

Tourist Information

Tourist Information Services

Tourist Information Services at the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) in Bangkok provides maps, brochures and useful information on tours, shopping, dining and accommodation. TAT Call Center: 1672. For more info, please visit <http://www.tourismthailand.org/about-thailand/>.

Tourist Police

In the case of emergency, contact the Tourist Police Office: Bangkok Tower Building, New Phetchaburi Road, Bangkok, 10310. Tel: 1155 or call 191 (24 hours, free of charge)

Medical Services

All tourism destinations and provincial capitals have hospitals and medical clinics staffed by well-trained doctors and nurses. In the case of emergency, an ambulance can be summoned from any private hospital.

Currency and Exchange Services

The Thai unit of currency is the baht. The baht is divided into 100 satang. Coins are valued at 25 satang, 50 satang, 1 baht, 2 baht, 5 baht and 10 baht. Banknotes are valued at 20, 50, 100, 500 and 1,000 baht.

Business Hours

Most commercial concerns in Bangkok operate five days a week. Government offices are generally open during 8.30 a.m. and 4.30 p.m. with a 12.00(noon) to 1 p.m. lunch break, Monday through Friday, except on public holidays. Private businesses maintain similar hours, 8.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m., with certain exceptions. Most shops are open 12 hours a day a week.

Tipping

It is customary to tip porters and hotel personnel who have given good service. A 10 to 15% tip is appreciated in restaurants, particularly where service charges are waived. It is not necessary to tip cinema ushers.

Electricity

The electric current is 220 volt AC (50 cycles) throughout the country. There are many types of plugs and sockets in use. Travelers with electric shavers, tape recorders and other appliances should carry a plug-adaptor kit. Larger hotels are likely to have 110-volt transformers available.

Export of Antiquities

Buddha images, bodhisattva images or fragments, part of ancient monuments and prehistoric objects, are forbidden to be taken out of Thailand. Newly cast Buddha images in complete condition can be exported for worship, cultural exchange or educational purposes with licenses

issued by the Fine Arts Department. Not more than 5 pieces per person shall be allowed. Reproductions of antiquities can also be exported with licenses.

Objects together with photographs and applicant's passport with photocopy (in case of export of Buddha images the photocopy of passport must be certified as true copy by the related Embassy or Consulate in Thailand) must be taken to any of the following offices: the Office of Archaeology and National Museums in Bangkok (Tel: +66-(0)2-628-5032), Chiang Mai National Museum in Chiang Mai or Thailand National Museum in Phuket. A license issuing process lasts for 4 working days.

Exchange Control

Any amount of foreign currency may be brought into the country. Visitors may take foreign currency out of Thailand, but no more than the amount stated in the customs declaration made on arrival. Travelers leaving Thailand may take out no more than 50,000 baht per person in Thai currency.

Transportation

Airport Transfer:

Private airport-to-city transfer options include hotel services, airport limousine service (approximately 950 baht from Suvarnabhumi International Airport to downtown Bangkok), metered-taxis from public taxi stands located outside arrival halls, and the Airport Rail Link which is connected to the BTS Sky Train and MRT in central Bangkok.

Airport Buses from the airport to the city and back, operate from 5:00 a.m. until midnight, at approximately 30 minute intervals. For more information, call +66-(0)2-134-8030.

The Suvarnabhumi Airport Rail Link (ARL) is a rapid transit line in Bangkok. The line provides as an airport rail link from Suvarnabhumi International Airport, via Makkasan city air terminal, to Phaya Thai station in central Bangkok. Services consist of the Express Line, a 15-minute non-stop service between the Makkasan city air terminal and the airport, and the City Line, a commuter rail service with 8 stations.

The ARL operates daily from 6:00 a.m. to 12 midnight, and both the City Line and Express Line trains depart every 15 minutes. A standard fare of 15 to 45 Baht or 150 baht was introduced for the City Line and Express Line service, respectively.

Baggage check-in service is offered to passengers travelling on flights operated by Thai Airways International and Bangkok Airways from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m., daily. Passengers checking in at Makkasan station (the city air terminal) are required to purchase an Express Line ticket and check in at least 3 hours prior to flight departure, or up to 12 hours in advance.

Getting around Bangkok

Public Buses are plentiful and cheap, with 7 baht minimum and 24 baht maximum fares to most destinations within metropolitan. A Bus Route Map is available at bookshops or the TAT tourist information counters.

Taxis cruising the streets of Bangkok, and designated “taxi-meter” charge 35 baht for the first 3 kilometers and approximately 5 baht for every kilometer thereafter.

Tuk-Tuks or Three wheel taxis are quite popular among the tourists for short journeys inside Bangkok. Fare must be bargained in advance.

BTS Sky Trains operate along Silom, Sukhumvit and Phahonyothin Roads, connecting many leading hotels, public parks and major shopping areas. The fares range from 15-40 baht per trip depending on distance, and 120 baht for 1-day Tourist Pass. For more information about BTS Sky Trains, call +66-(0)2-617-6000 or visit www.bts.ac.th. Bangkok Metro (M.R.T.) operates the route from Hua Lamphong to Bang Sue everyday during 6.00 a.m. to 12.00p.m. The fare starts from 15-39 baht depending on distance. For more information, call +66-(0)2-345-2000 or visit www.bangkokmetro.co.th.

River Taxis: There are many types of boats that navigate the Chao Phraya River in Bangkok. Private “Cigarette long-tail boats” are fast and available for tours of the city’s huge canal system. Public river tax is run from dawn till dusk from Wat Ratchasingkhon to as far north as Nonthaburi. The journey takes over an hour. Smaller trips between other landings can cost as little as 10-34 baht.

Getting around Thailand

Air:

There are many airlines operate regular domestic flights from Bangkok to major provincial and tourist destinations. Advance booking is necessary when travelling during the high season and public holidays. For more information, please contact directly at those airlines as follow:

Air Asia (FD): +66-(0)2-515-9999; +66-(0)2-134-3510; www.airasia.com.

Bangkok Airways (PG): 1771; +66-(0)2-265-5678; +66-(0)2-265-5555; +66-(0)2-134-3888 (-9); www.bangkokair.com.

Nok Air (DD): 1318; www.nokair.co.th.

Thai Airways International (TG): 1566; +66-(0)2-356-1111; +66-(0)2-132-1888; www.thaiairways.com.

SGA Airlines: +66-(0)2-134-3233 to 4; +66-(0)2-664-6099; www.sga.co.th.

Rail:

The State Railway of Thailand operates four train lines; Northern, Northeastern, Eastern and Southern, accessing nearly all provinces.

Train Fares depend on class of carriage and destination. Twenty-day rail passes are available for second and third-class carriages.

Hua Lamphong (Bangkok Railway Station) is the main station. For more information, call 1690 (Hot Line), +66-(0)2-220-4334 or +66-(0)2-220-4444, or visit www.railway.co.th.

Tickets can be purchased at any railway station.

Buses:

Buses and coaches are convenient for travelers to access to all provinces in Thailand, running both to and from Bangkok. Options include ordinary air-conditioned coaches and VIP air-conditioned coaches with refreshment services. Bookings can be made through the following bus terminals:

Mochit Bus Terminal: for northern and northeastern destinations.

Southern Bus Terminal: for southern and western destinations.

Eastern Bus Terminal (Ekkamai): for routes to eastern destinations.

For more information, contact Transport Co. Ltd. (commonly called by Thai as “Bor Kho Sor”) at +66-(0)2-936-2852 to 66 or visit www.transport.co.th.

Car Rental:

Travelers with a valid international driving license may choose to rent a car. English-language road sign and maps are common. The Bangkok Yellow Pages lists local and international automobile rental companies. Each offers different promotions. Self-drive and chauffeur-driven auto-mobiles are widely available.

International car rental companies such as Avis, Hertz and Budget operate in Bangkok, Pattaya, Hat Yai, Phuket, Chiang Mai and on Koh Samui.

Communication

Postal Services:

Thailand’s postal service is reliable and efficient. Major hotels provide basic postal services on their premises. Provincial post offices are usually open from 8.00 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.

Telephones:

International Phone calls can be made quite easily from mid-to-upper-level hotels or international call booths in tourist areas. There is direct dialing to and from more than 80 countries on five continents. General Post Office (GPO) on Charoenkrung Road, or any major post office also has special booths for making overseas calls. For more information, call CAT Call Center: +66-(0)2-614-1000.

At present, telephone numbers for local calls have nine digits. Mobile phone numbers have ten digits. The international dialing code for Thailand is 66. To make an international call from Thailand, first dial 001+ country code + Telephone number. For direct assistance, call 1133 (local call) or 100 (international call).

International Roaming Mobile Phone:

A Subscriber Identity Module Card (SIM Card) is now available for Thai and foreign customers who are travelling around. The SIM Card must be used in conjunction with a Digital GSM mobile phone within the 900-MHz range or a Digital PCN mobile phone within the 1800-MHz range.

Fax and E-mail:

All of Thailand's leading hotels offer facsimile (fax) and e-mail services. Numerous private businesses offer such facilities, most often in conjunction with translation services.

Internet Services:

Thailand has been expanding its information service for residents and tourists through the internet system. Services are available at hotels and at many internet cafe in all major tourist and business destinations.