



Khlong Tours

Experiencing the Uniqueness of Thai Life





Amphawa Floating Market, Samut-Songkhram

Introduction

With the focus on sustainable environmentally-friendly tourism, there has been an increase in the search for and learning about new lifestyles and cultural discoveries. Thailand is no exception, as within our country's borders is a land of exhilarating enthusiasm in which active, energetic, and fun-loving visitors of all ages can indulge in a diversity of rich adventurous touristic activities.

Since yesteryear, the traditional Thai way of life has been synonymous with water, as waterways have been an abundant source and sustainer of life with networks of arteries that have nurtured and supported local communities. These vital waterways have not only provided the people with their basic needs but also served as important transportation routes, conveniently linking all corners of the Kingdom.

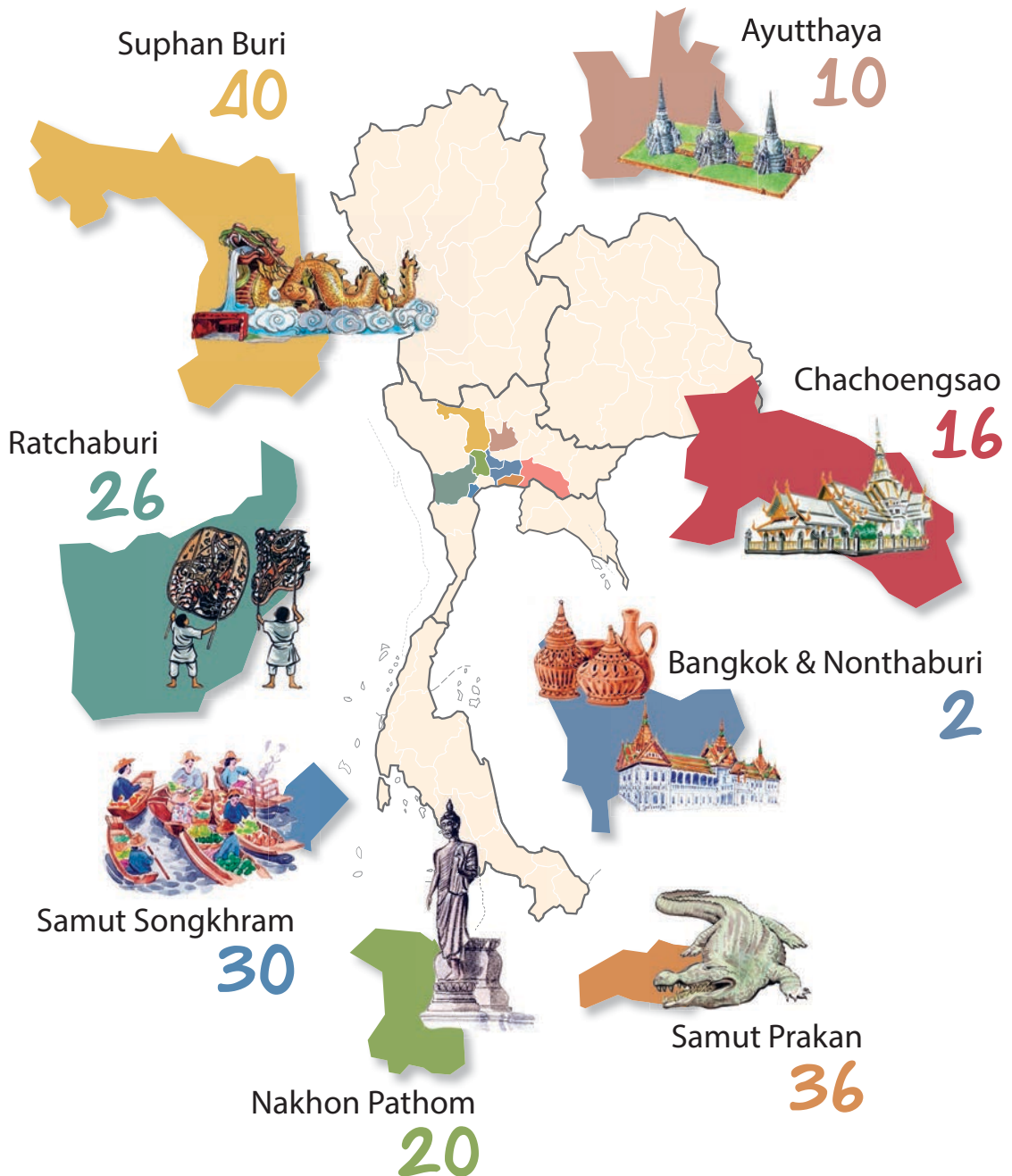
One way of seeing and getting to know more about the amazing waterways and the surrounding communities is by boat that will provide wonderful opportunities of exploring to your heart's content. And of course, along the way you can visit the people at their own doorstep, travel to an assortment of incredible destinations full of captivating heritage

that you may never have imagined, as well as discover a myriad of other exotic hidden treasures that are uniquely Thai. Whatever the season, the secrets of our waterways and other treasures are alive with colour and movement that will activate you to absorb and come in touch with new adventurous pursuits revolving around the Thai lifestyle. The wide choices on offer on where to go and what to do mean that your wildest dreams will come true; all of which will whet your appetite for more and create long-lasting lifetime memories.

Thus in realizing the potentiality that Thailand has to offer for those searching for our country's preserved heritage, the waterway cruises detailed in this brochure are only a small example of the various facets of our country's Central Region that is only an introduction of what the other regions have to offer, as well as further promotes Thailand as an eco-friendly destination in the heart of South East Asia.

We hope you have fun discovering our Thai waterways as well as have an out-of-this-world experience of a lifetime!

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Bangkok

As the capital city of Thailand, Bangkok or Krung Thep, the “City of Angels” features both old-world charm and modern convenience, at times served up in an apparently chaotic manner, but always with a gracious smile. Many tourists who travel to Bangkok are immediately overwhelmed by the sheer size of the city and the vast number of attractions the city has to offer.

The winding Chao Phraya River is connected by numerous canals from which Bangkok has earned its nickname the “Venice of the East”; when you travel around Bangkok, a cruise on the Chao Phraya, a visit to a floating market, or an exploration of the city’s “back alley” canals (khlongs) are themselves unique Bangkok attractions.



Wat Arun (Temple of Dawn)



Rattanakosin Island & the Chao Phraya River

1. Chao Phraya River Cruise

This route goes from Nonthaburi Pier to Wat Ratchasingkhon Pier. All along the route, there are numerous boat landings where one can stroll in the old areas to visit local markets selling fruits and flowers, ornamental and flowering plants, food items and commodities from dawn to dusk. Also enjoy major landmarks like the Grand Palace and the Temple of the Emerald Buddha, the royal palace of the Thon Buri Period, Wat Arun, the Temple of Dawn and other varied architecture on both banks of the river, including churches, mosques, old mansions, among modern high-rises, signifying the unique blend of the old and the new in Bangkok.

2. The Grand Palace & Wang Lang

Rattanakosin Island on the left bank of the Chao Phraya River is famous for the national heritage of its fine arts and architecture. The tour starts from Chang Pier, passing Na Phra Lan Road to the Grand Palace with a palace temple built within the compound to house the Emerald Buddha, known as the Temple of the Emerald Buddha. A detour can be made via Na Phra That Road to Chang Pier and Na Phra Lan Road, followed by a visit to the Art Gallery of Silpakorn University and the Silpa Bhirasri Memorial National Museum. One can then proceed to the Phra Chan Pier and take a shuttle boat across the river to the Phran Nok Pier to the Wang Lang Market, where food,

clothes, and commodities are offered at low prices. The market is open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. or why not visit the Bowonsathanphimuk Palace. Lying within walking distance is Wat Rakhong Khositaram, a 200-year-old temple of significance. Crossing back, walk past Thammasat University to the National Museum, where national treasures are displayed in the various royal halls. Then walk past the National Theatre, the Tourism Division of the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, to Phra Athit Pier.

3. From Phra Athit Pier to Bang Lamphu

The riverside area on Phra Athit Road is the site of palaces of princes of the Fourth Reign; e.g. the Maliwan Mansion, now the regional head office of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization. The pleasant evening stroll ends at the Santi Chaiprakan Park with the Santi Chaiprakan Royal Hall situated on the riverbank. Not far from the Royal Hall, one finds the last remaining lamphu plant of the area, and a sculpture entitled "Lifestyle of Bang Lamphu," telling the history of this ancient community. Also in the area is the Phra Sumen Fort, one of the two remaining forts originally built around Rattanakosin Island.



4. Chinatown

From Ratchawong Pier, stroll to view the various old buildings in the Talat Noi area, and walk along Ratchawong Road to Chinatown at the edge of Yaowarat Road. Visit the first Chinese Buddhist temple in Bangkok, Wat Mangkon Kamalawat. Then wander through Yaowarat that is now known worldwide for its Gold Street and Food Street image as well as the market to shop for innumerable items from both Thailand and China. Yaowarat Market is open daily from 6 a.m. to 5 p.m., and the night market is open from 4.30 p.m. to 2 a.m. Sample tea or coffee at the traditional coffee shops or try authentic Chinese dishes at the various restaurants. Following this, walk onto Sampheng and Phahurat or Little India, the textile market, where Indian food and spices are also available.



Bangkok's Chinatown





The Appeal of the Chao Phraya River

While cruising along the Chao Phraya River, the River of Kings, there are numerous aspects of Thai historical, religious, and cultural heritage to be seen.

1. Santa Cruz Church & Portuguese Community

Santa Cruz Church is situated in the Thai-Portuguese community that resettled in the area in the Thon Buri Period. The community is famous for their Kudi Chin cake, inherited from their ancestors, with a unique, enticing aroma.

2. Wat Kanlayanamit

Built in the reign of King Rama III, it stands out on the riverbank. The temple houses Phra Buddha Trai Rattananayok, the largest Buddha image in Bangkok. Thais and Thai-Chinese believe that paying respect to the image brings prosperity and fortune, as well as safe journeys throughout the year.

3. Wat Arun Ratchawararam, the Temple of Dawn

The pagoda or stupa of Wat Arun has long been a landmark on the bank of the Chao Phraya River. It is decked with bits and pieces of colourful ceramics and chinaware, in foliage and flower motif.



4. The Old Royal Palace & Wichai Prasit Fort

The royal palace of the Thon Buri Period covers an area on the riverbank from Wichai Prasit Fort to a canal north of Wat Arun. Wichai Prasit Fort or Bangkok Fort was built in the reign of King Narai the Great of Ayutthaya (1656-1688), the only remaining fort of the Ayutthaya Period.



Canal Tours in Bangkok & Nonthaburi

There are a number of tour packages and cruising options on offer at Chang-Wang Na Pier, the River City Pier, and Maharat Pier.

1. Khlong Bangkok Noi & Rattanakosin Island

Starting early in the morning, this tour takes tourists along the well-shaded Khlong Bangkok Noi, to enjoy shopping and a delicious lunch at the Taling Chan Floating Market. This market is open every Saturday and Sunday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. After lunch, return to Bangkok where the river trip ends at Chang Pier. The afternoon is devoted to a tour of the Temple of the Emerald Buddha and the Grand Palace complex. In the late afternoon, tour around Rattanakosin Island by tram. The tour concludes with dinner in the Na Phra Lan, Phra Chan Pier, and Chang Pier areas, or proceed to Khao San Road for its famed night-life.

2. Riverside Orchards on the Original Chao Phraya River

Khlong Bangkok Noi and Om Non are the original Chao Phraya River. The area is largely agricultural and known as the Inner Orchard of Bangkok. At present, both banks of Khlong Bangkok Noi, around Taling Chan, Bang Phrom, and Bang Ramat, are lined with flower gardens, vegetable plots, and fruit orchards. At the mouth of Khlong Bangkok Noi is the National Museum of the Royal Barges, housing the boats used

in the Royal Barge Processions. A highlight in the neighbourhood is a fabulous mural painting at Wat Suwannaram. Then, visit the last remaining village for metalwork artisans, Ban Bu. Thereafter, enjoy a meal at the Taling Chan Floating Market, which is open from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on weekends, and a boat ride along Khlong Bang Kruai, up to the Bang Khu Wiang Floating Market.

For a cruise along the Om Non-Nonthaburi round about canal, start from Nonthaburi Pier, with a visit to Wat Chaloem Phra Kiat and its fine Sino-Thai architecture as well as the Golden Jubilee Park that was created to mark the 50th Anniversary of His Majesty the King's Accession to the Throne. Enjoy the full view of Thai style houses amidst lush greenery on both banks. Stops are made at an original Nonthaburi durian plantation and an old-style mixed plantation. The cruise ends at the Modification Centre from the Agricultural Products of the Group of Bangkok Noi's Housewives, offering a galore of souvenirs.

3. Observing Mon Culture

The cruise starts at the boat landing of Wat Poramaiyikawat, with the Mon-style Mutao Pagoda as the symbol. Notable are Western-style mural paintings in the temple hall and unique Mon crafts in the temple museum. The cruise then proceeds along the Om Kret River, which is the original Chao Phraya River, to the lush fruit orchards and toxin-free vegetable plots on



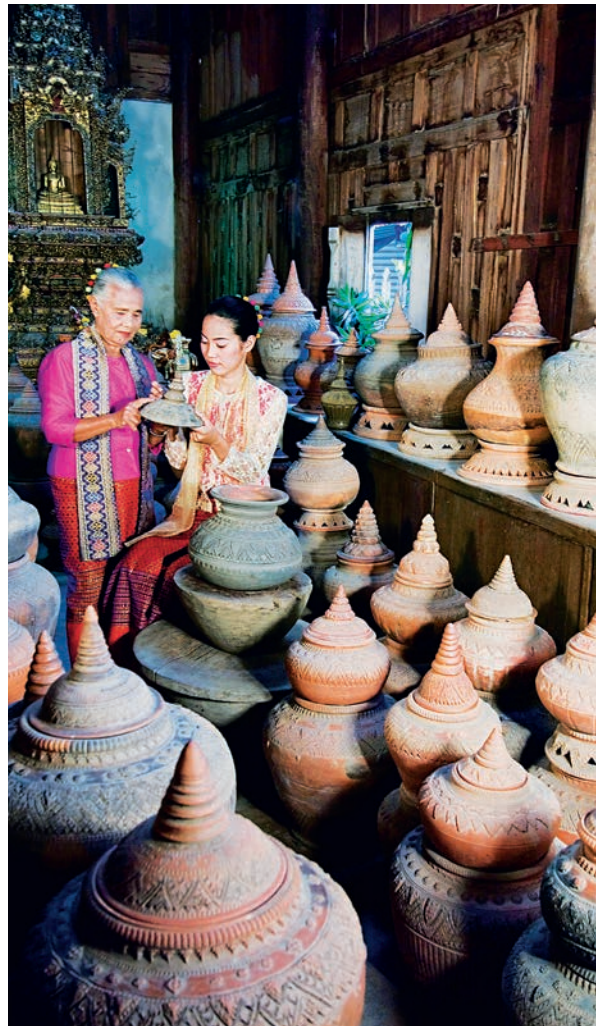
the west of the island. A visit to Khlong Khanom Wan is next, with the observation of sweetmeat making. At Lat Kret, see the community of Ban Mon Khwang, where all the houses face the north. Also visit the ancient Mon earthenware museum, the potter's village, and workshops. For lunch, authentic Mon dishes are served.

4. Khlong Bang Yai Tour

From Nonthaburi Pier, there are flat-bottomed boats operating on the Nonthaburi - Khlong Om - Khlong Bang Yai route.



Nonthaburi Durian Plantation



The Ancient Mon Earthenware Museum



Distinctive Heritage of the Canals

The National Museum of the Royal Barges

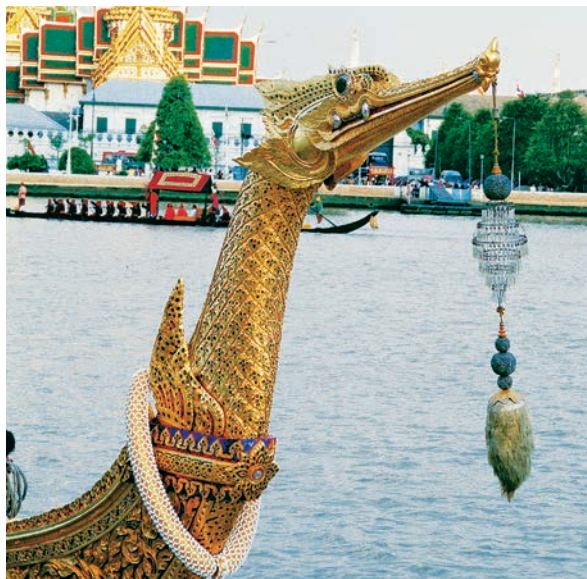
Eight ceremonial barges used in the time-honoured Royal Barge Procession inherited from the Ayutthaya Period are put on display, including the Suphannahong, Narai Song Suban Rama IX, and the Anantanakkkharat, as well as various utensils and belongings used in the Royal Barge Procession.

Ban Bu

The Ban Bu community on Khlong Bangkok Noi is believed to have derived from a group of craftspeople from Ayutthaya who resettled in the area following the fall of Ayutthaya in 1767. “Bu” refers to the method in which the alloy of copper and tin is forged into various objects, and polished with stone to obtain a smooth, shiny surface. Only one household remains engaged in metalwork at present.

Modification Centre from the Agricultural Products of the Group of Bangkok Noi’s Housewives

The Centre on Khlong Om serves as the outlet and demonstration site for high-quality processed products; such as, sun-dried, fried and seasoned banana, and where a typical Nonthaburi style lunch is offered.



Khlong Khanom Wan or Khlong Bang Bua Thong

The canal is known otherwise as Khlong Khanom Wan due to the fact that in the past local residents spent their spare time making desserts from toddy palm nuts for various events. Today, the place is a prime source of desserts and sweetmeats for Nonthaburi Province.



Floating Fruit Orchards

Ko Kret, once renowned for delicious lychees, was frequented by King Chulalongkorn the Great (Rama V). The sought-after fruit was named Salakun Lychee, in accordance with the original name of the island. Fruit orchards are presently found in villages 2 to 5 where durian, pomelo, mango, banana, and santol are grown. There are also toxin-free vegetables in the area.

Genuine Nonthaburi Durian Plantation

One of the few original Nonthaburi durian plantations that survived the natural disaster of 1995, here one finds genuine Nonthaburi durian breeds known as Durian Nai-Inner Area Durian. These varieties include Mon Thong (Golden Cushion), Kan Yao (Long Stem), Chani (Gibbon), Kop (Frog), and Kampan (Coffer), grown among other fruit trees. During late April to May, visitors can observe the traditional durian gathering method of Nonthaburi planters.



Wat Paramaiyikawat

A Mon-style Mutao pagoda, the symbol of the temple, was built by the first group of Mon migrants on Ko Kret and now lists outward in the strong current of the river.

Ko Kret Ceramics Trail

Although not part of the river cruise, the trail is not to be missed. One gets on a motorcycle taxi from Pa Fai Pier. The trail starts from Wat Poramaiyikawat to the west, passing the ancient Mon ceramics museum, the Potter's Village, Wat Phai Lom, and Wat Sao Thong Thong, and making a detour to the south, in the Ban Mon area. There remain old workshops and kilns, including some high moulds known as the "scorpion kilns."



Accommodation & Restaurants

Please contact the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) Bangkok Office, at Tel. +66 2276 2720-1 for a list of accommodation and restaurants.

Things to Buy

Throughout the cruising routes, there are uncountable food and souvenir shops, as well as at the original production sites in old areas that offer a variety of delicacies and craft items.

Ayutthaya, a World Heritage Site

As a former royal capital that is now the UNESCO World Heritage Site of the Ayutthaya Historical Park, this is where one can observe national treasures on different trails within the City Island area, or travel down river to view the “East Meets West” architectural style at Bang Pa-In, created in the reign of King Chulalongkorn the Great (Rama V) of the Rattanakosin Era. Nearby is the centre of folk arts and crafts from all regions in Thailand, at the Bang Sai Folk Arts and Crafts Centre, Bang Sai District.





On Wheels through the Old City

Riding a bicycle or a three-wheeler is an ideal way to get to the ruins of the old capital city of Ayutthaya and have a stroll. Bicycles are available for hire near the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) Ayutthaya Office every day. The cycling trail starts from the Ayutthaya Historical Study Centre, along Rotchana Road to the T-junction, where it is crossed by Si Sanphet Road. In the front is the original city hall, now used as the Ayutthaya Information Centre and the TAT Ayutthaya Office. One rides past the roundabout, Khum Khun Phaen, and Wat Phra Ram to Phra Mongkhon Bophit Hall, Wat Phra Si Sanphet, and the Old Royal Palace. After lunch, ride along U-Thong Road to Wat Na Phra Men, taking the side road to Wat Mae Nang Pluem and Wat Sam Wihan, ending at the Elephant Kraal. If it's too hot, take a ride in a motorized three-wheeler or "TukTuk". Also, pedal-driven trishaws are available in front of the Ayutthaya Historical Park.

An Ancient Riverine Capital

Ayutthaya has a number of cruising options in which you can discover this province's history and riverine way of life first hand.

1. Around the City Island

Start from the Hua Ro Market and follow the city moats where the Lop Buri and the Pa Sak Rivers meet. There are a number of significant temples along the riverfront, including Wat Choeng Tha and Wat

Salapun. The city moat runs into the Chao Phraya River at Ban Hua Laem. Continue cruising along the Chao Phraya River to see some of the riverside monuments including Wat Phutthaisawan, the Church of St. Joseph, Wat Chaiwatthanaram, Wat Kasattrathirat, the Queen Si Suriyothai Memorial, Pom Phet (Diamond Fort), Wat Phananchong, and the Chantharakasem Palace, returning to the Hua Ro Market.

2. East Meets West

Travel down river from Tha Chang Wang Luang to view the different architectural styles of the Bang Pa-In Summer Palace Pier created in the reign of King Rama V Chulalongkorn the Great of the Rattanakosin Era. Nearby is the centre of folk arts and crafts from all regions in Thailand, at the Bang Sai Folk Arts and Crafts Centre, Bang Sai District, or you can take a cable car across the canal to Wat Niwet Thammaprawat in Gothic style. Along the way see the former Portuguese and Japanese Villages on the riverbank, typical Thai houses, churches, mosques, temples, and folk fishery lifestyle.





The Splendour of World Heritage

While cruising along the Chao Phraya River, the River of Kings, there are numerous aspects of Thai historical, religious, and cultural heritage to be seen.

Khlong Rang Chorakhe

This is an ecotourism community, where unique Thai rural lifestyle is preserved, and the canal is kept clean. Fine wooden Thai houses from the old days line both banks of the canal. Visitors are afforded a chance to be in close touch with the folk fishery lifestyle and experience the traditional warm hospitality of rural Thailand.

Chantharakasem Palace

The palace was built in the reign of King Maha Thammaracha (1569-1590) as the residence of the viceroy, or the Prince of the Front Palace. The present structure was constructed in the Fourth Reign of Bangkok, housing a national museum with a display of artefacts.

The Church of St. Joseph

Situated in the French village in the Ayutthaya Period, the original church was destroyed in the fall of Ayutthaya to the Burmese in 1767 and rebuilt in the reign of King Mongkut (Rama IV) of the Rattanakosin Era. The former Portuguese and Japanese Villages on the riverbank, typical Thai houses, churches, mosques, temples, and folk fishery lifestyle.

Wat Chaiwatthanaram

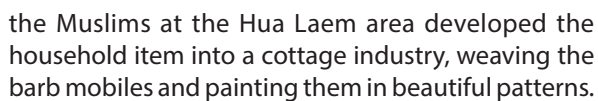
Built in 1630, during the renaissance of Thai arts and culture towards the end of the Ayutthaya Era, the temple plan was based on Buddhist cosmology. The main pagoda represents the epicentre of the universe, surrounded by four satellite pagodas at the four corners, as the four continents. Buddha images in full royal dress are placed in surrounding niches.

Wat Phutthaisawan

Wat Phutthaisawan was built in the area of the residence of the first monarch of Ayutthaya, King U-Thong. In the residence of the Lord Abbot, Somdet Phra Phutthakhosachan, murals from the Jataka stories (the former lives of the Lord Buddha) and a painting of the pilgrimage of a revered monk to the Lord Buddha's footprint in Sri Lanka can be found. There is a statue of King U-thong in front of the main pagoda.

Woven Pla Taphian Mobiles Production Site

The fish known in Thai as "pla taphian", or carp or barb, is the symbol of abundance of the rice field and the water. The craft of weaving palmyra leaves into hanging mobiles shaped like barb originated in Ayutthaya with the Persian Muslim merchants who conducted the spice trade along the Chao Phraya River. Later,



Located at the juncture where the Chao Phraya River meets the Pa Sak River at Bang Kacha, when Ayut-thaya was a major port. In the prayer hall, one finds the major Buddha image known as Phra Phuttha Trai Rattananayok.

The Japanese originally came to Ayutthaya as traders. In the year 1592, Japanese volunteers joined the armed service under the command of Yamada Na-ngamasa, with the high-ranking Thai title of Ok Ya Senabhimuk. At present, the Japanese village is an annex to the Ayutthaya Historical Study Centre. There are exhibitions on foreign relations of Ayutthaya with China, Ryukyu Islands, Portugal, Japan, Holland, Britain, France, India, Persia, and Malaya.

The Portuguese made up the first foreign mission to Ayutthaya in 1511. They were granted a piece of land to build their settlement southwest of the city island, with permission to establish a church for religious services. The church that can be seen at present was built in the reign of King Songtham (1610-1628). At an excavation carried out by the Fine Arts Department, a large number of artefacts were found, including chinaware, skeletons, and crosses.





Where East Meets West

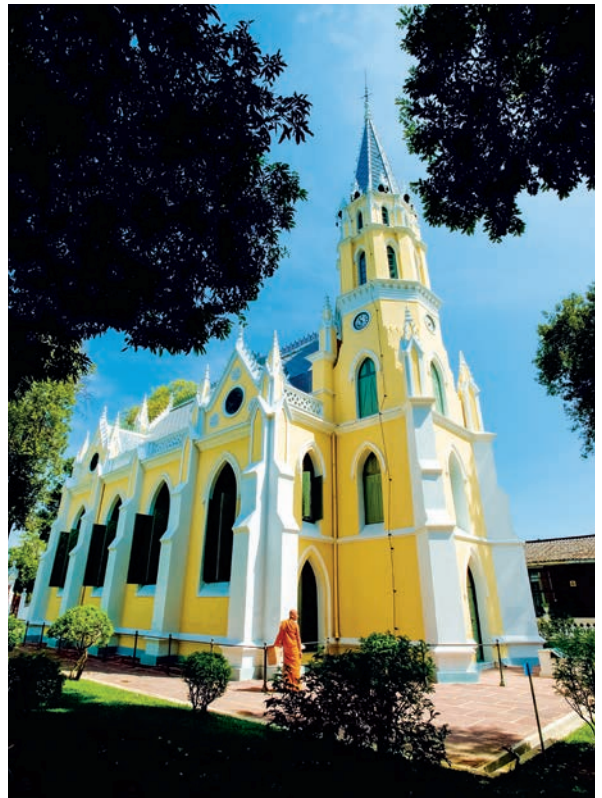
Bang Pa-In is a major island that was originally called Ko Ban Len. King Prasatthong of Ayutthaya had a royal residence built for his visit to the island in 1632, with a temple, Wat Chumphon Nikayaram, established. After the fall of Ayutthaya in 1767, the palace was deserted. King Mongkut (Rama IV) had a royal residence built, and later King Chulalongkorn (Rama V) had a summer palace built at the site in his reign and stayed there almost every year. Visitors can travel by road and cross to the island at the Bang Pa-In Palace Pier. A boat tour around the island can be made before strolling to view the palace. On the way back, stop at the Bang Sai Folk Arts and Craft Centre, where craft works from all regions of the country are made.

Bang Pa-In Palace

Different architectural styles have been employed at the Bang Pa-In Summer Palace, reflecting influences from various sources: Thai, Chinese, and the West. Major structures are the Aisawan Thipphaya At, Warophat Phiman, Utthayan Phumisathien, Wehat Chamrun royal halls, and Withun Thatsana Tower. From Bang Pa-In Palace Pier, one can take a cable car across Khlong Bang Pa-In to Wat Niwet Thammaprawat.

Wat Niwet Thammaprawat

Built by King Rama V and completed in 1878, the temple is in Gothic style. The door and window



Wat Niwet Thammaprawat

frames are decorated with stained glass, in the manner of a Christian church. A portrait of King Chulalongkorn the Great (Rama V), decorated with coloured glass, was placed above the main entrance to the prayer hall.



Bang-Pa-In Royal Palace

Accommodation & Restaurants

Please contact the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) Ayutthaya Office, at Tel. +66 3524 6076-7 for a list of accommodation and restaurants.

Things to Buy

As the former capital of Thailand for 417 years, Ayutthaya's local wisdom is diverse and this has been passed down to the present. From mother-of-pearl inlay ware and classical masks, earthen pots and ceramics, Palm Leaf Fish Mobiles made by Thai Muslims, and Thai musical instruments to Roti Sai Mai (a snack composing of candyfloss wrapped with flat bread), Pla Taphian Lae Daet Dieo (sun-dried Thai carp fillet), and Pla Yang Rom Khwan (smoked grilled fish), this World Heritage city is a great place to find that special something to take home for family and friends.

Chachoengsao

Chachoengsao, also known as Paet Rio, is located about 80 kilometres east of Bangkok. Being fed by the Bang Pakong River, this province is a very fertile area for agriculture of which mango is the most popular fruit grown. Among Buddhists, Chachoengsao is also known as the location of the Phra Phutthasothon or the Luang Pho Sothon Buddha image.





Auspicious Homage Paying Route



Chachoengsao is an easy city to tour around, as the area is flat. Start from Wat Sothon Wararam Worawihan where you can pay homage to Phra Phuttha-sothon or Luang Pho Sothon, a Buddha image highly revered alike. After this, move onto Wat Chin Pracha Samoson to see Chinese art featuring Thao Chatu Lakkaban (four guardian gods of the four compass directions) and deities according to Chinese belief, pay homage to the paper Buddha images from Shanghai, China, slightly rub the money bag of the God of Luck, and have discussions about the Buddha's teaching with Chinese monks at the temple. From here, continue onto Ban Mai Market, which is open on Saturday, Sunday, and public holidays from 8 a.m. to the evening, to shop for desserts and souvenirs. Take a boat back along the river, or alternatively go onto pay homage to Sam Po Kong at Wat Uphai Phatikaram and worship Kuan Im Loi Nam at the Chachoengsao Assistance for Charity Association before heading back into town.



Wat Sothon Wararam Worawihan



Bang Pakong River

To cruise along the Bang Pakong River, boats depart from the pier of Wat Sothon Wararam Worawihan and pass along Chachoengsao township in which visitors can admire the nature and scenery along the riverbank, as well as Thai lifestyle. Interesting and important places include the largest teak building in Chachoengsao, the Palace of Krommakhun Maruphong Siriphat, traces of ancient walls, old city hall, old raft houses, and historic religious sites like Wat Mueang, Wat Laem Tai, and St. Paul's Church. The boat will arrive at the Ban Mai Market, which is over 100 years old, and is open on weekends and public holidays from 8 a.m. to the evening.

Alternatively, from Wat Sothon Wararam Worawihan, take a boat ride to see the dolphins in Amphoe Bang Pakong and then go onto Khlong Suan Market that is open daily from dawn to dusk where there is a variety of savoury food to taste and buy.

For other possible routes, please check with the Tourism Authority of Thailand Offices in Bangkok.



Century-old Markets



Ban Mai Market

Ban Mai Market, known as "Talat Rim Nam" in the past, was built during 1904-1905, as a replacement of the old market that was destroyed by fire. The market is divided into 2 parts - the upper and lower market. The upper market is located to the north of the canal, from Wat Thep Nimit to Wat Chin Pracha Samoson (Wat Leng Hok Yi), and the lower market is found by the Bang Pakong River in front of Wat Uphai Phatikaram.

The present market also has over 100 well-preserved wooden houses boasting the rich history of the past; moreover, the community's traditional way of life is still strictly observed. The market is open on weekends and public holidays from 8 a.m. to the evening.



Khlong Suan Market

This market was built during the reign of King Rama V and is situated by Khlong Pravet Burirom. Initially, there was only a one-storey wooden house with pillars and a clay footpath; however, this was expanded in 1934 to include a 2-storey wooden house. In the past, the only way to access the market was by boat, and it was possible to travel between Bangkok and Chachoengsao. As an important trading and transportation hub, the local community is an ethnic mixture of Chinese, Thai, and Muslim, which can be seen in the temples, mosques, and Chinese vegetarian house that are all in close proximity to one another. This market is open daily from dawn to dusk.



Khlong Suan Market

Accommodation & Restaurants

Please contact the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) Chachoengsao Offices, at Tel. +66 3851 4009 for a list of accommodation and restaurants.

Things to Buy

Big Kung Yiat (boiled shrimp covered with syrup); Khanom Thai and Khanom Krop Khem by Ban Bua Nop, which is Thai style crispy puff with pepper and garlic; Khao Lam Mae Pissamai (glutinous rice baked in bamboo); Pong Pang Boran (traditional Thai-style toy), and paper-based toys are only some of the items that can be found as souvenirs.

Nakhon Pathom

Nakhon Pathom is known for the ancient religious structure called Phra Pathom Chedi, the first religious landmark that signified the introduction of Buddhism into Thailand. As an area of great historical importance that features both archaeological and religious treasures, Nakhon Pathom has a number of attractions that make it a great day trip or stopping point on the way to the South. The plains along the Tha Chin River (Nakhon Chai Si River) are the location of fertile land providing agricultural opportunities for the people; thus, most of the residents earn their living from agriculture, plantations, and farms growing food crops as well as fruit orchards.





Cruising the Nakhon Chai Si River & Canals

1. Enjoying Delicacies at the Floating Market & Visiting Nearby Attractions

Leave Bangkok early in the morning, heading towards Amphoe Bang Len to visit the Lam Phaya Floating Market, which is open on weekends and public holidays from 6 a.m. to 5 p.m. Have breakfast on a raft, take a boat ride on the Nakhon Chai Si River, before going to Don Wai Market that is open daily from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Lunch can be bought and taken along on the boat ride to view another stretch of the Nakhon Chai Si River. Returning to the riverbank, visitors can stroll along the wooden shop-houses on the riverfront to do shopping.

In the afternoon, there is still time to stop at Wat Rai Khing, Wat Tha Phut, Misiem Yipintsoi Sculpture Garden, relax at the Rose Garden, or to enjoy elephant and crocodile shows at the Sam Phran Crocodile Farm. A final stop in the evening is at the Nakhon Chai Si or Tha Na Market, where there is plenty of delicious food to enjoy. The market is open daily from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.

2. Canal Agriculture & Museums

Leave Bangkok early in the morning, heading towards Phutthamonthon District to Khlong Maha Sawat. Stroll at the morning market by the canal with its delicious food and home-brewed coffee on offer. A boat ride through the plantations is next, with activities; such



Sam Phran Crocodile Farm

as, visits to the orchid farms and pomelo plantations, paddling in the lotus field, or making sweetmeats with the housewife group.

In the afternoon, make a detour to visit the wax museum, or observe the training of traditional Thai craftspeople at the Palace College (from November to July only), and take a walk through the herb garden at Mahidol University, Salaya Campus. Thereafter, spend a quiet moment at Phutthamonthon, and conclude the tour with a delightful meal under the streetlights along Utthayan Road.

3. Khlong Maha Sawat & Traditional Agricultural Lifestyle

Khlong Maha Sawat was dug at the command of King Mongkut, Rama IV, during 1857-1860, to link the Nakhon Chai Si River with the Chao Phraya River. The area has largely retained its serene beauty with lush green plantations and orchards mirrored in the clear water of the canal. Start early so you can see food being offered to Buddhist monks in their boats. Also enjoy a stroll on the bank, with a stop for a meal or some snacks at the market by the canal in front of Wat Suwannaram, before taking a boat ride through various agro tourist sites; such as, various fruit orchards, or paddling in vast lotus fields to pick lotus flowers, participate in the making of health food, various snacks, and sweetmeats, which serve perfectly as souvenirs for people back home.

4. Two Floating Markets in a day

Don Wai and Lam Phaya Floating Markets on the Nakhon Chai Si River are the original floating markets of the riverside communities, and they have been revived and reinvigorated. They are currently major shopping sites for food and commodities. Also, tour boats can be obtained for cruising on the Nakhon Chai Si River, the lifeline of Nakhon Pathom Province.

• Don Wai Market

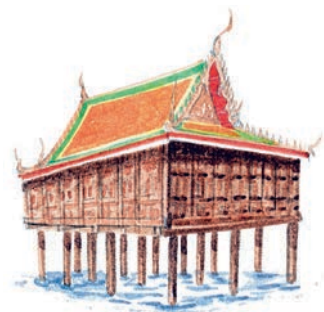
Don Wai Market is a community market established since the reign of King Rama VI and is known as the centre of delicacies of all sorts. The market is characterized by a row of wooden buildings situated by the Tha Chin River. Starting from Don Wai community to Wat Don Wai, this 400-meter market is packed by numerous vendors selling their products right in front of their houses. Exploring the market offers a unique experience of savoring the traditional way of life. The market is open daily from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

• Lam Phaya Floating Market

Located at the boat landing of Wat Lam Phaya, Lam Phaya Sub-district, Bang Len District, it comprises rafts of more than 270 metres long offering reasonably priced fruit and vegetables freshly picked from local farms, food, drinks, dishes, as well as desserts. On the bank, there are stalls selling commodities and food, with a traditional Thai massage service. Boats are available for a ride to take visitors along the canal, passing lush rice-fields, lotus fields, fruit orchards, Thai-style houses, temples, and other aspects of the typical Thai way of life. This market is open every Saturday and Sunday as well as public holidays from 6 a.m. to 5 p.m.



Nakhon Chai Si River



Alternative Routes

Sam Phran - Nakhon Chai Si

For those returning from Don Wai Market, a further ride towards Amphoe Sam Phran is recommended. On the way, stops can be made at Wat Tha Phut to pay respect to the Chulamani Pagoda and visit the Folk museum, then at Wat Rai Khing to pay respect to the revered Buddha and view the murals in the prayer hall. Then continue onto take an elephant ride at the model Thai village in the Rose Garden, or view the handling of crocodiles and elephant show at the Crocodile Farm nearby. For a fitting conclusion to the day, sample delicious food at the Nakhon Chai Si or Tha Na Market Amphoe in Nakhon Chai Si.



A Glimpse at Thai Culture

For people returning from Lam Phaya Floating Market or a cruise on Khlong Maha Sawat, a stop can be made at Wat Klang Bang Kaeo to view the folk Museum, followed by a visit to the Wax Museum for a glimpse into Thai history, lifestyle, and traditions through wax images. From here, go on to pay respect to the Si Sakkaya Thotsaphonyan statue at Phutthamonthon, and enjoy a meal in the glittering lights of Utthayan Road.



The Delights of the Canals

Nakhon Chai Si Market (Tha Na Market)

The site once served as the administrative centre of the Nakhon Chai Si Circle. Traces of the old riverside community remain at the Nakhon Chai Si or the Tha Na Market, the centre of delectable dishes. There are several original food shops, open all day long. In the river, there are also noodle boats and several food shops on rafts. The market is open daily from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Wax Museum

There are wax figures of personalities and historical events, including scenes from Thai literature and scenes of customs and traditions.

The Misiem Yipintsoi Sculpture Garden

Created by the late Misiem Yipintsoi, a dedicated sculptress and national artist who had a magical talent for depicting human movements, especially those of children. Her works are forceful and lively, with messages from Eastern philosophies, and placed in a lush and beautifully landscaped garden.

Suan Sam Phran

Known among foreigners as the Rose Garden, this well-established resort features a conventional English garden on the river, along with an orchid, a model Thai village, Thai art and culture, and an elephant ride



Nakhon Chai Si Market (Tha Na Market)

through the village. Besides, there is accommodation in typical Thai houses and a five-star hotel on the Nakhon Chai Si River, plus a well laid-out golf course and live musical performances on festive occasions.

Wat Rai Khing

An old temple on the bank of the Nakhon Chai Si River, renovated in the reign of King Mongkut (Rama IV) with a revered Buddha image in the Ayutthaya style brought down to preside in the prayer hall. Fine murals can be observed in the prayer hall. The river in front of the temple is teeming with fish, a favourite place for people to relax and throw food crumbs to the marine animals whose lives and safety are protected by the temple.

Sam Phran Elephant Show & Crocodile Farm

The spacious ground covers more than 100 rai (approx 33 acres) and has a small zoo, a delightful orchard, and large crocodile ponds. Demonstrations of crocodile handling are on show, along with elephant shows and elephant rides through

Palace College & Museum of Ten Schools of Thai Crafts

Open to visitors to observe the traditional training of Thai craftspeople, in mother-of-pearl inlay, painting, sculpting, and fruit and vegetable carving from 15 November to 15 July, the following year. There is also a museum that exhibits selected works produced by the trainees, and a building where the works are put on sale as souvenirs.

Sireeruckhachati Nature Learning Park

The lush garden on an area of 140 rai (approx 55 acres) is a depository of herbal plants in a pleasant surroundings with a collection of herbs from various regions for in-depth study.



Phutthamonthon

Built as the centre of Buddhist studies and religious ceremonies, the place is marked by a huge Buddha in walking posture, Phra Si Sakkaya Thotsaphonyan displayed in an open space and can be seen from afar. The vast complex of 2,500 rai (approx 800 acres) is well landscaped, as a retreat for Buddhists and non-Buddhists alike. On any given day, a large number of devotees come to pray, to make offerings, and to listen to sermons, and relax with their families in the peaceful surroundings, feeding fish or watching birds, while youngsters run around or ride their bicycles.

Utthayan Road

Known as one of the most beautiful roads in the country, it runs directly towards Phutthamonthon. In the evening, the road is lit up by lamps on the swan posts lining both sides. Makeshift food stalls selling popular Isan delicacies and grilled food are put up on the roadside, with several Thai food shops opened in the orchid farms and open fields along the road, making it a popular vacation spot on weekends.

Accommodation & Restaurants

Please contact the Tourism Authority of Thailand Ratchaburi Office, at Tel. +66 3291 9176-8 for a list of accommodation and restaurants.

Things to Buy

Olives in honey, Nakhon Chaisi grapefruit known for its sweet taste, an assortment of spicy chili pastes that is used in Thai cooking, Khanom Pia (Chinese pastry or Moon Cake), Chinese sausage, dried shredded pork just to name a few, as this area is a great place to experience and taste local cuisine.

Ratchaburi

Featuring a diverse topography, Ratchaburi features lowlands to the east and the Tanaosi Mountain Range to the west, and located on the banks of the Mae Klong River 80 kilometres west of Bangkok, this province also has a maze of canals in which vendors sell a vast array of wares. Begin exploring the traditional lifestyle of the local people by visiting lush plantations, serene canals, and the Mae Klong River, the source of water for thousands of farms in its basin travelling past numerous natural attractions and historical sites amidst clusters of typical Thai houses and lush fruit orchards.





The Mae Klong Basin

Start at Chet Samian Market with its rows of old shop houses and move onto the Chet Samian Train Station, a small station serving as a hub for all South-bound trains. The architecture has remained unchanged as it was a hundred years ago. Reversed walls are a distinctive characteristic of this station. From here go onto Wat Khongkharam with its outstanding murals that tell the history of the Lord Buddha, which can be rarely seen, and then continue onto the Siam Cultural Park at Bang Phae that displays the Thai way of life, culture and traditions all under one roof. From here, move onto the Royal Thai Handicraft Centre that contains teak sculptures in many forms for decoration or furniture and then onto Damnoen Saduak Floating Market.

Alternatively from Chet Samian Market, go to Amphoe Mueang. Here it's possible to visit sites; such as, the Ratchaburi National Museum near the clock tower on the Mae Klong riverside, Wat Mahathat Worawihan, an old temple dating back to around the 10th–11th century, and Ban Khu Bua Ancient City where a lot of archaeological evidence has been found. From here, it is onto Damnoen Saduak Floating Market, which is open daily from early morning till 11 a.m.



Markets of the Plantations



Riverine Market Life

Explore the canals while shopping for everything from vegetables and fruits to freshly-cooked noodle and souvenirs. Start from Khlong Damnoen Saduak Pier, passing plantations. Stop off to taste coconut juice before arriving at a mixed agricultural farm to see old typical Thai houses on the riverside. Taste fresh coconut juice to decrease your thirst and enjoy boat noodles. Pass Wat Choti Thayakaram and Ban Chek Huat, where King Rama V used to visit as a commoner and had lunch. Pass the Lat Phli Market and return to the middle of Damnoen Saduak Floating Market once again.

For more information on other possible routes, please contact the Tourism Authority of Thailand Ratchaburi Office.

Damnoen Saduak Floating Market

This is Ratchaburi's premier attraction and also considered as Thailand's best known floating market, which is visited by both Thai and foreign tourists. Debuting a little over 40 years ago as an international tourist destination, the Damnoen Saduak Floating Market has made an impression on thousands of visitors coming here each year with the hundreds of boats that crowd the market area from early morning until midday with vendors selling everything from vegetables and fruits to freshly-cooked noodle and souvenirs. The present market has been repositioned from Khlong Lat Phli to Khlong Ton Khem. The market is situated on a ground that was a bus terminal used by farmers deliver send their produce to Bangkok, and this relocation is considered to provide more convenience for visitors travelling to the market by car. The market is open from early morning till 11.00 a.m.



Chet Samian Market

There are several legends regarding the name of this market. One says that after Phraya Tak broke through the Burmese army defense line, he wanted to recruit as many soldiers as possible. As there were a lot of villagers wishing to join him, the army clerk was understaffed, so conforming to the traditional art of war, Phraya Tak intended to enlist them before dusk. Therefore, he asked for urgent volunteers to help him with the recruitment. Seven men applied as army clerks, and the people named the village as Muban Chet Samian, meaning “the village of the seven clerks”. The market, itself, is made up of rows of old wooden shop houses that are remnants of the community’s past that is full of cacophony, smoke from the grills along with the clashes of food aromas. At present, the market is open on Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday.



Chet Samian Market

Accommodation & Restaurants

Please contact the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) Ratchaburi Office, at Tel. +66 3291 9716-8 for a list of accommodation and restaurants.

Things to Buy

Tin Chok woven fabric of the Thai Yuan ethnic group, grapes, a famous produce of Damnoen Saduak district, dragon water jars and ceramic ware, brassware, handmade musical instruments of the local people, plastic rattan products that are durable and beautiful, topiary and bonsai, dairy products in which Ratchaburi has been famous for producing for a long time, fruits and vegetables such as sweet-salty preserved radish, and rolled banana that is second to none for its tasty flavour.

Samut Songkhram

Samut Songkhram, the smallest province in Thailand, is where the Tha Chin River flows into the sea. Cruising along this river, one comes into close touch with the simple and peaceful life on the lush riverbanks, lined with typical Thai houses and orchards in Amphoe Amphawa and Amphoe Bang Khonthi. Amphawa is also rich in history, arts and culture, and is the birthplace of King Rama II, the Great Artist King of Bangkok. Every year, the King Rama II Memorial Fair is organised in his honour.

The province is also a major fishing ground, especially at Don Hoi Lot, and for Thai classical music enthusiasts, Amphoe Bang Khonthi is the location renowned for musical instruments; such as, So Ou, which is like a violin with a skull made from coconut shell.





1. King Rama II Park, a Museum in the Lush Garden of Literary Significance

King Rama II Park is pleasant as a riverside garden, lush green and well-shaded, featuring over 100 species of fragrant flowering plants as mentioned in Thai literature and a special variety of coconut known as Phaya So - the King Fiddle, yielding nuts as ideal soundboxes for Thai fiddle making. An open-air theatre surrounded by well maintained grass-covered mounds as audience seats is used to stage an annual command performance of classical mask plays staged as a tribute to King Rama II. Five typical Thai houses behind the trees serve as the King Rama II Museum, where the king's personal objects and artefacts are on display. Souvenirs, food items and young plants can be bought from the Park office in the front.

2. Amphawa Market, a Waterfront Commercial Centre of the Past

Taking the path along the canal, one passes wooden row-houses with propped-up folded door panels. Several original shops remain in operation, such as that selling Chinese sweets and tidbits, fresh brewed coffee, wooden umbrellas, traditional medicines, farm

tools and gold ornaments. The peaceful and relaxed atmosphere makes the site perfect for a leisure walk, conversing with friendly residents, buying delicacies and taking a rest sipping coffee at the Ocharot coffee shop.



Amphawa Market

3. The Mae Klong River, Khlong Amphawa, Waterfront Temples & Market

The trip starts at the ancient waterfront Amphawa Market, where a leisure walk can be taken prior to the canal tour through the well-shaded Khlong Amphawa, to the Mae Klong River. On both banks are orchards, plantations and garden homes. Several old fine temples on the banks provide a unique opportunity to appreciate Thai religious art and architecture. The boat then heads back to the Amphawa Market, which is open Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, from midday to 8 p.m.

Another stopover can be made at the King Rama II Park, for a pleasant stroll among plants in Thai literature and a visit to the King Rama II Museum located in the typical Thai group houses. A short walk from the park leads to Wat Amphawan Chetiyaram with distinctive temporary mural paintings in the temple hall.

4. Tha Kha Floating Market & Canal Tour

For this trip, check in advance for the Tha Kha Floating Market, which is on every second, seventh and twelfth day of the waning and the waxing moon from early morning till early afternoon and on weekend. One should arrive at the market early to while away the time shopping for fresh fruits, vegetables and food items at incredibly low prices. Thereafter, a boat ride can take visitors through the labyrinth of waterways and channels feeding coconut plantations and fruit orchards. One can take a stroll in the plantation, witnessing palm-sugar making and buying products on the spot. For a unique experience of the Thai countryside, a homestay service is available at the riverside Thai houses, where visitors are welcome to join a typical Thai meal with the family, taking a bath in the canal, paddling the boat, making morning offering to Buddhist monks and trying their hands in palm sugar making.



Tha Kha Floating Market & Canal Tour



Canalside Destinations of Interest

Wat Bang Kung

This temple is situated in Bang Kung Military Camp, formerly the stronghold of King Taksin the Great. A structure of interest in the temple is an ancient temple building covered by trees such as pipal and banyan, whose roots keep the falling structure intact. At present, Buddhist rites and rituals, such as ordinations, still take place inside the building. A large Buddha image is enshrined in the hall, with traces of murals remaining.

King Rama II Park

The Park is lush and green with a great variety of plants. Inside, an open-air theatre has been built, where the mask play of Ramakian, the Thai version of the Ramayana, is performed on 24 February, Thai Artists Day, each year. The King Rama II Museum inside the park is a five-unit Thai-style group-house, with a display of artefacts and personal objects of the artistic king. The Mae Klong River runs past the back of the park. Visitors can relax in the pleasant atmosphere of the riverside park or enjoy the boat noodles available for sampling at very affordable prices.



Wat Phummarin Kudi Thong

This residence in golden teak, lacquered and gilded, is situated on the riverfront. It is the only surviving structure of the five-unit Thai group-house, built and dedicated to the temple by the parents of the Queen of the First Reign. Wat Phummarin Kudi Thong is currently the “House of Thai Music,” offering courses in Thai music to children in the community.



Wat Phummarin Kudi Thong

Wat Amphawan Chetiyaram

The temple area was once the residence of Queen Amarindra of the First Reign, and the birthplace of King Rama II. A stupa was built by King Rama III to house the ashes of King Rama II. The murals inside the temple hall were done under the instructions of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn, telling the life and work of King Rama II, featuring scenes from his famous literary works. The water-based lifestyle of the people of the Mae Klong River basin is also portrayed in the murals.

Wat Chulamani

This is an old temple dating back to the Ayutthaya Period, built towards the end of the reign of King Prasatthong. In the temple is a fine four-sided temple hall that took 31 years to complete. At the pier, a hall is located housing the figure of the Venerable Nueang, a revered Buddhist monk for the people of Samut Songkhram and the neighbouring areas.

Wat Bang Kaphom

This is an ancient temple of the Ayutthaya Period, with an unusual prayer hall, featuring round doors surrounded by porches, in the same manner as a Chinese pavilion, and with figures of Chinese and Western troops on guard. Within the hall, one finds four Buddha footprints, carved on wood, with exquisite mother-of-pearl inlaid patterns, presumably executed by court artists. The upper wall is decorated with stucco carvings in the Thai-Chinese style. To the front, one finds a hall housing the figure of the Venerable Khong, highly respected in Samut Songkhram and beyond.



Mae Klong River



Mae Klong River

Accommodation & Restaurants

Please contact the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) Samut Songkhram Office, at Tel. +66 3475 2847- 8 for a list of accommodation and restaurants.

Things to Buy

Fresh and dried seafood, processed seafood, with famous items like Mae Klong mackerel, processed fish of various types, and other seafood products, including fish sauce, dried fish, prawns, and natural salt, at the Mae Klong Market, Don Hoi Lot, and roadside stalls on the Thon Buri-Pak Tho Highway, delectable fruits, especially lychee and pomelo, coconut sugar and syrup, and coconut jelly at Mae Klong Market, at roadside shops on Samut Songkhram-Bang Khonthi Road (Highway 325), and in front of King Rama II Park.

Samut Prakan

Samut Prakan is only 25 kilometres from Bangkok and is also where the Chao Phraya River flows into the Gulf of Thailand. As such, many visitors make day trips to see its numerous historical and cultural sites as well as such attractions including Mueang Boran (Ancient City), Erawan Museum, and the Crocodile Farm. In addition to this, as the old section of the district is still referred to as Pak Nam, Samut Prakan is criss-crossed by numerous canals.





Bang Nampheung to Bang Phli or Bang Pu

Starting at Bang Namphueng Market that is by the Chao Phraya River, the route follows the roads running parallel to small canals in which there a large number of overland shops and vendors rowing to sell their fresh products. Continue onto the Erawan Museum, the 3-headed elephant museum that has a collection of art objects and antiquities and various other cultural heritage items. Following this, move onto Samut Prakan Crocodile Farm and Zoo that is the world's largest crocodile farm, where more than 60,000 crocodiles of various sizes are bred. Then go on for another 5 kilometres to Mueang Boran or Ancient City, a park that features downscaled replicas of all major historical buildings of Thailand. At the end of the day retrace your steps to go to the Bang Phli Floating Market or alternatively go onto Bang Pu Seaside Resort for a fresh seafood dinner.



The Erawan Museum



Cruising Around

The following is a suggested boat route, but for further details on this and other possible routes, please contact the Tourism Authority of Thailand Offices in Bangkok.

Khlong Samrong

For those who like being on the water, a boat rental service is available to allow visitors to enjoy the peaceful scenery along Khlong Samrong. The trip starts at Wat Bang Phli Yai Klang then continues to Wat Bang Chalong Nok and Wat Bang Chalong Nai.

Bang Namphueng Floating Market

The Bang Namphueng area was declared as a green zone in 1977 after which the floating market was established to showcase the real local way of life of the people of Samut Prakan who are mainly of Mon ethnicity. The market is by the Chao Phraya River in which there are a large number of shops and vendors selling their fresh products including an impressive range of trees and flowers, and chemical free and fresh fruits and vegetables that are grown locally at reasonable prices. The market is open every weekend from early morning to early evening.

Bang Phli Floating Market

This was once a large flourishing community that was a transportation hub for both passengers and products trading from the east coast to Bangkok. A combination of some one-level, wooden row houses

with unique door panels, Bang Phli Floating Market offers a distinctive pathway of approximately 1 kilometre of wooden boards for visitors. The market itself is divided into two parts that are connected by a simple wooden bridge. Rest chairs are located along the sidewalk. Shops in this market are for locals to trade, both overland and on board. Here, rare items which are hard to find are put on sale. The people's simple way of life adds even more charm to this market. The market is open daily from early morning to noon and is busiest during Saturday and Sunday.





Wat Bang Phli Yai Nai

Accommodation & Restaurants

Please contact the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) Chachoengsao Offices, at Tel. +66 3851 4009 for a list of accommodation and restaurants.

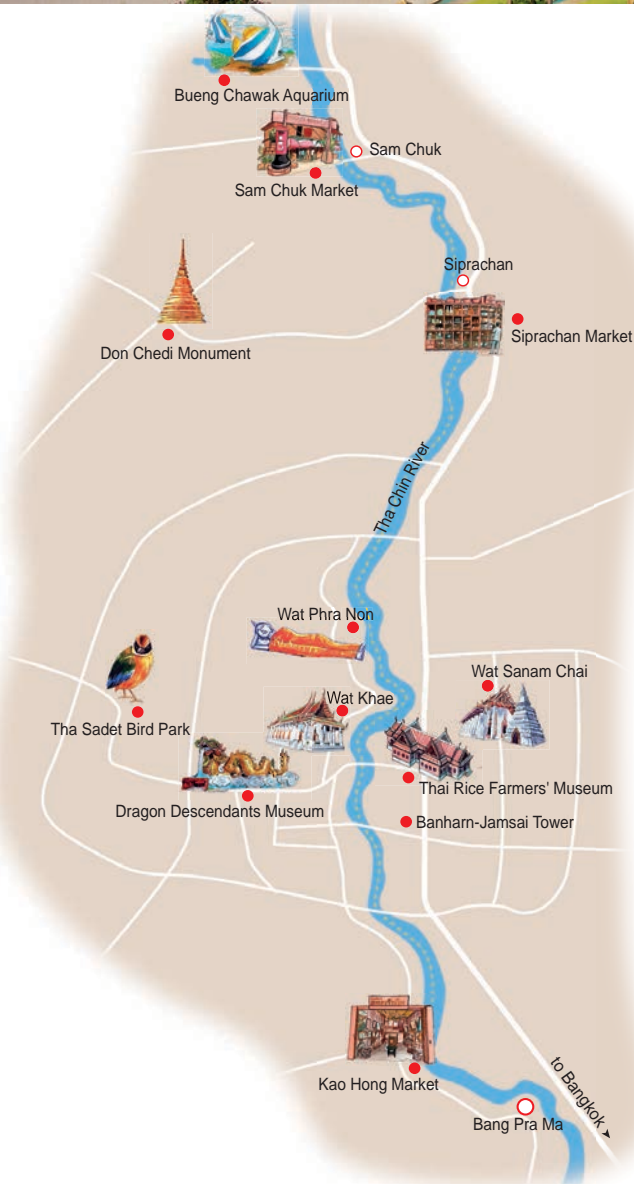
Things to Buy

There is variety of local food and products that visitors can enjoy to eat themselves or take home as souvenirs including Khanom Chak, a sweet made from flour, coconut and sugar; salted and dried fish; sweet mango in January and February, dried prawns; local OTOP products ranging from herbal incense sticks (mosquitoes repellent) to products from nutshells, and products made from water hyacinth and chemical-free vegetables.

Suphan Buri

Just about an hour away from Bangkok, Suphan Buri is an ancient town rich in natural and historical heritage. The city is one of the oldest in Thailand dating back to the 9th century, and the province was once an important border area during the Ayutthaya period; as such, a number of significant battles occurred here. Besides this, there is also a vast array of natural attractions including caves, waterfalls, bird parks, fish sanctuaries, and a crocodile farm.





The Heart of the Central Region

Travelling around Suphan Buri City there is much to see and do, as there are umpteen places to stop and visit including the 123.25-metre Banham-Jamsai Tower, Thailand's first and highest viewpoint tower overlooking Chaloem Phatthara Rachini Park allowing a bird's eye view over the city; Thai Rice Farmers' Museum with its displays of various aspects of agriculture; Wat Khae that is mentioned in Sunthon Phu's 'Khun Chang-Khun Phaen' literature, and Dragon Descendants Museum to mention just a few.

For those wanting to venture afield within this province, there are historical attractions including the Don Chedi Monument and Wat Khao Khuen, whose abbot played a significant role in Thai history; a number of natural wonders including Tha Sadet Bird Park and the Bueng Chawak Aquarium.

As such, visitors have a range of choice from within the main city of Suphan Buri itself, or by heading outside the city in all directions depending on their interests.





Down the Chao Phraya

Float down river from the Sam Chuk Market (100-year-old market) to the Kao Hong Market. Starting at the Sam Chuk Market, a Chinese community and old-fashioned market with wooden shop houses that remain in the Thai original style a century ago, go with the flow with the first stop at the Siprachan Market and then onto Beung Nong Chok. From continue onto a couple of riverside temples, Wat Phra Non famous for its large fish sanctuary that occupies some part of the river as well as a special reclining Buddha image and beautiful shady park, and Wat Sanam Chai with its big ruined octagonal pagoda surrounded by a wall with small pagodas at four points of the compass. Then continue onto the Kao Hong Market, the final destination.



Bueng Chawak Aquarium & Zoo

Sam Chuk Market



Markets of Old

Sam Chuk Market (100-year-old market)

A recipient of the 2009 UNESCO Asia-Pacific Heritage Awards for Culture Heritage, Conservation, this old market initially saw merchants coming to sell salt, cotton, mineral, and herbs, but this later changed when rice became a commodity. The market comprises large two-storey wooden houses on the bank of the Suphan Buri (Tha Chin) River in which there are as many as 19 patterns of a rare-to-find architectural wooden decoration called Lai Khanom Pang Khing (Ginger bread pattern). Today, the local people, most of who are of Thai, Chinese, and Mon ethnicity have realised the need to preserve their cultural heritage and have developed the market as an attraction for conservation tourism and a learning platform for both locals and visitors. Sam Chuk Market is open daily from 8.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.



Sam Chuk Market



Retro Markets

Siprachan Market

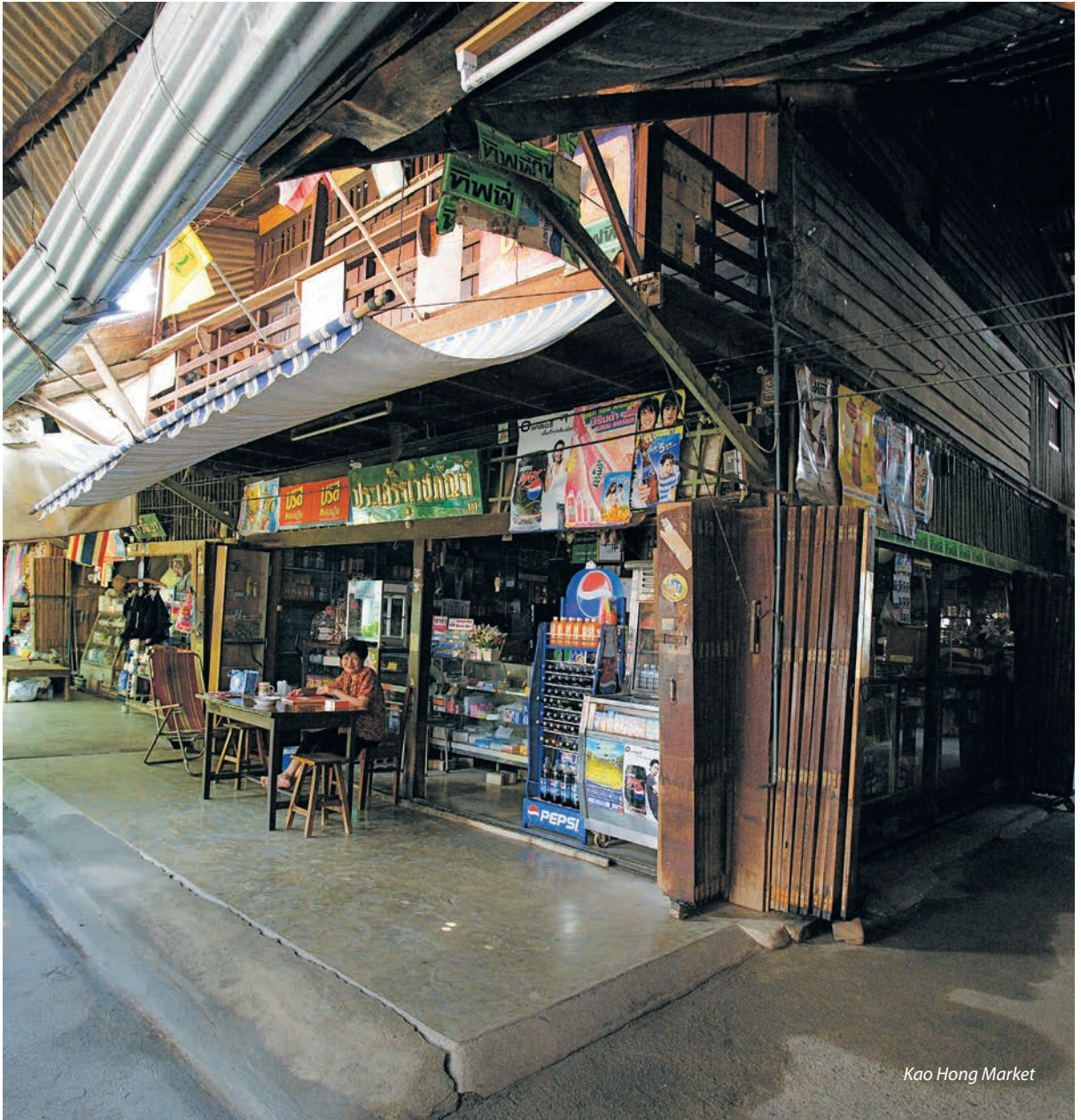
Located on the Tha Chin River, the Siprachan Market used to serve as a distribution and transportation hub in the past. With lots of trading transactions taking place between the Sam Chuk Market and Bodhi Phraya Market, the community gradually expanded from the pier to several long wooden buildings called Talat Rong Yao (long market). Later, the land was donated for public use and the Siprachan Sub-district was established. Following this, the Wat Yang Market and Chaianupab Market was added in 1953. Since then, all markets have been called the Siprachan Market. This place has preserved its community's heritage through the local way of life and traditional food. The market is open daily from 8.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.



Kao Hong Market

Featuring Chinese-design wooden houses, the market is situated opposite to Ban Kao Hong, which is located by the Suphan Buri (Tha Chin) River. In the past, it was a trading hub for the locals of Bang Pla Ma and a transport route for boats leaving from Suphan Buri to Ngiu Rai. The market comprises three parts: the upper, middle, and lower markets. The upper market dates back to over 70 years, as it was once a rice mill. Then an extension was added. The lower market is the oldest among the three. Kao Hong Market is open on Saturday and Sunday.





Kao Hong Market

Accommodation & Restaurants

Please contact the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) Suphan Buri Office, at Tel. +66 3552 5867, +66 3552 5880 for a list of accommodation and restaurants.

Things to Buy

Famous products from Suphan Buri Province include bamboo and rattan basketry, local chiffon soft cake Sali Suphan, canned water chestnuts, canned bamboo shoots, termite mushroom, honey roasted duck, baked chicken, small-scale croaker, sun dried fish, and sun-dried beef.



Lotus Field Nakhon Pathom

