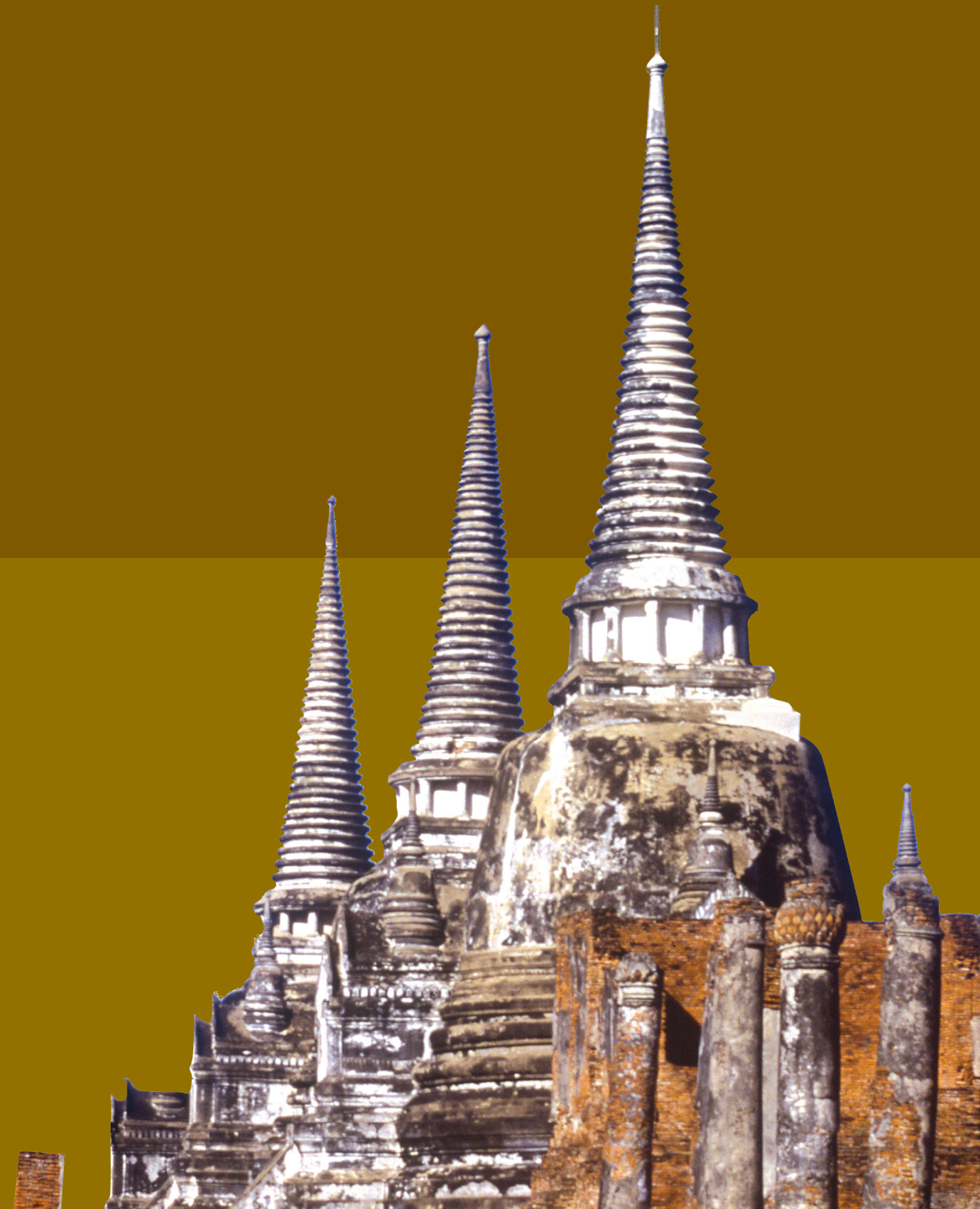


Ayutthaya

Saraburi • Ang Thong
Suphan Buri • Pathum Thani
Nonthaburi





Contents

<i>Ayutthaya</i>	8	<i>Pathum Thani</i>	44
<i>Saraburi</i>	24	<i>Nonthaburi</i>	50
<i>Ang Thong</i>	32		
<i>Suphan Buri</i>	38		





Wat Mahathat

Ayutthaya

The ancient city of Ayutthaya, formally designated Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya was the Thai capital for 417 years, and is one of Thailand's major tourist attractions.

Ayutthaya province is relatively small at 2,557 sq. km. and is easily accessible due to good road, rail and river connections and its proximity to Bangkok. Straddling the Chao Phraya River, the nation's principal waterway, the province is extremely important, as it was the Siamese capital for four centuries.

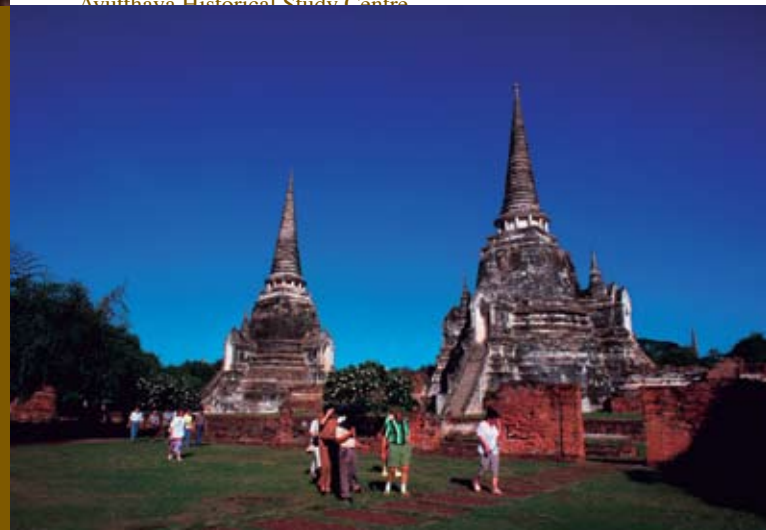
The city of Ayutthaya is 76 km. north of Bangkok and boasts numerous magnificent ruins from its days as the capital. Just to the south, in perfect condition, stands the royal palace of Bang Pa-in set in splendid gardens. The province is also noted for H.M. the Queen's Bang Sai Arts and Crafts Centre.

The ancient city of Ayutthaya, formally designated Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya was the Thai capital for 417 years, and is one of Thailand's major tourist attractions. Many ancient ruins and art works can be seen in a city that was founded in 1350 by King U-Thong when the Thais were forced southwards by northern neighbours. During the period when Ayutthaya was capital, 33 kings and several dynasties ruled the kingdom, until the glittering city was sacked by the Burmese in 1767, ruined and abandoned.

The extensive ruins and the historical records demonstrate that Ayutthaya was one of Southeast Asia's most prosperous cities. In recognition of its historical and cultural importance, Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Historical Park, the location of the ruins adjacent to today's city, was declared a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1991.

City Attractions

Wat Phra Si Sanphet
Ayutthaya Historical Study Centre



Located on Rochana Road, this Centre is devoted to the study of Ayutthaya. Its museum exhibits reconstructions of the city's past. It has an information service and a library containing historical materials about Ayutthaya. Open daily 9.00 a.m.-4.30 p.m. official holidays 9.00 a.m.-5.00 p.m. For more information, call 0 3524 5124.

Chao Sam Phraya National Museum

Located on Rochana Road, opposite the city wall, the Museum houses antique bronze Buddha images, carved panels and other objects of art more than 500 years old, and also local artefacts. Open daily except Monday, Tuesday and national holidays, 9.00 a.m.-4.00 p.m. For more information, call 0 3524 1587.

Forts and Fortresses around the City

The forts along the city wall and outer circle fortresses as found in the historical records include Pom Mahachai, Pom Phet, Pom Ho Ratchakhru, Pom Chidkop, Pom Champaphon and Pom Yai. They are mostly situated at waterway junctions.

Palaces and Buildings

There were three palaces in Ayutthaya: the Grand Palace, Chankasem Palace or the Front Palace, and Wang Lang or the Rear Palace.

Grand Palace

Currently called "The Ancient Palace", this residential dwelling for every king was located close to the city wall. Important buildings inside the Grand Palace compound are:

Wihan Somdet Hall The hall was decorated with gold leaf and surrounded by cloisters. It was used for various royal ceremonies including coronations.

Sanphet Prasat Hall This building, in the same design as Wihan Somdet Hall, was used by the king to welcome foreign envoys and visitors.

Suriyat Amarin Hall A four-gabled building of sandstone and brick, it is close to the riverside city wall. It was used for observing the royal barge processions.

Chakkrawat Phaichayon Hall This three-gabled hall is on the inner eastern city wall in front of the Grand Palace. It was used to view processions and military exercises.

Trimuk Hall Located behind the Sanphet Prasat Hall, this hall is believed to have been the royal consorts' living quarters with a regal leisure garden.

Banyong Rattanaat Hall This four-gabled hall is located on an island in a pond at the back of the Grand Palace.

Wat Phra Si Sanphet

Originally used as a royal chapel. This large temple compound contains a line of three tall chedis. This line of chedis has become widely identifiable with the Ayutthaya style.

Wihan Phramongkhon Bophit

Phra Mongkhon Bophit, a large bronze cast Buddha image, was originally enshrined outside the Grand Palace to the east, but later transferred to the west and covered. In the 1767 sacking of Ayutthaya, the building and the image were badly damaged by fire; the renovated ensemble is not as finely crafted as the original. The open area east of the Wihan was formerly Sanam Luang, where the royal cremation ceremonies took place.

Wat Phraram

This monastery is situated next to a pond, outside the Grand Palace compound to the east, with a pond in front. King Ramesuan had it built where King U-Thong's royal cremation

Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Historical Park





Wat Phraram

ceremony took place. It now also functions as Phra Ram Public Park.

Wat Mahathat

Located in front of the Grand Palace to the east near Pa Than Bridge, this temple was constructed in King Borom Rachathirat I's reign.

Wat Ratchaburana

This temple is located near Pa Than Bridge opposite Wat Mahathat. King Borom Rachathirat II commanded two Chedis built where Chao Ai and Chao Yi engaged in elephant-back combat during which both were killed. Later, he added a vihan so as to create a temple.

Wat Mahathat



Wat Phra Si Sanphet



Wat Ratchaburana

Suan Somdet

Situated on U-Thong Road to the southwest of the city, this is a large public park with a display of various plants referred to in Thai literature.

Chankasem or Front Palace

This palace beside the Pasak River was built by King Maha Thammaracha, the 17th Ayutthaya monarch, as a residence for his son. Like other ruins, it was destroyed in 1767 by the Burmese and abandoned. In the mid-19th century, King Rama IV ordered it rebuilt as a residence for his occasional visits to Ayutthaya. Some of the more interesting sites are:

City Wall and Gate These were newly constructed by King Rama IV. The original foundations have since been discovered, revealing that the original area was much larger.

Phlapphla Chaturamuk This wooden four-gabled pavilion is near the east gate of the palace and was a residence of King Rama IV during his visits to Ayutthaya.

Phiman Rattaya Hall A group of buildings located amidst the compound of the Grand Palace which once served as government offices.

Phisai Sanyalak Hall This is a four-storey tower located close to the western side of the Grand Palace. First built under King Narai the Great, but destroyed during the second fall of Ayutthaya. It was reconstructed by King Rama IV as an observa-



Wat Yai Chai Mongkhon

tory. The palace is now used as a national museum displaying china, weapons, Buddha images, sculptures and votive tablets of different times, and personal effects of King Rama IV. Open daily 9.00 a.m.-4.00 p.m. except Monday, Tuesday and national holidays.

Wat Senasanaram

This ancient temple as Wat Sua is behind Chankasem Palace. The main attractions are two Buddha images: Phra Samphuttha Muni, the principal image enshrined in the Ubosot, and Phra In Plaeng enshrined in the Wihan. Both were taken from Vientiane.

Wat Suwandaram Ratchaworawihan

This is a temple within the royal compound, located to the southwest near Pom Phet Fort. Originally called Wat Thong, it was extended and restored several times under the Chakri kings. The upper murals in the Ubosot depict the gathering of the deities, and the lower ones depict stories from the life of the Buddha. The front wall shows the Buddha subduing evil. Within the Wihan, King Naresuan the Great is depicted.

Wang Lang or the Rear Palace

Situated close to the western city wall, this palace was originally a royal garden with only one residential building. King Maha Thammaracha had more buildings built, and it became the palace of King Ekathosarot. Later, it became a residence for royal family members.

Chedi Phra Si Suriyothai

This memorial to the first heroine in Thai history is located at Ko Mueang to the west. Suriyothai was King Maha Chakraphat's consort. In 1548, he went to repel a Burmese invasion. During the fighting on elephant back, the king was in trouble and Suriyothai, clad as a warrior, rode her elephant at the Burmese commander, and was cut to death by his sword. The king had her cremated at a place which became named "Wat Suanluang Sopsawan". In King Rama V's reign, after a quest for the historical site, the exact location of Wat Suanluang Sopsawan was identified with a large indented stupa, renamed Chedi Phra Si Suriyothai. In 1990, the Chedi was restored.

Wat Lokkayasutha

This temple adjacent to Wat Worachettharam features a large reclining Buddha, of stucco-clad brick, 29 m. long. Large hexagonal pillar ruins are thought to be of the Ubosot.

Wat Kasattrathirat Worawihan

This temple is located outside Ko Mueang, opposite Chedi Phra Si Suriyothai, beside the Chao Phraya River. It has a prang as its centre.

Wat Chaiwatthanaram

Also located beside the river, on the west of the city island, this temple was built by King Prasat Thong in a Khmer-influenced style with a main stupa and lesser stupas along the gallery. It can be reached by river from Chankasem Palace.

Wat Phutthaisawan

This temple is situated on the river bank opposite Ko Mueang to the south, in the area where King U-Thong established his city. The most interesting feature is the great principal Buddha image of the early Ayutthaya Period.

Portuguese Village

The Portuguese Village or Mu Ban Protuket is located at Samphao Lom, on the west bank of the Chao Phraya River to the south of the city. The Portuguese were the first Europeans to trade with the Ayutthaya Kingdom, sending a diplomatic mission to King Ramathibodi II's court in 1511. The Portuguese also came as military volunteers in the Ayutthaya's army and as Christian missionaries, and they settled at this site. Remains of San Pietro, a Dominican church, and some objects such as tobacco pipes, coins and religious items have been found here.

Wat Phukhao Thong

Wat Chaiwatthanaram

Located 2 km. northeast of the Grand Palace, this temple was constructed in 1387 under King Ramesuan.

Elephant Kraal and Pavilion

The kraal and pavilion is located 4 km. from the city along Highway 309. The kraal is formed by a circular teak stockade and earthen wall which was created in 1957. The enclosure was used to pen wild elephants for battle training, while being observed by royalty and other spectators. The king used the pavilion as his vantage point.

Wat Na Phramen

Located on the bank of Khlong Sabua opposite the Grand Palace, this temple of unknown age is of a very old typical Thai style. Most interesting is the principal Buddha image in regal attire and another image in the small Wihan, made of black stone.

Wat Kudidao

Located in front of the railway station, this old temple features superb, though deteriorated, decorative craftsmanship.

Wat Samanakottharam

Located near Wat Kudidao, this old temple's main attraction is a large prang having an unusual aspect. It is believed to be based on Chedi Chet Yot at Chiang Mai.

Out-Of-City-Attractions

Wat Yai Chaimongkhon or Wat Chao Phraya Thai

This temple constructed in the reign of King U-Thong is located

Wat Na Phramen



outside the city to the southeast. One can see its large chedi from far away. King Naresuan the Great had the chedi built to celebrate his elephant-back victory over the Burmese.

Wat Phananchong

This temple located south of Ayutthaya existed before the city was founded. The Wihan's principal image called Phrachao Phananchong was built in 1325. Made of stucco in the position of subduing evil, it is most revered by local people.

Japanese Village

This former district for Japanese expatriates and visitors is located 1.5 km from Wat Phananchong at Ko Rien.

Prasat Nakhon Luang

Situated on the east bank of the Pa Sak River, this structure was used as the royal accommodation during trips to the Holy Footprint Shrine and to Lop Buri. Assumed to have been constructed under King Songtham, it was improved under King Prasat Thong.

Bang Pa-in Palace

The palace is located 18 km. south of Ayutthaya, 58 km. north of Bangkok by rail and 61 km. by road. The grounds are open daily 8.30 a.m.-4.00 p.m. For more information, call 0 2224 3273 or 0 3526 1044.

Originally, Bang Pa-in was a riverine island. King Prasat Thong (1630-1655) had a palace built on a lake in the middle of the island as a royal retreat, and it was used by every succeeding Ayutthaya monarch. But when the capital moved to Bangkok, the palace was left unused for 80 years.

Bang Pa-in was revived by King Rama IV (1851-1868), who had a house built there. His son, King Rama V (1868-1910), liked the place immensely, stayed there every year and constructed the splendid ensemble as it is seen today. Important buildings are :

Aisawanthippahaya-at Pavilion An exquisite Thai teak pavilion, was built in the middle of a lake by King Rama V. For reinforcement, King Rama VI had the floor and pillars replaced with concrete.

Warophat Phiman Hall This European-style building was the Throne Hall where the king received his subjects and visitors. In this hall are paintings of the royal historic records, I-nao litera-

ture, Phra Aphai Mani literature and the Ramayana epic.

Phra Thinang Uthayan Phumisathian The original two-storey wooden building, resembling a large dacha, was destroyed by fire during restoration. Now, a concrete structure of the same model has been built to replace the original.

King Rama VI Theatre King Rama IV had this theatre built in his consort's compound.

Hemmonthian Thewarat This Khmer-style stone prang, situated under a banyan tree beside the long stream, replaced an old shrine built by villagers.

Saphakhan Ratchaprayun This two-storey building on the river bank outside the palace wall was constructed by King Rama V as the living quarters for courtiers.

Witthunthassana Hall This hall, in the form of a tower, is a three-storey building with a spiral staircase. King Rama V used it to get a bird's eye view of the surrounding area.

Keng Buppha Praphat This Chinese-style pavilion stands within the inner royal compound.

Wat Yai Chai Mongkhon





Bang Pa-in Palace

Wehat Chamrun Hall This hall of a Chinese Emperor-style was a gift to King Rama V from Bangkok's Chinese merchant community.

Monument of Queen Sunantha This marble monument was built by King Rama V to keep the ashes of his beloved consort.

Rachanuson Monument King Rama V, in deep sorrow, had this marble relief memorial built to commemorate his beloved consort and three royal children who passed away at different times in the same year, 1887.

Wat Niwet Thammaprawat

On a small island in the Chao Phraya River, opposite the Royal Palace, King Rama V had this Buddhist temple built in the European Neo-Gothic style with stained glass windows. From Bang Pa-in Palace, visitors can reach the temple on a hand-cranked cable car.

Wat Chumphon Nikayaram

This temple stands opposite the train station. It was founded in 1632 by King Prasat Thong and restored in the mid-19th century.

Bang Sai Royal Folk Arts and Crafts Centre

The Centre is located within the extensive grounds of Bang Sai. Farmers from Ayutthaya and other provinces undergo training in folk arts and crafts here. The Centre offers visitors a glimpse of how farmers in Thailand's four regions live and work, and how their local arts and crafts are produced. The Centre comes under the Promotion of Supplementary Occupations and Related

Techniques (SUPPORT) scheme, established by royal patronage in 1976. Products and activities which can be seen here are different kinds of basketry, artificial flowers, handwoven silk and cotton, silk dyeing, wood carving, miniature handmade Thai dolls, and furniture making. All the products are for sale.

Open daily except Monday, 8.30 a.m.-4.00 p.m. For more information, call 0 3536 6092 or in Bangkok call 0 2225 8165-8 ext. 460. To get there from Bangkok, take a cruise, or a bus from the Northern Bus Terminal, or by car take Highway 306 via Nonthaburi and Pathum Thani.

Special Events

Bang Sai Arts & Crafts Fair

Late January

The annual fair held at Bang Sai Arts and Crafts Centre displays products of H.M. the Queen's SUPPORT programme, which are for sale, and there are exhibitions and demonstrations of local products. Folk performances of song and dance enliven the fair.

Songkran Festival

April 13-15

The traditional Thai New Year is the Songkran water festival. Anyone who ventures out on the streets is likely to get a thorough soaking, but all in a spirit of fun at the peak of the hot season. Special events are held in front of Wihan Phra Mongkhon Bophit.

Bang Sai Loi Krathong Festival

November

Bang Sai Arts and Crafts Centre holds a special Loi Krathong evening. Celebrations include making traditional floats (krathong) and beauty contest, handicraft demonstrations, exhibitions, and krathong launching in the river.

Wat Niwet Thammaprawat



How To Get There

By Rail

Trains leave from Bangkok's Hua Lamphong Railway Station. Call 0 2220 4334 or Hotline 1690 for more information.

By Bus

From Bangkok Bus Terminal on Kamphaeng Phet II Road (tel. 0 2936 2852-66), air-conditioned buses leave for Ayutthaya every half-hour from 5.30 a.m. to 7.20 p.m. Non-air-conditioned buses leave for Bang Pa-in, Bang Sai and Ayutthaya many times daily from 5.30 a.m. to 7.20 p.m.

By Car

1. Take Highway 1 (Phahonyothin Road.) then take Highway 32 to Ayutthaya.
2. Take Highway 304 (Chaeng Wattana Road) or Highway 302 (Ngamwongwan Road), turn right onto Highway 306 (Tiwanon Road.), then take Highway 3111 (Pathum Thani - Sam Khok - Sena) and turn right at Sena onto Highway 3263.
3. Take Highway 306 through Nonthaburi and Pathum Thani, then take Highway 347.

Boat Trips to Ayutthaya & Bang Pa-in

Bang Sai Loi Krathong Festival



Wat Yai Chai Mongkhon

There are no public boats going to Ayutthaya and Bang Pa-in but several private companies run excursions. One-day excursions: Chao Phraya Express Boat - Tel. 0 2222 5330, Fax. 0 2225 3002. Oriental Queen & Ayutthaya Princess - Tel. 0 2236 0400-9, Fax. 0 2236 1939. River Sun Cruise - Tel. 0 2266 9125, 0 2234 2250, 0 2233 2877. Two-day excursions: Mekhala - Tel. 0 2256 7168-9, Fax. 0 2256 7172.

Local Transportation

Mini-buses run from the train station into the city. Hiring a mini-bus within Ayutthaya costs 250-300 baht/day. Connecting Ayutthaya and Bang Pa-in, mini-buses leave Chao Prom Market from 6.30 a.m. onwards. The fare is about 30 baht and the trip takes 50 minutes.

Saraburi is a rice-growing province on the Central Plains possessing one of Thailand's most important temples, Wat Phra Phutthabat Ratchaworamahawihan, and many sites of natural beauty. The provincial capital lies 108 km. north of Bangkok, on the main highway to the Northeast.

Out-Of-City Attractions

Wat Phra Phutthabat Ratchaworamahawihan



Wat Phra Phutthabat Ratchaworamahawihan

Saraburi

Saraburi is a rice-growing province on the Central Plains possessing one of Thailand's most important temples, Wat Phra Phutthabat Ratchaworamahawihan, and many sites of natural beauty.

Located at Khun Khlon, 28 km. north of the town, this is one of Thailand's most important temples. The spiritual centrepiece is the massive Buddha's Footprint, 21-inches wide, 5-feet long and 11-inches deep, located on a hilltop. The footprint has 108 religious aspects and was discovered during the reign of King Songtham of Ayutthaya, who had a Mondop built to cover it. This has since been modified several times. Today's Mondop is a square pavilion with a seven-tier roof of green glazed tiles. The outer walls are decorated with gold and coloured glass in the shapes of mythological gods and lotus blossoms. The pearl-inlaid artwork on the doors represents some of the country's best craftsmanship. The Mondop is reached by three Naga (mythical serpent) staircases, with five-headed Nagas cast in bronze flanking their base. It is surrounded by bells, which visitors can ring as an act of making merit. The adjacent Ubosot and Wihan are in the Ayutthaya and early Rattanakosin styles. Phra Phutthabat National Museum, in the compound, displays various precious artefacts including King Songtham's attire, ceramics, bronzeware, old weapons and ecclesiastical fans from various periods.

Wat Tham Krabok

This temple and its monks, are famous for treating drug addicts. It is located at Tambon Khun Khlon, Amphoe Phra Phutthabat, 25 kms. north of the town along Highway No. 1.

Bo Phran Lang Nuea

This spring is near Wat Phra Phutthabat and important in local legend. The water that continuously flows from it is believed to be holy.
Namtok Muak Lek



Wat Tham Prathun

Located at Khun Khon, 3 km. from Phra Phutthabat, the Chedi houses Buddha relics. Two other caves are in this area.

Tham Phrathat

Located 8 km. south of Wat Phra Phutthabat on a 100 m. hill, this beautiful cave houses a Buddha image.

Tham Thep Nimit Than Thong Daeng

This cave is located at Wat Phu Kham Banphot, at Phu Kham Chan. Stone Age artefacts were found in the mountain range nearby.

Phu Khae Botanical Gardens

Located in Phu Khae district, 17 km. from town on the Lop Buri road, these enormous gardens with a flowing stream are a great place for relaxing. Open daily 8.00 a.m.-6.00 p.m.

Khao Sam Lan National Park

The park features mountains, the highest being Khao Khrok (329 m.), from which there are panoramic views. The park is home to pheasants, jungle fowls, barking deer, monkeys, wild boars and various birds. It has several waterfalls which can be toured within 2-3 hours on walking trails. The park has an area of 44 sq. km. and the entrance is 16 km. south of the town along the Bangkok road (Highway 1). October to January is the best time to visit. The park offers tents for 80 persons or visitors can bring their own. For more information, call the National Park, Wildlife and Plant Conservation Department on 0 2562 0760.

Wat Phra Phutthachai

The temple is on Khao Patthawi at Nong Pla Lai and can be

Phra Phutthachai National Park



Crocodile Farm and Zoo

reached by taking the same route as for Khao Sam Lan National Park, turning off at Km. 102. It enshrines Phra Phutthachai or the picture of the Lord Buddha appearing on a cliff wall. A Mondop pavilion shelters the picture. Stairs lead up to the Mondop and onward to the cliff above it. There are interesting prehistoric paintings on the cliff of animals and various symbols.

Crocodile Farm and Zoo

Situated near Wat Phra Phutthachai, the farm consists of a crocodile breeding pond and houses various other species such as deer, monkeys and birds.

Tham Si Wilai

Located at Na Phra Lan, some 22 km. from Saraburi town, the cave houses Phra Phutthanaowarat, a Buddha image of the Chiang Saen period, and beautiful stalactite and stalagmite formations. There are also scenic views of mountains.

Chao Mae Takhian Thong Shrine

Out near Wat Sung, Amphoe Sao Hai, this is a large pillar believed to house a female spirit, so true believers give offerings of female items.

Wat Khao Kaeo Worawiharn

Located at Ton Tan on the right bank of the Pa Sak River, the temple was built in King Rama IV's reign and used as his residence when visiting the district. King Rama IV had it renovated and upgraded to a royal temple. It has a peaceful ambience.

Wat Samuha Pradittharam

This royal temple situated at Suan Dok Mai has an attractive chapel with distinctive and beautiful mural paintings. In November/December, the temple holds an annual boat race.

Wat Tham Phra Phothisat

Located at Thap Kwang, 32 km. from Saraburi town, 15 km. along Highway 2 towards Korat and 11 km. along an access road, the cave temple houses a bas-relief Buddha image on the wall, a Lankan stupa of the Dvaravati period, and monumental stalactites and stalagmites. Other caves and a stone garden can be seen in the area.

Tham Phrathat Charoen Tham

This is a three-chambered cave with distinctive marble footpaths. One chamber has a fish pond, another contains stalagmites and stalactites shaped like well-known Chinese gods, and the third has stalactites and stalagmites resembling coral. Two other large caves nearby are worth visiting.

Cruising along the Pa Sak River

The Pa Sak River, which runs through Amphoe Kaeng Khoi offers beautiful scenery of forests, mountains and high cliffs. Boat trips are operated by some riverside resorts such as the Suphalai Pasak Resort, tel. 0 3630 6270-2 and Bangkok tel. 0 2260 2223-6.

Muak Lek Arboretum

Located 37 km. from Saraburi town along Mittraphap Road,

Muak Lek



covering 150 acres, this wooded area blooming with flowers features a fast-running stream with a cascade and bridges.

Namtok Chet Sao Noi or Namtok Sao Noi

This seven-level waterfall is located at Muak Lek and comes complete with a shady swimming area.

Tham Dao Khao Kaeo

Located at Phaya Klang, 35 km. from Muak Lek or 75 km. from Saraburi town, this cave is reached by climbing steps to a height of 100 m. When sunlight shines on the cave walls, they sparkle like beautiful red, black and brown stars.

Sunflower Fields

These are found between Lop Buri and Saraburi along the Phatthana Nikhom-Wang Muang route. From December to January (winter season), the sunflowers are in full bloom.

Chedi Phra Khun Mae

Located in Wat Khlong Mai, at Nong Mu, 42 km. from the town along Highway 1 to Bangkok, and 15 km. off to the left, the chedi contains a replica of the Buddha's footprint enshrined on a lotus base and surrounded by Buddha images. It was built for sons and daughters to remind them of the kindness of mothers.

Tambon Phai Tam Bird Sanctuary

Located at Phai Tam, 17 km. from the town along Highway 1, the 1.2 acre sanctuary is home to various species of birds including black starling, dove, white-breasted waterhen, little cormorant, black-crowned night-heron and bittern. The birds leave their nests to search for food in the early morning and come back in the evening.

Special Events

Hae Phra Khiao Kaeo

Celebrations of the Lord Buddha's Tooth. The Festival is held on the first day of the waxing moon in the fourth lunar month. Local people take the Tooth from the Wat Phra Phutthabat Ratchaworamahawihan Museum and carry it around the town in a procession.

Tak Bat Dok Mai or The Flower Offering Festival

Mid July

This impressive merit-making ceremony is held at the start of the three-month Buddhist Lent (June or July) when monks retreat to their temples. In the morning, people offer food and

candles to Wat Phra Phutthabat Ratchaworamahawihan. Then they collect a special yellow or white flower found on a hillside only during Buddhist Lent in Saraburi, which they give to the monks for merit. After the monks have carried the flowers up to pay homage to the Buddha's footprint, people wait on the steps for them with bowls of clean water, which they pour onto the monks' feet as a means of cleaning one's mind.

Phra Phutthabat Homage-Paying Festival

The event is held at Wat Phra Phutthabat Ratchaworamahawihan twice a year: from the first till the fifteenth day of the waxing moon in the third lunar month and from the eighth until the fifteenth day of the waxing moon in the fourth lunar month.

Chao Pho Khao Tok Festival or Chao Pho Khao Tok Procession

This annual Chinese festival features fire-walking, the Lo Ko dragon parade and Chinese opera. It is held from the first day of the waxing moon in the fourth lunar month for four days at Wat Phra Phutthabat Ratchaworamahawihan in Amphoe Phra Phutthabat.

Kam Fa Festival

Held at Phai Liw, Amphoe Don Phut on the second day of the waxing moon in the third lunar month, the Festival features folk entertainment and activities including a pitch and toss game, cockfighting, toasting rice in bamboo, etc.

Pa Sak Boat Racing Festival

This major regatta takes place at Sao Hai on the last Saturday or Sunday of September. Famous boats from all over the country join in the races.

Local Products

Hand-Woven Fabrics: Distinctive northeastern-style fabrics like *Tin Chok* silk and *Mat Mi* silk are sold at Ton Tan in Amphoe Sao Hai, Tao Phun in Amphoe Khaeng Khoi and Nong Khae in Amphoe Phra Phutthabat.

Bamboo baskets: Round baskets and those of other shapes are sold at Phu Krang in Amphoe Phra Phutthabat and Khok Yai in Amphoe Ban Mo.

Reed Mats: Striped mats are sold at Phu Krang in Amphoe Phra Phutthabat, Nong Mu in Amphoe Wihan Daeng, Song Khon and Ban That in Amphoe Kaeng Khoi and Ban Luang in Amphoe Don Phut. Other products include stone mortars, leatherware and mosaic tiles.



Tak Bat Dok Mai

How To Get There

By Car

From Bangkok, take Highway 1 (Phahonyothin) to the Bang Pa-in roundabout, then turn right onto Mittraphap Road.

By Bus

The buses depart from the Bangkok Bus Terminal on Kamphaeng Phet II Road. Call 0 2936 2852-66 for more information.

By Rail

From Bangkok's Hua Lamphong Railway Station, there are several Saraburi trains daily, some including stops at Kaeng Khoi and Muak Lek. Call 0 2220 4334 or Hotline 1690 for more information.

Ang Thong is a small province of 968 sq. km. beside the Chao Phraya River. The original settlement was a key frontier outpost of Ayutthaya when fighting the Burmese, located at Wiset Chai Chan on the banks of the Noi River. Most of the population moved to a new site on the left bank of the Chao Phraya River in the late 18th century, located 108 km. north of Bangkok.

City Attractions

City Pillar Shrine

Located opposite the City Hall, the shrine has beautiful mural paintings.



Phra Tamnak Khamyat

Ang Thong

The original settlement was a key frontier outpost of Ayutthaya when fighting the Burmese, located at Wiset Chai Chan on the banks of the Noi River.

Wat Ton Son

Located on the west bank of the river, this old temple enshrines “Somdet Phra Si Mueang”, a beautiful seated Buddha image.

Other interesting temples in the town include Wat Ang Thong Worawihan with a beautiful stupa and chapel, Wat Chantharangi with a gigantic Buddha image, and Wat Ratchapaksi with a large reclining Buddha image of the Ayutthaya period.

Out-Of-City Attractions

Wat Pa Mok Worawihan

Located at Pa Mok on the west bank of the river, 18 km. south of Ang Thong town, this temple has a reclining Buddha image thought to be of the Sukhothai period, 22.6 m. long, made of brick and mortar, and covered with gold. King Naresuan the Great visited the temple to pay homage to the image prior to leading the Thai army against the Burmese.

Wat Tha Sutthawat

Located on the east bank of the river at Bang Sadet, 15 km. south of Ang Thong via Highway 309, at the site of an old military river crossing, the temple has been renovated several times and houses Buddha images and historical remains of different periods.

Wat Sa Kaeo

Located 15 km. south of Ang Thong via Highway 309, this temple dates from 1699 and partly serves as a care centre for

Nai Dok-Nai Thong Kaeo Monument





Wat Tha Sutthawat

needy orphans from almost every part of Thailand. It also has a workshop making handwoven products such as skirts, table cloths and pillowcases.

Wat Chaiyo Worawihan

Located 18 km. from the town on the Sing Buri Road (Highway 32), this temple houses Phra Maha Phuttha Phim, a large seated Buddha image in the attitude of meditation, dating from King Rama IV's reign, and is well-known for its sacred amulets.

Wat Khun Inthapramun

Located 9 km along the Pho Thong Road and 2 km. along an access road, this temple has a 50 m. long reclining open-air Buddha image. The Wihan housing the image was destroyed during the first fall of Ayutthaya. According to local lore, Khun Inthapramun was a tax official who diverted revenue to enlarge the original 40 m. image, for which he was whipped to death.

Phra Tamnak Khamyat

Located near Wat Khun Inthapramun in a rice field, this ruined brick pavilion, measuring 10 m. by 20 m. was built in King Borommakot's reign as his residence when visiting the area.

Wat Khoi

In front of this temple, located at Pho Rang Nok, 12 km. along Wiset Chai Chan Road, then another 5 km. off to the right, some 50,000 fish of various species crowd the Noi River as part of a fish sanctuary. In the temple, there is a museum of boats and old

tools.

Bats at Wat Chantharam

Located 4 km. west of Pho Thong, the temple compound is home to numerous bats, which hang from the trees during the day and fly out for food at night.

Wat Khian

This Ayutthaya period temple at Wiset Chai Chan, 12 km. from Ang Thong, has a chapel with fantastic mural paintings made by a local artisan depicting rural lifestyles. Other temples at Wiset Chai Chan of the period include Wat Oi, Wat Wiset Chai Chan and Wat Luang.

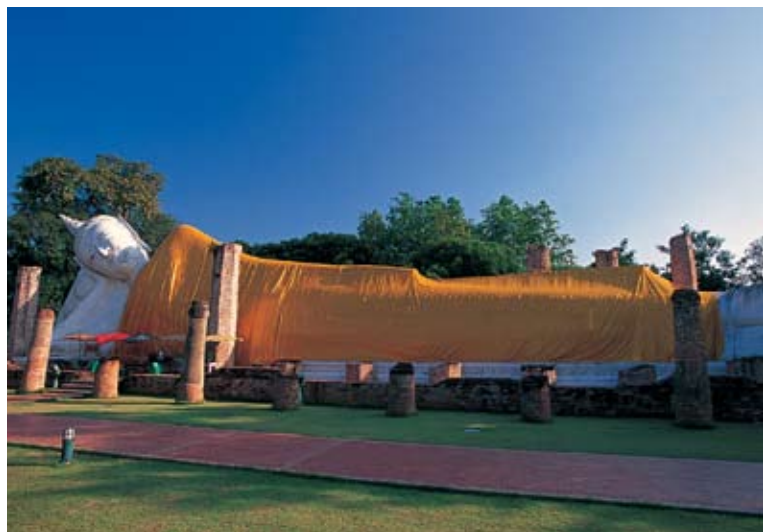
Local Products (Handicrafts Villages)

Ban Bang Sadet Village at Pa Mok is noted for producing delicate and beautiful "Court Dolls" from clay. Small and unglazed, they represent local customs, traditions and folk plays.

Ban Bang Phae Riverside Village specialises in making traditional drums from cowhide and soft wood with exquisite craftsmanship. Small drums are sold as souvenirs.

Ban Bang Chao Cha Village in Amphoe Pho Thong 14 km. from the town, continues the art of traditional bamboo basketry, making both old and modern designs.

Wat Khun Inthapramun



Along the Ayutthaya - Pa Mok Road, there is a cottage industry of traditional Thai house prefabricated parts, employing fine workmanship.

Special Event

Boat Races

October

The major regatta takes place in front of Wat Chaiyo Worawihan on the Chao Phraya River together with the Luang Pho To Worship Festival. Races are also held at other riverside temples including Wat Pa Mok by the Chao Phraya River and Wat Pho Kriap by the Noi River at Pho Thong. Famous boats from all over the country take part in the races.

How To Get There

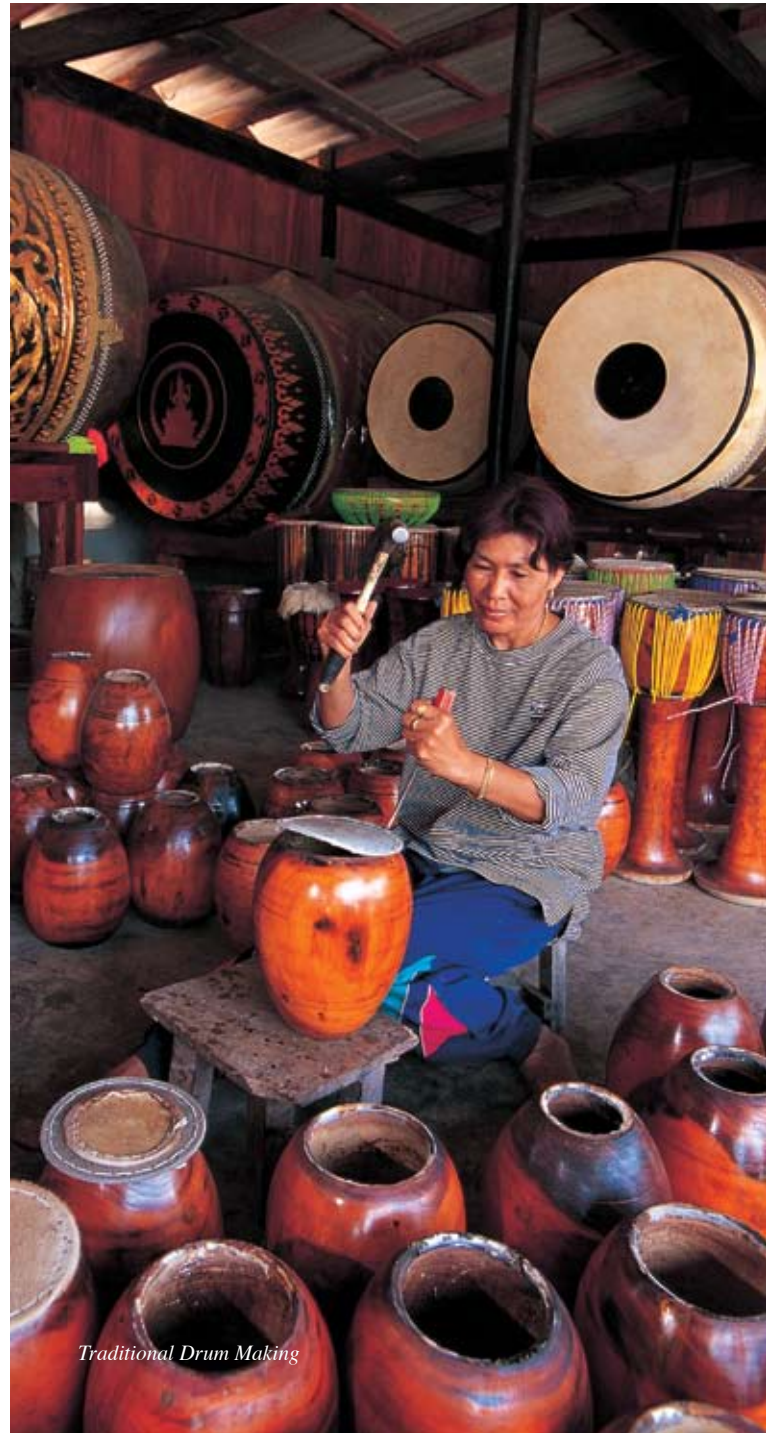
By Car

1. From Bangkok, take Highway 1 (Phahonyothin Road) and Highway 32 via Bang Pa-in, Ayutthaya and Bang Pahan, a total distance of 105 km.
2. From Bangkok, take the Pinklao-Talingchan Road, then Highway 340 to Suphan Buri, then Highway 350 to Ang Thong, a total distance of 150 km.

By Bus

Frequent air-conditioned and non-air-conditioned buses depart daily from Bangkok Bus Terminal. Call 0 2936 2852-66 for more information.

Suphan Buri province occupies an area of 5,358 sq. km. in the Central Plains northwest of Bangkok. Suphan Buri is an ancient town rich in culture and historical temples, located 169 km. from Bangkok on the bank of the Tha Chin River, sometimes called the Suphan Buri River. It was an important border town involved in wars during the Ayutthaya period.



Traditional Drum Making



Wat Pa Lelai

Located on the west bank of the Suphan Buri River, built in Thai style but later altered to a Chinese design, the shrine houses statues of the god Vishnu carved out of green stone.

Located in front of the City Hall, the Museum is dedicated to

the history and study of rice farming. Exhibits include tools of the trade, the many rites surrounding it, and the historical role of royalty in rice farming. Open Wednesday to Sunday, except public holidays; admission is free.

Wat Sanam Chai

At this abandoned temple on the east bank of the Suphan Buri River lie the ruins of a large stupa, estimated to have been 70-80 m. tall. Human remains have been excavated here, assumed to belong to warriors who died in battle in former times.

Wat Suwannaphum

In this temple of the early Ayutthaya period located opposite the City Hall, there is a museum of antique artefacts such as bowls, cups, vases, Buddha images, clocks and weapons.

Suphan Buri Tower

Rising 123 m. in the middle of a public park in the heart of Suphan Buri, the tower offers a panoramic view of the town with an exhibition centre and souvenir shops inside.

Wat Pa Lelai

Located on the river's west bank on Malaimaen Road, this temple is believed to have been built some 800 years ago during prosperous times. A huge sitting Buddha image named "Luang Pho To", 23 m. in height, is enshrined in the main chapel. Celebratory fairs for the image are held each April and November. Also in the compound is an old Thai-style house called "Khum Khun Chang" built according to the description in a classic poem by Thailand's best-loved poet, Sunthon Phu.

Wat Phra Si Rattana Mahathat

Buffalo Village



Located at Rua Yai on the river's west bank within the town, locally called Wat Phrathat, this temple was constructed during the early Ayutthaya period, over 600 years ago, and houses a large U-Thong-style stupa containing Buddha relics.

Wat Phra Rup

Located on Khun Chang Road on the Tha Chin River's west bank opposite the market, built during the early Ayutthaya period, this temple houses a 13 m.-long reclining Buddha image with a most beatific face. There is also a Buddha's footprint made of wood, the only one in Thailand.

Wat Khae

Located 2 km. beyond Wat Phra Si Rattana Mahathat, this old temple includes a gigantic tamarind tree and old Thai-style houses.

Out-Of-City Attractions

Western Handicraft Promotion Centre

Located at Don Kamyam on Malaimaen Road about 8 km. from Amphoe U-Thong, the Centre promotes handicraft industries in Suphan Buri and nearby provinces. Many fine handicrafts are on display and on sale.

Tha Sadet Bird Sanctuary

The Sanctuary is 15 km. from the town along the Don Chedi Road (Highway 322). The best viewing time is evening when a tremendous number of birds such as open-billed storks, herons, cormorants, painted storks, night herons and white ibises can be seen returning home.

Don Chedi Monument

Located at Don Chedi, 31 km. from the town, the Monument was constructed by King Naresuan the Great to commemorate his 1592 victory over King Maha Uparacha of Burma in elephant back combat. A statue of King Naresuan the Great mounting the elephant stands in front of the pagoda.

U-Thong Ancient Town

About 30 km. east of the town near the Chorakhe Sam Phan River, U-Thong was a prosperous town during the Dvaravati period before Ayutthaya was founded as the capital in 1347.

U-Thong National Museum

The Museum exhibits artefacts such as tools, utensils, and Buddha images found in excavations and shows the development of communities who settled in Suphan Buri during different



Suphan Buri Tower

periods.

Wat Phai Rong Wua

Located at Bang Ta Then, 43 km. from the town on the Bangkok road, this temple houses the world's largest metal-cast Buddha image, called Phra Phutthakhodom, which has a lap width of 10 m. and a height of 26 m.

Buffalo Village

Situated on the Chai Nat Road at Si Prachan, dedicated to water buffalo, this new attraction pays tribute to a wonderful beast and seeks to inspire appreciation of its mighty contribution to Thailand. It includes a Farmer Village, a display of a royal agricultural project and Thai-style teak houses. For more information, call 0 3558 2591-3, fax 0 3558 1676 or visit www.buffalovillages.com.

Special Event

Don Chedi Memorial Fair

January

This annual fair is held for seven days to commemorate the historic Don Chedi battle in 1592 that led to the kingdom's liberation from Burmese occupation. It begins on January 25, Royal Thai Armed Forces Day, with historical exhibitions and outdoor entertainment. Activities include a light-and-sound presentation of the elephant fight, a beauty pageant in period dress, and stage performances.

Local Products

At Ban Ratsadon Bamrung in Amphoe Don Chedi water hyacinths are made into wickerwork trays, baskets, purses, hats and cages. Hand-woven rattan and bamboo products are sold in Amphoe Song Phi Nong, Amphoe U-Thong and Amphoe Doem Bang Nang Buat.

Suphan Buri abounds in freshwater fish, prepared at many restaurants. Food products include soft cakes called *Khanom Sali*, canned truffles in syrup at Amphoe Si Prachan, and preserved mushrooms at Amphoe Deom Bang Nang Buat.

How To Get There

By Car

There are many routes from Bangkok to Suphan Buri:

1. Via Bang Bua Thong (107 km.).

2. Via Pathum Thani and Lat Lum Kaeo (115 km.)

3. Via Ayutthaya (132 km.)

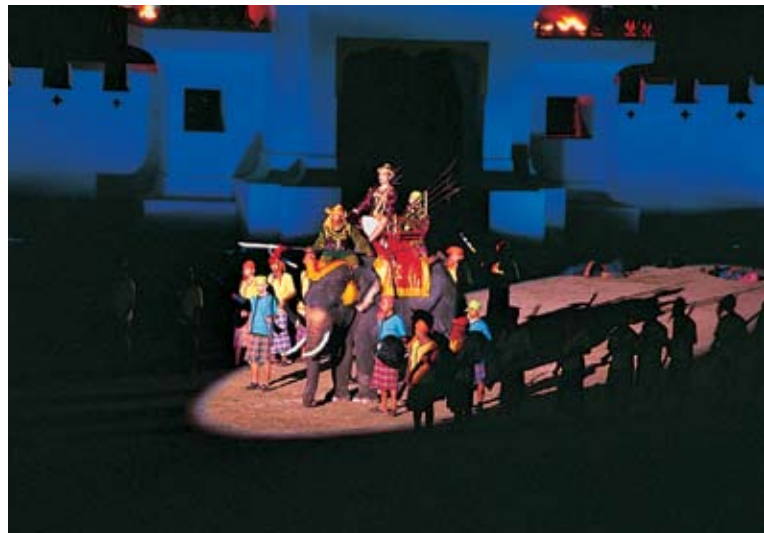
4. Via Nakhon Pathom and Kamphaeng Saen (164 km.)

By Bus

Both air-conditioned and non-air-conditioned buses depart from the Southern Bus Terminal (tel: 0 2435 1199) and Bangkok Bus Terminal (tel: 0 2936 2852-66) for Suphan Buri many times daily.

Pathum Thani is a neighbouring province of Bangkok, only 46 km. north of the capital and possessing an area of 1,525 sq. km. Situated in the fertile Chao Phraya River basin with many canals and tangerine orchards, the area was originally named Sam Khok. Founded in the Ayutthaya era, it was a settlement for Mon people migrating from Burma over 350 years ago. In 1815 when King Rama II made a royal visit to the area, the inhabitants offered him large quantities of lotus flowers, giving rise to

Don Chedi Memorial Fair





Lotuses

the present name.

Located in the compound of the City Hall, the shrine was constructed in 1977 as a four-gabled pavilion housing the city pillar and statues of the gods Narai and Vishnu. On one side is enshrined a Buddha image of the Sukhothai style in the position of Subduing Evil.

Wat Hong Pathumawat

Located on the west bank of the Chao Phraya River in the town, this temple was constructed by Mon immigrants in 1764. There is a fishpond in front of the temple.

Wat Chinwararam

This temple, originally called Wat Makhram Tai, is located on the west bank of the Chao Phraya River opposite the mouth of Khlong Rangsit Prayunsak near the town centre. Mural paintings depict the story of the Buddha's 10 lives with poetic descriptions.

Wat Sing

This first Mon-style temple of Pathum Thani is located on the west bank of the Chao Phraya River, 3 km. from the town centre. It houses Luang Pho To, an Ayutthaya-style gold-covered Buddha image, and Luang Pho Phet, a reclining Buddha image. The former monks' quarters have become a museum for Mon antiques. The villagers living around the temple produce old-style Mon bricks which are famous products of Pathum Thani.

Wat Phai Lom

On the east bank of the Chao Phraya River at Sam Khok, this temple is famed for the Asian open-bill storks that migrate from India to lay their eggs in the tall trees here from November to May. Other migratory birds include black-capped kingfishers, spot-billed pelicans and black-headed ibis.

Wat Chedi Thong

Located on the west bank of the Chao Phraya River at Sam
Wat Chedi Thong





Wat Phuet Udom

Khok, 8 km. from Pathum Thani town, this place of worship has a Mon-style pagoda approximately 160 years old and a white jade Buddha image enshrined in the Ubosot.

Wat Phuet Udom

This temple constructed in 1894 is located at Lam Sai, Amphoe Lam Luk Ka, 57 km. along the Pathum Thani-Nong Chok Road. It is known for its depictions of hell and heaven from the Buddhist canon.

Wat Bua Khwan

This temple at Lat Lum Kaeo houses a Buddha image in ascetic mode, cast in King Rama V's reign, and a pavilion where King Rama VI presided over a ploughing ceremony, called Sala Daeng, having an exquisite teak tile roof.

Wat Chedi Hoi

This small temple is located at Bo Ngoen, Lat Lum Kaeo, 18 km. from the town. A tremendous number of giant oyster shells, eight million years old, were unearthed and piled up into the form of a Chedi. Each shell weighs at least 1 kilogramme.

Thung Rangsit

This marsh at Khlong Nueng attracts many migratory birds from cold climates, such as ruby throats, blue throats, bush warblers, crakes and rails.

Wat Worani Thammakayaram

This temple, better known as the Meditation Practice Centre,

is located at Khlong Sam, 5 km. off Phahonyothin Road, in an extensive wooded area suitable for meditation.

Dream World

Situated at Km. 7 on Rangsit-Ongkharak Road, a 10-minute drive from Don Mueang Airport, this is an extensive fun fair consisting of a European-style plaza, a garden featuring model replicas of world wonders and a myriad of exciting game rides. Open daily 10.00 a.m.-5.00 p.m. and until 7.00 p.m. on public holidays. Call 0 2533 1152, 0 2533 1447, 0 2533 1449 for more information.

Talat Thai

This is Thailand's largest, international standard, wholesale and retail market for food products and fresh produce including fruit, vegetables, cut flowers and pot plants. It is located on 200 acres at Rangsit on Bangkok's outskirts, accessible by Phahonyothin Road.

Muai Thai Institute

This institute was established by the World Muai Thai Council to promote Thailand's primary martial art at national and international levels. It offers three types of Muai Thai (Thai boxing) courses for both Thais and foreigners, teaching combat skills and knowledge of Muai Thai culture. There are also special programmes for becoming an instructor or referee.

The Institute is at 323 Prachathipat, Thanyaburi, Pathum Thani 12130, Tel: 0 2992 0096-9.

National Science Museum

Six exhibition floors are devoted to different aspects of science and technology, including traditional Thai technology.

Visitors are encouraged to interact with exhibits in a hands-on

Dream World



educational approach. Located at Technopolis, Khlong 5, Rangsit-Nakhon Nayok Road. Open Tuesday-Sunday, 09.30-17.00. Tel: 0 2577 4172-8.

Local Products

Tangerines are the most noted produce; tiny shrimp served while still alive with chilli lemon juice and garlic, and Rangsit boat noodles are famous local dishes.

How To Get There

By Car

There are many routes, such as via Bang Khen, via Nonthaburi and Pak Kret, and via Bang Yai, Bang Bua Thong, and Lat Lum Kaeo.

By Bus

Pathum Thani can be reached by the following Bangkok city buses:

Bus No. 33 from Sanam Luang

Bus No. 90 from Chatuchak, connecting at Rangsit to a Pathum Thani bus

Bus No. 29, 34, 39, 59, 95, 503 to Rangsit, connecting to a Pathum Thani bus

Bus No. 104 from Victory Monument to Pak Kret, then connecting to Bus No. 33 or No. 90.

Nonthaburi is over 400 years old, dating from when Ayutthaya was the capital, and is a province immediately to the north of Bangkok lying beside the Chao Phraya River.

The town was originally located at Ban Talat Khwan, an area of canals and fruit orchards, but was twice moved by royal order in later centuries. Nonthaburi is now effectively a suburb of Bangkok.



Wat Chinwararam



Wat Khema Phirataram Ratchaworawihan

This was constructed during the reign of King Rama VI in a European architectural style with fine carved teak wood decorated all over the building. The front area of the city hall facing the Chao Phraya River is used as a rest area for the public.

Thailand's first natural history museum, built in 1961, is located in the town centre and features exhibits on the evolution of plants, animals, human beings and the earth. Open Tuesday

to Saturday 8.30 a.m.-4.30 p.m., closed on public holidays. Admission is free.

Wat Khema Phirataram Ratchaworawihan

Lying on the Chao Phraya River's east bank at Suan Yai, 2 km. south of the town centre, the lovely temple was built in the Ayutthaya period and refurbished in the mid-19th century. The 30 m.-tall chedi contains Buddha relics and Ayutthaya-style Buddha images.

Wat Sangkhathan

This temple was built in the late Ayutthaya period to enshrine Luang Pho To, a Buddha image. Later it was abandoned, but villagers continued paying homage to the revered image, and monks were invited for "Sangkhathan", to give offerings to monks, hence the temple's name. The temple has a peaceful ambience, resembling a forest meditation centre. Females can join a special nunhood project here. For more information call 0 2447 0799.

Wat Chaloem Phra Kiat

This royal temple located west of the river was constructed by King Rama III and King Rama IV, combining Thai and Chinese styles in an attractively peaceful compound. The chapel has a colourful mural painting of falling flowers, the door and window panels have lacquered gold leaf designs, the gables have raised plaster flower designs, the floor is decorated with mirrors, and the insides of the door and window panels have drawings of lotuses, birds and aquatic animals. The main Buddha image is made entirely of copper. Other interesting historical artefacts

Wat Chaloem Phra Kiat





Wat Chotikaram

include a Lankan-style pagoda.

Kanchanapisek Park

Covering an area of 40 acres and created to mark King Bhumibol's Golden Jubilee on the throne in 1997, the park has a fine collection of water plants, garden plants and aquatic life, and features several interesting Thai-style buildings. Open daily 6.00 a.m.-6.00 p.m., admission is free.

Wat Chotikaram

This temple, located at Bang Phai and built in 1807, has Chinese influences.

Wat Prasat

Built in the reign of King Narai the Great (late Ayutthaya period), this well-preserved temple possesses sophisticated craftsmanship, including Nonthaburi's oldest mural paintings.

Wat Chomphu Wek

Located at Tha Sai, the temple was built in 1757 by the Mon with a Mon-style chedi. The chapel features murals of Buddha's life and two Sukhothai standing Buddha images.

Wat Tamnak Tai

This is an old temple located at Tha Sai, with a vihan and bell hall built in 1824.

Wat Ku

Located on the river bank at Bang Phut, 4 km. from Pak Kret, this temple was begun by Mon people two centuries ago. Mon mural paintings showing the Buddha's life decorate the old chapel. A large reclining Buddha lies in front of the drowned Queen Sunantha's boat.

Wat Chonprathan Rangsarit

This is a peaceful, bamboo-shaded temple located at Bang Talat, Pak Kret.

Wat Pho Bang O

This charming old temple dates from the Ayutthaya period and is being renovated by the Fine Arts Department. The chapel has woodcarving with Chinese patterns. The door frames are decorated with beautiful sculptures made from sugarcane cement.

Bang Khu Wiang Floating Market

At the mouth of Bang Khu Wiang Canal, this lively market is open 6.00 a.m.-8.00 a.m. Villagers bring harvested fruit by boat to sell here. Monks come by boat to receive offerings from villagers. This traditional way of life is rarely seen nowadays.

Wat Suan Kaeo

The temple is a centre for Buddhist studies and projects guided by an innovative monk named Phra Phisal Dhamma Phati. It aims to improve the living standards of the poor and to develop society. Successful projects include the Rom Pho Kaeo, the shelter for the elderly, the supermarket for the poor and the Suan Kaeo nursery projects. For donations and tours, call 0 2595 1444.

Wat Amphawan

The most striking feature of this 18th century temple is a finely decorated wooden scripture hall in the middle of a pond.

Phra Srinagarindra Park

Spread over 40.8 acres in Nong Pru, Ban Mai. This lovely marshland park has a mini-garden, a sundial, and a fountain in the middle. Open daily, admission is free.

Plant Market

Nonthaburi is one of Thailand's major producers of flowers and fruits. On a journey along the Taling Chan-Suphan Buri route via Amphoe Bang Kruai and Amphoe Bang Yai, a vast variety of plants, both flower and fruit, are available for gardeners.



Pottery Making

Ko Kret

This island was created by the digging of a canal across a bend in the Chao Phraya River in the Ayutthaya period. The island prospered as is evident from the many temples dating back to this period. After the Burmese sacked Ayutthaya in 1767, it was probably deserted, after which Mon people moved here. The island is shady and pleasant to visit, especially by bicycle.

Attractions on Ko Kret

Wat Poramai Yikawat or Wat Pakao

This temple, prized by the Mon, is unique for having Buddhist scriptures in the Mon language, following King Rama V's provision. The Mon-style chedi is a replica of one revered by all Mons. The chapel enshrines a reclining Buddha of the late Ayutthaya period decorated with striking mural paintings of royal insignia. Before the building stands a marble Buddha image. The convocation hall is decorated with items from Italy, as was popular in Rama V's reign. Open daily 8.30 a.m.-4.30 p.m. The temple's museum exhibits artefacts that include earthen Buddha images, glassware, porcelain, and a Mon-style coffin, considered a masterpiece of aluminium plate carving.

Wat Sao Thong Thong

This temple, called Phia A Lat by the Mon, has the highest chedi in Pak Kret. The chapel has beautiful golden ceiling murals.

Wat Chim Phli

This temple consists of a small eye-catching chapel, with wood-carvings depicting an angel riding a chariot surrounded by floral patterns. The base is in the shape of a junk's hull.

Wat Phai Lom

Built in the late Ayutthaya period, this temple has a magnificent chapel featuring wood flower patterns and two small carambola-shaped chedis. Mons call the temple "Phia To".

Kwan A Man

This is a Mon cultural centre featuring traditional Mon earthen pottery, whose distinctive beauty is now part of the provincial emblem. Some island homes make pottery items for daily use like flowerpots, mortars and jars. Visitors can go inside and browse. Khlong Khanom Wan Canalside homes specialise in sweet-making and give demonstrations to tourists.

Special Events

The Mon Songkran

April

The water festival is held for one week from April 13.

Celebrated around Pak Kret District Office, Ko Kret, the event features a Mon procession and entertainment.

Mon Dance Festival

Local Products



April

Mon dance is an ancient dramatic art and today's Mons have managed to retain the skills of their forefathers. In Pak Kret, Phra Pradaeng and Pathum Thani, many people can still perform Mon dances and play the Mon alto oboe.

Nonthaburi Fruit Fair

April-June

This is an annual fair held to celebrate the abundance of such local fruits as durian, mangosteen, mango and star fruit, beside the dam in front of the old city hall in Amphoe Mueang. Ornamental flowers are also sold.

Giving Offerings to 108 Monks Festival

October

This decades-old merit-making festival is held along the Bangkok Noi Canal at many temples including Wat Thai Charoen, Wat Bang Krai Nok, Wat Utthayan and Wat Bang Krai Nai, on the eighth day of the waning moon in the twelfth lunar month.

Local Products

Pottery is sold on Ko Kret. This island in the Chao Phraya River is famous for its distinctive pottery with a fine, red-black glaze and intricate design.

Fruit, most importantly long-branched and Mon Thong durian, is widely grown. In April and June, the province holds fruit festivals before the old City Hall.

Flowers, notably orchids, are sold on both sides of the Taling Chan-Suphan Buri Road. Dubbed "the flower road", this is a major market garden area.

How To Get There

Nonthaburi is within the Bangkok city bus system. It can also be reached on the Chao Phraya Express Boat which plies the river.

Wat Amphawan





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Jersey, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania,
Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee,
Vermont, Virginia, Washington D.C., West
Virginia, Wisconsin, Puerto Rico and
the Bahamas and Canada (West Canada:
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