



Bangkok

Photo: Evoflash



Mike Behnken

Dynamic, exotic and richly cosmopolitan, Bangkok is one of South East Asia's most vibrant and cherished travel destinations. A city of contrasts, this cultural epicentre and shopping paradise entices millions of travellers each year to its bountiful markets, luxury hotels, stunning scenery and tantalizing cuisine. Where ancient and modern coincide, Bangkok's glorious golden temples and world-class skyscrapers await. Revel in the frenetic pace as you soak up the sights, shop until you drop then tuk-tuk around town for a zesty slice of Bangkok's indulgent and risqué nightlife.



Photo: Arian Zwegers



Photo: William Christiansen

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Top 5



Grand Palace

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Wat Saket and Phu Khao Thong (T...

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THE CITY



Photo: Arian Zwegers

To arrive in Bangkok is to be thrust into the pulsing heart of the Orient, a sprawling mega city encompassing 50 districts and six ever-expanding provinces. Truly, the engine room behind 'Amazing Thailand', Bangkok will amaze, dazzle and humble the most seasoned global wanderers with its exciting fusion of cultural, spiritual, historical and cosmopolitan charm.

Dusit is the political core of Thailand, home to lavish architecture and gardens, while Bangkok's rustic 'Old Town' Rattanakosin holds 'must see' sights such as the Grand Palace, Wat Pho and royal gardens of Sanam Luang.

The city throbs and pulses with relentless heat and frantic pace, as tuk-tuks zip along concrete boulevards and Skytrains zoom overhead. Glitzy Siam Square carves the city's commercial core with an array of shops, malls and boutiques - a true shopper's paradise. Multicultural Yaowarat and Pahurat provide a feast for the senses, with the cuisine of Chinatown and flurry of Indian markets.

Sensational Sukhumvit Road roars at night with fine restaurants, bars and raunchy clubs, while the ever-indelible Khaosan Road area is a delight for budget travellers and revellers alike, buzzing with curbside vendors, stalls and wild nightspots. Known to the Thai's as 'Krung Thep,' South East Asia's own 'City of Angels' epitomizes the East meets West tradition, where ancient

trends blend and thrive with cutting edge sophistication.

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DO & SEE



Photo: William Christiansen

With a relentless array of sights, sounds, scents and tastes all immersed in a bevy of hidden treasures, Bangkok has an overwhelming variety of things to discover and absorb.

Grand Palace



Home to the famous Emerald Buddha, the most revered Buddha image in Thailand, the Grand Palace is a spiritual hub and glorious architectural feat. Get in early to bypass the

bustle and crowds, and remember to show respect by wearing long pants – no shorts allowed! Take a taxi or tuk-tuk direct to the palace. Alternatively, catch a Skytrain to Sapan Thaksin and jump on a river boat to Phra Arthit pier.

Address: Na Phra Lan Road

Opening hours: 08.30 – 15.30

Tickets: Admission fee

More Info: Dress code: Long trousers/skirts, long-sleeve shirts, foot-covering footwear. Appropriate trousers/skirts and shirts provided at entry with refundable deposit.

Wat Phra Kaew (Temple of the Emerald Buddha)

Directly adjacent the Grand Palace, Wat Phra Kaew is known as the Temple of the Emerald Buddha and is the most sacred Buddhist temple in the country. It houses the magnificent statue of the Emerald Buddha, carved from a single piece of jade.

Address: Na Phra Lan Road

Opening hours: 08.30 – 12.00, 13.00 – 15.30

Tickets: Admission fee

More Info: Situated on the Grand Palace grounds. Dress code: Long trousers/skirts, long-sleeve shirts, foot-covering footwear. Appropriate trousers/skirts and shirts provided at Grand Palace entry with refundable deposit.

Wat Phra Chettuphon (Wat Pho)

Directly adjacent to the Grand Palace, Wat Pho is known as the Temple of the Reclining Buddha, the largest reclining image of Buddha in the nation, at an impressive 46m long and 15m high. It is adorned with mother of pearl and gold plating. Not limited to the one attraction, Wat Pho temple is home to over 1,000 images of the Buddha, towering statues, buildings and stupas. It is also home to the renowned Thai massage school for monks, and visitors can have this exceptional service on the grounds.

Address: Sanam Chai Road and Maharaj Road

Opening hours: 08.00 – 17.00 daily

Internet: www.watpho.com

More Info: Next to the Grand Palace. Dress polite: no shorts, flip-flops, tank-top shirts or short skirts.

Wat Arun (The Temple of Dawn)

Named after the Indian God Aruna. Take in the majestic white porcelain spires of the iconic 19th-century 'Temple of Dawn.' Linger in mythical gardens, climb the steep white stairs and soak up the romantic views at sunset. Take a taxi or a river ferry at Tha Tien Pier on Thai Wang Road across the Chao Praya River to the Thonburi area.

Address: 34 Arun Amarin Road

Internet: www.watarun.org

More Info: On the west side of the Chao Phraya River.

Wat Saket and Phu Khao Thong (The Golden Mount)

Thailand's revered King Rama IV built this temple's large golden chedi atop the ruins of previous temple buildings. The chedi is layered with centuries of gold leaf. Visitors can take the easy winding stairs that encircle the mount to the viewpoint at the top. A small entrance fee allows you

to enter the terrace and the temple area where you'll have a 360-degree view of Bangkok.

Address: Ratchadamnoen Klong

Opening hours: 9.00 – 17.00

More Info: Ratchadamnoen Klong (Canal) and Boripihat Road

Siam Ocean World

Found in Siam Paragon Mall in the Siam shopping district, Siam Ocean World is Bangkok's modern, sleek aquarium complex, and the largest aquatic centre in South East Asia. Kids and adults alike will enjoy Ocean World's 30,000 aquatic creatures from 400 different species. Marvel at this remarkable underwater world and dive with the sharks if you dare!

Address: Siam Paragon, 991 Rama 1 Road, Pathumwan, Bangkok 10330

Phone: +66 2 687 2000

Internet: www.siamoceanworld.co.th

More Info: Siam Paragon, Basement Level, 991 Rama I Road

Lumphini Park

Expansive, lush green Lumphini Park is Bangkok's green lung – a magnificent sprawling park with gardens, ponds, lawns and stages in the heart of the city bustle. Named after Buddha's Nepalese birthplace, it is replete with karaoke singers, tai chi artists, joggers and kite flyers. Join the throng and take a break from Bangkok without having to leave the city.

Address: Rama IV Road

Public Transport: MRT (underground transit train): Lumphini Station or Silom Station
BTS (elevated Skytrain): Sala Daeng Station

Opening hours: 04.30 (am) – 21.00

More Info: Rama IV Road, Wangmai Subdistrict, Patumwan

Abhisek Dusit Throne Hall

This pinnacle East-meets-West structure was built by King Chulalongkorn, the first Thai monarch to visit Europe. Visions of his travels must have still been swimming in his head when he commissioned this stunning, grandiose building with distinct Western influences fusing with a glorious Thai exterior and oriental charm.

Address: Ratchawithi Road

Phone: +66 2 628 6300

More Info: Across from Dusit Zoo

Jatujak Weekend Market (also: Chatuchak)

Thailand's largest weekend market is a shopper's dream, with locals and tourists hitting Jatujak's labyrinthine stalls en masse. Housing more than 10,000 stalls, you'll discover amazing prices on silks, handicrafts, clothes, antiques, collectibles and plants, to name a few. Get there early to avoid afternoon crowds and the sweaty hustle and bustle.

Address: Kamphaeng Phet 2 Road

Public Transport: MRT (underground transit train): Chatuchak Park or Kamphaengphet Stations
BTS (elevated Skytrain): Mo Chit Station

Opening hours: Saturday and Sunday

Internet: www.jatujakguide.com/home

More Info: Watch out for pick-pockets!

Sala Chalerkrung Theatre: Khon Masked Dance

Savour Thailand's classical masked dance at the Sala Chalerkrung Theatre, regarded as one of the most refined styles of performing art in the world. Once privy only to the royal court of the King, Khon's masked dance is held every Thursday and Friday evening and is a rare treat for the culturally savvy.

Address: 66 Charoen Krung Road, Phra Nakhon, Bangkok 10200

Phone: +66 2 222 0434

Internet: www.salachalermkrung.com

Damnoen Saduak Floating Market

This floating market is truly an impressive sight as vendors on long boats brimming with fruits or brightly coloured trinkets, navigate the 'klong' (canal) to sell their produce to the tourists and locals standing along the canal's edge. This world-famous market from the James Bond movie is 80km outside of Bangkok, but it's certainly worth the journey. Take an organised tour, or a regular bus from the Southern Bus Terminal and see what all the hype is about.

Address: Samut Sangkhram Ratchaburi Province
Opening hours: 07.00 – 11.00 (am) daily

Khaosan Road

Enter a bustling, exciting, vibrant mix of eateries, bars and lines of street stalls selling clothes, jewellery and tantalizing Thailand souvenirs. With the rich smoky scents of vendors cooking fresh Pad Thai on the curbside, t-shirt and jewellery stalls decorating the road walkways, and a maze of ferny alleys lined with local and travelling characters, a trip to Bangkok is incomplete without a stroll through its most lively, action-packed area. The area was once the infamous backpackers haunt, but is now a family-friendly area where tourists towing prams and elite Bangkokians come to spend the day. Nightlife here is still robust however, and many are up until dawn enjoying the revelries on this street.

Address: Banglamphu
Internet: www.khaosanroad.com
More Info: Banglamphu old city near the Chao Praya River and the Grand Palace

National Science Museum

The National Science Museum is a great family attraction, a place to learn little bit more about science, the environment and the world. There are plenty of activities for everyone to participate. The building where the museum is located has been designed and constructed in a remarkable geometry.

Address: Soi Khlong 5 Rangsit, Nakhon Nayok Road
Phone: +66 2 577 9999
Internet: www.nsm.or.th

Bangkok Art & Culture Centre (BACC)

If you love art, you should visit BACC since it provides an interesting program with contemporary art, theatre, film, design and cultural events. Also on display are contemporary Thai potteries and sculptures. You will be surprised how Thailand is full of wonderful artists and ideas.

Address: 939 Rama 1 Road, Wangmai, Bangkok 10330
Phone: +66 2 214 6630
Internet: www.bacc.or.th

Madame Tussaud's Wax Museum

With 10 zones and over 90 wax figures you will find yourself busy at Madame Tussaud's Wax Museum-Bangkok. Here you can pose with the A-list celebrity like Brad Pitt and Julia Roberts on the red carpet or hope on stage with your favourite stars like Lady Gaga and Justin Bieber.

Address: 989 Rama 1 Road, Pathumwan, Bangkok 10330
Phone: +66 2 658 0060
Internet: www.madametussauds.com/Bangkok
More Info: Siam Discovery, 6th Floor

DINING



Photo: *mattmangum*

If nothing else, Bangkok serves as an epicentre of South East Asian culinary sensation, with endless cuisine varieties and flavours to boot. Tantalize your taste buds with a journey thorough Bangkok's endless flurry of fine restaurants, delectable eateries and simmering roadside food stalls. Comprising the best places to dine with such a short list is an impossible task. However, here's what each of Bangkok's main culinary areas have to offer the gastronomic aficionado, with a sneak selection of some of the stand outs:

Yaowarat Road

Also known as Bangkok's Chinatown, this is a bustling, frenetic, neon artery featuring an impressive trail of

Chinese and oriental-inspired eateries and restaurants. Savour some of the best dim sum lunches in all of South East Asia.

Address: Yaowarat Road

Phahurat Road

Just a short stretch away from Yaowarat, sizzle the taste buds with the region's hallmark Indian fare - not to mention a spicy array of Pakistani and Punjabi delicacies.

Address: Phahurat Road

Siam Square

For a more modern, cosmopolitan air, check out the Siam shopping district and indulge in delectable choices of Thai, Chinese, Japanese, Western and European fare. Choose from restaurants, laid back buffets, or casual food court dine-ins.

Address: Siam Square

Sukhumvit Road

Variety is indeed the spice of life, a mantra that Sukhumvit Rd has taken to heart, offering a seasoned selection of local and international food options. Enjoy quality Thai alongside European, American, Mexican, Indian, Middle Eastern or Japanese. The menu is endless along Sukhumvit.

Address: Sukhumvit Road

Silom Road

Bangkok's business core is a culinary cornucopia. Take a long lunch at the Soi Lalais lunch market, sup fresh seafood by the Saladaeng intersection, Indonesian near Convent Road, Japanese by Soi Thaniya, or traditional Thai around Soi Pipat.

Eat Me Restaurant

Elegant and cool, reserved and unassuming, delight yourself with the artistic vibe of Eat Me Restaurant. Savour its decadent modern, international and regional plates,

with sizzling meat and poultry, sumptuous seafood and hearty vegetarian options.

Address: Silom Road

Phone: +66 2 238 0931

Internet: www.eatmerestaurant.com

More Info: Convent Rd, Silom, Soi Pipat 2

Suda Restaurant

Suda Restaurant is one of the oldest traditional Thai-Chinese family-run restaurants on Sukhumvit Road, and is conveniently situated underneath the Asoke SkyTrain station. The family owners have an eye for the freshest ingredients and one favourite is their pork satay. As a bonus, their prices are not much higher than what you find at most street vendor stalls, so it's very popular with the locals as well. Visiting early evening should assure you immediate seating. If you are a group, please call and book beforehand.

Address: 66/1 Sukhumvit Soi 14

Phone: +66 2 258 4181

Baan Khanitha

With its walls lined with delightful artwork and homely Thai ambience, Baan Khanitha produces excellent signature Thai dishes. The recipient of 10 consecutive 'best Thai restaurant' awards. Indulge in delectable hallmark dishes of spicy river prawn soup with glass noodles, and prawns with tamarind sauce, roasted duck, mango and sticky rice.

Address: 36/1 Soi 23, Sukhumvit Road, Bangkok 10110

Phone: +66 2 258 4181

Internet: www.baan-khanitha.com

La Dalat Indochine

A charming Vietnamese restaurant on bustling Soi 23, a short walk from Sukhumvit Road and Soi Cowboy. The restaurant is housed in a charming converted 1950's villa, adorned with lush plants, modern art and French Vietnamese memorabilia. Savour La Dalat's crisp baguettes and bouillabaisse, mouth-watering local seafood

and flourishing character.

Address: 57 Soi Prasanmitr Sukhumvit 23 Road Klongtoey Nua,
Wattana, Bangkok 10110
Phone: +66 2 259 95 93
Internet: www.ledalatbkk.com

Roti Mataba

Renowned for its no-frills, fast, tasty food and comfortable, lively setting, Roti Mataba provides top-notch budget Indian cuisine that won't leave a dent in the wallet. For next to nickels, take in a cosy feast of Massaman Curry, crisp garlic roti and tantalising chicken Korma, and wash it down with rounds of ice-cold Tiger beer.

Address: 136 Phra Athit Road, Phra Nakorn, Bangkok 10200
Phone: +66 282 2119
Internet: www.roti-mataba.net

Took Lae Dee

Literally translated as 'Cheap and Good,' look no further than Took Lae Dee for excellent Thai and Western cuisine that goes ever-so-easy on the back pocket. On the long counter armed with chefs, delight in the simplicity, rich characters, busy action and hearty fare at this much revered Bangkok institution.

Address: Sukhumvit Soi 5, Bangkok 10110
Phone: +66 2 530 02 20
More Info: Foodland Supermarket

Lan Na Thai - Face bar

The lavish Face Bar complex is home to this wonderful Thai hub, while also housing an Indian (Hazara) and a Japanese (Mizaki) restaurant. Traditional Thai artifacts and decor provide perfect ambience for a romantic meal. Sup aperitifs in the bar pre-meal, indulge in sublime cuisine and cap the night with a decadent digestive. Don't miss the pastry and chocolate shop Visage on the way out for unforgettable desserts.

Address: 29 Sukhumvit Rd, Soi 38, Prakanong Klongtoey, Bangkok 10110
Public Transport: BTS Thong Lo

Phone: +66 2 713 6048
Internet: www.facebars.com

Khaosan Road

As well as its pulsing, energetic nightlife, Khaosan is a hub for excellent local and multicultural eateries - both affordable and enticing. Indian, Korean, Japanese, Western and Thai all vie for attention along this busy stretch. Dine in, outside, or indulge in a steaming fresh plate of Pad Thai by the curbside.

Seven Spoons Bar and Restaurant

This restaurant has three tables and seats 12 people which creates a cosy and intimate atmosphere. At this small restaurant you can indulge yourself with Mediterranean influenced dishes made from locally produced and organic ingredients. Also provides good vegetarian options.

Address: 211 Chakkrapatipong Road, Bangkok 10100
Phone: +66 2 628 45 88
Internet: www.sevenspoonsbkk.wordpress.com

The Reflexions

The Reflexions is a romantic restaurant where you can savour the finest modern French cuisine. This sophisticated award-winning restaurant offers an intriguing menu where the dishes are only prepared with the best seasonal ingredients and beautifully executed and plated. You will definitely eat with your eyes!

Address: 61 Wireless Road, Lumpini, Pathumwan, Bangkok 10330
Phone: +66 2 650 88 00
Internet: www.plazaatheneebangkok.com/restaurant/thereflexions

BARS & NIGHTLIFE



Photo: Kevin Poh

When the sun comes down, Bangkok is well-versed on how to have a seriously good time. A city infamous for its wild nightlife, Bangkok's bars, clubs, taverns and lounges light up the streets, bustling and bursting with action. Partiers and revellers will rejoice with an abundance of rock pubs, jazz cafés and sleek cocktail bars. Many nightspots have free entrance, though some more popular venues charge a modest entry fee. The city also yields an array of sophisticated entertainment for more refined pleasure seekers, including Broadway-inspired stage shows, traditional performances and night time river cruises.

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Khaosan Road Area

Bangkok's backpacker hub caters in spades with an excellent collection of laid-back bars, frequented by swathes of international tourists and locals alike. Enjoy ice cold drinks at institutions like Gulliver's and Mulligan's, soak up excellent views of the street from Silk Bar, and dance the night away to smooth grooves at Reggae Bar.

Be seen at local favourites The Club and Lava, with a midnight plate of fresh Pad Thai and pancakes to keep the festivities going.

Address: Khaosan Road

RCA - Royal City Avenue

RCA yields an array of bars, clubs and nightspots hugely popular with Thai locals. Venues such as Route 66, Slim and Astra pulse with night-round action, live bands, techno halls, and spinning DJ's delving into hip-hop, house, rock and beyond. Night groovers are truly spoilt for choice at RCA.

Address: Royal City Avenue

Public Transport: Subway station (MRT) Pharam 9 Skytrain (BTS) station Asoke or Phrom Phong

Qbar

Quite simply one of the hottest and classiest spots in town catering to Bangkok's fashionable, sophisticated and uncompromisingly hip. With a delectable selection of spirits, drinks are reasonably priced and the decadent décor and smooth sounds will have you coming back for more.

Address: 34 Sukhumvit Soi 11 Klongtoey, Bangkok 10110

Phone: +66 2 252 3274

Internet: www.qbarbangkok.com

Bamboo Bar

For sensational live jazz, delicate service and a sophisticated array of décor, liquors and svelte cocktails, this legendary bamboo and palm festooned 'Jungle Speakeasy' is a one of a kind in Bangkok. An institution in its own right, Bamboo Bar is a delightful nook to while away a hot tropical night.

Address: 48 Oriental Avenue, Bangkok 10500

Phone: +66 2 659 9000

Internet: www.mandarinoriental.com/bangkok/dining/lounge_and_bar/the_bamboo_bar

Cheap Charlie's

As the name suggests, this is the place to meet for inexpensive drinks and great conversations. Travellers hailing from far and wide stand shoulder to shoulder chatting about their adventures over a cold beverage. More an outdoor shack than a bar, Cheap Charlie's opts for the minimalist route affording a basic, comfy open-air set-up and a no-frills vibe. It's everyone's favourite place to sip brews and people watch on busy Soi 11.

Address: 35 Sukhumvit Soi 11, Sukhumvit Rd
Phone: +66 2 253 4648

Vertigo

Vertigo lingers loftily above the city on the 61st floor of the lavish Banyan Tree Hotel, with a recherché open-air lounge and sultry selection of fine spirits and liquors. Patrons can enjoy a crisp cocktail and aperitif while taking in the amazing night-time vistas of bustling Bangkok below.

Address: 21/100 South Sathon Road Sathon, Bangkok 10120
Phone: +66 2 679 1200
Internet: www.banyantree.com

Sirrocco

At Bangkok's highest open-air bar and restaurant, take a seat amongst the A-list at classy Sirrocco. Smooth jazz, crisp drinks and delectable décor. If Vertigo's views don't cut it, then Sirrocco's sprawling panorama will definitely take your breath away.

Address: 1055/111 Silom Road
Phone: +61 2 624 9555
Internet: www.lebua.com/en/the-dome-dining/sirrocco-restaurant
More Info: Hotel Lebua at State Tower

Bed Supperclub

You've arrived in Bangkok's hottest club, where posh beauties sport the latest in clothing trends. Shaped like a futuristic spaceship, Bed splits itself into two sections: one for drinking and dancing, the other for dining and chilling out. This concept club lays on glam with real beds for

clientele to stretch out on and show off their finery.

Address: 26 Soi Sukhumvit 11, Sukhumvit Road
Phone: +66 2 651 3537
Internet: www.bedsupperclub.com

Phra Nakorn Bar

Hugely popular with university students and backpackers, Phra Nakorn is the perfect spot to chill and knock back a few bottles of Chang in the summer steam, located just a short saunter from the bustling Khaosan Road.

Address: 58/2 Soi Damnoen Klong Tai
Phone: +66 2 222 0282
More Info: Off of Ratchadamnoen Road

SHOPPING



Photo: eGuide Travel

Have we mentioned that Bangkok is a veritable shoppers' paradise? You'll find pretty much everything and anything you could ever want, need or desire in this town - from fashion to electronics, novelties and crafts. Hit up and indulge in Bangkok's enormous array of modern shopping hubs, contemporary stores, cosmopolitan boutiques and exotic, labyrinthine markets for every conceivable consuming penchant.

Clothing & Tailors

Bangkok is known for its inexpensive clothing and talented tailoring industry. There are tailor shops throughout the city, but it is best to ask around for reputable places. Some tailor shops will take your money, but won't deliver quality products.

Jatujak Weekend Market (also: Chatuchak)

With over 10,000 stalls, you'll find literally everything and anything at this extravagant weekend bazaar, from plants to crafts, pets, clothes, food and antiques – you name it. You'll need a map so you don't get lost in the maze of aisles, though the market is incredibly organised considering its behemoth size. Take the BTS Skytrain to Mo Chit Station, or the underground MRT to Chatuchak Park Station.

Watch out for pickpockets!

Patpong Night Bazaar

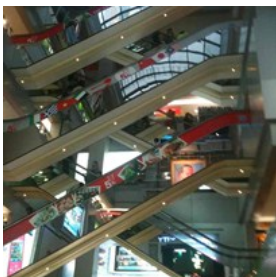
Infamous Patpong is home to the steamier side of Bangkok's night scene, but also caters for die hard shopaholics these days. At around 19.00 every day, the sidewalks of Patpong and Silom Rd come alive with a plethora of stalls offering clothing, trinkets, music, watches and myriad varieties of treats.

Address: Patpong / Silom Rd

Antiques

Antique sales in Bangkok are strong, but antiques aren't always what are sold. The word antique could actually mean that it was made to look old yesterday. That being said, Thailand antiques, whether old or young, display intricate craftsmanship and make for great gifts and decoration. There are antique stores around the city, especially in the more touristy areas of Siam, Silom, Sukhumvit and Khaosan Road.

Mahboonkrong (MBK) Center



The 'grand-daddy' of Bangkok's big shopping centres yields a market feel in indoor air-conditioned comfort, with floor upon floor of shops selling just about anything, and is topped with a movie theatre. An entire floor is devoted to mobile phones and digital cameras. Ample

clothes, bag and furniture stores spread across the remaining levels. Tourists can apply for a special Tourist Discount Card (MBK) at the information desk, which entitles you to between 5–30 percent discounts on selected merchandise and in some restaurants.

Address: Phayathai Road

Internet: www.mbk-center.co.th

Siam Paragon

Holding centre stage in the heart of the Siam shopping district, Paragon is modern, sleek and spacious. With names like Armani, Chanel and Maserati on hand, the Paragon is decidedly high-end, but its monumental cinema screens, delectable food court options and Asia's largest aquarium will keep you sheltered from the heat.

Address: 9991/1 Rama 1 Road, Pathumwan

Phone: +66 2 690 1000

Internet: www.siamparagon.co.th

The Emporium

The emporium is a high-class centre located on Sukhumvit Road at the Phromphong Skytrain station. With a variety of high and mid-end stores, this happening hub is popular with foreign residents and wealthy locals for beauty, fashion, threads and more.

Address: 622 Sukhumvit Rd., Klong Ton Neua, Klongtoey

Phone: +66 2 269 1000 Ext. 1726, 1727

Internet: www.emporiumthailand.com

Siam Centre & Siam Discovery

Set side-by-side and connected by a sky walk on the fourth floor, these sister malls are yet two more fabulous shopping centres in the Siam shopping district. Siam Centre is geared toward the teenager crowd with frequent singing and fashion shows and a live radio broadcasting booth where up-and-coming pop stars cut their tunes. Discovery is more upscale, with many artsy furniture stores and upscale clothing stores.

Address: 9991/1 Rama 1 Road, Pathumwan

Phone: +66 2 690 1000

Internet: www.siamparagon.co.th

Panthip Plaza Pratunam

In the heart of the Siam shopping district, Panthip Plaza is a mecca of all things IT. From video games, to computers, software to movies, anything you need to increase your tech connections can be found here.

Address: 22 New Phetchaburi Road

Opening hours: 10.00 – 21.00

Phone: +66 2 254 9797

Internet: www.pantipplaza.com

ACCOMMODATIONS



Photo: // UggBoy // UggGirl // PHOTO // WORLD // TRAVEL //

Built for tourism and travellers, Bangkok offers an incredible variety of hotels, guesthouses and hostel options, from the lavishly high-end to no-frills budget affordability. Narrow your choices down according to area and proximity to Bangkok's multitude of sights and happening activities. In the interim, get started with this short list of some of Bangkok's stand-out exclusive, mid-range and budget sleeping choices:

The Peninsula

Aesthetically stunning, the Peninsula is Bangkok's bastion of sophisticated 5-star comfort. Suites are warm, wood-laced and inviting, not to mention spacious, with spectacular balcony views, romantic terraces and opulent jacuzzis.

Address: 333 Charoennakorn Road, Klongsan, Bangkok 10600

Phone: +66 2 861 2888

Internet: www.bangkok.peninsula.com

The Mandarin Oriental

This hotel is hailed by many to be the best hotel in Bangkok. The Oriental Bangkok hotel has won an impressive amount of awards and is without a doubt one of the best 5-star hotels in Bangkok.

Address: 48 Oriental Avenue, Bangkok 10500

Phone: +66 2 659 9000

Internet: www.mandarinoriental.com/bangkok

Grand Millennium Sukhumvit

This is one of the newest 5-star hotels on the Sukhumvit strip, and conveniently within walking distance from both the Sky Train and underground stations Asoke and Sukhumvit. It is also one of the closest hotels to the new AirportLink city (Makasan) station. Apart from some exquisite restaurant choices, including a scrumptious tapas venue, they feature a full spa treatment, tennis courts and swimming pool with a city view. The rooms are spacious and generously appointed with a European touch. A good family venue for exploration of the city.

Address: 30 Sukhumvit Soi 21 Asoke Road, Bangkok 10110

Phone: +66 2 204 4000

Internet: www.grandmillenniumskv.com

Indra Regent Hotel

One of the more impressive mid-range options in Bangkok, the Indra Regent's chic, well-appointed suites are attractive and classy, housed in a dignified and stylish high-rise setup. With excellent swimming pool and facilities, complimentary breakfast, inviting cocktail bar and top proximity to Pratunam markets and Siam Square, the Indra delivers quality and modest luxury in spades.

Address: 120/126 Rajprap Road, Bangkok 10400

Phone: +66 2 208 0022 33

Internet: www.indrahotel.com

Baan Dinso

Charming, cute and delightfully comfortable, Baan Dinso provides a quaint, quiet colonial-inspired guesthouse experience, just a stroll from the action of the Khaosan

Road. You'll be thrilled with the attention to detail, excellent, warm service and immaculately modest air-conditioned suites. A real treat - affordable and unforgettable.

Address: 113 Trok Sin, Dinso Rd., Borvornnivate, Pranakorn
Phone: +66 86 815 2200
Internet: www.baandinso.com

New Road Guesthouse

Not all Bangkok's backpacker nooks lie by the Khaosan Rd. With clean, comfortable dorms and affordable single, double and triple suites, the New Road Guesthouse dishes out friendly, multilingual service and is an inviting, budget spot to rest your weary head, with an abundance of chill out zones, restaurant and bar and family friendly atmosphere.

Address: 1216/1 Charoen Krung Road Bangrak, Bangkok 10500
Phone: +66 2 630 699
Internet: www.visitbeyond.com
More Info: 1216/1 Charoen Krung between Soi 34 and 36

Wendy House

What this quaint guesthouse lacks in shimmer and sheen, it makes up for in charm, cosiness and fantastic proximity to the heart of Bangkok's action. With free high speed Internet, complimentary breakfast, hot showers, comfy rooms and cheerful service, Wendy House provides a solid, affordable choice for the budget traveller.

Address: 36/2 Soi Kasemsan 1, Rama 1 Road, Patumwan, Bangkok 10330
Phone: +66 2 214 1149
Internet: www.wendyguesthouse.com

Tara Place

Tara Place is a comfortable and friendly 3-star hotel located 5 minutes' walk from Khaosan Road and the nightlife. All rooms are well decorated in modern Thai style and offer a comfortable stay. Free Wi-Fi is available at this property.

Address: 113,117 Samsen Road, Samphraya, Phra Nakhorn, Bangkok

10200

Phone: +66 2 627 10013
Internet: www.taraplacebangkok.com

Centre Point Silom

The hotel is ideally situated in the middle of a shopping area, actually on the top of Robinson Department Store. At this 4-star hotel you can relax by the outdoor swimming pool and admire the beautiful views over Bangkok. In addition the hotel features facilities like fitness centre, sauna, coffee corner and restaurant.

Address: 1552/2 Soi 50, Charoenkrung Rd., Bangrak, 10500 Bangkok
Phone: +66 2 630 6345
Internet: www.centrepoin.com

Saphaipae Hostel

For budget alternative you can choose this stylish hostel in Bangkok's Silom area. You can either stay in a private room or in a dorm. All rooms come with air-condition, shared or private bathrooms and free Wi-Fi. Private rooms have flat-screen TV and minibar. The friendly staff makes you feel like home.

Address: 35 Surasak Road, Silom, Bangrak, Silom, 10500 Bangkok
Phone: +66 2 238 2322
Internet: www.saphaipae.com

Glow Trinity Silom

This modern 3-star hotel is located in the centre, a hotel where you can enjoy a comfortable stay and relax by the rooftop pool. The stylish guest rooms have cheerful colours and come with modern technology. When you are feeling hungry you will find a restaurant inside where you can eat tasty Thai food.

Address: 150 Silom Soi 3 Or Naratiwas Soi 3 Bangrak, Silom, 10500 Bangkok
Phone: +66 2 231 5050
Internet: www.zinchospitality.com

Shanghai Mansion

Housed in an old building which was originally built in 1892 and today it is refurbished into an exclusive 4-star

boutique hotel. It is nestled amongst the busiest streets of Bangkok, in Chinatown. The hotel can be described as elegant, cosy and romantic, the perfect hideaway for lovebirds. It also features a restaurant and jazz bar.

Address: 479 - 481 Yaowaraj Rd., Samphanthawong, 10100 Bangkok
Phone: +66 2 221 2121
Internet: www.shanghaimansion.com

Citypoint Hotel

Whether you are interested in dining, shopping or entertainment, you are within easy reach from these attractions when staying at Citypoint Hotel. This unique 3-star hotel is eco-friendly and non-smoking venue. Every morning Continental breakfast is served at the restaurant, this is also where you can enjoy Thai and international dishes.

Address: 6/22 Asoke-Sukhumvit Intersection, Klongtoey, Bangkok 10110
Phone: +66 2 229 4400
Internet: www.citypointhotel.com
More Info: Opposite Exchange Tower

Shangri-La Hotel Bangkok

Here you can stay in a luxury 5-star hotel with an amazing location on the magnificent River of Kings. When you arrive at the hotel you will be greeted by friendly staff with a warm smile and you can be sure that the experienced staff will cater your every need throughout your stay. The luxurious rooms have a Thai-inspired decor with high ceilings and large balconies overlooking the river.

Address: 89 Soi Wat Suan Plu, New Road, Bangrak, Bangkok, 10500
Phone: +66 2 236 7777
Internet: www.shangri-la.com/bangkok/shangrila

Gulliver's Tavern Hotel

Have a comfortable stay at this 3-star boutique hotel with personal service and quality. It is conveniently located in Bangkok's trendy Sukhumvit area and offers clean rooms with modern amenities. Inside you will find splendid hotel facilities like swimming pool, lobby bar, business centre, bar and restaurant.

Address: Sukhumvit Soi 5, Wattana, 10110 Bangkok
Phone: +66 2 655 7312
Internet: www.gulliverhotel.com

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION



Photo: Joe Hastings

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destination@arrivalguides.com

Airports

Suvarnabhumi International Airport Bangkok

A major international gateway to Asia, the immaculate, shining Suvarnabhumi Airport is the newest of Bangkok's airway hubs. It is located in Samut Prakan Province, just 30 km east of Bangkok. Suvarnabhumi — pronounced soo-WAHN-ah-poom, means 'golden land' in Thai — and this new airport welcomes thousands of visitors daily who are anxious to see the country's golden attractions.

Getting into Bangkok is easy with regular shuttle bus and airport taxi service. The recently opened Suvarnabhumi Airport Link provides direct train service into the terminal city station in the mornings and evenings (all day service

will open soon). Airport Express also provides four main direct bus services to various inner city hotels. A 24-hour public bus service is also provided from the Bus Terminal at the Transport Centre.

Taxis can be found on Level 1 of the terminal. Alternatively, take a shuttle bus (Express route) to the Transport Centre taxi stand.

+66 2 132 1888
www.suvarnabhumiairport.com

Don Muang International Airport

Bangkok's first airport now serves mainly short-haul flights for budget airlines on domestic routes. It lies 25km north of central Bangkok. There's a 500 m walkway that connects the International and Domestic terminals, with a free Thai Airways shuttle bus available.

Airport Directory +66 2 535 1111
www.airportthai.co.th

Public Transport

The Skytrain (BTS) is an extensive, modern air-conditioned monorail network. It is composed of two lines that reach the popular destinations of Bangkok. One line stretches east to Sukhumvit Soi 77 at the On Nut terminus all the way north to Jatujak Park and the Northern Bus Terminal at the Mo Chit terminus. Its other line runs from National Stadium at MBK Shopping Centre south across to the west side of the Chao Praya River at the Wongwan Yai terminus. Individual ticket fares are available, as well as a continuous top-up card.

Tuk Tuk

Bangkok's iconic transport, the three-wheeled mini taxis known as tuk-tuks, are not as common for transport these

days. Producing new tuk-tuks has been banned by the government due to the pollution they produce. However, these three-wheeler 'mobile lawnmowers' are a true adventure ride. Let your locks flow in the breeze as you absorb the sights, sounds and frenetic chaos of Bangkok's bustling roads in these hair-raising open-air carts. Price depends on distance, time of day (peak hour afternoons) and the mood of the driver. A common offer by tuk-tuk drivers is a ride around the city for a good price as long as you stop off at an over-priced tailor or jeweller afterward. Be wary of these offers.

Bus

Bus lines are a very common form of transport for locals getting to work and around the city. For visitors from foreign countries, it is less ideal as the lines follow major traffic arteries that are often clogged with traffic. The bus routes aren't laid out in English, so find a Thai speaker to help out with getting from here to there. The Bangkok Mass Transit Authority does have a website in English for bus numbers that reach popular tourist attractions.

www.bmta.co.th

Envisioned as a key rail artery from the city districts to Bangkok's major airline hub, commercial airport link services connect Suvarnabhumi Airport and Makkasan area in downtown Bangkok.

The express service is a 15-minute non-stop journey between the City. Alternatively, the commuter rail service is expected to make stops at eight different stations along the network, connecting with both the subway and Skytrain services.

www.bangkokairporttrain.com

MRT

The underground MRT train line runs north to south and covers the eastern edge of the city that the Skytrain doesn't serve. Its northern terminus is Bang Sue Station in the Northern Bus Terminal/Jatujak Park area. Its southern terminus takes passengers to the edge of Chinatown (Yaowarat) at Hua Lamphong Station.

www.bangkokmetro.co.th

Taxi

Taxis are readily available all over the city. Be sure to make sure the driver shows a working meter prior to the ride. Avoid touts offering a taxi service for a fixed fee, which is illegal and unsafe.

Post

Generally, post offices are open from 8.30 to 16.30, though some refuse international parcel shipments after 15.30. Many shopping centres and stores will send purchases from their locations during their business hours.

Central post office

Open 24 hours. International phone calls can also be made here

Address: Charoen Krung Road

Dentist

Bangkok Smile Dental Clinic

Address: 32/5-6 Sukhumvit 21 Asoke Road Wattana

Phone: +66 2 664 2800

Internet: www.dentalthailand.com

Pharmacy

Thailand pharmacies are exceptional with most pharmacists speaking excellent English. In tourist areas, many stay open until midnight or 01.00. Bangkok pharmacies will generally sell most medicines over the counter without prescription. The pharmacy directly across from Nana complex is open 24 hours.

Telephone

Country code: +66

Area code central Bangkok: 02

Electricity

220 Volts

Taxes

In restaurants (not noodle shops or local cafés) a 7% VAT is applicable. A service charge of around 10 to 15% is often added in hotel restaurants and bars. If your bill doesn't contain a service charge, then a tip of around 10% is appreciated if the service has met your expectations. However, tipping is not expected in Thailand.

Royal Reverence: A Special Reminder

One of the first things tourists arriving in Thailand will notice is an abundance of portraits of the King and the Royal Family. Thais hold a profound respect for their King, and foreign visitors are expected to also respect this reverence. Disrespecting the King is a punishable offence in Thailand, and it includes jail time, fines and/or deportation. While you're in the Land of Smiles, remember to be respectful of the culture, and your travels will be all the more pleasant.

Population

Approx. 10,300,00

Currency

Thai Baht

1 Baht = 100 Satang

Opening hours

Shops are generally open Monday to Saturday, 8.00 to 21.00. Banks are generally open Monday to Friday, 9.30 to 17.00 except on public and bank holidays. Banks located in major shopping malls are generally open Monday to Sunday (7 days a week) 10.00 to 19.00.

Newspapers

Bangkok Post

The Nation

Emergency numbers

Tourist Police: 1155

Police, Ambulance: 191

Fire: 199

Tourist information

Tourism Authority of Thailand TAT
1600 New Phetchaburi Road
Makkasan, Rajatevee
+66 2 250 5500
Monday to Friday, 8.30 to 16.30. Closed on weekends and
public holidays.



BANGKOK Mass Transit

- | BTS Skytrain | |
|---|----------------|
| ■ | Sukhumvit Line |
| ■ | Silom Line |
| MRTA Subway | |
| ■ | |

2009 © UrbanRail.Net (R. Schwandl)

S Klong Thom Wat Pra Phiren	D3	Thanon Chakrabongse	B1	Thanon Phra Sumen	B1 C1 D2
Sanam Luang	B2	Thanon Chao Khamrop	D3	Thanon Phraeng Nara	B2 C2
Soi Ban Bat	D3	Thanon Charoen Krung	B3 C3 D3	Thanon Prachathipathai	D1
Soi Damnoen Klang Nua	B1 C2	Thanon Chetuphon	B3	Thanon Rachini	B2 B3
Soi Damnoen Klang Tai	C2 D2	Thanon Damrong	D2	Thanon Ratchabophit	B3 C3
Soi Damnoenklang Tai	C2	Thanon Dinso	C2	Thanon Ratchadamnoen Klang	B2 C2 D2
Soi Kasaemsi	C1	Thanon Fuang Nakhon	C3	Thanon Ratchadamnoen Nai	B2
Soi Phalittaphon	D4	Thanon Ham Buttri	B1 C1	Thanon Ratchadamnoen Nok	D1 D2
Soi Prok Wat	A4	Thanon Kalayana Maitri	B3	Thanon Ratchawon	D4
Soi Ram Buttri	B1	Thanon Khao San	B1 C1	Thanon Samsen	C1
Soi Samran Rat	C2 D2	Thanon Krai Si	C1	Thanon Sanam Chai	B3
Soi Samsen 1	C1	Thanon Lak Muang	B2	Thanon Saphan	B4
Soi Samsen 4	C1	Thanon Lan Luang	D2	Thanon Saran Rom	B3
Soi Setthakan	B4	Thanon Luang	D3	Thanon Siri Phong	C2 C3
Soi Sukhat	C3	Thanon Maha Chai	D3	Thanon Somdet Phra Pin Klao	A1 B1
Soi Tha Klang	B4	Thanon Mahachak	D4	Thanon Tanao	C1 C2
Soi Wat Kanlaya	A4 B4	Thanon Mahannop	C2	Thanon Tani	B1 C1
Soi Wiwat Wiang	D4	Thanon Mahathat	A2 A3 B4	Thanon Thai Wang	B3
Soi Woraphong	C1	Thanon Mangkon	D4	Thanon Ti Thong	C3
Thanon Anuwong	C4 D4	Thanon Na Hap Phoel	B2	Thanon Tri Phet	C4
Thanon Arun Amarin	A4	Thanon Na Phra Lan	A2 B2	Thanon Unakan	C3
Thanon Atsadang	B2 B3	Thanon Na Phra That	B2	Thanon Wang Doem	A4
Thanon Bamrung Muang	C2 D2	Thanon Nakhon Sawan	D2	Thanon Wora Chak	D3
Thanon Boriphath	D2 D3	Thanon O-Sathahon	C4 D4	Thanon Yaowarat	D4
Thanon Bowon	C1	Thanon Parinayok	D1 D2	Thanon Yommaratsukhum	D3 D4
Thanon Bunsiri	B2 C2	Thanon Phahurat	C4	Trok Ban Lo	D1
Thanon Buranasat	B2	Thanon Phra Athit	B1	Trok Nawa	C2
Thanon Burapha	C3	Thanon Phra Chan	A2 B2	Trok Sake	B2 C2
Thanon Chak Phet	B4 C4	Thanon Phra Phitak	B3 C4	Trok Sillapakorn	A2
Thanon Chakkrawat	C4 D4				