Bangkok, Thailand’s capital, is a large city known for ornate shrines and vibrant street life. The boat-filled Chao Phraya River feeds its network of canals, flowing past the Rattanakosin royal district, home to opulent Grand Palace and its sacred Wat Phra Kaew Temple. Nearby is Wat Pho Temple with an enormous reclining Buddha and, on the opposite shore, Wat Arun Temple with its steep steps and Khmer-style spire.

Traditional teak buildings like the grand Vimanmek Palace and the residence-turned-museum Jim Thompson House contrast with the city’s skyline of modern high-rises. Shopping options range from the upscale mega-malls of the Ratchaprasong district to the thousands of tiny stalls at overflowing Chatuchak Weekend Market. The city’s renowned food scene spans traditional street-cart snacks – spicy, sour, sweet and salty – to upscale international restaurants. Bangkok is also known for its exuberant nightlife, with venues ranging from swanky rooftop lounges to basic backpacker bars and nightclubs of the notorious Patpong district.

Chiang Mai is a city in mountainous northern Thailand. Founded in 1296, it was capital of the independent Lanna Kingdom until 1558. Its Old City area still retains vestiges of walls and moats from its history as a cultural and religious center. It’s also home to hundreds of elaborate Buddhist temples, including 14th-century Wat Phra Singh and 15th-century Wat Chedi Luang, adorned with carved serpents.

Outside the central Old City, Nimmanhaemin Road is lined with sophisticated galleries, boutiques, cafes and restaurants cooking the signature local dish, khao soi (egg noodles in curry). Also offered around town are traditional khantoke dinners – served on low tables in teak pavilions – accompanied by classical Thai music and dance shows. Handicrafts such as silk, silverware and lacquerware can be found at open-air markets like the Night Bazaar. Chiang Mai also acts as a base for treks into the nearby mountains for visits to temples, elephant training and rehabilitation camps, or isolated hill-tribe villages.

Pattaya is a city on Thailand’s eastern Gulf coast known for its beaches. A quiet fishing village as recently as the 1960s, it’s now lined with resort hotels, high-rise condos, shopping malls, cabaret bars and 24-hour clubs. Nearby, hillside Wat Phra Yai Temple features an 18m-tall golden Buddha. The area also features several designer golf courses, some with views of Pattaya Bay.

Jet-skiing and parasailing are popular activities on Pattaya's busy beachfront, which is lined with lounge chairs and umbrellas. Jomtien Beach, to the south, is quieter and popular for windsurfing. Neon-lit Walking Street, which is closed to traffic each night, is packed with go-go bars, discos and massage parlors, while Art in Paradise features 3-D and interactive paintings. To the north, Naklua Bay also has beaches, a village-like vibe and the Sanctuary of Truth, an wood shrine covered with intricate Buddhist and Hindu carvings.

Ko Samui, Thailand’s second largest island, lies in the Gulf of Thailand off the east coast of the Kra Isthmus. It's known for its palm-fringed beaches, coconut groves and dense, mountainous rainforest, plus luxury resorts and posh spas. The landmark 12m-tall golden Big Buddha statue at Wat Phra Yai Temple is located on a tiny island connected to Ko Samui by a causeway.

The popular beaches of Chaweng and Lamai, on the east coast, have lounge chairs and strolling vendors, while the towns around them are the island’s party centers, packed with pubs, go-go bars and nightclubs. On the north side is the more laid-back village of Bo Phut, which features former Chinese shophouses converted to stylish restaurants, cafes and boutique hotels, as well as a night market selling street food, clothing and souvenirs. Nearby lies tranquil Maenam Beach, while the old capital Nathon lies on the west coast. Day trips to the limestone-cliff islets of Ang Thong Marine National Park offer snorkeling and diving.

**Kanchanaburi** ([Thai](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thai_language): กาญจนบุรี, pronounced [[kāːn.t͡ɕā.ná(ʔ).bū.rīː]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Help:IPA/Thai_and_Lao)) is a town municipality (*[thesaban mueang](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thesaban_mueang" \o "Thesaban mueang)*) in the west of [Thailand](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thailand) and part of [Kanchanaburi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kanchanaburi_Province) [Province](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Provinces_of_Thailand). In 2006 it had a population of 31,327. The town covers the complete [*tambon*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tambon) Ban Nuea and Ban Tai and parts of Pak Phraek and Tha Makham, all of [Mueang Kanchanaburi district](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amphoe_Mueang_Kanchanaburi), and parts of the *tambon* Tha Lo of [Tha Muang district](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amphoe_Tha_Muang). Kanchanaburi lies 123 km west of Bangkok.[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kanchanaburi#cite_note-1)

**Contents**

* [1 History](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kanchanaburi#History)
* [2 Geography](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kanchanaburi#Geography)
  + [2.1 Climate](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kanchanaburi#Climate)
* [3 Location](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kanchanaburi#Location)
* [4 Buddhism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kanchanaburi#Buddhism)
* [5 Death railway](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kanchanaburi#Death_railway)
* [6 See also](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kanchanaburi#See_also)
* [7 References](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kanchanaburi#References)
* [8 External links](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kanchanaburi#External_links)

**History**

In the late 18th century, Kanchanaburi was established by King [Rama I](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buddha_Yodfa_Chulaloke) as a defensive outpost against possible Burmese attacks in what is now Lat Ya subdistrict. In 1833, the town was moved about 16 km towards the south-east along the river to its present site during the reign of King [Rama III](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nangklao).[[2]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kanchanaburi#cite_note-2)

**Geography**

**Climate**

Kanchanaburi has a [tropical savanna climate](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tropical_savanna_climate) ([Köppen climate classification](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/K%C3%B6ppen_climate_classification" \o "Köppen climate classification) *Aw*). Winters are dry and very warm. Temperatures rise until April, which is very hot with the average daily maximum at 38.2 °C (100.8 °F). The [monsoon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monsoon) season runs from May through October, with heavy rain and somewhat cooler temperatures during the day, although nights remain warm.