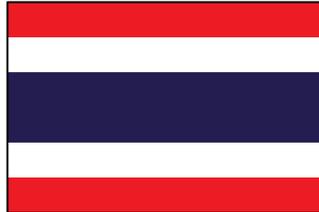


AT A GLANCE

Official name: Kingdom of Thailand

National flag:



Capital city: Bangkok

Population: Thailand has a population of more than 68 million people (2016), of which 80% are ethnic Thais, 10% Chinese and 4% Malays, plus Lao, Mon, Khmer, Indian and Burmese minorities. Such diversity reflects the country long history as an important crossroads of Southeast Asia. Thais are a friendly and easy-going people with a great reverence for the Buddhist faith.

Religion: Thailand is the world's most heavily Buddhist country. About 95 percent of all the people in Thailand are Buddhists (nearly all of them Theravada Buddhists). You will see Wats (Buddhist temples) and saffron robed monks everywhere. About 4 percent of the population is Muslim. They are mostly Malays who live in southern Thailand but there are also some in the north and other parts of Thailand. Many hill tribe members are animists or relatively recent converts to Christianity. Christians, Hindu and others make up 1 percent of the population.

Time zone: (GMT+07:00) Bangkok

Electricity: Thailand uses **220V** but the plugs are not standardized. It is recommended to bring a universal plug adaptor.

Dialing code: +66

Emergency numbers: Police, Ambulance and Fire: 191. Tourist police: 1155

Internet: Internet cafés are widespread and most are inexpensive. Prices as low as 15 baht/hour are commonplace, and speed of connection is generally reasonable but many cafes close at midnight. If you plan to go online for a short time you should first ask if there is a minimum charge. Higher prices prevail in major package-tourist destinations (60 baht/hour is typical, 120 baht/hour is not unusual). Islands with multiple Internet cafés include Ko Phi Phi (Don), Ko Lanta (Yai), Ko Samui, Ko

Pha Ngan, Ko Tao, Ko Chang (Trat), Ko Samet (Rayong), Ko Si Chang (Chonburi), and of course Phuket.

Keyloggers are all too often installed on the computers in cheap cafes, so be on your guard if using online banking, stock broking, or even PayPal. Using cut and paste to enter part of your password may defeat some of them. Or typing part of the user name and password inside the text input field (for password or username) then clicking outside of it some place in the browser window and typing some characters and then clicking back into the text input field and continuing to type the other part and doing this several times. Otherwise take your own laptop to the Internet cafe.

Phone:

Mobile coverage is good in most areas. The cheapest way of calling overseas (or locally) is via a VOIP service such as Skype. International phone and fax charges are best made from a post office or by using a prepaid card at a Lenso payphone. Reverse charge phone calls can be made for a minimal fee.