



# Bangkok - City Business Guide

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## Overview

A city of contrasts, the spirit of Bangkok is found equally in its bustling international commercial activity as in its historical monuments, denoting a rich cultural heritage. Home to approximately 12 million, Bangkok is called the City of Angels or Krung Thep. The huge numbers of business travelers who visit year-round experience an expansive Bangkok that encompasses both posh shopping areas and shanty-town slum districts, the calm of the Temple of the Emerald Buddha and the noise of traffic along busy artery Sukhumvit Road, neon-lit bars and nightclubs and richly detailed art and architecture. The ever-present reminders of ancient imperial times give this dazzlingly vibrant city a timeless quality.

## Business Etiquette

\* Compared to many Western countries, professional attire is casual. For men, short-sleeved shirts with ties and suits are the norm, and for women, casual suits are appropriate.

\* The gesture of greeting is not a handshake. When introduced to someone, put your palms together just below chin level, bow at a slight angle, smile and pronounce, "Sawa-dee."

\* If a Thai person has a title (e.g., professional or academic) use it when addressing him or her.

\* Exchanging business cards is customary do it with both hands and a slightly inclined bow. You should not write anything on the card.

\* Use both hands to present a document to a person rather than sliding it along a table.

\* Avoid coming across as excessively assertive when dealing with Thai people.

\* A lengthy decision-making process is customary, and compromises are often expected.

\* Meetings are generally relaxed in tone.

\* Your Thai business associates will spend time and effort getting to know you; making a reciprocal gesture is appreciated.

\* Thai employees will generally show a very high degree of loyalty to the company.

\* Touching other professionals is highly frowned upon; refrain from doing so.

\* Avoid questions that necessitate a direct response in business contexts.

\* The left hand is perceived as being unclean. Therefore it is bad manners to shake hands or eat with your left hand.

\* If you are taking out Thai business people and treating them, you should choose a restaurant that is not Thai.

\* When entering a Thai home, remove your shoes at the door.

## Chamber of Commerce

### American Chamber of Commerce

140 Kian Gwan Wireless Road, Pathumwan ; Tel:+ 66 02 251-9266;

www.amchamthailand.org

### British Chamber of Commerce

208 7th Floor, Wireless Rd., Pathumwan, Bangkok, 10330 ; Tel: +66 02 651-5351/+66 02 651-5354 ; www.bccthai.com

### Franco-Thai Chamber of Commerce

Richmond Office building, 10th floor, 75/20 Sukhumvit 26, Klongtoey; Tél. : + 66 02 261 82 76/261 82 77 ; www.francothaicc.com

### German-Thai Chamber of Commerce

Empire Tower 3, 25th Floor, 195 Sathon Tai Rd., Chong Nonsi, Yan Nawa, Bangkok, 10120 ; Tel: +66 02 670-0600/+66 02 670-0601 ; www.gtcc.org

### Japanese Chamber of Commerce

Amarin Tower, 15th Floor, 500 Phloen Chit Rd., Pathumwan, Bangkok, 10330 Tel: +66 02 256-9173/ +66 02 256-9621

### Thai-Chinese Chamber of Commerce

Thai CC Tower, 889 Sathon Tai Road, Sathorn ; Tel:+ 66 02 675-8583; www.thaiccc.or.th

### Thai-Italian Chamber of Commerce

Room 1208, Vanit Building, 1126/1 Phetchaburi Road; Tel.: +66 02 253-9909 ; www.thaitch.org

### Thai-Korean Chamber of Commerce

139 Sethiwan Tower, Pan Road, Silom, Bangrak; Tel: +66 02 266-6298/+66 02 266-6298

## Embassies and Consulates

### Brazil

1168/101, 34Fl. Lumpini Tower, Rama IV Rd., Sathorn; Tel.: +66 02 679-8567-8

### China

57 Ratchada Pisek Road, Dindaeng; Tel.: +66 02 245-7044

### Czech Republic

71/6 Ruam Ruedi Soi 2, Phloenchit Rd.; Tel.: +66 02 255-3027

### France

35 Soi Rong Phasi Kao, Charoenkrung 36 Road; Tel.: +66 02 266-8250

### Great Britain

Wireless Road, Pathumwan ; Tel:+ 66 02 253-0192

### Italy

399 Nang Linchi Rd.; Tel.: +66 02 285-4090-3

### Japan

1674 New Phetchaburi Road; Tel.: +66 02 252-6151-9

### Korea (South)

23 Thiamruammit Rd.; Tel.: +66 02 247-7561

### Mexico

20th Fl., 21/60-62 Thai Wah Tower 1, South Sathon Rd.; Tel.: +66 02 285-0995

### Netherlands

106 Wireless Road, Pathumwan; Tel: +66 02 254-7702/+66 02 254-5579

### United States of America

120-122 Wireless Road, Pathumwan ; Tel:+ 66 02 205-4000

## Business Centers

Most large hotels also have business centers that offer many of the same services that independent centers provide.

### Bangkok All Seasons Place

23/F, M Thai Tower, All Seasons Place, 87 Wireless Road, Pathumwan; Tel.:

+66 02 654-3888

### EBC Childom

Alma Link Building; Tel.: +66 02 251-6886/7

### EBC Lake Rajada

Lake Rajada Office Complex; Tel.: +66 02 661-9255

### M&A Business Center

38 Q House Convent Building 7th Floor, Unit 7A, Convent Rd. Silom, Bangrak;

Tel.: +66 02 632-0306

### World Trade Center Bangkok

Ratchadamri Road, Rama 1 Road ; Tel:+ 66 02 222-9855

### HQ Global Workplaces

23/F, M. Thai Tower, All Seasons Place, 87 Wireless Road ; Tel:+ 66 02 627-9000

### Servcorp

27/F, Bangkok City Tower, 179 South Sathorn ; Tel:+ 66 02 343-1888

## Conference and Exhibition Centers

### Bangkok International Trade Exhibition Center (BITEC)

8 Bangna Trad Rd; Tel.: +66 02 749-3939 ; www.bitec.net

### Queen Sirikit National Convention Center

60 New Rachadapisek Road; Tel.: +66 02 229-3000

## Translation Offices

### Interlanguage Translation Center

Tel.: +66 02 243-2018

### Siam Translation Center

Tel.: +66 0-2254-5582

### Bangkok Translation Services

Tel.: +66 02 251-5666

### Universal Translation Service

2040 New Petchburi Road, Huai Khwang; Tel:+ 66 02 2314-7333

## Courier/Messenger Services

### TNT

Tel.: +66 02 671-9313

### DHL

Tel.: +66 02-658-8000

### FedEx

Tel.: +66 02 367-3232

### UPS

Tel.: +66 02 712-3300

## Internet Connection Place

All upper-range hotels are equipped with dataports that allow guests to use laptop computers. Many upper-range hotels also offer business centers equipped with computers and Internet access. Outside hotels, cyber cafes are available with the highest concentration of cafes around Khao San Road and in Patpong.

## Visas & Customs

Citizens of Brazil, France, Germany, Italy, Mexico, the U.S., Japan, the U.K., and the Republic of Korea do not need a visa for visits up to 30 days. Citizens of China and Czech Republic can receive tourist visa for up to 15 days upon their arrival in Thailand.

Duty-free allowances are 200 cigarettes or 250g of tobacco or equal weight of cigars; one liter of wine or spirits, and; goods up to a value of Bt3000.

## Phone Information

The country code for Thailand is 66. The city code for Bangkok is 02 (0 can be dropped if dialing from outside Thailand).

## Emergency Phone Numbers

### Tourist Assistance Center

+66 02-282-8129 or +66 02-281-5051 (between 8 a.m. and midnight)

### Police

123 or 191

### Ambulance

Tel.: +66 02 252-2171-5

### Fire

191 or 199

### Tourist Police

1155

## Tips and Rules for Use of Phone in Country

Thai telephone numbers generally have a two or three digit area code and a six to eight digit telephone number. For directory assistance in Bangkok, call 13. To reach an operator, dial 101 or 100 (for international service). Public phones takes Bt1 or Bt5 coins. Public phones in airports and hotels usually require phone cards. The least expensive places for international calls are the public telephone offices in or near post offices.

## Tips and Rules for Use and Rental of Mobile Phones

Several cellular service providers exist in Thailand. Advanced Information Services is a major service provider, offering NMT-900 for analogue users, and GSM for digital. NMT-450 is offered by Telephone Organization of Thailand, NAMPS and DCS by Total Access Communication Company Limited, and AMPS by Communications Authority of Thailand.

If you choose to bring your cellular phone into Thailand, be sure to check with your home cellular service provider to establish compatibility of your phone with systems abroad. Rent a locally compatible cellular phone before you arrive to obtain reasonable rates and reliable service.

## Money

Thailand's local currency is the Thai baht (Bt). There are 100 satang in baht. Coins are in denominations of Bt50, 25, 10, 5, and 1. Notes are in denominations of Bt1000, 500, 100, 50, and 20. Foreign money can be exchanged at banks, airports, and hotels. Travelers' checks garner higher exchange rates than cash. Most merchants prefer Thai baht over foreign currency. ATMs are now widely available in Thailand. Major credit cards (American Express, Visa, MasterCard, and, at some places, Diner's Club) are accepted only at hotels, department stores, and fine dining establishments.

## Tiping

Tiping is not a common practice in Thailand. In Thailand, tips are generally given for good service, except when a price has been negotiated in advance. Most major hotels and restaurants include a 10% service charge in the bill. With metered taxis, the custom is to round the fare up to the nearest Bt5. Airport or hotel porters expect at least a Bt20 tip.

## Time Difference

Thailand is 7 hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time.





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## VAT & Taxes

A 10% Value-Added Tax (VAT) is built into the price of all goods and services, including hotel stays and restaurant meals. Officially, you should be able to get the VAT on store-bought purchases refunded at the airport, provided you have receipts, however, in practice, the VAT is essentially nonrefundable.

## Voltage

The electrical voltage and current in Thailand is 220V AC; 50Hz. Electrical plugs have two small round-prong.

## Local Transportation

Rental cars are not recommended. Taxis are a necessity, but quite expensive. The upper-end choice is the fleet of metered air-conditioned cabs with fares that start at Bt35 and increase with mileage. The down side to metered cabs is that many drivers aren't used to them and refuse long, slow, less-profitable fares in favor of a negotiated rate, like the old days. The cheaper cabs have white and black plates and will be less comfortable. Alternatively, you can take water taxis and river buses.

There are several classes of bus service within Bangkok. The red microbus, especially those on the #1 or #6 services, tend to go to the most interesting destinations. These are air-conditioned, the seats are fairly roomy and the drivers are helpful. You can also take the skytrain, which have 25 stations.

## Health Info

Only those traveling from countries with yellow fever are required to produce immunization records upon arrival; however, hepatitis A, polio, tetanus, and typhoid shots are recommended. Hepatitis B, tuberculosis, rabies, and Japanese encephalitis immunizations are suggested for those staying more than two weeks or traveling in rural areas. Many also choose to take anti-malarial medication.

Do not drink tap water in Thailand (bottled water is cheap and sold nearly everywhere), and avoid food that doesn't appear to be washed well. Most tourists are discouraged from eating fresh fruit and vegetables without peeling them first. It is important to bring bug repellent, as diseases such as dengue fever and malaria are mosquito-borne. Be aware that heat exhaustion, sunburn, and sunstroke are real dangers in Thailand. Protect yourself, drink plenty of fluids, and rest often.

## Climate

Bangkok has a tropical climate with three main seasons. Between November and February, weather is mild and dry with average daytime highs around 84 degrees Fahrenheit (28 C) and lows of approximately 46 degrees Fahrenheit (11 C). The hot season sets in during March and lasts through May with daytime highs of up to 104 degrees Fahrenheit (40 C) and extreme humidity, making the heat more intense. Bangkok experiences its rainy season from June to October, with the heaviest rainstorms, the legendary Thai monsoons, coming in September. The pattern of the monsoons is a few minutes of very heavy downpour, followed by the rain stopping altogether.

## Public Holidays

- \* **Western New Year's Day** January 1
- \* **Chinese New Year** February
- \* **Macha Bucha (the third-largest Buddhist holiday)** Full moon in February
- \* **Chakri Day (celebrating the founding of the Chakri Dynasty by King Rama I)** April 6
- \* **Songkran (the traditional Thai New Year celebration)** mid-April, according to the lunar calendar
- \* **Labor Day** May 1
- \* **Coronation Day (celebrating the crowning of King Bhumibol)** May 5
- \* **Royal Plowing Ceremony (observing the official start of the rice-planting season)** Early May
- \* **Visakha Bucha (in celebration of the birth, enlightenment, and death of the Buddha)** Full moon in May
- \* **Asanha Bucha (commemorating the anniversary of the Lord Buddha's first sermon)** First full moon in July
- \* **Her Majesty the Queen's Birthday (a sort of Mother's Day as well as lavish homage to Queen Sirikit's birth)** August 12
- \* **Chulalongkorn Day (memorializing the death of King Rama V)** October 23

- \* **His Majesty the King's Birthday (King Bhumibol)** December 5
- \* **Western New Year's Eve** December 31

## Where to Eat

For Thai cuisine with a twist, try **Lemongrass**, set in a house decorated with antiques. For another kind of Thai dining experience, **Sanuknuk** proposes lost and forgotten Thai dishes that the owner and his wife have painstakingly recreated by interviewing women in up-country areas. A large selection of Chinese seafood and dim sum options can be found at the longstanding **Grand Shangrila** Restaurant. On top of the Oriental Hotel, French cuisine is served up alongside an expansive view of the Chao Phraya River at **Le Normandie**. The family-run restaurant **Harmonique** is located in an old house, dating back more than 100 years, with a lush garden, Thai antiques and fans. **The Barbican** is a music café with a teak restaurant upstairs where you can eat Tapas snacks as well as Thai food. Located in the Rembrandt Hotel, **Senor Pico** is one of the best Mexican restaurants in Bangkok.

## Local Gift Ideas

Shopping in Bangkok is renowned for the exceptional choice offered in antiques, jewelry, silverware, leather and Southeast Asian handicrafts. Highly frequented areas with vendors selling such items are along Silom Road and in the Rama IV part of Suriwongse. In particular, antiques can be found in outlets along Oriental Lane, Charoen Krung Road and Silom Road, while jewelry shopping is best on Silom Road and Suriwongse Road and in the Jewelry Trade Center, or, if it's gold that interests you, on Chinatown's Yaowarat Road. Thai silks and other textiles can often be found at reasonable prices on Pahuraht Road and Pratumnam. For collectibles and high-ticket items, the Oriental Plaza and the River City Shopping Center are worth a visit. Posh, high-end boutiques can be found in the Peninsula Plaza, while Thaniya Plaza is the most recent addition to Bangkok's directory of tony shopping complexes. For more moderate budgets, the shops in The World Trade Center and Siam Square have much to offer.

## Leisure Time

To enjoy Bangkok's cultural riches, take in the impressive collection of Thai art, one of the largest in South East Asia, at the National Museum, venture into the temples Wat Pho, Wat Phra Kaew or the home of the Golden Buddha Wat Traimit, or visit the Suan Pakkard Palace, which consists of traditional Thai wooden structures. Bang Khu Wiang in Thon Buri is a good example of the uniquely Thai phenomenon of the floating market. Other attractions include the Grand and Jim Thompson's House. Bangkok's green spaces include the large Lumpini Park, which features a lake, and the newer, more peaceful Rama IX Royal Park. Adventurers can take a drive-through tour of Safari World, a safari park in suburban Miniburi. Two Bangkok nightlife areas are Royal Avenue and Soi Sarasin.

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