

SAS CITY PORTRAIT

# Bangkok

7th ed.

**SAS** SCANDINAVIAN AIRLINES



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The information given in this booklet is based on facts available in May 1970.



Front cover: Wat Phra Sri Mahatad.

## Introduction

The excitement of a visit to Bangkok begins with the view from your SAS or THAI International plane. Below you the whole city seems covered with glittering tiles and flashing golden spires. Small wonder, for more than 400 richly bejewelled temples and monasteries pattern Bangkok.

Once in the city you will be charmed by the mixture of old and new. Narrow lanes with open-air shops and workshops radiate from modern, wide streets. Buddhist priests clad in bright orange robes mingle with bustling crowds in Western attire. There are modern streetcars, buses and cars and the ubiquitous motor-tricycles. The Chao Phya River bustles with life, and paddle boats ply the waters in a melange of motor launches, paddy boats and steamers. This river, an important traffic artery of Thailand, is the scene of picturesque floating markets, the place where housewives come in small boats to browse among vessels laden with vegetables, fruits and other commodities.

But above all, it is the beautiful temples of Bangkok (monuments dedicated to Buddha by his devoted followers) that give the Western visitor a feeling of having arrived on the other side of the world.

Bangkok, founded in 1782, was established as the capital of Siam by King Rama I, following the destruction of Ayudhaya, 400-year-old capital, by the Burmese. Today Siam is known as Thailand, "land of the free", and Bangkok has grown from the site of the royal residence into one of the leading commercial centers of the Eastern hemisphere. Large European, Indian, Chinese and Thai business houses stand side by side in the business quarter. Thailand's own products of rice, maize, teak, tin, copra and rubber form the backbone of trade and a source of national income which makes it possible for the present-day democratic kingdom of Thailand to survive economically.

The Bangkok you are about to visit is a large and thriving city whose two and a half million people are hospitable and friendly. Many speak English or French, the hotels are good, the food excellent and the sights impressive.

## Your arrival in Bangkok

Your SAS or THAI International aircraft lands at Don Muang Airport, about 16 miles (25 kms.) from the center of Bangkok. A THAI International hostess will assist you through passport and customs controls, and porters will bring your luggage to the comfortable coach which will take you directly to your hotel.

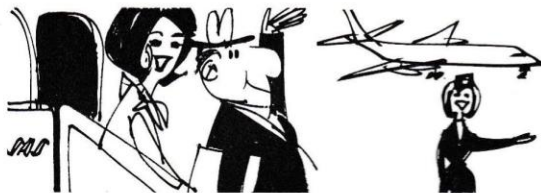
Money cannot be exchanged at the airport on Sundays or public holidays but any hotel, bank or exchange office in town will provide you with Thai currency. The monetary unit is the "Baht" or the "Tical", divided into 100 Satang.

There is a limousine service between airport and town, fare Bht. 20 each to any hotel. If you prefer not to take all your belongings to town, you can deposit your luggage at the THAI International's airport "Left Luggage" room where your luggage is safely kept as long as you like for a fee of Bht. 5 a piece per day.

Representatives of the Government Tourist Organisation - T.O.T. - are on duty 24 hours a day at the airport to answer any queries, or book you a hotel room if you have arrived without a reservation.

One thing to remember if you are scheduled to fly on from Bangkok is to reconfirm your SAS or THAI International reservation. This can be done at any of the six SAS and THAI International ticket offices in Bangkok.

On your departure, THAI International will arrange for a limousine to call for you at your hotel. If you do not



possess the limousine ticket, you are requested to pay Bht. 20 transportation fee at the airport's limousine counter. The official airport tax for those departing to points outside Thailand is Bht. 20.

## Entry regulations

Both a valid passport and visa are required for your stay in or transit through Bangkok.

There are three types of visa available:

- 1) transit visa permitting a stay of 3 days which can be extended immediately for a further period of 7 days;
- 2) tourist visa valid for 30 days from date of entry and no extension allowed;
- 3) non-immigrant visa which serves for an initial stay of 15 days and allows 15 days' extension and another 30 days if necessary.

A valid International Health Certificate of vaccination against smallpox (maximum period of validity three years) and inoculation against cholera (maximum period of validity six months) is required.

Thai customs allow non-residents to bring into Bangkok, duty-free, 200 cigarettes, 50 cigars or 250 grams (about 1/2 lb.) of tobacco, and 1 quart (1 liter) each of wines and spirits.

## Hotels

There are many excellent hotels in Bangkok, several of which have only recently been opened. The following are all centrally located or are within comfortable reach of the city center offering easy access to the shopping, business and embassy areas.

You can make your hotel reservations in advance through SAS, THAI International, or your local travel agent.

อมรินทร์ โฮเทล  
Amarin (I5)

526 Ploenchit Road  
Tel. 59810

เอเชีย โฮเทล  
Asia (H4)

Phya Thai Road  
Tel. 81 14 33

แอตแลนต้า โฮเทล  
Atlanta (K6)

541/3 Pasook Lane  
Sukhumvit Highway  
Tel. 57867, 56369

ดุสิตธานี  
Dusit Thani (I8)

1/3 Rama IV  
Tel. 86 51 11

เอราวัณ โฮเทล  
Erawan (I5)

Rajdamri Road  
Tel. 59870, 59880-89

เฟิร์ส โฮเทล  
First (H4)

Petchburi Road  
Tel. 81 33 22

ฟลอริดา โฮเทล  
Florida (H5)

43 Phya Thai Road  
Tel. 56452

อิมพีเรียล โฮเทล  
Imperial (J5)

6 Soi Ruam Rudee,  
Plernchit Road  
Tel. 54011

คิงส์ โฮเทล  
King's (H9)

31 South Sathorn Road  
Tel. 86 09 41

แมนดาริน โฮเทล  
Mandarin (F6)

662 Rama IV Road  
Tel. 37245

แมนฮัตตัน โฮเทล  
Manhattan (K6)

Lane 15  
Sukhumvit Road  
Tel. 53121-9

มโนรา โฮเทล  
Manohra (F8)

Suriwongse Road  
Tel. 37170, 37070

มดเตี้ยร โฮเทล  
Montien (G8)

Suriwongse Road  
Tel. 37360, 37060

นารายณ์ โฮเทล  
Narai (G8)

222 Silom Road  
Tel. 31070

โอเรียนเต็ล โฮเทล  
Oriental (E8)

48 Oriental Ave.  
Tel. 34941-9

แปซิฟิก โฮเทล  
Pacific (F7)

600 Siphya Road  
Tel. 31386-7

เพนินซูล่า โฮเทล  
Peninsula (F8)

Suriwongse Road  
Tel. 37000

เพรสซิเด้นท์ โฮเทล  
President (J5)

Gaysorn Road  
Tel. 59890

พรีนเซส โฮเทล  
Princess (F8)

Charoen Krung Road  
Tel. 32951-4

ราม่า โฮเทล  
Rama (F8)

Corner Silom and  
Surisak Roads  
Tel. 31010-9

รอยัล โฮเทล  
Royal (C3)

Rajadamnoen  
Tel. 29020-9

สยาม อินเตอร์คอนติเนนตัล  
โฮเทล

Siam Intercontinental (H5)

Rama I Road  
Tel. 59850

เซราตัน

Sheraton Bangkok (H7)  
80 Suriwongse Road  
Tel. 36481

ไทย โฮเทล  
Thai (D2)

Prajathipatai Road  
Tel. 81 34 15

วิกตอรี โฮเทล  
Victory (F8)

Silom Road  
Tel. 37040-9

เวียงไค้ โฮเทล  
Viengtai (C2)

42 Tanee Road  
Tel. 81 57 88

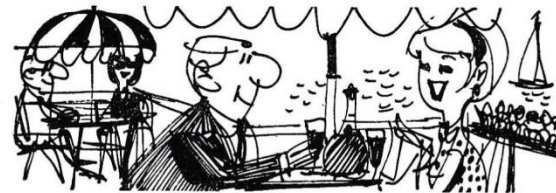
For a single air-conditioned room with bath the prices will range between US\$5 and 18 and between US\$8 and 32 for a double.

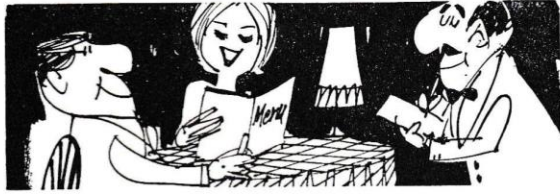
Please note that a 10 % service charge is added to the above rates, all of which are subject to change without notice.

The voltage for electrical appliances is 220 volts A.C. in Bangkok and 110 volts A.C. elsewhere.

## Restaurants and cuisine

Thai food is spicy and delicious, though many Europeans find it a little too peppery – and many restaurants have “toned down” the flavoring to suit such tastes. Meals begin with soup, followed by an assortment of vegetables, fish and curried meat with rice. As a dessert, the





lush, exotic fruits of Thailand – mangoes, papaya, rambutan and rang sard in particular – have few equals. Tempting, too, is Ta Ko, a delicious alternative consisting of Tapioca flour, coconut milk and sugar – all blended into a wonderful mixture.

Although the leading hotels and restaurants offer cosmopolitan menus, printed in English as well as Thai, the following definitions may prove useful for those who want to try some typical Thai dishes:

Kaeng Tom Yam – soup with prawns, chicken and fish.

Kaeng Chued Pak – vegetable soup.

Mee Krob – crisp noodles.

Kao Pad – fried rice.

Kaeng Ped Kai – chicken curry.

Kai Yang – chicken flavored with curry mixture and then barbecued.

Praw Wan Nua – sweet-sour beef.

Plakapong – a large white-fleshed fish, sweet and meaty, served fried or steamed with sweet-sour ginger sauce.

Kung Tod – fried giant prawns.

Tea, generally green and mild, is the staple Thai beverage. Try too, if you like neat whisky, Mekong, a rice product, somewhat like rough bourbon. Good beer is obtainable (for example, the local Singha and imported Danish beers), along with American cola drinks and lemon squash.

Thai food is eaten with a large spoon and fork – so you will not have to bother with chopsticks. You may, however, like to try one of the excellent Chinese and Japanese restaurants where chopsticks are provided.

There are also many first-class restaurants and hotels which serve European, American, Korean and Indian food.

We recommend:

#### Thai food

##### บ้านไทย

*Baan Thai* (L6)

32 Sukhumvit Road  
(Behind Rex Hotel)  
Tel. 91 30 13

##### มนีญา โลดส์รูม

*Maneeya Lotus Room* (J5)

518/4 Pleonchit Road  
Sirinee Building  
Tel. 56412-55282

##### ทิพย์ปรีชา

*Tip Preecha (Thai Sala)* (L6)

14 Soi 34 Sukhumvit Road,  
Bangkapi  
Tel. 91 01 05

##### พิมาน

*Piman*

46 Soi 49 (L6)  
Sukhumvit Road  
Tel. 91 26 30

##### วิลลา ฟลอรัล

*Villa Flora* (I2)

328 Phaholyothin Road  
Tel. 70762, 75025

#### Chinese food

##### การ์ลตัน

*Carlton Bar and Restaurant*  
(H8)

283 Silom Road,  
Sribungruang Building  
Tel. 37793

##### มังกรทอง

*Golden Dragon Restaurant*  
(K6)

Sukhumvit Road  
Bangkapi  
Tel. 56453, 57112

##### ฮอยเทียนเลา

*Hoi Thien Lao* (E5)

Sua Pha Road  
Tel. 20221, 21085, 28829

##### กินรีนาวา

*'Kinareenava'* (I7)

Lumpini Park  
Tel. 55982  
Floating restaurant

##### มิรามมา

*Miramar Restaurant* (I5)

Rajaprasong Shopping  
Center  
Tel. 56110, 59514

##### นิวเป็งเชียง

*New Peng Chieng* (G9)

Sathorn Road  
Tel. 34176

#### Japanese food

##### ไดมารู

*Daimaru Restaurant* (I5)

Third floor, Daimaru  
Dept. Store  
Rajaprasong Shopping  
Center  
Tel. 56463

##### ฮานายา

*Hanaya* (F7)

Siphya Road  
Tel. 33080

##### คาวาชิยา

*Kawachiya* (E8)

New Road  
Tel. 33495

##### มิซึสุ

*Mizu's Kitchen* (G8)

32 Patpong Road  
Tel. 33447

#### European food

##### ทูไวคิงส์

*The Two Vikings* (L6)

Soi Sawadee,  
31 Sukhumvit  
Tel. 91 19 78

Specializes in Scandinavian food



### สวิสอินน์

Swiss Inn (H5)

Siam Square; Rama I Road  
Tel. 51555

### เลอ ชาเล่

Le Chalet (I5)

Erawan Hotel  
Tel. 58050

### เลอ คาฟ

Le Cave (I5)

Erawan Hotel  
Seafood and excellent wine

### กระท่อมนิภา

The Nipa Hut (K6)

382 Sukhumvit Road  
Bangkapi  
Tel. 91 26 11

Serves Mexican as well as  
European food

### ทรอปีกาน่า

Tropicana (F8)

Rama Hotel  
Tel. 31010-9

### นอร์มันดี กริลล์

Normandie Grill (E8)

Oriental Hotel  
Tel. 34941-9

Practical advice on dining is offered by the following periodicals: "Visitors Guide", "Bangkok After Dark", and the "Bangkok Bulletin".

## Sights and excursions

In Bangkok one does not walk more than is absolutely necessary – it is generally too hot. To hop from sight to sight, many visitors use the conventional taxi or a motor-samlor, the popular motor-tricycle. The most inexpen-

### นิคส์ นัมเบอร์วัน

Nick's Number 1 (I8)

Sathorn Road  
Famous for Hungarian food

### ท่าอากาศยาน ดอนเมือง

Don Muang Airport  
Restaurant (I1)

Terminal Building  
Tel. 70030, ext. 31  
Scandinavian and Thai dishes

### Korean food

#### โคเรีย เฮ้าซ

Korea House (I5)

510-512 Plernchit Court  
(behind Erawan Hotel)  
Tel. 55927

### Indian food

#### ร้านมุสลิม

Muslim Restaurant (F8)

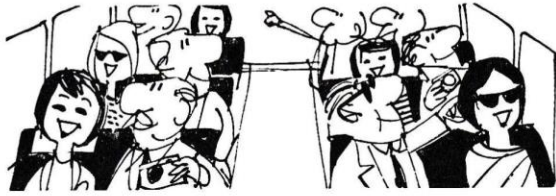
Opp. Central Trading Co.  
New Road  
Tel. 38010

sive and convenient way of sightseeing, however, is to join one of the professionally conducted tours arranged by a number of local travel agents. As the itineraries of various tours differ somewhat, we list below some of the main sights, so that you may select a tour which includes the places you wish to see. The references in parenthesis refer to the map.

**The Grand Palace** (B4) is, in fact, a walled town over a square mile in area. The many beautiful buildings have typical, multi-tiered, colored roofs, flashing spires and golden chedis (pagodas). As specimens of Thai architecture, The Chakri Maha Prasard, Dusit Maha Prasard and Phratinang Amanrindra Vinichai Palaces are unsurpassed. The first of these was built in 1876-80 by an English architect in Italian style, but with a typical Thai triple roof. The Dusit Hall, built by King Rama I in 1782 for ceremonial purposes, is considered the finest of them all. The Amanrindra Vinichai Hall contains the Throne Hall where the most recent coronation to take place was that of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej in 1950. The Grand Palace is open all day Tuesday and Thursday and during the morning only on Monday, Wednesday and Friday; closed on weekends and public holidays. When visiting, men must wear coats and ties and women are not permitted to wear slacks or shorts. The use of movie cameras is prohibited. Admission fee. Within the precincts of the Grand Palace stands also the famous Wat Phra Keo – see below.

**Temple of the Emerald Buddha** or **Wat Phra Keo** (B4). The Royal Chapel, built in 1785, enshrines the famous Emerald Buddha, carved out of a solid piece of translucent jasper, on a golden throne. This image is draped in gorgeous garments of gold and precious stones according to the season. The Buddha's change of dress is considered so important a matter that it is conducted by the King himself or on his deputation. The figure was made before 1457 and subsequently moved from country to country in South East Asia until, in 1782, it eventually came to Bangkok. The temple itself is by far the most elaborate in Thailand. Buildings adjoining the Royal Chapel include the Golden Pagoda and the galleries, the walls





of which are richly adorned with episodes of the mythological epic, Ramakien. Admission fee.

**The Temple of Dawn or Wat Arun (A5).** Situated on the bank of the Chao Phya river at Dhonburi, the Temple of Dawn is one of the most impressive edifices in Bangkok – and, in fact, the whole of Thailand. The center prang (tower) of this five-towered “Porcelain Pagoda” is 240 feet (75 meters) high and stands on a terrace cornered by four smaller towers. Each spire is covered with minute pieces of colored porcelain and glass giving the impression, when seen from a distance, of a building inlaid with thousands of precious stones. Climb half way up the center tower and enjoy the fine view of the river and surroundings. Admission fee.

**The Temple of the Sacred Figtree or Wat Phra Jetubon (B5).** Popularly known as Wat Po, The Temple of the Sacred Figtree or Wat Phra Jetubon stands on the site of an older monastery. Its construction was started by Rama I in 1793. The temple is renowned for its colossal statue of reclining Lord Buddha representing the moment when the Master entered Nirvana. This image is 42 feet (13 meters) high and nearly 180 feet (55 meters) long. The temple is one of the largest in Thailand. After seeing the reclining Buddha, walk around to look at the four western stupas (towers), green, white, yellow and blue, representing the first four kings of the present dynasty.

**Fine Arts Department (B3).** This is the State School for the young generation in Thai classical drama, ballet and music. Permission to visit the school may be obtained, and it is interesting to watch the students being trained in dancing and acting. At the Silpakorn Theater, the Fine Arts Department presents performances of classical Thai dramas between November and May on Fridays at 8 p.m. and on Saturdays and Sundays at 10 a.m., 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. Performances last about 3 hours.

**The National Museum (B3).** Once the residence of royalty, the National Museum provides today a collection of interesting exhibits, illuminating the political and cultural history of Thailand. Highlights include a model war elephant fully caparisoned with royal equipment; the Buddhaisawan Hall with its

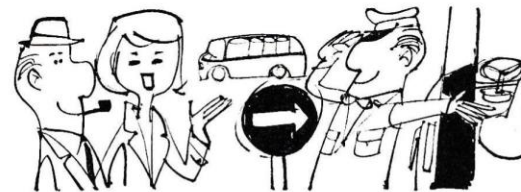
renowned Image of Buddha; and the Isaravinichai Hall with its imposing marble and bronze figures. The Museum is open to the public daily, except Mondays, from 9.30 a.m. to 12 noon and from 1 to 3.45 p.m., though not on Buddhist religious day, Wan Phra and other official holidays (see “Special events and public holidays”). Admission fee.

**The Marble Temple or Wat Benchamabopitr (E2)** was built by Thailand’s most famous king, Chulalongkorn. A fine example of modern Thai architecture, it is a happy blend of the best Thai traditions and modern ideas. Italian marbles and Chinese glazed tiles are dominant among the materials used. The chief attractions are the Buddha image, Phra Buddhajinaraj in the Convocation Hall and the unique collection of Buddha images of various periods and countries, among which are the two famous walking Buddhas. Wat Benchamabopitr is, today, the seat of the Supreme Patriarch of the Kingdom.

**The Snake Farm (H7).** This farm is run by the Pasteur Institute and was established by King Chulalongkorn’s consort, Queen Saovapha. Feeding the snakes and extraction of venom (for producing snakebite antitoxin) take place every day at 11 a.m., except on holidays, Saturdays and Sundays. Admission fee.

**Wat Rajabopit (C4)** is another temple worth seeing. It consists of a tall central stupa enclosed by a circular gallery intersected by four axial chapels, two of which serve as entrances to the inner courtyard. The group of buildings are entirely covered with tiles and slabs made in China. In the central stupa there is a vaulted room and in the center of this is a stone image of Buddha sitting on Naga. This statue was brought to Bangkok from Lopburi. Other Buddhas, which have been brought from various temples, are placed in the niches in the exterior side of the stupa. In the northern chapel are paintings representing episodes from the life of Buddha. In the garden behind the temple you will find Indian pavilions, Cambodian towers, Thai chedis and various other revered treasures.

**The Giant Swing and Wat Sudhas (C4).** The Giant Swing recalls the days when the Brahman’s swinging ceremony took place. It stands opposite the Wat Sudhas temple, which is famous for the marvelous carved doors of its Convocation Hall.





**Suan Pakkad Palace** (H3). If you enjoy browsing old porcelain, old weapons and fine murals, you should visit the Suan Pakkad Palace, really a group of buildings. The product of Thailand's Prince and Princess Chumbhot, brought about for the sole purpose of promoting Thailand's fine arts, the Palace maintains on the premises a qualified guide. Highlights include a Japanese Garden and a Lacquer Pavilion. Admission fee.

**The Golden Mount or Phukhaothong** (D4) is one of the most conspicuous and picturesque landmarks of Bangkok. The slopes of the mount, an artificial hill built by King Mongkut in the mid-1800s are pierced by a number of small caves. Two winding staircases, low and easily ascendable, lead to the summit which is crowned by a 'Phra chedi', a peculiar cone-shaped tower enclosed by a covered gallery. In the base of this huge edifice a piece of bone of the Lord Buddha is enshrined. Each November, at the Wat Sraket Fair, the lights of the Mount wink benevolently as pilgrims climb its stairs to offer homage to Lord Buddha.

**Wat Trimitr** (D2). The huge 5<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>-ton gold Buddha at Wat Trimitr is, today, one of the great attractions of Bangkok. Until 12 years ago nobody thought of this statue as anything more than a bronze Buddha covered in plaster. During the course of its removal from the original site to Wat Trimitr, however, a series of incidents befell it causing the statue's surface of plaster to crack and reveal an image of gold. In consequence, the Buddha is now valued by tourist and historian alike as a rare and priceless find. Though its age has not been determined, the statue is believed to have been cast in the early 14th century.

**Royal Barges of Thailand** (A3). The Floating Market tour which takes you along the Chao Phya River to the Temple of Dawn also includes, as a rule, a visit to the shed housing the Royal Barges. These vessels date back centuries to a time when water processions were a more common part of state and religious occasions. The King's Barge, the largest known dugout in the world, is approximately 140 feet (44 meters) long and carries a crew of 50 oarsmen. Nowadays, the Royal Barges are used

once a year to transport the Monarch down the river at the Tod Kathin Festival (see 'Public Holidays and Festivals').

**The Lumpini Park** (I7). This pleasant public garden is very popular with office workers and their families, a favorite meeting place in the afternoon and evening when the weather is fine.

**Jim Thompson's Thai House** (G5). This really consists of seven houses built into one and contains a magnificent collection of Thai and Asian art and antiques. Open Monday and Thursday 9 to 12 a.m. All donations go to the Bangkok School for the Blind. Admission fee.

**The Monument of Democracy** (C3), Rajadamnoen Avenue. Built in 1932, this interesting monument was built to commemorate the change from an absolute to a constitutional monarchy.

**Dusit Zoo Khao Din** (F1). Located on Rama V Road opposite the King's Palace, the Zoological gardens cover several acres and include, in addition to the diverse assortment of captive animals and birds, a lake on which visitors can enjoy paddle-and row-boats and a 'Happy Land' of swings, roundabouts and ferris wheel – all in all a paradise for the children. The Zoo is open weekdays from 8 a.m. to 6.30 p.m.; weekends until 7 p.m. Entrance fee.

**National Assembly Hall** (E1), Rajadamnoen Avenue. This is the meeting place of the National Assembly, and was originally The Throne Hall. It was built between 1908 and 1916 by Rama VI and was planned by two Italian architects in the style of the Italian Renaissance.

*Note:* All temples, except Wat Phra Keo (Chapel of the Emerald Buddha) may be visited at any time, and in most of them you will be allowed to use your camera. No admission fee is charged, but it is customary to deposit something in the donation box, usually situated at the temple entrance. It is a Thai custom to take off shoes before entering a temple building. As a visitor this will not be expected of you, but it will be regarded as a courtesy.

(cont'd on page 19)







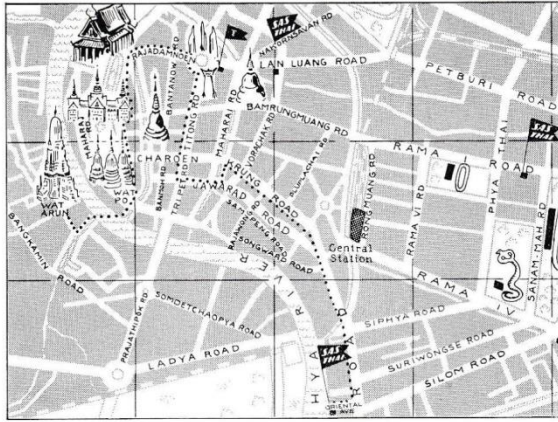
Code numbers in this booklet refer to the above map. Thus (B4) is located where lines drawn from "B" and "4" cross each other.

### Interesting sights in Bangkok

- |  |   |                                 |
|--|---|---------------------------------|
| (B4) The Grand Palace.   | (G5) The National Sports Stadium.                 | (I7) Lumpini Park.              |
| (B3) The National Museum.  | (I6) The Royal Bangkok Sports Club (race course). | (C4) Wat Rajabopit.             |
| (D2) The Standing Buddha.  | (H7) The Pasteur Institute (Snake Farm).          | (D4) The Golden Mount.          |
| (E2) The Marble Temple.  | (A5) The Temple of Dawn (Porcelain Pagoda).       | (C3) The Monument of Democracy. |
| (B4) The Temple of the Emerald Buddha.   | (B5) The Temple of the Sacred Figtree (Wat Po).   |                                 |
| (B3) The Fine Arts Department with the Silpakorn Theater. (The Classical Thai drama and dance performances.) | (C4) The Giant Swing and Wat Sudhas.              |                                 |

### Useful addresses

-  **Official Tourist Information Office** (Tourist Organisation of Thailand): Rajadamnoen Avenue (D3). Tel. 24641-2.
  -  **SAS and THAI International Ticket Offices:**
1. 412 Siam Square Rama I Road. Tel. 54181.
  2. 1040 CMMC Building, Phaholyothin Road. Tel. 72040.
  3. Erawan Hotel. Tel. 54181.
  4. Dusit Thani Hotel. Tel. 86 51 11.
  5. c/o THAI Airways Co., Lan Luang Road. Tel. 81 16 33.
  6. c/o EAC Co., Oriental Avenue. Tel. 37632.



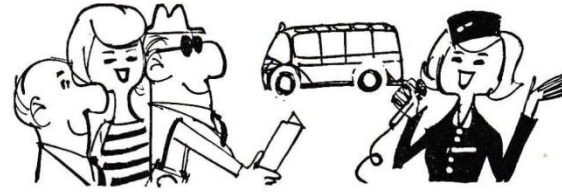
## One hour's walk around Bangkok

SAS and THAI INTERNATIONAL's Ticket Offices are conveniently located at the center of Bangkok's main shopping area. From the Ticket Office at Dusit Thani Hotel turn left along the Silom Road and a three minutes' walk will bring you to Patpong and then Suriwongse Road where you can buy the world-famous Thai handwoven silk. Take a ten minutes' taxi ride along the New Road (Charoen Krung Road) to the Thieves' Market (Nakorn Kasem) in which every conceivable kind of merchandise is on display. Walk a little further to the next corner, Yawaraj Road, where you will find the Chinatown District. Take another five minutes' taxi ride if you are not in the mood for walking and you will come to Pahurat Road and Rajadamnoen Avenue close to the famed Grand Palace and the Temple of the Emerald Buddha. Five minutes' walk will bring you to the busy river and a short ferry ride to the graceful Temple of Dawn.

## Useful addresses

**T** Official Tourist Information Office (Tourist Organisation of Thailand):  
Rajadamnoen Avenue (D3). Tel. 24641-2.

**SAS** and **THAI** International Ticket Offices:  
1. 412 Siam Square Rama I Road. Tel. 54181.  
2. 1040 CMMC Building, Phaholyothin Road. Tel. 72040.  
3. Erawan Hotel. Tel. 54181.  
4. Dusit Thani Hotel. Tel. 86 51 11.  
5. c/o THAI Airways Co., Lan Luang Road. Tel. 81 16 33.  
6. c/o EAC Co., Oriental Avenue. Tel. 37632.



(sights cont'd from page 15)

## THE FLOATING MARKETS

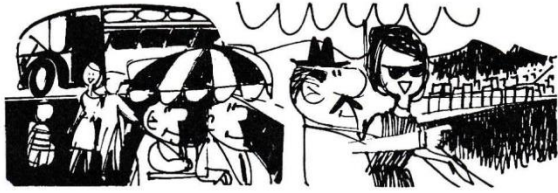
Whatever sightseeing you do, be sure to save one morning at least for the three-hour river and canal tour by motor launch. Because of the tide it has to be made in the early morning, but this is all to the good, since activity at the floating markets is then at its height. Traders can be seen weaving in and out in their boats overladen with tropical fruit, meat and fish, housewives bustle around for bargains, and silk dryers hang out their colorful wares to dry in the sun. This exciting, conducted tour down river includes, too, visits to the Temple of Dawn (see "Sights") and a riverside handicraft shop.

## Excursions

If you care to leave the bustling city for a day or two both the east and west shores of the Gulf of Siam offer a string of excellent beach resorts from Sattahip round to Hua Hin. Among those near at hand Bangsaen, Chonburi and Si Racha are particularly delightful. Alternatively, for those who prefer their Eastern fairy tales to be laced with the enchantment of "The King and I" and the authenticity of Santha Rama Rau's "View of the South-east", then there are for the inland explorer, the elephant logging camps, the primitive craft communities, ancient towns and revered temples.

**Ayudhya.** Thailand's capital from 1350 to 1767, Ayudhya, lies but two hours' ride upcountry from Bangkok. You may go by rail and ferryboat or by private car. Here stand the magnificent ruins of old palaces and temples and examples of an-





cient Thai houses. En route you will pass through rural villages and by rice paddies ploughed as of yore by pondrous water buffalo.

Ayudhya is most easily reached from Bangkok by train from Hua Lam Pong station. If time permits, break your journey for a look at Bang Pa-In's famous 17th-century palace-on-the-lake. Permission should be obtained beforehand, however, if you wish to look round the palace interior.

**Angkor Wat.** Across the border in Cambodia stands Angkor Wat. Any of the major travel agencies or the SAS/THAI offices will arrange the tour by plane (1½ hours each way). Angkor Wat, situated near the town of Siemreap, was discovered by the Western world less than 100 years ago. Formerly the center of Hindu culture in the Orient, it is today one of the most outstanding historical attractions of the East. Neither India nor Java can boast of such imposing shrines, temples and palaces as the group at Angkor Wat.

**Bangsaen.** A haven of sun-drenched sands and emerald waters, Bangsaen offers, in paradisaic setting, swimming, fishing, water-skiing, skin-diving, pony-rides along the sands, or boat rides on exotically colored sail boats into unruffled seas. Choice of accommodation includes the growingly-popular, flyscreened bungalow-cottages. Bangsaen is located 60 miles (90 kms.) from Thailand's capital. Most convenient mode of transport to Bangsaen and neighbouring Pataya is by car from Bangkok.

**Chiang Mai.** Second largest city in Thailand, and ancient capital of Northern Siam, Chiang Mai possesses a number of beautiful and interesting temples. Founded in the 11th century by Meng Ray, the Thai chieftain, it is the point upon which many of the struggles between Burma and Thailand converged. The town serves as an ideal stepping-off point to numerous 'cottage' industries, ranging from finely-wrought silver and delicate lacquerware to gaily painted parasols and hand-woven cottons.

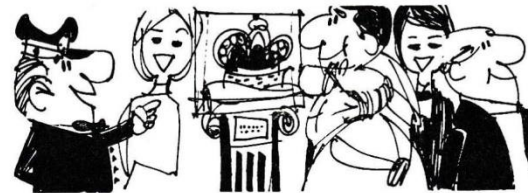
Also well worth a visit is the nearby, verdant mountain of Doi Sutep topped by a sparkling golden temple. Chiang Mai

is but three hours by air from Bangkok and 24 hours away by train. Here, as with Hua Hin, you would be wise to book accommodation in advance.

**Elephant Round-Up, Surin.** The elephant round-up held every November at Surin in Northeast Thailand is probably the only event in the world where you can witness 200 elephants at one time. In wild-west fashion the beasts are roped and captured, and displays of their strength are shown by pitting seventy men against one elephant in extraordinary contests of tug-of-war. The finale of the round-up features elephants in ancient battle dress, howdahs, warriors and lethal spears bristling from their broad backs. Special trains are provided to take visitors to this festival, and accommodation is available in Surin. In addition, there is a perennial tour, bookable through Diethelm's Travel Service, during which you can witness these mighty beasts logging and lifting immense hauls. Tour arranged by the Tourist Organization of Thailand.

**Hua Hin-on-Sea.** An idyllic seaside playground, situated on the west coast of the Gulf of Siam, Hua Hin lies some 130 miles (220 kms.) from Bangkok. The resort offers good accommodation in the form of the Railway Hotel and in its 'village' of holiday bungalows. Book in advance if you come, for it is extremely popular, specially from February through September. In addition to its lovely beach, Hua Hin possesses tennis courts, a miniature putting green, table tennis, TV, and modern facilities for dancing. Hua Hin can best be reached by train from Bangkok Noi and Hua Lam Pong.

**Khao Yai National Park.** 100 miles (160 kms.) from Bangkok, sprawls 514,950 acres (2,084 sq. kms.) of beautiful untrammeled terrain: Khao Yai National Park. Here you can spot wild game, particularly at dawn and dusk . . . play golf . . . eat at a modern restaurant . . . sleep in one of the special vacation 'bungalows' (all accommodation can be reserved by calling the TOT or SAS/THAI offices) . . . and enjoy an abundance of walks through the wild and beautiful flora of Thailand, over primitive rope bridges and by cascading waterfalls. The best way to reach Khao Yai National Park is by car from Bangkok.



**Nakorn Pathom.** Nakorn Pathom is not only the oldest town in Thailand, but also the site of the famous Golden Chedi, one of the oldest (2nd century A.D.) and tallest (380 feet – 116 meters) religious shrines in the world.

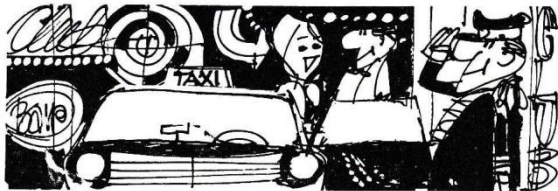
Said by historians to have been populated as long ago as 150 B.C., the city is one of the most revered centers in Buddhist Thailand, drawing tens of thousands of visitors every year, particularly during the November Fair. Today, it is a sleepy country town well worth strolling. You can reach Nakorn Pathom by train from Bangkok Noi and Hua Lam Pong.

About 30 miles (50 kms.) west from Nakorn Pathom lies *Kanchanaburi*, a town of little individual significance, but a milestone if you're interested in viewing infamous structures, for this is the place you should head for if you have a yearning to see the celebrated Bridge on the River Kwai.

**Pataya.** Beyond Bangsaen lies the popular beach resort of Pataya, which can be reached either by car or coach. Located right on the beach is the luxurious Nipa Lodge – a 120-room air-conditioned hotel complete with swimming pool, fine restaurants and every facility for fun and relaxation.

## Entertainment and night life

The visitor to Bangkok should not miss the classical Thai drama/dancing – an elaborate, intriguing entertainment modelled on ancient Sanskrit drama and composed today of choral singing and graceful dancing to traditional Thai music. Many of the epic tales, set to music, stem from the ancient Hindu mythology of Ramakien. The actors and actresses start training in early childhood to master the intricate movements of the dance. The costumes worn are highly elaborate and resemble those of Thailand in olden days, with a few frills added for stage effect. The faces of the performers are covered with thick powder or masks so that all attention is focused on the movements and not on facial expression. Classical Thai drama/dancing can be enjoyed at the Na-



tional Theater all year round, and at the Silpakorn Theater from November to May.

The latest British and American films can be seen at a number of cinemas, the most popular being: Siam, Lido, Scala, The King's, Grand, Queen's, Chalem Thai, Chalem Khetr, Hollywood, Paramount, Metro, Petchrama, and Coliseum. The current programs are published in the English language newspapers "Bangkok World" and "Bangkok Post".

Several nightclubs provide dinner and dancing, catering for the international set. The Orient Hotel's Bamboo Bar has dancing every night, except Sunday. The Ambassador nightclub in the Erawan Hotel offers a floorshow which is international. And the Tropicana at the Rama Hotel and the Cat's Eye of the President Hotel also swing with the best.

Popular night spots include:

*An-An* (G8)

Montien Hotel  
Tel. 37360

*Ambassador Club* (I5)

Erawan Hotel  
Tel. 59870

*Café de Paris* (G8)

Corner of Patpong Road  
Tel. 33638

*Cat's Eye Night Club* (I5)

President Hotel  
Tel. 59890

*Honey Nightclub* (F8)

Suriwongse Road  
Tel. 31968, 35724

*Lolita Night Club* (C3)

Rajadamnoen Road  
Tel. 81 65 95

*Moulin Rouge* (C3)

Mansion 3  
Rajadamnoen Avenue  
Tel. 20639

*Ramayana* (F8)

Rama Hotel  
Silom Road  
Tel. 31010-9

*Sani Chateau* (I5)

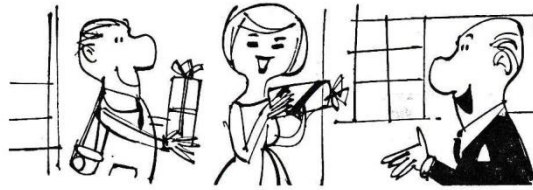
Gaysorn Road  
Tel. 58641, 56774

*Starlight* (E8)

1191 Chareon Krung Road  
Tel. 35256

*Tropicana* (F8)

Rama Hotel  
Tel. 31010-9



## Tipping

Hotels often (but not always) add a 10 per cent service charge to the bill. Restaurants: tip 10 per cent unless a service charge is already added. Taxi drivers expect a couple of Bahts, and the same goes for baggage boys at hotels.

## Shopping

Shopping in Bangkok is great fun and one long game of bluff – indeed, be prepared to bargain or you will deny both yourself and the vendor that warm egotistic feeling that follows a deal well dealt! In the larger stores, however, you must pay the asking price.

## What to buy

Among the irresistible treasures are the exotic Thai silks, the beautiful inlaid nielloware, fine porcelains and antique jewelry. Jewelry of delicate gold filigree, precisely set with tiny gems, is a Thai speciality. Metal buddha heads and statuettes, temple “spirit” bells, princess rings, and cutlery and tableware of black buffalo horn are also popular souvenirs.

## Where to shop

The Nakron Kasem Compound, also known as the “Thieves’ Market” is the place to go for something typically Eastern. Here sprawl endless Chinese-made wares as well as Thai goods and you are bound to discover something reasonably priced (if you have mastered the art of bargaining!).

At “Design Thai”, the largest Thai silk store in Bangkok, you will find an enormous range of exclusive designs, as well as ready-made clothes for men and women, plus an attractive range of accessories. The main store is in

Ploenchit Road, with branches in the Rama Hotel, and the Nipa Lodge, Pataya Beach. The retail shop of Jim Thompson’s Thai Silk Company in Suriwongse Road is also well worth a visit. Other excellent shops for locally made articles are Sena & Co., in Oriental Avenue, Thai Nakorn near Chalerom Krung, Thai Utsahugum, Prato Sarmyod and E. Seng Chong in New Road and Silpakorn in the Rajadamnoen Avenue.

If time permits, take a stroll along Sampeng, a crowded lane running parallel with Yawaraj Road. No vehicles are permitted entry and this fascinating street is lined with stalls offering mainly cotton and other inexpensive articles. Don’t stop shopping when you reach the end of Sampeng – at its conclusion lies the Sapan Hun bridge where rich Thai fruits and sweets are sold.

If you haven’t had enough of bargain-hunting, you will discover, over the bridge, Pahurad Street, where you may obtain goods and fabrics for evening wear that are a little more expensive.

## Business hours

**Banks** are open for business from 8.30 a.m. to 3.30 p.m. (closed on Saturdays).

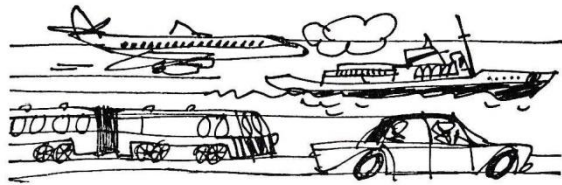
**Offices:** Open weekdays 8.30 a.m. to 12 noon and 1 to 4.30 p.m., Saturdays 9 a.m. to 12 noon (for Post Offices only).

**Shops:** The major shops are generally open on weekdays between 8.30 a.m. and 6 p.m. Saturdays same time.

## Transportation

Buses operate on almost all main streets, but their progress is usually slow and they are generally hot and crowded. Taxis have meters but seldom use them. The minimum charge, including the first kilometer is nor-





mally Bht. 3 with Bht. 1 for each additional kilometer. You may hire a taxi for the day at Bht. 150, which permits travel within the city boundaries of a distance up to 50 miles (80 kms.). For large taxis the charge is higher.

## Sports

Aside from the accepted, internationally popular sports such as tennis, fishing and golf, there are a number of fascinating sporting activities unique to Thailand. Prime among these are Thai boxing, kite fighting, virtually the national sport, and Takraw, the object of which is to keep a wicker ball in motion by hitting it with any part of the body.

Boxing, Thai-style, is that version of pugilism which allows head, elbows, knees and bandaged feet to be used as frequently and effectively as the competitors' gloved fists. Preceded by a ceremony of obeisance to the Guardian Spirit of the Arena, it is an exciting and skilful spectacle which moves from a ferocious pre-match display of strength, designed to strike fear into an opponent's heart, to a no-holds-barred fight paced by drums and pipes. Bouts are held at the Rajadamnoen Boxing Stadium and at the Lumpini Boxing Stadium.

Kite-fighting is in season during March, April and sometimes May, when a steady wind blows from the Gulf of Thailand. Visit Bangkok's Pramane Ground (opposite the Grand Palace) any afternoon after 4 for a sight of this unique and amusing sport. In each contest there are two participants – the "Chula" kite representing the male, and the "Pakpao" the female. The Chula is about six feet long and covered with barbs. The aim is for the Chula to catch the dainty Pakpao and to throw her to the ground, whilst the flirtatious Pakpao carries a loop with which to try to trap her man.

Almost every day some kind of sports competition takes place at the National Stadium – football, rugby, basketball, fencing, jujitsu, etc.

Alternatively, there is horse-racing on Saturday and Sunday afternoons at the Sports and Turf Club, golf and tennis at the Royal Sports Club, big-game safaris which can be arranged through the Tourist Organization of Thailand (see page 18 for address), and swimming at the outdoor pools of the Oriental, Erawan, Princess, Rama-Hilton and Royal Hotels, or from Bangsaen and Pataya's exotic beaches south of Bangkok.

## Climate and clothing

The seasonal monsoonal winds dictate the climatic character of Thailand. The cool, dry season starts in November and ends in February, with temperatures ranging from 62° F (17° C) to 84° F (20° C). It is intensely hot from March to May, and May to September is humid with temperatures varying from 76° F (24° C) in the evening to 95° F (35° C) in the daytime.

Lightweight tropical clothing is suitable daywear, cotton being the coolest material. Jackets and ties will be needed for visits to the Grand Palace. Sandals are not permitted in monastery grounds and shoes are removed before entering temples of worship and Thai homes. Dress is, however, generally informal though an evening dress may be required for the more special occasion.

A laundry and dry-cleaning service is available at most of the leading hotels.

## Religious services

Buddhism is the national religion and is taught in monasteries and institutions throughout the land. Lest the student of such matters becomes perplexed, the Theravada or Hinayana branch of Buddhism as practised in Thailand is somewhat different from that practised in Japan and Tibet. Such is the religious ardor of the Thai



peoples, that many of the young men serve at least three months as Buddhist monks in order to understand their religion better.

Most other religions have a place of worship in Bangkok, recognized and assisted more often than not by the King and Government of Thailand.

For those who wish to attend services, the following addresses have been listed:

**Roman Catholic.** The Assumption Cathedral, Oriental Avenue. Church of the Holy Redeemer, 123/15 Soi Ruam Rudee.

**Protestant.** Christ Church, Convent Road. Church of Christ, Sukothai Road.

**Baptist.** Calvary, 544 Pleonchit Road.

**Presbyterian.** International Church, Srivieng Road.

**Seventh Day Adventist.** 393 Lan Luang Road.

## Special events and public holidays

### December 31–January 1

*New Year.* National celebrations include colorful public festivities in the Royal Square.

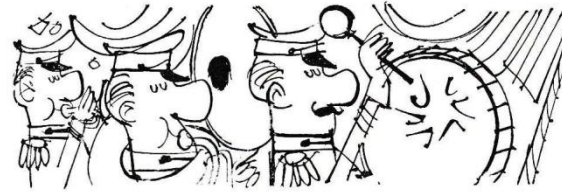
### February

*Kite Fighting.* Starts from the end of February goes on through April, and sometimes May, depending on the force of the south wind. The huge Pramane Grounds near the Grand Palace are crowded with people and seething with excitement.

This sport is for grown-ups and is an art that requires endless practice, skill and strength. Two types of kites are played as opponents. The object of the fight is for the one opponent to bring down the other in its own territory.

### April

6: *Chakri Day* – commemorates King Rama I – the first king of the Chakri dynasty. The Pantheon in the Royal Palace grounds is



opened to the public who come, carrying tapers, to place flowers at the eight statues of the kings of the present dynasty.

Beginning of the month: *Ko Phra Sai Ceremony.* Within the temple grounds people build up sand chedis – each grain of sand brought to the temple courtyard means one small sin atoned.

*Songkran* (Water Festival) in the middle of April, is a time of merriment and fellowship amidst the splashing of water. Water is sprinkled on the Buddha images, on the monks, parents and elders as a gesture of veneration.

This festival is at its best in Chiang Mai, in the north, where festivals with long processions wend throughout the town, with gilded floats, flags, bands and beautiful girls in brilliant costumes performing the traditional fingernail dance.

### May

(Dates vary.) *The Ploughing Ceremony* – a tradition which takes place in the sixth lunar month. In the time before calendars existed the King of Thailand

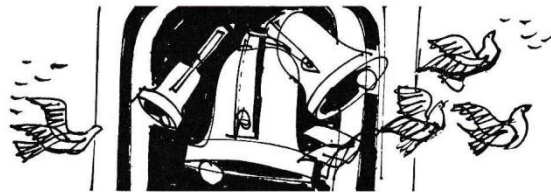
performed this ceremony as a means of letting the people know when to begin ploughing.

Nowadays, in commemoration of the tradition, the King usually attends the ceremony.

Beginning of the month: *The Visakha Buja Festival* takes place in commemoration of the three significant events in the life of the Buddha, his birth, his enlightenment, and his passing into Nirvana (the Buddhist equivalent of Heaven). There are candle processions, with elaborate lanterns made for the occasion, moving clockwise three times around the main chapel in the monastery grounds.

### June

*Buat Nak* takes place during June or July. It is the occasion when young Thai men enter the monkhood at the age of twenty-one. On the day of ordination, the candidate goes to the monastery, freshly bathed and robed in white, his head shaved. After the ceremony when the candidate is accepted into the monkhood, he then dons his



yellow robe and vows to follow the 227 rules of monkhood.

*August*

12: The Queen's Birthday, a national holiday.

*October*

22-29: This period marks the Fair which pays homage to the Phra Pathom Chedi - largest and oldest of Thailand's chedis (see 'Excursions', Nakorn Pathom) - and the Fair of the Phu Khoa Tong (The Golden Mount).

23: *Chulalongkorn Day*. Commemorates the death of King Chulalongkorn, who was a much beloved and brilliant monarch. Thousands of people each year place floral tributes and incense at the foot of his equestrian statue in front of the Assembly Hall. An impressive ceremony also takes place there on this date.

25-30: *Phra Chedi Klang Nam Festival*. The celebrations include boat races and a pilgrimage to the spired Klang Nam temple on the island in the Menam River.



*October-November*

*The Tod Kathin Festivals*. Every year magnificent barge processions transport the King down river to the Wat Arun where His Majesty ceremoniously presents monks with new robes and equipment.

*November*

*Loy Krathong*. At the full moon in November, the impressive Loy Krathong takes place. The surface of rivers, streams, lakes, ponds and canals throughout the kingdom glitter with tiny, flickering flames from hundreds of thousands of "Krathongs", small lights in leaf-cups decorated with flowers.

25: *Vachiravudh Fair*. One of the biggest fairs held at the Saranrom Garden, highlighted by the Miss Thailand contest.

*December*

5: This is the present King's birthday and also a national holiday, celebrated with religious ceremonies and official receptions.

10: *Constitution Day*, a national holiday.

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*Edited by Alan C. Lovejoy*

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