

Title:

Thailand is Their Land

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561

Summary:

The true magic you'll find when you travel to Thailand is its alluring authenticity. Thailand is the only Southeast Asian nation never to have been colonized by European powers; consequently, the still-standing and functioning monuments of the past attract visitors who admire thousands of years of history integrated into present day society.

Keywords:

Thailand, travel to Thailand, Thailand travel information, cheap airfare, travel deals, Asia travel, travel to Asia

Article Body:

The true magic you'll find when you travel to Thailand is its alluring authenticity. Thailand is the only Southeast Asian nation never to have been colonized by European powers; consequently, the still-standing and functioning monuments of the past attract visitors who admire thousands of years of history integrated into present day society. Even more appealing, Thailand offers the diversity of a society running in parallel: booming city life and leisurely beach escapes, thickly canopied jungles and white sand islands, indulgent cuisine, clubs and cocktails and the sanctuary of Buddhist lifestyle. Thailand has come of age as a traveler's dream destination, an affordable gateway to paradise with all the modern conveniences at your fingertips.

What's In a Name?

The Kingdom of Thailand was known as Siam until 1939, when a bloodless revolution instated a constitutional monarchy and the name was changed to literally mean "free" land. The original kingdom was founded in 1238, but largely influenced throughout history by China and India. Geographically, Thailand is surrounded by countries whose turbulent 20th century histories have defaulted tourism into its exotic but more accessible borders. For this reason, Thailand is also a wonderful home base from which to explore Cambodia and Laos to the east, Myanmar (Burma) to the west, and Malaysia to the south.

Wat You Waiting For?

Thailand is littered with just as many exciting cities as beautiful beaches.

Where you might notice the imbalance is in the inconceivable number of temples, or wat. As the main center of the very north, Chiang Mai is a large, beautiful and historic city. A visit to the famous Night Bazaar or the nearby Wiang Kum Kam archeological ruins is certainly not enough to distract even the most oblivious from the more than 300 Buddhist temples that sprinkle the skyline with shiny gold, red and green hues. Make sure to visit Wat Chiang Mun, the city's (and possibly Thailand's) oldest temple, located within the old city walls and dating back to 1296. Heading south, do not miss Ayutthaya and Sukhothai, Thailand's two former capitals (the latter being the founding city) classified as World Heritage Sites filled with hundreds of beautifully maintained temples, statues and bustling human activity, all embedded within the lush green environs.

Bangkok is perched on the Gulf of Thailand, but this humming, vibrant and congested 24-hour capital city is a far cry from the resort cities and towns found east and south along Thailand's sub-tropical coastline. Thailand extends south into the Kra Isthmus, providing for extensive coastline and some of the most filmed beaches in the world. Phuket is the most famous resort island, but more rewarding is a trip to one of the smaller and less commercialized areas. Ko Tao is of particular interest for scuba divers, while Ko Pha Ngan has become famous among younger travelers for its regular full moon festivals held all night on the sparkling shores. Ko Phi Phi is far more breathtaking in person than even the camera angles of the film "The Beach" could do it justice.

Some rudimentary social customs aside, Thailand is an extremely easy going and welcoming travel experience. Everything from simple to luxurious is at your disposal, and all with a very fair price tag, not to mention an unbeatable combination of picturesque beaches, rainforested mountains, and an intense metropolitan culture. So really, what are you waiting for? Start planning to travel to Thailand today.