

The Living Experiment

Figuring out life one educated guess at a time

First night in Thailand... finally (SRS -2 days) – Also what I'd do differently

First off, unexpected travel issues are shit. The United flight from Chicago to Tokyo got delayed by 5 hours and caused us to miss our connecting flight out of Tokyo. And because it meant we wouldn't get in until late we wouldn't get out of Tokyo until the following day. So United put us up in a hotel with dinner and breakfast included in Narita (Tokyo airport is actually Tokyo-Narita and about an hours drive outside of Tokyo) right by the airport. Japan is a place I'd like to go back to, but it is interesting. Bidets are very interesting. As are singing and dancing robots that were there.

So first thing, is if you can afford economy plus do it. If you have miles or can upgrade to business, do it for the long flight. It would be worth every penny. I am upgrading my return (or should be able to as I'm using miles to do it), but the outbound wasn't. Instead my gf and I got the aisle and window seat and middle was empty. This allowed us to sleep through 8 of the 13 hours. Which brings us to sleeping pills. Bring them. Do it. We used generic Unisom style stuff and it worked wonderfully. Second, is get a neck pillow and bring options for warm clothes or things you can ball up into blankets. Also the window seat is probably best as you can use the bulkhead to sleep on a bit.

Also make sure you get the right things. My gf got an inverter (keep in mind Thai power is 220V, and thus some US things that are only 120V will burn up if used), but the one she got just shoves into the wall and doesn't have a grounding plug. Just get [this one](#) and be done with it. The wifi at the hotel (Chon Inter) is horrible. I seriously am debating trying to talk to them about seeing if I can improve it while here... My gf and I get kicked off every 3-5 minutes. Don't forget to get a DTAC SIM

at the airport. It was \$30 for a 30 day plan with 15 gig of data. I'm trying to stay on wifi as much as possible, but we'll see. This wifi is pretty bad shape at the hotel.

The Red Door thai place that's right by the hotel had two pairs of people who were both likely with the clinic. One definitely was (she had the post-op cushion), the other just likely is here for it but pre-op. We'll see tomorrow potentially. In any case we couldn't figure out where to order so we just got pizza down the street by the closest shoppes. Plan to make a trip into the larger, and better, shopping center thats a few miles away before SRS date in case you miss something in packing.

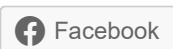
Oh another thing, Thai airlines is really good service. However Bangkok airport is annoying. They had us taxi from the runway to the opposite side of the airport, then to a super far out area where we walked down ladders onto the tarmac and into busses for a 10 min ride through the airport underbelly into immigration. And they were slow. Also I couldn't get on wifi unless I gave name, passport #, phone, created a user/pass, etc which I wasn't comfortable doing. That kept me from pulling up the info in the email from the clinic. For reference, meet between doors 3/4, they will have a laminated sign that has a blue S and the "Suporn Clinic" with your name on it. From there you have an hour ride into Chonburi on the clinic bus. Also, they provided a water for myself and my partner when we got in. That was definitely appreciated.

The hotel is meh at best. I travel a lot for my job and spend about 1/3-1/2 of many months traveling. So I've spent a lot of time in a variety of hotels, from super nice ones to not-as-nice chain hotels (Marriott, Hilton, etc chains). This is slightly below average. Oh, and if you don't like firm mattresses be prepared for a rough time. You may want to think about packing an air mattress or planning to buy one here. It's rock solid and I like firm beds. One other trick is that the air will turn off when you leave as you have one card that needs to be "left" in a slot by the door when you're in your room. Easy way to have that always on is to use a business card.

I may re-organize this at a later date to make it flow a bit more. But this is very much getting "real" for me. Up to this point I've been just worrying about the what if and hypothetical scenarios. Then the past 2 weeks dealing with logistics and making sure I pack stuff and get work setup. But now that I'm here and see these

other trans people in the hotel and outside it, I'm going "oh shit... this is happening." Like the girl who was walking very uneasily towards the elevator (clearly achy and sore down there). Oh well. I'm here, time for bed, and tomorrow is the hospital pre-surgery stuff.

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