

Visiting Thailand

Visa

Q: I would like to go to Thailand for vacation for 2 weeks. I am an American passport holder. Do I need a visa?

A: Nationals of the United States of America and 40 other countries are eligible to travel to Thailand, for tourism purpose, with the exemption of visa and are permitted to stay in the Kingdom for a period of not exceeding 30 days. Therefore, you do not need a visa. However, please make sure that you are in possession of a passport valid for at least 6 months, a round-trip air ticket, and adequate finances equivalent to at least 10,000 Baht per person or 20,000 Baht per family. Otherwise, you may be inconvenienced upon entry into the country. Furthermore, foreigners who enter the Kingdom under this Tourist Visa Exemption Scheme may re-enter and stay in Thailand for a cumulative duration of stay of not exceeding 90 days within any 6-month period from the date of first entry. The list of the 41 countries could be found in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand's website at <http://www.mfa.go.th>

- If your travel plans exceed 30 days in the Kingdom you will need to obtain a tourist visa from either the Thai Embassy or a Thai consulate nearest to you

Cultural Awareness

- When greeting another person, Thais “*wai*”. This is the gesture of bringing the hands together with palms facing together in front of the body.
- Never make disrespectful comments about the King, Queen and Royal Family members. This is a law that is strictly enforced.
- Buddhism is practiced by most Thais, so it is important to always respect temples and Buddhist images everywhere you travel. If you plan on visiting one of the many beautiful temples throughout Thailand, please wear the appropriate attire such as long trousers and shirts with sleeves. Remove your shoes and leave them outside the temple before you enter.
- Do not put yourself in a situation where gambling is involved
- Thais regard the head as the highest part of the body, literally and figuratively. Therefore, avoid touching people on the head and try not to point your feet at people or an object. It is considered very rude

Thai Language (ภาษาไทย)

Thai is a monosyllabic language which uses five tones (high, mid, low, rising, and falling tone) to alter the meaning of a single syllable. The use of Thai Language can vary depending on if you are in the North, Northeast, Central (most common) or South of Thailand.

Short conversation in Thai between John and Jenny

Jenny: Hello = **Sa-wat-dii ka**
(Ka) is the female polite particle used at the end of a sentence.

John: Hello = **Sa-wat-dii krap**
(Krap) is the male polite particle used at the end of a sentence.

John: How are you? = **Sa-baai-dii mai krap?**

Jenny: I am doing well = **Sa-baai-dii ka**
*(And how about you? = **Laew khun laa pen yang ngai ka?**)*

John: I am also doing fine = **Pom gaw sa-baai-dii Krap**
*(Thank you = **khawp-khun krap**)*

Jenny: You're welcome = **mai-pen-rai krap**

Useful phrases

I'm sorry / excuse me / pardon me = **Kor-Thode ka/krap**

How much? / how many? = **Thao-rai?**

Yes = **Chai or ka/krap**

No = **Mai chai**

Who? = **Krai?**

What? = **Arai?**

Where? = **Tee-nai?**

When? = **Muea-rai?**

Why? = **Tham-mai?**

How? = **Yang-rai?**

Go = **Pai**

Come = **Ma**

Stop = **Yood**

Left = **Sai**

Right = **Kwa**

1 = **Neung**

2 = **Song**

3 = **Sam**

4 = **Sii**

5 = **Ha**

6 = **Hoke**

7 = **Jed**

8 = **Baat**

9 = **Kao**

10 = **Sib**

11 = **Sip et**

20 = **Yii-sib**

21 = **Yii sib et**

30 = **Sam-sib**

40 = **Sii-sib**

50 = **Ha-sib**

100 = **Neung-roy**

Transportation:

Thailand is equipped with a well-developed transportation system. If you choose to travel around Bangkok, you can use the Skytrains, underground trains, taxis, buses, and three-wheeled motorcycle taxis or Tuk Tuk. There are also boat rides you can take during the day or night which really gives you the opportunity to see many of the beautiful sites Bangkok has to offer.

Useful links for travelling Thailand:

<http://www.tourismthailand.org>

<http://www.seasite.niu.edu:85/thai/>

http://www.asia-discovery.com/thailand_travel_tips.htm

<http://www.seasite.niu.edu:85/thai/QuickThai/Intro.htm>

<http://www.seasite.niu.edu:85/thai/guide.htm>