

Traditional Thai Massage at Wat Po, Bangkok

Interview with Khun Serat Tangtrongchit, Deputy Manager, Wat Po

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Why should prospective students of massage choose your massage school or program to train as a massage practitioner?

For many years, my massage school has been most proficient in teaching various types of massage to international students. Every year, there are students from 72 countries that come to Thailand to attend the classes and then return back to their own countries to practice our massage techniques.

Most clients who receive our Wat Po massage are very satisfied with the quality and come back to have massage again and again.

What type(s) of massage therapy do you teach at your massage school, and can you give a definition and background on this particular type of massage technique?

The school was established in 1955. The massage program for Thai students was started in 1962. The massage program for international students was officially offered in 1980.

Every year, more than 10,000 Thai and international students attend not only our three schools in Thailand, but also our 7 other affiliated schools from around the world.

There are various massage courses that we teach at Wat Po, and all of them have their own significant style.

General Massage Course

This course starts with the most basic and practical massage skills. Students will learn how to perform Thai massage for relaxation that is based on 10 principle lines. It takes 30 hours to complete the course. During the final hour of the program, a student must pass a practical examination in order to get our certificate.

Foot Massage Course

This course is the basic foot massage, adapted from the Chinese foot reflexology. It starts from the sole of feet to stimulate the wind element and balances all of the four elements in the human

body (i.e. earth, wind, fire, water). It takes 30 hours to complete this course. During the final hour of the program, a student must pass a practical examination in order to get our certificate.

Advanced Thai Therapeutic and Healing Massage Course

Study the fundamentals of Thai massage points for curing more than 50 common ailments such as: muscle pain, muscle sprain, tennis elbow, stiff neck, low-back pain, muscle cramp, muscle weakness or stiffness, as well as muscle discomfort and nervous tension. It takes 60 hours of practical and theoretical subjects to complete the course.

Oil Massage and Aromatherapy

Even though the science of oil massage and aromatherapy originated in the West, in ancient times, Thai's also used fragrances and herbs for everyday health care. You will learn how to make use of both oriental and western aromas, and learn an oil massage technique which is adapted from the well-known Thai massage. This course takes 30 hours to complete. Students have to pass the general Thai Massage Course before taking this course.

Infant and Child Massage Course

Learn how to give a warm and lovely touch to your baby. It will help to stimulate the muscular and nervous systems, prevent malformation, and support the development of body, mind and spirit. This course takes 21 hours to complete. Students have to pass the general Thai Massage Course before taking this course.

Woman's Healthcare Massage Course

Learn how to perform herbal massage for women before and after delivery, as well as how to select the right Thai herbs for each customer for herbal massage and for Thai sauna. The student will be able to perform massage, herbal massage, pregnancy massage and massage for menopausal women. This course takes 30 hours to complete. Students have to pass the general Thai Massage Course before taking this course.

What makes your massage school different than the rest?

All of our massage courses emphasize the hands-on, practical training. Each teacher will only work with 4 to 6 students at one time. Upon completion of a program, students will be able to successfully perform, and be proficient in, the specific massage technique they have been taught. Our teachers are highly qualified in traditional Thai practices as well as in western medical practices.

Do you have a program for international students of massage? How long is your massage program?

Yes, there are 6 massage programs that are available for international students. The long-term programs (for 1 month or 3 months) will be available at the end of this year.

For international students, the massage courses take anywhere between 10 days to 3 months depending on which program of study is undertaken.

And finally, in your opinion, what makes a good massage practitioner?

The best massage practitioner comes from the heart and works with care and passion. A good massage practitioner finds and develops good techniques to improve their performance throughout their career.