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TRAVEL TO THAILAND



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Thailand

Stig Albeck

Thailand

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Translation: Jan Thorhauge

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Contents

	A Visit to Thailand	6
A.	Bangkok	7
B.	Kanchanaburi	28
C.	Ayutthaya	29
D.	Lop Buri	35
E.	Sukothai Historical Park	38
F.	Si Satchanalai	41
G.	Kamphaeng Phet	43
H.	Tak	44
I.	Mae Sot	46
J.	Lampang	49
K.	Lamphun	52
L.	Chiang Mai	54
M.	Chiang Rai	62
	Facts about Thailand	70
	Phrase book	82



A visit to Thailand

www.tourismthailand.org

Many people begin their visit to the marvelous country of Thailand by flying to Suvarnabhumi - the international airport of Bangkok. Suvarnabhumi means the mythological "Land of Gold". There can be no better welcome as there are new perspectives to the exciting historical legends everywhere in Thailand... and gold and golden adornments in such great numbers that it will make you reach for your digital camera constantly.

Thailand is warm and lush and it is a country of great natural riches that can be experienced both in and outside the capital of Bangkok. From north to south, the country covers 2,000 kilometres and the variation from the green mountains and big rivers in the north over the rice paddies and open green areas in the central region to the many kilometres long beaches in the south, makes roundtrips and a continued reunion with Thailand, something to be wished for.

Enjoy the tasty Thai cooking which will treat you to everything from a tasty mellow to something so hot, it will bring both tears to your eyes and sweat to the brows of Westerners. Fish and shellfish are a wise choice and the fruits of Thailand are a cornucopia of healthy and refreshing food.

Shopping is something unto itself in Thailand. Large, modern shopping centres are placed side by side with dilapidated stalls and some of the hundreds of markets that you run into during a roundtrip of Thailand. The prices of many goods are very attractive, and many of the locally produced goods are beautiful, practical and also memorable souvenirs.

Have a nice trip!

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A. Bangkok

www.bangkoktourist.com

Historical outline

The settlement of present-day Thailand began about 2,000 years ago with waves of migration from China. For many centuries, the area was characterized by minor states and scattered systems of government. Some major states did exist during this period, however, especially the Khmer Empire, which was founded in the 9th century and covered the main part of both present-day Cambodia and Thailand. The Khmer people, by the way, called the Thai Siamese, so the area was known as Siam up until the 20th century.

During the 13th century, the Thai people was governed from the first kingdom of the Thai, Sukothai, which had become a regional kingdom as early as the 14th century after a short period of prosperity. Its power had gone increasingly to the kingdom of Ayutthaya, which was founded in 1350 and was ruled from the city of the same name. The Ayutthaya-period became a time of growth for the country and the trade connections with Europe were established.

In 1564, Burmese troops invaded the Kingdom of Siam and five years later Ayutthaya fell, and came under Burmese rule until 1593.

In the year of 1767, the Burmese attacked the capital, Ayutthaya, again, and this time they conquered the city and burned it down beyond recognition. In spite of the fact that the Burmese were driven out of Ayutthaya after a short time, the capital was in ruins and reconstruction was abandoned.

The Thailand military headed by General Taksin moved the capital to Thonburi on the western side of the Chao Praya River by present-day Bangkok.

General Taksin became the new king, but he was dethroned in 1782 and Rama I moved his court and his administration to Bangkok on the other side of the Chao Phraya River. By doing so, he made Bangkok the new capital of the country. Rama I, who founded the Chakri-dynasty, which is still in power, considered Bangkok an easier place to defend against potential enemies than both Ayutthaya and Thonburi, because the Burmese would have to cross the relatively wide Chao Phraya River.

The construction of a number of canals was initiated. These canals, the so-called klongs, were since used as waterways in the new city and a few of them still exist. It was thus possible to sail around in most of the city area east of the Chao Praya River. Klongs were also dug in Thonburi. Rama I also had the Grand Palace and the temple of Wat Phra erected. The buildings were highly inspired by the architecture and constructions of Ayutthaya and they were the centre of power of the kingdom.

Apart from these constructions and buildings for the national administration, the period until the middle of the 19th century was characterised by a steady development. The city did not take serious steps towards becoming the absolute centre of the country that Bangkok is today – northern Thailand, for instance, was still governed from Chiang Mai.

During the latter part of the 19th century, construction work in Bangkok accelerated and the population increased. King Rama IV had major construction projects carried out, including several canals and a number of road systems. His successor, King Rama V, stepped the modernisation process and the development of the city up further by considerable investment in the judicial system, health care and education. During this period, a large part of the farmland was transformed into residential areas, and in order to cope with the ensuing pressure on the infrastructure of the city, many new roads were

constructed, some of them on top of canals that had been filled up for this purpose.

In 1932, the present constitutional monarchy of Thailand was established and after that, a number of public institutions were founded and Chiang Mai became an official part of Siam, which was still the official name of Thailand.

During the Second World War, the Allies bombed Bangkok. The ruined buildings were soon rebuilt and the capital experienced a rapid development during the decades following the Second World War.

During the Vietnam War in the 1960s, Bangkok was, as were several other places in Thailand, a refuge for primarily American soldiers, and this underlined the status of the city as a regional entertainment centre.

The population has since exploded and many high-rise buildings with flats and offices have been erected. The high increase in the number of inhabitants has caused a heavy growth in traffic, which has been one of the major challenges that has faced the metropolis for several years. A number of train lines have been constructed, such as the Skytrain (BTS) and the Subway (BMCL) in the centre of the city, and they are extended continuously.

In the 1980s and 1990s, the economy of Thailand boomed. Bangkok was the economic locomotive and this period became the foundation of modern Bangkok, which the tourist will meet today. A wealth of new buildings has sprouted up, including some of the luxury hotels that tourists appreciate. After a recession at the end of the 1990s, the tourist trade is booming again to the benefit of local people and visitors alike.

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PEOPLE FIRST

Tour 1: Bangkok

1. Boat trip on the Chao Phraya River/แม่น้ำเจ้าพระยา



Station: Saphan Taksin

Pier: Central Pier

A good way of getting a first impression of Bangkok is by taking a boat trip on the Chao Phraya River. The name means “the River of Kings”. Several of the major sights of Bangkok are situated along the river, and there are fine and easy ways of transportation by boat.

Ordinary river busses go north and south from all piers on both side of the river. It is always possible and cheap to board a river bus and get to the next pier. If you do not live by the river, take the Skytrain to the Saphan Taksin Station, which is close to a big pier on the river. Saphan Taksin is also close to River City where many of the tour boats depart from.

2. The East Asiatic Company Building

Oriental Avenue

Station: Saphan Taksin

Pier: Oriental

The old headquarters of the Danish East Asiatic Company is situated on the bank of the Chao Phraya River. It is a charming house built in 1901 in a colonial Venetian style. Right behind it, you

can see the Christian Ascension Cathedral from 1910. Together, the two buildings tell a tale about Western influence on the history of Bangkok. Today, high-rise blocks and international hotels, among them the Oriental, which is the oldest in Bangkok, surround the buildings.

3. The Santa Cruz Church

Soi Kudi Chain

Station: Saphan Taksin

Pier: Central Pier (some boats for Santa Cruz Pier opposite Rajinee)

The Santa Cruz Church in Thonburi is the oldest Christian church in Bangkok. The church was originally built in 1770 when Thonburi was the capital for a short period. The Portuguese built the Church. They were the first Westerners in Thailand as they had traded with Ayutthaya since the 16th century.

After the Burmese attacked and destroyed Ayutthaya, the Portuguese gave King Taksin military aid to drive out the enemy. To thank the Portuguese, the King granted them land where they erected the Santa Cruz Church. Originally, it was a wooden building, but the Church was rebuilt in 1835 and again in 1913 in its present form. The Church was constructed in European style under the leadership of Italian architects.

4. Wat Arun/วัดอรุณ



Thanon Arun Amarin 34

Pier: Wat Arun

Wat Arun is also called "The Temple of Dawn". The name is due to the beautiful reflections of the sun in the glazed ceramic tiles of the temple in the morning, when Wat Arun allegedly is at its most beautiful. It is, however, also an unforgettable experience to watch the sun set behind the temple prangs.

Wat Arun has a beautiful position overlooking the Chao Phraya River directly opposite the Grand Palace. With its central pagoda Pha Prang of 79 metres, Wat Arun is one of Bangkok's best known monuments. The style is inspired by Khmer architecture. It was constructed when Ayutthaya was still the capital. Later, King Rama II enlarged the temple; among other things he added to the height of the central prang, which is a symbol of the mythological mountain Meru. According to Hindu mythology, Meru is the dwelling of the Gods.

5. The Grand Palace & Wat Phra Kaew/ พระบรมมหาราชวัง & วัดพระแก้ว



Thanon Na Phralan

Pier: Tha Tien

Bangkok's Grand Palace and the temple complex of Wat Phra Kaew belong to some of the most remarkable building complexes in the world. They were founded by King Rama I in 1782 when Bangkok became the new capital of the country.

There is one shared entrance to the two sights.

5a. Wat Phra Kaew/วัดพระแก้ว

Many of the buildings inside the temple area bear resemblance to earlier Ayutthaya buildings. The great, golden chedi Phra Si Ratana contains a piece of bone of the Buddha, and the particularly beautifully ornamented chedi next to Phra Mondhop is a library of scriptures. The two biggest buildings are the Bot and the Pantheon. The Bot houses the most sacred statue in Thailand – the Emerald Buddha, which is 66 centimetres tall, cut from one single piece of jade and resting on a platform 11 metres above the floor. The statue is thought to be from the 15th century. At that time, it was placed in Chiang Rai in northern Thailand. On its way to Bangkok, the statue has been in Lampang, Chiang Mai and Vientiane. At the beginning of each of the three Thai seasons (summer, rainy and winter season), the King changes the clothes of the Buddha at a great ceremony. Originally, the Pantheon should have housed the Emerald Buddha. Figures of Chakkri kings are now on display here.

In the temple complex, it is also possible to see a model of the impressive temple city of the Khmer, Angkor Wat, which for a short time was part of the Kingdom of Thailand. The model was built as a monument to the conquest of the place, even though the Thai supremacy only lasted for a short period. Elephant figures symbolising the elephants that helped various kings of Thailand are placed round the model. Within the temple grounds, a number of exciting figures can be seen, including Garudas (half man - half bird), Singhas (stone lions), and the awesome temple guardians, the demons who, according to the mythology, were overcome by Good. Full of remorse, they are now guarding the temple.

On the edge of Wat Phra Kaew there are eight prangs colourfully decorated with Chinese porcelain. They represent the eight elements of Buddhism. The Ramakien Gallery is the gallery that circles the temple buildings. Brilliant mural

paintings from the 18th century depict the legend Ramakien of how Good prevailed over Evil.

5b. Grand Palace/พระบรมมหาราชวัง

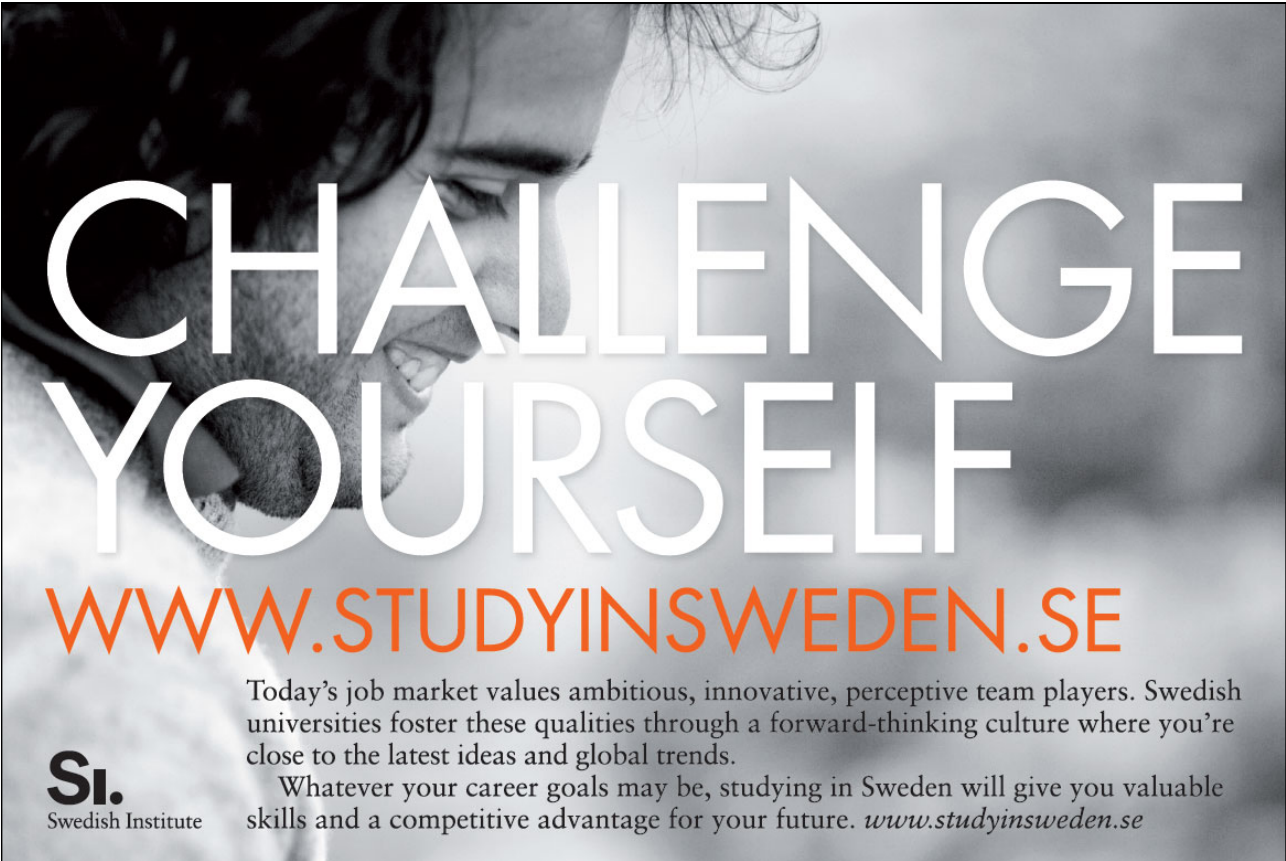
The original royal residence, the Grand Palace, was built in 1782, as was the temple, and it was the residence of the kings of Thailand until 1946. Today, the beautiful buildings are mainly used during various ceremonies.

On the left hand side of the exit from Wat Phra Kaew, there is a building where a significant event in the history of Thailand took place in 1946: the Barom Phiman Palace. King Ananda (Rama VIII) was murdered here under mysterious circumstances. After this incident, the new King Bhumibol IX chose to move to the Chitralada Palace at another location in Bangkok.

To the right of the Barom Phiman Palace, you will find the Phra Maha Montien. It is a group of buildings that were the residence and audience room of the king. This is where crowning ceremonies take place. Outside the building there is a pavilion where the king would arrive riding an elephant. He would change his clothes inside the building and walk the few steps to the audience room itself.

The next big building to the right is the Chakkri Throne Room built by King Rama V in 1882 in a neoclassical, European style with a roof in Thai style. The architect was John Clunich from England, and the European style was chosen because King Rama had studied in Europe where he was overwhelmed by the buildings and the development of especially London. The inspiration has come from Buckingham Palace and outside you can see some contemporary streetlights from London. The Throne Room is lavishly furnished.

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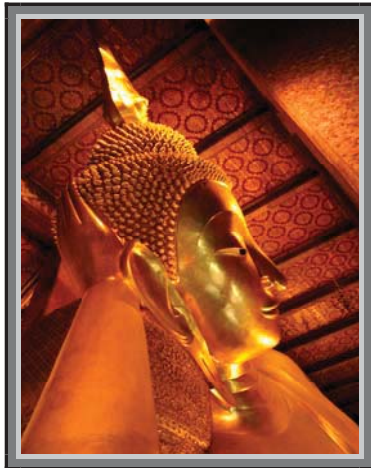
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The last building to the right of the Chakkri Throne Room is the Dusit Throne Room, which was built from 1784-1790 by King Rama I. The building is constructed as a copy of one of the most distinguished buildings of Ayutthaya. There is a beautiful and striking spire on top and inside you will find Rama I's throne made from teak and mother-of-pearl.

6. Wat Pho/วัดโพธิ์



Thanon Sanamchai 2

Pier: Tha Tien

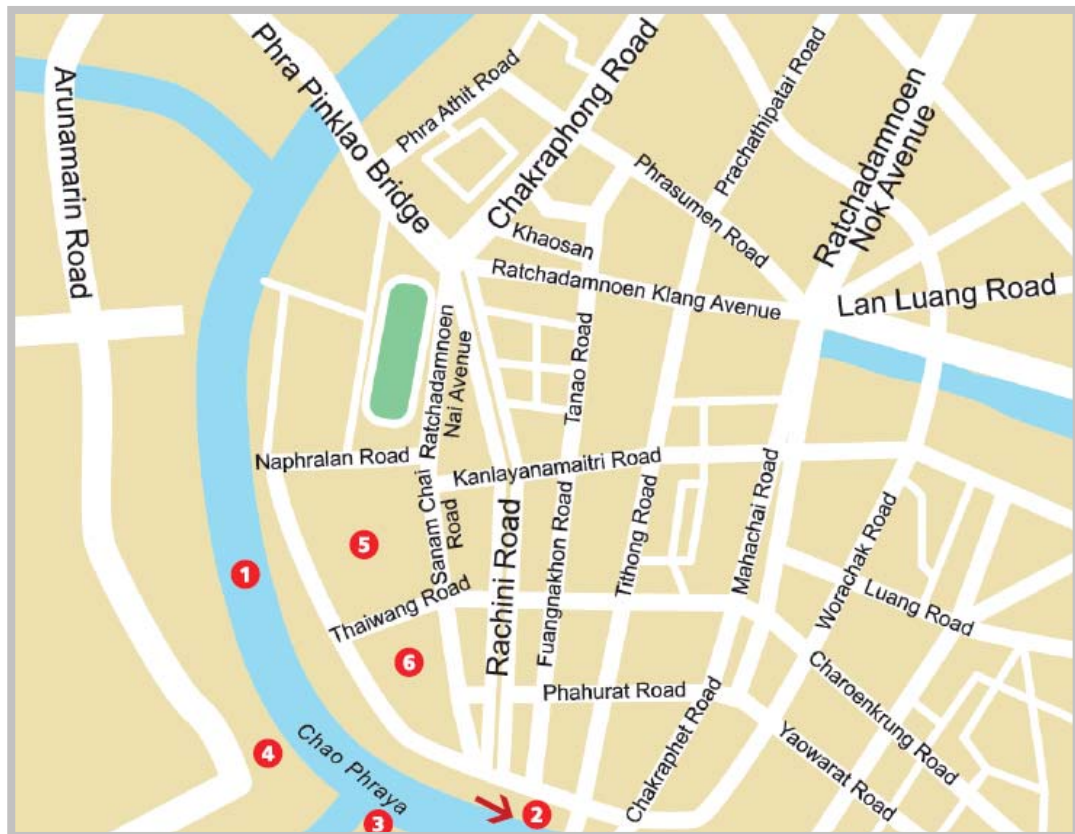
Wat Pho is a very large temple complex in central Bangkok. This is where the enormous Reclining Buddha can be found. With a length of 46 metres and a height of 15 metres, it is the biggest of its kind in the world. The statue is impressive in other ways than size, as it has some very beautiful mother-of-pearl engravings on the soles of its feet. The Reclining Buddha is from 1832 and it was built to draw people's attention to Buddha's Nirvana.

Close to the viharn with the Reclining Buddha, there is an enclosure with the four biggest chedi out of the temple total of 95. King Rama I built the middle chedi to house the Phra Si Sanphet Buddha, which was brought here from Ayutthaya. The ashes of King Rama II and King Rama III respectively are kept in the northern and southern chedi. King Rama IV built the fourth chedi to an unknown purpose.

In the grounds of Wat Pho, you can see statues of people wearing hats symbolising Westerners and a Chinese philosopher depicted so that he appears to be in a good mood. The remaining works put together form an immensely beautiful complex with many details of classical Thai architecture and temple art.

Wat Pho was built under King Petraja of Ayutthaya in 1688 and this makes it the oldest in Bangkok. The complex went through a major renovation under King Rama I and since then several kings have extended it.

Beside its many beautiful temple buildings and small gardens, Wat Pho is also known for its massage school. Many people are trained here every year to perform the traditional Thai massage.



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Tour 2: Bangkok

7. The National Museum of Royal Barges / พิพิธภัณฑ์สถานแห่งชาติ เรือราชพิธี

Thanon Arun Amarin/Klong Bangkok Noi
www.thailandmuseum.com/thaimuseum_eng/royalbarges/history.html

Pier: Thonburi Railway

As early as the 13th century in the Sukothai kingdom, the kings of Thailand had pageants on the water on special occasions. The tradition was carried on in Ayutthaya and later in Bangkok where the last absolute king sailed in the beautiful Royal Barges in 1932.

When Ayutthaya was devastated in 1767, the Royal Barges were also destroyed and a new fleet had to be built. After many years of service, the Royal Barges were damaged during the bombing raids of the Second World War – and shortly after the end of the war, King Bhumibol (Rama IX) initiated a restoration of the barges. The National Museum of Royal Barges opened in 1972 and 8 of the 51 Royal Barges can be seen there.

The museum is a big boat hall by Klong Bangkok Noi. The barges on display represent the most excellent of boatbuilding craft in Thailand and they are lavishly adorned. The King of Thailand still makes use of four of the barges on ceremonial occasions.

8. The National Theatre / โรงละครแห่งชาติ

Thanon Rachinee 2

Pier: Banglumpoo

Thailand's National Theatre is a fascinating building constructed in a modern version of traditional Thai architecture. In front of the theatre, there is a statue of King Pinklao.

9. The National Gallery / พิพิธภัณฑ์แห่งชาติ หอศิลป์

Thanon Chaofa 4

www.thailandmuseum.com/thaimuseum_eng/artgallery/main.htm

Pier: Banglumpoo

The National Gallery has been set up in the former Royal Mint. The building is a mixture of European and Thai architecture and as such typical of the buildings that were constructed during the reign of King Rama V. The permanent exhibition of the museum displays a broad selection of Thai art. The museum also has temporary exhibitions of foreign and other Thai works of art.

10. The National Museum Bangkok / พิพิธภัณฑ์สถานแห่งชาติ พระนคร

Thanon Na Phrathat 1

www.thailandmuseum.com/thaimuseum_eng/bangkok/main.htm

Pier: Banglumpoo

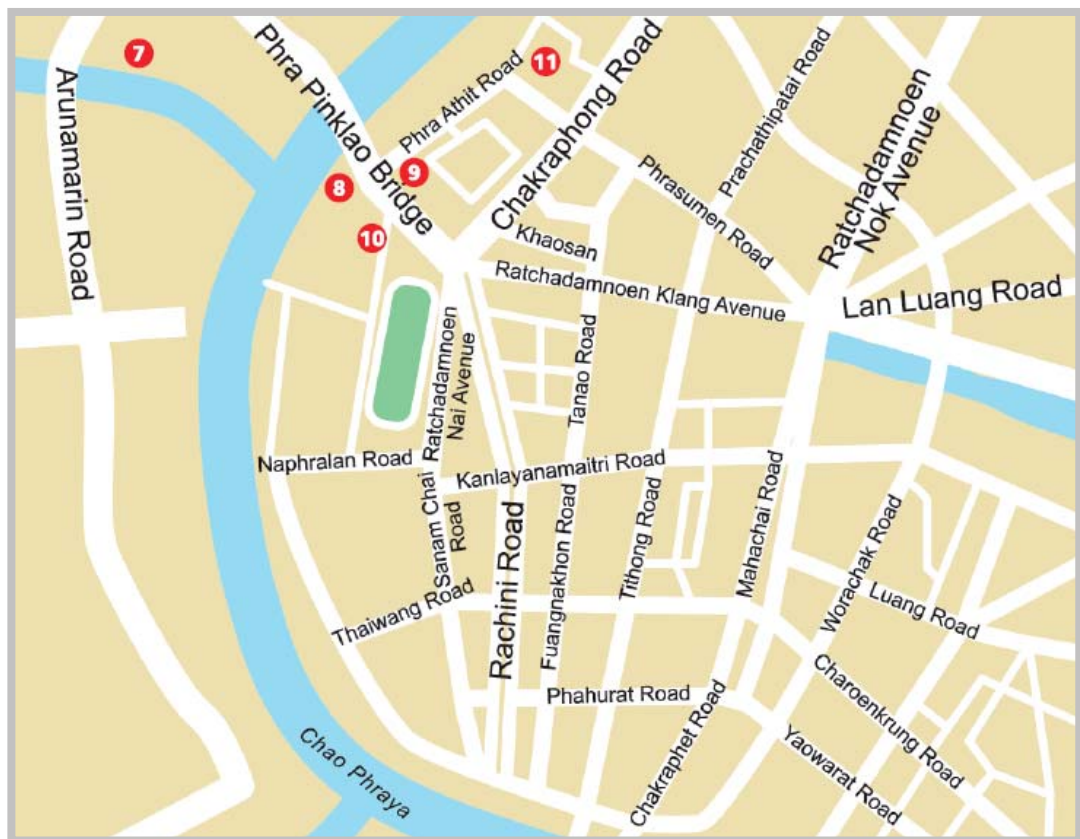
Thailand's National Museum is one of the most comprehensive in Southeast Asia as far as the size and the scope of the exhibitions are concerned. The countless artefacts that are on display have been excavated from all over Thailand, and they represent different ages in the history of the country – from the Neolithic Age over Sukothai and Ayutthaya to the present Bangkok Period.

11. Wat Intrarawihan/วัดอินทรวิหาร

Thanon Wisutkasat 114

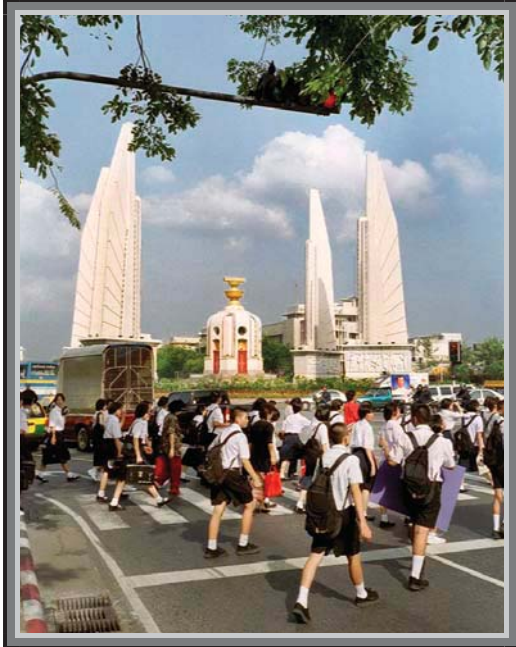
Pier: Rama VIII Bridge

The temple Wat Intrarawihan houses the colossal Standing Buddha, Luang Phor To. It is 32 metres tall and 10 metres wide. The construction of the temple began during the reign of King Rama IV in the 1860s and it was completed approximately 60 years later.



Tour 3: Bangkok

12. The Democracy Monument / อนุสาวรีย์ประชาธิปไตย



Thanon Ratchadamnoen Klang

The distinctive Democracy Monument was erected in 1939 in remembrance of the introduction of the constitutional monarchy and the new Constitution of Thailand in 1932. The Italian Corrado Feroci made the monument. It is 24 metres tall, symbolizing of the date of the event, which was 24 June 1932.

13. The Giant Swing / เสาชิงช้า



Thanon Bamrung Muang

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The Giant Swing was set up in 1784 by Rama I to perform a ceremony in honour of the God Shiva, who swung in Heaven. During the ceremony, four persons would swing to a height of 25 metres. The temple Wak Suhat, which is situated by the Giant Swing, houses, among other things, a bronze statue of the Buddha in the Sukothai style. The statue is 8 metres tall.

14. Wat Ratchanatdaram/

วัดราชนัฒดาราม วรวิหาร

Thanon Mahachai 2

Loha Prasat, one of the unique temple buildings in Bangkok, is situated in the temple complex of Wat Ratchanatdaram. Loha Prasat is in Burmese style with many towers and spires. It was begun at the beginning of the 19th century, but was not completed until recently. Inside the Loha Prasat, there is an almost maze-like collection of corridors and from the roof there is a spectacular view of the whole complex and the Golden Mount. Note the fortress Parapet Phrakan below the Golden Mount.

15. The Golden Mount /ภูเขาทอง



Thanon Chakkaphatdi Phong

The Golden Mount was built in the temple area Wat Saket (วัดสระเกศราชวรมหาวิหาร). The

Mount is the highest in Bangkok and on its top, there is a building with a big, golden chedi where King Rama V installed a Buddha relic in 1877. The relic is believed to come from the Sakya clan. They received it after the cremation of the earthly remains of the Buddha. The other temple buildings are very interesting and they have been significant in the history of Thailand since the first king of the Chakri dynasty.

16. King Prajadhipok Museum

Thanon Lanluang 2

www.kpi.ac.th

The Museum exhibits the belongings of King Prajadhipok, the seventh king of the Chakri dynasty. Queen Rambhai donated the objects in 1980. King Prajadhipok is of great importance to the Thais, because he was the monarch who gave his approval to the introduction of a constitutional monarchy in Thailand. He was thus the first monarch to rule under the modern Constitution of Thailand.

17. Anantasamakom Throne Hall / พระที่นั่งอนันตสมาคม

Thanon Uthongnai

The Anantasamakom Throne Hall is built in Italian renaissance and neo-classical style in Carrara marble. The central dome is 49.5 metres tall and the building is 112.5 metres long. Of all the buildings in Bangkok that were inspired by European architecture, this is the most impressive. The Throne Hall was completed in 1915 after 8 years of construction work. In 1932, King Rama VII decided that the building should house the National Assembly of Thailand, which it did until 1972.

18. Wat Benchamabophit/ วัดเบญจมบพิตร ดุสิตวนาราม ราชวรวิหาร



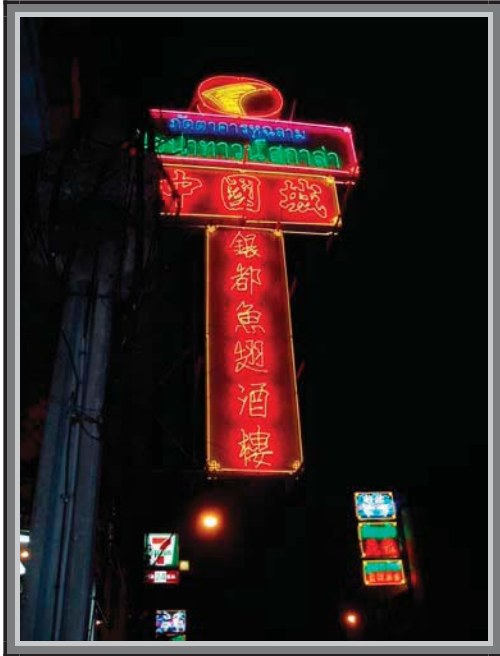
Thanon Si Ayuthaya

The elegant temple complex Wat Benchamabophit was built under King Rama V 1900-1910. The interior of the central temple hall is very beautifully executed in various materials, including gold. Wat Benchamabophit is also called the Marble Temple, because Italian Carrara marble has been used. The style is Thai, but inspiration from European neo-classicism can also be seen. The symmetry and lovely proportions of the temple makes it one of the most beautiful in Bangkok.



Tour 4: Bangkok

19. Chinatown



ThanonYaowarat

Station: Hua Lamphong

The Chinese quarter in Bangkok was founded in 1782 when Bangkok became the capital. The king constructed the Grand Palace where the Chinese living quarters were and they were moved to present-day Chinatown. In and around the Yaowarat Street, you get the feeling that you are in China. There are Chinese street signs, shops, restaurants, and the whole area gives a vivid impression of the entrepreneurial and commercial spirit predominant with the Chinese in Thailand.

20. Wat Traimit/วัดไตรมิตร

Thanon Trai Mit

Station: Hua Lamphong

The Wat Traimit Temple is known for its Golden Buddha made more than 700 years ago in a style typical of the Sukothai period. The Buddha is executed in solid gold; it is 3 metres tall and it weighs no less than 5.5 tons. Previously, the Golden Buddha was covered in plaster so that it would not be an attractive booty for enemies.

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Originally, the Golden Buddha was the most important Buddha statue in the Chotanaram Temple in another place in Bangkok. When that temple was abandoned in 1931, the Danish East Asiatic Company took over the area and kept the Buddha in a warehouse. The Golden Buddha was moved to Wat Tramt, and it was not until 1955 that it was discovered that it was made of pure gold.

21. Sri Mahamariamman-temple

Thanon Pan 2

Station: Surasak

The Tamil community, which was relatively large in this part of Bangkok, founded this extremely lavishly ornamented Hindu temple in 1860. The temple has since been extended. Inside you can see statues of a number of gods, including Ganesh.

22. Lumpini Park/สวนลุมพินี



Rama IV, Thanon Ratchadamri, Thanon Sarasin, Thanon Witthayu

Station: Si Lom

The Lumpini Park is a large and beautifully landscaped oasis in the big city. At the southwestern entrance to the park, there is a monument from 1941 in remembrance of King Rama VI. The vast lawns and lakes of the park form a tremendous contrast to the surrounding skyscrapers. In the park there are number of elegant buildings such as a belfry in Chinese style and a Chinese pavilion. Part of the park is a palm

court. In Lumpini Park, it is possible to go boating, and there are playgrounds for the children.

23. The Jim Thompson House /

พิพิธภัณฑ์บ้านไทย จิม ทอมป์สัน



6 Soi Kasamsan 2, Thanon Rama I

www.jimthompsonhouse.com

Station: National Stadium

The Jim Thompson House is a museum with a very fine collection of various works of Asian arts and crafts and interior design. The Museum was established by the river in a number of traditional Thai houses that belonged to Jim Thompson – the man who reconstructed the ailing silk industry of the country after the Second World War.

24. The Victory Monument



Anutsawari Chaisamorphum

Station: Victory Monument

The Victory Monument is a tall obelisk constructed of marble and concrete. It was erected to commemorate the soldiers, police officers and civilians who have given their lives for Thailand.

25. Chatuchak Weekend Market/ จตุจักร

Station: Mo Chit

There are many shopping possibilities in Bangkok, but the Chatuchak Weekend Market is something special because of its size and atmosphere. There are thousands of stalls selling everything under the sun. Even though it may seem rather chaotic, the market is divided into sections depending on the type of goods that are sold. In the market, there is also a section where you can buy all kinds of food.



Day Tours from Bangkok

26. Ancient City/ เมืองโบราณ

Thanon Sukhumvit (old), Bangpoo, 33 km SØ
www.ancientcity.com

Muang Boran is a very large park that has been laid out as Thailand in miniature. Many of the memorials of the country have been recreated on quite a large scale, so they will give you a good impression of what it would be like to actually be there. A visit to Muang Boran is an easy way of experiencing Thailand outside Bangkok if you are short of time.

27. Rose Garden



Thanon Phetkasem, Sampran, 32 km W
www.rose-garden.com

The Rose Garden has been created in a beautiful area that used to belong to the Royal Family. In the park, you can see beautiful gardens with some of the many flowers that are native to Thailand, especially orchids and roses.

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Inés Aréizaga Esteva (Spain), 25 years old
 Education: Chemical Engineer

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Houses in the building style of northern Thailand have been constructed in the Garden and an interesting, cultural show is performed daily, including various Thai dances, Thai boxing et cetera. The performance closes with an elephant show where you can watch the elephants as they move logs under the command of their mahouts. It is also possible to ride one of the elephants.

28. Nakhon Pathom/นครปฐม



50 km W

Nakhon Pathom is considered the oldest city in Thailand and the name also means "The First City". According to tradition, missionaries were sent from India to King Ashoka in Nakhon Pathom in the second century BC to spread the teachings of Buddhism. At that time, Nakhon Pathom was the capital of Suvarnabhumi, "The Land of Gold". This is also the name of the international airport of Bangkok, which opened in 2006.

Today, Nakhon Pathom is an important city to the Thais and the tallest Buddhist building in the world – The Pra Pathom Chedi, which measures 127 metres, dominates it.

The Chedi was built in several stages – in the 10th century, the Mon People constructed the first small chedi, which was later extended to 40 metres by the Khmers in the form of a Cambodian prang. The prang was destroyed already in 1057 when King Anaweatha of Pagan drove the Khmers out,

and the fighting left the prang a ruin. In the 19th century, King Mongkut recognised the importance of the place housing the oldest Buddhist building in the country, and he initiated the construction of the present big chedi, which was completed under his successor King Chulalongkorn.

In the vihar of the temple complex by the chedi, you can see a standing Buddha, which has been put together of old finds and new parts. This took place on the initiative of King Vajiravudh, whose ashes are buried by the statue, which was sanctified in 1915.

29. The Damnoen Saduak Floating Market/ดำเนินสะดวก



N of Samut Songkhram, 100 km SW

Traditionally, part of the local trade in Thailand took place in floating markets. This was possible because of all the dug out canals, which were often the easiest and most direct way of getting to the market place.

Today, the Damnoen Saduak is the only floating market left in Thailand. A market that is great to experience with its myriad of small boats where the vendors sell fruit and vegetables from the surrounding rural areas. Some boat vendors sell tourist goods, other boats are floating fast food stalls. The atmosphere is very lively and a trip on the canals in the area, known as the Venice of Thailand, is also interesting.

30. Bang Pa In/บางปะอิน

70 km N

www.palaces.thai.net

The comfortable Bang Pa In on the Chao Phraya River between Bangkok and Ayutthaya is the former summer palace of the royal families of Thailand. The Kings Rama IV, Rama V and Rama VI were the most frequent residents, whereas the later kings have not lived there because the architecture of the palace lacks Thai quality. It is still being used, however, most frequently by the Thai Government for various representative purposes, but the Royal Couple have been here during special ceremonies.

Bang Pa In is easy to get to by car or bus, but the most recommendable way of getting there is via the river, the way the kings did previously. You can reach Bang Pa In by boat from both Bangkok and Ayutthaya.

Bang Pa In was originally laid out in the 17th century as the Royal Garden. This was prior to the destruction of Ayutthaya and before Bangkok gained the status of capital. After the Burmese had destroyed Ayutthaya, Bang Pa In fell into disuse for a long period. During the latter part of the 19th century, King Rama IV (Mongkut) rediscovered and restored Bang Pa In, and the buildings that can be seen today are from the time of Mongkut and his successor Rama V (Chulalongkorn).

The architectural style is mainly European because the King studied in Europe. He wanted to acknowledge the progress that took place in Europe and build in a Western style to stay on good terms with the colonial powers, so that Thailand would remain independent as the only country in the region. The buildings are constructed around a centre of man-made ponds and canals.

Close to the southern main entrance of the complex, you will find a stone building in Khmer style. It was constructed in 1880 in memory of King Prasat Thong, who founded the place and during whose reign Khmer artefacts made of gold were found. To the west, on the opposite side of the pond, Saphakhan Ratchaprayun is situated. It is a building in colonial style from 1879 constructed to house the royal relatives.

Shortly after, you will reach the so-called Doll's Bridge, from where you will have the most famous view of Bang Pa In. The bridge itself is adorned with a number of statues in European style. To the north, the pavilion Phra Thinang Aisawan Thipaya-Art is situated on a small island in the pond and behind it, you will find the Italian inspired palace building Tevarai-Kanlai. The pavilion, whose name means The Divine Seat of Personal Freedom, is from 1876 and it is the only building in Thai style.

Towards and along the Chao Phraya, you go from the Doll's Bridge to the neo-classical residence and throne hall Phra Thinang Varophat Phiman, which means Excellent and Shining Heavenly Abode. In the audience chamber, there are fine oil paintings by Thai artists. The Royal Couple bought the paintings, which have all won first prize in various competitions. The throne belonged to Rama V, and facing it are two modern thrones the Royal Couple use when special guests arrive. The interior of the throne hall and the adjacent rooms is French and English, the carpet, however, is from Thailand. The royal apartments, which are located in the Inner Palace, are still used occasionally by the Queen. Behind the Royal Residence, you will find the quaint Royal Floating House on the Chao Phraya River.

If you go from the Doll's Bridge to the right past the pavilion, you will cross two bridges before you reach the largest island of the complex; an island dominated by a two-storied building called Phra

Thinang Uthayan Phumisathian. Originally, it was constructed in wood in 1877, but it burned down in 1938. The present building was constructed on the initiative of Queen Sirikit in Swiss style.

On the next island to the north, the characteristic observatory and watchtower Ho Withun Thasana (The Sage's Lookout) is situated. It was erected in 1881 in stripes of white and terracotta and bears resemblance to a lighthouse.

If you cross one more bridge from the watchtower you will see the 1889 palace Phra Thinang Vehat Chamrun in Chinese style. The name means Royal Abode, Divine Light, and it was a present from the Chinese Chamber of Commerce at the time. On the ground floor, there is a throne in traditional Chinese shape in the big audience hall and a bedroom. The colours are red and golden and in Chinese buildings, they symbolise joy and prosperity. On the remainder of the area, there are a number of buildings used for accommodation and administrative offices.



With children in Bangkok

Butterfly Garden & Insectarium (Rotfai Gardens)

Children's Discovery Museum (Chatuchak Park):
www.bkkchildrenmuseum.com

Dusit Zoo (Rama IV Road):
www.zoothailand.org

Fantasia Lagoon (The Mall Department Store):
www.themalldepartmentstore.com

Jamboree Land (Emporium):
www.emporiumthailand.com

Museum of Science & Planetarium
(Sukhumvit Road):
www.nsm.or.th

Safari World (Ram Indra Road):
www.safariworld.com

Siam Park (101 Sukhapibarn Road):
www.siamparkcity.com

Siam Ocean World (Siam Paragon):
www.siamparagon.co.th

Snake Farm (1871 Rama IV Road)

Shopping in Bangkok

Khaosan Road, Ploenchit Road/Rajdamiri Road,
Siam Square, Silom Road

Central City
(Thanon Bang Na Trat, station: On Nut):
www.central.co.th

Central Plaza (station: Mo Chit, Phanon Yothon):
www.central.co.th

Central Silom
(Silom Road 2, station: Sala Daeng, Silom):
www.central.co.th

Central World Plaza
(Skybridge from station: Chit Lom):
www.central.co.th

Emporium
(Sukhumvit soi 24, station: Phrom Phong):
www.emporiumthailand.com

Gayson Plaza (Skybridge from station: Chit Lom):
www.gaysorn.com

MBK Mah Boon Krong
(Thanon Phayathai, station: National Stadium):
www.mbk-center.com

Robinson (Ratchadapisek Road):
www.robinson.co.th

Robinson (Silom Road):
www.robinson.co.th

Robinson (Sukhumvit soi 17/19):
www.robinson.co.th

Siam Discovery Center
(Thanon Ploenchit/Thanon Phayathai,
station: Siam Station):
www.siamdiscoverycenter.co.th

Siam Paragon
(991/1 Rama I, station: Siam Station):
www.siamparagon.co.th

The Mall Department Store (1909 Ramkamhaeng):
www.themalldepartmentstore.com

Public transportation in Bangkok

Bangkok City Transport:
www.bts.co.th

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Metro Map



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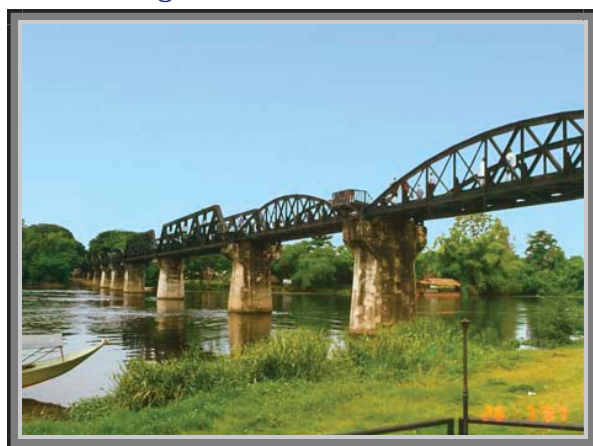
B. Kanchanaburi/ กาญจนบุรี

About Kanchanaburi

Kanchanaburi was founded in the 19th century, so it is not known as one of the old cities of Thailand, but as a stage for events during the Second World War.

Attractions

1. The Bridge over the River Kwai



The river Kwai has been immortalised through Pierre Boulle's novel about the dramatic events that took place when the bridge over the river Kwai was built and blown up. The book has been made into a film, and the melody "The River Kwai March" is also world famous.

Today, you can see the new bridge that was built after the Second World War. It is celebrated as if it were the historic one, but in spite of the difference, it is still an interesting experience.

2. The Railway of Death /ทางรถไฟสายมรณะ



During the Second World War, the Japanese wanted to avoid going by sea to reach British India. The strength of the English Navy was frightening and at the same time, it was a long way from Japan south of Singapore to India. Instead, the troops had to be transported over land through the mountainous and impassable border area between Burma and Thailand.

From 1942-1944, 415 kilometres of railway was built. In many places, the terrain was nearly impassable, but the railway was completed and linked up with the existing railways in Thailand and Burma.

The railway was never used for its purpose, however. Japan retreated and after a few years the railway was dismantled, except for a short stretch between Kanchanaburi and Nam Tok, where you can go by train today.

The railway is called The Railway of Death because hundreds of thousands of Asians and Allied prisoners of war built the railway, and many of them died of disease and accidents.

In the JEATH-museum, the story of the railway is described, and in Kanchanaburi you can see the thousands of graves of the Allied prisoners of war who succumbed to the hard labour.

Hellfire Pass, which is found 80 kilometres along the road from Kanchanaburi, is an example of how hard the labour was. On this section, the railway was cut and blasted through the rocks with simple tools and many lives were lost due to the hardships.

C. Ayutthaya/อยุธยา

<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/576>

Historical outline

The city of Ayutthaya is the second capital of Thailand. King Ramathibodi founded Ayutthaya in 1350 and it was the main city in the Kingdom of Ayutthaya. Ayutthaya was situated 80 kilometres up the Chao Praya River and thus in a central position in the realm and with access to the sea. Strategically, Ayutthaya was in a good position surrounded by rice fields, which contributed to the good economy of the city, and on the confluence of three rivers that made navigation from the capital to the provinces of Ayutthaya easy and fast.

Ayutthaya flourished and its architecture, among other things, developed into what is known today as the typical Thai style. Trade and the economy boomed and, except for a period in the 16th century when it was under Burmese control,

Thailand was ruled from Ayutthaya, which was one of the leading and wealthiest cities of South East Asia with more than one million inhabitants when at its peak.

The 33 kings who ruled from Ayutthaya continued the Khmer tradition of a divine royal power and they built great palaces and spectacular religious buildings. The city and the realm peaked under King Narai who ruled from 1657-1688. After his death, the kingdom began to decay and the relations with neighbouring Burma deteriorated. After a number of wars, Ayutthaya fell into the hands of the Burmese in 1767 after 15 months' of siege. The city stayed on Burmese hands for a short time only, but they had burnt down practically every single building beyond recognition and thus the Ayutthaya era was over. The ruins that characterize the city today are due to the Burmese conquest and the following destruction.

Ayutthaya is one of the sights in Thailand included in the World Heritage List of UNESCO.

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Attractions

1. Chantara Kasem/

พระราชวัง จันทรเกษม



Thanon U Thong

King Maha Thamaraja erected the Chantara Kasem Palace in 1577. The King built it for his son, the future King Naresuan, who was to rule from 1590-1605. The palace was destroyed but rebuilt by King Mongkut (Rama IV), who lived there during his visits to Ayutthaya.

Today, one of the palace buildings, Phisai Sanyalak, is converted into a section of the National Museum and the exhibition includes jewels, woodcarvings, Buddha figures and other religious objects dating from the 13th to the 18th century.

2. Wat Ratcha Burana/

วัดราชบูรณะ พระนครศรีอยุธยา



Thanon Sri Sanphet

With its brick buildings and its big prang, the ruin of the Ratcha Burana Temple looks rather like a church building. The temple was founded in 1424 by King Boromaraja II in remembrance of the two princes of the ageing king who killed each other duelling for the throne on elephant back. The temple was built by the third and younger prince to contain the ashes of his two brothers and of the recently deceased king. The ashes of the king were placed in the big, central chedi, while those of the princes were kept in two small chedis.

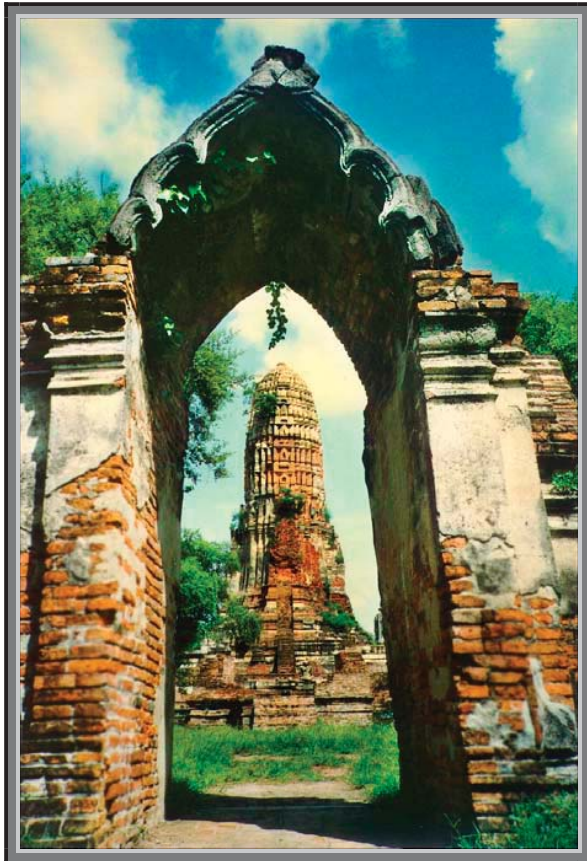
3. Wat Phra Mahathat/

วัดมหาธาตุ พระนครศรีอยุธยา



This temple dates back to the decades following the foundation of Ayutthaya. Allegedly, the temple was erected by King Boromaraja I (1370-1388) to house some relics of the Buddha. Today, you can see remains of the old prang and there are ruins of several chedis. The state of the temple ruin makes it an impressive place for a walk.

4. Wat Phra Ram/วัด พระราม



Thanon Sri Sanphet

The Phra Ram Temple was built in 1369 in a typical Ayutthaya style on the very spot where King U-Thong was cremated. The temple complex is a ruin, just like the other historical relics in the city. In the area, there are remains of the various temple buildings and the most striking is the high, rounded and well proportioned prang from the 15th century.

5. Chao Sam Phraya National Museum/พิพิธภัณฑ์สถานแห่งชาติ เจ้าสามพระยา

Thanon Rotchana

http://www.thailandmuseum.com/thaimuseum_eng/chaosamphraya/main.html

The collections of the Chao Sam Phraya National Museum contain primarily arts and crafts from the Ayutthaya Period, including Buddha images,

beautiful woodcarvings and some of the few treasures that survived the Burmese attack on and destruction of the city in 1767. The most brilliant treasures were found in 1957 during the restoration of the Wat Ratcha Burana prang.

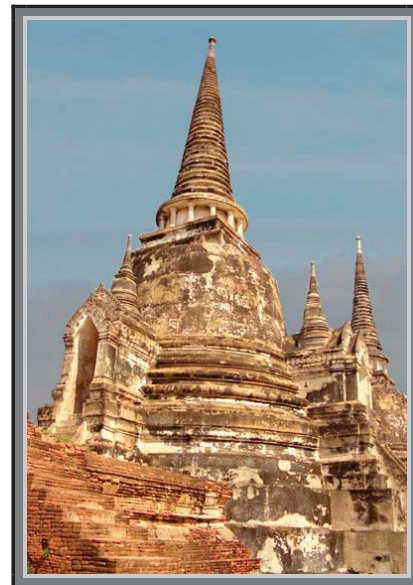
6. Viharn Phra Mongkol Bopit

Thanon Sri Sanphet

This beautiful viharn was built in the 1950s to replace the one that was destroyed in 1767. Inside the fine building, you can see one of Thailand's biggest Buddha figures in bronze. It dates back to the 15th century and was originally placed out of doors.

7. Wat Phra Si Sanphet/

วัดพระศรีสรรเพชญ์



Thanon Si Sanphet

This temple is the biggest in Ayutthaya and with its row of chedis, it has almost become the landmark of the city. The Phra Si Sanphet Temple is situated on the area of the former Royal Palace and it was used during royal and religious ceremonies.

The temple was established on the palace area in 1491 and it was since extended several times, for instance with the big chedi that can still be admired today. The chedi contain the ashes of three of the kings of Ayutthaya.

In 1499, the temple viharn was added and the following year, the king had a 16-metres tall Buddha covered with 340 kilos of gold erected. When the Burmese entered the city in 1767, they melted down the gold so that it could be used elsewhere

In its heyday, the temple complex consisted of a large building at either end of the row of chedis, which was also encircled by a wall. Today, the place is a ruin with only three of the big chedis in a relatively well-kept state. Of the other buildings only scattered remains of the foundations are left.

8. Wang Luang/วังหลวง

Wang Luang was built close to the western city wall. Originally, there was just a single building placed in a royal garden, but King Maha Thamaraja extended the palace with several buildings. After this, Wang Luang was the residential palace of the kings for a period.

9. Wat Lokaya Sutha

In the Lokaya Sutha Temple, you can see a reclining Buddha statue with a length of no less than 29 metres.

10. Wat Phu Khao Thong/วัดภูเขาทอง

The beautiful Golden Mount, Wat Phu Khao Thong, with its tall, white chedi is one of the unforgettable sights of Ayutthaya. The Burmese built the first temple here in 1569 during a short-lived invasion of the city.

According to Buddhist law, the Burmese temple could not be demolished, so the Thai had to wait almost 200 years for the temple of their enemy to collapse due to lack of maintenance. The new Thai temple was built only to be destroyed by the Burmese a few years later in 1767.

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The present chedi is a reconstruction of the building from the 18th century, and on the same occasion, a monumental statue of King Naresuan on horseback was built on the road leading up to the chedi, the Golden Mount, from where there is a spectacular view over Ayutthaya.

11. Wat Chai Wattanaram/

วัดไชยวัฒนาราม

The Chai Wattanaram Temple was built in 1630 by King Prasat Tong on a bank of the river.

Seen from the front, the complex could resemble a small version of Angkor Wat with its central prang in the shape of a corncob placed on an elevated terrace surrounded by minor prangs. The resemblance was intentional, as the central prang here, as in Angkor Wat, was erected as a symbol of the holy mountain Meru, which, according to the Hindu mythology, is the dwelling of the gods.

On the inside of the temple wall, there are a number of interesting Buddha figures.

12. St. Joseph's Cathedral

The Catholic St. Joseph's Cathedral was built in 1666 on the initiative of missionaries from Vietnam. They had come here lead by Bishop Lambert de la Motte. The original wooden church was rebuilt in stone between 1685 and 1695, but during the Burmese invasion in 1767, it gave shelter to the Thais and was therefore destroyed.

In 1831, the priest Pallegoix began rebuilding the Cathedral and in 1847, it was completed. To a European, the church building is not anything special in itself, but the atmosphere and the experience become interesting because it is placed in the historic capital of Thailand.

13. Wat Phutthaisawan

This is one of the small temples of the city and it is especially the white, corncob shaped prang that makes it a place worth seeing. The temple was built at the end of the 14th century in the place where the founder of the city, King Ramathibodi I, originally lived.

It is also worth it to have a look at the cloisters, where you will find a row of gilded Buddha figures. Notice, how the construction of the pillars creates the illusion that the room is longer than it actually is.

In the temple parking ground, there is a statue to commemorate King Ramathibodi I, King Naresuan and King Ekathotsarot.

14. Wat Suwan Dararam/

วัดสุวรรณดารารามราชวรวิหาร



The Suwan Dararam Temple dates back to the late Ayutthaya period. The restored ruins are an interesting sight including fine mural paintings and the bot, which has a curved middle part symbolising a ship that can sail monks to salvation.

15. Wat Phanan Choeng/

วัดพนัญเชิงวรวิหาร



The Phanan Choeng Temple is situated at the confluence of the Chao Phraya and Pasak Rivers and it is one of the oldest temples in Ayutthaya. The centre of the temple complex is the 19-metre tall Buddha figure from the 14th century. Round the figure, there are hundreds of other Buddha figures, especially in the many recesses. If you give a donation, you can have a figure placed here.

On the grounds, there is also a nice, little temple in Chinese style, which was built in the 18th century. The temple is particularly important to Thais of Chinese origins.

16. Wat Yai Chai Mongkol/

วัดใหญ่ชัยมงคล

King Ramathibodi founded the Yai Chai Mongkol Temple in 1357. It was meant to house monks returning from pilgrimage to Sri Lanka. The big bell-shaped chedi of the temple was not built until 1592 by King Naresuan to commemorate a military victory over the Burmese; a victory that restored freedom to Ayutthaya after 15 years as a Burmese vassal state. The Burmese returned, however, and this temple complex was also destroyed in 1767.

Today, it is possible to see the ruins of the complex and the big chedi is relatively well preserved. Out of several Buddha figures, there is a Reclining Buddha, which was for the personal meditation of King Naresuan. It is also possible to visit a small King Naresuan Museum. Notice that especially the big chedi is leaning - like the Tower of Pisa.

D. Lop Buri/ลพบุรี

Historical outline

Lop Buri, which was then called Louvo, developed as a city as early as the 6th century under the Dvaravati Kingdom. In the 10th century, the city and the region came under Khmer control and they made Loup Buri the provincial capital, which naturally increased the importance and power of the city. The architecture of the many new buildings erected by the Burmese left a clear mark on the city and later the local Lop Buri style was developed; a style that has a strong resemblance to Khmer architecture. At the end of the 13th century, the Thai fought the ruling Khmer and since then Lop Buri has been ruled by the kings of Thailand.

Lop Buri's golden age began in 1664 when King Narai declared the city the second capital of the Ayutthaya realm. Narai constructed many new buildings, including a governmental palace. He received assistance from the French, which is why the buildings from this period are a mixture of Thai and European architecture. King Narai ruled his kingdom from Lop Buri, but after his death in 1688, the city returned to the status of a provincial city under Ayutthaya. During the latter half of the 19th century, King Mongkut (Rama IV) restored some of the historic buildings and Lop Buri experienced a renaissance.

Today, Lop Buri is an administrative centre situated in beautiful natural surroundings, which, together with the city, have become the home of the famous Lop Buri monkeys – one of the popular attractions of the place. The monkeys can be seen almost anywhere, but they are concentrated round the Phra Prang Sam Yot Temple.

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Attractions

1. Wat Phra Si Ratana Mahathat/

วัดมหาธาตุ ลพบุรี

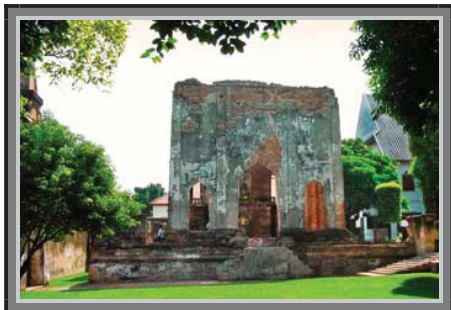


The Si Ratana Mahathat Temple is a complex of buildings constructed over several periods. It is believed to have been founded in the 12th century when the Khmers ruled the city. Inside the complex, you can admire a prang from this period, which was and still is the highest prang in the city. Later, a number of chedis and prangs were built representing Sukothai- and Ayutthaya style respectively. There is also a vihar from the time of King Narai inspired by Persian architecture.

2. Phra Narai Ratchaniwet/

พระนารายณ์ราชนิเวศน์

Pratu Phayakkha



This is King Narai's palace. It was built from 1665-1677 after the King had decided to make

Lop Buri the second capital of the Ayutthaya kingdom. As far as architecture was concerned, Narai was influenced by France, but still rooted in Khmer tradition, so the palace became an architectural mixture of the best of both cultures. After the death of King Narai in 1688, the palace was abandoned and it decayed until King Mongkut (Rama IV) restored and extended it in the 19th century. There are many exciting buildings inside the complex, only a few of the most important are mentioned here.

The Chantara Phaisan Pavilion is from 1665 and built in Thai architectural style. At first, it was King Narai's residence and later, it became his audience hall. The pavilion was restored in 1863 and it now serves as an exhibition hall for archaeological finds.

The Phiman Mongkut Pavilion was King Mongkut's residence during his visits to Lop Buri in connection with the restoration of the buildings in the 1860's.

Phra Khlang Supharat, also known as the Twelve Treasure Houses, was built in the 17th century to store the palace gold and valuable trading goods.

In the Suttha Sawan Pavilion, King Narai lived and died – in 1688. In the time of Narai, there was a beautiful garden round the pavilion with plants, ponds and fountains. Today, only ruins remain.

The Dusit Sawan Thanya Maha Prasat Hall was used by King Narai as an audience hall for diplomats and others. It was here he received Chevalier de Chaumont, the Sun King Louis XIV's envoy, who was to influence King Narai on the choice of architectural style.

2a. Narai National Museum/

พิพิธภัณฑ์สถานแห่งชาติ

สมเด็จพระนารายณ์

http://www.thailandmuseum.com/thaimuseum_eng/narai/main.htm

The King Narai National Museum is set up in the building complex of Phra Narai Ratchaniwet. The museum was founded in 1924 and it houses a brilliant collection of arts and crafts mainly in Lop Buri and Khmer style.

3 Phaulkon's Palace – Vichayen's Palace /บ้านวิชาเยนทร์

This palace was built by King Narai as a residence for Chevalier de Chaumont, who was the first French ambassador to Thailand – it was during the reign of the Sun King Louis XIV. Later, Konstantin Phaulkon from Greece moved into the palace, and he became King Narai's counsellor and later minister by the name of Chao Phraya Vichayen. Phaulkon tried to convert King Narai to Christianity and after the death of Narai, Phaulkon was executed at the request of political opponents. He was born in 1647 on a Greek island and had come to Thailand on board an English merchant ship.

Today, various ruins can be seen on the grounds, including a Catholic church, the ambassador's residence and the quarters for the rest of the diplomatic staff.

4. Prang Khaek/ปราสาทแขก

Thanon Vichayen

Prang Khaek is one of the relatively few preserved Khmer buildings and even though it is a ruin, it gives a fine impression of typical Khmer architecture. Prang Khaek is the oldest Khmer building in Lop Buri and it was restored by King Narai in the 17th century.

5. Phra Prang Sam Yot/ปราสาทสามยอด



The Phra Prang Sam Yot was originally built as a Hindu shrine, and not until the reign of King Narai was it converted to a Buddhist Temple and the Buddha figures were added.

The temple was built in the 13th century in the local Lop Buri style. The three well preserved prangs symbolise the Hindu Trinity; Brahma the creator, Vishnu the preserver and Siva the destroyer, and this harmonious building is the landmark of the city. Two of the prangs contain Buddha figures that have now been damaged, while all three prangs originally were lavishly decorated. Each November a ceremony for the local monkeys is held and this makes the place particularly well known to the Thais.

6. Wat Nakhon Kosa/วัดนครโกษา



The Nakhon Kosa Temple, which is a relatively small building, was founded and constructed in 1157 when the Khmers ruled over Lop Buri.

E. Sukothai Historical Park/แหล่งมรดกโลกสุโขทัย ศรีสัชนาลัย กำแพงเพชร

<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/574>

Historical outline

Sukothai Historical Park consists of the ruins of the town of Sukothai. The town was founded in 1238 and was the capital of Thailand's Sukothai Kingdom. The kingdom came into existence after the Khmer had been driven out of the region. King Ramkhamhaeng, who ruled from 1278, turned Sukothai into a military and culturally strong kingdom. One of his achievements was the revision of the Khmer alphabet and developing it into a Thai written language, which is still the core of the language spoken in Thailand today. The Sukothai Kingdom ceased to exist as an independent state in 1365 when it became part of the Ayutthaya Kingdom to the south.

The historic town lies west of the new town of Sukothai and covers a large area. The Royal City, which forms a rectangle of 2 kilometres east-west by 1.6 kilometres north-south, is the most interesting. It is surrounded by ramparts, moats and walls with town gates facing each of the four corners of the world. Within the area, there are ruins of the Royal Palace and of a countless number of temple complexes. The historic town of Sukothai is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The Sukothai style is considered the quintessence of the cultural golden age of Thailand and many Thais look upon Sukothai as the most outstanding of Thai architecture.

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Attractions

1. Wat Mahathat



The Mahathat Temple is at the heart of the historic Sukothai's Royal City. Furthermore, the temple was the religious centre of the entire Sukothai kingdom.

The oldest building in the grounds is the central chedi with a top in the shape of a lotus flower bud. It was erected by King Si Intharathit in the middle of the 13th century and was extended in the following century by King Lo Thai. The extension was meant to create room for some Buddha relics.

Until Sukothai was abandoned in the 16th century, the kings kept extending the temple complex and finally there were more than 200 chedis and a number of other temple buildings. A tour of the ruins will give you an impression of the large area and impressive number of buildings in the temple.

The central chedi with its decorations and the two figures of the Buddha flanking the chedi on the north and south are among the highlights.

East of the chedi are the remains of the big viharn of the compound with a well-preserved big Buddha figure. East of the viharn, you can see some chedis including a beautiful octagonal specimen.

2. Ramkamhaeng National Museum

http://www.thailandmuseum.com/thaimuseum_eng/ramkhamhaeng/main.html

East of the central temple of Wat Mahathat and still within the Royal City lies the Ramkamhaeng National Museum of Sukothai. The museum houses a number of finds from the area, and the collection describes and illustrates the exciting history of Sukothai by various means - including pictures from the beginning of the 20th century before the restoration work was begun.

3. Wat Traphang Tong

Close to the eastern exit from the Royal City, you will find the Traphang Tong Temple, known for housing a footprint of the Buddha in the mondhop of the complex. The temple, which is beautifully located on a small island, has a chedi from the 14th century.

4. Wat Si Sawai

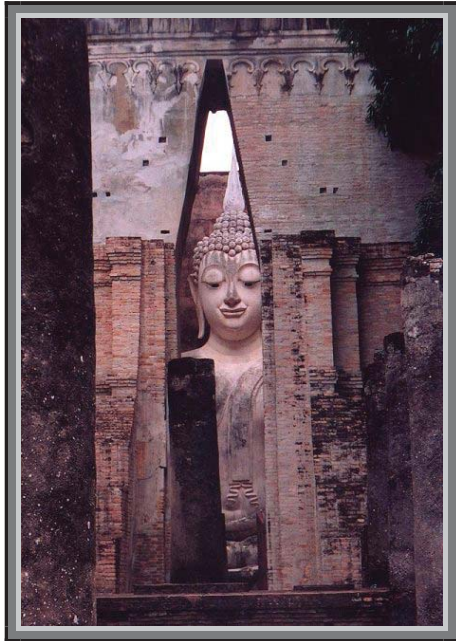
Southwest of the central temple, you will find the Si Sawai Temple. It dates from the time prior to the Thai conquest of the Sukothai area from the Khmers. The three prangs of the temple were built in Khmer style in the 12th and 13th century.

5. Other temples in the Royal City

The San Tha Pha Daeng Shrine, built in Khmer style, is located at the King Ramkamhaeng Monument. Close by you will find Wat Sorasak, a traditional bell shaped chedi from the 15th century. Note the ornamentation – 24 elephants carrying the chedi.

To the west, there are two temple complexes beautifully located in artificial ponds - the Wat Trapang and Wat Sra Si.

6. Temples outside the Royal City



To the east lies Wat Chang Lom whose bell shaped chedi is supported by no less than 36 elephants. In the area, you can also see the Wat Chedi Sung, which is an example of late Sukothai architecture.

To the north lies the Khmer Temple Wat Phra Pai Luang. It was part of the Khmer city located here before the Thais established Sukothai. West of here, you will find Wat Si Chum that houses a big figure of the Buddha in its mondhop.

F. Si Satchanalai/

ศรีสัชนาลัย

Historical outline

The Sukothai area and especially the capital Sukothai flourished after coming under Thai control. To strengthen the city and the kingdom, several satellite cities were constructed. The most important of these was Si Satchanalai north of Sukothai on the Yom River.

Si Satchanalai was the seat of the viceroy of Sukothai, and during the 14th and 15th centuries it developed into a thriving commercial town known especially for its ceramics.

Si Satchanalai has been laid out as a historical park, as has Sukothai. East of the park lies the old Khmer city Chalieng, which is also worth visiting.

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The advertisement features a light blue background with a central formula. Above the icons, the text reads: **Student Discounts** + **Student Events** + **Money Saving Advice** = **Happy Days!**. Below each text element is a square icon: a shopping cart for discounts, a calendar for events, a pound symbol for saving advice, and three stars for happy days.

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Attractions

1. Wat Chang Lom

As in Sukothai, there is a central chedi in the old town inside the walls. The chedi is an impressive example of Sri Lankan architecture, and being the first of its kind in the Kingdom of Sukothai, it served as an example to many similar buildings.

The bell shaped chedi is placed on a foundation that has two levels. The upper level contains recesses with inserted Buddha figures, while the lower level consists of a row of elephants carrying the chedi towards heaven and thus the holy mountain Meru, which is the dwelling of the Gods according to the mythology.

2. Wat Chedi Chet Thaeo



This temple is found south of the central chedi. One of its preserved chedis has a top in the shape of a lotus bud.

3. Chalieng



Chalieng dates from the time of the Khmers, even though construction work has been carried on here through the following Thai period. Therefore, it is possible today to see a blend of architectural style in the ruins, for example in the temple Wat Phra Si Ratana Mahathat that boasts characteristics of Khmer, Sukothai and Ayutthaya architecture.

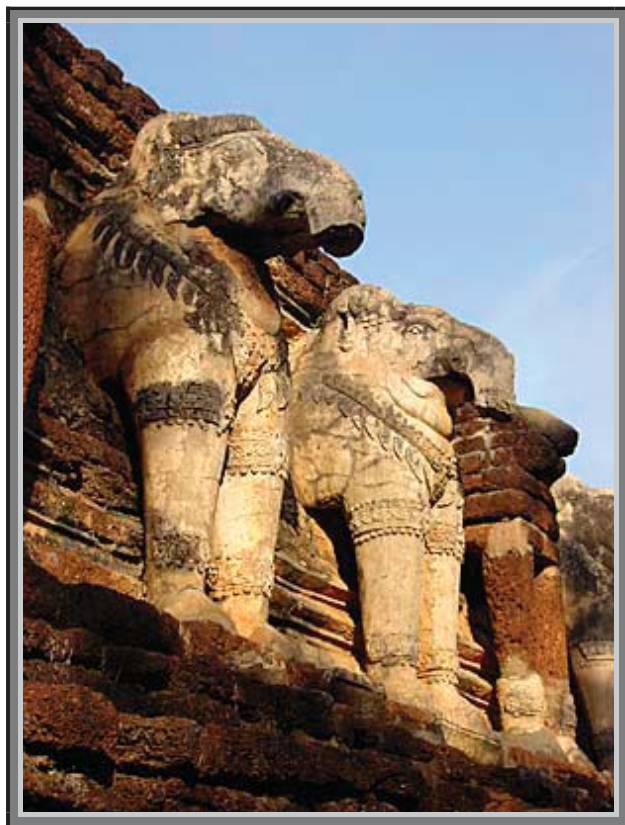
G. Kamphaeng Phet/ กำแพงเพชร

Historical outline

King Li Thai founded the historical city of Kamphaeng Phet in the middle of the 14th century. The city is situated on the Ping River southwest of Sukothai, whose kings established Kamphaeng Phet as an advanced garrison town. Kamphaeng Phet replaced the military outpost on the opposite side of the river - the town of Chakangrao.

Attractions

1. The historical Kamphaeng Phet



In the historical Kamphaeng Phet, you can see ruins of fortifications and temples. The Wat Phra Si Iriyabot Temple is named after the four Buddha statues that the place is known for. The four

statues in Sukothai style are in four postures: walking, standing, sitting and reclining. The standing Buddha is the only one that is well preserved. It is also possible to see part of the original temple wall behind the statue.

Even though the Wat Chang Rob Temple is in ruins, its chedi is quite remarkable. The chedi is carried by elephants and a row of them are well preserved.

The largest temple complex is Wat Phra Kaew, which houses several viharns and restored Buddha statues.

2. The Provincial Museum

At the Provincial Museum, there is an exhibition of archaeological finds from the area – both from the Sukothai period and earlier. Most famous is the statue of the Hindu God Shiva. The statue was cast in bronze in the first half of the 16th century and it is as tall as a man.

3. The historical Chakangrao

There is not much left of Chakangrao, but in the middle of the countryside you come upon the Wat Chedi Klang Tung Temple lying there as a beautiful ruin, and the name actually means “The Temple in the Fields”.

You can also see the ruin of the fortified town Phom Seti, which was part of Chakangrao's own defence.

H. Tak/ตาก

www.tessabantak.go.th

Historical outline

The town of Tak was one of the westernmost towns of the Kingdom of Sukothai in the 13th century. Later, it came under the Lanna kings, and in spite of the fact that nothing has been preserved from these periods, the town really has something to offer visitors, especially the many teak houses that were built from the 19th century to the beginning of the 20th.

Tak is also known for being a fine starting point for trips in the very beautiful landscape surrounding the town. There are some national parks with mountains, rivers, waterfalls, forests and other wonders of nature.

King Tak Sin Maharat came from Tak and he drove out the Burmese in 1767 after they had conquered and destroyed Ayutthaya. Tak Sin was governor of Tak, but he became king and founded the new capital in Thonburi west of Bangkok.

Tak is also called Thailand's San Francisco, because there is a small version of the Golden Gate Bridge spanning the Ping River in the centre of town.

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Attractions

1. The old town

Tak was once the centre of the teak trade and naturally, this had an effect on the architecture of the town. It was relatively easy for the locals to build houses from valuable teak. The best way to experience these houses is by visiting the narrow streets in the southern part of the central quarters of Tak. The houses have beautiful carvings with many fine details.

2. Wat Bot Mani Si Bunruang

Until 1954, this temple complex was divided into two separate temples: Wat Bot Mani Rat and Wat Si Bunruang. There are several things to see in this place, where traditional Thai building style coincides with the Mon style. The big chedi was built in Mon style, whereas the viharn is distinctly Thai. In the viharn, you can admire a 13th century bronze figure from the Sukothai period.

Close to the temple, you can see the statue the town erected for King Taksin, the most famous townsman. Taksin lived from 1734-1782 and he was the king who drove out the Burmese after they had destroyed Ayutthaya.

3. Wat Phra Boromthat and the historical Tak /วัดพระบรมธาตุ

25 km north of Tak, Amphoe Ban Tak

This place constitutes the historical position of Tak (not to be confused with the old town in present day Tak). There are a number of ruins here, including a pagoda built by King Ramkhamhaeng around 1300. Legend has it that the pagoda was built as a victory monument to commemorate a duel between King Ramkhamhaeng and a rival king. The duel was fought on elephant back.

4. The Bhumibol Dam/ เขื่อนภูมิพล(เขื่อนยันฮี)



60 km north of Tak, Amphoe Sam Ngao

The dam, which is named after King Bhumibol, is the biggest in Thailand and it dams the Ping River, which also flows through Tak. The construction work began in 1953 and the dam was completed 11 years later.

There is 154 metres from the foundation to the top of the dam; it is 384 metres wide and it has the capacity to retain 13,462 million cubic metres of water behind its concrete wall. The dam controls the water level and prevents flooding – and at the same time, of course, it produces electricity.

The dam is the starting point for boat trips on the artificial lake, and one of the popular trips goes 120 kilometres north towards the Chiang Mai region.

I. Mae Sot/แม่สอด

About Mae Sot

Mae Sot is a border town just 5 kilometres from Myanmar. It is a lively town marked by the border trade across the Moei River, which constitutes a natural frontier.

The Mae Sot area is characterised by various ethnic peoples, the four dominant of which are Thais, Burmese, Chinese and the Karen people. In and around Mae Sot, you can see many Burmese working legally or illegally in Thailand; they are easy to recognise by the powdered cheeks of the women and the sarong pants worn by the men.

The road to Myanmar goes over the Thai-Myanmar Friendship Bridge, which was built in 1997, and it is along this road to Myanmar that some of the sights are situated. Others are to be found near Mae Sot, which is surrounded by mountainous landscapes with roaring rivers, beautiful waterfalls and other outdoor wonders.

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Attractions

1. Wat Chumphon Khiri

In Mae Sot

The Chumphon Khir Temple was built about 200 years ago. In the course of time, the complex has been restored and reconstructed several times, including the recently erected chedi inspired by the Shwedagon chedi in Yangon, the capital of Myanmar. Apart from the big, gilded chedi, there are other lavishly decorated buildings worth seeing.

2. Wat Mani Phraison

In Mae Sot

This temple by the market of Mae Sot has a particularly exciting chedi upon which 233 small chedis have been built. The chedi is a very beautiful sight with a wealth of details, including a vast number of Buddha figures.

3. Wat Thai Wattanaram

4 km west of Mae Sot towards the Myanmar border bridge

Inside this temple complex, you can see a number of Buddha figures in Burmese style, including a colossal reclining Buddha from 1993 and another statue in marble. In the viharn of the complex, there is an exhibition of Burmese musical instruments and this may give you a taste of what it is like to be in Myanmar, which is less than one kilometre away.

4. Talat Rim Moei border market/ ตลาดริมเมย



5 km west of Mae Sot by the Myanmar border bridge

Being a border town, trade is widespread throughout Mae Sot and various ethnic groups sell all kinds of goods on the Rim Moei Market. It is a good place for buying Burmese products and the mere atmosphere is enough to give you a foretaste of the culture of the neighbouring country.

5. Wat Phra That Doi Din Kiu

11 km northwest of Mae Sot

The Phra That Doi Din Kiu Temple is a kind of forest temple, beautifully situated on a hilltop overlooking the Moei River and Myanmar. The chedi was built in Burmese style much like the Kyaiktiyo Pagoda in Myanmar.

6. The Namtok Pha Charoen Waterfall/ น้ำตกพาเจริญ



40 km southeast of Mae Sot

The Pha Charoen Waterfall is one of the spectacular experiences found in the landscape around Mae Sot. The fall consists of no less than 97 minor falls quite close to the highway, and they seem to spring from nowhere in the jungle-like surroundings.

The waterfall is in a national park by the same name as the fall. The park covers an area of 855 rather mountainous square kilometres and the tallest peak reaches a height of 1,765 metres. In addition to the Pha Charoen Fall, there are other waterfalls, hot springs and an abundance of plants to delight the eye of any visitor.

Highway 1090 running from Mae Sot to the Pha Charoen Waterfall and on to Um Phang is an experience in itself. Hairpin bends and a hilly landscape with one vantage point after the other is what awaits you on this trip and on the trip through the mountains between Mae Sot and Tak. Driving here will give you the chance to experience the beautiful landscape along the border with Myanmar.

7. Gibbon Sanctuary



45 km southeast of Mae Sot

Approximately five kilometres south of the Pha Charoen Waterfall, there is a sanctuary for gibbons that have been found unwanted, injured or mistreated in the private homes, bars and zoos of Thailand. The sanctuary is run on a private basis and tries to give the gibbons a new and better life full of care, ample room and correct food.

J. Lampang/ลำปาง

www.lampang.go.th

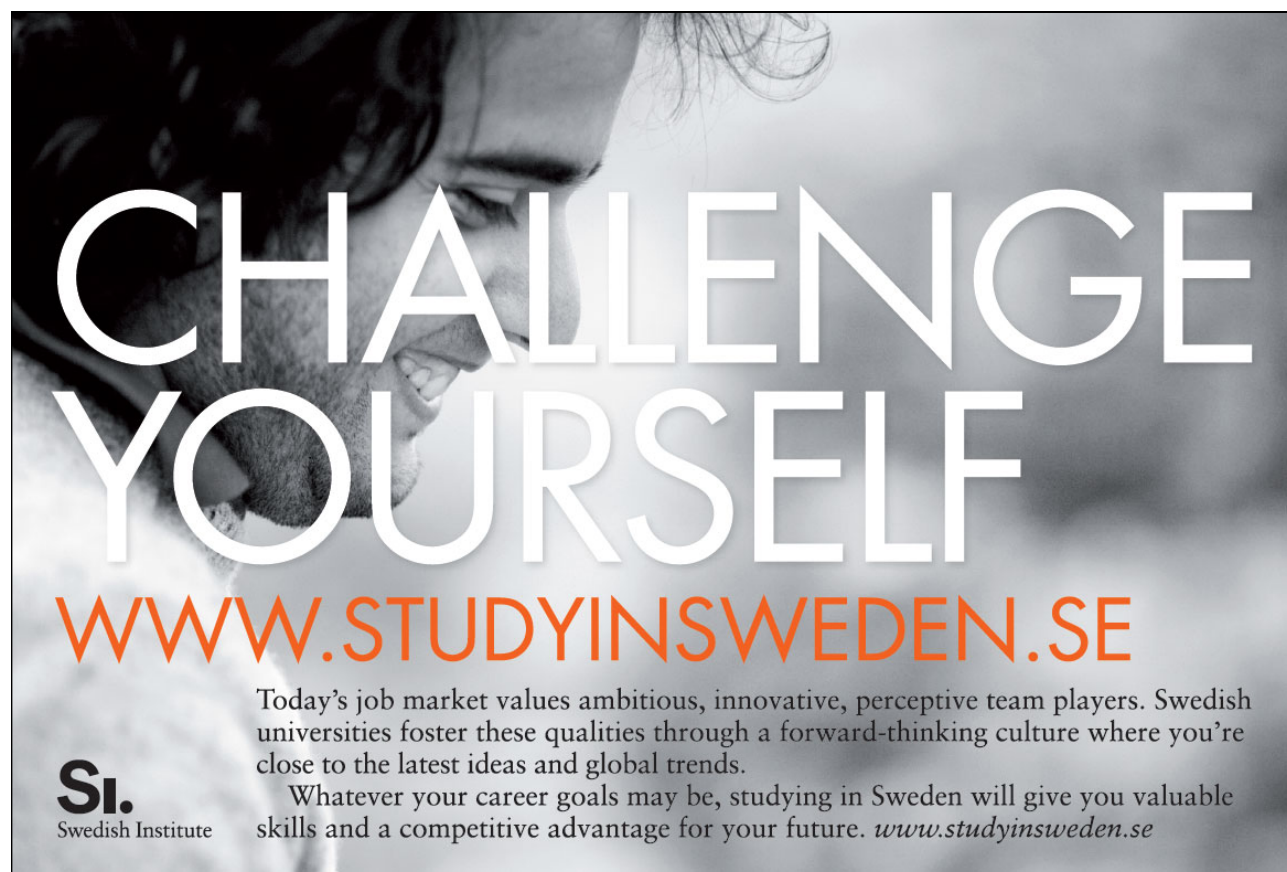
Historical outline

A prince, the son of Queen Chama Devi of the Haripunchai Kingdom, founded Lampang in the 7th century. Queen Chama had established the Mon Kingdom north of Lampang. At that time, the city was called Kelang Nakhon and beside the city itself, there were four satellite towns functioning as advanced military outposts. Of the four satellite towns, only Wat Phra That Lampang Luang remains today.

For a long time, Lampang had self-government, to a wide extent also under the later Lanna Kingdom. Like the rest of the region, the Burmese ruled Lampang for several centuries until it became part of Thailand again.

In the 20th century, Lampang was one of the centres of the teak industry of northern Thailand with about 4,000 elephants hauling logs. The historic abundance of teak is still evident in the streets where you can see old teak houses built in traditional style – especially in the Baan Sao Nak neighbourhood.

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Attractions

1. The old town

Thanon Talat Kao

The Talat Kao Street, which runs parallel to the river, is the old market street of Lampang. Go for a walk here where it is still possible to see buildings in the traditional Lanna style. Note also the Chinese element present in the carved wooden doors – and the Victorian element brought in by the trade with the Burmese, who were influenced by the English.

2. Wat Phra Kaew Don Tao/

วัดพระแก้วดอนเต้า



Thanon Phra Kaew

The architecture of the Phra Kaew Don Tao Temple was inspired by both the Lanna Kingdom and the Burmese, who ruled the city for centuries. Thailand's famous Emerald Buddha, which can now be seen in Wat Phra Kaew in Bangkok, was here for some decades in the 15th century. It is said, that the elephant that was to carry the Emerald Buddha from Chiang Rai to Chiang Mai in 1436 stopped here and refused to move on. Therefore, the figure stayed here until 1468 when King Tilokaraja moved it to Chiang Mai as originally planned.

The big white and golden chedi of the temple and a small museum with Lanna artefacts are among

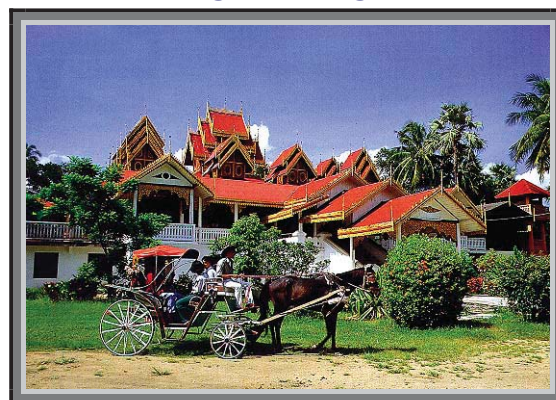
the sights here. The chedi with a height of 50 metres is the only preserved original building in the area, and it is said to house a strand of the Buddha's hair. Among the 20th century buildings here, it is possible to see fine examples of glass mosaic and woodcarvings.

3. Wat Pha Fang

Thanon Sanam Bin

The temple here was built in the 19th century and especially the golden chedi is a beautiful sight. This place houses a relic brought here from Myanmar in 1906. The Phra Fang Temple is in fact built in Burmese style and bears witness to the strong historical Burmese influence in the area.

4. Wat Si Rong Mueang/วัดศรีรองเมือง



The Si Rong Mueang Temple was erected in 1905. Woodwork, stuccowork and glass mosaic are brilliant elements of this prime example of Burmese temple architecture.

5. Wat Phra That Lampang Luang/ วัดพระธาตุลำปางหลวง



This impressive temple complex is among the most important in Thailand and a good example of the traditional building style of the Lanna Kingdom. It is situated in one of the historic satellite towns outside the actual city of Lampang. A memorable moment for the Thais in their many battles against the Burmese took place here when the Burmese troops were defeated after having ruled for 200 years. Thai soldiers sneaked into the temple through the drainpipes and the element of surprise was decisive in securing their victory.

Climbing up the stairs to the temple, you can see the grand and elegant design of the buildings. Some people consider it one of the most spectacular temples in Thailand and the 50-meter tall chedi is said to house genuine relics of the Buddha.

Access to the temple is through the richly decorated and monumental entrance guarded by lions and nagas, the mythological serpents.

The big viharn of the temple is from 1496. It was restored in the 1930s and it houses fine murals from the 19th century. In the Nam Tam viharn, there are paintings from the 16th century. In a small viharn, you can see the Phra Keo Don Tao-Buddha figure that was originally kept in the temple of Lampang, which had the same name as the figure.

Inside the temple grounds, there are also some holy bodhi trees whose branches are supported by a vast number of crutches placed there by people wishing to bring health and happiness to their families. There is also a minor temple here.

6. Wat Chedi Sao/วัดเจดีย์ขาวหลัง



This beautiful temple, which is also known as the “Temple of 20 chedis”, is found outside Lampang on the road to Jae Hom. It is a very idyllic place and the many white chedis in a blend of Burmese and Thai style are a delight to the eye. The temple also has a fine collection of statues, including the twelve animals from the Chinese calendar and some others from Buddhist mythology.

K. Lamphun/ลำพูน

Historical outline

The city of Lamphun was founded in the year 660 and from 750-1281, it was the capital of the Mon Kingdom known as Haripunchai. It was one of the minor historical kingdoms situated in the present-day area of northern Thailand. A number of buildings from the time of the Mon Kingdom are still here and some preserved artefacts can be seen in the city museum. The independence of the Haripunchai Kingdom had to be given up when King Mengrai annexed the area into his Lanna Kingdom. More recently, city walls and moats were constructed. They were laid out and dug at the beginning of the 19th century and can still be seen today.

A visit to Lamphun is also recommendable due to the pleasant atmosphere of the city streets - particularly along the Kuang River.

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Attractions

1. Haripunchai Lamphun National Museum

Thanon Inthayongyot

http://www.thailandmuseum.com/thaimuseum_eng/haribhunchai/main.htm

The National Museum in Lamphun has an interesting exhibition of finds and artefacts, especially from the periods of the Kingdoms of Haripunchai and Lanna, but also from other periods of the cultural history of Thailand.

2. Wat Phra That Haripunchai/ วัดพระธาตุหริภุญชัยวรมหาวิหาร

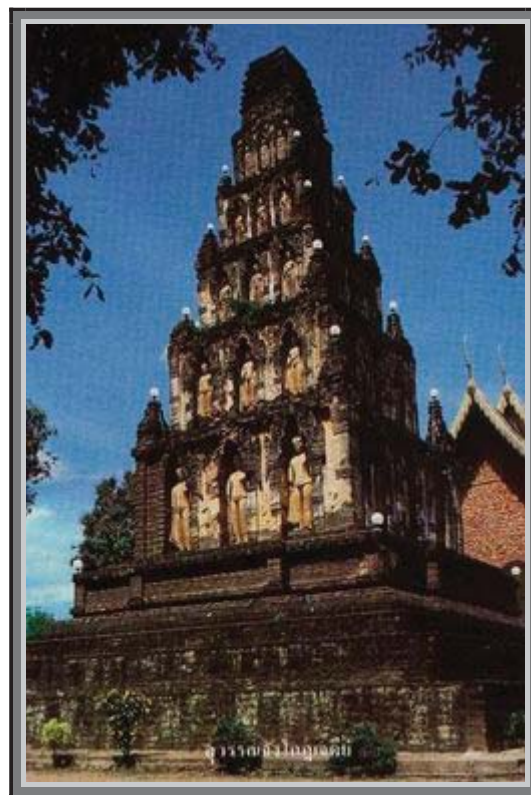


This temple complex is said to have been founded in 1044 by Kong Athitayaraj of Haripunchai. The 46-meter tall golden chedi with a top of 9 sunshades made of 7 kilos of pure gold is especially interesting and dominating. Within the complex, it is also possible to see stone lions, an untypical square chedi and a Buddha statue in Lanna style from the 15th century. The temple is built in a place where there used to be a royal palace.

There is also a temple library here from the 19th century adorned with nagas and a pavilion with a gong that was the biggest in the world when it was cast in 1860. Outside the temple walls, there are various buildings and Buddha statues, including a

reclining Buddha and a fat, happy Buddha in Chinese style.

3. Wat Chama Devi/ วัดจามเทวี



Centrally located in the Chama Devi Temple, you will find the interesting stepped-pyramid chedi, among the oldest of its kind in Thailand. Apart from its special shape, it is lavishly decorated with no less than 60 niches housing Buddha figures. The chedi contains the ashes of the famous Queen of Lamphun, Chama Devi. Locally, the temple is also called Wat Ku Kut.

L. Chiang Mai/ เชียงใหม่

Historical outline

Chiang Mai is the main city of northern Thailand. It is known as the “Rose of the North” because of its picturesque position on the Ping River surrounded by beautiful scenery.

Chiang Mai was founded in 1296 by King Mengrai to be the main city of the region, where there had so far been only scattered buildings along the river.

Chiang Mai was constructed with moats and city walls, so the basis for an influential city was laid out from the beginning, and within the Lanna Kingdom, Chiang Mai did become the dominating city. An example of its success was that the eighth Buddhist World Synod was held here in 1477.

In 1556, the Burmese conquered the city and they ruled the following two centuries. In 1775, the Thais reconquered the city under King Taksin and he appointed Chao Kawila Viceroy of northern Thailand. In a few years around 1800, Chao Kawila had strengthened the city walls.

Chiang Mai was extended and culture and trade flourished. The railway from Bangkok reached Chiang Mai in 1921 and in 1927, the Royal Family of Thailand rode into the city on elephants; this was the first royal visit from Bangkok. In 1933, Chiang Mai officially became part of Siam - present-day Thailand. In the latter part of the 20th century, tourism in Chiang Mai developed rapidly, and the historical starting point as the main city of northern Thailand has created a cultural peculiarity that is very rewarding to visitors. This can be seen in the city's vast numbers of temples and in the lively trade of locally produced arts and crafts.

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Attractions

1. Pratu Tha Phae

The old part of Chiang Mai is square and surrounded by a moat, walls and city gates. If you want to do the entire beautiful and nice trip around it, it will amount to a bit more than 6 kilometres and the Tha Phae city gate is a good place to start.

Tha Phae is the eastern entrance to the city and you can see the beautifully reconstructed city gate, just wide enough to allow an elephant with a person on either side to enter. Now, there is a square in front of the gate where the moat runs north-south and you can see quite a stretch of the city wall.

Walking clockwise will take you southeast to the Jaeng Katam bastion and from there to the next city gate, Pratu Chiang Mai, which carries the name of the city and was the entrance from the city of Lamphun to the south. The gate was erected by King Mengrai in 1296, restored around 1800 and reconstructed from 1966 to 1969. If you walk on, you will reach the other southern gate, Pratu Suan Prung, which for a long time was reserved funeral processions leaving the city.

Towards the southwest, you will see the Jaeng Ku Ruang bastion and further along at the west side of the moat the Pratu Suan Dok city gate, which means the “Flower Garden Gate”. The name refers to the king’s Flower Garden placed outside this city gate in the 14th century. To the northwest is the Jaeng Hua Rin bastion, which is probably the best preserved of the bastions.

The last of the five gates of the city, Pratu Chang Pheuk, which was erected in 1296 like the eastern gate, is on the north side of the moat. This was the gate where the Lanna sovereigns entered in connection with their crowning ceremonies. To

the northeast, you will find the fourth and last bastion called Jaeng Si Phum, which is the oldest part of the entire structure.

2. Wat Chiang Man/วัดเชียงใหม่



Thanon Ratchaphakkinai

This temple dates back to the year 1296 when Chiang Mai was founded as King Mengrai’s capital. It is the oldest temple of the city, and in the beginning, it also served as the royal residence. The building style is typically Lanna-northern Thailand, which can be seen by the teak pillars in the bot, the main vihar and by the low hanging roof constructions. In the temple vihar, you can see some interesting Buddha figures.

3. The Three Kings Monument



Thanon Phra Pokklao

This monument was erected to commemorate the three kings of northern Thailand: King Mengrai of Chiang Mai, King Ngam Muang of Phayao and

King Ramkhamhaeng of Sukothai. The monument is a symbol of the pact of the kings that made the foundation of Chiang Mai as the new capital of the Lanna Kingdom possible. The square, by the way, is the central square of the city from a historical point of view.

4. Chiang Mai Art & Cultural Hall

The Chiang Mai City Art & Cultural Centre is located right behind the Three Kings Monument. Through a number of fine works of art and crafts, it shows the historical development of the area from main city in the Lanna Kingdom to a part of modern Thailand.

The museum building is the former residence of the royal families of northern Thailand and it was also the City Hall and seat of the provincial government.

5. Wat Chedi Luang/วัดเจดีย์หลวง



Thanon Phra Pokklao

Wat Chedi Luang is the name of a temple area that was originally three separate temples; apart from Chedi Luang, there was Wat Ho Tham and Wat Sukmin. King Saen Muang Ma began the construction work in the 14th century and it was completed in 1401. It was, however, extended by King Tilokaraja shortly afterwards.

The Chedi Luang Temple contains one of the most impressive buildings of Thailand, now standing as an evocative and devout ruin: The great chedi was 97 metres high and the highest

building in the Lanna Kingdom. An earthquake destroyed the chedi in 1545, and in the 1990s it was renovated and made into the present beautiful ruin as a testimony to the position of Chiang Mai as the absolute centre of power of the Lanna Kingdom.

From 1468-1551, the Wat Chedi Luang Temple housed the Emerald Buddha, which was found in Chiang Rai and is now kept in the Wat Phra Kaew Temple in Bangkok. In 1995, a replica of the figure was placed in the eastern niche in the reconstructed chedi.

There were life size elephant statues all around the chedi, placed in such a way that they helped raise the chedi and thereby the king towards the sky. In the southwestern corner of the chedi, some of the elephants have been preserved.

West of the chedi, you can see one of the fat, happy Chinese Buddhas and in the next building, there are more figures, including a reclining Buddha.

This temple is also known as the place where the foundation stone of Chiang Mai, Lak Mueang/หลักเมือง, is kept. Originally, it was placed in Wat Sadeu Muang, but King Chao Kawila moved it here in the year 1800. It is said that King Mengrai was struck by lightning and killed in this place in 1317.

6. Wat Pan Tao

Thanon Phra Pokklao

Next to the Wat Chedi Luang Temple there is a small temple called Pan Tao, which has a very beautiful viharn in Lanna style. It is built solely from wood – note the impressive columns and the walls.

7. Wat Phra Singh/วัดพระสิงห์วรวิหาร



Thanon Sam Lan

The Phra Singh Temple was founded in 1345 by King Pha Yu to contain the ashes of his father King Kham Fu. The big chedi and the Viharn Lai Kham, which contains fine woodcarvings and murals in the Lanna style, are among the interesting buildings in the temple area. In the temple viharn, you can see the Phra Singh-Buddha image, completed at the end of the 14th century and brought here from Chiang Rai in 1400 – another beautiful example of traditional Lanna style. The murals are from the end of the 19th century.

8. Old Chiang Mai Cultural Centre/ศูนย์วัฒนธรรมเชียงใหม่

Thanon Wualai 185/3

www.oldchiangmai.com

A number of cultural shows take place in this cultural centre, including the traditional dance of northern Thailand. The centre has a very nice atmosphere and it will give you an opportunity to get close to the rich cultural life of the area - particularly the traditions of the Lanna Kingdom. The local Lanna Museum complements the experiences with historical artefacts and historical houses that have been moved to the area and reconstructed.

9. Wat Suan Dok

Thanon Suthep

In 1373, King Keu Na built this temple as a retreat for a travelling monk. Because of its many chedis, the temple is very interesting and full of atmosphere. Several of the chedis contain the ashes of royalties. In the viharn, you can also see a 500-year-old bronze statue of the Buddha.

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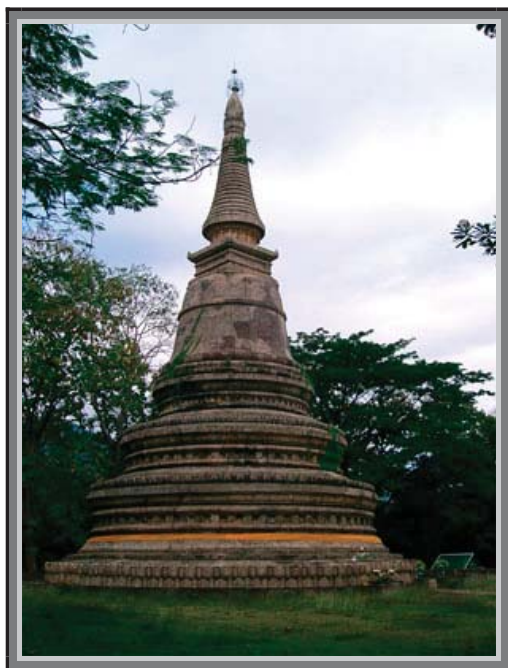
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10. Wat U Mong/วัดอุโมงค์



Thanon Suthep

www.watumong.org

The U Mong Temple is known for its beautiful location in the middle of a grove. The temple complex dates from around 1400 and after being abandoned for many years, it was restored during the latter part of the 20th century.

The special thing about the temple is that it has underground meditation cells for the monks.

11. Chiang Mai University Art Museum

Thanon Nimmanhemin

This is one of the art museums of the city where you can see a number of interesting works of art - especially from the Chiang Mai region. The museum is part of the university that was founded in 1964 as the first in the country for modern art.

12. The Chiang Mai Zoo/

สวนสัตว์เชียงใหม่

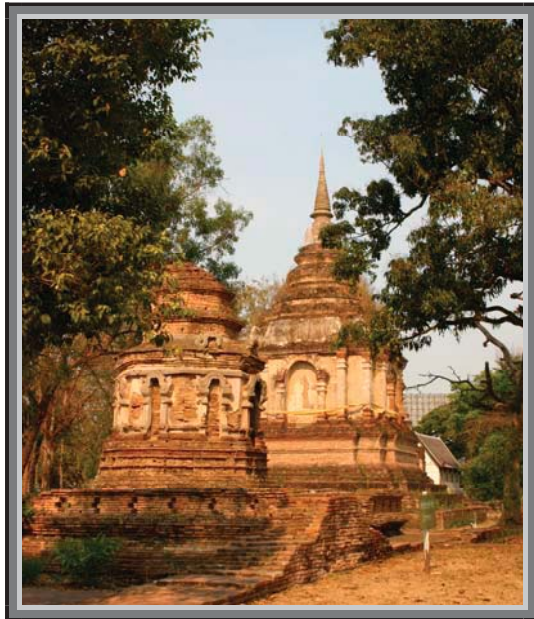


www.chiangmaizoo.com

The zoological garden in Chiang Mai is one of the biggest in Thailand. The animals are interesting to watch, of course, but the park itself is also worth seeing with its landscaped gardens, ponds and waterfalls. It is placed on a hill with a fine view of Chiang Mai. A couple of panda bears sent as a gift from China are one of the attractions that draw people here.

13. Wat Chet Yot/

วัดเจ็ดยอดหรือวัดโพธารามวิหาร



Super Highway

The Chet Yot Temple was built in 1453 and it was the setting of the eighth Buddhist World Synod – a religious congress held in 1477.

The construction of the temple was inspired by the Mahabodhi Temple in Bodhgaya in India. This is evident in the seven spires of the chedi. Each spire represents one of the weeks the Buddha stayed in Bodhgaya, where he achieved enlightenment.

There is a rural atmosphere in the temple area in spite of the proximity to the centre of Chiang Mai. The temple has preserved chedis where kings of Lanna are buried, and the Buddha figure is found inside the temple with the seven spires.

14. Chiang Mai National Museum/

พิพิธภัณฑ์สถานแห่งชาติเชียงใหม่

Super Highway

http://www.thailandmuseum.com/thaimuseum_eng/chiangmai/main.htm

The Chiang Mai National Museum was established as a regional museum centre of the culture and

history of northern Thailand. The museum opened in 1973 and the building was constructed according to local tradition, including a roof in Lanna style.

The museum's collection of Thai arts and crafts is divided into various topics, including Buddhas dating from the 14th century, and you will find collections of historic weapons and effects from modern northern Thailand.

15. Wat Ku Tao/วัดกุเต๋า



This temple was built in 1613 and it is said to house the ashes of the Burmese Prince Tharawadi Min, the son of the Lanna King Bayinnaung, who ruled from 1578 to 1607.

The Ku Tao Temple is one of Chiang Mai's many peaceful oases. The temple buildings are surrounded by many large, old trees – almost as if they are placed in a park. Ku Tao means the Watermelon Temple in Thai due to the peculiar shape of its chedi that looks like piled melons. At the foot of the chedi, you can see figures of several of the local animals, including a tiger.

16. Chiang Mai Night Bazaar

Thanon Chang Khlan

The night bazaar, one of Chiang Mai's most popular attractions, is located in the Chang Khlan Street between the streets of Tha Phae and Si Donchai. Here you can buy a load of tourist goods and local goods in the approximately 4,000 stalls and shops.

The historical basis of the night bazaar is the caravan traffic between Simao in China and Mawlamyaing on the Burmese coast southwest of Chiang Mai.

17. Wat Phra That Doi Suthep/ วัดพระบรมธาตุดอยสุเทพ



15 km northwest

Doi Suthep is the name of both a hill and a temple in the same place and it is one of the most visited places in the city.

The Wat Phra That Doi Suthep Temple is located at an altitude of 1,156 metres and it was built in 1353. The golden chedi contains a relic of the Buddha and it is therefore a place of pilgrimage to Buddhists worldwide. The story goes that the monk Sumanathera felt called upon to search for a relic in Pang Cha. The monk found the shoulder blade of the Buddha, and Lanna King Nu Naone had the relic placed upon a white elephant that was let loose in the jungle. The elephant walked all the way to the location of the present temple where it laid down and died. This was a sign that a temple had to be built right there. Today, you can see a memorial to the elephant in the temple.

Going up to the temple, you can choose the beautiful staircase of a little more than 300 steps flanked by the mythical serpents, the nagas, or you can go by the funicular railway and get there without working up a sweat.

Apart from the temple itself, you can admire the beautiful flowers, including huge bougainvilleas, and on a clear day, the view of Chiang Mai at the foot of the mount is unequalled.

18. The Phu Phing Palace/ พระตำหนักภูพิงคราชนิเวศน์

16 km northwest

The Phu Phing Palace, which is the Royal Family's winter residence, is located in the hills outside Chiang Mai. It is not possible to visit the palace when the Royal Family is in residence (normally from the middle of December to the beginning of February), but the rest of the year, you can take a closer look at the palace and the beautiful park around it. Phu Phing was built and laid out in 1962.

19. The Doi Pui Hilltribe/ หมู่บ้านชาวเขาเผ่าม้งดอยปุย

19 km northwest

There are several places where you can visit the many hill tribes of northwestern Thailand, and the Doi Pui tribe offers an easy way of getting acquainted with village life if you are in Chiang Mai and on the Doi Suthep Mountain.

The Doi Pui tribe immigrated from China after the Second World War and they have created a small community of 300 inhabitants. There are a number of shops on main street where it is possible to buy locally produced goods – other products are also for sale, however. In the side streets, you can still see houses that have been preserved as they were when the tribe moved here. They are simple wooden houses with one room for most of the daily activities. You can also see how the women produce the traditional clothing of this tribe.

You can visit several museums that exhibit tools and depict village life. You should also visit the city garden, which is particularly beautiful with various flowers, including opium poppies.

With children in Chiang Mai

The Chiang Mai Zoo

www.chiangmaizoo.com

Shopping in Chiang Mai

The Night Bazaar/Thanon Chang Khlan, Tha Pae,
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M. Chiang Rai/เชียงใหม่

Historical outline

King Mengrai founded Chiang Rai in 1262 when he ruled the Kingdom of Lanna from Chiang Saen. After the conquest of new territories, he founded Chiang Rai and made it the capital of the kingdom. In 1296, the status of capital passed to Chiang Mai, which was in a safer location farther from the unruly northern border.

Chiang Rai is a popular starting point for trekking in the beautiful and hilly landscape surrounding the city and for trips to the Golden Triangle. Chiang Rai has its own sights, however, including a number of temple complexes and there is a nice atmosphere in the city streets and parks, in the market and the night bazaar. In the centre of Chiang Rai, everything is within walking distance and there is almost no traffic compared to Bangkok and Chiang Mai. All this creates a quiet atmosphere where it is possible to stroll along the streets that are not crowded with tourists, but with local people.

Attractions

1. The Mengrai Monument/

อนุสาวรีย์พ่อขุนเม็งรายมหาราช



One of the most important places in Chiang Rai to the locals is the monument in honour of King Mengrai, the city founder. It is interesting to see how important his statue is; many people come by here and show their respect by placing flowers and elephant figures and other things at the monument.

2. The Chiang Rai city wall

Originally, Chiang Rai was located on the Kok River and surrounded by city walls. The walls were torn down in 1920 on initiative of the American Dr. Briggs, who thought that the walls blocked up the fresh air and thus caused disease. Besides, he thought that the walls restricted the growth of the city.

In the 1980s, the city council wanted to draw attention to the history of Chiang Rai and make the city more interesting to tourists, so part of the city wall was reconstructed. No one knew what it looked like. All that was left was an engraving of an elephant walking into the morning sun at the eastern city gate, so that is the only part that has been reconstructed. The wall is beautifully located; it is 100 metres long, 5 meters tall and with the eastern city gate in the middle.

3. The Hill Tribe Museum



Many different tribes live in the mountain villages in northwestern Thailand, including the Karen, Akha and Longneck. Most of the tribes have immigrated from Myanmar, but there are also tribes of Laotian origin.

You can visit the mountain villages, but the Chiang Rai Hill tribe Museum is also a possibility. It will introduce the various tribes and their history. Besides, the museum houses a number of tools and arts and crafts typical of the various tribes.

4. Wat Chet Yot

Thanon Chet Yot

When visiting the Wat Chet Yot Temple, you must see the beautiful chedi with seven spires. Like its namesake in Chiang Mai, the chedi is built like the temple in the Indian city of Bodghaya, where Buddha achieved enlightenment. The spires

symbolise the seven weeks the Buddha spent in the Indian temple.

Another interesting building is the temple viharn and in the adjoining building, you can see a ceiling painting.

5. Wat Ming Muang



The Ming Muang Temple is one of the less visited temples of the city, so it is a place characterized by a very peaceful atmosphere. The temple itself has beautiful buildings in the traditional Lanna style of northern Thailand to show. The viharn has a beautiful interior of dark wood. Note also the nicely ornamented entrance to the temple.

6. Wat Mung Muang



The Mung Muang Temple is found on the outskirts of the market area of Chiang Rai. The beautiful viharn is the biggest in the city, but do not forget to admire the fat, happy Buddha in

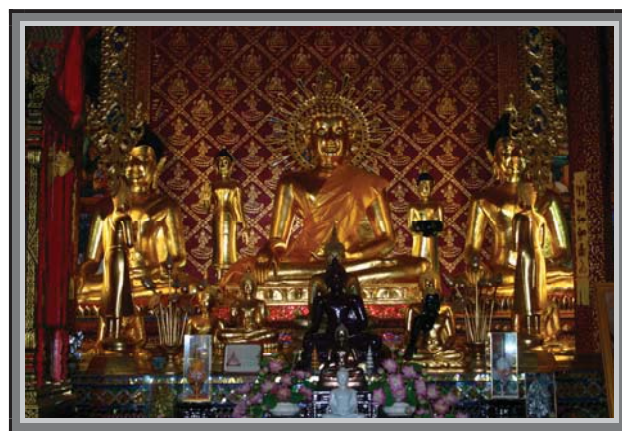
Chinese style sitting on a platform by the entrance from the market.

7. The Market

In the local fruit- and vegetable market in Chiang Rai, it is possible to experience local life in another way than in the other major cities of Thailand.

There are no tourists here, but on the other hand a lively local trade in the many stalls and entertaining, varied traffic through the market.

8. Wat Phra Singh/วัดพระสิงห์



Thanon Tha Luang

The Phra Singh Temple was built in the latter part of the 14th century and it houses one of the oldest figures of the Buddha in northern Thailand. There are many beautiful buildings in the temple compound, including the viharn that contains murals and the golden chedi.

The Buddha figure inside the viharn is a copy of the one in the Phra Singh Temple in Chiang Mai – the one that originally came from Chiang Rai in 1400.

9. Wat Phra Kaew/วัดพระแก้ว



Thanon Trairat/ถนนไตรรัตน์

This temple has a special history. It is said that lightning struck its octagonal chedi and a fragment fell off a Buddha figure made of plaster. A green colour became visible under the plaster and the figure was immediately called the Emerald Buddha, as emerald was the most valuable, green material. It turned out, however, that the figure is made of jade. In the course of time, the Emerald Buddha has been here in Chiang Rai, in Chiang Mai and in Vientiane, the present capital of Laos, before it was placed in Wat Phra Kaew in Bangkok, where it can be seen today. In 1991, a copy of the original Emerald Buddha was made and it can now be seen in the temple in Chiang Rai. This is actually the best place in the country to see it, because it is possible to get real close to it.

In the temple complex, it is also possible to see the beautiful Buddha figure called Phra Jao Lan Thong, which is made of copper and brass. The figure is said to be around 700 years old.

Wat Phra Kaew is in itself a fine example of a traditional building from the Lanna period. This is clearly seen in the fine woodcarvings and the building style with the low hanging roof constructions.

10. The Overbrook Hospital

The old part of the Overbrook Hospital was built in typical, European colonial style of the 19th century. The hospital was founded by a Christian organisation and is an example of the influence of that time of the colonial powers in the neighbouring countries of Burma (England) and Indo China (France).

11. Wat Phra That Doi Chom Thong/ วัดพระธาตุดอยจอมทอง



This temple stands on a hilltop on the outskirts of Chiang Rai. It is a place of pilgrimage for both the inhabitants of the Chiang Rai area and to people from the neighbouring countries of Laos and Myanmar.

King Achutaraat, who was the head of the Yonog Kingdom, founded the temple in the year 911 and it is said that there are relics of the Buddha in the chedi.

In the temple vihar, you can see the “City Pillar” of Chiang Rai, which marks the foundation of a new city. It dates from the 1980s, because even though Chiang Rai is an old city, it never had a pillar.

12. The Night Market



Chiang Rai has a large and agreeable night market frequented by both foreigners and local people. As opposed to the Night Bazaar of Chiang Mai and the Patpong Market of Bangkok, there are Thai restaurants and two stages with folklore and Thai popular music enjoyed by the Thais at night. Besides, the goods on the market are quite varied compared to many other markets.

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Day Tours from Chiang Rai

13. Mae Sai/แม่สาย

www.maesai.go.th

Mae Sai is the northernmost town in Thailand, situated close to the Myanmar border. The town is one of the few places where you can cross the border between Thailand and Myanmar and this influences activities and life in the street.

According to the best border trade style, the main street functions as one big market where it is possible to buy Burmese and other goods.

By the border bridge across the Ruak River towards Myanmar, it is possible on the eastern side to stand by a sign that marks the northernmost spot of Thailand.

13a. A Trip to Tachileik, Myanmar



From Mae Sai it is possible to visit Myanmar, where there is a completely different atmosphere and culture than in Thailand in spite of the short distance between the two countries.

Directly opposite the border bridge, there is a big market winding in and out of all the side streets. There are many goods here appealing to both Thais and foreigners. Here it is also easy to find the Burmese version of the Thai tuk-tuk – it is a

fun experience and a good way of getting around in the town of Tachileik.

On a hilltop near the centre of town, you will find the Burmese temple the Shwedagon Pagoda, which is a copy of the famous, colossal pagoda of Yangon. The pagoda in Yangon, however, is 3.5 times bigger than the one in Tachileik. The days of the week are marked round the pagoda, note the two Wednesdays representing the beginning (1) and the end (2) of the day. It is a tradition to have your photo taken on the day you were born and local people are ready with reference books to help you find the right date. From the Shwedagon Pagoda, there is as well a fantastic view over the city and the surrounding area.

At the foot of the Shwedagon Pagoda, there is a beautiful temple from around 1900. Both its exterior with elephant statues and its interior are worth seeing. Inside, there are beautiful murals and some Buddhas in Burmese style, which differs considerably from Thai style. There is also a Thai Buddha. Notice the three-dimensional Buddhas whose eyes are always looking at you.

14. Chiang Saen/เชียงแสน

The city of Chiang Saen is thought to have been founded in the 10th century and this makes it one of the oldest cities in northern Thailand. It was the seat of the regional government and ruling king, until King Mengrai founded Chiang Rai in 1262 and moved the capital there.

Chiang Saen was heavily fortified with city walls and moats, but it was still conquered by the Burmese in the 16th century, as was the rest of the area. The city was not under Thai rule again until King Rama of Bangkok drove out the Burmese at the beginning of the 19th century. At the same time, the king decided that Chiang Saen should be abandoned so that the Burmese would not want to reconquer it.

Throughout the 20th century, the city has been extended but with due respect shown for the historical ruins and the many old trees, which are part of the charm and characteristic of Chiang Saen.

14a. Wat Chedi Luang



King Saen-Phu ordered that the Chedi Luang Temple be built in 1291, only three years after the completion of the city wall close by. The chedi with its octagonal foundation was the highest in the city and it is in typical Lanna style.

All the stones within the temple area are original. A roof has been established over the vihar, however, as the local people use the temple actively. The big Buddha figure is from the 14th century.

14b. The City Wall

At Chedi Luang, you can see the remains of the once heavy fortifications of Chiang Saen. The original ruins of the city wall, which was built in 1288, and the matching moat are lying there.

15. Sop Ruak



The small town of Sop Ruak is the heart of the famous and notorious Golden Triangle where the river Ruak joins the mighty Mekong, the 12th largest river in the world by volume. Being a border town on both rivers, Sop Ruak can offer a view of both Laos and Myanmar. The borderland, the Golden Triangle, has for long periods produced half of the world's opium.

Sop Ruak is characterised by its status as a tourist town and is full of souvenir shops, while the proximity to Laos and Myanmar is the basis of a supply of goods from all three countries. In the town, you can also visit the opium museum – “House of Opium”, which depicts the history of opium growing in the area. In the museum, it is also possible to see real opium poppies grown for medical purposes.

From Sop Ruak, you can go on boat trips on both the Ruak and Mekong Rivers. One of the most popular trips goes south to the city of Chiang Saen. Outside the rainy season, the Donxao Island lies in the middle of the Mekong River a couple of kilometres south of Sop Ruak. The island belongs to Laos and it is possible to visit it on a boat trip – even without a visa, as there is no access to the mainland. On the island, a cabin constitutes the immigration authorities and a small Laotian market. It is popular to mail a postcard from there – it is stamped and mailed from Laos.

From Sop Ruak you can also sail close to Myanmar where the big casino Paradise is located. The casino is for Thais only. They are the only persons who can be sailed to this area. If foreigners want to visit Myanmar, they must do so from Mae Sai.

Shopping in Chiang Rai

The Night Market

Public transportation in Chiang Rai

Chiang Rai Airport:

www.airportthai.co.th

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Facts about Thailand



Politics

Official name	The Kingdom of Thailand (Prathet Thai/ราชอาณาจักรไทย)
Capital	Bangkok (Krung Thep/กรุงเทพมหานคร)
Form of Government	Constitutional monarchy
Head of State	King Bhumibol Adulyadej
Head of Government	Prime Minister Surayud Chulanont
National Day	10. December
Gained independence	Was never colonised by other countries
Main religion	Buddhism
Language	Thai
Area	513,120 km ²
Population	62,800,000 (2002)

Borders on

To the north	Myanmar, Laos
To the south	Malaysia, Gulf of Thailand, Cambodia
To the east	Laos, Cambodia, Gulf of Thailand
To the west	Myanmar, Strait of Malacca

The Highest mountains

Doi Inthanon	2,565 metres
Loi Un	2,131 metres
Khao Mokochu	1,960 metres
Khao Luang	1,835 metres
Khao Ta U Cho	1,780 metres
Khao Plai Huai Kha Khaeng	1,687 metres
Khao Yai	1,554 metres
Khoa Thong Chai	1,530 metres
Doi Sam Liam	1,456 metres
Doi Nam Dan	1,429 metres

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The largest islands

Ko Phuket	543 km ²
Ko Chang	492 km ²
Ko Samui	247 km ²
Ko Phangan	168 km ²
Ko Kut	162 km ²
Ko Tarutao	152 km ²

The largest lakes

Songkhla	1,040 km ²
Bueng Boraphet	224 km ²
Nong Han	125 km ²

The longest rivers

Mekong	4,880 km, only part of it flows through Thailand.
Salween	2,815 km, only a small part of it is inside Thailand.
Chi	765 km
Mun	673 km
Nan	627 km
Ping	590 km
Yom	555 km
Pa Sak	513 km
Songkhram	420 km
Kwae Yai	380 km
Chao Phraya	372 km

The largest administrative city areas (2000)

Bangkok	6,355,000
Samut Prakan	379,000
Nonthanburi	292,000
Udon Thani	222,000
Nakhon Ratchasima	205,000
Hat Yai	188,000
Chon Buri	183,000
Chiang Mai	174,000
Phra Pradaeng	172,000
Lampang	148,000

Administrative units

Provinces	Area
Nakhon Ratchasima	20,494 km ²
Chiang Mai	20,107 km ²
Kanchanaburi	19,483 km ²
Tak	16,406 km ²
Ubon Ratchathani	15,744 km ²
Surat Thani	12,892 km ²
Chaiyaphum	12,778 km ²
Mae Hong Son	12,681 km ²
Phetchabun	12,668 km ²
Lampang	12,334 km ²
Udon Thani	11,730 km ²
Chiang Rai	11,678 km ²
Nan	11,472 km ²
Loei	11,424 km ²
Khon Kaen	10,886 km ²
Phitsanulok	10,815 km ²
Buriram	10,322 km ²
Nakhon Si Thammarat	9,942 km ²
Sakon Nakhon	9,606 km ²
Nakhon Sawan	9,598 km ²
Si Sa Ket	8,840 km ²
Kamphaeng Phet	8,608 km ²
Roi Et	8,299 km ²
Surin	8.124 km ²

Uttaradit	7,838 km ²
Songkhla	7,394 km ²
Nong Khai	7,332 km ²
Sa Kaeo	7,195 km ²
Kalasin	6,947 km ²
Uthai Thani	6,730 km ²
Sukhothai	6,596 km ²
Phrae	6,538 km ²
Prachuap Khiri Khan	6,368 km ²
Chanthaburi	6,338 km ²
Phayao	6,335 km ²
Phetchaburi	6,225 km ²
Lop Buri	6,200 km ²
Chumphon	6,009 km ²
Nakhon Phanom	5,513 km ²
Suphanburi	5,358 km ²
Chachoengsao	5,351 km ²
Maha Sarakham	5,292 km ²
Ratchaburi	5,197 km ²
Trang	4,918 km ²
Prachin Buri	4,762 km ²
Krabi	4,709 km ²
Phichit	4,531 km ²
Yala	4,521 km ²
Lamphun	4,506 km ²
Narathiwat	4,475 km ²
Chon Buri	4,363 km ²
Mukdahan	4,340 km ²
Phang Nga	4,170 km ²
Yasothon	4,162 km ²
Nongbua Lamphu	3,859 km ²
Saraburi	3,577 km ²
Rayong	3,552 km ²
Phattalung	3,425 km ²
Ranong	3,298 km ²
Amnat Charoen	3,161 km ²
Trat	2,819 km ²
Ayutthaya	2,557 km ²
Satun	2,479 km ²
Chai Nat	2,470 km ²
Nakhon Pathom	2,168 km ²

Nakhon Nayok	2,122 km ²
Pattani	1,940 km ²
Bangkok	1,569 km ²
Pathum Thani	1,526 km ²
Samut Prakan	1,004 km ²
Ang Thong	968 km ²
Samut Sakhon	872 km ²
Sing Buri	823 km ²
Nonthaburi	622 km ²
Phuket	543 km ²
Samut Songkhram	417 km ²



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Sovereigns since 1350

Ramathibodi I	1350-1369
Ramesuan	1369-1370
Pha Ngua (Borommaracha Thirat I)	1370-1388
Thong Lan	1388-1388
Ramesuan	1388-1395
Ramracha Thirat	1395-1409
Intha Racha (Nakharinthara Thirat)	1409-1424
Borommaracha Thirat II (Sam Phraya)	1424-1448
Borommatrailokkanat	1448-1488
Borommaracha Thirat III	1488-1491
Ramathibodi II (Chettha Thirat)	1491-1529
Borommaracha Thirat IV (Nor Phutthangkun)	1529-1533
Ratsadathiratcha Kuman	1533-1533
Chaiya Racha Thirat	1534-1546
Kaeo Fa (Yot Fa)	1546-1548
V̄aravon̄śādhirāj	1548-1548
Phra Maha Chakkraphat	1548-1568
Mahinthara Thirat	1568-1569
Maha Thammaracha Thirat (Sanphet I)	1569-1590
Naresuan, the Great (Sanphet II)	1590-1605
Eka Thotsarot (Sanphet III)	1605-1610
Si Saowaphak (Sanphet IV)	1610-1611
Drongdharm (Intha Racha)	1611-1628
Chejthathraj	1628-1629
Artitthayawongs	1629-1629
Prasat Thong (Sanphet V)	1630-1655
Chao Fa Chai (Sanphet VI)	1655-1655
Si Suthammaracha (Sanphet VII)	1655-1655
Narai	1656-1688
Phet Racha	1688-1703
Luang Sorasak, Phrachao Sua (Sanphet VIII)	1703-1709
Tai Sa (Sanphet IX)	1709-1733
Boromma Kot (Borommaracha Thirat III)	1733-1758
Uthumphon (Borommaracha Thirat IV)	1758-1758
Suriyamarin or Ekkathat (Borommaracha Thirat V)	1758-1767
Taksin	1769-1782
Buddha Yodfa Chulalok (Rama I)	1782-1809
Buddha Loetla Nabhalai (Rama II)	1809-1824
Nangklao (Rama III)	1824-1851

Mongkut (Rama IV)	1851-1868
Chulalongkorn (Rama V)	1868-1910
Vajiravudh (Rama VI)	1910-1925
Prajadhipok (Rama VII)	1925-1935
Ananda Mahidol (Rama VIII)	1935-1946
Bhumibol Adulyadej (Rama IX)	1946-

Prime Ministers since 1980

Prem Tinsulanondá	1980-1988
Chatichai Choonhavan	1988-1991
Anand Panyarachun	1991-1992
Suchinda Kraprayoon	1992-1992
Meechai Ruchuphan	1992-1992
Chuan Leekpai	1992-1995 and 1997-2001
Banharn Silpa-Archa	1995-1996
Chavalit Yongchaiyudh	1996-1997
Thaksin Shinawatra	2001-2006
Chitchai Wannasathit	2006-2006
Surayud Chulanont	2006-

Holidays and remembrance days

1. January	New Year's Day
3. March	Makha Bucha
6. April	Chakri Day
13.-15. April	Songkran/Thailand New Year
1. May	Labour Day/May Day
31. May	Visakha Bucha
29. July	Asalha Bucha
30. July	Khao Phansa Buddhist Holiday
23. October	Chulalongkorn's Day
10. December	Constitution Day
31. December	New Year's Eve

Various facts

Currency	Thai baht
Currency Code	THB
Time Zone	Standard Time Zone (UTC+7)
International Postal Code	T
Internet Domain	.th
Telephone Country Code	+66

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Climate Bangkok	Avg. Temperature (°C)	Avg. Rainfall (millimeter)
January	25.9	11
February	27.6	28
March	29.2	31
April	30.1	72
May	29.6	189
June	29.0	152
July	28.5	158
August	28.4	187
September	28.1	320
October	27.7	231
November	26.8	57
December	25.5	9

Source: WorldClimate (www.worldclimate.com)

Climate Chiang Mai	Avg. Temperature (°C)	Avg. Rainfall (millimeter)
January	21.2	8
February	23.4	6
March	26.2	15
April	28.8	45
May	28.7	153
June	27.9	136
July	27.4	167
August	27.1	227
September	27.0	251
October	26.3	132
November	24.3	44
December	21.6	15


Source: WorldClimate (www.worldclimate.com)

Climate Chiang Rai	Avg. Temperature (°C)	Avg. Rainfall (millimeter)
January	20.0	16
February	22.4	6
March	25.0	29
April	27.5	80
May	27.7	216
June	27.5	249
July	27.0	297
August	27.2	436
September	26.6	264
October	25.3	136
November	22.6	38
December	19.1	24

Source: WorldClimate (www.worldclimate.com)


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Climate Phuket	Avg. Temperature (°C)	Avg. Rainfall (millimeter)
January	26.9	35
February	27.6	31
March	28.3	39
April	28.5	163
May	28.1	348
June	28.3	213
July	27.8	263
August	28.0	263
September	27.2	419
October	27.1	305
November	27.0	207
December	26.7	52

Source: WorldClimate (www.worldclimate.com)

Phrase book

Courtesy phrases

Greetings

Good morning	การทักทาย
Good day	อรุณสวัสดิ์
Good afternoon	ขอให้โชคดี
Good night	สวัสดิ์ตอนบ่าย
Hi/Hey	ราตรีสวัสดิ์
farewell	สวัสดิ์
See you	ลาก่อน
	แล้วเจอกันใหม่

Others

Thanks	อื่นๆ
Thans for the help	ขอบคุณ
	ขอบคุณสำหรับความช่วยเหลื่อ
Yes	ใช่
No	ไม่ใช่
Okay	ตกลง
Be so good	ขอให้วันนี้เป็นวันที่ดี
Be so kind	ขอให้วันนี้คุณทำแต่เรื่องดีๆ
Sorry	ขอโทษ
My name is.....	ฉันชื่อ...
What is your name?	คุณชื่ออะไร

Question (Inquiring) words

What...?	อะไร
Where...?	ที่ไหน
When...?	เมื่อไหร่
Who...?	ใคร
How...?	อย่างไร
Why...?	ทำไม

Find way

To the right	ไปทางขวา
To the left	ไปทางซ้าย
Straight on	ตรงไป
Back	ย้อนกลับ
Where is?	...อยู่ที่ไหน?

Can you show the way to.....?

Where am I/we at present?

How do I reach.....?

how far is it to.....?

Where is the nearest station?

Address

What is the address?

คุณช่วยบอกทางไป...-
ได้ไหม

ตอนนี้ฉัน/เราอยู่ที่ไหน

ฉันจะไป...ได้อย่างไร
...ไกลแค่ไหน

สถานที่ที่ใกล้ที่สุดอยู่ที่ไหน

ที่อยู่

ขอรายละเอียดที่อยู่ด้วย

Tourist in the city

Have you a city map?

What shall I see here in this city?

Can you recommend a sight seeing tour?

Visit to the toilet

Toilet

Have you a toilet?

Do you have some more toilet paper?

มีแผนที่ไหม

ที่เมืองนี้มีสถานที่ที่ท่องเที่ยวที่น่าสนใจที่ไหนบ้าง

ช่วยแนะนำทัวร์น่าเที่ยว-
ชมวิวดูด้วย

ไปห้องน้ำ

ห้องน้ำ

คุณมีห้องน้ำไหม

คุณมีกระดาษชำระอีกไหม

Transport for the trip

Railway

Underground railway

Train

Till what time does the train run?

Time table

Station (train)

การทางรถไฟ

รถไฟใต้ดิน

รถไฟ

รถไฟเปิดทำการถึงกี่โมง

ตารางเวลา

สถานี

Bus and Tram

Tram

Bus

What time does the bus/train leave.....?

รถประจำทางและรถราง

รถราง

รถประจำทาง

รถประจำทาง/รถรางวิ่ง-
ถึงกี่โมง

At what time is the last bus/tram?	รถประจำทาง/รถรางคันสุดท้ายออกกี่โมง	Automobile	รถยนต์
Station (bus)	สถานี (รถประจำทาง)	Motorcar	รถยนต์
Stop	หยุด	Car rental	เช่ารถยนต์
Airway		Driving License	ใบขับขี่
Airport	สายการบิน	I would like to hire a....	ฉันต้องการเช่า...
Check-in	สนามบิน	Have you a children's seat?	มีที่นั่งสำหรับเด็กไหม
Passport	เช็คอิน-อิน	Does it run on petrol or diesel?	ใช้น้ำมันเบนซินหรือดีเซล
	หนังสือเดินทาง	Parking space	ที่จอดรถ
Ship		Multi-storeyed car park	อาคารจอดรถที่มีหลายชั้น
Ferry	เรือ		
Port	เรือข้ามฟาก	Taxi	รถแท็กซี่
	ท่าเรือ	Drive me to this address	ช่วยขับพาไปยังที่อยู่นี้ด้วย
		I shall go to.....	ฉันจะไป...
		How much is it by taxi to?	ถ้านั่งแท็กซี่ไปจะมีราคาเท่าไร

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General

Cycle	ทั่วไป
Motorcycle	จักรยาน
Arrival/arrival time	รถจักรยานยนต์
Departure/departure time	มาถึง/เวลาที่มาถึง
Baggage	ออกจาก/เวลาที่ออกจาก
Baggage locker	กระเป๋าเดินทาง
	ตู้เก็บกระเป๋าเดินทาง

Entertainment

Cinema	โรงภาพยนตร์
Theatre	โรงละคร
Match	การแข่งขัน
Concert	คอนเสิร์ต
Park	สวนสาธารณะ
Circus	สวนสัตว์
Museum	พิพิธภัณฑ์
Amusement park	สวนสนุก
Casino	คาสิโน
Discotheque	ดิสโก้เทค
Night club	คลับ
Aquarium	พิพิธภัณฑ์สัตว์น้ำ
Zoological garden	สวนสัตว์ป่า

Tickets

Adult	ผู้ใหญ่
Child	เด็ก
Pensioner	ผู้รับเงินบำนาญ
Student	นักเรียน
Can I get a ticket?	ขอซื้อตั๋วได้ไหม
Can I get a daily ticket?	ขอซื้อตั๋ววันได้ไหม

In the hotel

I/we have a reservation	ฉัน/เราจองห้องพักเอาไว้
The name is....	ชื่อของฉันคือ...
Single room	ห้องเดี่ยว
Double room	ห้องคู่
What is the room number?	ห้องหมายเลขอะไร
Which floor?	ชั้นไหน

Where is the elevator?

No smoking

Smoking

Have you a vacant room?

What is the cost of a single-/double room?

Can I order for an extra bed?

Have you a baby cot?

Where is the breakfast?

When is the breakfast?

When shall we check in?

Where can I park?

Can I call for a taxi?

Have you a card with the hotel's address?

Have you a security locker?

Is there a swimming pool?

Can I ask for a wake up call?

Can I borrow an ironing board?

Can I borrow a hair drier?

Can I keep my baggage?

Can I request for extra toilet paper?

On shopping

Shopping centre

Departmental stores

Main shopping area

Pedestrian street

ลิฟต์อยู่ที่ไหน

ห้ามสูบบุหรี่

อนุญาตให้สูบบุหรี่

คุณมีห้องพักรว่างไหม

ห้องเดี่ยว/คู่มีราคาเท่าไร

ขอเตียงเสริมได้ไหม

คุณมีเตียงสำหรับเด็กทารกไหม

อาหารเช้าอยู่ที่ไหน

อาหารเช้าบริการเมื่อไหร่

เราควรเช็คอินเมื่อไหร่

เราจะจอดรถได้ที่ไหน

ฉันจะเรียกรถแท็กซี่ได้ไหม

คุณมีบัตรที่มีที่อยู่ของโรงแรมไหม

คุณมีตู้เก็บของนิรภัยไหม

มีสระว่ายน้ำไหม

ขอรับบริการโทรปลุกตอนเช้าได้ไหม

ฉันขอยืมที่รีดผ้าได้ไหม

ฉันขอยืมที่เป่าผมได้ไหม

ฉันเก็บกระเป๋าเดินทางไว้ได้ไหม

ฉันขอกระดาษชำระเพิ่มได้ไหม

ศูนย์การค้า

ห้าง

ศูนย์กลางการจับจ่ายซื้อของ

ถนนคนเดิน

Is it available in large size?	มีขนาดใหญ่กว่านี้ไหม	From the menu card	จากเมนู
Is it available in small size?	มีขนาดเล็กกว่านี้ไหม	Starters	เมนูว่าง
What is the cost of this/that?	สินค้าชิ้นนี้มีราคาเท่าไร	Main course	เมนูหลัก
Do you have this/ these in my size?	คุณมีสินค้าชิ้นนี้/ เหล่านี้ที่ฉันใส่ได้ไหม	Desserts	ของหวาน
Can you pack this in a gift wrap?	คุณช่วยห่อของขวัญให้ได้ไหม	Fish	ปลา
Do you accept credit card?	คุณรับบัตรเครดิตไหม	Shell fish	อาหารจำพวกสัตว์น้ำเปลือกแข็ง
When do you close?	คุณปิดร้านเมื่อไหร่	Poultry	อาหารจำพวกสัตว์ปีก
Open	เปิด	Chicken	ไก่
Closed	ปิด	Duck	เป็ด
		Goose	ห่าน
		Turkey	ไก่งวง
		Pork	หมู
		Beef	เนื้อ
		Veal	ลูกวัว
		Lamb	แกะ
		Bread	ขนมปัง
		Butter	เนื่อ
		Egg	ไข่
		Yoghurt	โยเกิร์ต
		Soup	ซุ๊ป
		Salad	สลัด
		Sandwich	แซนด์วิช
		Sausages	ไส้กรอก
		Hotdog	ฮ็อตด็อก
		Pizza	พิซซ่า
		Hamburger	แฮมเบอร์เกอร์
		French fries	เฟรนช์ฟรายส์
		Cheese	ชีส
		Ice	น้ำแข็ง
		Cake	เค้ก
		Sugar	น้ำตาล
In the restaurant/café			
Breakfast	อาหารเช้า		
Lunch	อาหารกลางวัน		
Supper	อาหารค่ำ		
May I see the menu card?	ขอดูเมนูได้ไหม		
May I see the liquor card?	ขอดูเมนูเครื่องดื่มได้ไหม		
Menu for the children	เมนูสำหรับเด็ก		
Vegetarian	มังสวิรัต		
Well done	สุกมาก		
Medium	สุกปานกลาง		
Red (rare)	สุกน้อย (สุกๆดิบๆ)		
It must not be very strong	ไม่ต้องการรสจัด		
I cannot bear....	ฉันไม่ชอบ...		
Bill	บิล		
May I pay?	เก็บเงินด้วย		
Can I pay with the credit card?	ฉันจ่ายด้วยบัตรเครดิตได้ไหม		

Beverages

Milk
Mineral water
Juice
Soda water
Without ice
Coffee
Tea
Cocoa
Beer
White wine
Red wine
Champagne
Liquor
Spirits

เครื่องดื่ม

นม
น้ำเปล่า
น้ำผลไม้
น้ำโซดา
ไม่ใส่น้ำแข็ง
กาแฟ
น้ำชา
โกโก้
เบียร์
ไวน์ขาว
ไวน์แดง
แชมเปญ
สุรา
เหล้า

Service

Knife
Fork
Spoon
Teaspoon
chop stick
Glass
Plate
Napkin

มีด

ส้อม
ช้อน
ช้อนชา
ตะเกียบ
แก้ว
จาน
ผ้าเช็ดปาก
มีด

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PEOPLE FIRST

Numbers

Zero	ศูนย์
One	หนึ่ง
Two	สอง
Three	สาม
Four	สี่
Five	ห้า
Six	หก
Seven	เจ็ด
Eight	แปด
Nine	เก้า
Ten	สิบ
Twenty	ยี่สิบ
Thirty	สามสิบ
Fourty	สี่สิบ
Fifty	ห้าสิบ
Sixty	หกสิบ
Seventy	เจ็ดสิบ
Eighty	แปดสิบ
Ninety	เก้าสิบ
Hundred	หนึ่งร้อย
Thousand	หนึ่งพัน
Million	หนึ่งล้าน

Calendar and time

Days	วัน
Monday	วันจันทร์
Tuesday	วันอังคาร
Wednesday	วันพุธ
Thursday	วันพฤหัสบดี
Friday	วันศุกร์
Saturday	วันเสาร์
Sunday	วันอาทิตย์
Yesterday	เมื่อวาน
Today	วันนี้
Tomorrow	พรุ่งนี้
Day after tomorrow	มะรืนนี้

Months	เดือน
January	มกราคม
February	กุมภาพันธ์
March	มีนาคม
April	เมษายน
May	พฤษภาคม
June	มิถุนายน
July	กรกฎาคม
August	สิงหาคม
September	กันยายน
October	ตุลาคม
November	พฤศจิกายน
December	ธันวาคม

Time	เวลา
What is the time?	ขณะนี้เป็นเวลากี่โมงแล้ว
The time is quarter past....	ขณะนี้เป็นเวลา...-นาฬิกาสิบห้านาที
The time is half past....	ขณะนี้เป็นเวลา...-โมงครึ่ง
The time is quarter to.....	ขณะนี้อีกสิบห้านาทีจะ-ป็นเวลา...

A man wearing a tan hat, a short-sleeved Hawaiian shirt with a tropical print, and khaki shorts stands on a brick-paved platform. He is looking towards the right. Behind him is a silver train car with several windows. The scene is set outdoors under a clear blue sky.

About the Author

Stig Albeck (1969) is the author behind the travel books at OnLibri.com. Stig writes the way you travel the destinations!

The books often take their departure in the world's most exhilarating cities and evolve to the attractions and sights in their vicinity. Stig is a devoted traveller and a passionate explorer which brings him around the world several times each year to search for new exciting destinations.

Going to big cities or more adventurous destinations, Stig writes his travel guides to help and inspire readers to get the full benefit of their destination of choice.

Travelling is about enjoying the moment, but also about taking home memories and gaining new knowledge. No matter how far or near by the destination might be there sure are great experiences waiting to be unveiled.

Stig holds a masters degree in marketing and tourism from Copenhagen Business School in Denmark. He has been working in the tourism industry and with global marketing of tourist destinations.

If you have questions or perhaps made a discovery that you would like to share, then send Stig an email to travelstig@gmail.com (if you attach photos you agree to letting us use these for future travel guides).

Stig offers lectures on his travel experiences, or any specific tour that you might be about to head out for. To learn more about things like touring Australia, visiting the Mongolian capital Ulan Bator, or enjoying a fresh smoked omul at the Lake Baikal in February, visit www.stigalbeck.com.

Bonne Voyage!