

DISCOVER













# 7 THAINESS GEMS



amazing  
THAILAND  
2015  
Discover Thainess

- MUST SEE
- MUST DO
- MUST BUY
- MUST TASTE

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# *Discovering Thainess :* THE ESSENTIAL THAILAND

You will know when you see, you will enjoy when you feel - the quintessential "Thainess" that makes a trip to Thailand unique and fascinating. Come and experience the wonders of the Thailand, its arts and culture, traditions and heritage, people and lifestyle. Immerse yourself in the real Thai touch with by finding out about, and unhesitatingly joining in, must-do local activities: "Must-see," "Must-do," "Must-buy," and "Must-taste "and as millions of people from all over the world already have, fall in love with Thailand again and again.



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FOOD



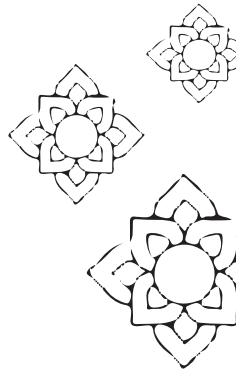
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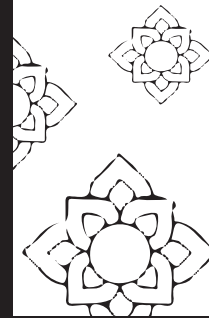
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# THAINESS

## *Intro*

Holidaymakers and discerning travelers might have already come across Thailand and started experiencing the moment of the Orient, art, culture, fascinating ruins, temples and any long-established tradition. Actually, Thailand has more things than just those surfaces to learn, to see, to do, to taste, and to experience so as to end up the trip with a distinctively unforgettable history page of sojourning in this land of smiles. There are still many places whose endearing spirit of Thainese, living traditions, and charming Thai origin might have not yet graced your travel notebook. The next page from now is a raft of brilliant reasons why you should come to re-explore this golden land where the scope of rediscovery of Thainess is still waiting. Here is your new handy travel companion on the next journey to explore the very Thai, the hidden meaning and the melody of Thainess.



## THAI *Way of Life*

There are many magical and memorable tourist attractions in Thailand from the cultural monuments, heritage, landmarks, historical buildings, including the distinctively local wisdom and traditional lifestyle that have been well practiced and preserved amidst the complex lifestyle. Thailand has seen a multitude of ethnic groups inhabiting the region and many still live a traditional way of life. Visiting Thailand is truly the gateway to traveling back in time to explore the traditional lifestyle, cultural traditions, beliefs, local way of life, attitudes, and values. Let's discover the convenience and amenities of an urban setting and the enduring charms of the traditional Thai lifestyle and see how Thai people live and flourish together under the different lifestyle approaches and respective environmental situations in each region and community.

## THAI *Festivity*

Thailand is a country with a mosaic of different races and lifestyle approaches, its geography, climate, prosperity, knowledge, religious beliefs, and abundance of nature give rich variety to its colorful festivals, which are held all over the country all

throughout the year. Such is sensually the reflection of the charming characteristics of a waterborne lifestyle in Thailand. Every region has uniquely different practices to conduct and celebrate culture and festivals, which are mostly connected with religion and agricultural cultivation. Meanwhile, the timing and commencement of the festivals is calculated according to the Buddhist lunar calendar, and thus festival dates change each year.

## THAI *Fun*

Thailand is a country abundant in art and culture, well-preserved traditions, and ample season fruits. It's a great place to experience the colors of the East from the heritage, spa indulgence, gourmet, adventure, diving, contemporary and Oriental art, and the all affordable Thainess, fun-filled activities, and range of cultural performances which are distinctively unique, both physically and verbally, for an unforgettable experience of a lifetime. Don't let your holiday time in Thailand go without making your way on enjoying ancient folk wisdom, sacred festivals of each region as well as a wide variety of folk performances, some rare Thai folk dance traditions, Khon Thai masked dance, Thai martial art show, Thai puppet show, and other local arts and crafts. The

next page from now is your passport to the Thai way of happiness and to fully experience Thainess and understand the friendly character of the Thai people.

## THAI *Food*

Travel and food are naturally partners in style, but far fewer people forget to realize to make the connection. Cuisine has always played a major role in the hospitality industry. Your visit to Thailand is not completed without experiencing the taste of Thainess on a plate or even having an ultimate hands-on experience on making Thai delights for a culinary experience of a lifetime, as Thai food is regarded as a special interest tourism or unique selling proposition. In Thailand, there are so many eateries capable of elevating the Thai dining experience as well as wealth-experienced cookery classes that provide you the chance to taste the experience and experience the taste and realize the DNA behind the Thai cuisine and the art of eatable pleasure on a plate that mesmerizes the world over.

## THAI *Wellness*

Thailand's spa and wellness sector has witnessed phenomenal growth and has

made a remarkable progress in cementing its status as the "Health Tourism Hub of Asia" and a "Wellness Capital of Asia" as people are trending towards taking care of the body for healthy aging and longevity. Thailand now becomes the spa destination of choice for any visitor wishing to fulfill the spiritual wellbeing as the element of Thainess and service-mind of the Thai people perform as the salutary medical doctor in the spa business. Such is the DNA of the Thai spa industry that makes them so unique and is what attracts international discerning tourists to spend their holiday enjoying total well-being in the land of smiles.

## THAI *Wisdom*

Thailand is audaciously shifting to a data-rich and modern society, but the charming tradition has still been retained and preserved as we are living through the fast lane of a new digital revolution. Thai wisdom and knowledge heritage have never been overshadowed by the growing presence of capitalism and materialism and the great influx of Western values ever brought about by a thriving tourist industry. Thailand is a Buddhist country worthy for discovering a meaningful angle of life, which there are still scopes of rediscovering the identity of the regional



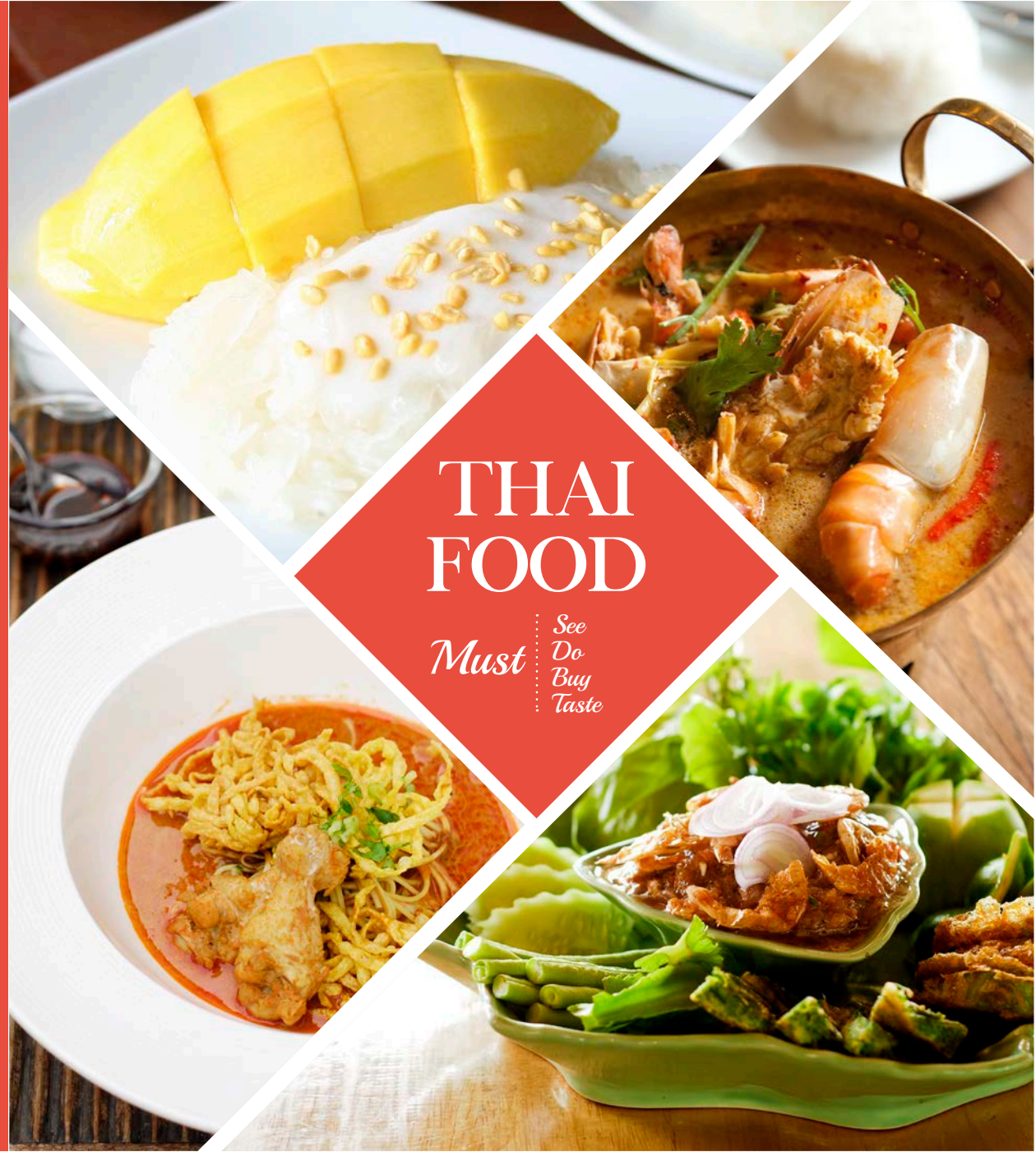
culture and local wisdom; such as, essentially the nutritional value and medicinal dimension that have been practiced as an art of living and handed down from generation to generation. Even if there have been many changes in this entwined world, the eclectic blend between traditional Thai, contemporary, and modern style can still be found on the next page from now that dictates the direction of Thainess.

## THAI *Art*

Thailand is a Buddhist country worthy for discovering an angle of the peaceful and meaningful part of life and exploring the sense and essence of Thainess through a variety of art forms and priceless treasures of Thailand. It offers visitors an array of vastly differing experiences from the Thai way of life, Thai culture, hands-on Thai activities, the essential part of Thai culture handed down from generation to generation; such as, Thai massage, the excellent art of making Thai specialties and fruit carving, flower garland making, Thai classical dance, indigenously-designed handmade products and facilities, not to mention the traditional Thai martial art and Muay Thai boxing, Thailand's flagship martial art and the country's national sport, so as to truly get in touch and understand the essence of Thainess. Here is a must-try journey to create a new travel memory.



Thailand's distinctive cuisine is second to none, making the country a haven for a tantalizing gastronomic sensation. Each region features its own signature style, defined by fresh ingredients, local character and sublime flavors from street-side stalls to luxurious dining venues, culinary adventures abound. Indulge in delicious everyday fare or relish seasonal delights. Or alternatives, learn to cook with an array of tropical produce, herbs and spices. Enjoy !



# THAI FOOD

*Must* See  
Do Buy  
Taste

# THAI FOOD

There's more to Thailand that makes the "dream destination" of many international travelers besides the "Smiles" and the "Paradisiac Beaches" - and that is its one-of-a kind food. Thai food now being ranked one of the highest favorite cuisines in the world, and that's not surprising, considering its range of flavors, variety of tastes, and inherent versatility in its creative presentation and food culture.

It goes without saying that while one can easily find a Thai restaurant in many parts of the world today, the best Thai food is still found where else, but in Thailand, of course.

What makes Thai food utterly awesome? Ask many Thai food experts - whether from fancy restaurants at five-star hotels to blogger recommended shops or street food corners. They will tell you that it's all in the use of the naturally fresh ingredients and the unique art of Thai cooking, the techniques of which have been developed many years ago.

The unique flavor of Thai food basically

comes from the balance of tastes that has resulted from the heavy influence of two dominant Asian cultures: India and China. India has strongly influenced Thai food, especially in terms of selective spices that give it distinctively rich and strong flavors. The influence of China cannot be underestimated, primarily in the inclusion of select, natural ingredients that make Thai food not only nutritious, but also healthy.

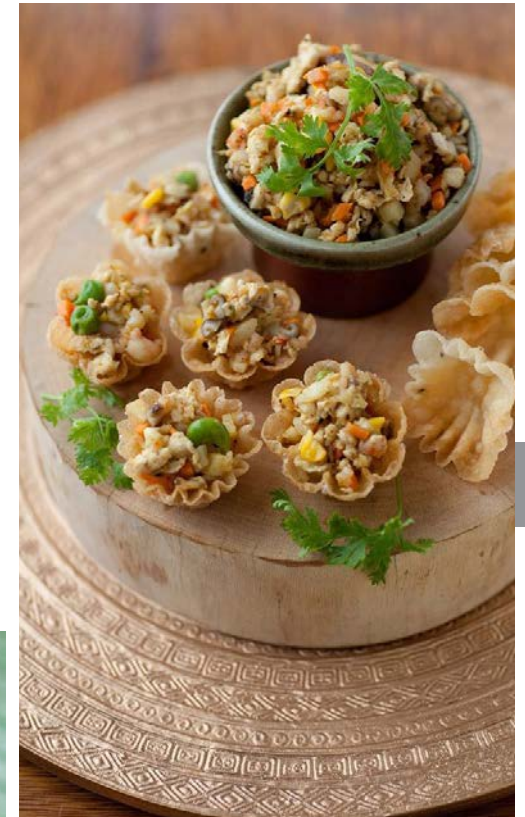
In fact Thai food has been influenced by a variety of food cultures. For example, Central Thailand's cooking style has been influenced from Indian, Persian and Chinese styles that resulted from ancient trading commerce. Northern Thailand's cooking styles has been very much influenced by Southern China and the Tai Yai (an ethnic group living along the border of Myanmar and Thailand). Southern Thailand has been also influenced by Muslim culture, while the Northeastern Thailand has been influenced from Lao PDR.

From all these cross-cultures, Thai food has been influenced from various cuisines. It slowly created a unique flavors to become Thai food. Thai food is well known around the world not only because of its strong, rich, savory, taste, but also because of the natural, healthy ingredients. Arguably that Thai food is one of the healthiest cuisines

with presentation techniques that has reached the level of art.

The art of Thai cuisine is obviously not only in the taste but presentation. Each dish is designed not only to delight the taste buds but also the eyes, the smell, and the touch. With its sensory pleasures, it is no wonder then that Thai food is on the front row of international cuisine favorites today.

Most Thai food can be considered "hot" for many foreign palates. There are many dishes on the Thai menu that are not really spicy; such as, "Massaman Curry," which could be perfect for foreigners.







## STREET FOOD

Eating on the street has always been integral to Thai culture, and street food shops are dependable for quick-service and wallet-friendly goodies. There are three common elements behind the popularity of street food: First, the dishes are mostly comfort food, quick snacks and drinks. Second, service is fast as most Thai food can be cooked a la minute. Think American burgers and fries' chains; street food is the same style of fast food that you can either grab and go, or sit down and finish it before your lunch break ends. Third, the most essential quality perhaps is the inexpensive prices, that make street food affordable to eat every day.

There are four common forms of street food outlets. Probably the biggest and most established form is the shop house restaurant, which is the most common type in community areas. It's easy to spot: a house of which the first floor is open for diners. Usually, the tables also spread over onto the sidewalk to accommodate more people. The second form is the street-stalls. This one looks like a pop-up



station with plenty of cooking essentials for the shop's specialized dishes, and some tables for clients to sit down. Other forms come as street carts, which can either stop at one place, or move around throughout the day, and the traditional shoulder pole.

That's why you will never be hungry in Thailand. Almost every corner, especially in big cities like Bangkok, has many food shops available every where. Just walk down a street and you can easily fill up

your belly with both savory and sweet grub, and some drinks - at a very good price. It's quite fun too as the atmosphere is lively, and there's many varieties: from the noodle shop house and curry rice stall to a grilled pork street cart and vendors carrying a pole and selling grilled eggs. No wonder, Thailand's street food is one of the country's main attractions today.

Here are some areas to enjoy great street food in Bangkok:

## Highlight Bangkok

### YAOWARAT

**Where :** Yaowarat Road  
**When :** 9a.m.-3p.m. for morning stuff; 5p.m. till late for evening stalls



Chinatown (or Yaowarat as locals call it) is a favorite of many foodies in Bangkok. Yaowarat is famous for authentic Chinese food, and you will find a lot of dim sum, roasted chestnuts, and pomegranate juice outlets around this area. During the day, it is a bustling business area with lots of retailing and wholesaling going on, but at night, it transforms into a neon town with street treats and throngs of foodies. The atmosphere is electrifying and the fun energy is contagious. In the evening most of the stores by the road are closed, street carts and pop-up stalls come out to set up their own operation, selling a variety of food treats from comfort Thai food, exotic Chinese dishes and feast from an inherited ancient recipe.

Seafood Place at the corner of Texas Alley (Soi Padungdao) is one of the "hot spots" here. There are actually two rivals located opposite each other, but a hint : go for the more crowded one. You won't be



disappointed. You must also try the peppery Kuai chap (rice-noodle soup with pork and entrails) from Uan Pochana, located in front of the Chinatown Rama Cinema; and curry rice from Gang Garee Nai Yong at the corner of Yaowarat Soi 11.



### SILOM

**Where :** Silom Road (between Rama 4 and Narathiwas Road)  
**When :** 9a.m.-5p.m.



An area that never sleeps, Silom is one of Bangkok's CBDs (central business district). The road is packed with tall buildings and the sidewalk is always filled with the office crowd. On top of the classic shop houses by the main road near Sala Daeng BTS Station, - There is Samai Suek Pochana, which sells khao man kai (Hainanese chicken rice) and Chuan Savoey, which specializes in Chinese roasted pork. Soi Convent is another must go hot spot here. Two sides of the soi are lined with food stalls and shop houses including the popular Som Tam Thai, Tang Hong Pochana, which sells five-spice-boiled goose, and Yen Ta Fo Convent, which sells noodles.

### BANGRAK

**Where :** Charoen Krung Road (From Saphan Taksin BTS Station toward higher number sois)  
**When :** 8a.m.- 8p.m. (the shops' opening hours vary)



This area with an old world charm, thanks to the line-up of colonial style houses along Charoen Krung Road that remain standing to this day, and an energy that seems to have frozen in time a more gracious period in Bangkok. The usual crowd here is a bit older and you'll see them walking along Charoen Krung to dine, shop, or run errands in a rather leisurely fashion, in comparison with the younger crowd in the Silom area who seems to be always rushing.

A short walk from Saphan Taksin BTS Station, you'll find a bunch of shop houses on both sides of the road where you can enjoy local favorites from roasted duck, fish ball noodles or a unique rice congee to a lot of sweets vendors on the sidewalk which offer the best sticky rice to pair with delicious ripe mangoes.



## KHAO SAN ROAD

**Where :** Khao San Road - Tanao Road - Rambutri Road  
**When :** From 5p.m. till late



Khao San Road is at its liveliest peak at night. Backpackers and fun-loving foreigners come to this famous road in the old part of town to enjoy themselves amid its unique atmosphere. Restaurants, bars, and hostels stand on both sides of the road while right in the middle of the street are various stalls and food carts, which will seduce you to get your belly filled before finding nice real treats on Tanao Road just around the corner. Keep your eyes open for various vegetarian places.



## BANG LAMPHU

**Where :** Phra Sumen Road – Phra Athit Road  
**When :** Around 10a.m.-3p.m.



This area is also in the Old Town near Khao San Road, but less bustling. A lot of good stuff can be found here, just stroll down Phra Sumen Road for a little food trek starting from a cup of coffee at Kopi Hya Tai Kee, and onto the Wat Bowon Niwet area where there are Nai Ngum's noodles. Not far past the Bang Lumphu junction is Mae Prapa's traditional khanom bueang (Thai crepes). Go down farther at the end of the road, turn left, and you'll see Phra Athit Road, which is another street food hub. Try Roti Mataba's eponymous goodies, Kuai Thieo Nuea Nai Soy's beef noodles, and Nai Ngao's shrimp paste rice here.



## SAMYAN

**Where :** Chulalongkorn Soi 42 - Chulalongkorn Soi 5, between Phaya Thai and Banthat Thong Roads  
**When :** Samyan Market area 8a.m. - 4p.m.; Suan Luang Market area 10a.m. - 8p.m.



The area behind the campus of Thailand's oldest university, Chulalongkorn, has earned a reputation among foodies because of the delicacies that can be enjoyed both at the fresh market and at the food shops and stalls. Starting from Phaya Thai Road down Chulalongkorn Soi 42, you can see some food outlets. What's more exciting is that several alleys surround the area where "hidden gems"; such as, Som Tam Je Dang and Joke Samyan can be found. A short walk from the end of the soi to the right is the New Samyan Market, a two-story building comprising a fresh market on the ground floor and wallet-friendly food stalls on the second. Around Chulalongkorn Soi 5 is Suan Luang Market. Don't miss Kua Kai (stir-fried noodles with chicken) at Nai Peng, Pra Ram Rong Song at Jueng Ang Lak, and Sweet Icy Bowls at Sheng Sim Ee. Or, take a 15-minute walk to Rama 4 Road and try the Saphan Lueang street food stalls across the street.



## THONG LO

**Where :** Sukhumvit Soi 38  
**When :** From 5p.m. till late



It will probably takes you months before you can dine at every food place in Thong Lo (Sukhumvit 55), the new trendy foodie hub and hipsters' favorite in Bangkok. But across the road you can simply take the opposite exit from Thong Lo BTS Station to Sukhumvit Soi 38, which is all about street food. Most of the outlets here are pop-up stalls although there are also some shop houses. Setting up begins in the evening (at about 5p.m.) and operation lasts till early morning. What makes dining here easy is that most of the stalls offer an English menu with food pictures. Try noodles with roasted pork and crab meat, Khao Soi (noodles in curry) and Mango Sticky Rice.



## HUA HIN NIGHT MARKET

**Where :** 1 Soi Sasong Hua Hin 72, Hua Hin, Prachuap Khiri Khan



Located in central Hua Hin, between Phetchkasem Road and the railway line, the Hua Hin Night Market is typically the flea market where you can experience an authentic local market atmosphere with all that easy-going, down-to-earth goings on among cloth shops, fashion accessories, street food, plus a few unique gifts and handmade crafts. You will find countless outlets and stands selling delicious food. The Hua Hin Night Market is a good place for food and drink, and the numerous seafood restaurants along the road draw a lot of attention from visitors eager to experience a taste of Thainess. Food is freshly cooked and delightfully served within a matter of minutes, and good seafood can be easily enjoyed. So, make sure you include The Hua Hin Night Market in your itinerary or your Hua Hin holiday will not be complete.

## Northern

## NAKHON CHUM'S RETRO MARKET

**Where :** Nakhon Chum's Retro Market, Kamphaeng Phet  
**When :** Friday-Sunday (every first week of the month) 5-8p.m.



If you're in Kamphaeng Phet during a weekend evening and you wish to experience a taste of the local lifestyle, make sure that you visit the open-air retro market at Nakhon Chum, one of the best tourist attractions in the province. There are lots of stores selling handicrafts, handmade products, and souvenirs, and there are so many food stalls to enjoy the local food. Located at the mouth of Khlong Suan Mak on the west bank of the Ping River, Nakhon Chum is also a great place to enjoy live music. There's a large area to sit back, relax, and eat some authentic Thai food from any of the many food places serving them at really low prices. This must-visit "nocturnal lifestyle zone" appeals to international tourists when the sun goes down and the nighthawks emerge offers a truly memorable travel experience.



## NIMMANHEMIN CHIANG MAI

**Where :** Nimmanhemim Road, Chiang Mai  
**When :** Day spots 9a.m.-5p.m.; Night 5p.m.-late



This chic area not far from Chiang Mai's center is a true gastronomic hub. Jampacked with shop houses on every sub road, most of them serve food, Nimmanhemim has become a destination for traveling foodies. During the day, try Kuai Thieo Tum Lueng's noodles on Soi 1, Mu Ping Khun Po's grilled pork skewer on Soi 11 and Kua Kai Sarinya's stir-fried noodles with chicken on Soi 17 for some staple Thai food. If you have a sweet tooth, Hom Pak Hom Ko on Soi 1 and Charin Pie on Soi 11 will help with some baked items. At night, fill your stomach with Sai Kok Khun Yai's Isan style sausages in front of Mon Nomsod between Soi 7 and 9, and wash them down with some drinks at Beer Republic on Soi 11. With a lovely neighborhood full of stylish places with chic décor and interiors, exploring the area and finding your very own favorite here should be easy.



## KON KIN SEN ROAD UDON THANI

**Where :** Udon Thani  
**When :** All Day 6a.m.-9p.m.



Udon Thani, locally called "Udon" for short, is home of one of the world's earliest Bronze Age civilizations, the UNESCO World Heritage Ban Chiang Archeological Site, and there are a large number of expats who settled there after the Vietnam War. The province is presented in the way of cultural exploration, but also for culinary adventure. Foodies should not miss a trip to Kon Kin Sen Road to experience many different kinds of noodles. The traditional Udon noodles are made in-house and are more refined. Don't miss Udon's excellent version of Phat Thai, Pho, Pork Noodle.

## NIPHAT UTHIT 3 HAT YAI

**Where :** Hat Yai, Song Khla  
**When :** 5p.m.-midnight



The best way to enjoy local culture is to sample local food at some walking street market and Niphat Uthit 3 Road, in Hat Yai, Songkhla province, is a great place to explore and enjoy the sights and try the delicious Thai and southern delicacies. This road teems with food stalls and makeshift eateries selling mouthwatering dishes from various parts of Thailand. Here you will find a huge variety of fresh fruits, vegetables, and cooked food stalls, available at very affordable local prices. Other local Thai goods are also available at reasonable prices. Bargaining is common.





*Must Do*

**COOKING  
CLASS**



## COOKING CLASS

Travel and food are natural partners, but many people fail to make the connection that food is the real sensory gateway to get in touch with the root culture of Thailand. The DNA of Thai food lies in its ability to combine three key values - nutritional, cultural, and medicinal - with using fresh ingredients and well-trained natural talents in cooking methods that have been practiced as an art and handed down from generation to generation. The next page offers a gateway for Thai enthusiasts to enjoy a culturally enriching Thai cooking experience in an authentic Thai atmosphere.



## ORIENTAL COOKING SCHOOL

**Where :** Mandarin Oriental Hotel,  
48 Oriental Avenue Bangkok  
Tel. +66 (0) 2659 9000  
[www.mandarinoriental.com/bangkok](http://www.mandarinoriental.com/bangkok)



Located across the Chao Phraya River, in an antique wooden house, the Oriental Cooking School offers a four-day English-language cooking course with a “watch and learn” methodology, emphasizing demonstration followed by a hands-on experience of preparing a Thai dish. All participants learn how to create stunning Thai meals while gaining insights of the fascinating culture and traditions of Thailand. The instructor demonstrates the methods and steps of Thai cookery from ingredient preparation to cooking. Class participants are encouraged to try grounding pastes, chopping meat and vegetables, stir-frying, deep-frying, and stewing food to create dishes of the highest quality and flavor.

## AMITA THAI COOKING CLASS

**Where :** Wutthakat Road, Talat Phu, Thonburi,  
Bangkok, Tel. +66 (0) 2466 8966  
[www.amitathaicooking.com](http://www.amitathaicooking.com)



Visitors get a hands-on experience cooking some exotic Thai delights at the Amita Thai Cooking Class. Here, you learn how to prepare and cook many favorite Thai dishes from the extensive list of recipes. The instructors introduce you to Thai cuisine and explain the four delicious dishes prior to visiting their homegrown herb garden to pick first-hand fresh Thai ingredients for your dishes. Amita Thai Cooking Class also provides complimentary picking up and dropping off services from various locations in Central Bangkok. And, after the completion of the cooking classes, they will drop you off at your hotel or shopping center of your choice.



## MSC THAI CULINARY INSTITUTE

**Where :** 457-457/1-6 Sukhumvit 55, North Khlong Tan, Wattana, Bangkok



This new cooking school is run by one of the “Iron Chef of Thailand,” chef Chumpol Jangprai, located in Thong Lo. MSC is a serious cooking institute that offers both certified professional courses and short non-professional courses. Weekend classes with choices of Thai dishes course, Thai dessert courses, and Thai fusion dishes courses. In a weekend class, you’ll learn to cook five dishes from the school’s recipes developed by Chumpol. All-time-favorites: Tom Yum Kung, Som Tum, Phat Thai, Green Curry, Massaman curry to other typical curries and spicy salads. The school also offers a Thai carving course where you can learn to carve Thai fruits and vegetables in delicate and exotic patterns.



## BLUE ELEPHANT THAI COOKING SCHOOL

**Where :** 233 South Sathon Road, Yannawa, Sathon, Bangkok, Tel. +66 (0) 2673 9353-6 [www.blueelephant.com](http://www.blueelephant.com)



The Blue Elephant Cooking School is an ideal full-fledged learning environment, featuring tailored classes in a cozy and fun atmosphere. They provide the necessary facilities to organize interactive and engaging sessions. The instructors are friendly offering the right amount of encouragement, with a personal approach for every student. All participants will graduate with a Blue Elephant Cooking School Certificate. Blue Elephant Phuket is the best place for a culinary experience you can learning Thai cooking class in Bangkok or Phuket

## THAI FARM COOKING SCHOOL

**Where :** Mun Mueang Road Soi 9, Si Phum, Mueang Chiang Mai, Chiang Mai  
Tel. +66 (0) 81288 5989, +66 (0) 87174 9285  
[www.thaifarmcooking.net](http://www.thaifarmcooking.net)



The Thai Farm Cooking School is one of the best places to learn how to cook Thai food aligned with the authentic Thai concept. This is enhanced through visiting their own organic farm to learn about various types of plants, herbs, vegetables and fruits as the basic knowledge about the herbal essence and natural ingredients used in Thai cuisine. You will be given the opportunity to pick some of the fresh ingredients to prepare your favorite dishes at the well-equipped kitchen. Finally, enjoy experiencing the taste of your own meal on the terrace with the peaceful spectacular view of the entire farm.



## THE DHARA DHEVI CHIANG MAI

**Where :** 51/4 Chiang Mai - Sankampaeng Road, Mu 1, Tasala, Mueang, Chiang Mai  
Tel. +66 (0) 5388 8888  
[www.dharadhevi.com](http://www.dharadhevi.com)



The Dhara Dhevi Cooking Academy will make you realize a realm of Thai cuisine with an authentic taste. The Dhara Dhevi Chiang Mai has its own Thai cooking school located on the upper story of a delightful wooden pavilion behind the Le Grand Lanna Restaurant. The classroom-style kitchens are fitted with modern equipment with individual cooking stations, extractor hoods, sinks and preparation areas for up to 20 students. You will learn how to cook healthy and delicious Thai food to surprise your family and friends at home as a gourmet souvenir from Thailand.



## PHUKET THAI COOKERY SCHOOL

**Where :** 76/3 Mu 2, Soi Cokmakam, Rawai, Mueang Phuket, Phuket  
Tel. +66 (0) 7625 2354-5  
[www.phuketthaicookery.com](http://www.phuketthaicookery.com)



The Phuket Thai Cookery School is one of your choices if you really wish to enjoy Thai food and you are interested in learning the art of Thai cuisine from highly experienced teachers. Nestled in a pristine beach paradise on Siray Beach, the Phuket Thai Cookery School is definitely the one and only place on Phuket that offers a haven of peace and serenity away from the hustle of the city. The cookery school provides you comfort and quiet while you are cooking favorite Thai dishes and enjoying your homemade delicious meal. The beautiful natural surroundings, from the crystal clear water to the panoramic ocean view that is just a stone's throw from your kitchen, will relax you.



## SPICE SPOONS ANANTARA GOLDEN TRIANGLE CHIANG RAI

**Where :** 229 Mu 1 T Wiang, Chiang Saen, Chiang Rai, Tel. +66 (0) 5378 4084  
[www.goldentriangle.anantara.com](http://www.goldentriangle.anantara.com)



Located in the heart of the Golden Triangle, the Anantara Golden Triangle Elephant Camp and Resort offers a cooking class daily at 5,100 THB per person. From 7.30a.m., you'll travel to a local market to learn how to pick fresh produce, make merit at Wat Chedi Luang and recharge yourself for the class with a picnic breakfast in the temple. Return to the hotel, you'll learn some cooking techniques and get your hands dirty on your dishes. House wine will be provided to pair with your master dishes.



## ORGANIC THAI COOKING

**Where :** 39/4 Thepatan Road., Rassada, Mueang Phuket, Phuket  
Tel. +66 (0) 89970 1797  
[www.organicthaicooking.com](http://www.organicthaicooking.com)



No teaching method is better than a hands-on approach, and copying the element of Thainess that teachers do for performing an artistic idea before creating your own masterpiece. The Organic Thai Cooking School offers you these. You experience a unique day of Thai culture and traditions at a local market, learn about the different herbs and spices, view an organic farm, and then cook some of the most delicious Thai dishes. Each class includes a visit to a Thai outdoor market to shop for fresh ingredients, providing you an authentic look into a very interesting part of Thai culture. Class sizes with a maximum of three students are recommended to ensure a highly personalized and quality experience.

## KOH COOKING CLASS

**Where :** 219 Mu 5, Ang Thong, Ko Samui, Sarat Thani, Tel. +66 (0)7724 3000  
[www.fourseasons.com/kohsamui](http://www.fourseasons.com/kohsamui)



KOH, Thai Kitchen and Bar, has a trail-blazing cooking class that teaches you to enjoy Southern Thai cuisine using authentic Thai recipes reflecting the flavorful Southern style. The cooking class allows you to try your imagination to create Southern dishes. The emphasis is on dishes that you cannot normally find at any local Thai restaurant, and the menu features genuine, clean flavors using top quality local products and produce sourced and originated from Southern Thailand.







## INGREDIENTS FOR HEALTH BENEFITS

Herb and spices do not only make food tastier but can also treat our health. Common herbs used in staple Thai dishes are known for both their culinary uses and their health benefits. Herbs such as sweet basil can help reduce inflammation and swelling, and can boost appetite. Lemongrass, found mostly in soups and spicy salad, is used to heal respiratory conditions, aids in digestion and fights fever. Eggplant is not only a good source of dietary fiber but is also an antioxidant besides having substances that help keep the heart healthy. Kaffir lime leaves, used to scent tom yum, other soups, and curries, are used for their carminative benefits and help blood flow. Found in almost every Thai dish, garlic is very beneficial in preventing a cold and reducing the blood cholesterol level. One of the most colorful ingredients such as bird's-eye chili, helps to improve digestion, and can also remedy arthritis and rheumatism. You'll be surprised to see how almost every easy-to-find ingredient around us provides wide-ranging benefits for health.

## SEASONINGS

A secret to Thai food's complex and deliciously well-rounded flavors come from its ingredients and seasonings. Making a good dish requires many ingredients to guarantee dominant and layered subtle flavors, especially in curries. Curry pastes is a base of every curry and making one is obviously not easy. Imagine the traditional way of smashing 10 ingredients in a mortar till they are all combined together. Soups also need the correct portion of herbs to make them right. Palo dishes, for example, need five essential spices including star anise, cloves, Chinese cinnamon, Sichuan pepper, and fennel seeds. Thus, there are some products that help cooking Thai dishes at home be much easier. Various curry pastes can be found in every market whether it is basic red, green, yellow pastes or the more complicated masamun and panaeng curry pastes. Seasoning powders such as five-spice powder, soup seasonings, and Thai salad dressing are also good substitutes.





## PRESERVED FRUITS

Thailand grows fruits abundantly, and we have a variety of seasonal fruits and vegetables available each year. What lets you have your favorite fruits all-year-round is the local knowledge to preserve the fresh produces during their season and transform them into a number of tasty, preserved, and processed goodies for you to buy at very wallet-friendly prices. If you're into bananas, don't worry: we have sweet al dente sun-dried bananas, banana toffees, and unstoppable banana chips. Mango is also widely processed, making it into products; such as, dried mango paste sheets, candied mango, spicy and sweet mango toffees, and mango jams. Durian, the king of Thai fruit, is not only good to eat as it is; the processed variations; such as, durian chips and durian paste are also hard to resist. If you still can't get enough of coconut from coconut milk ice cream, coconut milk and flesh in Thai desserts and fresh coconut juice in Thailand, you probably want to bring some coconut chips home. Other dried tropical fruits include bael fruit, pineapple, tamarind, and longan. Fruits that are commonly candied are papaya, star gooseberry, pineapple, jackfruit, tamarind, and plum mango while some sour fruits; such as, star gooseberry and raw mango are pickled.



## LOCAL REGIONAL PRODUCTS

Although everything is available in Central Thailand, it is clear to see that many local products are sourced from other regions around the country. Since each region has a different climate and topography, their produce varies. Northern Thailand is full of mountains and hills. The highland and cold climate is conducive to growing tea, coffee, and temperate fruits; such as, apple, peach, and strawberry. Even though Robusta coffee is widely grown in Southern Thailand, premium-grade Arabica is grown on the hills in the North. Famous crops include those from Doi Chang in Chiang Rai and Huai Hom in Mae Hong Son. Most of the tea in Thailand is also grown in the North. While tea from nice plantations on the hills are already impressive, there is also wild grown tea in some particular areas. On top of tea and coffee, fresh fruits and vegetables from Northern Thailand, as quality controlled by the Royal Projects, are known for good breeding and being organic. The Royal Projects also make some of the best food products out of the produce; for example, fruit juices, jam, fruit chips, dried fruits, and nut spreads.





## TASTE MENU

Just like every fancy restaurant, every country has its own signature dishes, one that tells the long story of the country and its culture through its culinary arts.

Thai food influenced by our neighbors in East Asia's varied cooking techniques is no different. For example, many of the Southern Indian cooking recipes with coconut milk, and the interpretation of an Arabian dish with the various spices - all these influences have helped enriched the art of Thai cookery.

The art of Thai cooking developed from various regional cooking styles, using the best natural ingredients and various local herbs. It will make the dish to be delicious as they are healthy.

And that is the reason why Thai food has been embraced so openly worldwide. The perfect blend of tastes, such as spicy, sour and salty, make Thai food "a harmony of beautiful tastes." The healthy characteristics of Thai food make millions of people from around the world fall in love.

What are the six "Signature Dishes" of Thailand that you should not miss? They are :

- *Phat Thai* : Fried noodles with prawns, tofu, and bean sprouts,
- *Tom Yam Kung* : Prawn sour soup,
- *Massaman chicken curry* : Chicken in coconut milk, roasted peanuts potato and curry powder,
- *Thai Papaya salad* : green papaya salad, well known as "Som Tam",
- *Tom Kha Kai* : Chicken with coconut milk soup and herbs, and
- *Green Curry* : Literally sweet green curry

## POPULAR THAI SWEETS

The art of making Thai Sweets, famous for their taste and unique appearance, has been passed on from generation to generation.

Many Thai sweets are famous among foreigners; such as, the signature Thai dessert : Mango with Sticky Rice.

Other popular items in a "Thai sweet" menu :

- *Khanom Chan* : Layer sweet cake,
- *Khao Niew Sang Kaya* : Sticky rice custard,
- *Khanom Bua Loi* : Rice ball in sweetened coconut milk,
- *Tap Tim Krop* : Stuffed water chestnut in syrup and coconut milk.





## CENTRAL

Central Thailand's food is the best way to interpret our neighbors' cuisine plus the distinctive Thai taste then harmonized to perfection. For example, the Thai coconut curry recipes blend Hindu herbs and spices with Chinese stir-frying techniques before flavoring it with the unique Thai taste which combines the spicy, sour, salty, and sweet to perfection: Phat Thai, the most famous fried noodle dish of Thailand; Shrimp paste fried rice, the popular fried rice creation served with dried shrimp, fried egg, and veggies; Red Curry and Green Curry unique curry paste cooked in coconut milk, which goes well with pork, chicken, and beef with basil leaves served with jasmine rice; Sweet and sour sauce stir-fried, the perfect balance of sweet and sour in one dish, can be pork, chicken, or even fish fillet with various veggies added to the appeal of a dish, making it look tastier and colorful.



## EASTERN

In Eastern Thailand, food culture basically stemmed mostly from "seafood preservation," because the area is close to the sea, and seafood products are in high supply over the season. The area also produces amazing fruits on a year-round basis; such as, Rambutan (ngo), Durian (thu-rian), Mangosteen (mang-khut), and many others, a number of Eastern Thailand dishes invariably include seafood and fruit. Unique to the East are Sen Jan Phat Pu, rice noodles with crab; Mango chili sauce, a spicy sauce made from mango and served with fresh veggies; fresh seafood, live seafood served with spicy sauces and veggies; and Pork Cha-muang, pork stew or curry with cha-muang leaves.





## NORTHERN

They love to eat with the family in a round group on the floor, sharing with all the dishes that are unique to the area. The Northern food style is based on sticky rice with a variety of chili dips, and a typical Northern food menu includes Nam Prik Num, Northern Thai green chili dip served with fresh veggies; Nam Prik Ong, Northern style spicy meat and tomato dip; Kaeng Ho, the Northern mixed curry; Kaeng Khae Kai, Northern style chili soup with chicken; Naem, fermented pork, bound tightly with banana leaves; Sai-Ua, the spicy Northern Thai sausage; and Khap Mu, strips of pork with crispy crackle. Also, many people live in the mountain or uphill areas, and they usually include herbs or leaves homogenous to the areas as part of the food.

## NORTHEASTERN

The people in this region love “hot, spicy and salty” food. Natural ingredients come in handy with some exotic live stuff; for example, live fish and some types of insects. Isan people are good at “food preservation” as well as this helps them to keep their food for a long time. Common staples in Isan eating include sticky rice and pla-raa (fermented fish) and fresh veggies. The dishes among the most famous in the country, and perhaps even become worldwide, is Som Tam (papaya salad), Kai Yang (BBQ chicken), Lab (spicy minced pork/chicken), Sai Krok Isan (Northeastern style sausage), and Khai Kata (pan omelet with minced pork).

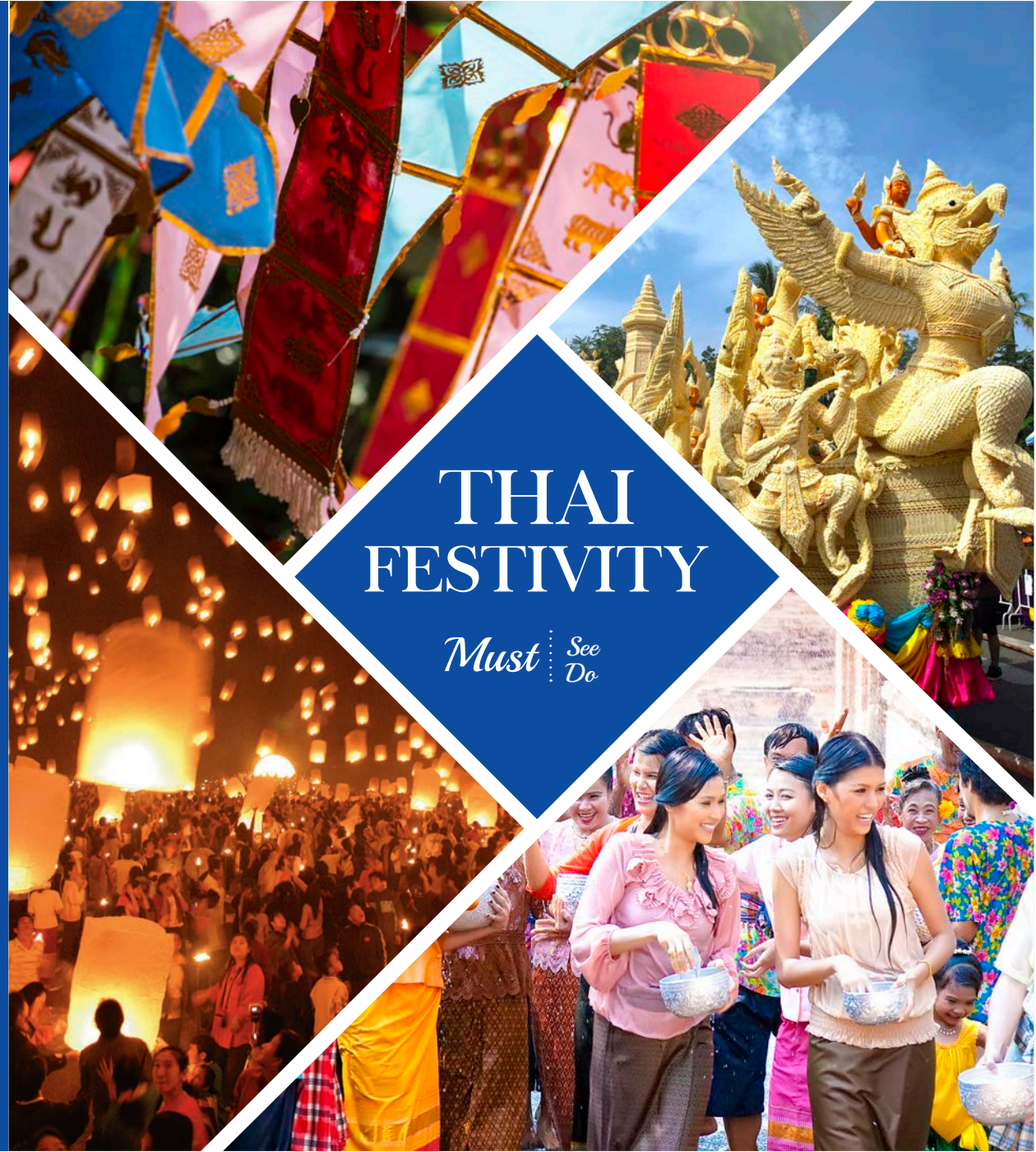


## SOUTHERN

Because most of the people in this region derive their livelihood from fishing, it is not surprising that most of their food supply comes from the sea. People here enjoy lots of seafood every day, and they have developed a secret cooking technique to control the fishy smell - with the “curcuma” or “Indian saffron.” Southern food varies from being “hot” and “very hot.” Some signature Southern dishes (served with fresh veggies) include the Yellow Curry (Southern sour soup with pork rib and preserved bamboo shoot); Kaeng Tai Pla (fish organ sour soup); and the most recommended, Nam Prik Kung Siap (Phuket style), Chi-ya preserved egg, and Mueang Trang roasted pork (Thai noodles Southern style).



The Thai festivals and traditional events across the country present an exhilarating, stimulating experience for locals and visitors alike to experience and understand our religious faiths and long-standing customs, translated into refined ceremonies, wondrous festivities and of course, loads of fun! Come together with Thai communities to celebrate the richness of life through unforgettable, extraordinary moments.



# THAI FESTIVITY

*Must* See  
*Do*

# THAI FESTIVITY

“2015 Discover Thainess” aims to present a new image of Thailand through its unique and extraordinary Thai culture year-round, and give the world a deeper understand of our beliefs, traditions and customs. The campaign hopes to provide foreigners with an opportunity to really immerse themselves in the local touch, the Thai people's way of life and culture.

Most “Discover Thainess” festivities are connected with our people's age-old mores and values as well as our religious beliefs. The lasting legacy of the past, the priceless heritage from every part of the country that has been passed on from generation to generation provides a rich tableau of the culture as reflected by the festivals.

These festivals offer a platform of sorts for visitors to learn more about the different beliefs and traditions of each region around the country. Even though some events may have similarities with our neighbors' culture, there is always something different, something unique and not just in the timing or details of the activities.



Because Thailand is a Buddhist country, most of the festivals are always based on Buddhist ceremonies and the Buddhist way of life. Beyond the fun part, there is always a deeper underlying meaning to any local event and festival even if they are not obvious to the onlooker at first. There is much to learn and gain from being part of these festivals and events, and for visitors, it's a great, fun way to discover more of the country and what makes it an amazing place to travel.





## BUDDHIST LENT (KHAO PHANSA)

A very important Buddhist festival that has been passed on from generation to generation since the Buddha's era is Buddhist Lent. During the three lunar months of the rainy season, when monks are required to remain in the temple and in the past the electrical did not cover all the area so devout Buddhists bring candles to the monks for convince the monks to do religious ceremony. In addition, the locals believe that the candles will bring light to their life.

Even though the Buddhist Lent period is observed mainly for the monks' retreat, devout Buddhists take this opportunity to follow the teachings of the Lord Buddha, and behave in a manner following the examples that the Buddha has set. The teachings of think well, talk well, and act well, are practiced. Do good things, and clear your mind, the Buddha admonished. So many Buddhists time their intention to quit smoking or rid themselves of alcohol during this period. Many Thai parents encourage their sons to enter the monkhood during this period because they believe that this will gain merit for themselves and their children.

Buddhist Lent is a time for candles, and not surprisingly, many provinces hold candle festivals, which have now become big tourist attractions too; such as, the "Ubon Ratchathani Candle Festival."

## THE FLOWER OFFERING TRADITION AT PHRA PHUT THABAT DISTRICT SARABURI

**Where :** Wat Phra Phutthabat District, Saraburi  
**When :** The Buddhist Lent period



Buddhists believe that offering flowers to the monks will reward one with many blessings. The offered flower will be used for worship the religious in the temple and for praying in the religious ceremony at Amphoe Phra Puttabat, Saraburi, this belief has turned into something else - it has become the town's identity.

In the afternoon of Buddhist Lent Day, local folks at Amphoe Phra Puttabat offer "Dok Khao Phansa" to the monks. These beautiful flowers, which bloom only during Buddhist Lent, delight with their colors: yellow, white, and rare purple. They are perfect for offering to the monks.

On Buddhist Lent Day, more than 3,000 monks will be at the Wat Phra Phutthabat to receive flowers from the followers. The monks then climb the steps to the top of the hill, and after paying respects to the Buddha's Footprint, descend the other side of the hill where even more followers await. This activity has been practiced for



so many years in Saraburi that it has become more than a tradition. It is the identity of Saraburi.

Today, the festival has become recognized worldwide as an integral Buddhist festival. Followers are now able to offer flowers for three days, twice a day, at 9a.m. and 3p.m.



## UBON RATCHATHANI CANDLE FESTIVAL

**Where :** Thung Si Mueang, Mueang District, Ubon Ratchathani  
**When :** Buddhist Lent day



The most elaborate Thai tradition of parading candles is held in Ubon Ratchathani province, in the northeast of Thailand every July. This festival showcases the locals' devotion to Buddhist traditions while at the same time supports tourism in the region.

The festival is highlighted by the parade of the beautifully carved wax candles, a visit to the renowned candle-carving village, the display of wax candle masterpieces produced by various artists, a visit to the Ubon Ratchathani Museum where a candle exhibition is displayed, and participation in the opening ceremony of the traditional parade. In addition, there is an International Wax Sculpture Competition wherein artists from all over the world can join and display their art.

Joining the Festival helps attendees understand more about the story of candlemaking in the region and be amazed at the skill of Thai candle-making artists. The wax candle sculptures are usually preserved for a long time and put on display for the public to see.



## END OF BUDDHIST LENT (OK PHANSA)

Ok Phansa marks the end of the "rains retreat." It signals the time when monks can return to their usual social duties and travel. Lay people also celebrate Ok Phansa by offering food to the monks in a ritual called "Tak Bat Devo." Some temples celebrate the festival by having the monks carry the Buddha image and march down the mountaintop to receive alms and food from many followers who line the road waiting for them. The festival symbolizes the Buddha's return to Earth after spending three months preaching to his mother in Heaven. The "Tak Bat Devo" festival is held on the full moon of the 11<sup>th</sup> lunar month (October).

## TAK BAT DEVO

**Where :** Wat Songkat Rattana Khiri, Uthai Thani  
**When :** End of Buddhist Lent



The Tak Bat Devo at Wat Songkat Rattana Khiri, is the biggest event in Uthai Thani province. As the legend goes, the followers of Buddha at Uthai Thani built a chedi at Wat Songkat Rattana Khiri in a place called "Sirimahamaya Kutthakan," where hundreds of steps go all the way down to



Wat Songkat Rattana Khiri, symbolizing the Buddha's descent from heaven. During Tak Bat Devo day, the villagers - wearing white gowns - pay respects to the Buddha image from the chedi accompanied by hundreds of monks along the 449 steps going about to collect food offerings from thousands of people. Uthai Thani is a very small town, but full of friendly folks who welcome all visitors warmly and openly during the fascinating festival. "Tak Bat Devo" is a festival of giving and sharing.

## THE CHONG PARA FESTIVAL (POI LENG SIP ET FESTIVAL)

**Where :** Mueang District, Mae Hong Son  
**When :** End of Buddhist Lent (Ok Phansa )  
during October to November



The Chong Para Festival is the part of Ok Phansa in Northern Thailand. The word “Chong Phara” comes from the Thai Yai dialect meaning “the monk’s castle.” The festival recreates the incident when the Buddha returned to Earth from Daowadeung Heaven. The highlight of this festival is the spectacular Chong Phara procession organized by the Thai Yai people, which features a colorful parade of beautifully decorated wooden castle replicas covered with colorful perforated paper and decorated with fruit, flags and lamps. As in all of the other Thai festivals, this event is also marked by activities; such as, the “King Kala Bird” dancing contest, merit-making, candle processions, a fair of local products and food, and lots of cultural performances. These activities make the evening of the Chong Para Festival truly as bright and beautiful as in heaven.



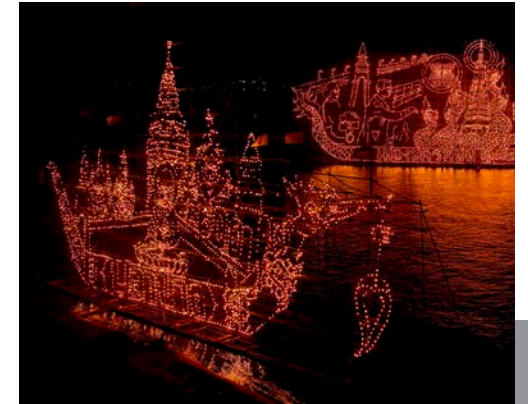
## THE ILLUMINATED BOAT PROCESSION NAKHON PHANOM

**Where :** Nakhon Phanom



The Illuminated Boat Procession is an ancient tradition of the Isan (Northeastern) people. Some call the festival, “Lai Reua Fai meaning “floating illuminated boat.” The event is held on the Mekong River, considered the most important river in Nakhon Phanom province. This is because the lives of the folks here have always been intertwined with the river. They use the Mekong (or Kong River) every day for a variety of purposes, and it is only proper that a festival as important as this one is held in the river. Locals also believe that this event is a chance for them to pay respect to “Phra Mae Khong Kha,” the goddess of the river.

Boats used in this procession are originally made from banana logs or any floating devices, which are then lighted up as they float along the river. Most boats used today are made of wood or synthetic materials. High technology is applied these days and electricity is used to make the beautiful light that sends onlookers in awe. Besides the “illuminated boat” parade along the



*Northeastern*

river, many interesting activities complete the evening including an exhibition of illuminated boat making, colorful street parades, boat races, street procession, and cultural performances. It is a festival to enjoy!

## NAGA FIREBALL FESTIVAL NONG KHAI

**Where :** The Mekong Riverbank, Nong Khai District, Wat Thai Pier, Phon Phisai, Nong Khai  
**When :** End of Buddhist Lent



When a number of fireballs burst from the bottom of the Mekong River - without sound, light or smoke - in the middle of Ok Phansa night, a mystery is created and onlookers wonder if some kind of a miracle is happening in front of their eyes. The fireball phenomenon has been occurring for many years now, and it happens every year, but to date no one can answer or explain where they are coming from. But that's the main reason why many people flock to this side of the Kong River during these festivals. This phenomenon takes place once a year along 300 km of the Mekong River near the border of Thailand and Lao PDR. Local people believe that the Giant Serpent (Phraya Naga), which lives at the bottom of the Mekong River, calls to the Buddha by sending up pink points of light to request his return to the Earth after three months of visiting his mother. Besides the fireballs, other activities can be enjoyed during the festival, including cultural performances, the "Thida Naga" beauty contest, boat races, and many other activities.



## WAX CASTLE FESTIVAL SAKON NAKHON

**Where :** Sakon Nakhon  
**When :** Buddhist Lent day



Another unique Isan festival, of how people at Sakon Nakhon celebrate during Buddhist Lent. The Wax Castle Festival is a glittering event that showcases not only fierce local beliefs, but also their innate artistry. Most of the artists show off their wax castles in a procession for all to see. Aside from the main procession, visitors can also enjoy long-boat races at Nong Han, cultural performances, as well as other entertainment programs. The giant wax castles are always a sight to behold, but they are not just for the art. They also reflect the vibrant spirit of the local inhabitants. The amazing parade show full of imagination and the belief of the locals mean a lot to the visitors. An interesting performance to see is the old style Muay Thai boxing, and the traditional dances called "Phu Thai." The event is also a way of paying homage to Phra That Choeng Chum.



## CHAK PHRA FESTIVAL SURAT THANI

**Where :** Surat Thani  
**When :** Buddhist Lent day



The Chak Phra and Long-boat Races Festival normally falls on the first day of the 11<sup>th</sup> lunar month (October). It lasts for nine days and nine nights. With a month of advance preparations, the local people and local temples help each other to prepare the "Rot Pha Nom Pa" and "Rue Pha Nom Pa" (flora floats on boats and trucks). The floral floats are decorated with many wonderful shapes and images while boats and trucks are decorated with shapes of animals that are found in Buddhist legends; such as, a huge Naga. One of the most interesting aspects of the festival is having representatives of hundreds of temples around the town be present during the pulling ceremonies both on ground and on water.



## SONGKRAN FESTIVAL

The Songkran Festival is Thailand's traditional New Year. In the past, Thailand celebrated the New Year in period, from 13 till 15 April each year, until some changed their celebrations to go along with the international New Year and the international calendar. In some provinces of Thailand, they set another period after the Songkran period to be their own Songkran festival.

Songkran is also characterized by the "Sand Pagoda Making" tradition. In the old days, it was believed that when Buddhists went to the temples, they took some sand from the temple to their homes. Therefore, to return the sand back to the temple, the people took sand from the river to make "Sand Pagodas" at the temple during Songkran. Doing so also teaches them the lesson of teamwork and cooperation as you can't make a Sand Pagoda alone.

Traditional water pouring is meant as a symbol of the washing away of sins committed in the past year. Filled with fragrant "Nam Op," the water pouring makes the celebration more meaningful, a practice of good manners. But the most fun part of Songkran is the water throwing activity that has become a major tourist attraction these days.

## BANGKOK

 **Where :** Around Rattanakosin Island, Khao San Road, and Silom Road




Spending Songkran in Bangkok means experiencing the fun side of the exotic Thai culture around the capital. In Rattanakosin Island (old Bangkok) alone, there are more than one "not-to-be missed" spots for Songkran revelry : Bang Lamphu, Khao San, Phra Athit, and the Santichai Prakan Public Park, where the four styles of Songkran festivities (from the four regions of Thailand) are simulated in one place. In addition, the nine Royal Temples around Bangkok, are a must-visit for fun and memorable Songkran activities. These include: 1. Wat Phra Kaeo / Wat Phra Sriรัตน Sassadaram 2. Wat Arun, 3. Wat Suthat, 4. Wat Saket, 5. Wat Pho / Wat Phra Chetuphon Vimolmangkhlaram

Besides merit-making activities around Rattanakosin Island, visitors should not miss another Songkran festival highlight in Bangkok : The "Wisut Kasat Songkran Festival" at Bang Khun Phrom Intersection, Wisut Kasat Road, Wisut Kasat Pier along the Chao Phraya River. Activities here include merit making and food offering to monks, beauty pageants, and a Chak Phra Ceremony. Last but not least, a riotous



Songkran can be enjoyed at most famous areas; such as, Khao San, Silom, Chokchai 4, RCA, and Ratchadaphisek Roads. Celebrate the Thai New Year, the Thai style by joining in in these festivities.

## WAN LAI SONGKRAN FESTIVAL PATTAYA - CHON BURI


 **Where :** Bang Saen Beach, Sri Racha District, Chon Buri



Wan Lai Songkran Festival in Pattaya is popular among both locals and tourists alike. The “Wan Lai Festival” starts a bit later than the Maha Songkran Festival in Central Thailand, usually around 16-20 April every year, and that is why it is called “Wan Lai.” Songkran in Pattaya, as in other places in Thailand, it features many fulfilled activities; such as, “Rot Nam Dam Hua,” a traditional way to celebrate with elders by pouring scented water onto the elder’s palm; and “Wan Lai Parade,” a parade of cultural performances and other traditional activities. Don’t miss the super fun water fight where everyone can join. Also expect to get a glimpse of traditional Thai folk games; such as, “Muay Talay, the traditional Thai sports, and a taste of local products and food offered by various stalls.



## CHIANG MAI SONGKRAN FESTIVAL

 **Where :** Chiang Mai



The Northern Thai people celebrate Songkran Day in their own special way. They call it “Pavnee Phi Mai,” which translates as “welcome New Year.” It is celebrated citywide, and we can say that it is the most important festival for locals to present their rich, long history; unique culture, priceless heritage, and time-honored values. There are many activities during this event; such as, the procession and bathing of Phra Phutta Sihing, riding a “Kang Chong” (the Northern vehicle), carrying sand to the temples, and of course, cultural performances. Tourists will also be glad to take part in the fun splashing of water around the moats of Chiang Mai, and experience a sample of gracious Lanna culture and beliefs during the celebrations.



## DOK KHUN SIANG KHAEN SONGKRAN FESTIVAL AND KHAO NIEO ROAD SONGKRAN FESTIVAL KHON KAEN

 **Where :** Khao Nieo Road, Khon Kaen



Songkran Isan-style features the ancient merit-making traditions, the famous “Human wave” (activity on Khao Nieo Road), stalls offering local products and food, a Songkran procession with many beautiful floral floats, and a Miss Dok Khun Siang Khaen beauty contest.

Reflecting the rural way of life in Isan, the festival is held 13-15 April every year at Kaen Nakhon Lake, located at the center of town. The place will be decorated with multi-colored flowers, making the environment more inviting for people and tourists to welcome the coming Thai New Year.

The main activity of water splashing here is really fun, with Khao Nieo Road becoming the center for water splashing. Lots of fun indeed as Songkran is marked in other parts of Thailand.



## HAT YAI SONGKRAN FESTIVAL AND HAT YAI MIDNIGHT SONGKRAN FESTIVAL

 **Where :** Odeon Intersection, Sanehanusorn Road, Niphat Uthit 3 Road, Hat Yai District, Songkhla



The Songkran festival in Southern Thailand is unlike those in other regions, as the festival is held from morning till midnight and with a popular foam party. The morning activity begins with merit making (offering food to the monks). In addition, paying respect to the elders by pouring scented water and the procession of Phra Phuttha Sihing are also very important to the local people. From noon to evening, all kinds of entertainment : free concerts, stage shows, and foam parties are held. The unique highlight is the Songkran Procession at Midnight, as the locals believe that it is this time of the day when the angel will be on Earth to protect everyone.

As for the water splashing activity, it is especially boisterous at Sanehanusorn Road, where the foam party also takes place. It is open for tourists until midnight. Other activities include the Songkhla beauty pageant, the rarely seen traditional folk games including Muay Talay, traditional Thai sports, and stalls offering local products and food.



## LOI KRATHONG

The Loi Krathong festival is a tradition that goes back to ancient times. The festival started as a ceremonial rite to pay respect and give thanks to “Phra Mae Khongkah”, the goddess of the river, and waterways for taking care of Thais during the year, as well to wish for good luck in the coming year. The festival has since become the most beautiful of Thai festivals. Held on the full moon night of the 12<sup>th</sup> lunar month (November), Loi Krathong is a magical event that is not easy to forget. The sight of a krathong floating on the river, their lights bright against the dark of the night under the full moon is simply romantic. But slight differences in celebrations occur in each region.

## LOI KRATHONG FESTIVAL : BANGKOK

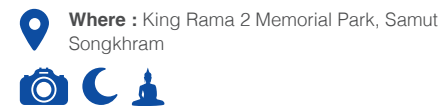


Where : Bangkok

Bangkok is one of the best spots to experience Loi Krathong - usually held at the Chao Phraya River. A variety of activities accompany the festival; such as, merit making and asking for forgiveness from Phra Mae Khong Kha, an illuminated boat procession, as well as the sight of buildings and historic places along the river from Bangkok to Krung Thon Krung Thon Bridges decorated with thousands of lights.

For those who love a classic Retro-style, we recommend the Rama 8 Bridge area as the place will be decorated in a classic theme with the beautiful scenery of the Chao Phraya River as a backdrop. For those who enjoy tradition and culture, “The River Festival Event”, which takes place along the river from the Rama 8 Bridge to Asiatique is recommended. Seeing the Chao Phraya River during Loi Krathong night will make you fall in love with it again. Tourists will love the sights of buildings and historical sites on both sides of the river decorated with thousands of lights and enjoy illuminated boat and cultural performances.

## LOI KRATHONG KAP KLUAI MAE KLONG FESTIVAL SAMUT SONGKHRAM



Where : King Rama 2 Memorial Park, Samut Songkhram


After years of not celebrating their unique tradition, Samut Songkram province decided to bring back the celebration of Kap Kluai Mae Klong. The basic idea of making a krathong is easy, because they use banana trunks, which can be easily found anywhere. Before Loi Krathong night, the local people gather banana trunks to make a proper krathong, prepare the incense stick by dipping them in rubber oil and leaving them under the sun for two days. Some people make their “Krathong Kap Klui” more special by adding some beautiful carvings.

More than 100,000 pieces of these banana trunks will float nicely all over the “Mae Klong” River during Loi Krathong night for all people to enjoy besides the Thai folk shows, Thai classical music shows, Noppamas beauty pageants, maybe a demonstration of krathong making, and some traditional Thai food.





## YI PENG FESTIVAL

 **Where :** Chang Klan Road, Chiang Mai



“Yi Peng” is the most important festival of Chiang Mai, the former capital of the Lanna Kingdom. Yi Peng means “the full moon of the second month,” as the twelfth month in the Thai Lunar calendar corresponds to the second month in the traditional calendar. The period is at the end of the rainy season and the beginning of winter, when the sky is bright and clear to welcome the festival. Besides floating a krathong on the water they also launch khom fai (lanterns) into the night sky, as the Lanna people believe that the lanterns will take the sins and bad luck away with them. Thus, Chiang Mai people hurl hundreds of lanterns up to the sky - a truly memorable moment for anyone to see. Other activities that characterize Loi Krathong elsewhere in Thailand are also present, as local people make merit (Tam Bun) at the temple, decorate their house, streets, and temples with khom fai, flowers, candle, and tung (Lanna flags). At night, they hold a Yi Peng parade, conduct traditional performances in the Lanna style, and perform rarely seen traditional folk games.




## LOI KRATHONG SAI TAK

 **Where :** On the banks of the Ping River, Rattanakosin 200 years Bridge, Tak



The Loi Krathong Sai Festival in Tak province blends Buddhism with the idea of the local Tak people. The krathong in Tak is shaped more like a lotus. They use coconut shells as krathongs, filling the inside with some oil and yarn to light up the krathong; a local wisdom that has been passed down through generations. The beautiful part of the festival is the floating of 8,000 lanterns along the Ping River, a sight you can't find anywhere. Each year, Tak celebrates Loi Krathong along with a competition, floating a train of 1,000 glittering lanterns for a royal trophy. Their basic belief is the same as those in other regions : to ask forgiveness from Phra Mae Kong Kha.

## LOI KRATHONG PHAO THIEN LEN FAI SUKHOThAI

 **Where :** Wat Maha That, Sukhothai Historical Park, Sukhothai



The Loi Krathong celebration in Sukhothai is probably the most authentic in all Thailand. Unique to the festival are the “krathong,” the circular floating object decorated with banana leaves and “Phao Thien Len Fai,” or lighted candle. You will easily see the beautiful handmade “krathongs” made from banana leaves and trunks, decorated with scented flowers. Tourists will also get a chance to experience the way of their living and explore the World Heritage ancient city. A beautiful parade, Noppamas beauty contest, stalls offering local products and food, features during the day, and in the evening, visitors can experience the Festival of the Dawn of Happiness City with chandelier lamp parades and fireworks.







Having fun during your stay in Thailand is as easy as 1-2-3- just do as the locals do! Going shopping is a lot more enjoyable when you can find almost anything in bustling markets. Sports fans will be thrilled to experience our traditional sports and recreational pursuits. Music enthusiasts are in for a treat. And even commuting can be amazing if you try getting around using local rides. The choices are endless and they are all yours to discover. So, let's begin, shall we?



# THAI FUN

*Must* See  
*Do*

# THAI FUN

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The hospitality of Thais is innate, part of the fun-loving, easy-going character that comes naturally to all Thais. Everywhere you go in Thailand, their generally positive approach to life is obvious, whatever they do, wherever they are. Thais are basically warm, friendly, generous, and always ready to help, owing perhaps to their Buddhist upbringing. This is a country where people are taught not to cling onto anything but to remain open to new things, to be tolerant and forgiving. These traits make Thais a people who take to fun and pleasure easily. These make them such great hosts, and their country is always such a fun place to visit.



## TEMPLE FAIR

Thai temples are the veritable center of the community unit. As such, the temples are not only places of worship or religious activities they are also a place where people come together for fun. Nothing exemplifies this best than the temple fairs. From the North to the South, temple fairs represent the best of the fun local lifestyle. Especially during public holidays, the temples are dressed up with a carnival atmosphere where fun-seeking Thais can go: There will be booths selling local products, food stalls to enjoy local food and drinks, and, of course, entertainment outlets. One can ride the Ferris wheel; enjoy games; such as, shooting, darts, quoits, Girl Overboard, and other fun activities. There might even be a place where local bands and singers are in concert, as well as other stage shows and entertainment fare. Many of the fun activities in the temple fairs are similar to what one can enjoy in other countries, but there are some features that are unique to each Thai region. Temple fairs in the Northeast; for example, will always have a stage for local arts and culture shows; such as, mo lam or likay. The temple fair is a traditional part of Thai village lifestyle that continues to remain strong and robust.

## GOLDEN MOUNT TEMPLE FAIR

Where : Wat Saket, Boriphat, Bangkok  
[www.facebook.com/watsraket](http://www.facebook.com/watsraket)



Every year, usually during the Loi Krathong Festival, the Borom Banphot ground (Golden Mount), Wat Saket Rajavoramahaviharn becomes one big temple fair that attracts hordes of Thais and foreigners for its sights and sounds. The fair, which usually lasts seven nights and eight days, features activities; such as, booth exhibitions, entertainment, Thai musical performances, haunted houses, Ferris wheels, darts, blowing balloons, and stores sell famous local products from around the country. In addition, the temple extends its opening hours in the evening to those who want to pay homage to the Buddha's Relics. A visitor here should not miss going up the Golden Mount to worship the gilded relics, to enjoy the view on the most top floor, see the mural paintings and Buddha images in the temple, and experience first-hand how the local Buddhists revere their religion.



## MARKET FAIR

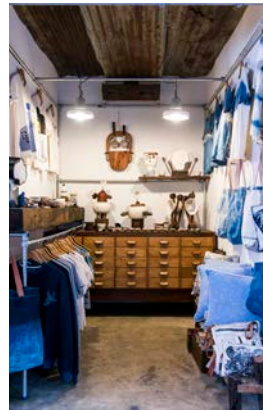
A market with days of trading fixed for some days or some times is called a market fair. On market fair day, it is crowded, with both buyers and sellers. Products for sale are on the ground, if not placed on a table or makeshift stall. There will also be some pick-ups distributing miscellaneous household goods, including cooked foods and desserts for shoppers. The location of the market fair can be fixed or changed. There are some differences between the market fair and the fresh market. A fresh market is a place where products are sold every day (although other days may be skipped as required). A market fair is fixed for a few days a week only. If trading is made daily, it is not a "market fair." In addition, the market fair offers a variety of goods, not only fresh foods, but also items; such as, clothing and books.

## CHATUCHAK WEEKEND MARKET BANGKOK

**Where :** Phaholyothin Road, and Kamphaengpet 2 Road, Chatuchak, Bangkok  
[www.jatujakshoppingguide.com](http://www.jatujakshoppingguide.com)



Chatuchak Weekend Market, also known as “JJ”, is the market at the foot of the BTS Skytrain and MRT system in Chatuchak district popular with both Thais and foreigners. There are more than 9,000 stalls in 27 projects offering a myriad of items - food, clothing, fashion apparel, old and new books, rare antiques and collectibles, handicrafts, ceramics, Thai porcelain, pets and animal accessories, trees and landscaping equipment, decorative items, arts - you name it! Occasionally, there might be some performances and shows for visitors to enjoy but mainly it's shopping. Contrary to popular belief Chatuchak Weekend Market opens on business days too; For instance, the tree market is open Wednesdays and Thursday from 5a.m. to 6p.m. and the ceramic market opens on Fridays from 8a.m. to 9p.m.



## RAILWAY MARKET BANGKOK

**Where :** Branch 1 Srinakarin 51 Road, Bangkok Open on Thursday - Sunday  
Branch 2 Ratchadapisek Road, Bangkok  
Open on Tuesday - Sunday 5p.m. to 1a.m.  
[www.facebook.com/taradrodfi.com](http://www.facebook.com/taradrodfi.com)



Railway Market has a retro atmosphere that pleases shopaholics. Open in the evening, it has an easy atmosphere and many different types of goods, second-hand clothes, and even gorgeous furniture are sold. Railway Market has opened a new branch near the prime area of Ratchadaphisek behind the Esplanade: the Train Night Market Ratchada, which opens at night with the traditional Thai night bazaar style, with thousands of stores selling fashion clothing and second-hand goods. The zones are stylish, cool, and chic. There is also a food zone and various tasting menus can be tried. The market provides performances and shows for visitors during festivals and special events.



## Central and Eastern

### CICADA MARKET HUA HIN

**Where :** The Venue at Suan Sri KhaoTakiap, Hua Hin  
[www.cicadamarket.com](http://www.cicadamarket.com)



### THA PAE WALKING STREET CHIANG MAI

**Where :** Tha Pae Gate, Ratchadamnoen Road, Chiang Mai



Tha Pae Gate, the most famous and largest walking street in Chiang Mai, opens only on Sunday evenings at about 5-10 p.m. It is a large market with a wide variety of goods: cultural products; such as, handicrafts, accessories; such as, bags, scarves, lamps, clothes, souvenirs, etc., as well as fashion items. There's also a foodie zone where visitors can enjoy rice noodles with spicy pork sauce, rice noodles in fish curry sauce with vegetables, snacks like crispy roti, and the like. If you are visiting during winter, a trip to this walking street is kind of enjoyable and relaxing. As the largest walking street in Chiang Mai, it draws great attention from both Thai and foreign visitors.



## Northern



Cicada Market opens on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays. An art market, this is the place to go for contemporary fine artworks, including handmade and home-decorative artifacts, clothing, household objects, and creative products. The area is divided into three zones: 1. the Art a La Mode : an indoor space for creative handmade work pieces, reused articles, and home decorations in the format of a House Studio, 2. an outdoor space for stage performances and shows (concerts, plays, dances, etc.) : and lastly 3. Art of Eating : a dedicated space for performances, selling, and demonstrations; for example, of food from Hua Hin's famous restaurants to give visitors an experience of esthetics and taste.

## WUA LAI CHIANG MAI

**Where :** Wua Lai Road, near the Chiang Mai city gate



Wua Lai is a walking street that opens only on Saturdays from 5 to 10 p.m. The road is charming not only because it is a cultural street (most vendors are indigenous people living along Wua Lai Road), but also because it is located in the silverware village, where production and distribution of goods; such as, silver jewelry as well as a wide selection of native products are available.



## TAI LOM WALKING STREET PHETCHABUN

**Where :** Ronnakit Road, Lom Sak, Phetchabun



Tai Lom Walking Street is a popular classic shopping district because both sides of Ronnakit Road have plenty of well-arranged two-story wooden houses. It opens on every Saturday evening from 5 to 10 p.m. The street is also a haven for rarely found local food; such as, Tai Lom rice noodles, roasted chicken with ground rice, and Paya Leum Kaeng Rice; and great for those shopping for local goods; such as, handmade products for souvenirs or gifts. There are also cultural performances to enjoy; such as, those of demonstration kiosks on how to make ancient knives, presented by the Ban Mai Knife Making Group. The 100-year-old art was inherited from Vientiane smiths. The highlight though is the folkloric experience: folk dances, and traditional musical performances by the local villagers.

## KAD KONG TA LAMPANG

**Where :** Old Market Road, Suan Dok, Mueang Lampang, Lampang  
[www.facebook.com/kardkongta.com](http://www.facebook.com/kardkongta.com)



Located in the old market along the Wang River, Kad Kong Ta is regarded as an “economy road with historic origin,” because it was formerly a commercial center in Northern Thailand. The buildings have been reconstructed and now it has come alive again as a unique cultural street. Kad Kong Ta Walking Street is open every Saturday and Sunday from 5 to 10 p.m. If you wish a full exploration of Kad Kong Ta, it is recommended that you walk from the beginning of the road surrounding the base of Rassada Bridge (biking is preferable). On the way of sightseeing, you will see restaurants and cute coffee shops where you can sit and relax. If you wish to experience the atmosphere longer, it is recommended that you lodge in one of the guesthouses there, available in various styles and varying level of prices.





## RIDING A LOCAL VEHICLE

For a fun-trip across the different regions of Thailand, it is always best to travel by local vehicles.

The local vehicle experience provides not only fun and amusement for visitors but also promotes environmental tourism under the "7 Greens" concept. For instance, a tricycle, an energy-saving and safety local vehicle that helps reduce global warming, is a joy to ride in as the passengers also learn about the history, custom, and traditions of the locality as narrated by the driver. Availing of local transportation also helps in the creation of jobs and good income distribution among the local community.

Many prominent tourist destinations provide visitors with a first-hand undiluted experience of the local touch and have fun as well. Try the local travel modes now. You'll enjoy it.

## Central

### MOTORIZED TRICYCLE (TUK-TUKS) BANGKOK

Where : Around Bangkok



The Thai tuk-tuk has become a unique symbol of Thailand, well known the world over. The tuk-tuk is for those who would like to try a different, exciting experience other than the typical taxi. Travel by tuk-tuk to visit a mall or a temple, and enjoy a thrilling open-air ride that captures the spirit of the destination.

### TRICYCLE MUEANG NONTHABURI

Where : Mueang Nonthaburi District, Nonthaburi



There is a "tricycle" that can only be found in Nonthaburi province. These tricycles (Samlo) cannot be found elsewhere but in Nonthaburi only, especially at the areas surrounding the Nonthaburi waterside, in front of the old wooden city hall and the market of Nonthaburi. Try the Samlo service for city sightseeing and you will have experienced the real Nonthaburi.



## LONG - TAILED BOAT TRIPS THA TIEN/THA CHANG BANGKOK

**Where :** Tha Tian Pier / Tha Chang Pier,  
Taksin Pier, Bangkok



Bangkok was once recognized as “the Venice of the East” because of its rivers and waterways system. Today, some of these old waterways still exist, and can only be visited by using long-tailed boats. It is like the taxi of the past, but the long-tail boat has been converted into “yachts” for today’s travelers instead. A voyage aboard the long-tailed boat leaves a memorable experience of Bangkok that visitors will relish for a long time. The long-tailed boat service offers visitors two options: 1-hour or 2-hours. Most trips focus on trips along the Chao Phraya River to Khlong Bangkok Noi and ending with paying homage to the pagoda at Wat Arun.



## ELEPHANT RIDING AYUTTHAYA

**Where :** Wang Chang Corral Ayutthaya  
[www.ayutthayaelephantcamps.com](http://www.ayutthayaelephantcamps.com)



Sightseeing of the most popular and historic sites in the World Heritage Site of Ayutthaya on elephant's back is an activity very few tourists can resist. The visitors are “touched” by the joy of riding the elephant and sightseeing the historic old town from a high corner, giving him or her a different perspective of viewing Wat Phara Ram, Wat Phra Sri Sanphet, Viharn Phra Mongkhon Bophit, and Kum Khun Phan. The program is ideal for tourists who wish to experience the adventure while sightseeing around Ayutthaya. You might also learn something about these adorable, intelligent animals along the way.





## Northern and Northeastern

### HORSE - DRAWN CARRIAGES

 **Where :** Mueang Lampang



Lampang is the only province in Thailand where a horse-drawn carriage is still widely used as a vehicle for short distances of travel in the city. Lampang's horse-drawn carriages have convertible, passenger seats similar to the seat of a tricycle but bigger, laid at the rear of the horse rider, and a bit higher. They are available for two passengers only. Those interested can mount a horse-drawn carriage in front of the old town hall, in front of the Viengthong Hotel, or in front of the Tipchang Hotel.



### PIG PEN BUS


 **Where :** Kongkailas, Sukhothai



Experience Sukhothai via the pigpen bus, otherwise; known as "minibus" and be touched by the way the local people in the birthplace of Siam commutes around their community. The highlight of the pigpen bus is the pig-like wooden structure. Visitors can catch a ride to go sightseeing in Kongkrailas town, one of nine districts of Sukhothai province, which was once a large cargo port. In addition, visitors can take a trip to the first fish market of Thailand, or visit the ancient Chinese wooden house, taste traditional sweet ginger pastry, and experience the fishermen's way of life along the Yom basin of Kongkrailas.



### I - TRACT


 **Where :** All province in Northeastern



"I-tract" in Isan language is a term used to name a modified pushcart with a seat, but no roof for the purpose of transporting agricultural crops. Its name came from the unique sound, "trak trak," produced while running. In many provinces, I-tracts has been modified as a travel vehicle, used to visits a garden or tourist attractions where the route is rugged, steep, and not smooth, especially en route to a scenic mountain. This novel form of transport brings forth fun, amusement, and excitement.



## SCORPION-TAILED BOAT


 **Where :** Mae Ping River, Mueang Chiang Mai, Chiang Mai



“Scorpion-tailed boat” is regarded a fruit of the wisdom of the Lanna people. So named because the boat’s tail is like that of a scorpion’s tail. This mode of transport used to be the only vessel ideal for sailing on the Ping River. It takes an entire large old teak tree to make a scorpion-tailed boat. The scorpion-tailed boat is currently used as a vessel for cruising in an eco-historic tourism program, to sail along the Ping River, sightseeing both sides of the river with a guide narrating the history of the area, as well as the story of Chiang Mai from the past to its present.



## SKYLAB TRICYCLE

 **Where :** Northeastern



Skylab tricycle is a symbol of tourism in the northeastern provinces. It originated in Udon Thani province, and then spread onto other provinces across the Northeast. It is powered by a motorcycle engine with double rows of seats at the rear. A prominent feature of the tricycle is the bright colors with the Isan-style upward face at the front, spacious comfortable chairs, and beautiful appearance. Many provinces in the Northeast, including Udon Thani, Nakhon Phanom, Nong Khai, Loei, etc., all possess the Skylab tricycle as tour vehicles carrying tourists to reach the destination enjoyably.



## Southern

### TUK TUK HUA KOP

 Where : Trang




The Tuk Tuk Hua Kop public bus has been well known in the town of Trang for more than 50 years now, and today just 300 units remain. It is a symbol of Trang's historic past. Explore Trang by a Tuk Tuk Hua Kop ride to experience the atmosphere of the old town. The local vehicle serves as a guide carrying visitors to the major tourist attractions of the city. Service offered includes 1-hour, 2- hours, and 4-hours or depending on the tourists' wishes.



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### THAI FOLKLORE SPORTS FLYING KITES

 Where : Sanam Luang , Bangkok - Hua Hin



A Thai kite is a unique national heritage. In the past, during the summer, Sanam Luang was used as an activity lawn for flying kites. Today this activity is being revived, and is being promoted not only for the restoration of Thai culture, traditional sport, and national heritage, but also as a means of cultural exchange between countries in the region and beyond. The Thailand International Kite Festival is now a regular agenda in the Thai events calendar and the feedback is encouraging. More than 100 sets of international kite shows are performed in different formats, including Thai kites, under the concept of the conservation and restoration of Thai culture and art so that future generations will know and inherit the cultural heritage as well.



## Central and Eastern



### LONG-BOAT RACING

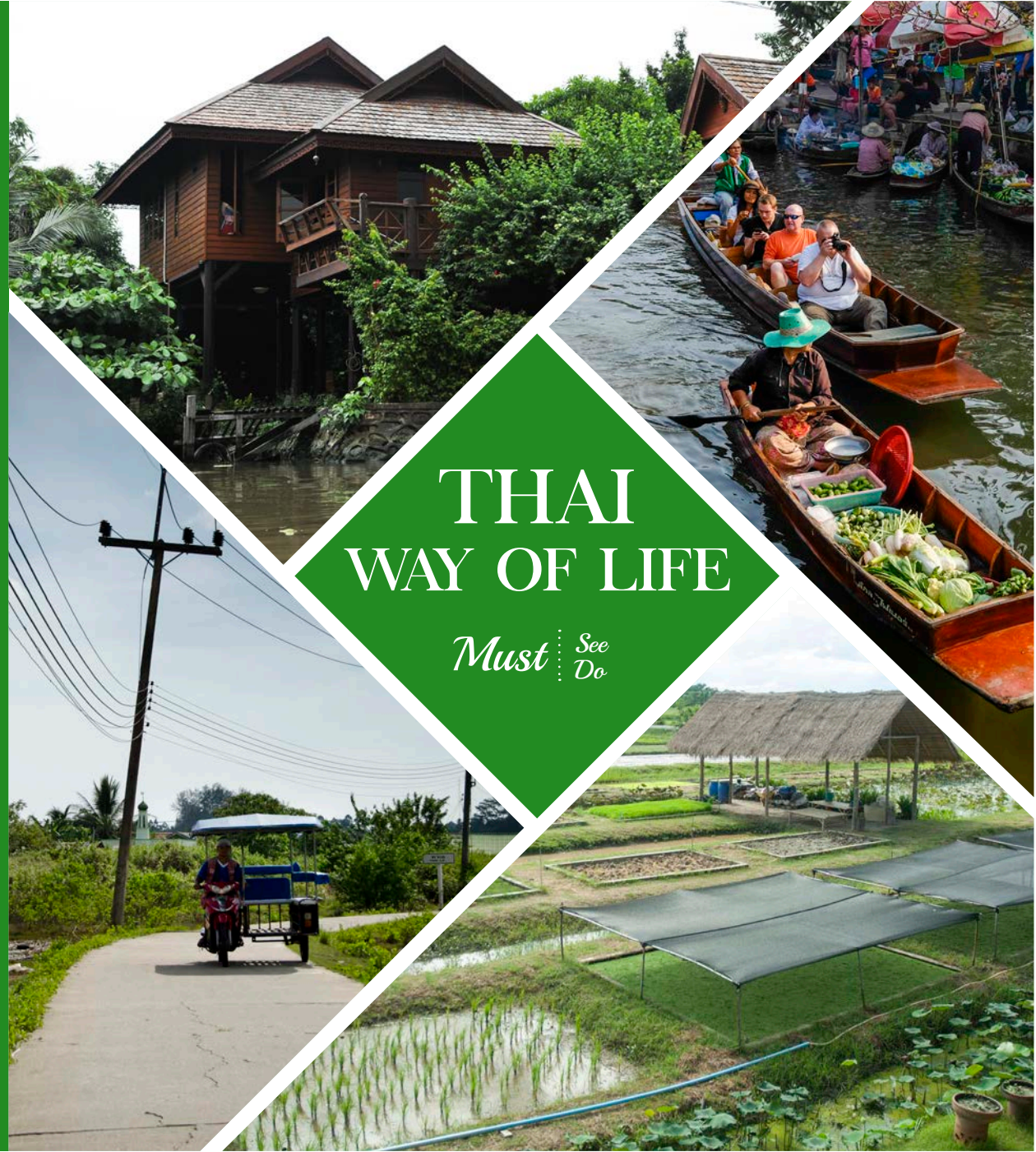
Long-boat racing is a cultural heritage that reflect the relationship between Thai lifestyle and boat because In the past the boat is the main transportation. By the ancestry's intelligence, they can build a long boat with a whole tree. Long-boat racing is the festival that happens after the three lunar months and that period is great flooding time. Even though, the Long-boat racing is a competition, it still provides cohesion and entertainment.

Long-boat racing is available in many parts of Thailand; such as, Pichit, Pitsanulok, Nakhonsawan Nan and Narathiwat province. Long boat in Nan looks like nagas, especially at the front and the end of boat. For Narathiwat's long boat, it is decorated beautifully by colorful stencil.

085



The Thai way of living embodies the best of each community, and each region offers unique, first-hand experiences. Take it slow and immerse yourself in the tranquil surroundings and simple pleasures of agrarian life. Discover the charms of age-old customs, beliefs and practices. Learn how locals make the things they need with materials they have on hand, and, fully appreciate the harmonious bonds between the people and nature.



# THAI WAY OF LIFE

*Must See  
Do*

# THAI WAY OF LIFE

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## ALL ABOUT THAI

The Thai way of life can be described as Janus-faced: one looking into the past, and the other looking into the future. The first is that portrayal of the Thai lifestyle traditional revolving around religion, monarchy, state, and family only; the second is that of the modern kingdom jealously guarding its heritage as it tiptoes into the future. Both views are actually valid.

In every aspect of the community, despite the individual circumstances of the people in making a living or status in society, Thailand has retained its basic cultural values and traditions since the day of their forefathers: from the way they worship to the way they eat and dress to the way they celebrate life. Even if each community can boast a unique, separate culture of their own, there is a thread that unifies and interweaves them all into a single whole - being Thai.



And Thais are very much aware of what it means to be Thai, whether they are in the rural area of Isan planting rice, in the South eking a livelihood from a bountiful sea, in the North basking in their beautiful, temperate atmosphere; or the Central part enjoying urban comforts. They are proud of their common identity; their common Thainess.



## Must See

Thailand is basically agricultural-based, and even with modern development advancing, most people's main source of livelihood comes from the farms, paddy fields, and orchards. Many communities continue to grow fruits, vegetables and other staples, which is why the country is called the "Food Bowl of the World," abundantly producing food for the world, whether fresh or processed.

### Central



#### BAN BANG PHLAP SAMUT SONGKHRAM

**Where :** Ban Khlong Bang Phlap is located some 69km southeast of Bangkok  
Tel. 034-761-985,08-1274-4433



There are other more prominent locations than Ban Bang Phlap, but those looking for "unseen" settings to discover Thainess; few places closer to Bangkok are more pristine. The village takes you back to the days when Thailand was still a backwater in international tourism, and the simple joys of life are what most people aspire for, pace of life in general is slow, and people are generally polite and gracious. This place is best explored with other locations such as Ban Khlong Khut Lek, Wat Phleng, Damnoen Saduak, Ban Wat Yang Ngam, Ban Wat Bot and Samut Songkhram.



#### BAN RIM KHLONG SAMUT SONGKHRAM

**Where :** 43/1 Mu 8, Ban Prok, Samut Songkhram



Samut Songkram's rich historical heritage and closeness to Bangkok make it an easy weekend getaway for many Bangkokians. It's not on the mainstream tourist itinerary, but if you find your way here you'll be surprised at how many "hidden gems" you will find. One is this place, located beside a narrow river. Ban Rim Khlong offers accommodation, but the restaurant side is really a treasure. The timeless ambience of the surroundings will enhance your enjoyment of a meal. Reasonably priced too, especially if you are keen to slip away from the modern world.

### Northern

#### BAN NA TON CHAN SUKHOTHAI

**Where :** Sukhothai



For a taste of what authentic Thai life is, or used to be, the place to go Ban Na Ton Chan is a home-stay community in Sukhothai. It is not surrounded by stunning mountains or facing a beautiful beach, but its rustic appeal is popular among home-stay tourists. Moreover, there are many local activities available here such as making fermented mud cloth, fabrication, enjoying local food named "Kao perb" and visiting local people's farm. Ban Na Ton Chan offers culture and a way of life, a fact recognized recently by PATA, which awarded it a Gold Award in the Heritage and Culture category. Make a visit and get a glimpse of one of the best experiences of life inside a Thai home.





## BAN MAE LANA MAE HONG SON

 **Where :** Pang Ma Pha, Mae Hong Son



Ban Mae Lana is an ethnic Thai Yai (Shan) community, located 18 kms. from Soppong, and framed by the mountains of Mae Hong Son province. This tranquil village lies in a valley surrounded by paddy fields. On arrival, visitors will notice the beautiful, simple, Shan-style Buddhist temple. A river winds gently through the village complementing the peaceful atmosphere. Here, you can experience the Thai Yai lifestyle, history and serene Buddhist culture, explore stunning caves and enjoy traditional Thai massage and local herbal sauna. Among the most popular activities here are: cave trekking, enjoying a Shan massage and herbal sauna, watching a Chat Tai dance performance, and joining some volunteer activities.



## BAN SRI NA PAN NAN

 **Where :** Mueang Nan District, Nan



Another undiscovered treasure, located in the off-the-beaten tourism destination of Nan, Ban Sri Pan is known only to tourist, and travelers who on their own venture to faraway places to experience more of the local touch. The place has been recognized by the Thailand Tourism Awards too, but has yet to fully invade the consciousness of mainstream tourists. This is a great springboard to explore the province that is full of serendipitous surprises, adventurous activities, undiscovered wonders, and other rewards.

## *Northeastern*

## THAI PHUAN BAN CHIANG UDON THANI

 **Where :** Nong Han District, Udon Thani



Ban Thai Phuan is a traditional Thai house built on the site where an archeological excavation site has yielded many ancient objects. Ban Chiang is now believed to be the oldest cradle of civilization in Southeast Asia, as proven by the over a million pottery pieces, dozens of human skeletons and bronze grave gifts - the earliest evidence of the manufacture of metal tools in the region (dating back to 2000 BC) - found there. Archeologists also found rice fragments, which lead to the assumption that the Bronze Age settlers must have been farmers. Ban Chiang was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1992.



## Southern



### BAN KO KLANG KRABI

Where : Klong Prasong, Krabi



Community-based tourism is coming of age in this small island situated in the middle of the Krabi River. From the city's main pier, boats or ferries can take you to Ban Ko Klang for a quick exploration of this island that has long been inhabited but only recently rose up to its tourism fortunes. The main form of livelihood is still fishing, but other community-based initiatives have been giving the residents relative sustainability: rice farming, batik art, wooden boat art, and many others. There is only one resort on the island - and you are invited to visit before the big crowd learns about this best-kept secret.

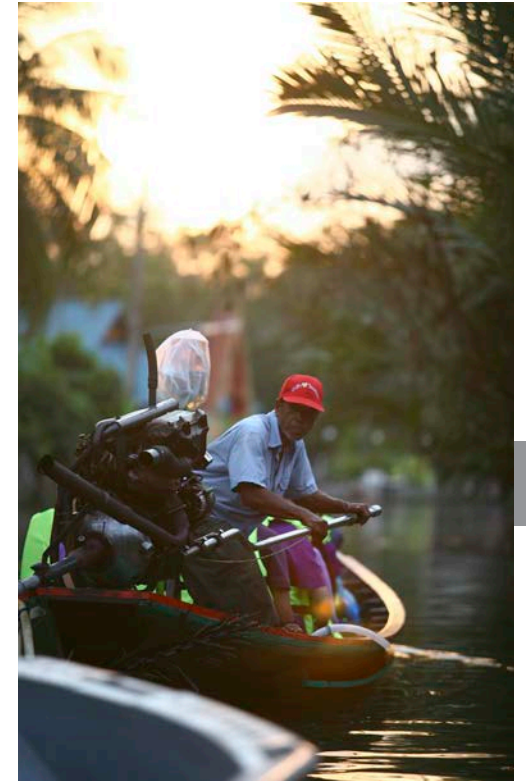


### KHLONG ROI SAI SURAT THANI

Where : Tapee River, Mueang District, Surat Thani



Khlong Roi Sai translates to "a hundred canals," given to the place because of the many canals that eventually meet at the Tapi River in Surat Thani. Visitors have always found Thailand's riverine culture interesting and exploring places where they can trace the lifestyles of the local fishermen, farmers, and the rural folks have always attracted them. The touch of Thainess in the long-tailed boat, the simplicity of riverside culture, and the richness of nature, among other things are enjoyed to the hilt and enlightening too about understanding another culture. Do not forget to pay respect to Luang Pho Kao Suk, a Buddha statue made of dried rice at Wat Bai Mai, the heart and soul of the Khlong Roi Sai people or the 200-year-old antique house of Khun Prachan. At night, a boat ride to see the glittering fireflies is an experience to relish.





## ELEPHANT VILLAGE (MU BAN CHANG)

The role that elephants play in Thai life cannot be over-emphasized. They have been helpful in war and in peace, and they have always been an amazing beast of burden. This elephant village helps tourists understand these jumbos and encourage them to care for them as well.

*Northeastern*

## BAN TA KLANG SURIN

**Where :** Surin Where: Ban Ta Klang Elephant Village, Krapho, Tha Tum, Surin



Ban Ta Klang Elephant Village is located in the ancient Kui village, where elephants have been raised for hundreds of years. Surin province is known worldwide for its annual elephants festival - the Surin Elephant Round-up - and this elephant village is where most of those elephants are reared and trained. A visit to the village rewards tourists with a first-hand look at the way elephants and their mahouts live, and also enjoy activities; such as, elephant rides, which gives visitors an opportunity to experience Thailand's rural side, the way it used to be.



*Central*

## FLOATING MARKET (TRADITIONAL WAY ALONG THE RIVER)

With Thailand's series of waterways that snake along various communities, it was but natural to develop an effective exchange system of goods and services. The riverine network made the products easy to transport from one point to another, and soon it became a bustling trade. This gave way to the "Floating Markets" of today.



## KHLONG BANGKOK NOI BANGKOK

**Where :** Bangkok Noi District, Bangkok



More a river than a canal because it is wider and bolder than the usual Bangkok canals, Khlong Bangkok Noi is a tour that visitors in search of Thainess should not miss. The route is filled with factories, temples, traditional Thai homes, and a Navy installation, and it is easy to feel the placid atmosphere that makes the area attractive to many Thais. Khlong Bangkok Noi is where the Chao Phraya River meets the Royal Barges National Museum, which is another stop that offers visitors a look at the rich history of the Thai people through the elaborately gilded barges used in Royal ceremonies.



## KO KRET NONTHABURI

Where : Chao Phraya River,  
Nonthaburi District



Ko Kret is an island in Nonthaburi, some 17 km north of Central Bangkok settled by Mon immigrants over 200 years ago. This people still forms a majority of the population in this community, which has preserved its special character and traditional way of life to this day. The place has become a favorite daytrip activity for those in Bangkok for a short time and don't have the time to enjoy other authentic "Thainess" in other more distant destinations in the kingdom. As one explores the place, he or she will not fail to notice how the riverside houses have not changed much in a hundred years. More than the houses, the people's riverine lifestyle, their traditional earthenware pottery, and their beliefs can be seen in the old Mon-style temples, in particular Wat Paramai Yikawat with its adjoining museum.



## KHLONG SUAN 100 YEAR MARKET CHACHOENGSAO

Where : Theppharat, Ban Pho,  
Chachoengsao



The Khlong Suan 100-year-old market, in Chachoengsao, was established during the reign of King Rama V the Great. Visiting the market is like riding on a time machine to get back to an era of idyllic, gentle Thailand, and the old-Thai-style has been preserved, especially in the buildings and the furniture. Many shops here have been doing trade for more than 50 years. The most popular spot is the legendary Pae Lee Coffee. Also, the much-loved Chinese sausage (Pae Ngin-Yai Porn) made with pure pork should not be missed. The market is located at Tambon Tepparat, Ban Po district, Chachoengsao.





## BANG NAM PHEUNG MARKET SAMUT PRAKAN

**Where :** Soi Bua Phueng Phatthana,  
Phra Pradaeng District, Samut Prakan



Bang Nam Phueng in Phra Pradaeng district has been popular with Thai day trippers since its floating market was established as a cultural attraction. The laidback atmosphere and old-world charm of this near-island in the river, is made even more magical by its proximity to the bustle of Thailand's biggest city. Indeed, you can cross over Bangkok's mighty Chao Phraya River and find yourself in the green, fragrant environs of Phra Pradaeng so suddenly that you risk culture shock. After the fumes and fury of Bangkok, it is like being blasted into Eden. From traffic on the road changes to transportation by boat, air pollution to fresh air and also busy people to slow life people. It seems that little stretch of river is the dividing line between the bustling and bucolic, the calming and chaotic, the green and the grey.

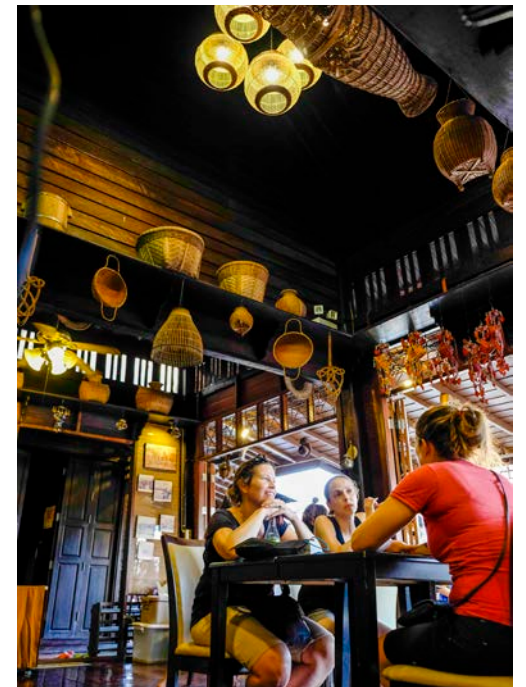
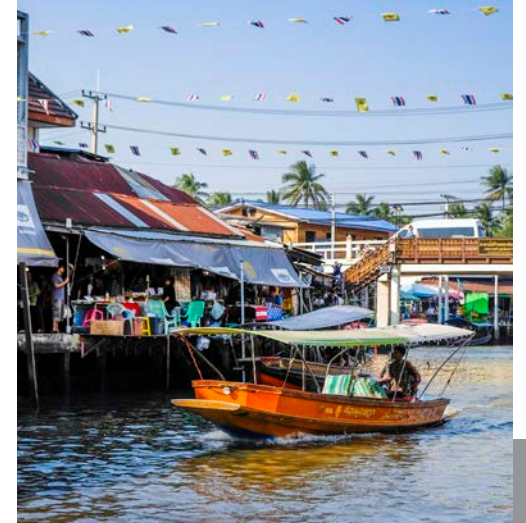


## AMPHAWA FLOATING MARKET SAMUT SONGKHRAM

**Where :** Amphawa District, Samut Songkhram



Amphawa Floating Market is not as large as Damoen Saduak Floating Market. But it's probably the most authentic. Most visitors are Thai domestic travelers, who enjoy the peaceful atmosphere of the old days, and charming simplicity of the local ways. The market is only 100 km from the capital, so it is also accessible. The market is situated where once a small village stands proud in the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century. Visitors here can enjoy an authentic Thai meal from food stalls that line the riverbanks and into the surrounding streets. The main draw is the grilled seafood on wooden boats, though.



## THA KHA FLOATING MARKET SAMUT SONGKHRAM

Where : Amphawa District, Samut Songkhram



A traditional floating market is a great passport to step back into the old Thai lifestyle. But this one is even more unique, taking places only on weekends and on special days depending on the phase of the moon. The usual sights and sounds, and product range can be expected, but there's also the delightful sight of exotic fruits, vegetables, and local delicacies sold mostly by elderly womenfolk in their small rowing boats. Then, there's the Benjarong House and Museum, where you will also have the opportunity to watch the skilled artisans painting the delicate chinaware with intricate designs, as well as a boat trip to explore the numerous canals and observe the traditional Thai way of living along Thailand's waterways.



## SAMCHUK MARKET SUPHAN BURI

Where : Sam Chuk District, Suphan Buri



This 100-year-old market is also known as a living museum. Samchuk Market is not only a tourist attraction with so many stories to tell, but also is the veritable link between the past and the present of Suphan Buri. But it's not only the nostalgic atmosphere - for instance coffee shops, barbers, photo studios, or vintage zinc toys from childhood - that makes it charming, but also the love that the local inhabitants have for their hometown community. The local people work hard to preserve their traditional way of life, making it such a living museum where the younger generation can explore their ancestors' way of life.





## SAN CHAO RONG THONG MARKET ANG THONG

 **Where :** Wiset Chai Chan District, Ang Thong



San Chao Rong Thong is a sub-district in Ang Thong province. Most of the inhabitants here are of Chinese descent. One of the legacies of this Chinese migrant community is this market in San Chao, which has been in existence for 100 years. Besides the main market, visitors should also try to experience the market fair that takes place every Tuesday morning, which is said to be among the biggest market fairs in the province.



## KAO HONG MARKET SUPHAN BURI


 **Where :** Bangplama, Suphan Buri



Suphan Buri is a province rich in history and culture, and in town, there is a market on Ban Klao Hong, Bang Pla Ma that epitomizes all that Suphan Buri used to be. This is the oldest market place in town: Kao Hong Market, which is still open for business. A walk through the market will reveal interesting insights into the Suphan Buri way, and traces of the past can be found in the ancient publisher, agricultural equipment store, and Chan Ab Bakery. The atmosphere of the morning market is one that brings back that oriental market mystique of the past.

## Southern

## KHLONG SONG NAM KRABI

 **Where :** Khao Khram Sub-district, Mueang District, Krabi



In the southern part of Thailand, it is not uncommon to see a way of life different from that in many parts of the kingdom. Here, the traditional Muslim village way of life prevails, a testament to the embracing tolerant culture of the kingdom. At Krabi's Khlong Song Nam, this way of life has been preserved with much care, enriching the diversity of the country even more. Make a visit and immerse yourself in the distinctive culture of this gentle gracious people, whose strong religious belief is mirrored in their daily habits, tasks and attitude toward their surrounding - from eking a living to welcoming visitors to worshipping Allah.





### ROYAL AGRICULTURE PROJECT (SUFFICIENCY ECONOMY, ROYAL PROJECTS ORGANIC VEGETABLES)

The Royal Agriculture Project started by His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej himself is a program to eradicate opium growing and the slash-and-burn farming method that was prevalent among the hill tribes in the past. Today, the Royal Projects symbolize the best of the Sufficiency Economy concept advocated by His Majesty. The Royal Projects are involved in research, development, and management of the program under the projects.



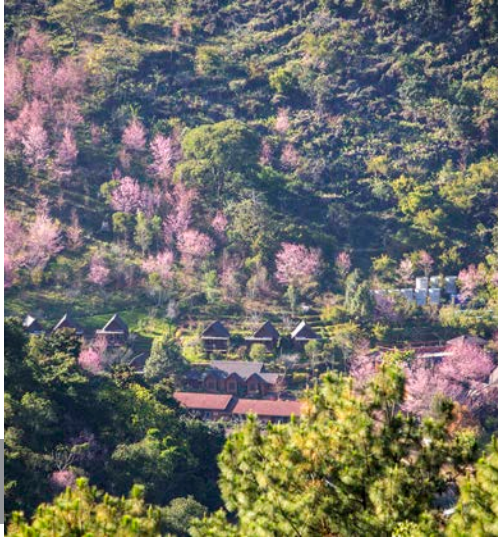
### ROYAL AGRICULTURAL STATION ANG KHANG CHIANG MAI

**Where :** Doi Ang Khang, Chiang Mai  
[www.angkhangstation.com](http://www.angkhangstation.com)



One of the most successful Royal Projects, this one in Doi Ang Khang has not only been able to improve the livelihood of the hill tribes that live in the surrounding areas of the kingdom, but also has changed the place of the area greatly, making it a model for the sufficiency economy, agricultural development, and community-based tourism. There is a vast range of temperate-friendly produce farmed here, fruits, vegetables, flowers, which reaches all the way to Bangkok and beyond.





## RICE, VEGETABLES, COOKING DUCK EGG PRODUCTION PROJECTS CHIANG MAI

**Where :** Doi Ang Khang, Chiang Mai  
[www.angkhangstation.com](http://www.angkhangstation.com)



Making the tourist aware of how a community sustains itself has grown as a major attraction in recent years. But with Thailand's strong agricultural and economic base, it offers a treasure trove of knowledge for everyone's interest and inclinations. From simple rice-growing techniques, to vegetable farming, to cooking favorite Thai food and delicacies, all you have to do as a visitor is find out what interests you and your travel agent will be more than happy to help you achieve your goals.

## HOMESTAY & FARMSTAY CHIANG MAI

**Where :** Doi Ang Khang, Chiang Mai  
[www.angkhangstation.com](http://www.angkhangstation.com)



Homestays and farmstays are the new buzzwords in eco-, agri-, and community-based tourism. With the growing number of people wishing to go deeper and learn more about the places and people of the destination they are visiting, these types of accommodation are perfect for providing the ideal springboard to start an experience more of the local touch wherever they are. Good value too, although one has to contend with simpler facilities and amenities.



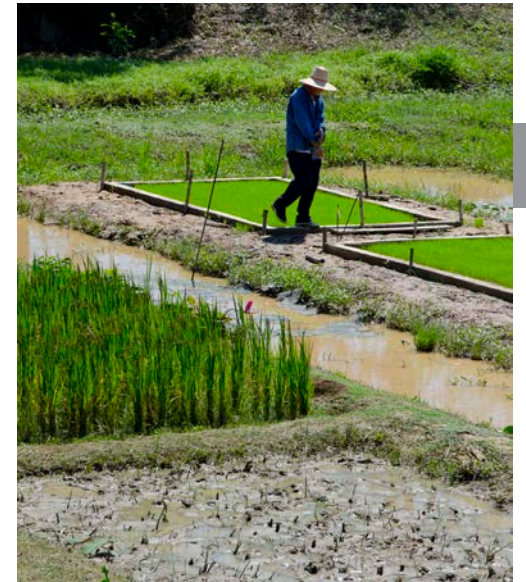
## ORGANIC AGRICULTURE PROJECT SUKHOTHAI AIRPORT SUKHOTHAI

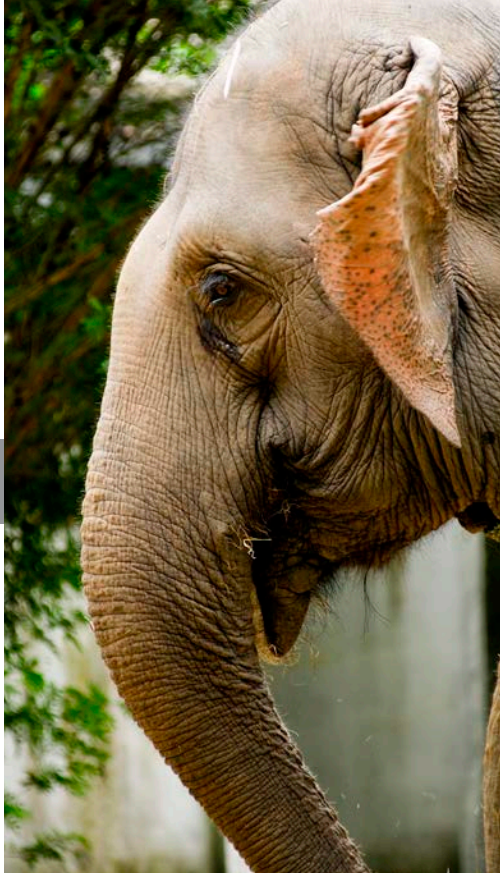
**Where :** Klong Krajong, Swankhalok,  
Sukhothai



About 10 years ago or so, certain areas around Sukhothai Airport were converted into green areas. Initially with a rice farming experiment in a small field without using any chemicals, the proponents of this organic agricultural project accumulated knowledge and experiences and eventually they ventured into larger and larger spaces. And that's how the Organic Agriculture Project in Sukhothai Airport was set up. The project goes along the "sufficiency economy" concept of Thailand

And today, the project produces safe food for consumers, helps in saving the environment, and supports efforts to broaden the expansion of the organic agricultural system in Thailand.





## SCHOOL FOR ELEPHANT TRAINERS

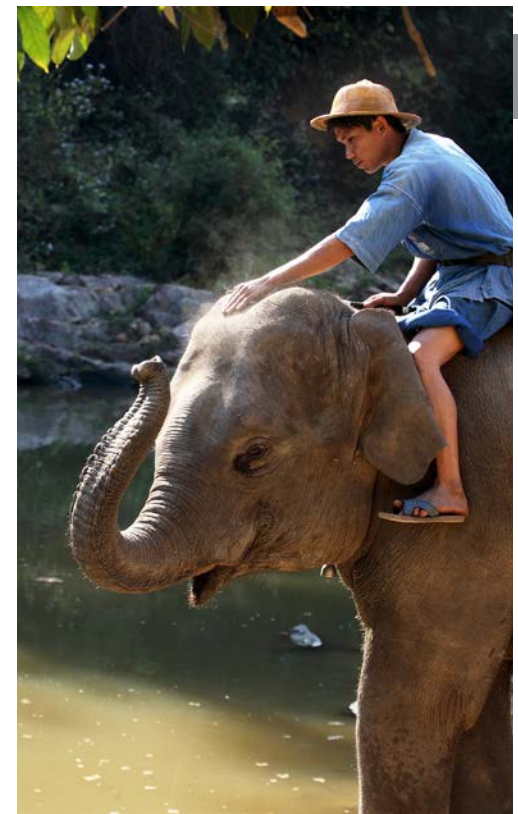
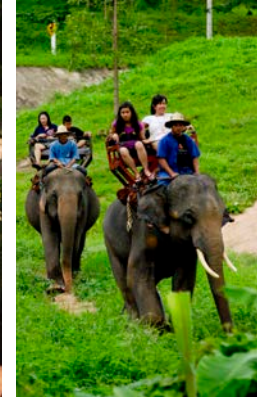
Thais have always revered elephants, and our history is full of accounts on how these animals - Thailand's beast of burden - have figured out in many facets of Thai life. The elephant is not only Thailand's national animal but also a symbol of national pride. Working as an elephant trainer may not be your goal - although it can be fun having co-workers that are over 100 times bigger than you are, and capable of spraying you with two gallons of water if they disagree with your methods - but there is joy indeed in having elephants listening to your stories, performing your tricks, and rewarding you with their attention and discipline. And with so many schools in Thailand to make it easy for you!

## THAI ELEPHANT CONSERVATION CENTER LAMPANG

**Where :** Lampang-Chiang Mai Highway, Hang Chat, Lampang



The Elephant Conservation Center in Lampang is one of the most famous elephant centers of such kind. Formally known as the Thai Elephant Conservation Center (TECC), it was founded in 1993 under Royal Patronage. It cares for more than 50 Asian elephants in a beautiful forest. Beyond being an exciting tourist experience, the TECC is also known for its pioneering work in conservation and science. The TECC also proudly houses six of HM King Bhumibol's 10 white elephants in the Royal Elephant Stables. As Thailand's only government-owned elephant camp, the TECC promotes affordability and accessibility. It offers elephant treks, and elephant shows where you can see how the jumbos can be smart, agile, and flexible - you can even see them paint. Most importantly perhaps, you will learn about the TECC's serious efforts in the conservation of the species. The admission price is only THB 200 for adults and THB 100 for children.







Thai arts celebrate the local ways of life in the most elegant of forms, encompassing architecture, painting, literature, drama and martial arts. Get a glimpse of Thailand's long-treasured history and heritage, a compelling blend of regional influences and local sensibilities, through such artistic expressions. Browse a selection of intricately fine handicrafts for your own token of Thai artistry.



# THAI ARTS

*Must* See  
Do  
Buy

# THAI ARTS

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114 Thai arts have been influenced by a lot of factors - religion, lifestyle, interaction with other cultures, and geography. The Indian influence can be found in cultural and religious practices, arts, and traditions, and if you take a look at the modern Thai language and some of the older architecture, there evidently are many signs of Chinese influence.

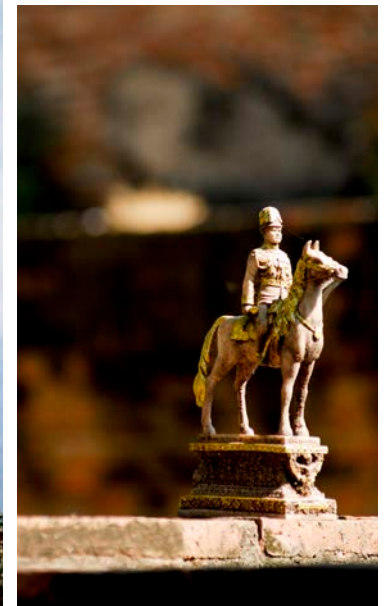
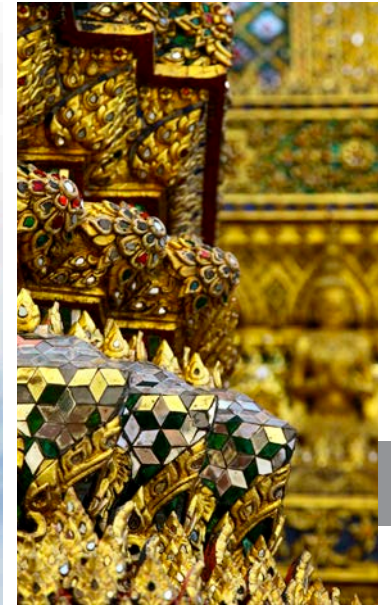
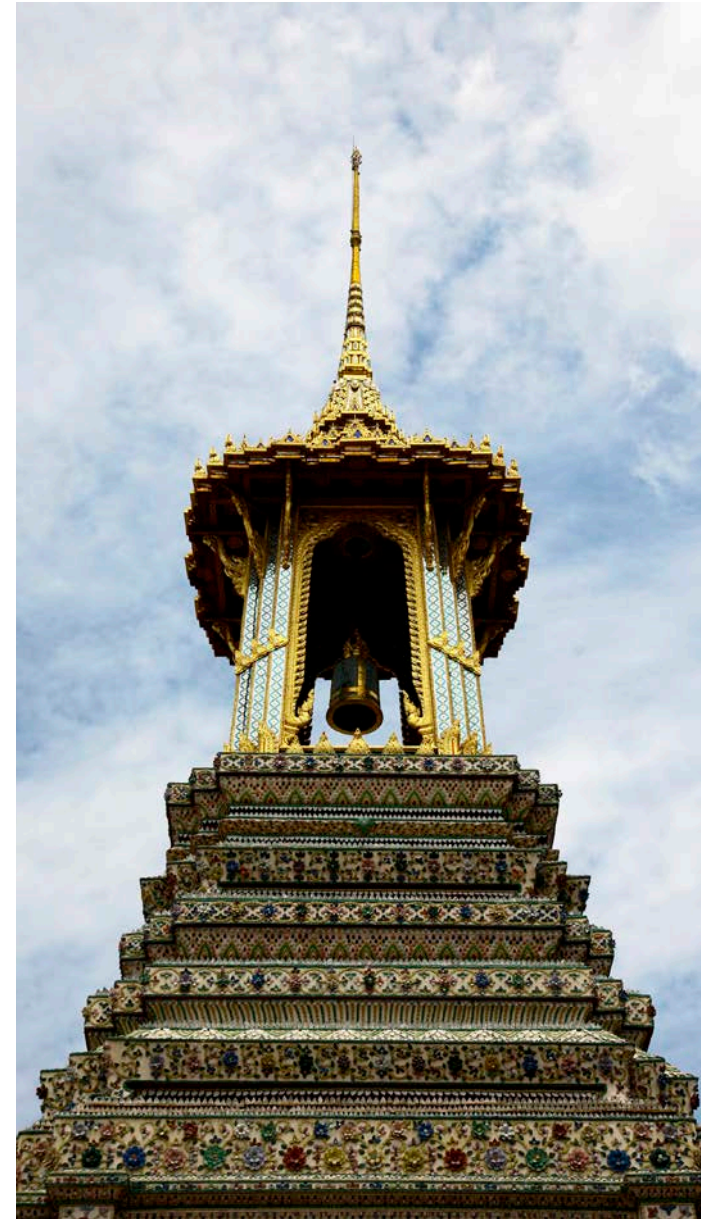
However, Thai arts are unique, depicting the Thai way of life through architecture, arts, dances, literature, and even martial arts. Thai food, one of the most popular cuisines in the world, is an example of how creative and artful Thai people have always been.

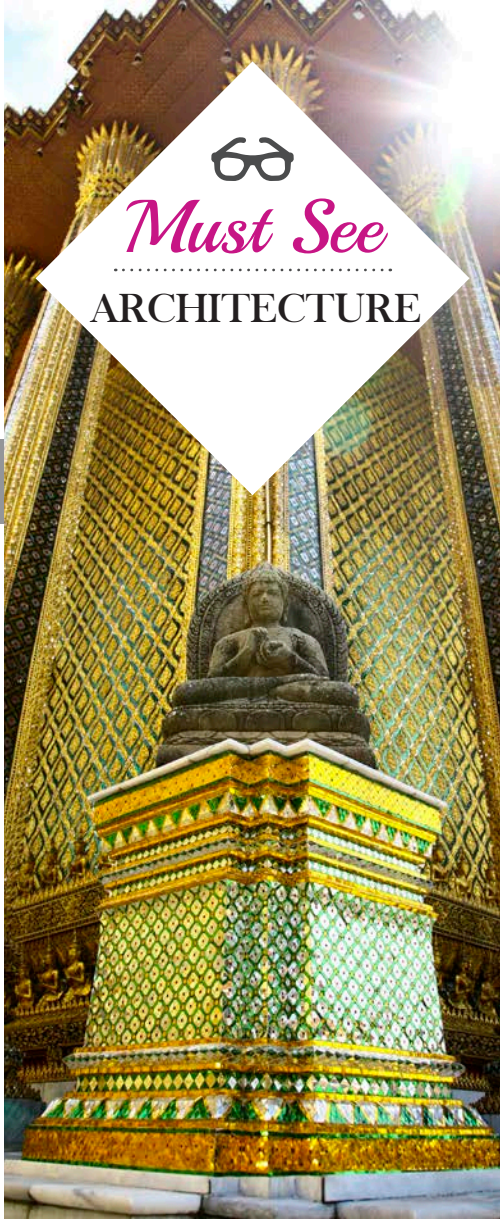
Thailand is quite a big country, geographically divided into six regions - Northern Region, Northeastern Region, Eastern Region, Western Region, Central Region, and Southern Region. Their cultures are different, as portrayed in their arts. What they wore,

ate, and built was all different, but not entirely dissimilar to their neighboring regions.

The institution of the monarchy in Thailand has put great influence on art and culture, and the Royal Court was home to the exquisite arts, from Royal cuisine to Lakhon Nai, a type of performance allowed only in the King's palace. However, the ordinary people also enjoyed a variety of arts, some of which were almost as impeccable as what the elite enjoyed.

Arts are alive and evolve constantly, and today, while the metropolitan culture has permeated most of the big cities in Thailand, ancient arts still have their place in the modernday Thai culture. You can still see Thai-style architecture, ceremonies, and beliefs interwoven into the lives of the urbanites today, blending seamlessly with the contemporary culture.





## ARCHITECTURE

Thai architecture showcases a rich visual diversity, influenced by the region, the local culture, and the way of life. Traditional Thai houses are simple wooden structures on stilts, designed to match the lifestyle needs and climatic conditions. During the era of King Rama V the Great, European designs began to influence Thai architecture, but the influence was initially seen only at government buildings and royal palaces. Shophouses built with bricks and mortar also began to thrive during the period of King Rama V the Great, many of which still remain in the present day.

Thailand features a large number of Buddhist temples, which reflect not only the country's deep-rooted ties with Buddhism, but also the skills of Thai artists, who decorated the temples with mirror arts, gold, lacquer, and intricate carving work. Some temples; such as Wat Pho, Wat Thepthidaram, and Wat Ratchaoros, serve as a reflection of the Chinese influence, which became stronger during the reign of King Rama III.

## Highlight

### SUKHOTHAI HISTORICAL PARK

**Where :** Sukhothai Historical Park, Mueang Kao subdistrict, Mueang Sukhothai District, Sukhothai.



Sukhothai was the first capital city of the Kingdom of Thailand, dating back to 1238, and is considered to be the beginning of the history of Thailand. Sukhothai Historical Park is where you can see the city's glorious past, including ancient Buddha figures, palace buildings and temple ruins. The Park, which has been declared a World Heritage Site, is maintained by the Fine Arts Department of Thailand with help from UNESCO. The Park is a definite must-visit if you are in Sukhothai. The main attractions are Wat Mahathat, the largest temple on the compound, and the monument of King Ramkhamhaeng the Great, Sukhothai's greatest monarch who composed the Thai alphabet in 1283. Due to the compact size of the site, you can enjoy the Park on foot or by renting a bicycle.





## AYUTTHAYA HISTORICAL PARK AYUTTHAYA

**Where** : Khlong Tho Road, Pratu Chai Subdistrict, Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya District, Ayutthaya.



Ayutthaya was the capital city of Siam from 1351 until 1767, and was one of the largest and most prosperous empires at the time. The Ayutthaya Historical Park houses the ruins of temples and palaces of the capital of the ancient Ayutthaya Kingdom. Since Ayutthaya was the capital for about four centuries, its architecture was quite diverse. One of the highlights of the Park is the Grand Palace, where the kings of Ayutthaya once lived. However, it was destroyed in a war, and only the foundations and parts of the walls remain.

Highlights of this historical park include Wat Phra Si Sanphet, Wat Mongkhon Bophit, Wat Na Phra Meru, Wat Thammikarat, Wat Ratburana and Wat Phra Mahathat temples, all of these can be visited easily on foot. At the south of Wat Phra Si San Phet, there is Viharn Phra Mongkol Bophit where Thailand's largest bronze buddha image is enshrined.

## SANCTUARY OF TRUTH CHON BURI

**Where** : 2 06/2 Mu 5, Soi Naklua 12, Naklua, Banglamung, Chon Buri  
[www.sanctuaryoftruth.com](http://www.sanctuaryoftruth.com)



The Sanctuary of Truth is a magnificent wooden construction, covered with exquisite wooden carvings which depict the ancient Thais' vision of earth, ancient knowledge, and Eastern philosophy. There are five halls in total, each telling its own story. One of the unique features of the Sanctuary of Truth is that it was entirely made of wood, without any piece of metal used. The bolts that hold the wall, roof, floors and sculptures aloft are all made of wood. The process during the construction only involved ancient Thai carpentry techniques and marvelous wood-carving skills. Although the purpose of the construction was to teach humanity the deep Buddhism-based philosophy of life, it is still enjoyable for non-Buddhists because of the amazing beauty of the architecture as well as the celestial view of the ocean.



## Northern



### WAT RONG KHUN CHIANG RAI

**Where :** Pa O Don Chai Road, Mueang District, Chiang Rai  
[www.watrongkhun.org](http://www.watrongkhun.org)



Wat Rong Khun is also commonly referred to as the White Temple because of its colour. The all-white architecture is a masterpiece created by a famous Thai artist Chalermchai Kositpipat, who has been dubbed a National Artist because of his genius art skills. However, Chalermchai has vowed to rebuild it to its former glory.

The magnificent white architecture has so many intricate details that it would take more than a day to fully appreciate all the elements. Wat Rong Khun is commonly known as the White Temple, because of its colour. The all-white architecture is a masterpiece created by a famous Thai artist Chalermchai Kositpipat, who has been dubbed a National Artist because of his genius art skills. The temple lasts 16 years to build. The style of this temple presents many vision of buddhism with many parts of this temple; such as, the bride with many raising hands that means passing through transmigration, the statue of a giant with his fangs that means infinitive wants of human.



## Central and Eastern

### WAT PHUMMARIN KUDI THONG SAMUT SONGKRAM

**Where :** Suan Luang, Amphawa, Samut Songkram  
[www.watphummarin.com](http://www.watphummarin.com)



Wat Phummarin Kudi Thong was built in 1888 . It was built with gilded black lacquer, which earned it the name Kudi Thong, which means “golden hermitage”. The temple was built with golden teak wood, one of the most durable materials used in traditional Thai houses, which is why it is still in a great condition even though it was built over a hundred years ago. The temple itself is also interesting, as it houses ancient Buddha images.

## Northeastern

### WAT PA PHU KON UDON THANI

**Where :** Ban Na Kham, Ban Kong, Na Yung, Udon Thani  
[www.watpaphukon.org](http://www.watpaphukon.org)



Wat Pa Phu Kon is located on the mountains called Phu Konalong where is the Thai-Lao border. The breathtaking temple with a celestial blue roof is located among lush forest, making it be the only building in your sight when you are there. The mountain-embraced complex is guarded by naga statues, people believe that nagas are the guardians of Khong river and they will also protect Buddhism. The large entrance doors are made of polished bronze, with beautiful and delicate carvings. Inside the temple is a reclining Buddha statue, 20 metres in length, also carved from the same precious stone.



## MURAL ARTS

Thai mural arts are unique and diverse, with various moods and tones - from comical to romantic, educational to satirical. The paintings are usually flat, using 2D images without shading or shadows. Most of the mural paintings are found on the walls of Buddhist temples, and therefore usually have religious references.

Generally, the artists used ordinary colors from natural pigments, but in more exquisite places, some paintings were applied with gold leaf, while some were gilded black lacquer painting with mother-of-pearl inlay. The paintings vary from era to era, and from region to region.

Since the capital city of Thailand has always been in the Central Region, here you can find mural paintings that depict the life in the Royal Court. In the Northern region, there are many mural paintings portraying the life of the people, whereas in the Southern region, the trade with the Chinese people and the close relationship with the sea can be seen in their mural arts.

Literature also has its place on these intricate walls. The Ramakian, the Thai adaptation of India's Ramayana, is one of



the most portrayed stories. Local tales were also often portrayed on the walls; such as, the story of Khun Chang Khun Phaen, which was painted on the walls surrounding Wat Pa Laylai in Suphan Buri province. In the main hall of Wat Hua Lamphong, visitors can learn about Phra Aphaimanee, a well-known Thai literature written by Sunthorn Phu, the same author who wrote Khun Chang Khun Phaen.

Since most of the mural paintings used natural pigments, it is not easy to restore them by matching the original colors, since only few artists today possess the knowledge of how to derive those colors.

## Highlight

### WAT PHRA KAEO BANGKOK


**Where :** Na Phra Lan Road, Phra Nakhon, Bangkok



Wat Phra Si Rattana Satsadaram or Wat Phra Kaeo is one of the most historically significant temples in Thailand, and one of the top tourist destinations in Bangkok. Mural paintings inside Wat Phra Kaeo are centuries old, mostly painted during the reign of King Rama I the Great. They depict the scene of the Buddhist cosmology and scenes from the life of the Buddha. The compound walls are decorated with paintings portraying 178 scenes of the Ramakian, one of each panel, each occupying the area between two pillars. The mural art at Wat Phra Kaeo is known to be the longest wall painting in the world. The murals serve to emphasize human values of honesty and faith. Though originally painted by order of King Rama I the Great when the temple was first constructed, the mural paintings at Wat Phra Kaeo have been restored many times, most recently for the 1982 Bangkok Bicentennial Celebrations.

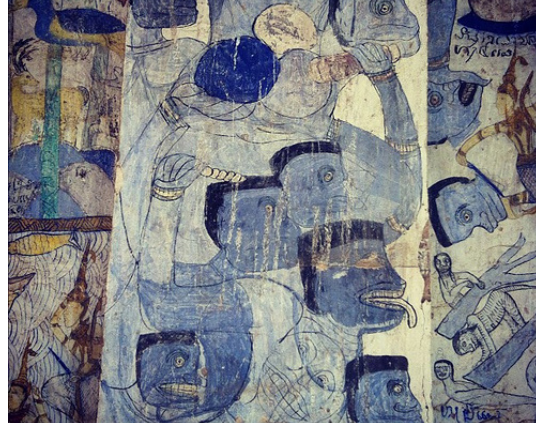


## WALL PAINTING AT WAT CHAISAI KHON KAEN

 **Where :** Mu 8, Ban Sawatee, Mueang, Khon Kaen



Wat Chaisai was built over a hundred years ago, and although the temple has been renovated, its mural paintings have remained. Called “hup taem” by the locals, the mural paintings inside the ordination hall depict the past incarnation of Buddha, divinities, people, and animals. This painting present the bad people who are punished in the hell because of their mistakes. Only men are allowed to come inside this zone. On the outer walls are mural paintings portraying the gruesome inferno, and the story of Sang Sinchai, a local folk story. The style of the painting is also unique - every inch of the wall was painted, and the style is quite cartoonish in a way, with odd proportions, simple lines and basic colors. While the paintings have faded, the beauty still remains, and the temple is highly regarded by the Khon Kaen people.



## WALL PAINTING AT WAT PHUMIN NAN

 **Where :** Ban Phumin, Mueang, Nan



Wat Phumin is believed to have been built in 1596, but was reconstructed in 1867. The most notable feature of Wat Phumin is the mural paintings covering nearly the entire wall surface of the interior, depicting the scenes from the Jataka tales (the past lives of the Buddha), as well as scenes from the daily life of the Lanna people in the 1800s. These distinctive murals were painted by a Thai Lue artist who spent more than two decades working on these paintings. The most famous mural scene was named by the artist in the local dialect as “Pu Man Ya Man” or “Grandpa Man and Grandma Man” and is commonly called “Whispering” in English. The paintings offer a glimpse into how the people dressed, lived, and looked at the current affairs of their time, including the arrival of the French to the region.



## THAI DANCES

Traditional Thai dance can be divided into two major categories - classical dance and folk dance. They can also be grouped based on the region of their origin, as each region has its own style. Some of the dances were influenced by Buddhist and Brahman culture, while some received influences from neighboring cultures.

The Northern style dance is typically slow and graceful, while in the Northeast the rhythm is faster. Southern dances are very refined and usually have a story to tell, while in the Central Region, dances enact the daily activities of the people.

What's interesting about the dance is not only the movement and the music, but also the costume of each dance, which portrays how the Thai people in each region traditionally dressed in the past. While most dances are quite feminine, there are some masculine performances reserved for men; such as, Klong Sabat Chai drum performance, and Muay Thai Wai Khru ritual.

Khon is a form of Thai dance which combines many arts. Founded in the Ayutthaya era, the performance has been well-preserved until today, and it is

regarded as one of the highest art forms. The story usually revolves around the Ramakian, a Thai adaptation of the Ramayana. In addition to the exquisitely controlled grace and charm of the dance, the marvelously painted Khon masks, made from painted and gilded papier maché, are also considered precious pieces, and are often bought as souvenirs or for home decorations.

Thai dance is well-preserved partly because it is a mandatory subject taught in Thai schools nationwide.



## Highlight

### KHON SALA CHALERMKRUNG BANGKOK

**Where :** Sala Chalermkrung, Charoenkrung Road, Bangkok.  
[www.salachalermkrung.com](http://www.salachalermkrung.com)



Sala Chalermkrung was Thailand's first theater, opened in 1933. Here, many entertainment programs have been showcased, and the theater is still lively and thriving today. In 2005, a Khon performance titled "Phra Chakrawatan" was organised by the Sala Chalermkrung Foundation initially to celebrate the auspicious occasion of the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of His Majesty the King's Accession to the Throne. A year after that, another performance, "Hanuman Chankamhaeng", was held at the Sala Chalermkrung Royal Theatre. In 2010, it introduced another episode, "Hanuman Becoming Phra Chakri's Devotee", also an excerpt from the Ramakien story. This spectacular episode has 60 performers, with elaborate dress specially designed for this specific dance. It involves highly traditional singing, dancing, acting, acrobatics and music.



The performance features extravagant settings and costumes, following the ancient Khon traditions. English subtitles are available in every show.



## SIAM NIRAMIT IN BANGKOK AND PHUKET

**Where : Phuket facility** - 55/81 Mu 5, Mueang, Phuket  
**Bangkok facility** - Tiamruammit Road, Huai Khwang, Bangkok  
[www.siamniramit.com](http://www.siamniramit.com)



Siam Niramit is a one-of-a-kind stage production, one of the largest in the world, with over 100 performers and more than 500 exquisite costumes. The show also features amazing special effects, using advanced technology that has continued to dazzle the audience for nearly a decade. The first act talks about the history of Thailand, taking you back in time to see how the people of Siam lived. The second act is about the Thai people's belief in the law of karma, Buddhism, and heaven and hell which are presented by the position of three different worlds. The third act portrays the Thai people's festivities and ceremonies. As a part of the experience, a buffet-style dinner offers a delicious range of Thai and international dishes, and guests are encouraged to take a walk around the venue to try the cultural activities; such as, Thai temple fair games.



## KLONG SABAT CHAI

**Where : Old Chiangmai Cultural Centre**  
Location: 185/3 Wua Lai Road, Mueang, Chiang Mai  
[www.oldchiangmai.com](http://www.oldchiangmai.com)  
**Khum Khan Toke**  
Location: 139 Mu 4, Nong Pa Krang, Mueang, Chiang Mai  
[www.khumkhantoke.com](http://www.khumkhantoke.com)



Klong Sabat Chai, literally translated as "Drum of Victory", is typically practiced before fighting a battle to signify victory. The drummer uses two wooden bars to hit the drum, and shows off the skills with elbows, legs, head, and strenuous body movements.

The performance is one of the most famous performances in the Northern region. Some of the best places to witness this exciting performance are the Old Chiang Mai Cultural Center, where you can also enjoy Northern-style khan toke food, and Khum Khan Toke.



## Northern



## FON LEP

**Place :** Old Chiangmai Cultural Center, Khum Khan Toke



Fon Lep or Fingernail Dance is a unique northern Thai dance style in which the dancers usually wear bronze nails on every finger except for the thumbs. It is one of the numerous fon dances, which were performed with an aim to please the divine beings. It is performed in groups and has very slow, graceful, and almost meditative movements, said to be inspired by how elephants walk. In the past, it was a rare performance reserved only for the royal court in special ceremonies. Today, it is performed in celebratory events and festivities, but some restaurants or tourist destinations also offer this performance. Fon Lep is also performed at the Old Chiang Mai Cultural Center and Khum Khan Toke.



## BAN TAWAI VILLAGE CHIANG MAI

**Where :** 90 Mu 2 Ban Tawai Khun Khong,  
Hangdong, Chiang Mai  
Tel. +66(0)81-882-4882  
www.ban-tawai.com



Ban Tawai village was awarded the OTOP Tourism Village of Thailand because of its unique character as the wood-carving village. Various kinds of handicrafts-bronze ware, furniture, pottery, lacquerware, and more - are also locally produced here in this centuries-old community. All of the products are handmade by the experienced locals, and visitors can see the work in progress by visiting the Ban Tawai Handicraft Center where the artists craft their creations by hand. The homes of the people in this village are also worth visiting, since most of them are wooden houses with amazing wood-carving decorations.



## SILVERWARE ETCHING CHIANG MAI

**Where :** Chiang Mai



Chiang Mai is known for its meticulous silverware, and in the past, the clinking sound of etching was a common part of the atmosphere. In an attempt to revive this rare art, the people of Chiang Mai are bringing back this craft by turning it into a family affair. The men are in charge of shaping the silverware, while the women do the decoration. The children and elders can also help with the polishing. Silverware etching is a difficult process and can only be done by those with enough experience. The patterns are a complicated 3D art and take a long time to accomplish. The most commonly found patterns are scenery, mythical creatures, Buddhism-inspired pictures, and characters of Thai literature.

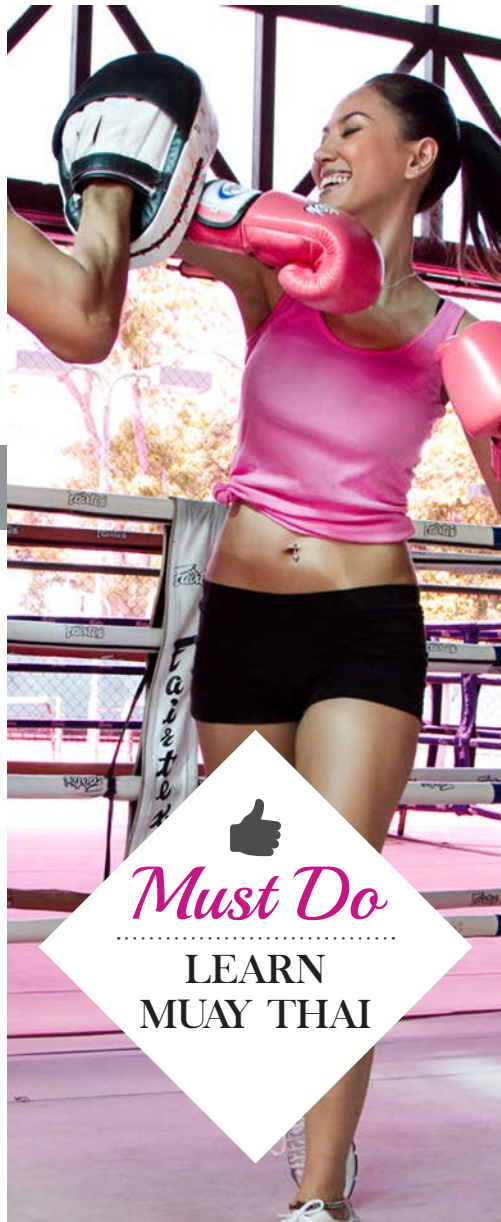
## SI SATCHANALAI GOLD SUKHOTHAI

**Where :** Sukhothai



Si Satchanalai was a glorious district during the Sukhothai era, famed for its gold production. Si Satchanalai gold art is not only personal accessories, but also extends to wall decorations, sculpture, textiles, and painting. This amazing art is fading away without support from the new generation, but there are still some families who are trying to keep alive this 800-year-old art. The details are very fine and to perfection. Gold inlay art, in particular, requires weaving each thread of gold to create a mesmerizing piece of jewelry.





*Must Do*

LEARN  
MUAY THAI

## LEARN MUAY THAI

Muay Thai is not only a type of sport, but also an art form. Under the Muay Thai umbrella are many variations, and each region has its own Muay Thai style. In the Central Region, the “Muay Lop Buri” movements are fast, focusing on swift punches. Northern-style Muay Thai “Muay Thasao” includes a lot of kicking, while in the Northeast, “MuayKorat” focuses on strength and there is the Southern region’s “MuayChaiya”. The identity of Muay Chaiya are beautiful movement ,thai style paying respect and Thai style binding hand with the cloth.

The ancient boxing style has been modernized in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with the introduction of rules, Western boxing rings and equipment. There is a growing number of boxing gyms for fitness purposes, a great way to keep fit and try a taste of Thai martial arts for foreign visitors.

There are also quite a few venues where you can watch real Muay Thai matches played by professional boxers, as well as stage performances which depict the beauty and grandeur of the ancient martial art. But if you’re interested in getting hands-on experience, there are many Muay Thai camps around the country where you can learn how to kick, punch, elbow, knee, and spin kick like a real boxer.

## FAIRTEX PATTAYA CHON BURI

 **Where :** 179/185–212 Mu 5, North Pattaya Road, Na Kluea, Chon Buri  
[www.fairtexpattaya.com](http://www.fairtexpattaya.com)



Fairtex is a leading name in the world of Muay Thai and offers superb training facilities. The complex in Pattaya has four Olympic-size boxing rings, a spacious practice area, and world-class trainers offering private coaching, from beginner to advanced levels. All the gear is provided and is of good quality, since Fairtex also produces its own boxing equipment brand, selling a full range of Muay Thai equipment and apparel.



## SUWIT MUAY THAI TRAINING CAMP PHUKET

**Where** :15 Chaofa Road, Chalong, Mueang, Phuket  
[www.suwitmuaythai.com](http://www.suwitmuaythai.com)



Suwit Muay Thai Training Camp on Phuket has been in business for almost three decades and is a well-known Muay Thai camp for both locals and foreigners. The Camp welcomes students from all ages, as long as they are keen on practicing Muay Thai. It operates its own boxing stadium, and registered students are able to check out the Muay Thai fights here for free every Friday night. The Camp provides accommodation, with a swimming pool and free Wi-Fi. The classes are generally quite small, with no more than 5 students, meaning you get the full attention from the instructor.



## SUPERPRO SAMUI SURAT THANI

**Where** : 8/10 Mu 3, Chaweng Beach, Ko Samui, Surat Thani  
[www.superprosamui.com](http://www.superprosamui.com)



Superpro Samui is located on the beautiful Ko Samui. It offers Muay Thai, martial arts, and MMA training, as well as a kids' programme for the young ones. Guests have all-hours access to the gym and can train as much as they want. The resort-style facility includes standard rooms and Thai-style fighter rooms, a gym, and a private swimming pool, and guests can train at its full weights gym, cardio machines, boxing gym, four Muay Thai boxing rings, and a Mixed Martial Arts Cage. Muay Thai classes at Superpro Samui keeps the traditional style of Muay Thai and mixes it with the progressive movement of the sport today for enhanced physical benefits.

## HANDICRAFTS

Much of the handicrafts in Thailand originated with the ordinary people just trying to make their everyday items more beautiful and functional, and what started out as ordinary items soon evolved into art pieces that sometimes are so beautiful that the owners never use them. Handicrafts are also closely related to the lifestyle and beliefs of the Thai people, many of them playing an important role in rituals, ceremonies, and special occasions.

In addition to reflecting the ways of life of the Thai people, handicrafts also connote cultural influences from other countries, history, and social values of each period and region. Today, there is a wide array of modern handicrafts by talented young designers influenced by the Western values, but traditional techniques still have a place in Thai society, particularly in the rural areas where the majority of people still produce some of their own household items.

Over recent years, the private sector and the government have been actively trying to restore and preserve Thai handicrafts by supporting the existing craftsmen and encouraging the new generation to see the value of these incredible arts. As a result, many contemporary products in Thailand now are created using traditional

## Highlight



materials or techniques, creating a new kind of handicrafts.


## HANDMADE UMBRELLAS

**Where**: Bo Sang village, San Kamphaeng District, Chiang Mai



Bo Sang village is home to the world famous umbrellas, paper lamps, and fans made from sa paper, handmade and hand-painted by the local artists. It is believed that this style of umbrella, now called Bo Sang umbrella, was influenced by Myanmar, and initially, it was used as an offering to monks and typically used in religious ceremonies. The art of making a sa paper umbrella became popular among tourists in the past few decades, spurring the umbrella-making industry in Chiang Mai. The size of the umbrella ranges from large garden umbrellas to small ones for decoration.

## EARTHENWARE


 **Where :** Sawankhalok, Si Satchanalai, Sukhothai



Earthenware made in Si Satchanalai and Sukhothai during the Sukhothai era is referred to as Sangkhalok. Many of them, as well as the kilns they were fired in, have been unearthed in Sukhothai province, which was the hub of earthenware at the time, exporting its products to other towns. Sukhothai earthenware can be divided into 4-5 groups based on the color and texture. This ancient art has been passed on to the present days, and many communities in Sukhothai today continue to produce this traditional earthenware. Sukhothai province also has the Sukhothai Sangkhalok Museum, which showcases original earthenware from the Sukhothai era.



## CELADON


 **Where :** San Kamphaeng District, Chiang Mai



There are many pottery styles in Thailand, and one of the finest potteries of the country, as well as of the region, is celadon, which has a distinctive glaze made with wood ash, characteristic color, and beautifully crackled texture. The technique was originally developed in China at least 2,000 years ago. The art was received by the Lanna people early in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Today, many communities in Chiang Mai province produce and sell celadon, and visitors can see the making and painting of celadon pottery to better appreciate this type of handicraft.



## LANNA FLAG

 **Where :** Mueang Nan District, Nan



The Lanna flag is called tung. It is typically a flat, vertical piece of wood, brass, fabric, or paper, used in religious ceremonies and special occasions. Lanna flags are still used today in ceremonies regarding birth, death, and celebration. Different shapes and styles are for different purposes. These flags are usually beautifully decorated, so making Lanna flags require expertise and artistic skills. There are several places where visitors can learn the art of making tung from Lanna locals or witness how exquisite flags are made. Lanna flags can be seen at Buddhist temples in the Northern region and in communities where they are made; such as, Wat Phra Kerd village and Ban Khru Phumpanyayan in Nan province, Pattama Sevi Learning Centre in Lampang province

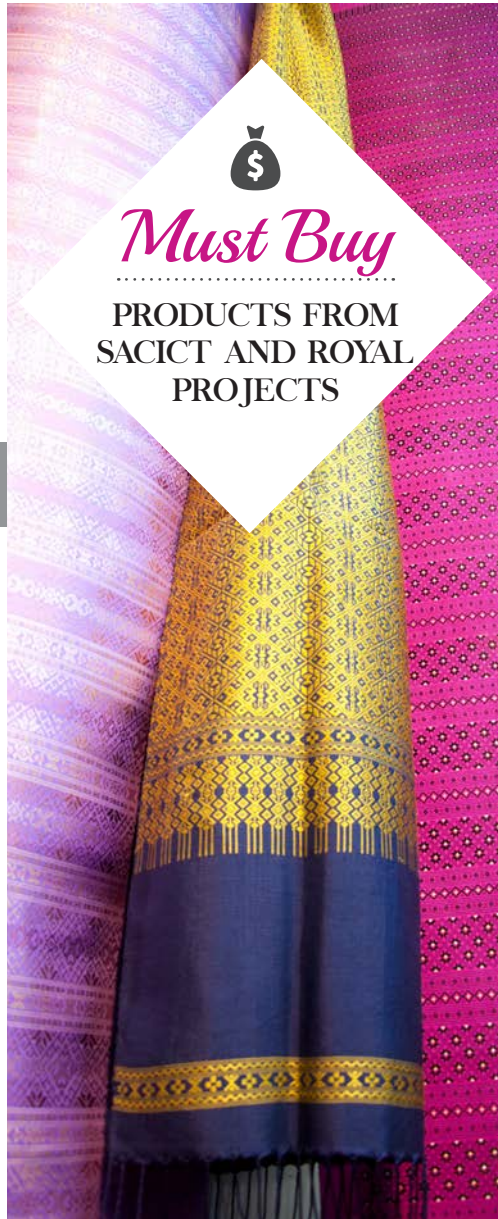


## BENJARONG

 **Where :** Ban Don Kai Dee, Samut Sakhon



One of the most famous crafts in Thailand is benjarong ceramics, which refers to multi-colored enamel on a white porcelain base. Formerly, this heavily decorated form of ceramic was used exclusively in the Royal Court and for religious places, but today, it is now used by the ordinary people who appreciate its graceful beauty. Today, one of the most well-known producers of benjarong ceramics is Samut Sakhon province. Many communities have received the skills from their ancestors and continue to create this marvelous art. The province is also home to many homestay services where guests can learn more about benjarong making.



## PRODUCTS FROM SACICT AND ROYAL PROJECTS

Their Majesties the King and Queen of Thailand play an important role in supporting the conservation of arts and crafts in Thailand. Such attempts are expected to help with the country's economic development as well as keep Thai arts alive for future generations. His Majesty the King issued the royal decree for the establishment of the Support Arts and Crafts International Center of Thailand (SACICT) in 2003 to promote Thai folk arts and crafts for export.

In addition to SACICT, there are also many other Royal Projects initiated to help promote and develop local arts and crafts and to apply modern technology to improve the quality and design of the products.

Her Majesty the Queen has been actively promoting Thai silk and has kindly initiated numerous projects to support Thai silk and other local textiles. The Queen Sirikit Museum of Textiles was established to serve as a learning hub about Thai textiles, some of which are being forgotten by the new generation. It is conveniently located just inside the compound of the Grand Palace in Ratsadakorn-bhibhathana Building.



The Bang Sai Art Bang Sai district, Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya province is a Crafts Training Center is another of Her Majesty's projects, established in 1980. Its objective is to provide training of handicrafts and supplementary occupations to underprivileged Thai people. Exquisite handicrafts made by the locals can be purchased here at a reasonable price.

There are also many handicraft centers set up throughout the country to encourage farmers to spend their free time creating valuable handicrafts to earn extra income and to help conserve the precious wisdom passed on from their ancestors. Ban Khao Tao Hua Hin District, Prachup Khiri Khan, for example, is known for weaving skills, and the Women's Weaving Group of Ban Khao Tao is now a place for visitors - students, tourists, and women from other provinces - to learn about their crafts.

## THE SUPPORT ARTS AND CRAFT INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF THAILAND (SACICT)

**Where :** Bangsai, Phra Nakorn Si Ayutthaya, Ayutthaya  
[www.sacict.or.th](http://www.sacict.or.th)

The SUPPORT Arts and Crafts International Center of Thailand or SACICT (pronounced "Sak-Sit") is an organization which supports the creation and sale of folk arts and crafts in line with Her Majesty Queen Sirikit's projects as well as to promote their marketing domestically and internationally. It is located adjacent to the Bangsai Arts and Crafts Training Center, where locals learn how to make arts and crafts to support themselves and their communities. High-quality wood carvings, silk, accessories, wickers, and other crafts are sold here at a reasonable price. Nowadays, there are more than twenty departments in SACICT; such as, tailoring, furniture making, the pattern department and so forth, which means the center is a one-stop shopping destination for those looking for authentic arts and crafts in Thailand.



## THAI TEXTILE

Thai textiles are known for their beauty and quality, especially hand-woven fabrics created using skills passed on from generation to generation. The social context and cultural aspects of Thai textiles are also very interesting - they can emphasize the role of dress in establishing social status, reflect cultural influences from other countries, and reveal geographical differences which result in the materials being vastly different.

Although the industrialization of the fabric industry has seen the traditional hand-woven textile decreasing in popularity, authentic Thai textiles still have their place in Thai society. Silk, in particular, is regarded as a higher quality garment, and Thai silk is touted to be among the best in the world.

There have been several projects to encourage the Thai people to value their cultural roots by using Thai textiles. Today, the traditional textile industry is widely supported, both by businesses and by consumers, and Thai textiles have become an important export product of the country.



### JIM THOMPSON BANGKOK

**Where :** Bangkok  
[www.jimthompson.com](http://www.jimthompson.com)



Jim Thompson is a globally known Thai silk brand established in the 1950s. The brand now has several branches selling high-quality silk products and souvenirs. The products range from traditional silk fabrics to modern-looking home decor items. While there are several Jim Thompson shops at leading department stores, it is nice to pay a visit to the Jim Thompson House, the actual home of the brand's founder James H.W. Thompson, which has been transformed into a museum. There is also the Jim Thompson Sale Outlet in Soi Sukhumvit 93, where the goods are available at a reduced price.

*Highlight*

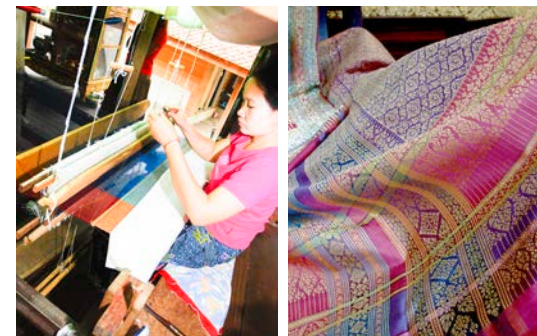
*Central and Northeastern*

### YOK THONG SILK

**Where :** Tha Sawang village, Mueang District, Surin



Tha Sawang village is home to a silk manufacturing community where authentic Yok Thong silk is made. The silk is woven using very fine silk threads and golden threads using ancient techniques to create traditional patterns which are exquisite and require expertise. This type of silk takes a long time to weave due to its ethereal details, and some might take over a year to complete. The village is supported by the Bureau of the Royal Household and the Foundation for the Promotion of Supplementary Occupations and Related Techniques of Her Majesty the Queen, and its product was presented to the international delegates of APEC 2003 in Bangkok.



### PRAEWA SILK

**Where :** Ban Phon village, Kalasin



Praewa is a type of silk cloth, nicknamed "Queen of Silk" thanks to its intricate features. Recognized for its patterns, the hand-woven silk requires superior craftsmanship and deep understanding of the ancient patterns. Some of the masters who are still weaving praewa silk today are in their 80s. Phon village is one of the most renowned praewa producing communities in Thailand, and many visitors come here to enjoy the beautiful scenery and praewa weaving experience. Ban Phon village's praewa silk weaving group has received support from Her Majesty the Queen, making the products popular worldwide.

## Northern

### BAN TAWAI VILLAGE

**Where :** Hang Dong, Chiang Mai  
[www.ban-tawai.com](http://www.ban-tawai.com)



Ban Tawai village is known for high-quality wood carving, and the products crafted by the locals range from small wooden dolls to big furnishing items. Here, you can find unique home décor items made entirely of wood; such as, lamps, wall decoration, and chairs. Smaller items; such as, wooden dolls, spoon and fork, pepper and salt shakers, make great souvenirs and are not difficult to pack. Bigger items; such as, chairs and tables might have to be shipped back home separately. Most shops can recommend reliable door-to-door services.



### BO SANG VILLAGE

**Where :** San Kam Pheng, Chiang Mai



Located in San Kamphaeng district, Bo Sang Handicraft Center is home to the world famous umbrellas, paper lamps, and fans made from sa paper, handmade and hand-painted by the local artists. The most famous product is the colorful paper umbrellas. Bo Sang is a community known as the "Umbrella Village", and the umbrellas produced here are called Bo Sang umbrellas. Made from bamboo and sa paper, the art of making Bo Sang umbrellas has been around for generations, and the art has been handed down through a small number of families that live here. It is said to have originated from a Thai Buddhist monk who learned the practice on a pilgrimage to Myanmar. While the structure of the umbrella is quite simple, the exquisite value lies in the painting and the decoration on them.

### WUA LAI SILVERWARE

**Where :** Wualai Road, Mueang Chiang Mai, Chiang Mai  
[www.wualaisilver.com](http://www.wualaisilver.com)



Wua Lai silverware is an ancient art, dating back over 700 years ago. The art is said to be brought into Thailand by King Mengrai of Chiang Mai, who had a close relationship with Bagan city of Myanmar. Initially, the art of Wua Lai silverware was practiced as a hobby when the villagers had spare time from farming. The silverware produced here is known for its delicate raised patterns which require superior expertise. In addition to household products like bowls and cutlery, Chiang Mai province is also home to Ubosot Ngoen at Wat Sri Suphan, an elaborately crafted silver temple hall which took over a decade to complete.



### SILVERWARE

**Where :** Nan




Nan province's silverware is believed to have been influenced by Lao PDR. In the past, the silverware of Nan province was considered a valuable tribute. Silverware of Nan province is very pure, made from 96-100% silver, which gives it a softer texture. The highlight is the extremely refined patterns, which take a long time to complete. A simple bowl, for example, might take a whole week to finish. Silver craftsmen in Nan province today still use traditional techniques passed on to them from previous generations.



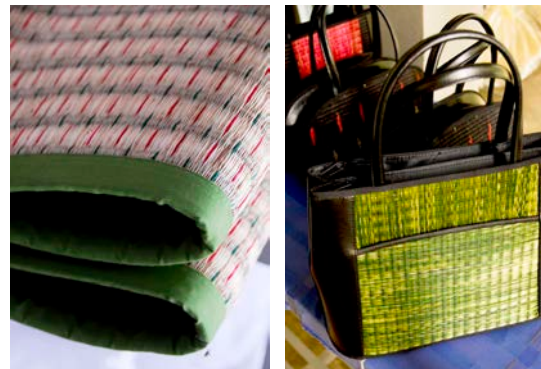


## CHANTABUN MAT


 **Where :** Chantaburi



The Chantabun mat is made from sedge, a grass-like plant which typically grows on wet ground. Chantaburi has a lot of sedge growing naturally, and the locals have made use from this plant for centuries. The Chantabun mat is vibrantly colored and quite durable. Originally, mats were a flooring material, but in recent years, they have been used to create briefcases, bags, tissue boxes, and beyond. This multipurpose material is popular, and modern patterns have been introduced to appeal to the younger crowds. Many communities in Chantaburi province offer a mat weaving demonstration for visitors to learn more about this beautiful art.



## ROYAL PROJECT DOI TUNG

 **Where :** Chiang Rai  
[www.doitung.org](http://www.doitung.org)



The Doi Tung Development Project, which was established in 1988 by the Princess Mother, has branched out into a non-perishables scheme. It combines local people's handcraft skills and a market-driven approach to produce woven fabrics with signature motifs and colours. The project also sells ceramics and fashion accessories to meet the demands of local and international buyers. Handicrafts made by hilltribe and local people at the project training center also make for popular merchandise.



## DON LUANG COTTON

 **Where :** Lam Phun  
[www.royalprojectthailand.com](http://www.royalprojectthailand.com)



Don Luang is a village known for its beautiful cotton. Located in Lamphun province, the village has eight weaving centers to promote hand-woven cotton in the community. The cotton produced here is very colorful, woven using ancient techniques taught by their ancestors. Most of the high-quality cotton found in Thailand comes from this village, where there are about 250 families, all of whom are familiar with this creative craft. Today, the village not only produces cotton for the domestic and international clients, but also serves as a cultural tourism destination.

## LOCAL CRAFTS

Thailand's deep traditional culture has contributed to a thriving arts and crafts scene nationwide, and learning about Thai crafts and heritage takes your understanding of the kingdom to a higher level. As both esthetic expression and a way of life, crafts in each region has distinctive characteristics shaped by local beliefs, lifestyle, and area-specific culture.

While the vast majority of the Thai people today are using mass-produced household items, handicrafts are still a large part of the Thai culture, and in some communities, this is still a major source of income. Even though modern life has little connection to the traditional products, many of the country's traditional handicrafts are still going strong and in use because they have been adapted to fit the contemporary lifestyle while paying respect to ancient techniques and forms.



## SA PAPER MADE FROM ELEPHANT DUNG

Where : Lampang



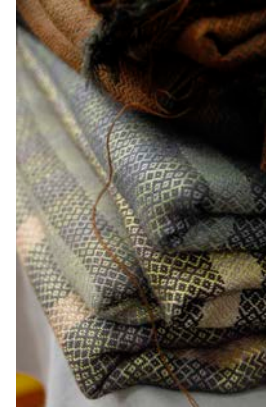
Thanks to the creativity of the Thai people, something seemingly unusable can be turned into a money-making product. Fiber in elephant dung can be used to make fertilizers, fuel, and beautiful sa paper. This type of sa paper is different from typical sa paper - the texture is smoother and lighter in color. The Thai Elephant Conservation Center in Lampang province has a sa paper production factory, where visitors can see how the paper is made. The production of elephant dung sa paper can help contribute to the well-being of the elephants under the care of the Thai Elephant Conservation Center, and improve the quality of life for the people in the community.

## MO HOM FABRIC

Where : Ban Thung Hong, Phrae



Mo hom or indigo cloth is a widely used fabric in Northern Thailand. The dark blue fabric is perfect for the hot and humid weather in Thailand, and with the close resemblance to denim, mo hom can easily be adapted to fit the modern fashion trends. Many communities in the Northern region of Thailand still actively produce mo hom fabric for use and for sale. Ban Thung Hong in Phrae province is known to produce the best mo hom products, and it was a "champion of handicrafts" under Thailand's OTOP (One Tambon One Product) scheme.



## MUD-SOAKED FABRIC, NA TON CHAN VILLAGE

Where : Sukhothai



Mud-soaked fabric is the highlight art of Na Ton Chan village in Sukhothai province. It originated from the fact that in the past, when the farmers returned home after working in the fields, they noticed that the mud-soaked part of their clothes was softer than the rest. The discovery inspired them to create a new kind of fabric. Mud-soaked fabric is naturally colored to create beautiful patterns. Na Ton Chan village won a PATA Gold Award 2012 in the Heritage and Culture category, and Thailand Tourism Award 2013, because of its special fabric.

## INDIGO-DYED COTTON

Where : Sakon Nakorn



Indigo-dyed cotton has a beautiful deep blue color that doesn't wash off. The traditional process of indigo dyeing does not require any chemical, which means the dye does not damage the fiber of the fabric. Sakon Nakorn province has over 20 communities who are experienced in indigo dyeing and creating marvelous patterns. Indigo-dyed cotton is very popular today, as there is a great demand for all things organic, chemical-free, and natural. Indigo-dyed cotton also offers UV protection, making it a practical fabric for a sunny country like Thailand. Home-stay services are available in indigo-dyeing communities for those who want to get their hands dirty, literally.



## BATIK FABRIC

Where : Krabi



If you are looking for light, colorful beachwear, you can't go wrong with batik fabric. One of the distinct pleasures of visiting Krabi province, in addition to the mesmerizing beaches, is the opportunity to purchase some truly magnificent Batik shirts and dresses made by the locals. batik fabric in Krabi province is handmade and each piece is unique. Originally, the ancient art of batik making originated in Indonesia and later spread throughout the Malay Peninsula. Due to the close proximity, Krabi received the influence from its neighboring culture, and batik fabric became an integral part of Krabi's local culture.

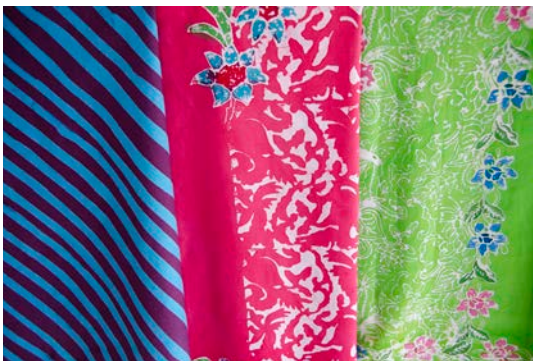


## KRACHUT BASKETRY

Where : Phatthalung and Narathiwat



Lepironia articalata, called krachut in Thai, is a type of sedge plant found in the Southern region of Thailand. It is the perfect material for basketry because it is quite durable and flexible, making it easy to weave. The local people use krachut baskets in their daily lives. From a baby bassinet to rice basket, the use of krachut is virtually limitless. The art of krachut basketry is a valuable local wisdom passed on from previous generations, and krachut baskets today contribute largely to the economy of Phatthalung province and Narathiwat province. The seemingly simple material can be used to create intricate patterns that add great value to the products.



## TIE-DYED FABRIC, KIRIWONG VILLAGE

Where : Nakhon Si Thammarat



Kiriwong village is known for producing high-quality tie-dyed fabrics using naturally derived dyes; such as, mangosteen shell, tree barks, and fruits. Most of the people in this village are farmers who make a living by growing fruit. Those who have free time, especially the women who might not be able to work in the orchards, get together to learn this ancient art of dyeing in order to earn extra income. Cotton and linen are tied and dyed in natural colors, giving the fabric a nice pattern. The fabric is then turned into garments, home décor items, and household products for local sale and international export.

## SILVERWARE AND NIELLOWARE

Where : Nakhon Si Thammarat

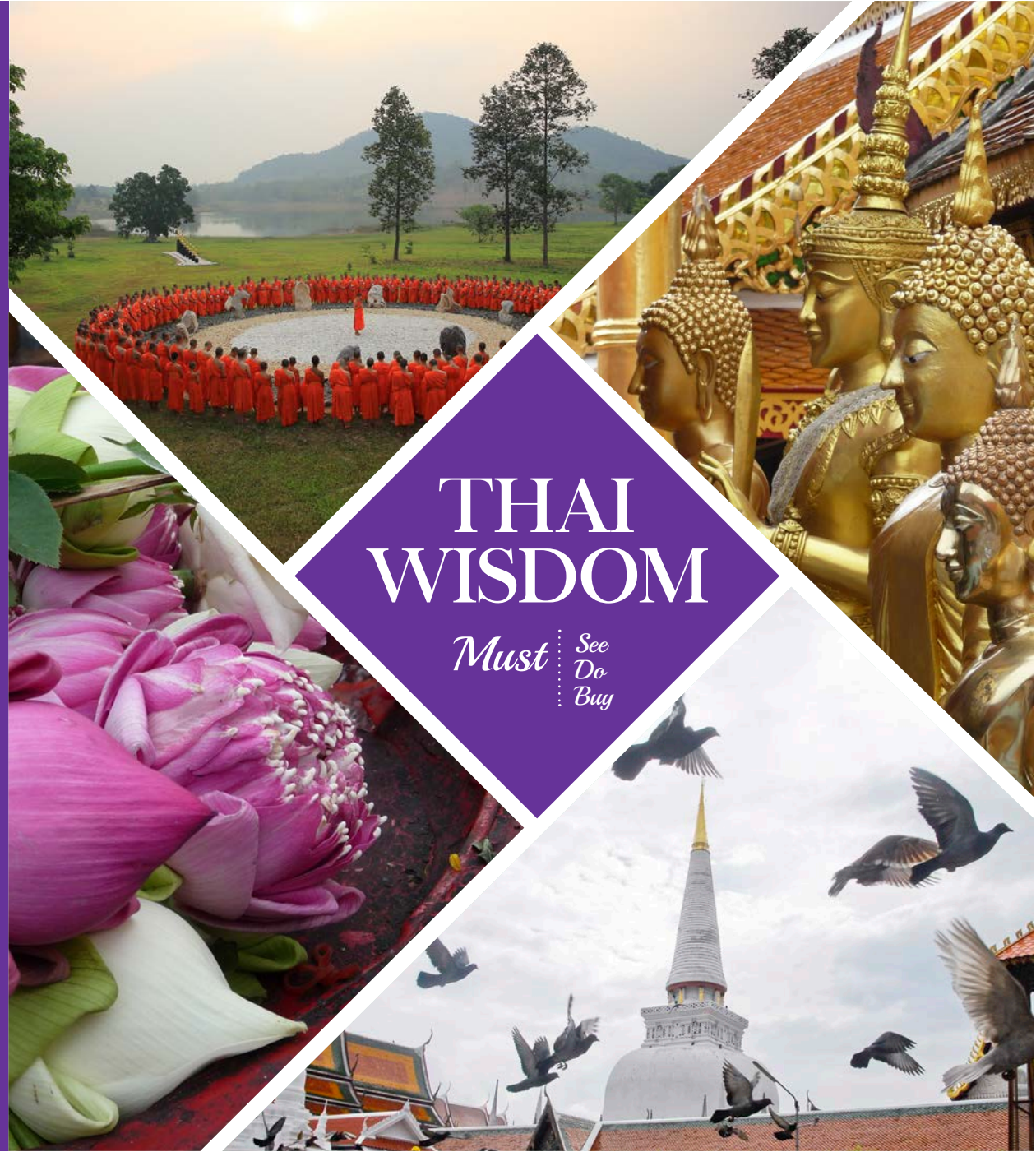


Silverware and nielloware (niello is a black mixture of copper, silver, and lead) of Nakhon Si Thammarat province are popular for their durability and intricate design. In the past, only the elite were entitled to use silverware and nielloware, since they were very precious and expensive. To make an exquisite piece of silverware and nielloware is not easy, and today, there are not many skilled craftsmen left who can emulate the same intricate quality as that of the previous generation. There are, fortunately, a few clusters of nielloware and silverware craftsmen in Nakhon Si Thammarat province, who get together to try to conserve this art.





To understand the true meaning of Thai wisdom, explore the roots of the Thai ways of living. You will find that this wisdom permeates the very essence of society. Visitors are most welcome to observe Buddhism, embraced as the national religion of Thailand, through countless options; such as, visiting temples and museums, and practicing meditation. Enjoy learning and discovering the wisdom of Thai life, while broadening your global perspective.



# THAI WISDOM

*Must* See  
*Do* Buy

# THAI WISDOM

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## FAITH, WISDOM, AND BELIEFS

Stories of the unique Thai wisdom and beliefs were formed by the kingdom's long history, rich culture and traditions, and a distinctive way of life, all of which are reflected in the historical landmarks and monuments, arts and crafts; such as, antiques, food, and clothing, social manners and behavior, local games and sports, and the Thai language. And if we look even closer, we will see that these stories unavoidably mirror a profound faith that is the basis of all common local practices and religious activity.

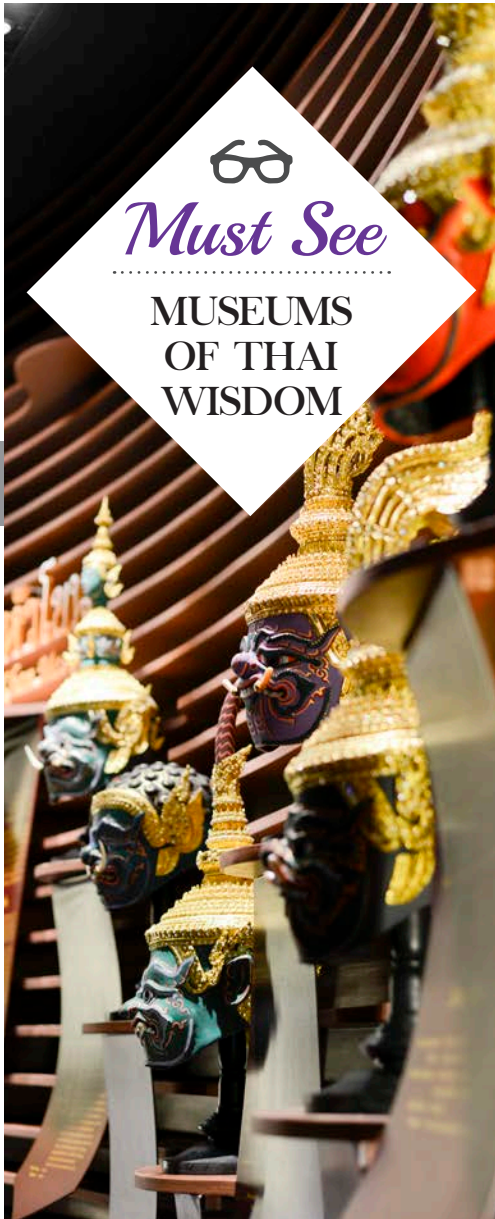
It all started in the ancient times. Buddhism spread from India through the sea trade routes, and influenced Thailand as locals absorbed new beliefs, and religious principles and mythologies, and merged them with their own. All of these are echoed in the various aspects of religious practices today, and became part of being "real Thai." Here are places to get a sense of how "being Thai" developed:



🕒  
*Must See*  
 MUSEUMS  
 OF THAI  
 WISDOM

## MUSEUMS OF THAI WISDOM

There is no place better than museums to learn more about a place's past and natural history. The unique experiences that created what we call local knowledge, abilities and skills, beliefs and faith, form the total of a people's living mores and values. From these experiences, wisdom was gained and refined, and eventually passed on through the generations. Though some practices may have already disappeared, the precious wisdom collected and preserved by the museums for new generations to carry with them, will remain forever.



## Central and Eastern

## RATTANAKOSIN EXHIBITION HALL

📍 **Where :** 100 Ratchadamnoen Klang Avenue, Bawonniwet, Phra Nakhon, Bangkok  
 Tel. 02 621 0044  
[www.nitasrattanakosin.com](http://www.nitasrattanakosin.com)

One of the great modern museums in the old town of Bangkok, the Rattanakosin Exhibition Hall allows you to experience the best of the historic area in a day. You will enjoy stories of the kingdom as if told by your grandmother, and not as if you are not visiting a museum with a tourist guide. The highlights of the exhibition present the best of the Rattanakosin Era in a stunning presentation, which is informative and fun, at the same time. Every corner of the museum is packed with visuals tightly interweaving the Rattanakosin stories together.



## NATIONAL MUSEUM BANGKOK

📍 **Where :** 4 Na Phra That Road, Phra Nakhon, Bangkok Tel. 02 224 1333

Thailand's first public museum showcases priceless Thai art, archeology, and ethnography. The exhibit is divided into four categories. The first one is History of Thailand, which offers an enriching glimpse into the history of the Thai nation and people. The second part is Art History and Archeology, in chronological order. The third part is Fine Arts and Ethnology, which displays antiques and fine art objects along with implements used in ancient daily life; such as, gold ornaments, silver, and nielloware. The last part, Showcases, consists of ancient royal palace buildings in the Museum's compound, which also houses important artifacts; such as, the most revered Buddha image called "Phra Phuttha Sihing."

## MUSEUM SIAM

**Where :** 4 Sanam Chai Road, Phra Nakhon, Bangkok Tel. 02 225 2777  
[www.museumsiam.org](http://www.museumsiam.org)

This is Thailand's first museum of learning, which raises the standard of learning among youth and helps them to know more about themselves, their neighbors, and the world. The Museum tries to create the new concept of learning through modern technology and creative activities, and to make learning of history more fun. There are both permanent and "rotating" exhibitions in the Museum, along with facilities for creative learning activities. The displays also explain the history of the Thai people, beginning in their early days when ethnic culture and traditions started to evolve to how they become the people of Thailand that they are today.



## NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ROYAL BARGES

**Where :** 80/1 Arun Amarin Road, Bangkok Noi, Bangkok Tel. 02 424 0004

This museum stores and preserves royal barges that take part in the Royal Barge Procession, a Thai royal ceremony, which has been in practice since the Ayutthaya Era. The exhibition includes eight royal barges displayed. The most important one is the Suphannahong Royal Barge, which is the highest-ranked royal barge and the King is usually aboard this one. The prow was carved as the zoomorphic figurehead of a mythical swan, gold-gilded and decorated with mirrored glass. The Narai Song Suban HM King Rama IX Royal Barge was constructed for the celebration of HM the King's Golden Jubilee in 1996. The prow is a carved wooden and gold lacquer figure of the four-handed god Vishnu riding the Garuda.

## SIRIRAJ MEDICAL MUSEUM

**Where :** 2 Wanglung Road, Bangkok Noi, Bangkok, Tel. 0 2419 2618-9, 0 2419 2601, 0 2419 2600, [www.si.mahidol.ac.th/museum](http://www.si.mahidol.ac.th/museum)

Located on the 2nd floor of the Adulaya-dejvikrom Building, Faculty of Medicine Siriraj Hospital on Wanglang Road, which is Thailand's first medical institute. The museum comprises the Congdon Anatomical Museum, Songkran Niyomsane Forensic Medicine Museum, Prehistoric Museum and laboratory, Pathology Museum and Touch Exhibits Museum in honor of Her Majesty the Queen.



## PIPIT BANGLAMPHU

**Where :** Phra Athit Road, Chanasongkran, Phra Nakhon, Bangkok Tel. 02 629 1850  
[www.facebook.com/pipitbanglamphu](http://www.facebook.com/pipitbanglamphu)

Pipit Banglamphu and the museum of the Banglamphu area were built to tell the story of Banglamphu, one of Bangkok's oldest neighborhoods.

The story of Banglamphu is recreated in a community experience provided at the exhibition room called Yum Trok Bok Rueng Kao (Stories of an Old Alley), which take visitors up close to the way of life of the people in the old days and give them insights into their livelihood crafts; such as, how they make embroidery for the traditional dance drama Khon costume, flag, gold, and nielloware. For those who like to learn more about the local way of life, this zone should not be missed. You can collect information while doing a walking tour in real places.



## THE EMERALD BUDDHA WAT PHRA KAEW

**Where :** Bangkok

Wat Phra Kaew gleams and glitters with so much colour and glory that its earthly foundations seem barely able to resist the celestial pull. Architecturally fantastic, the temple complex is also the spiritual core of Thai Buddhism and the monarchy, symbolically united in what is the country's most holy image, the Emerald Buddha. Attached to the temple complex is the former royal residence, once a sealed city of intricate ritual and social stratification.

## Must Do

Among the things that make Thais unique as a people are their devout religious beliefs in traditional Buddhist values. Going to temples to worship, paying homage to sacred relics that relate to their birth year, paying respects to their revered teachers, praying before Buddha images - these are outward manifestations of a strong faith in something greater than them, and the belief that doing good will bring them blessings and prosperity. Visit a Thai temple for a glimpse of how important religion plays a role in the lives of the Thai people. Here are some of them.

## SRI MARIAMMAN TEMPLE (WAT KAEK)

**Where :** Silom, Bangkok

Most Thai people call this place Wat Kaek, in relation with the Hindu influence that is obvious in the temples look and feel. In fact, from the architecture and all - the sights, sounds and smell in this temple is more Hindu than Buddhist. But that just shows how tolerant and embracing the Thais are of all religions.



## WAT TRAMIT

**Where :** Bangkok

The only Thai temple in Yaowarat is special in that it houses the world's largest golden Buddha image as recorded in the Guinness Book World of Records. Thais believe that



worshipping the golden Buddha image will bring prosperity and success.

## THE GATHERING OF GODS RATCHAPRASONG INTERSECTION

**Where :** Bangkok

Ratchaprasong, in downtown Bangkok, is known as "the gathering of gods junction" because it is home to six Hindu god shrines. Believers can start at the Brahma Erawan Shrine at the main Ratchaprasong intersection, and then continue to visit the Ganesha God and Trimurti God in front of Isetan the Depart-



ment Store. Then they can take a walk to Gaysorn Plaza, where there's a Lakshmi Shrine on the rooftop, before going to the Inter Continental Hotel to worship God Narayana on his carrier, Garuda; and then go to the Indra Shrine in front of Amarin Plaza.

## DEVASATHAN (BRAHMIN TEMPLE)

**Where :** Dinso Road, Sao Ching Cha (The Giant Swing), Bangkok

Most people come here to pay respect to Ganesha, also known as the lord of success. Devasathan is believed to be the oldest place that houses prestigious statues in Southeast Asia. The place is full of images and statues such as that of Shiva ('Great God'), who is one of the main deities in Hinduism. Visitors may enter the temple on Thursdays and Sundays.



## WAT MANGKON KAMALAWAT

**Where :** Charoen Krung Road between Soi 19 and 21, Bangkok and Bang Bua Thong, Nonthaburi

Wat Mangkon Kamalawat is also known as Wat Leng Noei Yi. The temple is decorated typically using a Chinese architectural style that makes use of Chinese dragons. The ordination hall houses the temples gold colored Buddha. The Buddha's image is patterned after the Chinese. An altar can be found there as well where religious rites are performed. Three pavilions stand to the rear side of the temple





## Northern

### WAT PHRATHAT DOI SUTHEP

Where : Doi Suthep, Chiang Mai

For those born in the Year of the Goat, this most important temple and the spiritual center in Chiang Mai houses a splendid pagoda that enshrines the Buddha's relics. Its Lanna-style architecture makes this place, particularly, the pagoda, distinctive. It is believed that people who visit this temple to pay respect will have their wishes come true. The way up to the Phra That is a cement staircase decorated with seven-headed Naga. Inside the temple is a Chiang Saen-style chedi. Following stylised Lanna art, the bell-shaped stupa is covered with two layers of gold leaf and has a high octagon base. Situated to the west of Chiang Mai, visitors can clearly admire the panoramic view of the city from the temple. Wat Phra That Doi Suthep is held as one of the most important temples in the province. It might as well be said that a visit to Chiang Mai cannot be completed without a stop to pay a sign of respect to Phra That Doi Suthep.



### WAT PHRA THAT PHANOM

Where : Nakhon Phanom

Wat Phra That Phanom is home to the sacred Phra That Phanom Chedi which is located in the town of That Phanom in the Southern part of Nakhon Phanom province. It is believed that Phra That Phanom Chedi contains The Buddha's breast bone which makes it one of the most important Buddhist structures in the Isaan region.



## Northeastern

## Southern

### WAT PHRA MAHATHAT WORAMAHAWIHAN

Where : Mueang, Nakhon Si Thammarat

The most important temple in Thailand's southern region, Wat Phra Mahathat Woramahawihan is home to the most revered ancient monument and sacred shrine called Phra Mahatat, a pagoda that enshrines the Buddha's relics. The 55m-high tip is covered by pure gold while 170 smaller pagodas surround the base. What's amazing about the architecture is that it doesn't have the reflection or shadow on the ground, no matter which direction the sun filters through. A big ceremony is held here annually to bring garments to cover the stupa, which is believed to bring good fortune and make wishes come true.



### WAT CHALONG

Where : Chalong, Phuket

Wat Chalong temple is the largest and most revered. The temple complex was built in its current location in 1837. Some remains of older structures have been found, however it is unknown exactly how old they are. The large grounds of Wat Chalong that is officially named Wat Chaitaram contains a viharn, a mondop, a ubosot, a chedi containing a secret relic, a sala and a crematorium.



### WAT CHANG HAI, PATTANI

Where : Khok Pho, Pattani

Luangphu Thuat was once the abbot of this temple. The statue has been made into amulets, which is highly popular for those who want to get something for their spiritual anchor. Some believe that by paying respect to the Luangphu Thuat statue, they will be safe or will be successful.

## DHARMA PRACTICE

Dharma Practice is a Buddhist way to seek peace of mind. Activities are mostly hosted at temples that focus on meditation. Thailand has more than 600 registered meditation centers nationwide, and there are many facilities open for foreigners, including The International Buddhist Meditation Center (IBMC) at Wat Mahathat Yuwaratransarit in Bangkok where they offer English lectures and teach practical meditation for foreigners. Apart from temples and Buddhist foundations, many private meditation centers also offer various meditation practice or courses as well to both locals and foreigners alike.



building, which has the cervical terrace for meditation practice and welcomes both locals and foreigners to practice Dharma. If you are interested in the life of the Buddha, there is a photo exhibition (duplicated from India) that traces his holy life. What we love about this place besides the peaceful ambience, is how they also provide research, educational support, and further information for those into Dhamma study.

## SUAN MOKKH BANGKOK

**Where :** Wachirabenchatit Park (Suan Rodfai) Nikhom Rodfai 2 Road, Bangkok  
Tel. 02-936-2800

Suan Mokkh Bangkok, or The Buddhadasa Indapanno Archives (BiA), is an edutainment and spiritual cultivation center built as a tribute to the teaching of Buddhadasa Bhikkhu, the most revered meditation monk in Thailand. The place comprises a three-storey architectural bare-cement

## Northern

## CHERN TAWAN INTERNATIONAL MEDITATION CENTER

**Where :** 217 Mu 25, Ban Mai Sanpaheing, Huai Sak, Chiang Rai  
Tel. 084-915-6146, 087-080-7779  
[www.raicherntawan.com](http://www.raicherntawan.com)

This is a great choice if you are a city person with super tight schedules. The meditation center is open to all, from beginners who are interested to learn Dharma to advance meditators. There are weekend courses suitable for office workers, and advance courses and which last for five days, for those who have more time during weekdays. There is a 7-day course for foreigners. Apart from providing space and lessons for meditate, the center also helps participants regain or maintain their health by just being in the serene Chiang Rai natural environment.



## Northeastern

### PLUM VILLAGE

**Where :** Pak Chong District, Nakhon Ratchasima, Tel. 02 885 5980, 085 128 8044, [www.thaiplumvillage.org](http://www.thaiplumvillage.org)

One of the 12 international practice centers run by the well-known Vietnamese Zen Master, Thich Nhat Hanh, the village focuses on training participants to be mindful throughout the day, while conducting daily routines or any activities. What makes this place different from others is that there is no line to divide people with different religious backgrounds. This meditation center has become a solid community not only for monks and Buddhist nuns but also for laymen in general. It offers a way to live together in peace.



## Southern

### DIPABHAVAN MEDITATION CENTER AT KO SAMUI

**Where :** Maret, Ko Samui, Surat Thani Tel. 089 593 0121 [www.dipabhavan.org](http://www.dipabhavan.org)

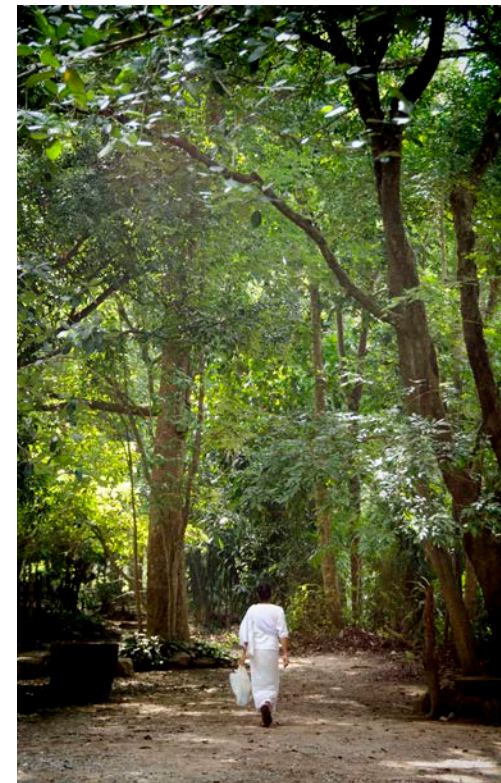
Here is another option for those who would like to combine their vacation with a meditation trip in one go. Situated on the famous tourist destination of Ko Samui, the place welcomes both Thais and foreigners. The highlights include fun activities; such as, reforestation project. Please note that beds and blankets will be provided for you and read this: Courses here are free of charge. But you can make a donation to give this place some financial support on the last day of your stay.



### SUAN MOKKH PALARAM

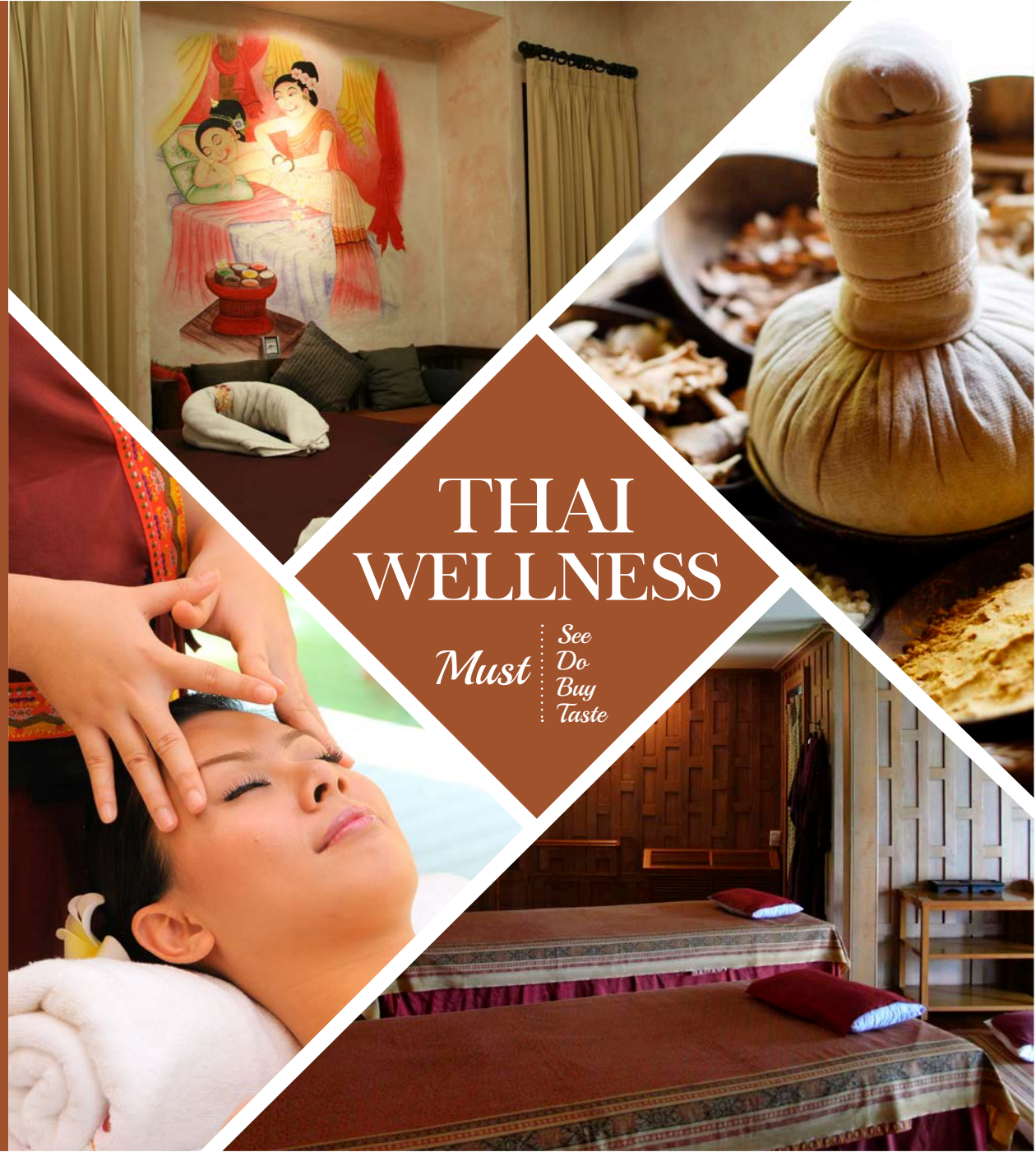
**Where :** Petchakasem Road, Chaiya, Surat Thani Tel. 077-431-552 [www.suanmokkh.org](http://www.suanmokkh.org)

Known as the place where people come to seek peace and Dharma studies, Suan Mokkh Palaram in Southern Thailand was founded by the late Buddhadasa Bhikkhu, one of the most revered monks in Thailand. The facility itself has gained a reputation in organizing monthly meditation trainings called Anapanasati, which is a form of meditation that the Lord Buddha used until he reached Enlightenment. Training is offered for both monks and laymen of all ages, along with English training for foreigners who would like to adapt Buddhist teaching to their daily life. The vast compound also houses a Spiritual Theater packed with arts, poetry and Dharma teachings, and rock carvings of Buddha tales in India. The tranquil surroundings make this center perfect for training and Buddhism study. Meditation teaching for foreigners is conducted monthly from day 1-10 of each month at 8.30 a.m. to 5 p.m.





Thai wellness regimens promise a thoroughly blissful experience-for mind, body, soul. Relish our traditional massage techniques and reap the benefits of their healing touch, based on ancient wisdom, aromatic Thai herbs and other natural materials. Indulge in world-class spa treatments, for the ultimate form of pampering. Top off your relaxing, healthful journey by treating your body with a variety of Thai beauty products.



# THAI WELLNESS

*Must* See  
*Do*  
*Buy*  
*Taste*

# THAI WELLNESS

Spas and Thai massage are considered to be ranked one of the world's five renowned, especially "Thai traditional massage", which has become a signature of the country and creativity that has elicited the "local identity" integrated as the strength of spa and Thai traditional massage and local wisdom that has been developed and recognized internationally.

In regard to Thailand, the highlight of the spa and massage is the "the knowledge of Thai traditional medicine", which mainly has been inspired by Indian culture and traditional Chinese medicine. Nonetheless, massage treatment also includes a science of herbs (massage therapy and herbal therapy) by analyzing the elements in human body, including the date of birth, personality, traits, physical and mental states as indicators, or called the treatment of the body, mind, and soul simultaneously.

For this reason, Thai massage has been featured in relaxing massage, massage therapy and herbal compress massage. The cognitive knowledge of Thai massages is considered a vital capital that the Thai


massage science can be applied to the universality in harmony, thereby resulting in the business of Thai health massage can develop holistic health programs in the dimension of joy, peace and power of nature poured over into the spirit of rest and physical and mental health superbly. With a variety of Thai spas, from the north to the south of the country, it has been internationally recognized.

Also, based on the Thai way of joy and comfort fundamentally, in courtesy, Thailand is regarded as a tourist destination where visitors can experience the Thai-style warmth; Thai spa and various health treatment programs, which can be seen among leading resorts in which the power of life is generated; whether they be the aspects of fitness, beauty program, diet, or even detoxification programs offered. In addition, it is found that they are standardized and have been accepted internationally, and Thailand is considered a center of health services in Asia (Spa of Asia).

Come and experience a Thai spa and you'll recognize the miracle!

## *Must See*


### WAT PHO INSCRIPTION, THAI TRADITIONAL MEDICINE FORMULAS

 **Where :** Wat Pra Chetuphon Vimonmankhlaram or Wat Pho, Bangkok

The Wat Pho Inscription, Thai evidence in writing engraved on marble slabs of 1,360 pieces, which King Rama I the Great graciously ordered to inscribe all Thai knowledge on the wall of the temple, vihara, pavilion within Wat Pho, including the pharmaceutical formulas, engraved on the oval-shape stone for Thai medicine formulas, for the treatment of various diseases, which knowledge application and treatment had been carried out successfully by physicians. The conventional method of massage therapy uses, the fingers press down along the tendons of the body to relieve from symptoms.

Such inscriptions feature human shapes, both the front and the back, along with the lines plotted with the name to indicate the points of the tendon in the body and troubleshooting to relieve various ailments, all of which are inscribed in a systematic way.

### BAN DONG BANG HERBAL GARDEN PRACHIN BURI

 **Where :** Ban Dong Bang Herbal Garden  
Tel. 0 7600 8842, 0 7087 5039

Ban Dong Bang herbal village, a full-service source of herbal raw materials, has been recognized and appointed as an "OTOP village model" and "OTOP tourism village" of Prachin Buri, Not only is it a tourist attraction in agro-tourism that focuses on organic herbs and herbal agricultural raw materials for sale, but it also offers spa, massage with herbal compresses, homestay for those interested in learning the folklore lifestyle and herb growers in the midst of the herbal garden and flowering and ornamental plants.



# Must Do

## TEN TREATMENT PROGRAMS WITH THAI WELLNESS

Come and experience 10 treatment programs in the Thai traditional style that will give you the experience of visiting Thailand and knowing more deeply about Thailand and be filled with the joy of the recommended spa treatments.

### ORIGINAL THAI MASSAGE

**Where :** Wat Pho Thai Massage School, Wat Pho, Bangkok Tel. 0 2622 3533 [www.watpomassage.com](http://www.watpomassage.com)

If you wish to experience original traditional massage and gain a deeper experience of Thai traditional massage, at Wat Pho, the Wat Pho style massage is of course the best destination for you to access to the science of Thai traditional massage. Here it is categorized as a therapy of traditional medicine. The massage is ideal

for health because it stimulates the blood circulation and lymphatic system, stimulates muscles, eases sleeping. And if massage is intended to chase blood to the heart, it helps stimulate and refresh the body.

Unlike other forms of massage, Thai traditional massage is not only relaxing, but it makes you feel that your blood circulation is improved better; aches disappear, and you feel more energetic.



### ORGANIC MON ROSE REVIVAL, ARUSAYA THAI HERBAL SPA

**Where :** Rose Garden Riverside, Sampran Garden, Nakhon Pathom Tel. 034 325 478 [www.sampranriverside.net](http://www.sampranriverside.net)

Refresh and energize both physically and mentally at the Arusaya Spa, a full service spa in an ancient Thai house, located along the lake, and experience the

traditional massage. Its highlights of the sales include spa products with chemical-free ingredients from an organically grown garden, special courses; Scent of Rose, a uniqueness of the Sam phran Garden, Damask Rose, as main the signature in every stage of massage; beginning with washing the hands and feet with rose water, damask roses grown in a garden are fumed with water in a traditional way to produce the rose fumed water, followed by body scrubbing with crushed rose petals, then massage with the rose-scent massage oil, alternating with Thai traditional massage combined with kneading, The rose essential oil smell gives better scent than other varieties; it helps in balancing the body, refreshing, and relaxing from stress, as well as provides an emotionally romantic mood.



### KANGHUNTONG SEA SALT

**Where :** Kanghunting, Salt Spa, Phetchaburi Tel. 032 405100 [facebook: kanghuntingseasalte](https://www.facebook.com/kanghuntingseasalte)

Kanghunting Sea Salt is Thailand's first salt spa, located within the large Thai style house amidst the Na Klua atmosphere, where clients can experience the salt spa, a single signature in Thailand that has featured pure "flower of salt" from the locals of Phetchaburi Province, combined with Thai herbs; such as, turmeric, curcumin, locomotor, Thanaka to produce a variety of skin care products that help keep the skin clean, firm, smooth, with the fragrant aroma of herbs that helps to relieve stress and tension.

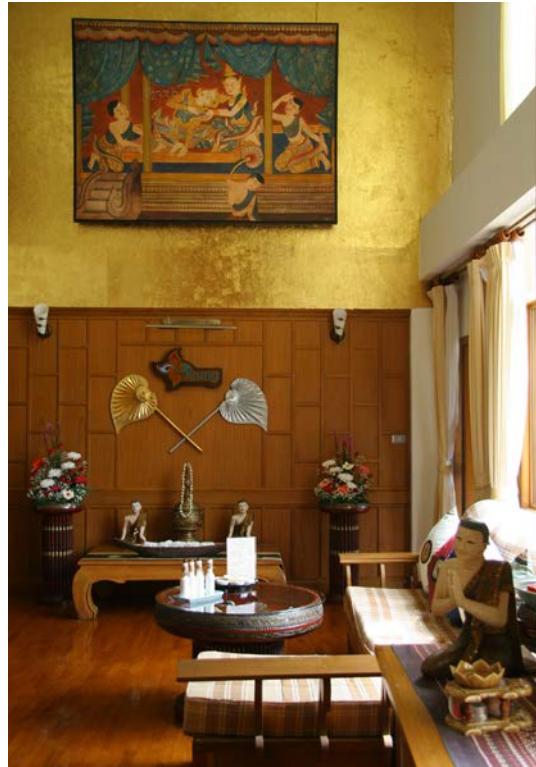
Salt spa product is a beauty innovation by local wisdom applied to produce a variety of skin care products; including body scrub, facial scrub, turmeric salt scrub, salt scrub mixed oil, and salt dip. In addition, they are used in the Thai traditional massage service, foot massage, along with scenic sightseeing of a salt farm among a unique comfortable atmosphere.

## THAINESS FOR WELLNESS JIRANG HEALTH RESORT

**Where :** Jirang Health Resort, Mae Rim Chiang Mai, Tel. 080 802 6600  
www.jiranghealthvillage.com

Jirung Health Spa is considered a holistic health retreat that promotes a healthier condition to living. It offers four dimensions of well-being in health-care services; physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually, including administratively integrating the knowledge of alternative medicine, Thai traditional medicine science and Buddhist medicine.

The spa provided here is in the kind of the signature massage, integrating the knowledge of the Thai traditional medicine; particularly the use of essential oils mixed with various herbs, based on the elements in the body of the clients. It also includes medical experts and health-care professionals at every stage from a physical check-up, identifying the elements in the body, analysis of causes, instructing the right knowledge and holistic treatment planning, as well as recommending the optimal treatment methods for clients.



## THE VOYAGE OF GOLDEN LANNA OASIS SPA

**Where :** Oasis Spa Chiang Mai is available in several branches, Tel. 053 920 111  
www.oasisspa.net

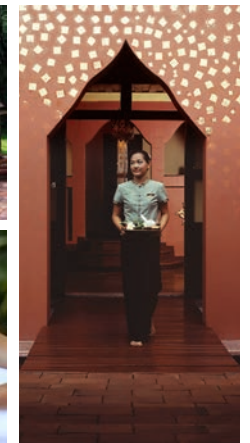
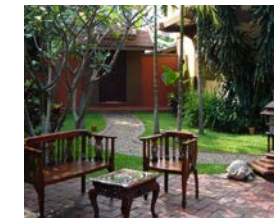
Oasis Spa is typical of spa service in Chiang Mai that discovers the formula for health and skin care. The highlighted treatment is "the Voyage of Golden Lanna", which takes 90 minutes, focusing the integrative excellence of Lanna wisdom and aesthetic in music therapy.

The Oasis Spa has been established with purpose of relaxation, four-handed massage from two therapists, anointed with pure golden-mixed essential oil, kneading in equal weight of strokes in gentle manner, accompanying with the sound of the applied Lanna music, promoting mental security, and rest and relax, and increases the power of life wonderfully.

## LANNA EXOTIC LANNA COME SPA

**Where :** Sridonchai Road, Changklan, Mueang Chiang Mai, Chiang Mai, Tel. 053 274 377  
www.lannacomespa.com

Lanna Come Spa offers several aspects of spa treatments. They include aromatherapy massage, stone massage, Ayurvedic massage, hydrotherapy massage, massage in the ozone water which is unique differently from others. An exotic signature includes the "Lanna Exotic" treatment and the identity of Lanna massage as the symbol of Chiang Mai, as well a combined variety of unique blended oil, accompanying with Lanna music while performing Thai massage and aromatherapy massage along the body line, beginning with Thai herbal sauna, body scrub, relaxing massage, aromatherapy, and warm oil. This process will take full 2 hours approximately.



## SIAM TEN SENSES NATURE WING

**Where :** 11/5 Mu 6 Bangpor Beach,  
Ko Samui, Surat Thani, Tel. 077 602 111  
[www.naturalwing.com](http://www.naturalwing.com)

Nature Wing Health Spa ... natural spa - an experience of a genuine Thai spa. Inside is a health spa resort located on Ko Samui, which primarily offers holistic healing, it's guaranteed as a natural spa that has been one of the most popular on Samui.

The recommended signature of the highlighted treatment is the Siam Ten Senses. The Siam Ten Senses massage is a kind of massage that focuses on the ten main senses in the human body by massage with a warm press and warm oil to the body line, which will make a movement of air within the body. This will help in restoring the body's systems and improve the balance. This treatment course includes a 30-minute hot herbal compress and 120-minute treatment.

The ingredients of ground coconut, sesame, marinade and fresh milk, are all mixed together and rubbed on the skin for about 30 minutes. "Coconut" is a symbol of Ko Samui; and its properties include caring skin and improving skin under the discoveries of local wisdom of the natural remedies.



## KINAREE EXPERIENCE WAREERAK HOT SPRING RETREAT

**Where :** Mu 5 ,Khlung Tom Nua , Khlung Thom,  
Krabi Tel. 075 637 130  
[www.vacationvillage.co.th](http://www.vacationvillage.co.th)

Is located in the area covered with flower plants and perennial large trees that provide shade and cool. Thai traditional massage pavilions are available for such service as the Swedish massage, Thai traditional massage, facial treatment and body scrubs orderly in the open-air nature to increase relaxation. The spa offers the following services: hot springs and mineral water, available in both aromatherapy and hydrotherapy. The options depend upon your decision; massage or hot spring.

Once arriving, don't miss to enjoy the Kinaree hot spring. The hot spring ponds are located orderly and interstitially with the trees. All the hot springs are called "Kinnaree Hot Spring", named after the literature. Amidst the pleasant atmosphere with a clear mineral spring, you will be fascinated with the hot spa, which has guaranteed standards and qualities of mineral water that is inspected by the Department of Science Service and Lo-borRomeis Bad Kissengen, Germany. In short, the Wareerak Hot Spring is considered the "hot mineral water spring



beneath the Earth's surface" with the properties of standard minerals, and it is recognized by the German Spa Association and the Association of German Tourism as a "thermal spa and resort".

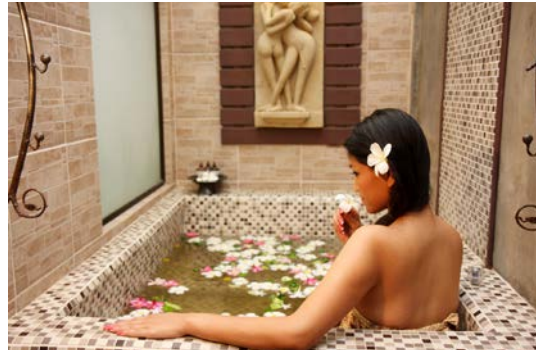


## THAI NORA THERAPY TARN TARA SPA

**Where :** 58/11 Mu 6, Chao Fa Road, Chalong, Phuket Tel. 076 521 746  
[www.tarntarasp.com](http://www.tarntarasp.com)

Tarn Tara Spa is the first day spa located on Phuket, under the concept of a waterfront spa amidst the forest to promote the local identity of the South; from the interior decoration in the traditional Southern atmosphere, birdcages, lamps, batik in embroidery in harmony with the room to the various treatments. Thai Nora Therapy or the so-called "Nora Massage" is provided under the close consultation of specialists; Thai traditional practitioners and graduate physicians who have specialized in bones and joints, as well as pharmacists for the optimal outcomes.

Under this program, it begins with soaking into cool herbal water containing herbal ingredients by the local wisdom of the South; i.e., Donax gran-dis Ridl, Catathea, and Sessile joyweed, and then masked with cool herbs, i.e, Gotu kola and soft-prepared chalk to increase moisturizing the skin prior to undergoing the treatment by a couple of therapists who perform massaging and arrange your gesture like a puppeteer performs a delicate Manora dance, consistent with manual massage in which the weight and posture is exerted



perfectly throughout a 150-minute course. It is a novel experience of fun you can't find elsewhere.

## TIN STONE THERAPY RAIN TREE SPA

**Where :** Montri Road, Talat Yai, Mueang Phuket, Phuket Tel. 076-232-054  
[www.theraintreespa.com](http://www.theraintreespa.com)

Tin Stone Treatment has undergone research and development by both experts including physiotherapists, instructors experiencing in herbal compress massage and tin for more than 60-70 years.

Hence, the tin used is the choicest grade for body use safely; it is molded to be characterized of the river rocks of various sizes that are highly potential to keep the temperature of the tin powder that has been ground for a compress.

Imagine you are now here, and you would have undergone treatment amidst the forest in the city. Methodologically, lie prone and place a hot tin on the feet, apply non-toxic sesame oil that has been heated by tin rocks on the skin with a massage. Once the rock becomes warm, the therapist has it massaged on various points of the body. The heat of the hot rocks is beneficial while adequate weight of the therapist pressed on gives a feeling of relaxation when the muscles become relaxed with a hot stone and oil. The therapist will massage with a special herbal compress made of tin power, compressed along the



line of the body, unlike other compresses where a small angled shape exists, the heat is conveyed thoroughly on the body, and meanwhile, it helps open the pores where the oil is absorbed onto the skin more effectively. Once massaging is completed, the therapist takes small stones previously soaked in cold water to perform a facial massage; the cooling water helps you feel refreshed, certainly it is a signal to wake up from the sub-consciousness during the splendid hours of treatment.



## *Must Buy*

### HERBAL COMPRESS

“Herbal compress” is another ancestral Thai wisdom, which local herbs have been used for treatment purposes, especially, to improve blood circulation, reduce clogged blood, swelling, pain, and muscle elasticity. In addition to these medical benefits, if changed into more specific properties, the herbs can be used to compress the facial skin for beauty purposes as well.

The herbal compress has been famous among Thais for treatment purposes from the past to the present, and it is usually used in conjunction with massage therapy; namely, after the massage treatment is finished, the herbal compress is gently exerted along the body, thereby resulting in the expansion of the capillary vessels.

### HERBAL MEDICINES THE UTMOST THAI WISDOM

Herbal plants have been existent with Thais over hundreds of centuries. With their medical properties and benefits, and with the ancient wisdom, they have been discovered and created into pharmaceutical products that help cure many diseases; whether in the format of decoction, aromatics, inhalants, and more modernly, been developed into tablets and capsules; whether in the form of supplements and medicines. It has been found that the herbal medicines produced of *Butea superba* Roxb, *Centella asiatica*, Black Galingale, and *Zingiber montanum* have been relatively popular overseas.

### THAI COSMETICS

Cosmetic products in Thailand that have been recognized internationally include the branded spa with Thai herbs as prominent features, including soaps, shampoos, conditioners, skin lotions, serums in various formulas, as well as the fragrances. All these Thai products have been popular internationally in terms of the quality, design, production and reasonable price.



## *Must Taste*

### HERBAL TEA

Tea is a refreshment that has been familiar worldwide. In addition to tea leaves, many other herbs can be utilized as a refreshment for health benefits. Herbal teas benefit health a great deal, for example, Pandanus leaf tea, Bael fruit tea, Ginger tea, Ceylon tea, Cat’s Whiskers leaf, Lemon grass tea, Ringworm Bush tea, Safflower tea, Laurel Clockvine tea, Roselle tea, Emblica tea, Stevia teas, etc. All these tea products have been developed and distributed diversely. Mostly, the prominent local herbs in the region are presented with their medical properties to draw customers attention.



### ORGANIC FOOD

Thailand has been known as a learning center for organic farming, with pure natural production processes; no chemicals, and is a source of the organic agricultural products for export and distribution domestically and internationally. All fresh vegetables, fish, eggs are produced from non-toxic materials, and they can be processed into a variety of organic products; i.e. beverages, meals, and snack, etc. as healthy foods which can be found in the spa treatment or health food stores.



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