Geography of Thailand

Thailand, a country rich in **natural beauty** and **cultural heritage**, is located in the heart of Southeast Asia. This presentation will explore the **geography, regions, connectivity, and major cities** of Thailand, providing insights into its unique characteristics and global significance.

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.*

"Thailand in Brief" is produced in both **PDF file (.pdf)** and **Powerpoint Presentation (.pptx)** formats, consisting of xx slides. Users may download and select the topics they wish to present, and may rearrange the sequence of the slides as appropriate. However, the content of this document cannot be edited. Reproduction or use for commercial purposes without permission from the Thailand Foundation is not allowed.

"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**.

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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) การจัดอันดับที่เกี่ยวกับประเทศไทย** (Rankings related to Thailand)

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

"Thailand in Brief " จะได้รับการปรับปรุงให้ทันสมัยในทุกไตรมาสที่ 3 ของปี หากมีข้อสงสัยและข้อเสนอแนะเพิ่มเติม กรุณาติดต่อมูลนิธิไทย อีเมล info@thailandfoundation.or.th

27 พฤษภาคม 2568

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.

Photo credit: VectorStock

Thailand's Size Comparison

With 513,120 km²

Thailand is the **53rd largest country** in the world by total area.
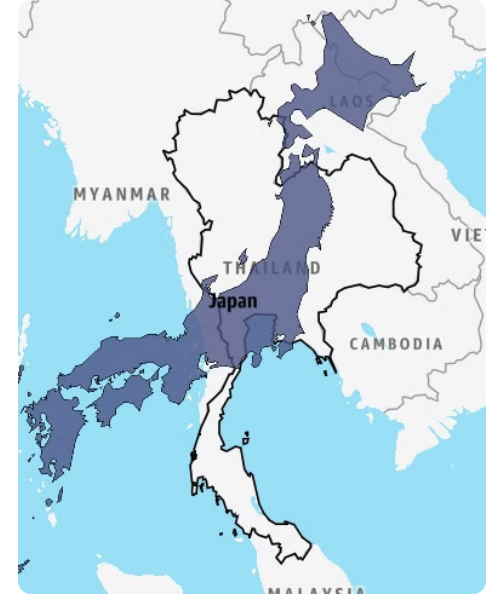
Photo credit: Mylifeelsewhere

France

543,940 km²

Spain

505,990 km²

Japan

377,975 km²

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.
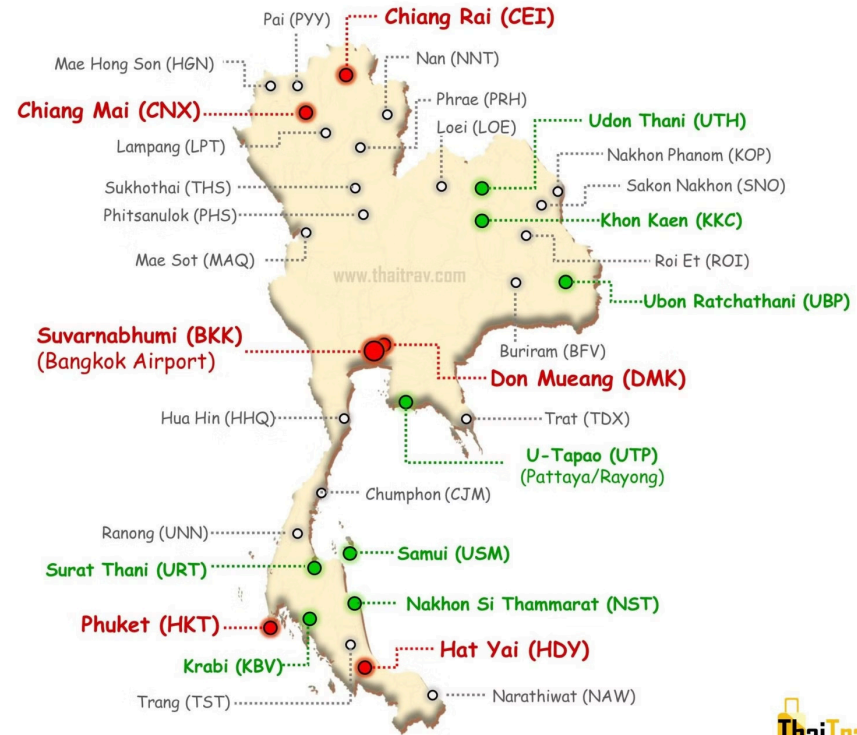
Photo credit: greatermekong.org

Railways

- Thailand's railway system spans over **4,800 km** passing through a total of 47 of 76 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.

Photo credit: Akyra Hotels, Thailand Awaits

Don Mueang Airport (DMK)

Caters to low-cost carriers and domestic flights.

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)

Photo credit: Airportthai, Sailing Click

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

Size and Population

1,568.737 km² in total area. Bangkok is the most populous city in Thailand with over 9 million total residents.

Where is Bangkok?

Photo credit: NordNordWest

Bangkok: The Capital City

World's Longest City Name

Krungthepmahanakhon Amonrattanakosin Mahintharayutthaya Mahadilokphop Noppharatratchathaniburirom 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

Photo credit: Pixels

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.

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.

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.

Photo credit: Sun Leisure World, Roasn, Tourism Authority of Thailand

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: Siampiwat, Thairath, The Unusual Trip

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.

Khlong Lat Mayom Floating Market

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

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.
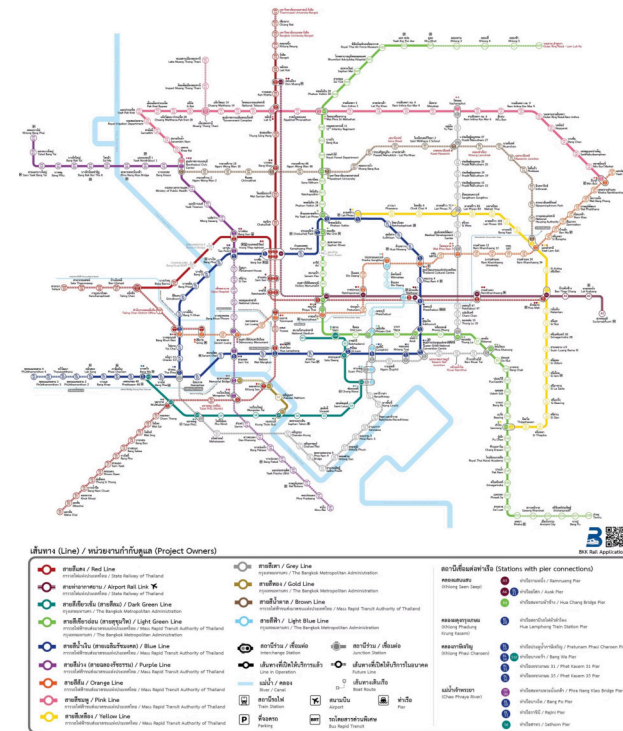
Photo credit: Faculty of Engineering, Mahidol University

Bangkok Rail Transit

Bangkok's Mass Transit System

Other Transport

Taxis, Tuk-Tuks, Motorbike Taxis, Buses, and Boats and Ferries traversing the Chao Phraya River and canals within the city.

Bangkok's Global Rankings

1st

Ranked as the Top Tourism City in 2024 with around 32.4 million visitors. (Euromonitor International)

1st

Ranked 1st globally for 'easy to get a visa'. (Brand Finance Global City Index 2024)

2nd

Ranked as the 2nd best place in the world for digital nomads in 2023. (ETHRWorld)

4th

The 4th most 'affordable city' for housing, education, and overall cost of living. (Brand Finance Global City Index 2024)

Bangkok's Global Rankings

6th

Ranked as the 6th best food city in the world in 2024. (Time Out magazine)

9th

The 9th most diverse and multicultural city in the world.
(Brand Finance Global City Index 2024)

11th

Ranked 11th top city in the area of economic activity in 2024. (Global Cities Index)

13th

The 13th most open and welcoming city in the world.
(Brand Finance Global City Index 2024)

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.

Where is Chiang Mai province?

Photo credit: Agoda, NordNordWest

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.

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.

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: Flickr, Silpa-mag, 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.

Where is Chonburi province?

Size and Population

53.4 km² in area. With 120,000 population

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

Photo credit: Withlocals, Atmind Group, Viator

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.

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 Khmer civilization.

Photo credit: Unseentourthailand, Virtual Historical Park

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.

Photo credit: Asia King Travel, NordNordWest

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.

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

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?

Photo credit: MGR Online, NordNordWest

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, CBT Thailand, Agoda

Phu Phra Bat Historical Park

Home to the **prehistoric archaeological site** featuring ancient **cave paintings, religious shrines, and rock formations** shaped by nature over thousands of years.

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**.

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.

Where is Ubon Ratchathani province?

Photo credit: Nopparat Thnatawan, NordNordWest

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.

Photo credit: Thailand NOW, CBT Thailand, Ubon Ratchathani Municipality

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.

Photo credit: Paikanmayang, NordNordWest

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.

Photo credit: Phuket Elephant Nature Reserve, Global Galivanting, World's Best Luxury Hotels

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.

Photo credit: Asia King Travel, Zonezi Properties

Ao Nang

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

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.

Where is Songkhla province?

Photo credit: Adobe Stock, Suphanut Arunprayote

Songkhla

Samila Beach

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

Photo credit: Traveloka, Suphanut Arunprayote

Hat Yai

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