

The country and its attractions

Contributed by ABC Asian Business Consulting Co., Ltd.

Enjoy this wonderful country called Thailand

Expats, living in Thailand, are here for various reasons – running a business, working for a local or an international company, investing and waiting for remuneration or simply to enjoy their retirement. However, we all have one possibility that is the envy of millions of other foreigners – the many attractions that exist in Thailand and neighbouring countries.

Get closer!

Yes, we all have our priorities, especially when in business, as we have to be sure to make ends meet. We have responsibilities and obligations. However, our lifestyles and maybe our work already include travelling. If we chose another country as our temporary or permanent second home we should get closer to it by discovering the beauty of that country – experience its various customs, get a taste of the cuisine, enjoy the highlights and hidden cultural jewels, and, most importantly, make new friends.

Take the opportunity!

While many foreign visitors have to travel from far away to see Thailand, you are here already, so take the opportunity to spend some time on discovering what the country has to offer. Thailand has something for everybody and while some attractions might be further away, others are just on your doorstep.

So much to see, so much to do!

Wherever you go in Thailand there is something worth seeing – from the islands and pristine beaches in southern Thailand to the mountains and jungles in the north; from the small and charming villages in the north-east to the cities and places along the Mekong River and in the eastern provinces of Thailand. Whatever you want to do there is a place somewhere that offers it; from golfing to water sports, mountain biking or river rafting, trekking or sunbathing and, of course, entertainment of all kinds.

Make up your mind

There are so many attractive places in the country and it would probably take a life-time to see them all. I have travelled the country from the north to the south, and from the east to the west, so maybe I can give you some ideas. Of course, some of the places you may know or have visited them already; however, there are other places you might not even have heard about; in fact some of those “hidden” treasures are not even known to many of the local population.

The islands and beaches

Yes there are the well-known islands of Phuket, Koh Chang, Koh Samui or Koh Samet; however, there are less frequent islands, some of which are luckily still ignored by the public. There is Ko Si Chang just 12 km off the shore of Si Racha or the less known and visited neighbouring islands of Koh Chang, Koh Kood. Then there are “The islands in the Sun” of southern Thailand, such as Koh Kradan and the Surin Islands, and the 51 islands of the Tarutao National Park which include Koh Ra, Koh Adang and Koh Tarutao near to the Malaysian border.

National Parks

There are well-known National Parks such as Khao Yai, Kaeng Krachan, Doi Inthanon and Khao Sok. However, there are many

more, some of which require experience in jungle and mountain trekking. Phu Luang, not too far from Loei is one such area. Then there are the Phu Paan Mountains in the neighborhood of Sakhon Nakhon, which are not for the halfhearted. You should visit Phu Pha Thoep, which is home to unusual rock formations, and Roi Yot, which has an amazing swamp wetlands area with limestone mountains. Phu Phra Bat, some 65 km from Udon Thani has an incredible rock landscape and prehistoric cave paintings. Also, if you are interested in dinosaurs, the Phu Wiang National Park located west of Khon Kaen is one of the world's largest dinosaur burial grounds. Khao Luang, west of Nakhon Si Thammarat, is another must-see park, as is Than Bok Khorani, which is small but very special. If you are interested in National Parks, get the brochure “The Best of National Parks of Thailand” published by the National Park Office.

Mountains

If you like mountains there are quite a few, some of which are easy to reach, while for others you have to walk up to enjoy the view. Doi Inthanon, Thailand's highest mountain, or Phu Chi Fa offer spectacular views, but there are other mountains where you can show your skills. The latter include Doi Chiang Dao, Doi Ang Khang in Fang District and Khao Luang in Nakhon Si Thammarat Province, which are renowned for their waterfalls, as well as the Tham Khao Luang Cave.

Interesting trips

Thailand's roads are quite good and provide access to most of the attractions that local and foreign tourists are keen to see. Driving with your own car can be boring, especially when on a big busy highway, but there are some locations where driving is worth the effort. The road from Nong Khai to Chiang Khan follows the Mekong River – that is an amazing ride. Another scenic ride is from Chiang Mai via Pai to Mae Hong Son and back via Mae Sariang and Doi Inthanon. Last but not least, the route from Mae Sot to Mae Sariang along the Thai-Myanmar border – but don't drive along this road at night! If you like boat trips take the Kok River tour from Tha Ton to Chiang Rai – you won't be disappointed.

Discover Thailand

There are so many places in Thailand that are worth visiting, but it would take a book to describe them all. In fact, I have written a book about travelling in Thailand, titled: “Western Face, Eastern Heart” – in both English and German – which could give you many more ideas.

