

Thailand in Brief

"**Thailand in Brief**" has been prepared by the Thailand Foundation to support students, scholars, and the general public who wish to give presentations about Thailand to their audiences—for example, exchange program students and international participants.

The work presents some basic information about Thailand in 11 areas: 1) *Geography*, 2) *History*, 3) *Politics and Government*, 4) *Economics*, 5) *Demographics*, 6) *Culture*, 7) *Values*, 8) *Thai People and Other Popularity That You May Know*, 9) *Misconceptions about Thailand*, 10) *Thailand's Role on the Global Stage*, and 11) *Rankings Related to Thailand*.

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"**Thailand in Brief**" will be updated every third quarter each year. For inquiries or further suggestions, please contact the Thailand Foundation at info@thailandfoundation.or.th.

July 2026

Thailand in Brief

"Thailand in Brief" จัดทำขึ้นโดยมูลนิธิไทย (Thailand Foundation) เพื่ออำนวยความสะดวกแก่ นักเรียน นักศึกษา และผู้สนใจทั่วไป นำไปใช้ประโยชน์ อาทิ ในการบรรยาย หรือให้ความรู้เกี่ยวกับประเทศไทยในด้านต่าง ๆ แก่ชาวต่างประเทศ เช่น กรณีนักศึกษาแลกเปลี่ยนที่ไปเรียนในต่างประเทศที่ต้องนำเสนอเรื่องราวเกี่ยวกับประเทศไทยในสถาบันที่ไปศึกษาอยู่ เป็นต้น

งานชิ้นนี้เสนอข้อมูลเกี่ยวกับประเทศไทยโดยสังเขป 11 ด้าน ได้แก่ **1) ภูมิศาสตร์ (Geography) 2) ประวัติศาสตร์ (History) 3) การเมืองการปกครอง (Politics and Government) 4) เศรษฐกิจ (Economics) 5) ประชากร (Demographics) 6) วัฒนธรรม (Culture) 7) ค่านิยม (Values) 8) คนไทยและสื่อที่คุณอาจรู้จัก (Thai people and other popularity that you may know) 9) ความเข้าใจผิดเกี่ยวกับประเทศไทย (Misconceptions) 10) บทบาทของไทยในเวทีโลก (Thailand's role on the Global Stage) และ 11) การจัดอันดับที่เกี่ยวข้องกับประเทศไทย (Rankings related to Thailand)**

"Thailand in Brief" นี้จัดทำเป็นสไลด์ จำนวน 399 สไลด์ ในรูปแบบ .pdf และ .pptx สามารถดาวน์โหลดและเลือกใช้หัวข้อที่นำเสนอ และสลับลำดับการนำเสนอได้ตามความเหมาะสม อย่างไรก็ดี ผู้ใช้งานไม่สามารถดัดแปลงเนื้อหาในเอกสารได้ และห้ามผลิตซ้ำ หรือนำไปใช้เพื่อผลประโยชน์เชิงพาณิชย์โดยไม่ได้รับอนุญาตจากมูลนิธิไทย

"Thailand in Brief" จะได้รับการปรับปรุงให้ทันสมัยในทุกไตรมาสที่ 3 ของปี หากมีข้อสงสัยและข้อเสนอแนะเพิ่มเติม กรุณาติดต่อมูลนิธิไทย
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กรกฎาคม 2569

Where is Thailand in the World?

Photo credit: Zuanzuanfuwa



Where is Thailand? Who are Thailand's Neighbors?

Thailand is located in the middle of mainland Southeast Asia.

Bordering Countries

It is bordered by 4 countries:
Myanmar to the northwest,
Laos to the northeast,
Cambodia to the southeast,
and **Malaysia** to the south.

Coastal Access

The country has coastlines along the **Andaman Sea** to the west and the **Gulf of Thailand** to the east, providing access to significant maritime routes.



Thailand's Size Comparison



With 513,120 km²



France

543,940 km²



Spain

505,990 km²



Japan

377,975 km²

Thailand is the **50th largest country in the world by total area** and the **3rd largest country in Southeast Asia**.

Photo credit: Mylifeelsewhere

Four Regions of Thailand

Thailand is commonly divided into four regions*:

- The North
- The Northeast (Isan)
- The Central
- The South

*Using for administrative and statistical contexts

Photo credit: Thai Language Hut



The North

Characterized by forested mountains and cooler climate



Doi Inthanon, Chiang Mai



Doi Pha Hee, Chiang Rai



Doi Ang Khang, Chiang Mai

Photo credit: Khun Kay, Chillpainai, Thai Rath

The Central

Known as the "Rice Bowl of Thailand," it features agricultural fields, rivers, and flood plains.



Rice fields in Ayutthaya



Chao Phraya Dam, Chai Nat

Photo credit: Bangkokpost

The Northeast

Also known as Isan, the Thai Northeast is a plateau with drier climate



Hin Sam Wan (Three Whale Rock), Bueng Kan



Thung Kula Ronghai, Roi Et

Photo credit: Kapook Travel, Silpa-mag

The South

Boasts tropical weather, beaches, islands, and coastlines



Koh Phi Phi, Krabi



Koh Ta Pu, Phang Nga



Koh Kradan, Trang

Photo credit: Asia King Travel, Thailand Tours, Krungthep Turakij

Thailand's Connectivity

Thailand's strategic location, combined with a robust transportation network, has established the country as a vital hub for regional and international connectivity.

Primary Highways

Through several major highways, Thailand is connected to its neighbors and regions beyond such as India and China.

Photo credit: greatermekong.org



Railways

- Thailand's railway system spans over **4,800 km** passing through a total of 47 of 77 provinces.
- Its major railways link the country with international transportation routes, extending far and wide.

Photo credit: Thailand Trains



Airports in Thailand

There are approximately
33 airports all over the country.

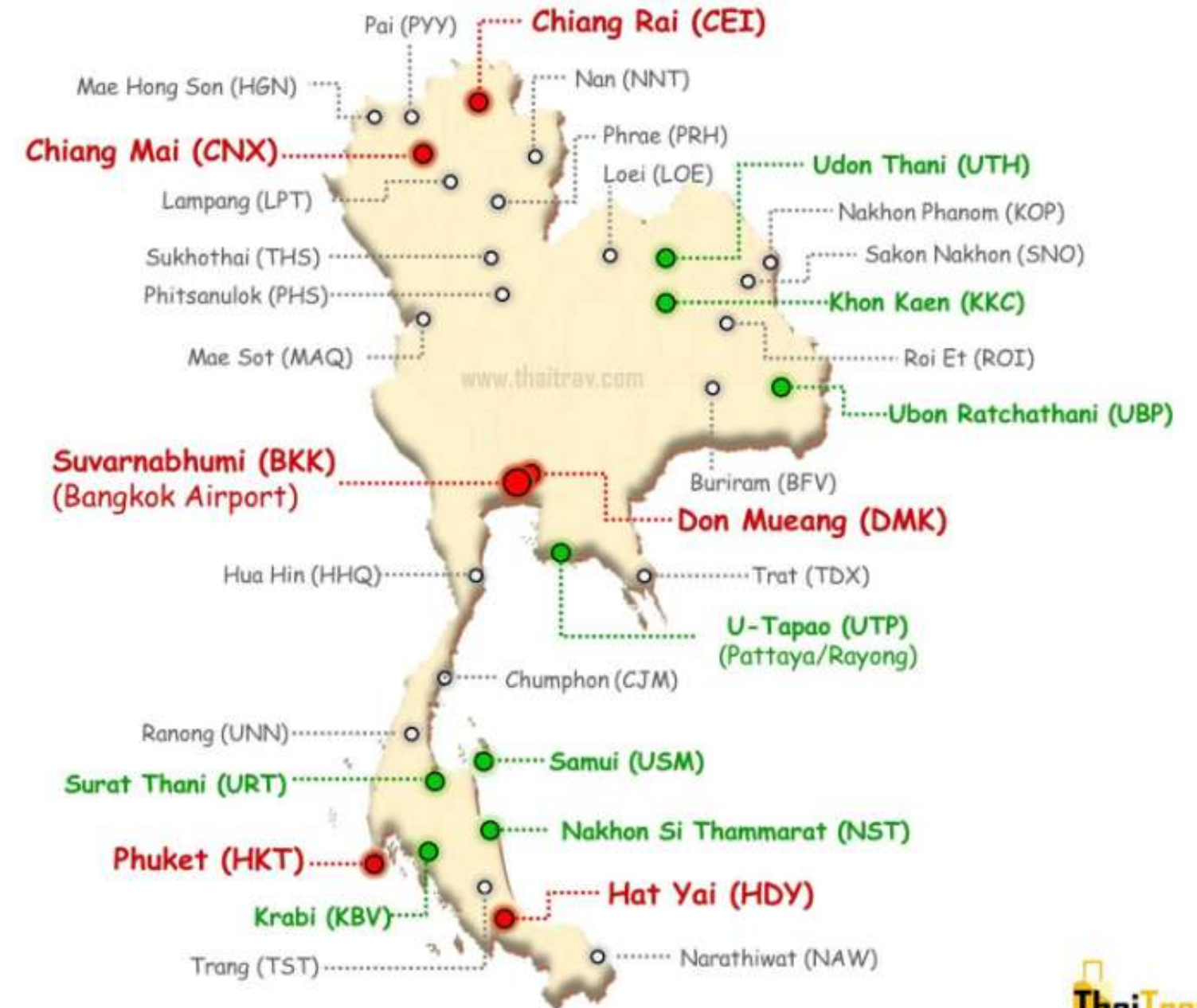


Photo credit: ThaiTrav

Major Airports in Thailand



Suvarnabhumi Airport (BKK)

One of Southeast Asia's busiest aviation hubs, offering international flights to Europe, Asia, the Middle East, and beyond.



Don Mueang Airport (DMK)

Caters to low-cost carriers and domestic flights.

Photo credit: Akyra Hotels, Thailand Awaits

Secondary Airports in Thailand



**Chiang Mai International Airport
(CNX)**



**Hat Yai International Airport
(HDY)**

and other airports include...

**Chiang Rai International
Airport (CEI)**

**Udon Thani International
Airport (UTH)**

**Phuket International Airport
(HKT)**

**U-Tapao International Airport
(UTP)**

Seaports

- **Laem Chabang Port** in Chonburi, is Thailand's largest deep-sea port.
- **Map Ta Phut Industrial Port** in Rayong, together with Laem Chabang Port, is part of the Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC).
- **Bangkok Port** further supports the nation's logistics and industrial sectors.

Pictured: Laem Chabang Port

Photo credit: Hutchison Ports Thailand

Thailand's Major Cities

Bangkok: The Capital City

Where is Bangkok?

Size and Population

1,568.737 km² in total area.

Bangkok is the most populous city in Thailand with over 5,422,568 total registered residents.

Photo credit: NordNordWest



Bangkok: The Capital City

World's Longest City Name

*Krungthepmahanakhon Amonrattanakosin
Mahintharayutthaya Mahadilokphop
Noppharatchathaniburirom
Udomratchaniwetmahasathan
Amonphimanawatansathit
Sakkathattiyawitsanukamprasit*

Meaning

*City of angels, great city of immortals, magnificent city
of the nine gems, seat of the king, city of royal palaces,
home of gods incarnate, erected by Vishvakarman at
Indra's behest*

Bangkok's 244th anniversary

Bangkok marked its 244th anniversary on 21 April 2026,
commemorating its establishment as Thailand's capital in 1782.

Bangkok's Historic Places



The Grand Palace Complex

The Grand Palace sits at the heart of Bangkok and has been the official residence of the monarchy since 1782.

Located in the Grand Palace,
Wat Phra Kaew is Thailand's most sacred site housing the revered **Emerald Buddha** statue.

Bangkok's Historic Places

Wat Pho

One of Bangkok's oldest temples, Wat Pho is home to the massive **Reclining Buddha** statue and a center of traditional Thai massage.



Bangkok's Historic Places



Wat Arun

Wat Arun, or **the Temple of Dawn**, stands as a stunning monument on the bank of Chao Phraya river serving as the first sign to travelers sailing from the Gulf of Thailand that they have arrived in Bangkok.

Bangkok's Shopping Destinations



Siam Shopping District

One of the top shopping destinations in the world, featuring Siam Paragon, Siam Center, Siam Discovery, Siam Square One, MBK Center, Central World, etc.

Photo credit: Tripadvisor

Bangkok's Shopping Destinations

Chatuchak Market

Thailand's biggest market with over **200,000 visitors** every weekend. It offers diverse goods, selling anything from antiques, furniture, cosmetics, clothing to pets and plants.



Photo credit: Time Out

Bangkok's Shopping Destinations



Khlong Lat Mayom Floating Market

A traditional Thai floating market experience in Bangkok, offering local foods and goods.

Photo credit: Tigtets

Chinatown (Yaowarat)



Yaowarat Road



Dragon Gate



**The Golden Buddha
at Wat Traimitr**



Wat Leng Noei Yi

Photo credit: Bangkok Tuk Tuk Tour, HLP VirtualTour, Thaipost, Shutterstock

Bangkok's Mass Transit System



BTS Skytrain

An elevated rail system with two main lines—the Sukhumvit Line and the Silom Line—providing a convenient way to navigate the city's central areas.



MRT

The metro system that connects key districts and suburban areas.



Airport Rail Link (ARL)

An elevated rail connecting Suvarnabhumi Airport to the city center.



Buses and BRT

Operated by the Bangkok Mass Transit Authority (BMTA) and private companies. BRT (Bus Rapid Transit) is a dedicated bus service operating along specific lanes to provide faster travel compared to regular buses.

Bangkok's Mass Transit System

As of 2025, Bangkok's rapid mass transportation network (BTS, MRT, ARL, BRT) covers a combined distance of nearly **250 kilometers**, with ongoing expansions to accommodate the city's growing population and ease congestion.

Bangkok Rail Transit

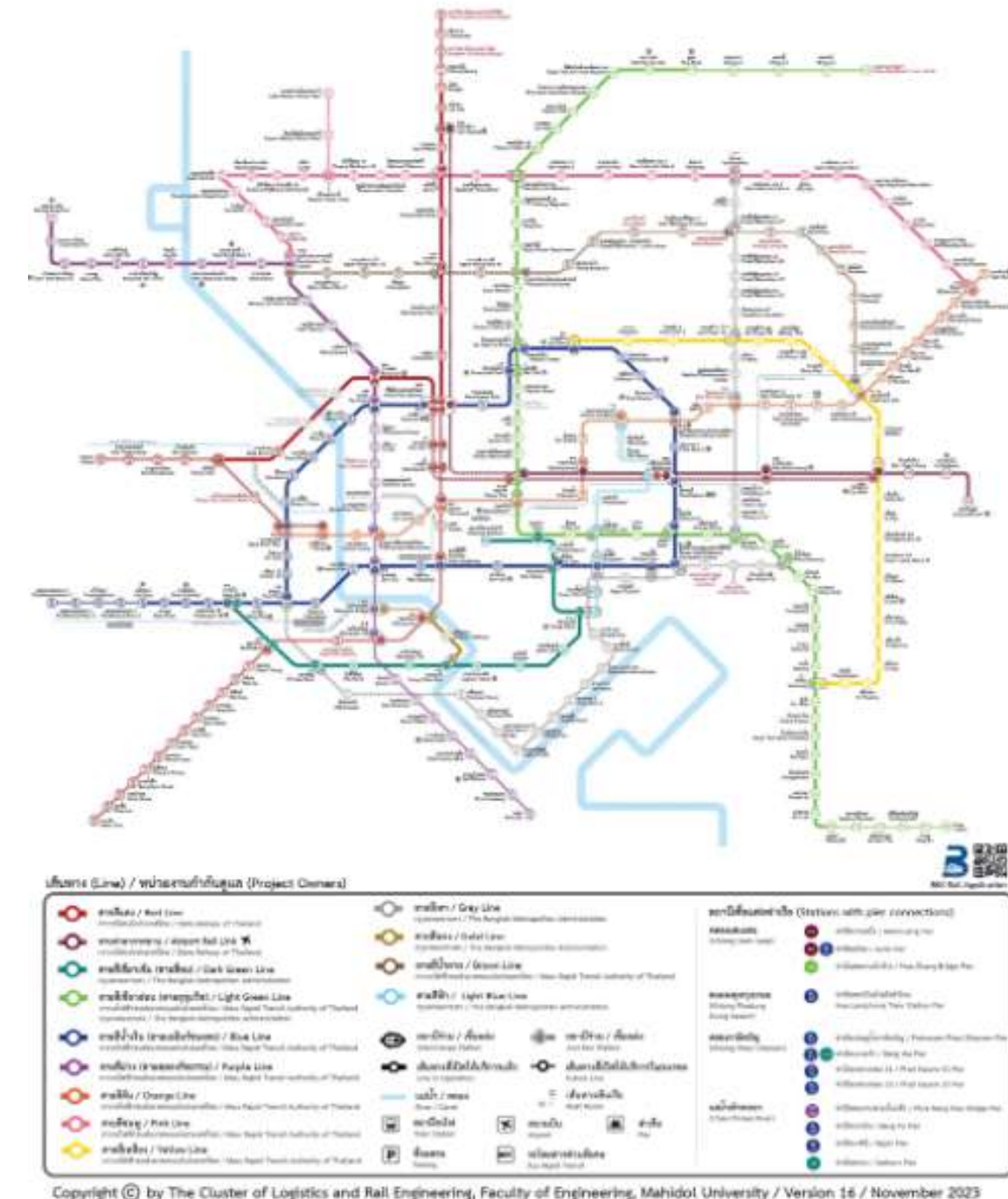


Photo credit: Faculty of Engineering, Mahidol University

Bangkok's MRT Orange Line

The **MRT Orange Line** is an under-construction rapid transit line designed to strengthen east-west connectivity across Bangkok. The **eastern section** is expected to open in **late 2027**, while the **western section** is planned to open around **2030**.

When fully completed, it will link **Bang Khun Non, Thailand Cultural Centre, and Yaek Rom Klao**, serving **29 stations** and connecting with several major rail systems.



Pictured: MRT Orange Line Future Interchange Announcement 2025

Photo credit: P_Railway on YouTube

Bangkok's Mass Transit System

Other Urban Transport Options

Taxis, Tuk-Tuks, Motorbike Taxis, Buses, app-based ride-hailing services, and Boats and Ferries traversing the Chao Phraya River and the city's canals.



Photo credit: Bangkok Tuk Tuk Tour, Techsauce, Consumerthai, Thairath, Siamnews

Chiang Mai

The second largest city in Thailand at 405 km², Chiang Mai has a population of over a million people.

Located on Thai Highlands and surrounded by mountains and forests, making it a hub for outdoor activities.

It is home to Chiang Mai University, the leading academic institution of the Northern region.

International Recognition

Forbes named Chiang Mai one of the world's eight leading destinations for digital nomads and creators, highlighting its co-working spaces, café culture, infrastructure, creative ecosystem, and growing role as a MICE city.

Travel + Leisure ranked Chiang Mai as the 3rd best city in the world in its World's Best Awards 2026, based on reader votes evaluating landmarks, culture, food, friendliness, shopping, and overall value.

Where is Chiang Mai province?



Source: Forbes, reported by [Bangkok Post](#),
[TravelandLeisure](#)

Photo credit: Agoda, NordNordWest1

Landmarks in Chiang Mai



Wat Chedi Luang

A historic temple known for its massive Lanna-style *chedi* (pagoda), which once housed the revered Emerald Buddha.

Landmarks in Chiang Mai

Doi Suthep

A *doi* (mountain) overlooking Chiang Mai, it hosts a sacred temple with a golden pagoda and panoramic views of the city. The site is a major pilgrimage destination in Thailand.



Photo credit: Wikipedia

Landmarks in Chiang Mai



Tha Phae Gate

A historic gateway to Chiang Mai's Old City, it is a well-preserved remnant of the ancient city walls. The gate serves as a cultural hub, hosting festivals and a lively night market.

Photo credit: ForeverVacation

Pattaya City

Pattaya is a vibrant coastal city located in the Chonburi province, famous for its lively beaches, nearby islands such as Koh Larn, entertainment, and nightlife. Once a small fishing village, Pattaya has grown into a major tourist destination.

Size and Population

53.4 km² in area. With 120,000 population

Where is Chonburi province?



Photo credit: Thailand Awaits, NordNordWest

Landmarks in Pattaya City



Beaches

Pattaya beach,
Jomtien beach



Sanctuary of Truth

A intricately carved
wooden temple



Nong Nooch Tropical Garden

The largest botanical garden
in Southeast Asia



Tiffany's Show

A famous transgender
cabaret known for its
spectacular costumes
and choreography

Ayutthaya

Ayutthaya, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, was the **former capital of the Kingdom of Siam** and remains one of Thailand's most historically significant cities.

Founded in 1350, it flourished as a cosmopolitan trade and cultural hub. Today, the **Ayutthaya Historical Park** showcases the city's grandeur, which includes **Wat Mahathat**, famous for the Buddha head in tree roots, and **Wat Phra Si Sanphet**, the former royal temple.

With its rich history and well-preserved ruins, Ayutthaya offers a captivating journey into Thailand's past.

Photo credit: NordNordWest

Where is Ayutthaya province?



Landmarks in Ayutthaya



Wat Mahathat



**Buddha Head
in Tree Roots**



Wat Phra Si Sanphet



**Ayutthaya
Floating Market**

Photo credit: Quizlet, iStock, Tripadvisor

Nakhon Ratchasima

Nakhon Ratchasima, commonly known as **Korat**, is the third largest city in Thailand.

It serves as a gateway to the Isan region and is known for its rich history, cultural landmarks, and modern urban development.

Where is Nakhon Ratchasima province?



Photo credit: Asia King Travel, NordNordWest

Landmarks in Nakhon Ratchasima



Thao Suranaree Monument

Dedicated to the revered local heroine,

Thao Suranaree (Ya Mo), who played a role in defending the city from invaders in the 19th century.

Photo credit: Unseentourthailand, Virtual Historical Park



Phimai Historical Park

Home to Thailand's **largest sandstone temple** complex.

Built in the **11th century**, the site features intricate Khmer architecture, reflecting Thailand's historical connections with ancient Angkorian civilization.

Khon Kaen

The Isan region's center for **education and commerce**, Khon Kaen is one of the 'Big Four' of Isan, which also includes Nakhon Ratchasima, Udon Thani, and Ubon Ratchathani.

It is home to **Khon Kaen University**, the region's leading academic institution. The province is known for its rich **silk-weaving tradition** and landmarks like **Wat Nong Wang**, with its towering pagoda overlooking Kaen Nakhon Lake. Nature lovers can explore **Phu Pha Man National Park**, famous for its limestone mountains, caves, and diverse wildlife.

Where is Khon Kaen province?



Landmarks in Khon Kaen



Khon Kaen University

The leading academic institution of Isan, it is a hub for **research, innovation, and higher education**. Established in 1964, it plays a key role in regional development.

Photo credit: Khon Kaen University, Thaipost, Roijang

Landmarks in Khon Kaen

Wat Nong Waeng

A revered temple featuring a **9-story pagoda** that enshrines the Buddha's holy relics. Each floor showcases intricate carvings while the top level offers a **panoramic view** of the city



Photo credit: Khon Kaen University, Thaipost, Roijang

Landmarks in Khon Kaen



Phu Pha Man National Park

A limestone mountain range, known for its **cliff resembling a giant curtain**. The park features evergreen forests, a cool climate year-round, caves, and waterfalls for nature lovers to explore.

Photo credit: Khon Kaen University, Thaipost, Roijang

Udon Thani

Udon Thani is known for its **historical significance and natural beauty**. It is home to **Ban Chiang Archaeological Site**, a UNESCO World Heritage site, and **Talay Bua Daeng (Red Lotus Sea)**, a stunning seasonal lake covered in blooming pink water lilies.

Serving as a key economic and transportation hub, the province is easily accessible via **Udon Thani International Airport**, connecting it to major domestic and international destinations.

Where is Udon Thani province?



Landmarks in Udon Thani



Ban Chiang National Museum

This **UNESCO World Heritage Site** is one of Southeast Asia's oldest **Bronze Age archaeological sites**. Famous for **pottery, ancient tools, and burial sites**, it offers insight into early human settlements.

Photo credit: The Cloud

Landmarks in Udon Thani

Phu Phra Bat Historical Park

This **UNESCO World Heritage Site** preserves the world's largest collection of in situ **Sīma stones** from the **Dvaravati period**. It reflects the long-standing **Buddhist heritage of the Khorat Plateau** and the transformation of a natural landscape into a sacred religious site.



Landmarks in Udon Thani



Talay Bua Daeng

The **Red Lotus Sea** is a seasonal lake in Udon Thani, famous for its breathtaking **pink water lilies** that bloom from **December to February**.

Photo credit: Agoda

Ubon Ratchathani

One of the major provinces in the Isan region, known for its Buddhist heritage, natural beauty, and cultural festivals.

Located near the Lao and Cambodian borders, the province is famous for its annual **Candle Festival** and features numerous beautiful and historically significant temples.

Photo credit: Nopparat Thnatawan, NordNordWest

Where is Ubon Ratchathani province?



Landmarks in Ubon Ratchathani



Candle Festival

Featuring elaborate wax sculptures, the festival marks the start of Buddhist Lent in July.



Wat Nong Pa Phong

A prominent forest monastery founded by the venerable **Ajahn Chah**. It is a center for meditation and monastic training, attracting practitioners from around the world.



Urban Area

Ubon Ratchathani city blends modern urban development with traditional Thai culture.

Nong Khai

Nong Khai, a scenic province in northeastern Thailand, sits along the **Mekong River**, serving as a gateway to Laos via the **Thai-Lao Friendship Bridge**.

With its blend of history and Mekong River charm, Nong Khai offers a fascinating glimpse into Thailand's **north Isan** culture.

Where is Nong Khai province?



Landmarks in Nong Khai



Sala Kaew Ku

A unique sculpture park featuring large concrete statues inspired by Buddhism and Hinduism

Photo credit: Diwerent, Jim Holmes/AusAID



Thai-Lao Friendship Bridge

An important landmark connecting Thailand and Laos across the Mekong River

Phuket

Thailand's largest island, Phuket is a world-renowned tourist destination. Surrounded by the Andaman Sea, it offers crystal-clear waters, numerous luxury resorts, and famous spots.

Where is Phuket province?



Photo credit: JFTB Real Estate Phuket, NordNordWest

Landmarks in Phuket



Beaches

Beaches such as Patong Beach and Karon Beach are famous for pristine white sand and clear waters.



Old Phuket Town

Features Sino-Portuguese architecture and rich cultural heritage.



Luxury Tourism

Home to high-end resorts and a popular destination for yachts.

Krabi

Another province on the Andaman Sea coast, Krabi is well-known for its stunning limestone cliffs, clear turquoise waters, and magnificent beaches.

Where is Krabi province?



Photo credit: Magzter, NordNordWest



Krabi



Koh Phi Phi

A group of islands known for their stunning beauty, clear waters, and limestone cliffs. Popular for snorkeling, diving, and beach activities.



Ao Nang

A central beach town in Krabi, serving as a starting point for island tours and offering a variety of accommodations and restaurants.

Nakhon Si Thammarat

**Where is
Nakhon Si Thammarat
province?**

Nakhon Si Thammarat is a historic province in Southern Thailand, located along the Gulf of Thailand. It is known for its Buddhist heritage, local traditions, mountains, waterfalls, and coastal areas.

The province is home to **Wat Phra Mahathat Woramahawihan**, Thailand's newest UNESCO World Heritage Site and the first World Heritage Site in Southern Thailand.

Photo credit: Thailand Insider, Wikipedia



Landmarks in Nakhon Si Thammarat



Wat Phra Mahathat Woramahawihan

Thailand's newest **UNESCO World Heritage Site** and the first World Heritage Site in Southern Thailand. The temple is an important Buddhist heritage site and a symbol of Nakhon Si Thammarat's religious, artistic, and architectural legacy.

Photo credit: Watphramahathat.watportal

Landmarks in Nakhon Si Thammarat

Khao Luang National Park

A mountainous national park known for forests, waterfalls, and rich biodiversity. Khao Luang rises to **1,835 metres** and is the highest peak in Southern Thailand.



Photo credit: Kapook

Landmarks in Nakhon Si Thammarat



Ban Khiri Wong Village

A scenic community near Khao Luang, known for mountain views, fruit orchards, local crafts, and community-based tourism. The village reflects the province's close connection between local life, nature, and sustainable tourism.

Photo credit: Tourism Thailand

Songkhla

A coastal province on the Gulf of Thailand, it is a key southern **cultural and economic hub** with a unique blend of Thai, Chinese, and Malay influences.

As a **major port city**, it plays a vital role in trade and tourism, offering a rich mix of history, culture, and scenic coastal landscapes.

Photo credit: Adobe Stock, Suphanut Arunprayote

Where is Songkhla province?



Songkhla



Samila Beach

A beautiful beach known for its mermaid statue and clear waters.



Hat Yai

The largest city in the Thai South, known for its markets and diverse culture.