachuap Khiri Khan	1-31 Aug	1-31 Aug
	H.M. the Queen's Birthday	Nationwide	12 Aug	12 Aug
	Hua Hin Regatta	Prachuap Khiri Khan	Aug	Aug
	Songkhla Marathon	Songkhla	Aug	Aug
SEPTEMBER	International Art and Music Festival	Bangkok	Sept	Sept
	King's Elephant Cup Polo Tournament	Prachuap Khiri Khan	Sept	Sept
OCTOBER	Phuket Vegetarian Festival	Phuket	16-24 Oct	Oct
	Nakhon Phanom Illuminated Boat Procession	Nakhon Phanom	23-31 Oct	Oct
	End of the Buddhist Lent Festival and Naga Fireballs Phenomenon	Nong Khai	29-31 Oct	Oct
	Thailand Raptor Watch Festival	Chumphon	Oct	Oct
NOVEMBER	Hat Yai International Lantern Festival	Songkhla	1 Nov-28 Feb	1 Nov-28 Feb
	Phimai Festival	Nakhon Ratchasima	9-11 Nov	8-10 Nov
	Surin Elephant Round Up and Red Cross Fair	Surin	16-18 Nov	16-17 Nov
	Bangkok Marathon	Bangkok	18 Nov	Nov
	River Kwai Bridge Week	Kanchanaburi	25 Nov-5 Dec	Nov
	Loi Krathong Festival	Bangkok, Chiang Mai, Sukhothai, Ayutthaya, Tak, Samut Songkram, Supan Buri	28 Nov	17 Nov
DECEMBER	Phuket King's Cup Regatta	Phuket	1-8 Dec	Dec
	H.M. the King's Birthday	Nationwide	5 Dec	5 Dec
	Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya World Heritage and Red Cross Fair	Ayutthaya	7-16 Dec	Dec
	Thailand's New Year Countdown celebrations	Nationwide	31 Dec	31 Dec
	Phu Rua Flower Festival	Loei	Dec	Dec
	Bangkok Jazz Festival	Bangkok	Dec	Dec
	Chiang Mai Bike Week	Chiang Mai	Dec	Dec



Floating Market

## PART IV

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# USEFUL ADDRESSES



### TAT HEAD OFFICE

212

### TAT OVERSEAS OFFICES

212

- ASEAN, South Asia and South Pacific Region
- East Asia Region
- Europe, Africa and the Middle East Region
- The Americas Region

### TAT LOCAL OFFICES

215

- The North
- The Central
- The East
- The Northeast
- The South

### TOURISM-RELATED ASSOCIATIONS

218

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*Areas of responsibility: Northern India, Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan*

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*Areas of responsibility: Vietnam, Lao PDR. and Cambodia*

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*Areas of responsibility: Australia, New Zealand and South Pacific*

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 Website: [www.amazingthailand.org.hk](http://www.amazingthailand.org.hk)  
*Areas of responsibility: Hong Kong, Macau and Guangdong Province (People's Republic of China)*

### TAIPEI

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 Fax: +88 (62) 2502 1603  
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 Website: [www.tattpe.org.tw](http://www.tattpe.org.tw)  
*Area of responsibility: Taiwan*

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 E-mail: tatbjs@tat.or.th, tatbjs@sohu.com  
 Website: [www.tatbjs.org.cn](http://www.tatbjs.org.cn)  
*Areas of responsibility: Beijing, Liaoning, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, Qinghai, Jilin, Tianjin, Ningxia, Hui Autonomous Region, Shanxi, Hebei, Gansu, Heilongjiang, Henan, Shandong, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region and Mongolia*

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### OSAKA

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### FUKUOKA

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*Areas of responsibility: United Kingdom, Ireland and Republic of South Africa*

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Website: [www.thailandtourismus.de](http://www.thailandtourismus.de)  
*Areas of responsibility: Germany, Austria, Slovenia, Croatia, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Romania, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Moldova, Macedonia, Albania, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, Hungary, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro*

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*Areas of responsibility: France, Belgium, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Morocco, Monaco, Tunisia and Algeria*

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*Areas of responsibility: Italy, Spain, Greece, Portugal, Israel, Turkey, Cyprus and Libya*

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*Areas of responsibility: Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania*

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Website: [www.tourismthailand.org/us](http://www.tourismthailand.org/us)  
*Areas of responsibility: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Washington, Wyoming, Guam Island and all Central and Southern America Countries*

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*Areas of responsibility: Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, New York, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, Washington D.C., West Virginia, Wisconsin, Puerto Rico, the Bahamas and Canada (West Canada: Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Northwest Territories, Saskatchewan and Yukon; East Canada: Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and New Foundland)*

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#### TAT CHIANG RAI OFFICE

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## THE NORTHEAST

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*Areas of Responsibility: Trang and Satun*

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## TOURISM COUNCIL OF THAILAND (TCT)

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Website: [www.thailandtourismcouncil.org](http://www.thailandtourismcouncil.org)

## THAILAND CONVENTION AND EXHIBITION BUREAU (TCEB)

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Pathumwan, Bangkok 10330  
Tel.: +66 (0) 2694 6000  
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## THAI HOTELS ASSOCIATION (THA)

294/1, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Asia Building,  
Phayathai Road, Ratchathewi, Bangkok 10400  
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Fax: +66 (0) 2216 9499  
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## THAI EXHIBITION ASSOCIATION

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## ASSOCIATION OF THAI TRAVEL AGENTS (ATTA)

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## PROFESSIONAL TOURIST GUIDE ASSOCIATION OF THAILAND (PTGAT)

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