

World66's guide to Thailand

Table of Contents

<u>Thailand</u>	1
<u>Thailand – People</u>	1
<u>Thailand – Economy</u>	3
<u>Thailand – National Parks</u>	5
<u>Thailand – History</u>	5
<u>Thailand – Getting Around</u>	6
<u>Thailand – Getting There</u>	8
<u>Thailand – Thai Language</u>	9
<u>Thailand – Eating Out</u>	10
<u>Thailand – Practical Information</u>	11
<u>Thailand – Do's & Don'ts</u>	12
<u>Thailand – Books</u>	12
<u>Thailand – Map</u>	15
<u>Thailand – Accommodation</u>	15
<u>Thailand – Things to do</u>	15
<u>Thailand – Tours and Excursions</u>	16
<u>Thailand – Internet Cafes</u>	16
<u>Thailand – Festivals</u>	16
<u>Notes:</u>	16
<u>Ayutthaya</u>	18
<u>Ayutthaya – Accommodation</u>	18
<u>Ayutthaya – Sights</u>	18
<u>Ayutthaya – Museums</u>	19
<u>Ayutthaya – Internet Cafes</u>	19

Thailand

The best cultures and backgrounds makes *Thailand* an interesting and memorable country to visit. More people visit Thailand than any other country in Southeast Asia. This is no surprise as the Royal Kingdom of Thailand has much to offer for the visitor: historic culture, lively arts, beautiful beaches, a good nightlife, friendly and hospitable people and last but not least one of the best cuisines in the world. Travel in Thailand is easy due to a good network of trains, busses and airplanes. Most visitors enter the country via the Southeast Asian travel hub Bangkok , the City of Angels. From there you can do great daytrips to cities like the former capital Ayutthaya and Kanchanaburi , known for the River Kwai bridge.

From there most visitors head either north or south. In the north you can visit the interesting cities of Sukhothai , Chiang mai , Chiang Rai or Mae Hong Son . The north is known for its fantastic trekking possibilities and the interesting hill tribes. In the south the traveler can relax at some of the most beautiful beaches in the world, for example, Koh Tao , Krabi , Koh Samui or Phuket . Some areas are very touristy, but it is easy to find some quiet spots. A little closer to Bangkok there is the resort town of Hua Hin which is home to one of the most used Palaces.

The Northeast is popular with independent travelers. Known by Thais as Isaan this area hosts some lovely forested mountains and national parks and very friendly people. The major highlight is probably the famous Khao yai national park , but other interesting places are easily found in this area including Nong khai and Surin.

People with a limited time budget might go to the East Coast. There are many popular resorts, including Pattaya . Asia's premier beach resort. The region is rich in natural resources, including rubber, rice, fishing, orchards and gemstones, and scenically arresting with several national parks containing waterfalls, virgin forest and uninhabited, remote islands. Popular islands locations are Koh chang and Ko Samet.

Thailand – People

Population: 60 037 366 (July 1998 est.)

Age structure:

0–14 years: 24% (male 7 440 863; female 7 169 837)

15–64 years: 70% (male 20 605 197; female 21 210 697)

65 years and over: 6% (male 1 596 267; female 2 014 505) (July 1998 est.)

Population growth rate: 0.97% (1998 est.)

Birth rate: 16.76 births/1 000 population (1998 est.)

Death rate: 7.11 deaths/1 000 population (1998 est.)

Net migration rate: 0 migrant(s)/1 000 population (1998 est.)

Sex ratio:

at birth: 1.05 male(s)/female

under 15 years: 1.04 male(s)/female

15–64 years: 0.97 male(s)/female

65 years and over: 0.79 male(s)/female (1998 est.)

Infant mortality rate: 30.82 deaths/1 000 live births (1998 est.)

Life expectancy at birth:

total population: 69 years

male: 65.35 years

female: 72.83 years (1998 est.)

Total fertility rate: 1.84 children born/woman (1998 est.)

Nationality:

noun: Thai (singular and plural)

adjective: Thai

Ethnic groups: Thai 75% Chinese 14% other 11%

Religions: Buddhism 95% Muslim 3.8% Christianity 0.5% Hinduism 0.1% other 0.6% (1991)

Languages: Thai English (secondary language of the elite) ethnic and regional dialects

Literacy:

definition: age 15 and over can read and write

total population: 93.8%

male: 96%

female: 91.6% (1995 est.)

Thailand – Economy

Economy overview: In 1997/98 the Thai economy was in a deep recession as a result of the severe financial problems facing many Thai firms particularly banks and financial institutions. In the early 1990s Thailand liberalized financial inflows; banks and other firms borrowed in dollars and did not hedge their positions because there was no perceived exchange rate risk. These funds financed a property boom that began to taper off in the mid-1990s. In addition export growth – previously a key driver of the Thai economy collapsed in 1996 resulting in growing doubts that the Bank of Thailand could maintain the baht's peg to the greenback. The Bank mounted an expensive defense of the exchange rate that nearly depleted foreign exchange reserves then decided to float the exchange rate triggering a sharp increase in foreign liabilities that cash-strapped Thai firms were already having trouble repaying. In August 1997 the government headed by Prime Minister Chawalit signed an agreement with the IMF for access to a \$14 billion facility to supplement foreign exchange reserves and restore financial market stability. Chawalit resigned in November 1997 however under pressure for lacking a coherent approach to managing the IMF program and the financial crisis. Democratic Party leader Chuan Leekpai formed a seven-party coalition government and closely adhered to the IMF program tentatively re-establishing financial stability by February 1998. An economic turnaround requires rescheduling the large short-term foreign liabilities of Thai firms restoring high rates of export growth to finance foreign liabilities and extensively recapitalizing the banking system.

GDP: purchasing power parity \$525 billion (1997 est.)

GDP real growth rate: -0.4% (1997 est.)

GDP per capita: purchasing power parity \$8 800 (1997 est.)

GDP composition by sector:

agriculture: 10%

industry: 28.7%

services: 61.3% (1997)

Inflation rate consumer price index: 5.6% (1997 est.)

Labor force:

total: 32.6 million (1997 est.)

by occupation: agriculture 54% industry 15% services (including government) 31% (1996 est.)

Unemployment rate: 3.5%

Budget:

revenues: \$24 billion

expenditures: \$25 billion including capital expenditures of \$8 billion (FY96/97)

Industries: tourism; textiles and garments agricultural processing beverages tobacco cement light manufacturing such as jewelry; electric appliances and components computers and parts integrated circuits furniture plastics; world's second-largest tungsten producer and third-largest tin producer

Industrial production growth rate: -15% (1997 est.)

Electricitycapacity: 15.838 million kW (1995)

Electricityproduction: 77.5 billion kWh (1995)

Electricityconsumption per capita: 1 295 kWh (1995)

Agricultureproducts: rice cassava (tapioca) rubber corn sugarcane coconuts soybeans

Exports:

total value: \$51.6 billion (f.o.b. 1997)

commodities: manufactures 82% agricultural products and fisheries 14% (1997)

partners: US 19.6% Japan 14.9% Singapore 11% Hong Kong 5.7% Malaysia 4.3% UK 3.7% (1997)

Imports:

total value: \$73.5 billion (c.i.f. 1996)

commodities: capital goods 50% consumer goods 10.2% fuels 8.7% (1997)

partners: Japan 25.6% US 13.9% Singapore 5% Taiwan 4.6% Germany 4.5% Malaysia 4.1% (1997)

Debtexternal: \$90 billion (1997)

Economic aid:

recipient: ODA \$624 million (1993)

Currency: 1 baht (B) = 100 satang

Exchange rates: baht (B) per US\$138.568 (January 2000) 53.812 (January 1998) 31.364 (1997) 25.343 (1996) 24.915 (1995) 25.150 (1994) 25.319 (1993)

Fiscal year: 1 October30 September

Thailand – National Parks

There are number of interesting and beautiful national parks in Thailand. If you want to find more information about them you can contact the National Park Division of the Royal Forestry Department at Phahonyothin Road, Bang Khen in Bangkok. Phone is +66–5614292–3, Extension is 724 or 725.

Some 14 percent of Thailand's land area has been set aside for environmental protection. In total, there are now 79 national parks, 89 wildlife and non–hunting sanctuaries, and 35 forest reserves .

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{**Khao Yai National Park**}

Khao Yai is Thailand's oldest and most revered national park. Spanning four provinces, this 2,000–square–kilometer biological wonderland contains more than 70 mammal species, including tigers and elephants, as well as 320 varieties of birds. It has been declared an ASEAN National heritage site and probably it will be by the United Nations soon, too. Like most of Asia's wildlife sanctuaries, Khao Yai has been long under threat from poachers who are stripping the forest of its plant and animal wealth. In March 2000 the government launched the so–called Khao Yai Conservation Project, so hopefully future generations are able to visit this outstanding piece of nature. The park has over 50 km hiking trails, many of them formed by wildlife movement. Elevations range from 100 to 1400 metres. It is easy to get lost so it's recommended to hire a guide. Trips to the park can be arranged easily from Bangkok.

Kao Laem Ya

This marine national park is the nearest park from Bangkok. It is located at [Ko Samet](#).

Doi Inthanon National Park

The park is located near the northern city of [Chiang mai](#). At 2,565 metres, the park is the kingdom's highest peak and its 482 sq km area forms one of the best mountain national parks in Thailand. Home to nearly 400 bird species and hailed as the Mecca of Thailand's bird watchers, the Inthanon mountain range is also a sanctuary for such threatened animals as the Asiatic black bear and the leaf monkey. Luxuriant flora such as orchids, lichens and mosses flourishes on its slopes.

Thailand – History

Southeast Asia has been inhabited for more than half a million years. Recent archaeological studies suggest that by 4000 B.C. communities in what is now Thailand had emerged as centers of early bronze metallurgy. This development along with the cultivation of wet rice provided the impetus for social and political organization. Research suggests that these innovations may actually have been transmitted from there to the rest of Asia including to China.

The Thai are related linguistically to groups originating in southern China. Migrations from southern China to Southeast Asia may have occurred in the 6th and 7th centuries. Malay Mon and Khmer civilizations flourished in the region prior to the arrival of the ethnic Thai.

Thais date the founding of their nation to the 13th century. According to tradition in 1238 Thai chieftains overthrew their Khmer overlords at Sukhothai and established a Thai kingdom. After its decline a new Thai kingdom emerged in 1350 on the Chao Praya River.

The first ruler of the Kingdom of Ayutthaya King Rama Thibodi made two important contributions to Thai history: the establishment and promotion of Theravada Buddhism as the official religion (to differentiate his kingdom from the neighboring Hindu kingdom of Angkor) and the compilation of the Dharmashastra a legal code based on Hindu sources and traditional Thai custom. The Dharmashastra remained a tool of Thai law until late in the 19th century. Beginning with the Portuguese in the 16th century Ayutthaya had some contact with the West but until the 1800s its relations with neighboring nations as well as with India and China were of primary importance.

After more than 400 years of power in 1767 the Kingdom of Ayutthaya was brought down by invading Burmese armies and its capital burned. After a single-reign capital established at Thonburi by Taksin a new capital city was founded in 1782 across the Chao Phraya at the site of present-day Bangkok by the founder of the Chakri dynasty. The first Chakri king was crowned Rama I. Rama's heirs became increasingly concerned with the threat of European colonialism after British victories in neighboring Burma in 1826.

The first Thai recognition of Western power in the region was the Treaty of Amity and Commerce with the United Kingdom in 1826. In 1833 the United States began diplomatic exchanges with Siam (as Thailand was called until 1938). However it was during the later reigns of Rama IV (or King Mongkut (1851–1868)) and his son Rama V (King Chulalongkorn (1868–1910)) that Thailand established firm reapprehment with Western powers. The Thais believe that the diplomatic skills of these monarchs combined with the modernizing reforms of the Thai Government made Siam the only country in South and Southeast Asia to avoid European colonization.

In 1932 a bloodless coup transformed the Government of Thailand from an absolute to a constitutional monarchy. King Prajadhipok (Rama VII) initially accepted this change but later surrendered the kingship to his 10-year old nephew. Upon his abdication King Prajadhipok said that the obligation of a ruler was to reign for the good of the whole people not for a select few. Although nominally a constitutional monarchy Thailand was ruled by a series of military governments interspersed with brief periods of democracy from that time until the 1992 elections. Since the 1992 elections Thailand has been a functioning democracy with constitutional changes of government.

As with the rest of Southeast Asia Thailand was occupied by the Japanese during the Second World War. Since Japan's defeat in 1945 Thailand has had very close relations with the United States. Threatened by communist revolutions in neighboring countries such as Burma Vietnam Cambodia and Laos Thailand actively sought to contain communist expansion in the region. Recently Thailand also has been an active member in the regional Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Thailand – Getting Around

Best ways to travel inside the cities: By *tuk-tuk* bus – in cities like Tibet – By *Taxi-meter* in Tibet, because of "not so fresh" air

The best way to travel (if possible) is by water. Many types of boat, and fresh air makes travel marvelous, especially in the hot day.

Renting a car is not recommended.

Around the Islands:

Kho Sumai, Kho Pangnan and Kho Tao.

Taxi– meters which can bundle in up to 8 people and you can haggle the price depending on the length of the journey. Its always a good idea to check what other people are paying in the taxi.

Jeeps/Land Rovers. These are a lot of fun as you sit on the open bit on the back and hang on for dear life, as the roads are very un even. Watch out for falling out. Again these can cater for up to about 8 people and you can haggle the price.

Mopeds/Bikes to hire. Again these are a lot of fun and are very cheap to rent, however it is one of the most notorious things in Thailand for accidents. You may come away with a Kho Pangnan tatoo, either an exhaust pipe burn or a scrape from falling off. However you could come off alot worse and no one wants to spend time in a Thai hospital. So becareful of the roads and the alcohol in take!

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By Plane

Bangkok Domestic airport terminal is 25 km north of the city. Airport departure tax is required at domestic departures. Domestic passengers have to pay 60 baht/person. Thai Airways maintains an extensive network to any place of importance in the kingdom. Alternatively you can check with Bangkok Airways Bangkok, Samui, Chiang Mai, Phuket, Hua Hin and Ranong.

Taking a plane to or from Bangkok to Chiang Mai, Phuket and Ko Samui is highly recommended. Prices are very cheap and they are a number of dialy flights allowing the traveller a lot of flexibility. The best bargain is probably the flight Chiang Mai–Mae Hong Son.

By Car

Thailand has a good up–to–date network of well–maintained roads and highways between all main centres. Much of the north–south route is dual carriageway. Road signage follows international convention and usually are in Thai and English. Often the smaller roads, known as Sois, are in Thai only.

Night driving is not recommended on the open road due to heavy truck traffic, which tends to have little respect for cars. Motor bikes can also a hazard, particularly as they are often ridden into oncoming traffic. Driving on the most of the major routes outside Bangkok and around resort areas is both a safe and an enjoyable experience. A self–drive holiday offers the opportunity to experience wonderful Thai culture and the opportunity for travellers to stop as long as they like at the many points of interest in the Kingdom.

Most cars in Thailand use unleaded petrol, which is sold by the litre. While vans use diesel. Both fuels are freely available throughout Thailand and prices generally range between Baht 14. to Baht 17.– per litre for

them. Fuel stations are plentiful and most of the larger ones accept major international credit cards. In more remote locations cash will be required. Check the daily oil prices [here](#)

Road Rules

Thailand uses the left-hand system. The maximum speed limit in cities and towns is 60 km/h (35 mp/h) and varies between 100 and 120 km/h (60–72 mp/h) on expressways and country roads.

Police regularly check motorists' speed. Wearing of seat belts is compulsory and drunk driving laws apply. All insurance is invalid if drivers exceed the legal alcohol limit.

Car Rental

While there are numerous car rental companies as well as comprehensive self drive holiday packages available it is worth noting that rentals from many of the smaller companies are not covered by insurance and you will be liable for any damage to the vehicle regardless of who is at fault.

Several Internationally recognised car rental companies either have offices in Thailand or have allocated agents here. While these companies are generally more expensive they do tend to offer better insurance coverage.

Courtesy of *[Ethailand.com](#)*

By Train

Trains are a great way of travelling and the country takes pride in a well-maintained rail system that reaches almost every corner of the country. Several different classes of train travel are available, from coach to private sleeper, and from regular to express service. Most people tend to buy a sleeper train. The route from Bangkok to Chiang Mai and to the South are the most popular with the foreign visitor. For the train in Thailand, no advance reservation is available, however if you are traveling during weekends on popular routes it is recommended to buy your ticket a few days ahead.. You have to go to the train station to purchase the ticket or ask a local travel agent to do so. Luggage Allowance – 1st class 50 kg; 2nd class 40 kg; others 30 kg.

By bus

Modern and comfortable air-conditioned buses provide reliable service to every province and all the major towns. Regular and local buses, while usually slower and less comfortable, are extremely reasonably priced. You can buy ticket at every bus terminal (Please note: in Bangkok there are different bus terminals!) or contact any local travel agent to help with purchasing a ticket. Besides that there are mini-buses leaving from Khao San Road to nearly any spot of tourist interest. There are very cheap, direct, but very often very uncomfortable. Besides that you will not meet any local people. Last but not least – coach tours are available with most travel agents.

Thailand – Getting There

Thailand – Thai Language

There are four main Thai languages spoken in Thailand (Central Thai, Southern Thai, Northeastern Thai (the same language is used in Laos) and Northern Thai, but the language referred to as Standard Thai is close to Central Thai. Being in Bangkok you might notice that Bangkokians skip the "r" in words like the polite ending "khrap".

Learning Thai as a "farang" is not really easy, but the Thai people really appreciate if you make an effort. If you want to learn basic words and sentences buy a Thai language course which is available in every book shop selling English language books.

Thai is a very complicated language to learn with a unique alphabet to make it even more difficult. To master a few words is not difficult however and will be greatly appreciated by the locals. Here are some essential words. For more information on the Thai language go to Travlang. Notice that Khrap is used as a polite ending for men and kha for women:

Yes = chai

No = mai-chai

Thank you = kob-khun

Thank you very much = kob-khun-mark

You're welcome = mai-pen-rai

Please = ka-ru-na

Excuse me = kor-tot/kor-a-nu-yart

Hello = sa-wat-dee

Goodbye = lar-korn

So long = narn/yao-narn Good morning = sa-was-dee-torn-chao

Good afternoon = sa-was-dee-torn-bai

Good evening = sa-was-dee-torn-khum

Good night = ra-tree-sa-was

I do not understand = chan-mai-kao-jai (f) pom-mai-kao-jai (m)

How do you say this in [English]? = khun-ja-pood-nee-pen-[pa-sa-ang-glish]-wa-young-lai?

Do you speak ... = khun-pood ...?

English = pa-sa-ang-krit

French = pa-sa-fa-rang-sez

German = pa-sa-yer-re-man

Spanish = pa-sa-spain

Chinese = pa-sa-jeen

I = chan (f), phom (m)

We = puak-lao

You (singular, familiar) = khun

You (singular, formal) = khun

You (plural) = khun

They = puak-kao

What is your name? = khun-cheu-ar-rai

Nice to meet you. = dee-jai-tee-dai-pob-khun

How are you? = khun-sa-bai-dee-mai?

Good = dee

Bad = mai-dee

So so = kor-young-narn-lae

Where is the bathroom? Where is the toilet? = hong-nam-you-tee-nai?

Thailand – Eating Out

Without a doubt – Thai food is one of the best Asian cuisines in the world, but be careful some dishes can be very very spicy. Thai cuisine is essentially a marriage of centuries-old Eastern and Western influences harmoniously combined into something uniquely Thai.

Due to Buddhist religion, Thais have not developed dishes with a use of large animals in big chunks. Big cuts of meat were shredded and laced with herbs and spices. Traditional Thai cooking methods were stewing and baking, or grilling. Chinese influences saw the introduction of frying, stir frying and deep-frying. Culinary influences from the 17th century onwards included Portuguese, Dutch, French and Japanese. Chillies were

introduced to Thai cooking during the late 1600s by Portuguese missionaries who had acquired a taste for them while serving in South America.

Thais were very good in "Siamese-ising" foreign cooking methods, and substituting ingredients. The ghee used in Indian cooking was replaced by coconut oil, and coconut milk substituted for other dairy products. Overpowering pure spices were toned down and enhanced by fresh herbs such as lemon grass and galanga. Eventually, fewer and less spices were used in Thai curries, while the use of fresh herbs increased. It is generally acknowledged that Thai curries burn intensely, but briefly, whereas other curries, with strong spices, burn for longer periods. Instead of serving dishes in courses, a Thai meal is served all at once, permitting dinners to enjoy complementary combinations of different tastes.

A proper Thai meal usually consists of a soup, a curry dish with condiments, a dip with accompanying fish and vegetables.

If you are not so much into Thai food, do not worry. You can find Western and other cuisines in every city, but it would be a sin not to try as many dishes as possible. If you have not tried Tom Yam Kung-soup and Phat Thai-Noodles you probably haven't seen Thailand at all.

Thailand – Practical Information

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Electricity

The electric current is 220 Volt AC (50 cycles) throughout the country. There are many plugs and sockets in use. Travellers with shavers, tape recorders and other appliances should carry a plug-adaptor kit. The better hotels will make available 110 Volt transformers.

Medical Services

All tourism destinations and provincial capitals have hospitals and clinics staffed by well-trained doctors and nurses. In case of emergencies, ambulances can be summoned from any private hospital.

Business Hours

Most commercial concerns in Bangkok operate on a five-day week basis. Government offices are generally open between 8.30 AM and 4.30 PM with a noon to 1.00 PM lunchbreak, Monday through Friday, except on public holidays. Private businesses maintain much the same hours – perhaps 8.00 AM to 5.00 PM, with certain exceptions. Many stores open 12 hours a day, seven days a week.

Tourist Information Services

Tourist information is available at the Tourism Authority of Thailand head office in Bangkok, local offices in 22 major cities (listed in the back cover) and the TAT information counter in Bangkok Airport and at every airport where there is a TAT local office. They provide maps, brochures and useful information on tours, shopping, dining and accommodation. All TAT information offices are open seven days a week from 8.30 AM. to 4.30 PM.

Airport limousine service

After a long and wearing flight into Bangkok airport, use the comfort of an Thai limousine service to transfer you in all comfort to your final holiday resort in Pattaya, Hua Hin or Cha Am.

url: www.thaiipro.com

Thailand – Do's & Don'ts

Thai people have a deep, traditional reverence for the Royal Family, and a visitor should be careful to show respect for the King, the Queen and the Royal Children. This includes, for example, standing up in the cinema as the royal anthem is played before every movie starts. You also should stand still, when at public places as the railway stations the anthem is played as well.

Visitors should dress neatly in all religious shrines. They should never go topless, or in shorts, hot pants or other unsuitable attire (otherwise you will never get into the Grand Palace & Wat Phra Kaeow compound. It is acceptable to wear shoes when walking around the compound of a Buddhist temple, but not inside the chapel where the principal Buddha image is kept. Each Buddha image, large or small, ruined or not, is regarded as a sacred object. Never climb onto one to take a photograph or do anything which might indicate a lack of respect.

Buddhist monks are forbidden to touch or be touched by a woman, or to accept anything from the hand of one. If a woman has to give anything to a monk, she first hands it to a man, who then presents it.

Thais don't normally shake hands when they greet one another, but instead press the palms together in a prayer-like gesture called a wai. Generally a younger person wais an elder, who returns it.

Thais regard the head as the highest part of the body, literally and figuratively. Therefore, avoid touching people on the head and try not to point your feet at people or an object. It is considered very rude. Shoes should be removed when entering a private Thai home. Public displays of affection between men and women are frowned upon, but holding hands nowadays became pretty normal, especially in Bangkok.

Thailand – Books

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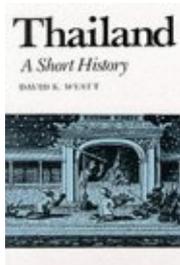
A Different Brand Of English

A comprehensive travel guide to WW2 *Thailand*.

isbn: 1-9208-8490-4

author: Andrew Mason

Thailand:A Short History



author: David K.
Wyatt

isbn: 0300035829

subject: history

The Railway Man:A True Story of War, Remembrance and Forgiveness



author: Eric Lomas, Eric
Lomas

isbn: 0345406680

subject: history

Anna and the King of Siam

author: Margaret
Landon

isbn: 0381981355

subject: history

Lonely Planet Thailand:Travel Survival Kit



author: Joe
Cummings

isbn: 0864424116

subject: travel

Eyewitness Travel Guide:Thailand



author: DK Travel Writers,Rosalyn Thiro (Editor)
isbn: 0789419491
subject: travel

Lonely Planet Thailand's Islands & Beaches '98

Einar Sjo:



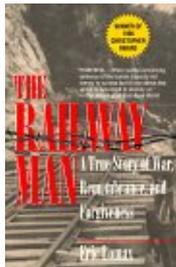
author: Joe Cummings,Nicko
Goncharoff
isbn: 0864425406
subject: travel

Hush!:A Thai Lullaby



author: Minfong Ho,Holly Meade (Illustrator)
isbn: 0531095002
subject: culture

The Railway Man:A True Story of War, Remembrance and Forgiveness



author: Eric Lomas,Eric
Lomax
isbn: 0345406680
subject: culture

Culture Shock!:Thailand



author: Robert Cooper,Nanthapa Cooper
isbn: 1558680586
subject: culture

The revolutionary King

author: William Stevenson
subject: True sequel to the king and I

Thailand – Map

NIGHTLIFE

Thailand – Accommodation

Thailand has a plethora of Hotels , Resorts , and Guesthouses, with prices ranging to suit all budgets.

As with most things in life you do tend to get what you pay for, but in thailand the service you receive can be fantastic and natural even in the low budget places.

Most websites, locations in Thailand offer online reservations. R24 comes highly recommended ...

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farangs.com Thailand Hotels

Offers Hotels, Resorts, and Guesthouses in Bangkok, Phuket, Pattaya, Hua Hin, Koh Samui, Chiang Mai, Krabi and more locations in Thailand

url: www.farangs.com

Thailand – Things to do

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my favorite things: BANGKOK –having a drink and people watching on khao san road on a saturday night –chatuchak market– sells everything you could possibly want including endangered species –riverboat ride past wat arun to the saphan taksin stop, then the skytrain to MBK shopping center –red light shows in silom

area and on soi cowboy –sitting at the park by the river (at the rear side of the temple across from khao san road) and watching thai kids play music –going out to eat with thai friends – thai massage at pian's (the alley off of khao san road next to susie's pub) or at wat po international massage school which is also the same complex as a great temple (take a tuk tuk) –pirated everything at pantip plaza OTHERS –playing voyeur in the seedy, decadent pattaya –motorbiking all over the island of ko chang –day trips by boat to gorgeous untouched islands to snorkel –hot springs and nightlife in pai –wilderness and hill tribes in sappong –kayaking in krabi province

Thailand – Tours and Excursions

An essential travel guide for Thailand is 'A Different Brand Of English' by Andrew Mason (Poseidon Books) – it will advise you of scams to avoid, security and cultural tips and give you a guided tour around some excellent Bangkok markets up to Kanchanaburi and that province's infamous sites, like the Bridge Over the River Kwai, War Cemetery, Thai–Burma Railway Museum and Hellfire Pass through to the border at Three Pagodas Pass. A Hotel guide, a restaurant list with comments on the food to a language guide – this is comprehensive, it even advises on how to get in to Bangkok's infamous 'Big Tiger' – Maximum Security Prison (and then out again!). There are interviews in the book, pages and pages of photographs, advice from the State Dept and Foreign Affairs, with exclusive comments by the Australian Prime Minister John Howard for this guide. A must for travel to Thailand. 367 pages.

<http://www.poseidonbooks.com/a_different_brand_of_english.htm>

Thailand – Internet Cafes

Thailand – Festivals

World66 is Open Content. All content is free for everybody to use, but we're also dependent on travelers for updating our contents. Please use the space below for notes and when you get back home, please take the time to add your notes to World66 so everybody can profit.

Notes:

Ayutthaya

Ayutthaya is the great ancient city. The former capital of Thailand. "The city of angels" – the same name as for Bangkok. Destroyed by Burmas warriors.

Ayutthaya – Accommodation

So far we do not have hotels listed here, please refer to our friends from Thailand Hotels

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farangs.com Thailand Hotels

Discount Reservations at farangs.com Thailand Hotels the Best Budget Travel Deal in Thailand. 5 Star Luxury Hotel Package with a Cheap Promotion Price and Guaranteed Booking Service.

url: www.farangs.com

Accommodation in Ayutthaya

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Ayutthaya – Sights

all

Wat Phra Ram

This is one Ayudhaya's oldest temples, built in 1369 by King Ramesuan, situated on the outside of the eastern town wall. It was built on the site where the first monarch of Ayudhaya, King Uthong, was cremated. The prang has been partially restored, but one can still find some original stucco garudas and nagas. The tall archway at the entrance to the compound was designed for elephants to pass through.

Wat Phra Sri Sanphet

The temple was built in 1491, at the command of King Borom Trilokkanatin in the grounds of Wang Luang Palace. Two of the now restored Ceylonese-style chedis were built during the reign of King Rama Thi Badee II to enshrine the relics of his father, King Trillokanat, and brother. The third was added later, by his own son King Borom Racha, to enshrine the relic of his father.

The Fort

The forts along the city wall and outer circle fortresses as found in the historical records include Poni Mahachai, Pom Phet, Pom Ho Ratchakhru, Pom Chidkop, Pom Champaphon, Poni Yal, etc. They are mostly situated at waterway intersections.

Bang Pa–In Palace

This palace is located in Tambon Bang Len, Amphor Bang Pain, 18 kilometres south of Ayuthaya It lies 58 kilometres north of Bangkok by fad, 61 kilometres by road. To access to Bang Pain from Ayuthaya, one can go by Phahonyothin Road and make a right trim at Km.35 for another distance of 7 kilometres to Bang Pa – In Palace. For more information Tel: +66–2–243273 or +66–35– 261044.

openinghours: daily, 8.30 am – 4 pm

City Wall & Gate

They were newly constructed by the command of King Rama IV. The original foundation of the city was has since been found through excavation, thus revealing that the original area was much more spacious than what is currently seen.

Front Palace / Chankasem

On the bank of Pasak River, this palace was built during the reign of King Maha Thammaraja, the 17th Ayutthayan monarch, for his son's residence (King Naresuan). Like other ruins, the palace was destroyed by the Burmese and left unrepaired for a long time. King Mongkut of the present Chakri dynasty ordered reconstruction of this palace for use as a residence during his occasional visits to Ayutthaya.

Ayutthaya – Museums

all

Chao Sam Phraya National Museum

The museum is located on Rochana Road, opposite the city wall. It houses various antique bronze Buddha images and famous carved panels. A receptacle at the Thai Pavilion contains relics of Lord Buddha and objects of art more than 500 years old. The museum also has a substantial collection of local artifacts. *Just Wagner:* An interesting museum.

openinghours: daily except Monday and Tuesday, 9 am. – 4 pm

Ayutthaya – Internet Cafes

all

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Near U-Thong Inn Hotel. Opposite HONDA show room Ayutthaya. On the Rojana Road.

Wat-Prayart Intersection