

# Bangkok

*YOUR FREE BANGKOK GUIDE FROM THE ASIA TRAVEL SPECIALISTS*



## WEATHER

Bangkok has a tropical monsoon climate and holds claim to being the hottest city in the world. Sitting close to the equator, it is both hot and humid in equal measure, is unrelenting simply because it doesn't cool significantly at night. The period between April and May is the steamiest (avg. 25-35° C). The Southwest monsoons arrive between May and October, and with it pouring rain and thunderstorms – for many, though, this is a welcome respite.

## AIRPORT TRANSFERS

All road transport to downtown Bangkok is located on the 1st Floor. The Airport Link (06:00 - midnight) is the fastest mode (Express Line takes only 15mins), while taxis require an additional 50 baht on top of the meter fee and expressway tolls. Running a fixed route to four downtown areas, namely Silom, Sukhumvit, Khao San or Hualamphong (Central Train Station), the Airport Express Bus (05:00-midnight) is the cheapest way to go.

If cost is not your main concern, then why not save the trouble and use the airport limousine service (24 hours)? You can book one in advance through the Bangkok.com website or, upon arrival, locate the nearest service counter in the arrival hall (2nd Floor).

## SIM CARDS AND DIALING PREFIXES



Pre-paid SIM cards are available for purchase at most convenience stores (you will find 7-Elevens everywhere) as well as the service operators' shops – DTAC, AIS and TRUE – located inside shopping malls. To make a call to a landline within Bangkok, dial 02 then the seven-digit number. Making a call outside Bangkok requires a three-digit area code, starting with 0, the area code, then the six-digit number. Calls between mobile phones require the three-digit prefix (08x), followed by the seven-digit subscriber number.

## GETTING AROUND

Bangkok's traffic is notorious, particularly during the rush hours when road transport should be avoided at all costs. Better alternatives are the Skytrain (BTS) and Underground (MRT) rail systems (06:30-midnight), together connecting the main shopping, entertainment and business areas of the city. Consider buying a one-day BTS pass, which may help save you a few baht, or a store-value Smart Card, for the sake of convenience.

Taxis are ubiquitous, while tuk-tuks – once an icon of Bangkok – are fast disappearing from the streets; simply hail one from anywhere along the pavement, but be careful not to block the on-coming traffic. For sightseeing along the riverside, the river ferries and express boats (06:00- 20:00) come in handy. Start your journey at the Sathorn Pier (BTS Saphan Taksin), then hop on and off at whichever point you like.

## CURRENCY

Thai baht (THB). US\$1 = approximately THB 30.00

## TIME ZONE

GMT+7 (the same as Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam).

## ELECTRICITY

Voltage is 220 Volts with either two flat blades (NEMA 1-15 or JIS C 8303) or round two pin plugs (Europlug CEE 7/16).

## IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Police	191
Tourist Police	1155
Ambulance	1554
Fire	199
Samitivej Hospital	02 711 8000
Bumrungrad International Hospital	02 667 1000
Medical Emergency	1669
Operator-assisted overseas calls	100
Directory Assistance	1133, 13
Airport Flight Schedules	1566
Traffic Hotline	1197
Immigration	1111

## BANGKOK AREA GUIDES

Covering an area of 1,500 sqkm, the greater Bangkok Metropolis fits into the 'big city' league with ease. Add to that an estimated ten million inhabitants, more than 30,000 taxis and an ever-increasing number of tourists, and you'll soon realise that getting to grips with such a vast concrete jungle is no easy feat, especially if you're a first-time visitor. This is where our Area Guides come in pretty handy...



### SUKHUMVIT

The longest road in Thailand and the centre of up-to -the-minute shopping, eating and nightlife, Sukhumvit has something to offer all visitors. While there are touches of 'Thainess' on every corner, the many fashionable restaurants, bars, air -conditioned malls, hotels and clubs give the area a distinctly modern, cosmopolitan flavour. Some of the city's most 'sinful' spots, red-light districts Nana Plaza (Soi 4) and Soi Cowboy (off Soi 23) are also here. The elevated Skytrain (BTS) helps make exploring incredibly easy.



### SIAM

Siam is unquestionably the centre of shopping in Bangkok, home to some of the city's most popular and important shopping centres like MBK, Siam Discovery, Siam Center, and Siam Paragon. Within Siam Square itself, there is a wide range of shops and services, including restaurants, cafés, designer clothing boutiques, record stores, cinemas, bookshops, a Hard Rock Cafe, hotels and banks. Shoppers vary, from students to office workers, trend-setting city dwellers and, of course, a throng of tourists.



### SILOM

Silom is an area of contrasts. By day, sharply dressed business folk head into the numerous high rise offices and financial institutions along Silom Road. While at night, many of Bangkok's finest restaurants bring people from far and wide, as well as the infamous nightlife scene around Patpong. Silom enjoys excellent public transport options and, bordered by the Chao Phraya River on one side and Lumpini Park on the other, there are a host of different experiences to be had.



### RIVERSIDE

Bangkok's riverside is where its historic roots lie; the traditional heartland of this magical city with origins that read like an epic novel. One of the most fascinating and scenic areas of Bangkok, the riverside reflects a constantly changing scene; water-taxis ferrying commuters and heavily laden rice barges chugging upstream, set against a backdrop of glittering temples and palaces, historical landmarks and luxury, five-star hotels. Despite some modernisation, the area has retained its unique identity and seductive charm.



### KHAO SAN & OLD CITY

The Old City (Rattanakosin) is home to Bangkok's most spectacular and revered historical attractions, among them The Grand Palace, Wat Phra Kaew and Wat Pho. Not only part of the Kingdom's rich past, but intrinsic to it, a day or two exploring here provides a deep insight into the heart, soul and psyche of the Thai people. Part of the Old City, Khao San Road is jam-packed with budget guesthouses, internet cafés, lively bars and clubs, restaurants, massage parlours, travel agents, tattoo shops and more.



### CHINATOWN

Busy, bustling and packed with market stalls, restaurants, shrines and the greatest concentration of gold shops in Bangkok, Chinatown is an experience not to miss. After sunset, the entire strip becomes a food haven for gourmands who flock here to enjoy street-side cuisine. The energy that oozes from its rows of wooden shop-houses is plain contagious and will keep you eager for more. Plan your visit during festivals, like Chinese New Year and the vegetarian festival in October, for Chinatown at its hectic best.

## BEST LUXURY HOTELS



### THE ST REGIS BANGKOK, CHIDLOM-PLOENCHIT

With a 24 hour butler a mere phone call away, the service at St Regis is unparalleled. The spacious, elegant rooms display subtle Thai touches. Stunning views from the floor to ceiling windows and the marble bathroom is fit for a king. Communal spaces are equally decadent, with a European inspired pool area and refined dining and bar options like the classic Decanter wine bar. Handily located with direct access from Ratchadamri Sky Train station, the hotel is close to both Siam and Silom areas.



### LEBUA AT STATE TOWER, RIVERSIDE

The Bangkok hotel with arguably the best view in town, Lebu at State Tower is a 67 storey skyscraper close to the Chao Phraya River and the BTS line at Saphan Taksin. The ornate exterior of the hotel hints at the luxury to be found inside, with an amazing rooftop bar and restaurant, attractive swimming pool and sundeck, and the requisite business centre and fitness centre befitting of a five-star hotel. Guestrooms are a muted, masculine mix of wooden flooring, cream and bronze with floor-to-ceiling windows and balcony in each of the 557 guestrooms of this all-suite hotel.



### SIAM KEMPINSKI HOTEL BANGKOK

It's location behind Siam Paragon Mall makes it a fantastic choice for those who want to indulge in some retail therapy, but once you step inside you might not want to leave this majestic five star hotel. All rooms offer a beautiful view of the gardens and are lined with cream silk and embellished with beautifully decorated wall panels. The chunky tub in the marble bathroom was custom-designed, and there is also a separate shower. For something special, the cabana rooms offer direct access to the large swimming pool.

## BEST BOUTIQUE HOTELS



### HANSAR SIAM BANGKOK

Both the suites and bathrooms are extremely spacious at Hansar, using green and yellow tones in the decor to bring a natural feel to the rooms. Extra touches like a free mini-bar, in-room massage service and an impressive 24 hour gym help this five star hotel shine, and the service is international standard. Swim amongst Bangkok's skyscrapers, savour delicious French cuisine at Eve restaurant or enjoy a cocktail with a view at Zest. Less than a minute's walk from the BTS at Ratchadamri, the location is ideal for travelling around Bangkok.



### HOTEL MUSE BANGKOK, CHIDLOM-PLOENCHIT

Sophisticated and charming, walking into the hotel feels like entering a member's club from Victorian Britain, original vintage posters and paintings decorate public spaces, inspired by the Thai King's early 20th century travels. Every room comes with Wi-Fi, iPod dock and flat-screen televisions as standard. Richly decorated in dark wooden panelling, along with a muted colour palate, the king-size or twin beds are comfortable and decked out in the softest monogrammed sheets. Head up to the Speakeasy bar on the roof for some prohibition inspired cocktails.



### PRAYA PALAZZO HOTEL, RIVERSIDE

Lovingly restored, this beautiful mansion by the river has retained its vintage feel whilst still providing the modern conveniences required by today's savvy travelers. You may feel a million miles from Bangkok, but the hotel is only a minute's boat ride from Pra Athit and Bangkok's main historical sites. The rooms are decorated in the style of Rama V with period furniture, and you can enjoy breakfast on the terrace that overlooks the Chao Praya River. The lava tiled jade pool is surrounded by a manicured garden.

## BEST BUDGET HOTELS



### SUK11 HOSTEL, SUKHUMVIT

To stay in such a brilliant location would usually cost a pretty penny, but Suk 11 is on a small side street just off one of Bangkok's best party streets, perfect if you want to spend your money on enjoying Bangkok rather than a room in which you might not even be spending much time. The hostel is quirky, a maze of wooden corridors that belong in a Tim Burton movie. Rooms are simple and clean with air-conditioning and a hot shower.



### RAMBUTTRISAN VILLAGE INN, KHAO

Looking for a great bargain in Khao San area that means you don't have to give up all your modern conveniences? Rambuttri Village Inn has a great location only a few minutes' walk from the buzz of Khao San, but far enough away from the party that it won't keep you awake. All rooms come with air-conditioning, satellite television, hot showers and comfortable beds. The highlight has to be the rooftop pool, ideal for lazy days after big nights out.



### IMM FUSION SUKHUMVIT

This Moroccan styled, 168 room hotel has touches of Aladdin's cave and has simple, clean and tidy rooms, perfect for those who want to stay somewhere on a budget without losing facilities. The location isn't exactly central, but the Sky Train is five minutes away (15 minute journey to central Bangkok) and it's an easy taxi ride if you are planning to explore other parts of the city. All 168 rooms come with basic amenities including.

## BEST SERVICED APARTMENTS



### RADISSON SUITES BANGKOK SUKHUMVIT

The warmly decorated rooms and suites make you feel completely at home, with a subtle Thai inspired décor and comfortable beds for a great night's sleep. Located on Sukhumvit 13, you are far enough from the city buzz that it won't disturb you but you can hop on the complimentary tuk tuk service that whisks you to the nearby BTS, MRT and shopping mall. The rooftop swimming pool is tiled a surprising, orange colour, and there are some excellent onsite eateries that will satisfy the entire family.



### OAKS BANGKOK SATHORN

The spacious studio, one, and two bedroom units in Oaks Sathorn all feature cooking facilities, with their one bedroom guestrooms offering some of the best value for money to be found in Bangkok. Decor is plain but tasteful with cream tiles and lightwood creating an uncluttered feel. Facilities include a central swimming pool surrounded by frangipani trees, large and well equipped gym and on site spa. Chong Nonsi BTS Station is only a short walk from the hotel and to make things even easier, there is a hotel shuttle to drop guests off at the station in the most exotic of vehicles: a tuk-tuk!



### GRANDE CENTRE POINT HOTEL TERMINAL 21

Built above one of the most interesting shopping malls in Bangkok (Terminal 21), Grande Centre Point Hotel Terminal 21 makes the transition from shop to hotel the simple matter of a few steps. Guestrooms all feature full -length windows, free Wi-Fi and a large LCD TV, and front-facing rooms get the beautiful view of Benjakitti Park. The swimming pool is one of the nicest in Bangkok, with unique activities on offer to guests such as complimentary use of the karaoke room, a tennis court and a putting green. With both the BTS skytrain and MRT subway lines on its doorstep.

# WHAT TO SEE IN BANGKOK

Bangkok began as a small trading centre and port community on the west bank of the Chao Phraya River some 200 years ago. Today, while the city is up to speed with modern times, the grandeur and glory of its illustrious past still prevails. Be it dazzling temples, spectacular palaces, a world-famous floating market or colourful Chinatown, each of these famous places has an intriguing story to tell.

## 1 WAT ARUN (THE TEMPLE OF DAWN), RIVERSIDE

The impressive silhouette of Wat Arun's towering spires is one of the most recognised in Southeast Asia. Constructed during the first half of the 19th century in the ancient Khmer style, the stupa showcasing ornate floral pattern decked out in glazed porcelain is stunning up close. Apart from its beauty, Wat Arun symbolises the birth of the Rattanakosin Period and the founding of the new capital after Ayutthaya fell. [Read more...](#) **Open:** 8:30-17:00 **Location:** Thonburi **How to get there:** river taxi to Tien Pier, then cross the river via ferry



## 2 GRAND PALACE & WAT PHRA KAEW, OLD CITY

The Grand Palace and Wat Prakaew command respect from all who have walked in their sacred grounds. Built in 1782, and for 150 years the home of Thai Kings and the Royal court, the Grand Palace continues to have visitors in awe with its beautiful architecture and intricate detail. Wat Pra Kaew enshrines Phra Kaew Morakot (the Emerald Buddha), the sacred Buddha image meticulously carved from a single block of emerald. [Read more...](#) **Open:** 08:30-15:30 **Location:** Between Wat Pho and the Royal Field **How to get there:** taxi



## 3 FLOATING MARKET, DAMNOEN SADUAK

The pioneer of all floating markets, Damnoen Saduak continues to offer an authentic experience despite its increasingly touristy atmosphere. Imagine dozens of wooden row boats floating by, each laden to the brim with farm-fresh fruits, vegetables or flowers. Food vendors fill their vessels with cauldrons and charcoal grills, ready to whip up a bowl of 'boat noodle' or seafood skewers upon request. [Read more...](#) **Location:** Ratchaburi Province **How to get there:** best to book a tour, call +66 (0)2 694 5770



## 4 CHINATOWN (YAOWARAT)

Chinatown is a colourful, exotic and pleasingly chaotic area, packed with market stalls and probably the highest concentration of gold shops in the city. During major festivities like Chinese New Year and the Vegetarian Festival, the dynamism and spirit of celebration spreads across town like wildfire, and if you happen to be around, don't miss an opportunity to witness Bangkok Chinatown at its best. [Read more...](#) **Location:** Yaowarat Road MRT: Hua Lamphong **How to get there:** taxi or MRT then walk five mins.



## 5 WAT PHO, OLD CITY

There's more to Wat Pho than the gigantic reclining Buddha and traditional Thai massage. Once a centre for public education during the reign of King Rama III, Wat Pho harbours a fascinating collection of murals, inscriptions and sculptures that delve into various subjects, from warfare to literature, astronomy to archaeology. The vast temple complex contains a landscaped garden with stone sculptures. [Read more...](#) **Open:** 8:00-18:00 **Location:** Sanam Chai Rd. **How to get there:** Taxi or river taxi to Tien Pier



## 6 CHAO PHRAYA RIVER & WATERWAYS, RIVERSIDE

One of the most scenic areas, the riverside reflects a constantly changing scene day and night: water -taxis and heavily laden rice barges chugging upstream, set against a backdrop of glittering temples and luxury hotels. The areas from Wat Arun to Phra Sumeru Fortress are home to some of the oldest settlements in Bangkok. [Read more...](#) **Open (river taxis):** 06:00-20:00 **Location:** start from Sathorn Pier (Central Pier) **Book tour:** call +66 (0)2 694 5770



## 7 CHATUCHAK WEEKEND MARKET

Once only popular among wholesalers and traders, Chatuchak Weekend Market has reached a landmark status as a must-visit place for tourists. Its sheer size and diverse collections of merchandise will bring any seasoned shoppers to their knees. The market is home to more than 8,000 market stalls. On a typical weekend, more than 200,000 visitors come here to sift through the goods on offer. [Read more...](#) **Open:** Saturdays and Sundays, 09:00 - 18:00, Fridays 18:00 - 24:00. **Location:** Phahonyothin Road BTS: Mo Chit



## 8 KHAO SAN ROAD

If Bangkok is a city where East greets West, then Khao San Road is the scene of their collision, the place where they jostle for superiority and poke one another in the eye. With travellers from every corner of the modern world, sleek clubs playing sophisticated sounds, eclectic market stalls, converted VW cocktail bars, and foods tamed to suit the Western palate, it may seem clear who won the fight. [Read more...](#)



## WHAT TO DO IN BANGKOK

Sights, sounds and smells? Does it enlighten, enrich and entertain? The following Top 10 Tours in Bangkok have been selected based on these factors. When it came to the crunch, the best not only offer insight into what makes Bangkok one of the most exciting Asian cities – be it culture, history or back-to-nature – but are also ... well, fun. And who are we to judge? Simply put, we've tried them all, that's how.

### 1 BANGKOK CITY, TEMPLES & GRAND PALACE

**OLD CITY – TOUR DURATION: 3HRS 30MINS**

Bangkok has hundreds of temples, but this particular tour is a must-do because it introduces you to three of Bangkok's most dazzling – Wat Trimitr, Wat Pho and Wat Benjabophit. What's more? It also takes you to Thailand's foremost religious site: The Grand Palace, the Emerald Buddha at Wat Phra Kaew, a spiritual icon carved from jade that towers

above all others in its holiness. [Book now](#), call +66 (0)2 694 5770



### 2 AYUTTHAYA TOUR BY RIVER SUN CRUISE

**BANG PA-IN, AYUTTHAYA – TOUR DURATION: 8HRS**

Some tours are jam-packed full of facts, sights and history – so much, in fact, you barely have a moment to yourself. This day trip to Ayutthaya, Siam's war-ravaged former capital, has plenty of substance but doesn't test your staying power. A morning spent exploring temple ruins is followed by an afternoon on board a luxury cruiser – all that's left to

do is laze happily on deck. [Book now](#), call +66 (0)2 694 5770



### 3 SIAM NIRAMIT

**RATCHADAPISEK – TOUR DURATION: 5HRS**

Packing all the splendour of the Land of Smiles into an 80-minute stage show is no easy task. But Siam Niramit succeeds – and spectacularly. How so? Try the world's biggest stage, a cast of hundreds, and bags of Thai finesse. The first act describes how Siam became a crossroads where civilisations met, the second how karma binds the Thai

people, the last how religious ceremony earns Thais merit in this life. [Book now](#), call +66 (0)2 694 5770



### 4 DAMNOEN SADUAK FLOATING MARKET (HALF DAY)

**DAMNOEN SADUAK, RATCHABURI – TOUR DURATION: 9HRS**

The pioneer of all floating markets, Damnoen Saduak continues to offer a delightful experience despite its increasingly touristy atmosphere. Imagine small thin canals teeming with longboats piled high with fresh produce, each one jockeying for position, and paddled by a lady ready to stop and bargain at a moment's notice. This visual vibrancy, as

well as its popularity, ensures Damnoen Saduak's iconic status. [Book now](#), call +66 (0)2 694 5770



### 5 RIVER KWAI TOUR INCLUDING LONG-TAIL BOAT

**KANCHANABURI – TOUR DURATION: 10HRS**

There's more to the River Kwai than elegiac WWII sights, and this tour around Kanchanaburi, a lush unspoilt province bordering Burma, proves it. Visits to the Death Railway, the Bridge over the River Kwai and the memorial museum, are tastefully juxtaposed with thrilling doses of undulating mountains, rugged landscapes, as well as activities like elephant rides and tiger temples. [Book now](#), call +66 (0)2 694 5770



### 6 CALYPSO LADYBOY SHOW

**AYUTTHAYA – TOUR DURATION: 9HRS**

Red curtains, glamorous feathers and long legs...and since you are in Thailand, may we add ladyboys? While this is no Broadway show, Calypso Cabaret is a feast for your eyes and ears. A fantastic evening involves a string of dazzling performances by a wildly talented troupe of transvestite dancers, entertainers and lip-sync singers. [Book now](#), call

+66 (0)2 694 5770



### 7 CANDLE LIGHT DINNER BY GRAND PEARL CRUISE

**RIVERSIDE – TOUR DURATION: 2HRS 30MINS**

Experience the Chao Phraya River by candlelight with this dinner cruise on the luxurious Grand Pearl. After being welcomed onboard with warm smiles and cocktails, you'll be awed by the architectural beauty of passing riverside sights like Wat Arun, the Grand Palace and Wat Pra Kaew. Relax under the stars and moonlight. [Book now](#), call +66

(0)2 694 5770



### 8 THONBURI KLONGS COMBINED GRAND PALACE

**RIVERSIDE, OLD CITY – TOUR DURATION: 5HRS**

Bangkok's 'khlongs' (canals) aren't mere remnants of the past. Many are still functioning transport arteries that play a significant role in city life. This morning tour focuses on the scenic waterways of Thonburi. A long-tailed speedboat glides you past floating kitchens, mobile shops and all kinds of colourful river scenery, before stopping at the enchanting Temple of Dawn (Wat Arun) and ending at the Royal Barges Museum. [Book now](#), call [+66 \(0\)2 694 5770](tel:+6626945770)

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## WHAT TO EAT

While Thai food needs little introduction, these popular dishes are must-try while you visit Thailand. The below list spans everything from staple backpacker favourites to Thai classics. Although some of them may sound familiar, don't be surprised if they taste nothing like what you usually find back home.

### 1 TOM YUM GOONG (SPICY SHRIMP SOUP)

A bold, refreshing blend of fragrant lemongrass, chilli, galangal, lime leaves, shallots, lime juice and fish sauce. Tom Yam is a versatile dish that can fit within virtually any meal – its invigorating sour-spicy-hot taste just screams 'Thailand'!



### 2 PAD THAI (THAI STYLE FRIED NOODLES)

From Cape Town to Khao San Road, the default international Thai dish. Dropped in a searing hot wok, fistfuls of small, thin noodles do a steamy minute-long dance alongside crunchy bean sprouts, spring onions and egg, before disembarking for the nearest plate.



### 3 GAENG DAENG (RED CURRY)

Made with morsels of meat, red curry paste, smooth coconut milk and topped off with a sprinkling of finely sliced kaffir lime leaves, this rich, aromatic curry always gets those taste buds tingling.



### 4 SOM TAM – (SPICY GREEN PAPAYA SALAD)

Hailing from the Northeast (Isan), this outlandish dish is both great divider - some can't get enough of its bite, some can't handle it – and greatly distinctive. Garlic, chilies, green beans, cherry tomatoes and shredded raw papaya get dramatically pulverized in a pestle and mortar, so releasing a rounded sweet-sour-spicy flavour that's not easily forgotten.



### 5 TOM KHA KAI (CHICKEN IN COCONUT SOUP)

A mild, tamer twist on Tom Yam, this iconic soup infuses fiery chilies, thinly sliced young galangal, crushed shallots, stalks of lemongrass and tender strips of chicken. Topped off with fresh lime leaves, it's a sweet-smelling concoction, both creamy and compelling.



### 6 PAK BOONG FAI DAENG (STIR-FRIED MORNING GLORY)

The leafy plant with hollow green stems and thin fragile leaves forms the main component of this super easy favourite. Cloves of garlic and birds eye chilies join it in a wok alongside oyster sauce, fish sauce and fermented bean. A few lazy stirs, and it's done!



### 7 GAENG KEOW WAN KAI (GREEN CHICKEN CURRY)

Another all-time favourite dish, served alongside a bowl of fragrant rice. Green curry paste and coconut milk form the creamy base. Morsels of fresh chicken, cherry-sized eggplants, bamboo shoots, sprigs of coriander and generous handfuls of sweet basil add body to this seminal curry.



### 8 YAM NUA (SPICY BEEF SALAD)

If there was such a thing as a 'Salad Hall of Fame', Yam Nua would surely take pride of place. The fresh, fiery thrill of Yam Nua – with its sprightly mix of onion, coriander, spearmint, lime, dried chili and tender strips of beef – perfectly embodies the invigorating in-the-mouth-thrill of all Thai salads, the yummy-ness of yam.





## BEST RESTAURANTS IN BANGKOK

When it comes to dining in Bangkok, the question is not what, where, or even when to eat. With so many possibilities just outside your hotel's doorstep, you might wonder how best to experience it all. Whether you are looking for style, ambience, flavour that defies any adjectives you know, or a brush with world-recognised celebrity chefs, Bangkok has got a whole lot to offer.

### 1 ISSAYA SIAMESE CLUB - THAI

Standing proudly in the middle of a lush green garden, this 100-years-old house with its wooden verandah and old fashioned staircase instantly sets a romantic mood, making it a perfect place for duo dining. This is not another pretty tourist place: Thais, expats and the few travelers who make the effort to discover it are unanimous - the combined charm of a heritage house. [Read more...](#) **Open:** 11:30-15:00 **Sundays** **Tel:** +66 (0)2 126 8866 **Location:** Four Seasons Hotel, Ratchadamri Rd. **BTS:** Ratchadamri



### 2 LE DU RESTAURANT - MODERN THAI

Le Du Restaurant is a new rising star on the culinary scene of Bangkok and you better go there now before the word is out and seats become hard to get. Despite a French sounding name, Le Du is not a French restaurant at all... Le Du means 'Season' in Thai and categorizing its cuisine is a bit difficult. It could be defined as Young Creative Cuisine with Thai Roots with touches from many international origins. [Read more...](#) **Open:** Monday to Friday 11:30 - 14:30; Monday to Saturday 18:00 - 23:00 (Closed on Sundays) **Tel:** +66(0)2 7147708 **Location:** 56/10 Sukhumvit S.Thonglor **BTS:** Thong Lo



### 3 LE BEAULIEU AT PLAZA ATHENEE - FRENCH

For many years, Le Beaulieu has been a name synonymous of great French Cuisine in the busy Sukhumvit. After being closed for a while, Chef Herve Frerard comes back with a more stylish venue at the Le Meridien Plaza Athenee on Chidlom, the perfect match for an elegant and sophisticated restaurant addressing to the ever demanding Bangkok young gourmets. [Read more...](#) **Open:** 11.30 - 2.30 pm , 6.30 pm - 11.30 pm, Closed on Sunday **Tel:** (083) 073-6860 and (081) 562-6464 **Location:** 399/3 Silom Soi 7 **BTS:** Chong Nonsi exit 4



### 4 BO LAN - THAI

Recognised for many years as one of the best Thai restaurants in Bangkok, Bo Lan is not your everyday local eatery. This is the kind of place to invite your discerning friends or when you want to impress visitors who think they tried it all before. The name 'Bo.Lan' comes from the two chefs 'Bo' (Duangporn Songvisava) and 'Dylan Jones' who were both inspired and worked under the supervision of Michelin starred chef David Thompson at Nahm London. [Read more...](#) **Open:** 11:00-02:00 **Tel:** +66 (0)2 628 8382-3 **Location:** Samsen Soi 3, near Rama VIII Bridge, Old City



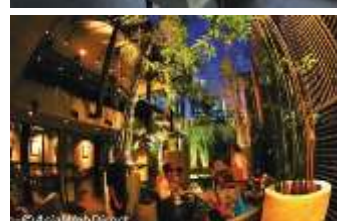
### 5 NAHM - THAI

Consistently ranked among the finest restaurants in the world, and with a Michelin star chef at the helm, Nahm serves Thai cuisine prepared according to ancient recipes with a focus on how the flavours and textures of premium quality ingredients interact together. Whether you are a longstanding visitor to Bangkok or it is your first time eating traditional Thai food, Nahm will both surprise and delight you with fantastic dishes. [Read more...](#) **Open:** Lunch - 12:00 - 14:00, Dinner 19:00 - 22:30 **Tel:** +66 (0) 625 3333 **Location:** Ground Floor, The Metropolitan Hotel, 27 South Sathorn Road, Bangkok



### 6 EAT ME - INTERNATIONAL

Eat Me - The name is less of a suggestion and more a promise of something irresistible. This gallery and restaurant on Soi Convent in Silom lives up to its name by serving mouth-watering modern international food, good drinks and some very tasty desserts. The restaurant has been wowing the crowds for years which is no mean feat given Bangkok's fickle dining scene and even fickle diners. [Read more...](#) **Open:** 15:00 - 01:00 **Tel:** +66 (0)2 260 2962 **Location:** 1/6 Pipat Soi 2, Convent Rd, Silom **BTS:** Sala Daeng **MRT:** Silom



### 7 SEVEN SPOONS - EUROPEAN

In a cosy double shophouse on a quiet road that visitors don't really frequent you will find one of the best restaurants in Bangkok. Seven Spoons is so popular that it's recently expanded, but still has the warm atmosphere and large portions of Mediterranean and vegetarian food regulars are familiar with and first-timers will be excited by. It now opens for lunch and offers sandwiches alongside its hearty mains. [Read more...](#) **Open:** Daily from 18:00 - Midnight, except Mondays **Tel:** +66 (0)2 6284588 or +66 (0)84 5391819 **Location:** 211 Chakkrapatipong Road, Intersection of Lan Luang Road



## WHERE TO GO FOR NIGHTLIFE

“One Night in Bangkok can make a hard man humble”. It’s the old cliché, from the old musical ‘Chess’. What this lyric ignores is the diversity, the fact that Bangkok now registers a strong steady blip on the global nightlife radar. Raucous, refined or raunchy? Culture, carousing or some clubbing? Forget what you’ve heard, one night in Bangkok can make man or women not just humble – but happy.

### 1 DINNER CRUISES ON CHAO PRAYA RIVER

Thai history, culture and cuisine converge with a journey along Bangkok’s River of Kings. Aboard a luxury cruiser or teakwood rice barge, admire sparkling temples and the bustle of river life while enjoying a sumptuous meal.

Spellbinding. [\[Redacted\]](#), call +66 (0)2 694 5770



### 2 NAUGHTY NIGHT ON THE GO-GO TRAILS

For pole-swinging temptresses, exotic boy-meets-girl creations and notorious take-home pleasures, head for one of Bangkok’s lust-driven dens of sin. Patpong (BTS Saladaeng), Nana Plaza (BTS Nana), or Soi Cowboy (BTS Asoke) – take your pick. [Read more...](#) **Best time to go:** after 21:00



### 3 COCKTAILS AT A ROOFTOP BAR

Fancy touching the clouds while sipping a cocktail? The city’s handful of rooftop venues has elevated the Bangkok nightout to stratospheric new heights. Breathtaking vistas merge with stunning crowds at this higher breed of open-air bar. [Read more...](#) **Recommended:** Vertigo and Moon Bar at Banyan Tree Bangkok, Sathorn Road (MRT Lumpini, open 17:00 - 01:00)



### 4 BANGKOK LADYBOY SHOWS

Nothing out-glams a Bangkok ladyboy show! The flamboyant costumes, spectacular sets and crazy musical tributes to the female form, will leave you dazzled by the performances, and most definitely smitten with the ‘girls’.

[Book a tour](#) call +66 (0)2 694 5770



### 5 SIAM NIRAMIT CULTURAL SHOW & DINNER

Packing all the majesty and splendour of the Land of Smiles into a spectacular 80-minute stage show, is no mean feat. Using the world’s biggest stage and a cast of hundreds, Siam Niramit more than manages it.

**Show Time:** 17:00-22:00 **Location:** Tiamruammit Road, opposite Thailand Cultural Centre MRT: Thailand Cultural Centre (exit 1)



### 6 BANGKOK CLUBS

Asia’s finest clubs unite with the world’s best DJ’ing talent at Bangkok’s many hip, happening club nights. Find dance floors covered in cute creatures, whisky-sipping adolescents and boozy expats. The soundtrack: a storm of dark, twisted beats. [Read more...](#)



### 7 AFTER-DARK SHOPPING EXPERIENCE

If you’re not ready to hit the bars and clubs, scratch your shopping itch with some after-dark shopping. Malls do a storming trade until late. But its Khao San Road, with its carefree traveller attire, and the bootleg heaven that is Patpong Market, that really wow. [Read more...](#) **Best time to go:** after 20:00



### 8 JAZZ LIVE MUSIC

Bangkok’s got a fascinating lineup of cool and classy jazz bars ideal for whiling away the hours in style. These 10 venues are the crème de la crème of the Bangkok’s jazz bar scene, featuring some of the most talented local and international artists on a nightly basis. [Read more...](#) **Recommended:** Saxophone Pub, 3/8 Victory Monument Phayathai (BTS Victory Monument, open 17:00 - 02:00)



## WHERE TO SHOP

Shopping in Bangkok is a day-and-night activity that runs parallel with the best in the West, while also giving a flavour of the cultural uniqueness of the East. Work your way through these experiences, and you'll soon come to realise why Bangkok is such a famous shopping hub.

### 1 MBK SHOPPING MALL

The multi-storey MBK is probably Bangkok's most legendary shopping mall, popular with both tourists and locals. Eight floors packed with 2,000 shops that sell everything from clothing, fashion accessories, handbags, leather products and luggage to furniture, mobile phones, electric appliances, cameras, stationery and DVDs. MBK (launched in 1986) is a beehive of activity, especially on weekends, when half of Bangkok converges to shop for bargains. [Read more...](#) **Open:** 10:00-22:00 **Location:** Pathumwan Intersection. **How to get there:** BTS National Stadium



### 2 CHATUCHAK WEEKEND MARKET

The market of all markets, Chatuchak Weekend Market is the ultimate. You will be amazed by its sprawling size, but perhaps even more so by the unbelievable variety of wares. Stumble across anything from vinyl records, beads, suits of armor to a live seahorse! Haggling is encouraged – just do so politely. Possibly the most exhilarating, chaotic and lively shopping experience that can be had anywhere in the world. [Read more...](#) **Open:** 06:00-18:00 (Sat-Sun) **Location:** adjacent to Chatuchak Park **How to get there:** BTS Mo Chit, MRT Chatuchak



### 3 SIAM PARAGON SHOPPING MALL

Siam Paragon is an immensely popular shopping mall housing a host of international high-end fashion brands, Southeast Asia's largest aquarium, a 16-screen Cineplex, and a comprehensive selection of world cuisine. Located prominently in front of Siam BTS Skytrain station - the interchange of the two BTS lines - it is considered by many to be the centre of Bangkok. [Read more...](#) **Open:** 10:00-22:00 **Location:** downtown Siam area. **How to get there:** BTS Siam



### 4 ASIATIQUE NIGHT MARKET

Asiatique has successfully combined two of the most popular shopping experiences in the city: a night bazaar and a mall. Ten minutes downriver from Saphan Taksin BTS station this once-bustling international trade port has been transformed, with over 1,500 boutiques and 40 restaurants housed under a huge replica warehouse complex. [Read more...](#) **Open:** 17:00-midnight **Location:** Chareonkrung Soi 74-76 **How to get there:** Take the BTS to Saphan Taksin and jump on the free shuttle at the end of the pier. It only takes ten minutes, and the boat runs until 23:00.



### 5 CENTRALWORLD SHOPPING MALL

CentralWorld mega-shopping complex offers one of the most exciting shopping experiences in Bangkok. It has everything from brand name clothing boutiques, funky fashion, high-tech gadgets, bookshops and designer furniture to imported groceries, a lineup of banks, beauty salons, gourmet eateries and even an ice-skating rink. [Read more...](#) **Open:** 10:00-22:00 **Location:** downtown Siam area. **How to get there:** BTS Chidlom or Siam



### 6 TERMINAL 21

Terminal 21 brings the dream of traveling the world to downtown Bangkok, with its cutting-edge concept that places several world-famous cities under one roof. Find yourself wandering around a maze of shops in Tokyo City, sauntering down London's Carnaby Street, bagging a bargain in an Istanbul zouk, or shopping for something to fill your growling stomach at the Fisherman's Wharf in San Francisco. [Read more...](#) **Open:** 10:00-22:00 **Location:** downtown Sukhumvit, from BTS National Stadium to BTS Phrom Phong. **How to get there:** MRT Sukhumvit or BTS Asok



### 7 SIAM SQUARE

Siam Square, like the city in which it is located, is an area of contrast. In essence it is the hub of all things cool, an individual expression point where styles are both shaped and surface (and resurface). Siam also holds claim to being the most expensive place to rent land in Bangkok. It is to the City of Angels, what Bond Street is to London and Fifth Avenue to New York. [Read more...](#) **Open:** 10:00-22:00 **Location:** Rama 1 Road opposite Siam Paragon **How to get there:** Take the BTS to Siam station



### 8 PRATUNAM AND PLATINUM MALL

Pratunam is well-known among locals as the wholesale fashion district, where street ware meets odd fashion meets tomorrow's trends. Shopping here is fun because there's a whole gamut of accessories to dress you up from head to toe – at a bargain. The original wholesale market is outdoors, around Indra Hotel and Baiyoke Sky Hotel, while the air-conditioned malls are located across the main street. [Read more...](#) **Best time to go:** morning (for outdoor shopping) **BTS:** Ratchathewi, Chidlom **How to get there:** taxi, or walk about 15mins from the two BTS stations



## TIPS AND GOOD TO KNOW



### CARRY SMALL CHANGE

Thailand is relatively inexpensive, unless you plan to enjoy all your shopping, dining and nightlife inside a hotel or upscale shopping malls. Taxi drivers, food vendors and shop keepers usually don't carry change for big bills. So, make sure that you break the 1,000 baht notes into a few 100s and small coins upon arrival at the airport. The 5 and 10 baht coins usually come in handy when taking a taxi or public transportation.

### BEWARE SCAMMERS

It begins with a polite stranger offering to take you sightseeing around the city. You thank them and tell them where you're from. Then, before you've even had a chance to shake their hand, you're gripping the sides of a tuk-tuk as it whizzes towards temples your guidebook has never heard of, and (drum roll) pushy gem stores. The moral of this all-too-common scam? Savour contact with the locals but, please please, beware the shysters. The general, but by no means universal, rule of thumb: a Thai who approaches you in the street is after more than a chat.

### DRINK LOTS OF WATER

This tip, of course, applies even to the Antarctic. But packing a supply of the wet stuff in Thailand's sticky, stifling heat is even more crucial to your well-being. Our unscientific rule of thumb: drink more than you sweat. Fortunately you are never more than a few paving stones from a drinks vendor. Always make sure bottled water is sealed. For a change, take your chosen tipple modern Thai-style, in a small plastic bag with handle and straw. Its quirky but, as you'll find when rummaging around overheated markets, also convenient.

### BARTER, BUT NICELY

The first rule of shopping in Thailand: if there's no barcode or set price, get haggling. It's expected. However, instead of adopting a confrontational "give me it for this price, now!" attitude, try the gracious, smiley "what's your best price, my friend?" approach. Why? Because a smile here goes further than a sneer. Aim to chip anything from 10-40% off the quoted price. And by all means, walk away if the price is disagreeable – more often than not you'll be called back for last ditch negotiations!

### CARRY A PHOTOCOPY OF YOUR PASSPORT

Whether it be an impromptu demand from a local policeman or a request from security at one of the city's swanky nightspots, carrying ID is a must in Thailand. The fact that you are 25 but look like you're pushing 40 doesn't matter – proving who you are is a day-to-day formality, something the Thais are finicky about. Instead of dragging your passport around with you, and with it the constant fear of losing it, take a photocopy.

### CARRY A HOTEL CARD WITH THAI DIRECTIONS

It's simple. It isn't rocket science. But this ingenious device, little more than a piece of card with your hotel's address written on it in Thai, will save endless how-do-we-get-home headaches. Flash it beneath the eyes of your chosen driver and watch how his shrugs of utter incomprehension instantly change to reassuring nods.

### EASY THAI PHRASES

#### Krab / Ka =

Words added at the end of a sentence/phrase to add politeness. Krab if you are a male. Ka if you are a female

#### Phom / Chan = I (male / female)

#### Khun = You (polite)

#### Sawad Dee (krab / ka) = Hello (male / female)

#### Khob Khun (krab / ka) = Thank you (male / female)

#### Phom / Chan Pood Thai mai pen = I (male / female) don't speak Thai

#### Hong nam yuu nai? = Where are the restrooms?

#### Tao rai (krab / ka)? = How much does it cost (male / female)?

#### Lod dai maak sood tao rai? = What's your best price?

#### Pood len rue plao = Are you kidding?

#### Nii khong jing rue khong plom = Is this real or fake?

#### Ao ped ped = I want my food very spicy

#### Mai ped = Not spicy

#### Check bin / Kheb tang = Can I have the bill please?

#### Khun lor / suay maak = You are very handsome / beautiful



## ANANTARA BANGKOK RIVERSIDE RESORT AND SPA

Set on the banks of the Chao Praya River, Anantara Bangkok Riverside Resort & Spa provides 10 restaurants and bars, expansive pool surrounded by lush indigenous landscaping, tennis courts and fully equipped gym with planned activities. Add to this the famous Anantara Spa with a wide range of treatments, a staffed children's playground, and you have activities to please the whole family. By many elements of Thai design mixed with a profusion of wood and high ceilings, the low-rise resort feels separated from the hustle of downtown Bangkok, even though it is only a 15 minute boat ride to the pier and BTS Station at Saphan Taksin.

## EXCLUSIVE TOUR OFFERS FOR BANGKOK

Just for Asia Web Direct readers, we selected three most popular tours in Bangkok and worked hard to get very special prices for you, you won't find them anywhere else. If you have any question or wish to book **even at the last minute**, please call +(0)2 694 5770



**-25%**

### CANDLE LIGHT DINNER

Candle Light Dinner by Grand Pearl Cruise, Experience the Chao Phraya River under candlelight with this dinner cruise on the luxurious Grand Pearl. After being welcomed on board with warm smiles and cocktails, you'll begin a journey up the river, starting at River City Pier, then passing such iconic sites as Wat Arun, the Grand Palace and Wat Phra Kaew. [Read more...](#)

**Only 1,275 THB Per Person (Normal Price 1,700 THB) 25% Discount!**



**-20%**

### DREAM WORLD PARK + LUNCH

With a day out at Dream World you and the kids will get to experience the spectacular atmosphere of this huge amusement park, and savour the exciting shows and rides in its four themed lands of dreams. Set in beautifully landscaped gardens, there are linked paths, pools, legendary castles and more than 30 exciting rides for everyone to enjoy. [Read more...](#)

**Only 560 THB Per Person (Normal Price 700 THB) 20% Discount!**



**-10%**

### BANGKOK CITY & TEMPLES

Discover three of Bangkok's finest temples: Wat Traimit houses a striking 3-metre tall Golden Buddha image - a gleaming, 5-ton figure of solid gold. Wat Pho houses the highly revered giant Reclining Buddha and traditional massage school, while Wat Benjabophit is famous for its elegant, white marble facade and Buddha images lining the cloister walls behind the main chapel. Alternatively, combine a tour to the three temples above with a visit to the Grand Palace. Inside its 61-acre complex, you'll encounter what is undoubtedly one of the wonders of the world, the Temple of the Emerald Buddha (Wat Phra Kaew). [Read more...](#)

**Only 1,638 THB Per Person (Normal Price 1,820 THB) 10% Discount!**