

## Popular Tourist Destinations in Thailand



Bang Pa-in, Ayutthaya



Wat Phra Sisanphet,  
Ayutthaya

The **CENTRAL** **Bangkok**, the capital of Thailand, is a metropolis where one can find both old and new, East and West, traditional and fashionable, blended together in a harmonious way. Samut Prakan (29 km) has countless tourist attractions such as historical sites, old markets and indigenous lifestyles along the canals. The largest crocodile farm in the world is situated here. **Samut Songkhram** (63 km) highlights King Rama II Memorial Park and Amphawa Floating Market. Those who love to experience the local lifestyles have many choices of homestay programmes to choose from. The old capital from 1350 to 1767, **Ayutthaya** (76 km from Bangkok), is today visited chiefly as a historical site, especially the World Heritage Historic City of Ayutthaya and associated Historic Towns. Bang Pa-in Palace, and Bang Sai Folk Arts and Crafts Centre are places recommended for inclusion in a one-day tour.



Raft - Houses, very popular in Kanchanaburi

**Kanchanaburi** (128 km), a good place for nature lovers, where they can raft down the stream watching enchanting scenery. The Death Railway and the Bridge over the River Kwai are also located here. On a trip to **Saraburi** (107 km), Buddhists should not fail to pay homage to the Buddha's Footprint there. **Lop Buri** (153 km) is famous for shrines in the Khmer style, the remains of King Narai's palaces of the 17th century, and the sunflower fields.



A Sunflower, Lop Buri



Phra Prang Samyot, Lop Buri

**Nakhon Pathom** (56 km) is the town that boasts the tallest Buddhist pagoda both in Thailand and in the world. The greatest Elephant Show in Thailand can be seen here. **Phetchaburi** (123 km) has many tourist attractions, including the famous **Cha-am** Beach and many other beaches, scenic mountains, limestone caves, historical sites, and ancient temples. **Prachuap Khiri Khan** (281 km) is well known for Klai Kangwon Palace, a summer palace of the King and the Royal Family, the oldest beach resort, **Hua Hin**, and Khao Samroi Yot National Park. Another famous attraction is the 12-km-long Ban Krut Beach. Prachuap Khiri Khan Bay is scenic and suitable for sport activities.



Pattaya Beach

**The EAST** Just 2 hours' drive from Bangkok is **Pattaya**, the renowned recreation centre on the east coast. Its fine sand, blue sky and limpid sea are among many other good things that prove irresistible to both foreign and domestic tourists. Although Pattaya is the cream of **Chon Buri** (81 km), other places of interest are plentiful in this province -- Khao Sam Muk, where stands the Chao Mae Sam Muk Shrine highly revered by Thais; Bang Saen, the nearest-to-Bangkok beach resort for families; Ko Sichang, a paradise island whose name has become the title of a song. **Chanthaburi** (245 km), a coastal province famous for its gemstones, fruits, hot pepper and Chanthabun mats.



Samet Island, Rayong

**Rayong** (179 km), where the most attractive tourist spot is the Samet Island, which has become very popular among foreign visitors. **Trat** (315 km), the most far-flung province on the eastern coast, is well known for its Ko Chang Marine National Park. **Prachin Buri** (135 km) is famous for its "Hin Phoeng" Rapids which is part of Khao Yai National Park.



Buffalo Racing Festival in Chon Buri



Hin Phoeng Rapids, Prachin Buri

## The NORTH

The fine weather, the mountainous scenery, the exquisite handicrafts and the rich northern Thai culture are some of the charms of the North. Nan (668 km) is where culture blends well with nature. This small and peaceful province amidst the mountains is one of the most exciting sites to shoot the rapids. **Chiang Mai** (697 km), the second biggest province of Thailand, provides visitors with a host of places of interest, such as, Doi Suthep, Doi Inthanon, Bhubing Palace, etc.



Mae Fa Luang Garden,  
Doi Tung, Chiang Rai



Chiang Mai  
Flower Festival



**Chiang Rai** (785 km), located at the northern tip of Thailand in the very heart of the Golden Triangle, gains fame from its scenic views, exotic hilltribes and exciting elephant-back riding tours.



Doi Tung Royal Villa

**Lamphun** (670 km) is a town of beautiful women, bountiful orchards and ancient temples. **Lampang** (599 km) is the sole province in Thailand where horse-drawn carriages are still used as a means of transportation. **Phrae** (643 km) is known for the northern costume called *mohom* and Phae Muang Phi, a small area of weird earth formation.



Horse-drawn Carriage, Lampang

Lying in the northwestern corner bordering Myanmar, **Mae Hong Son** (942 km) is well known as the "Town of Three Mists" because it is mist-shrouded throughout most of the three seasons. It has several tourist attractions, both natural and cultural. Being mountainous, the province has many waterfalls and caves.



A camping area in Phetchabun



Another perspective of Sukhothai Historical Park

**Sukhothai** (427 km), the first capital of the Thai Kingdom, is well-known for its two historic sites -- Sukhothai and Si Satchanalai Historical Parks, which have been declared World Heritage Sites by UNESCO in 1991.

**Tak** (426 km) This mountainous province is ideal for nature lovers and adventurous tourists as there are numerous places for white-water rafting, trekking and elephant riding. Blessed with high mountains and natural beauty, **Phetchabun** (346 km) is where the scenic Nam Nao National Park and Phu Hin Rong Kla National Park are situated. It is also rich with waterfalls, rivers and lakes. **Phitsanulok** (377 km) features many historic sites and natural scenic spots like Chat Trakan and Thung Salaeng Luang national parks. The province is also famous for the Khek River which is excellent for shooting the rapids.

## The NORTHEAST

Known as Isan in Thai, the Northeast consists mostly of a plateau. Some may think that this area is dry and lifeless. But in fact, it has large numbers of tourist spots, especially sites of historical and archaeological significance. **Nakhon Ratchasima** (259 km), or Khorat for short, is the gateway to the Northeast, where are located the Thao Suranari Monument, Khmer-style stone shrine Prasat Hin Phimai and an over 250-year-old banyan tree. **Khon Kaen** (449 km), one of the northeastern commercial centres famous for the local product -- *matmi* silk. At Phuwiang National Park, dinosaurs' fossils, which were uncovered at the site, are on show. **Kalasin** (519 km) is where dinosaurs' fossils were excavated and are now exhibited at Dinosaur Research Centre in Sahatkhan District.



Samphanbok, Ubon Ratchathani



Prasat Hin Phanom Rung, Buri Ram

**Ubon Ratchathani** (629 km) is the easternmost province of Thailand, bordering Laos on the east and Cambodia on the south. The renowned Pha Taem and Pha Mon are sandstone cliffs featuring prehistoric colour paintings. Other attractions include beautiful old temples and many rapids and cascades along the Mun and Mekong rivers. **Sakon Nakhon** (647 km) offers tourists the picturesque scenery of the vast Nong Han Lake and Phu Phan National Park. **Surin** (457 km), the land of elephants, is world famous for its Elephant Round-up taking place at the third weekend of November. **Si Sa Ket** (571 km) where the famous Khmer ruins, Khao Phra Wihan, is located on the Cambodian border. There are many other Khmer-style stone buildings in the province which are worth visiting.



A view of Phu Kradueng National park.

**Buri Ram** (410 km) Comprising plenty of Khmer ruins, this province is where the largest Khmer-style stone temple, Prasat Hin Phanom Rung is located.

**Loei** (520 km), a challenging place for nature lovers who want to admire the scenic beauty of Phu Kradueng National Park in the cool season.

**Udon Thani** (564 km) is famous for its World Heritage site -- Ban Chiang Village of ancient civilisation, and Phu Phra Bat Historical Park with bizarre rock formations. **Nakhon Phanom** (740 km) is well known for its Phrathat Phanom, which is a very ancient pagoda containing a relic of the Buddha, and its annual Illuminated Boat Procession Festival, which is held around October or November.



Ban Chiang, Udon Thani

## The SOUTH

The 14 provinces in the South stretch along the narrow peninsula of Thailand from Chumphon to Malaysian border. The Andaman Sea coast on the west with numerous offshore islands and a beautiful underwater world offers many fascinating travel opportunities to the sea loving tourists. The most prominent tourist attraction in the South is inevitably **Phuket** (862 km), the biggest island of Thailand located in the Andaman Sea. It has rapidly become one of the best known seaside resorts of the world.



Patong Beach

But if you find Phuket a little too crowded in the peak tourist season, then **Samui Island** of **Surat Thani** (644 km) will be another choice. Its tranquillity and unpolluted environment will refresh you. Pha-ngan Island, which is a famous diving centre, is also an interesting destination.



Ko Nang Yuan, Surat Thani

**Ranong** (568 km), Thailand's rainiest province, is well known for its hot mineral springs. Visitors can enjoy mineral bath in many hotels here. The offshore Surin Island is stunning with abundant coral reefs and colourful fishes. **Phatthalung** (840 km) is believed to be in the realm of the ancient Sri Vijaya Kingdom, which has long been forgotten leaving only a few



hallowed hills today. **Songkhla** (950 km) is a famous seaside resort in the far South where a cruise on Songkhla Lake is fascinating. Another famous place in this province is **Hat Yai**, the big bustling city widely known for the low priced imported goods.



Similan

**Phang-nga** (788 km), adjoining Phuket, is full of magnificent seascape and beautiful lime-stone caves. Those who love diving may visit **Krabi** (814 km) to explore its Phi Phi, Lanta, and Hong Island Groups. At Rai Le Beach, you can enjoy the exciting rock climbing. Krabi and Phang-nga are two stars besides Phuket. They are becoming popular with tourists because there are interesting attractions both on land and in the sea.



Au Maya, Krabi

**Trang** (828 km) With plentiful picturesque islands, this province has many fine beaches and beautiful scenery waiting to be explored such as Chao Mai National Park, and Ko Muk and its Morakot Cave. Tarutao Island off Satun (973 km), being the remotest, will provide you with the most marvelous underwater life and most tranquil atmosphere. Nakhon Si Thammarat (780 km), the land of predominant Buddhism during the Sri Vijaya period, is famous for its Talumpuk Cape and Hat Khanom-Mu Ko Thaletai National Park.