



Welcome to Thailand

WELCOME TO THAILAND

Or should we say, welcome to Paradise. Thailand is blessed with some of the world's most-enviable beaches and a myriad of off shore islands ensuring your will be filled with water sports, hammocks and sunset strolls along the water's edge. Some areas are super-vibey while others offer a more serene experience.

CLIMATE

Thailand's tropical climate has three main seasons:

Hot: March to June

Rainy: July to October

Cool: November to February

Average temperatures range from 20°C to 35°C

The monsoon season in the Andaman Sea (West coast/Phuket and surrounds) is from approximately May to October. The monsoon rains are generally short and heavy, clearing quickly and days of constant rain are rare.

LANGUAGE

The national language is Thai, although English is widely spoken in Phuket, Krabi & Phi Phi.

CURRENCY

The currency is the Thai Baht which is better for bargaining and shopping in markets. US Dollars, Pounds and Euros are accepted at hotels.

TIPPING

A service charge is already included in all prices. Tips, in general, are not mandatory, and you should only give them if you are really content with the service offered. Waiters, bellboys, porters, restroom attendants and taxi drivers will happily accept loose change.

TIME DIFFERENCE

5 hours ahead of South Africa.



A QUICK GUIDE TO THE MOST POPULAR SPOTS

Phuket

Phuket is the largest island in Thailand and is undeniably the country's most popular beach destination. With a vibrant nightlife, bustling market stalls, a family atmosphere or romantic seclusion. This island paradise offers a vast selection of hotels, and the beaches supply every kind of vibe! Head to Patong Beach if you feel like a party or being active. Kata and Karon Beaches are great for families and couples. The range of activities available is fantastic; canoeing, hiking, white water rafting, scooter hire and best of all – diving and snorkelling.

Phi Phi

Phi Phi Island is located 2 hours by ferry from Phuket (some resorts also offer a speedboat service). You'll be collected from the ferry by long-tail boat and taken to your resort; all of which are located in the north of the island, a quieter area, for that true getaway experience. Phi Phi is nature at its best; towering limestone cliffs shelter white, sandy beaches leading to aquamarine bays filled with marine life; perfect for diving and snorkelling or simply taking it easy and letting the stress of modern life slip away. There are no roads on Phi Phi so once you settle into your resort your only mode of transport is a longtail boat (and some haggling with a local for the right price!). Make sure that you won't need an ATM!

Krabi

Krabi is a 2 hour overland trip from Phuket through countryside terrain and local villages. Sit back, relax and enjoy the ride! Krabi's sheer limestone cliffs will welcome you to where over 130 islands rise majestically from the sea, and secluded beaches are accessible only by colourfully adorned long-tail boats. Krabi is about getting out and exploring nature - sea caves, exotic marine life, rock climbing, beautiful National Parks, hot spring waterfalls, the spectacular turquoise waters of the Emerald Pool and Tiger Cave – a cliff monastery in a jungle valley.

Koh Samui

The tropical island setting and laid back ambience make you feel like you have truly discovered the ideal island escape and that is why it is so popular with honeymooners. But, typically Thailand, there is something for everyone here. Head to Chaweng Beach for the vibe, and try Lamai or Bophut Beaches for a more tranquil experience and to bask in the beauty of nature. Within sight of Koh Samui, you'll find Ang Thong National Marine Park – an archipelago of 42 towering islands with lush jungles, white beaches, hidden coves and waterfalls – making any trip away from the perfection of Koh Samui not only painless, but an experience like no other. Koh Samui is Thailand's third largest island and extremely popular but there is still an opportunity to find your own little slice of paradise.

FESTIVALS

Thailand brags of many festivals throughout the year; one of the most famous being the Songkran Festival in mid-April which washes away all the bad spirits and celebrates the

traditional Thai New Year. Basically, Songkran is all about getting wet, so be prepared to be squirted with ice water!

WHAT TO WEAR

Light, cool clothes are sensible. Shorts (except knee length walking shorts), sleeveless shirts, tank tops and other beach-style attire are considered inappropriate dress when not actually at the beach or in a resort area.

COMMON COURTESIES

It is important to show respect for the Thai Royal Family. Revealing attire is not allowed in religious shrines. Do not climb over or sit on Buddha monuments. Do not touch or give anything directly to a Buddhist monk if you are a woman. Thais greet each other by pressing their palms together called 'wai'. It is rude to touch people on their head or point your feet at people or an object.



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ELECTRICITY

The electric current is 220 volts AC (50 cycles) and the majority of electrical outlets take a round, two-pronged slim plug.

HEALTH

Visitors do not require vaccinations unless coming from or passing through a designated contaminated area. Drink only bottled water and avoid ice unless you know is made from bottled or boiled water. Be cautious when eating from food vendors on the street.

WHAT TO PACK

- As a guide, the maximum weight for checked luggage is 20kg in economy class and 30kg in business class
- Your hand-luggage should not weigh more than 6kg and needs to be small and compact
- Take along your best beach and casual wear, perfect for the day
- The dress-code for dinner is usually smart casual and gents are required to wear long trousers
- Sunglasses and suntan lotion are a must
- Don't forget any medication that you might need, and be sure to pack it in your hand luggage
- Chargers for all your devices (it's a good idea to take along a few movies on a tablet or something similar as the English TV channels in your hotel may be limited)
- Mosquito repellent
- A hat or cap
- A beach bag

TRAVEL TIPS

- Pack a change of clothing in your hand luggage in case of baggage delays (and a spare cozzie so at least you can have a swim when you get to your resort)
- Clothing creases less if rolled in a sausage shape when packed – so roll, don't fold
- No sharp objects are permitted in your hand luggage (yes, tweezers are sharp!)
- Travel insurance is a must. If you can't afford it, you can't afford to travel!
- Travelling with kids – please check that you have all the relevant documents including unabridged Birth Certificates.
- Put electronics, medication, toothbrushes and jewellery in your carry-on bag
- It's often a good idea to let your bank or credit card company know that you're going overseas
- Be patient, be flexible, be spontaneous and have the best time ever!

DID YOU KNOW

- Thailand was known as Siam until 1939
- Bangkok is typically only called "Bangkok" in English. In Thai, it is often called Krung Thep Maha Nakhon, or just Krung Thep. However, the full name is "Krung Thep Mahanakhon Amon Rattanakosin Mahinthara Ayuthaya Mahadilok Phop Noppharat Ratchathani Burirom Udomratchaniwet Mahasathan Amon Piman Awatan Sathit Sakkathattiya Witsanukam Prasit."
- Thailand is the world's largest exporter of rice
- Thailand's coastline is 3219 kms long



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