WJONNYJAMES

PATTAYA NIGHTLIFE

The Ultimate Guide to Pattaya

302 practical guides to the streets, nightlife, getting around, money, visas and living in Pattaya, written from riding the same streets every night.

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A free download for W Members

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SECTION

📍 Areas & Streets

Pattaya is small enough to ride end to end in twenty minutes, but every area has its own feel. These pages cover the streets we ride every night, from LK Metro and Soi Buakhao to Tree Town, Soi 6 and Walking Street, plus the quieter parts of town like Jomtien, Naklua and Pratumnak.

Quick answer: For a first visit, stay in Central Pattaya or around Soi Buakhao, where you can walk to the beach, food and nightlife; a budget hotel in the centre was about ฿1,000 a night in high season. For quiet beaches, pick Jomtien or Pratumnak; for families, Naklua, Wong Amat or Jomtien; for long stays with space, East Pattaya. The city is a simple grid: Beach Road and Second Road loop by baht bus for ฿15, and North, Central and South Pattaya Roads run inland to Sukhumvit.

Pro tip: his own picks: retiree, Jomtien; young solo traveller, Central Pattaya, “100%”; family, East Pattaya (the Darkside); couple, “maybe Naklua”.

Which area suits you?

YOU WANT…	TRY	READ MORE
—	—	—
Everything within walking distance	Central Pattaya, Soi Buakhao	Where to stay
Quiet beaches	Jomtien, Pratumnak, Na Jomtien	Jomtien
Seafood and a local feel	Naklua, Wong Amat	Naklua
Space, houses and gardens	East Pattaya, Mabprachan, Huay Yai	East Pattaya
A budget base	Soi Buakhao, Thepprasit Road	Soi Buakhao
Nightlife on the doorstep	Central Pattaya, Beach Road, Soi Buakhao	Nightlife
An island escape	Koh Larn, 45 minutes by ferry	Koh Larn

From our where to stay page and each area guide, checked in 2026.

Start here

- Where to stay: every area compared.
- Jomtien: the long, calmer beach south of the hill.
- Naklua: seafood, Wong Amat and the Sanctuary of Truth.
- Pratumnak: the quiet hill, viewpoint and small beaches.
- Soi Buakhao: cheap food, markets and local life.

How the city fits together

Think of Pattaya as a grid. Beach Road runs south along the sand and Second Road runs north one block inland; together they make the main baht-bus loop. Further inland, Soi Buakhao, Third Road and Sukhumvit Road run north to south, and North, Central (Pattaya Klang) and South Pattaya Roads cross them. Walking Street is at the south end, by Bali Hai pier. Over Pratumnak Hill, Thappraya Road leads to Jomtien.

The area guides

- **Central Pattaya:** Beach Road, Second Road, Pattaya Klang, Soi Buakhao, Soi Diana and Soi Chaiyapoon.
- **Nightlife streets:** LK Metro, Tree Town, Myth Night, Soi 6, Soi 7 and 8 and Walking Street.
- **North:** Naklua and Wong Amat Beach.
- **South:** Pratumnak, Thappraya Road, Jomtien, Dongtan Beach, Thepprasit Road, Na Jomtien and Bang Saray.
- **Inland:** Sukhumvit Road, East Pattaya, Mabprachan Lake and Huay Yai.
- **Offshore:** Koh Larn.

Getting between areas

FROM	TO	HOW	COST (2026)
—	—	—	—
Beach Road	Second Road	Walk one block	Free
Central Pattaya	Jomtien	Green baht bus over Thappraya Road	Up to ฿20

FROM	TO	HOW	COST (2026)
Central Pattaya	Naklua	Naklua baht bus from the Dolphin roundabout	฿15 to ฿20
Second Road	Soi Buakhao	Walk along Soi Diana, or the Soi Buakhao baht bus	Free to ฿15
Beach Road	East Pattaya	Cross-town baht bus to Sukhumvit, then Bolt or Grab	฿15 plus the app fare
Bali Hai pier	Koh Larn	Public ferry, about 45 minutes	฿30 or ฿40

Fares from our baht bus and Koh Larn pages. For door-to-door trips, use Bolt and Grab.

Rain and floods

In heavy rain, low-lying streets flood first, often by 10 to 60 cm: Soi Buakhao and the streets around it, South Pattaya Road, Central Pattaya Road and parts of Beach Road. Hills like Pratumnak stay dry. If you're booking in the rainy season, it's worth knowing which areas drain fast. See flood season.

Seeing the streets

Many of these pages have a "See this street on a ride" video from Jonny's nightly rides, and the Pattaya map shows the areas, the ride route, featured bars with prices and the baht-bus routes.

Common questions

What is the best area to stay in Pattaya? Central Pattaya or Soi Buakhao for a first visit; Jomtien or Pratumnak for quiet; Naklua for families and seafood.

Is Jomtien part of Pattaya? Yes, it's the beach area south of Pratumnak Hill, about 10 to 15 minutes from the centre.

What is the Darkside of Pattaya? The local nickname for East Pattaya, east of Sukhumvit Road: houses, gardens and space.

How long does it take to cross Pattaya? About twenty minutes end to end by scooter outside rush hour.

Where is Walking Street? At the south end of Beach Road, running under 1 km to Bali Hai pier. It's pedestrian-only in the evening.

Sources

- Our where to stay, area and street pages (checked 2026, with their own sources), plus our nightly ride footage.
- Jonny James: area picks from his own notes.

AREAS & STREETS

Myth Night

Myth Night is an open-air beer bar complex beside Made in Thailand Night Plaza, a few minutes from Tree Town and Soi Buakhao: around 40 to 50 small bars, pool, sport on big screens, and cheap drinks.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/areas-streets/myth-night/

Area	**Central Pattaya, near Soi Buakhao and Tree Town**
Bars	**About 40 to 50 small open-air bars**
Opened	**October 2023**
Parking	**Free; toilet ฿5**

Myth Night is an open-air beer bar complex next to Made in Thailand Night Plaza, in the lanes between Soi Buakhao, Soi Chaiyapoon and Tree Town. It opened in October 2023 and has around 40 to 50 small bars, many with a pool table or two.

Quick answer: Myth Night is one of Pattaya's newer beer bar complexes, a short walk from Tree Town in the Soi Buakhao area. It's usually calmer and less crowded than Tree Town, with rows of small open-air bars, pool tables, big screens for sport and cheap drinks; our budget guide lists it among the cheapest areas in town. Bars open from the afternoon and are listed until about 4:00, though hours vary by bar. Parking is free and the toilets cost ฿5.

Myth Night at a glance

THING	DETAILS
—	—
Where	Beside Made in Thailand Night Plaza, between Soi Buakhao, Soi Chaiyapoon and Tree Town
What	About 40 to 50 small open-air bars
Opened	October 2023
Vibe	Calmer than Tree Town, sport and pool
Hours	Afternoon until late, listed until about 4:00; varies by bar
Beer	About ฿60 to ฿120 at featured bars, typically ฿85 (2026)
Parking	Free
Toilet	฿5

What it's like

- Rows of small open-air bars, with pool tables and big screens for sport.
- Cheap drinks, and some bars run happy hours.
- Usually calmer and less crowded than Tree Town next door.
- Bars generally open from the afternoon until late at night (listed until 4am). Hours vary by bar.

Parking and toilets

- Parking: free
- Toilet: 5 baht

What drinks cost

Prices vary by bar and by happy hour, so check the board before you sit down. At the featured bars on our map in 2026, beers ran about ฿60 to ฿120 (typically ฿85) and mixed drinks ฿100 to ฿215, and pool was free at many. Happy hours usually run until about 20:00 or 21:00. See drink prices and happy hours.

Pro tip: in his first year and a half he rang bar bells and didn't track his money, and calls it "a great time, but very irresponsible". These days he goes out less, buys his own drinks only, and is happy at cheap places with a cheap beer and a game of pool.

Watching sport

With big screens at many bars, Myth Night is a good place to watch football and other big games without the crush of the sports pubs. For early-morning European kick-offs or late-night games, ask a bar a day ahead whether they'll show it. See sports bars.

Getting there

Myth Night is in the lanes behind Soi Buakhao, a few minutes on foot from Tree Town and Soi Chaiyapoon. Baht buses run along Soi Buakhao all evening for ฿15, and Bolt and Grab can drop you nearby. See baht bus routes.

Nearby

- Tree Town, busier, a short walk away.
- Soi Chaiyapoon and LK Metro, a few minutes on foot.
- Soi Buakhao for street food and the market.

Money

- Carry small notes. Bars, toilets and food stalls struggle with ฿1,000 notes, and the ฿100 and ฿1,000 notes look alike in the dark.
- Thai ATMs charge foreign cards about ฿220 to ฿250 per withdrawal, so take out enough before you go rather than several small amounts. See ATM fees.
- Decide your budget before the first drink and keep the rest at the hotel.

Getting home

Baht buses run on the main roads into the night, but late at night it's simplest to use an app or a motorbike taxi. Jonny's own preference when he isn't riding is a motorbike taxi, "so much faster" through traffic: "Motorbike taxis, Grab, Bolt, you name it." Bolt and Grab show the price before you book. Never ride a scooter after drinking. See Bolt and Grab and motorbike taxis.

Tips

- Check the bill in your check bin before paying. See bar etiquette.
- Some staff can be pushy about drinks or tips. A polite no is fine.
- Tree Town is a short walk away.
- Set a budget and carry small notes. See nightlife on a budget.
- Read staying safe on a night out.

Common questions

Where is Myth Night in Pattaya? Beside Made in Thailand Night Plaza, in the lanes between Soi Buakhao, Soi Chaiyapoon and Tree Town.

When did Myth Night open? In October 2023.

What time does Myth Night open? Bars open from the afternoon and are listed until about 4:00; hours vary by bar.

Is Myth Night cheaper than Tree Town? Prices are similar, and both are among the cheapest areas in central Pattaya. Myth Night is usually calmer.

Is Myth Night busy? It's usually calmer and less crowded than Tree Town next door, which suits people who want a quieter drink and a game of pool.

Sources

- Our drink prices, happy hours and nightlife on a budget pages (2026).
- Opening date, bar count, hours, parking and toilet prices from our own nightly rides and venue listings.

AREAS & STREETS

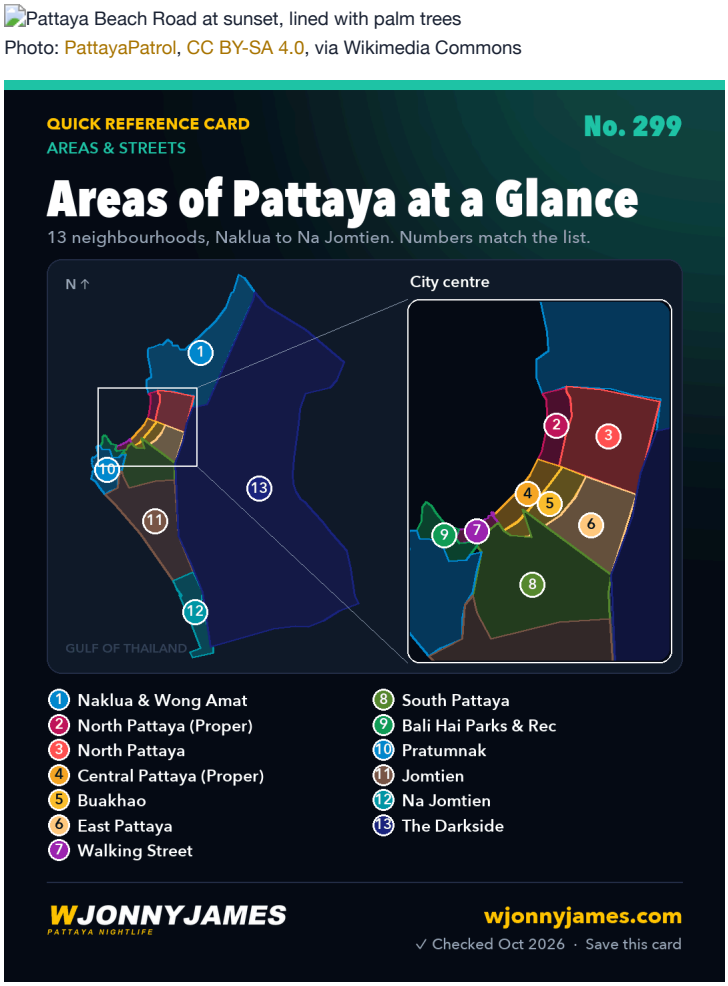
Where to Stay in Pattaya

The best area to stay in Pattaya for nightlife, families, beaches, budget trips or a long stay: Central Pattaya, Beach Road, Soi Buakhao, Jomtien, Pratumnak, Naklua and East Pattaya compared.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/areas-streets/where-to-stay/

First visit	**Central Pattaya or Soi Buakhao, walking distance to everything**
Nightlife	**Central Pattaya, Beach Road, Soi Buakhao**
Quiet and beaches	**Jomtien, Pratumnak**
Families	**Naklua and Wong Amat, Jomtien**
Budget	**Soi Buakhao, Thepprasit Road**
Long stays	**Jomtien, Pratumnak, East Pattaya**
Budget hotel, high season	**About ฿1,000 a night in the centre**

Pattaya is really several towns side by side, and where you stay changes your whole trip. This page compares the main areas from riding them every night: what each one is like, who it suits, and what to watch out for. Every area has its own page if you want more.



Pattaya Beach Road at sunset, lined with palm trees
Photo: PattayaPatrol, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

Pattaya's areas at a glance. Save the card, or open the same areas in Google Maps: Open the areas map in Google Maps

Quick answer

IF YOU WANT	STAY IN	WHY
Your first visit	Central Pattaya or Soi Buakhao (areas 4 and 5 on the areas map)	You can walk to almost everything
Nightlife on your doorstep	Central Pattaya, Beach Road, around Soi Buakhao	Walk to Soi 6, LK Metro and Walking Street
The cheapest rooms and food	Soi Buakhao and Thepprasit Road	Local prices, markets, beer bars
A beach holiday with less noise	Jomtien	Long beach, seafood, slower pace
Quiet, views and small beaches	Pratumnak	The hill between Pattaya and Jomtien

IF YOU WANT	STAY IN	WHY
Families and upmarket hotels	Naklua and Wong Amat	Calmer, near the Sanctuary of Truth
A month or more on a budget	Jomtien, Pratumnak, East Pattaya	Good-value condos, see renting a condo

Pro tip: my own picks. Retiree: Jomtien. Young solo guy: Central Pattaya, 100%. Family: East Pattaya, the Darkside. Couple: "Don't come to Pattaya, but if you absolutely have to, maybe Naklua."

First visit? Stay central

For a first trip I recommend **Central Pattaya or Soi Buakhao** (areas 4 and 5 on the areas map above). You'll be out a lot, and from here you can walk to the beach, the malls, the food and the nightlife at any hour. Saving a little on a room further out usually costs more in rides, and in time.

Central Pattaya and Beach Road

The middle of everything: the beach, the malls, the main nightlife and the baht bus loop on Beach Road and Second Road. Hotels range from cheap guesthouses in the sois to big sea-view towers.

- Good for: first-timers, nightlife, not needing transport.
- Watch out for: noise late at night, busy roads, higher prices on the seafront.

Soi Buakhao and LK Metro

Inland from Second Road, this is where many long-stayers and repeat visitors base themselves: markets, cheap food, beer bars, massage shops and lots of mid-price hotels. LK Metro and Tree Town are right there.

- Good for: budget trips, nightlife without Walking Street prices, food.
- Watch out for: traffic on Soi Buakhao itself; it's a 10 to 20 minute walk to the beach.
- More: Soi Buakhao.

Walking Street and South Pattaya

Staying right by Walking Street puts you at the busiest nightlife in town and near Bali Hai pier for Koh Larn ferries.

- Good for: big nights out, island trips.
- Watch out for: it's loud until very late; not ideal with children.

North Pattaya and Naklua

North of the Dolphin roundabout the city calms down. Naklua and Wong Amat beach have upmarket resorts, seafood restaurants and the Sanctuary of Truth.

- Good for: families, couples, a quieter beach.
- Watch out for: you'll need a baht bus, Bolt or Grab to reach the central nightlife.

Pratumnak

The hill between Pattaya and Jomtien: condos, small coves, the Big Buddha and the viewpoint. Quiet and green, but close to everything by scooter or app.

- Good for: quiet stays, views, longer stays.
- Watch out for: few baht buses on the hill itself. More: Pratumnak.

Jomtien

A long beach south of Pratumnak with a slower pace, beach restaurants, a big expat community and the immigration office on Soi 5.

- Good for: beach holidays, longer stays, families.
- Watch out for: it's 15 to 20 minutes to the central nightlife. More: Jomtien.

East Pattaya

East of Sukhumvit Road: housing estates, lakes and international schools, where many residents live. Cheaper and greener, but you need your own transport.

- Good for: long stays with a car or scooter. More: East Pattaya.

Further out

- Bang Saray: a fishing village south of Jomtien, for a quiet beach base.
- Koh Larn: the island, for a night or two away from the city.

Hotel, hostel or Airbnb?

- **Budget hotels in the centre:** in high season (November to March) expect about **฿1,000 a night** (around US$30) for a budget room in Central Pattaya or Soi Buakhao. I've stayed in these and they're fine, and the location can't be beaten. The same rooms drop to about **฿600 to ฿700** (around US$20) in the low and rainy season.
- **Hostels:** on a tight budget, or if you want to meet other travellers in shared spaces, you can roughly halve those prices and still be right in the middle of the action.
- **Airbnb and short-term condos:** great for stays of about **3 weeks or more**, but I don't usually recommend them for a first visit. Picking the right area is tricky, and most are outside the centre, so you'll add 2 to 6 rides a day. A motorbike taxi is about ฿40 a leg, and those rides can cost as much as the difference to a central hotel.
- **If you do go the Airbnb route:** Pratumnak and South Pattaya have very cheap condos, often ฿600 to ฿800 a night, for example New Nordic in Pratumnak, or Arcadia Beach Resort and Arcadia Beach Continental in South Pattaya. Just don't expect to walk to the action whenever you like.
- **A central favourite:** Markland on Soi 1, overlooking Soi 2 near the beach in North Pattaya, is a beautiful location, with Airbnbs from about ฿1,000 to ฿1,500 a night. I rented there myself and highly recommend it if you can get one, but for a first visit I'd still pick a hotel.
- Airbnbs really make sense once you're coming back several times a year, have rented a scooter, and spend some days at home rather than out all day, every day.

Staying a month or more: what rent looks like

These are the numbers Jonny has paid or been quoted himself, as of late 2026. Prices move with the season and the building.

WHAT	MONTHLY RENT	NOTES
Condo off the main strip	about ฿10,000	What Jonny would look for if he rented again
Typical range across Pattaya	฿8,000 to ฿25,000	Depends on the area, size and building
Villas and 2-bedroom condos	฿20,000 to ฿40,000	East Pattaya and Jomtien have more space for the money
One-bedroom in a beachfront tower	฿30,000 to ฿40,000	Seen by Jonny, with partly blocked views: about double a central condo one block back
His old studio at The Markland	฿15,000, later about ฿19,000 to ฿20,000	15th floor, Soi 1 overlooking Soi 2, city and bay views

Pro tip: the beachfront towers I looked at were about double the price of The Markland, and only about one block closer to Soi 6 and Central Festival. Off the strip, the same money buys a lot more. Pick by the view and the walk, not the address.

See renting a condo, buy vs rent and monthly budget examples.

Small things that make a big difference

- **The walk from the main road.** Jonny nearly stayed at a condo a 5 to 6 minute walk down a side soi. Two or three times a day, he says, that walk "starts to add up", especially in the heat or rain.
- **The lifts.** In a tall building, ask how many lifts there are. At The Markland, his one downside was two slow lifts for 20-odd floors.
- **Which side faces the street.** A bar or a busy road below can mean music until late. See noise and sleep.
- **The layout.** A studio is cheaper, but Jonny says a wall between the bedroom and the living area is worth having, especially if you are staying as a couple.
- **Pets.** Many condos don't allow them. The Markland isn't pet-friendly, which is the only reason he can't go back with his dog. See dog-friendly places.
- **Flooding.** Low streets can flood after heavy rain. Look at the entrance and car park, and ask how the building did last rainy season. See flood season.

Who you'll meet in each area

- Central Pattaya, Beach Road and Soi Buakhao: the busiest mix of short-term visitors, long-stayers and people who work in the city.
- Jomtien: a large Russian-speaking community and many retirees. Jonny finds it a lighter experience that can also save money.
- Naklua: quieter, with more families and a German community.
- East Pattaya: housing estates and international schools, where many families and long-term residents live.

Jonny's own taste is Central, North and South Pattaya. East Pattaya, Jomtien and Naklua feel too far from the action for him, but that is exactly why many people choose them. If you only go out once a week, more space further out may suit you better. Learning some Thai helps you save money and get a more local experience outside the centre. See learning Thai.

Before you book

- Check the exact location on a map, not just the area name. "Central Pattaya" covers a lot of ground.
- Ask whether the hotel allows guests to bring visitors ("joiner policy") if that matters to you; some charge a fee or require ID.
- For a month or more, a condo is usually better value than a hotel. See renting a condo and cost of living.
- Arriving from Bangkok? See Bangkok to Pattaya and airport transfers.
- See the areas we ride every night on the Pattaya map.

Common questions

What is the best area to stay in Pattaya for a first visit? Central Pattaya or Soi Buakhao. You can walk to the beach, malls, food and nightlife, and you'll spend less on rides.

Where should I stay in Pattaya without the nightlife? Pratumnak for quiet and views, Jomtien for a long beach and slower pace, or Naklua and Wong Amat for families. See Pattaya with kids.

Is Jomtien better than Pattaya? It depends what you want. Jomtien is calmer and often cheaper for long stays. Central Pattaya is better if you want to walk everywhere.

How much is a hotel in Pattaya? A budget room in the centre is about ฿1,000 a night in high season and ฿600 to ฿700 in the low season. Hostels cost roughly half that.

Beach Road or Soi Buakhao? Beach Road for sea views and the beach on your doorstep, at higher prices. Soi Buakhao for cheaper rooms, food and services, a 10 to 20 minute walk from the sand.

Where do expats live in Pattaya? Across the city: Jomtien and Pratumnak for condos near the beach, East Pattaya for houses and schools, and Soi Buakhao for long-stayers who want to be central. See East Pattaya and retiring in Pattaya.

AREAS & STREETS

LK Metro

An L-shaped bar street between Soi Buakhao and Second Road, quiet early and busy late, where many of our rides start: what it's like, 2026 drink prices, when to go, getting there and tips.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/areas-streets/lk-metro/

Area	**Central Pattaya, between Soi Buakhao and Second Road**
Best time	**After 9pm**
Bars	**Beer bars, pool bars**
Getting there	**Baht bus to Second Road, then walk**

LK Metro is an L-shaped soi packed with bars, running off Soi Buakhao in central Pattaya. It's where many of our nightly rides start, because early in the evening it's still quiet enough to ride through slowly and say hello.

Quick answer: LK Metro is a short, L-shaped street of bars in the block between Soi Buakhao and Second Road. It's quiet in the early evening and busy from around 21:00 or 22:00, cheaper and more relaxed than Walking Street, and popular with expats and regulars. At the featured bars on our map, a beer typically cost about ฿85 in 2026 (range ฿60 to ฿120). Walk in from Soi Diana or Soi Buakhao, a few minutes from Tree Town.

LK Metro at a glance

THING	DETAILS
—	—
Where	Central Pattaya, between Soi Buakhao and Second Road
Shape	An L-shaped soi, short and walkable
What	Open-air beer bars and pool bars, close together
Busiest	From about 21:00 or 22:00
Beer	About ฿60 to ฿120 at featured bars, typically ฿85 (2026)
Getting there	Baht bus to Second Road or Soi Buakhao, then walk

What it's like

- A mix of open-air beer bars and pool bars, close together on a short street.
- Quiet in the early evening, getting busy from around 9 or 10pm.
- More relaxed and cheaper than Walking Street, popular with expats and regulars.
- Restaurants, cafés and small hotels at the edges, plus food carts later in the night.
- Some venues are adults-only; the open-air beer and pool bars are the easy-going part.

When to go

- **Early evening, before about 21:00:** calm, easy to look around, and the best time for happy hours.
- **21:00 to late:** busy, louder, music from every bar.
- **Daytime:** mostly shut; a quick walk-through shows you the layout.

What drinks cost

At the featured bars on our map in 2026, beers ran about ฿60 to ฿120 (typically ฿85) and mixed drinks ฿100 to ฿215. Pool is free at many bars, and happy hours usually run until about 20:00 or 21:00. Prices are on boards outside most bars; if not, ask before you order. See drink prices and happy hours.

Getting there

LK Metro is in the block between Soi Buakhao and Second Road. Take a baht bus along Second Road and walk in along Soi Diana, or start from Soi Buakhao and Tree Town, which are a few minutes away. Baht buses on the main loop and along Soi Buakhao cost ฿15. See baht bus routes.

A night around LK Metro

LK Metro sits in the middle of central Pattaya's cheaper nightlife. Within a few minutes' walk you have Tree Town, Myth Night, Soi Chaiyapoon and the food on Soi Buakhao, so you can eat, play pool and move between areas without transport.

Money

- Carry small notes. Bars, toilets and food stalls struggle with ฿1,000 notes, and the ฿100 and ฿1,000 notes look alike in the dark.
- Thai ATMs charge foreign cards about ฿220 to ฿250 per withdrawal, so take out enough before you go rather than several small amounts. See ATM fees.
- Decide your budget before the first drink and keep the rest at the hotel.

Getting home

Baht buses run on the main roads into the night, but late at night it's simplest to use an app or a motorbike taxi. Jonny's own preference when he isn't riding is a motorbike taxi, "so much faster" through traffic: "Motorbike taxis, Grab, Bolt, you name it." Bolt and Grab show the price before you book. Never ride a scooter after drinking. See Bolt and Grab and motorbike taxis.

Tips

- Drinks are paid as you go, with a bill kept in a cup (a "check bin") at your seat. Check it before you pay. See bar etiquette.
- See what drinks cost in the Nightlife section before you go.
- Set a budget for the night and carry small notes. See nightlife on a budget.
- Bar staff calling you in is normal; a smile and a no is fine.
- Keep your phone in a front pocket and watch for scooters at the soi entrances.
- Read staying safe on a night out. Tourist police: 1155.

Common questions

Where is LK Metro in Pattaya? In the block between Soi Buakhao and Second Road, close to Soi Diana and Tree Town.

What time does LK Metro get busy? From around 21:00 or 22:00. Earlier evenings are quiet.

Is LK Metro cheaper than Walking Street? Generally yes, and it's more relaxed.

How much is a beer at LK Metro? Typically about ฿85 at featured bars in 2026, from about ฿60 in happy hour.

Is LK Metro safe? It's busy and well lit, and most visitors have no trouble. Check your bill, keep valuables in front pockets, and use the tourist police on 1155 if you need help.

Sources

- Our drink prices and happy hours pages (JJ Map featured bar prices, 2026) and baht bus page.
- Our own nightly rides through LK Metro.

AREAS & STREETS

Soi Buakhao

The long, busy local street between Second Road and Third Road: markets, cheap food, massage, beer bars, Tree Town, and good-value places to stay.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/areas-streets/soi-buakhao/

Area	**Central and South Pattaya**
Known for	**Markets, cheap food, beer bars**
Best time	**Evenings**
Nearby	**LK Metro, Tree Town, Soi Diana**
Basic prices (Sep 2026)	**foot massage ฿200, haircut ฿150**
From the beach	**about 1 to 1.5 km inland**

Soi Buakhao is a long, busy street running north to south through central Pattaya, parallel to Second Road and Third Road, between Central Pattaya Road in the north and South Pattaya Road in the south. It feels more local than the beach side of town, with markets, street food, small shops, massage places and plenty of beer bars and pool bars.

Quick answer: Soi Buakhao is where many long-stay visitors and budget travellers base themselves: cheaper food, rooms and services than near the beach, nightlife on the doorstep, and about a 10 to 20 minute walk to Beach Road. It is busy, noisy and full of scooters, so it suits people who want to be in the middle of things more than people looking for a quiet beach holiday.

Where it is

- The street runs roughly parallel to the beach, about 1 to 1.5 km inland, between Second Road and Third Road.
- The north end meets Central Pattaya Road (Pattaya Klang). The south end meets South Pattaya Road, near the market. See Pattaya Klang.
- Soi Diana and Soi Chaiyapoon link it west to Second Road. LK Metro and Tree Town sit just off it. See Soi Diana, Soi Chaiyapoon, LK Metro and Tree Town.
- It is a two-way street, narrow in places, with side sois branching off all along it.

The market

The Buakhao market sits at the south end of the street, near South Pattaya Road. It sells cooked food, fruit, clothes, phone accessories and household bits at local prices.

- Sources disagree on the days. Older guides call it the Tuesday and Friday market, when the street fills with stalls. A guide updated in April 2025 says it now opens every day from early morning until about 6pm.
- Either way, mornings are the best time to go, before the heat.
- Bring small notes. Most stalls take cash, and some take Thai QR payments. See QR payments.

Food

- Cheap Thai food is everywhere, from noodle stalls to Isaan grills. A plate of pad kra pao at a street shop in Pattaya can still cost as little as ฿35, and ฿50 to ฿80 is normal at small restaurants.
- Food here is usually cheaper than near the beach, where Jonny has seen a ฿40 market smoothie sold for ฿280.
- Western food, bakeries and pizza places are mixed in for when you are tired of Thai food.
- Pick busy stalls where food is cooked fresh in front of you. See street food, cheap eats, Isaan food and food poisoning.

Prices on and around Soi Buakhao

These are basic street-shop prices Jonny saw on his rides in September 2026. He found them “normal across the board” in this part of town.

SERVICE	PRICE	NOTES
Foot massage	฿200	Basic street shop, before tip
Body (Thai) massage	฿300	Basic street shop, before tip
Haircut	฿150	Basic barber
Shave	฿100	Basic barber
Pad kra pao (street shop)	฿35 to ฿80	฿35 specials still exist

Pro tip: One shop I rode past was listed online at ฿650 for a foot massage and ฿950 for a body massage. When I got there it was ฿200 and ฿300. Online prices can be old, so look at the board outside before you decide. I also prefer a barber on Soi Buakhao that costs a bit more than the basic places, which is fine too. You don’t always have to pick the cheapest.

See massage, barbers and hair salons and laundry.

Shops and services

- Massage shops, barbers, phone shops, laundries, pharmacies and mini marts line the street.
- Clinics, dentists and hospitals are close by. Jonny's own hospital visit for a stomach problem, at a hospital off Soi Buakhao, was a smooth trip. See hospitals and clinics.
- Pet shops and groomers are around too. Jonny's dog groomer is just off the street. See dog-friendly places.

Nightlife

- Beer bars and pool bars all along the street, many with live sport on TV and free pool if you buy a drink. See Soi Buakhao bars and pool and karaoke.
- Drinks are usually cheaper here than on Walking Street or Beach Road. Happy hours are common. See happy hours.
- LK Metro and Tree Town are just off it, so it is an easy base for a night out.
- Buy your own drinks and keep track of your bill. See night out safety.

Staying here

- Soi Buakhao has some of the best-value condos and rooms in central Pattaya. Jonny has seen simple hotel rooms near the street for about ฿600 a night (October 2026).
- For a monthly rental across Pattaya, expect roughly ฿8,000 to ฿25,000 depending on the area and the building. A ฿10,000 condo is what Jonny would look for if he rented again. See renting a condo and where to stay.
- Check the walk from the main road. Jonny nearly stayed at a condo a 5 to 6 minute walk down a side soi, and says that walk, two or three times a day, "starts to add up".
- It is lively and can be noisy, so ask which side of a building faces the street, and whether there is a bar below. See noise and sleep.
- Low parts of the street can flood after heavy rain. Look at the building entrance and car park, and ask how it did last rainy season. See flood season.

Who it suits

- Good for: first-timers on a budget, long stays, people who want nightlife and cheap food close by, and anyone happy to walk or ride a scooter to the beach.
- Less good for: light sleepers, families wanting a quiet pool holiday, and people who want to step out of the hotel onto the sand.
- Jonny's own pick for a young solo traveller is Central Pattaya, "100%". For retirees he points to Jomtien, and for families East Pattaya. See Jomtien and East Pattaya.

Getting around

- It is a busy two-way street with heavy scooter traffic in the evening. Walking is fine, crossing takes patience. See walking in Pattaya.
- Baht buses run up and down Soi Buakhao all evening, ฿15 a ride. It isn't an official route, but trucks run it every night. See baht bus routes.
- Bolt, Grab and motorbike taxis are easy to find. See Bolt and Grab and motorbike taxis.
- To reach the beach, walk west along Soi Diana or Soi Chaiyapoon to Second Road, then on to Beach Road.

Tips

- Evenings are the liveliest time, mornings are good for the market.
- Watch your belongings in crowded market areas, and keep your phone away from the road side when scooters pass.
- Have small notes ready. Many shops struggle to change a ฿1,000 note, and the ฿100 and ฿1,000 notes look alike at night. Check your change.

Common questions

Is Soi Buakhao a good place to stay? For budget and long stays, yes: cheap food, rooms and services, with nightlife nearby. It is noisy and busy, so pick your building and room side carefully.

How far is Soi Buakhao from the beach? About 1 to 1.5 km inland, roughly a 10 to 20 minute walk to Beach Road, or a short Bolt or motorbike taxi ride.

Is Soi Buakhao safe? It is a busy, well-lit local street. The main risks are traffic, petty theft in crowds and overspending at night, as anywhere in central Pattaya. See common scams.

When is the Soi Buakhao market on? Sources disagree: traditionally Tuesdays and Fridays, and one 2025 guide says daily until about 6pm. Mornings on Tuesday or Friday are the safe bet.

What does "Buakhao" mean? Bua khao (บัวขาว) means "white lotus" in Thai.

AREAS & STREETS

Tree Town

An open-air market and nightlife complex near Soi Buakhao, named for the greenery that was originally there: cheap drinks, pool, food stalls, a friendly crowd, and 2026 prices, parking and tips.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/areas-streets/tree-town/

Area	**Central Pattaya, near Soi Buakhao**
Bars	**Open-air beer bars, pool**
Best time	**Evenings, busiest at weekends**
Nearby	**LK Metro, Soi Buakhao, Myth Night**

Tree Town is an open-air market and nightlife complex of beer bars and food spots near Soi Buakhao. It isn't built around one particular tree; the name comes from the trees and greenery that were originally in the area. It's one of the stops on almost every ride, and a good place to start the night.

Quick answer: Tree Town is a big open-air square of small beer bars, pool tables and food stalls in the Soi Buakhao area, and one of the cheaper places for a drink in central Pattaya. Our drink prices page lists Tree Town among the cheapest areas, with beers at featured bars typically about ฿85 in 2026 (range ฿60 to ฿120) and happy hours until about 20:00 or 21:00. Parking is ฿10 and the toilets ฿5. LK Metro, Soi Chaiyapoon and Myth Night are all a short walk away.

Tree Town at a glance

THING	DETAILS
—	—
Where	Central Pattaya, by Soi Buakhao
What	Open-air beer bars, pool tables, food stalls
Vibe	Casual, friendly, tourists and expats
Busiest	Evenings, especially weekends
Beer	About ฿60 to ฿120 at featured bars, typically ฿85 (2026)
Parking	฿10
Toilet	฿5

What it's like

- Rows of small open-air bars, many with pool tables.
- Some of the cheaper drink prices in central Pattaya. Several JJ Map featured bars are here; see the map for prices.
- A friendly, casual crowd of tourists and expats.
- Food stalls and small restaurants around the edges, so you can eat without leaving.

Parking and toilets

- Parking: 10 baht
- Toilet: 5 baht

Pro tip: in his first year and a half he rang bar bells and didn't track his money, and calls it "a great time, but very irresponsible". These days he goes out less, buys his own drinks only, and is happy at cheap places with a cheap beer and a game of pool.

What drinks cost

Prices vary by bar and by happy hour, so check the board at each bar. At the featured bars on our map in 2026, beers ran about ฿60 to ฿120 (typically ฿85) and mixed drinks ฿100 to ฿215, and pool was free at many. Our budget guide reckons about ฿500 makes a good night in the cheaper areas. See drink prices and nightlife on a budget.

Getting there

Tree Town is in the Soi Buakhao area of central Pattaya. Baht buses run up and down Soi Buakhao all evening for ฿15; from Second Road, walk in along Soi Diana. Bolt and Grab can drop you at the entrance. See baht bus routes.

A night around Tree Town

Many people start here with a cheap drink and food, then walk to Myth Night next door, Soi Chaiyapoon or LK Metro. Everything is within a few minutes on foot, so there's no need for transport until you head home.

Money

- Carry small notes. Bars, toilets and food stalls struggle with ฿1,000 notes, and the ฿100 and ฿1,000 notes look alike in the dark.
- Thai ATMs charge foreign cards about ฿220 to ฿250 per withdrawal, so take out enough before you go rather than several small amounts. See ATM fees.
- Decide your budget before the first drink and keep the rest at the hotel.

Getting home

Baht buses run on the main roads into the night, but late at night it's simplest to use an app or a motorbike taxi. Jonny's own preference when he isn't riding is a motorbike taxi, "so much faster" through traffic: "Motorbike taxis, Grab, Bolt, you name it." Bolt and Grab show the price before you book. Never ride a scooter after drinking. See Bolt and Grab and motorbike taxis.

Tips

- Check the bill in your check bin before paying. See bar etiquette.
- LK Metro is a short walk away if you want to move on.
- Carry small notes for toilets, parking and drinks.
- Heavy rain floods the Soi Buakhao area quickly. See flood season.
- Not drinking? The food stalls and pool make it fun with a soft drink. See Pattaya at night without drinking.

Common questions

Why is it called Tree Town? After the trees and greenery that were originally in the area, not one particular tree.

Is Tree Town cheap? It's one of the cheaper places for a drink in central Pattaya, especially in happy hour.

Where is Tree Town in Pattaya? In the Soi Buakhao area, a short walk from LK Metro, Soi Chaiyapoon and Myth Night.

Is there food at Tree Town? Yes, food stalls and small restaurants around the complex.

Is Tree Town open in the daytime? Some bars and food stalls open in the afternoon, but it's at its best in the evening, especially at weekends.

Sources

- Our drink prices and nightlife on a budget pages (JJ Map featured bar prices, 2026).
- Parking and toilet prices from our own nightly rides.

AREAS & STREETS

Soi 6

Pattaya's best-known short bar street, between Beach Road and Second Road: busy from the afternoon, closes earlier than most. Hours, prices, how it works, parking and the quieter way through.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/areas-streets/soi-6/

Area	**North-central Pattaya, between Beach Road and Second Road**
Length	**A few minutes' walk end to end**
Opens	**Many bars from around lunchtime**
Closes	**Mostly midnight to 1am**
Best time	**Late afternoon to late evening**
Parking	**Soi 6/1, the parallel side alley**
Getting there	**Baht bus on Beach Road or Second Road, ฿15**

Quick answer: Soi 6 is a short, busy bar street linking Beach Road and Second Road in north-central Pattaya, a few minutes' walk end to end. Unlike most Pattaya nightlife it starts early: many bars open around lunchtime, it's liveliest from late afternoon to late evening, and most close between midnight and 1am. An ordinary drink costs more here than on Soi Buakhao or in Tree Town. It's an adult street, not a family stroll. If you just want to pass through, use the parallel alley, Soi 6/1.

Soi 6 is a short street lined with bars, running between Beach Road and Second Road in north-central Pattaya. It's one of the best-known streets in town and usually the busiest stop on our rides. It's loud, crowded and very much an adult street, so it isn't one for a family stroll.

Soi 6 at a glance

WHAT	TYPICAL	NOTES
Opening time	Around lunchtime for many bars	Quiet in the morning
Busiest	Late afternoon to late evening	Beach Road end is usually busiest
Closing time	Mostly midnight to 1am	Earlier than Walking Street
Beer	Above the ฿85 everyday average	฿60 to ฿90 on Soi Buakhao and in Tree Town
Baht bus to either end	฿15	Beach Road southbound, Second Road northbound
Motorbike parking	Soi 6/1	The parallel side alley

Hours

Unlike most of Pattaya's nightlife, Soi 6 gets going in the afternoon. Many bars open around lunchtime, it's busiest from late afternoon into the evening, and most bars close between midnight and 1am, earlier than Walking Street. If you want to see it at its liveliest without staying out late, early evening is the time.

What it's like

- Small open-fronted bars side by side down both sides of the street.
- Staff stand in the doorways calling people in. If you're just walking through, a smile and "no thanks" is all you need.
- Music, neon and crowds at both ends; the Beach Road end is usually the busiest.
- It's part of the route on most of our ride videos, so you can watch it on YouTube before you go.

What things cost

Soi 6 is one of the pricier places for an ordinary drink in Pattaya, because you're paying for the location and the atmosphere.

ITEM	TYPICAL PRICE ON SOI 6	COMPARE
Beer	Usually above the ฿85 everyday average	฿60 to ฿90 on Soi Buakhao and Tree Town
Mixed drink	Above the ฿180 everyday average	See drink prices

Prices vary from bar to bar and change often. Ask before ordering, and look for happy-hour boards in the afternoon. More on happy hours.

Pro tip: Not everything on Soi 6 is a bar. Bronx Pizza is pretty good at about ฿90 a slice, but not as good as Slice on Soi 6, which I think is about ฿100 a slice (Nov 2026).

How the bars work

Each drink you order adds a slip to the check bin on your table, and you pay at the end. For how bars work, fees and etiquette, read how Pattaya bars work and bar etiquette.

Parking and a quieter way in

If you're on a motorbike, your own or a rented scooter, there's plenty of parking on Soi 6/1, the side alley that runs parallel to Soi 6.

Soi 6/1 is also the easy way to walk through without being called into every bar. If you already know which bar you want, walk down Soi 6/1 and cut across to it, and you'll skip most of the hassle on the main soi.

When it's busy, and when it isn't

- **Late morning to early afternoon:** quiet, many bars still setting up.
- **Late afternoon to about 9pm:** the liveliest time, and the best window for happy-hour prices.
- **After midnight:** most bars are closing. If you want to keep going, people usually move on to Walking Street or Soi Buakhao.
- **Songkran (mid-April):** the street becomes one of the town's water-fight spots for several days, so protect your phone. See the events calendar.
- **Crowded nights:** street food stalls can take up much of the road. In February 2026 local press reported vendors squeezing cars and pedestrians into a narrow lane late at night, so walk rather than ride through at peak times.

Getting there

- Baht buses on Beach Road (southbound) and Second Road (northbound) pass both ends, ฿15.
- Bolt and Grab drop at either end. See Bolt and Grab.
- From Central Pattaya it's a 10 to 15 minute walk along Beach Road.

Safety and good sense

- Keep your phone and wallet in a front pocket; the street is narrow and crowded.
- Count your slips before you pay, and check the total.
- Don't take photos or video of people without asking. Many staff don't want to be filmed.
- Pace yourself in the afternoon heat, and drink water. See heat and sun safety.
- More: night out safety.

Nearby

- Soi 7 and Soi 8, a couple of minutes south along Beach Road, with bigger beer-bar complexes and lower prices.
- Beach Road and the beach itself, across the road.
- LK Metro and Soi Buakhao, a short ride inland.
- See every featured bar with prices on the Pattaya map.

Common questions

What time does Soi 6 open? Many bars open around lunchtime. It's busiest from late afternoon into the evening, and most bars close between midnight and 1am.

Is Soi 6 expensive? For an ordinary drink, yes, by Pattaya standards. Beer is usually above the ฿85 everyday average, while Soi Buakhao and Tree Town are often ฿60 to ฿90. Ask the price before ordering and look for happy-hour boards. See drink prices.

Is Soi 6 safe? It's a busy, well-known street, and most visits are uneventful. The usual issues are pickpocketing in the crowd, mistakes on the bill and arguments that start over drinks. Keep valuables in a front pocket, check your slips and walk away from trouble. Tourist Police: 1155.

Can I just walk through? Yes. Staff will call out to you; a smile and "no thanks" is enough. Soi 6/1, the parallel alley, is the calmer way through.

Where do I park? Motorbikes park on Soi 6/1. There's no easy car parking on the soi itself, so a baht bus, Bolt or Grab is simpler.

Is Soi 6 suitable for families? No. It's an adult nightlife street. For a family evening, try the Beach Road promenade or a night market.

Know before you go

- Daytime is quiet. It gets busy from late afternoon.
- See drink prices.
- See night out safety.

AREAS & STREETS

Soi 7 & Soi 8

Two neighbouring sois between Beach Road and Second Road, lined with open-air beer bars and pool tables: more relaxed than Soi 6, easy to walk between, with 2026 drink prices and tips.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/areas-streets/soi-7-soi-8/

Area	**Central Pattaya, between Beach Road and Second Road**
Bars	**Open-air beer bars, pool bars**
Best time	**Evenings**
Getting there	**Baht bus on Beach Road or Second Road, ฿15**

Soi 7 and Soi 8 are neighbouring streets running between Beach Road and Second Road, both lined with open-air beer bars. They're more laid back than Soi 6 and easy to walk between.

Quick answer: Soi 7 and Soi 8 are two short, parallel bar streets in the middle of Pattaya, one block from the beach. Expect rows of open-air beer bars with pool tables, music and a mix of tourists and regulars, busy from early evening. At featured bars on our map, a beer typically cost about ฿85 in 2026 (range ฿60 to ฿120), with happy hours until about 20:00 or 21:00. Get there on the ฿15 baht bus along Beach Road or Second Road.

Soi 7 and Soi 8 at a glance

THING	DETAILS
—	—
Where	Central Pattaya, between Beach Road and Second Road
What	Open-air beer bars, pool tables, a few restaurants and hotels
Vibe	Relaxed, friendly, more laid back than Soi 6
Busiest	From early evening until late
Beer	About ฿60 to ฿120 at featured bars, typically ฿85 (2026)
Getting there	Baht bus south on Beach Road or north on Second Road, ฿15

What it's like

- Beer bars with pool tables and a mix of tourists and regulars.
- Busy in the evening, quieter in the day, when you can walk through and see the street calmly.
- A short walk from the beach, so they're popular early in the night, with a drink after sunset.
- Small hotels and guesthouses sit between the bars; light sleepers should look elsewhere.
- Bar staff will call out and invite you in. A smile and "no, thank you" is fine; nobody minds.

On rainy nights the sois go quiet: Jonny described Soi 7 as "real slow" on a wet September 2026 ride, with "everybody's hiding in the bars".

What drinks cost

Prices vary by bar and happy hour, so check the board outside. At the featured bars on our map in 2026, beers ran about ฿60 to ฿120 (typically ฿85) and mixed drinks ฿100 to ฿215. Pool is free at many bars. Beach-side streets tend to be a little dearer than inland areas like Soi Buakhao and Tree Town. See drink prices and happy hours.

Getting there

Take a baht bus south along Beach Road and get off at the soi, or north along Second Road for the other end. Both cost ฿15 on the main loop. See baht bus routes. Bolt and Grab can drop you on Beach Road or Second Road; the sois themselves are narrow.

Nearby

- Soi 6, a few minutes north, busier and louder.
- Beach Road and Second Road at either end.
- Central Festival, a short walk south along Beach Road, for food and air con.

Money

- Carry small notes. Bars, toilets and food stalls struggle with ฿1,000 notes, and the ฿100 and ฿1,000 notes look alike in the dark.
- Thai ATMs charge foreign cards about ฿220 to ฿250 per withdrawal, so take out enough before you go rather than several small amounts. See ATM fees.
- Decide your budget before the first drink and keep the rest at the hotel.

Getting home

Baht buses run on the main roads into the night, but late at night it's simplest to use an app or a motorbike taxi. Jonny's own preference when he isn't riding is a motorbike taxi, "so much faster" through traffic: "Motorbike taxis, Grab, Bolt, you name it." Bolt and Grab show the price before you book. Never ride a scooter after drinking. See Bolt and Grab and motorbike taxis.

Tips

- Drinks are paid as you go into a "check bin", a cup of bills at your seat. Check it before you pay. See bar etiquette and check bins.
- Don't ring the bell unless you mean it: it means you're buying a drink for everyone in the bar.
- Set a budget and carry small notes. See nightlife on a budget.
- Keep your phone and wallet in front pockets, and watch for scooters on the narrow sois.
- Read staying safe on a night out.

Common questions

What is the difference between Soi 7 and Soi 8? Very little: both are short beer bar streets side by side. Walk both and pick the bar you like.

Is Soi 7 or Soi 8 better than Soi 6? They're calmer and more relaxed than Soi 6, which suits people who want a drink and a game of pool.

How much is a beer on Soi 7? Typically about ฿85 in 2026 at featured bars, from about ฿60 in happy hour to ฿120.

How do I get to Soi 7 and Soi 8? Take the ฿15 baht bus along Beach Road or Second Road and walk in.

Sources

- Our drink prices page (prices at JJ Map featured bars, 2026) and baht bus page.
- Jonny James ride video, 22 September 2026 (rainy night on Soi 7).

AREAS & STREETS

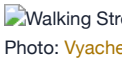
Walking Street

Pattaya's famous nightlife strip at the south end of Beach Road: pedestrian-only at night, open until around 4am, with clubs, live music and the highest prices in town. Hours, prices, getting there and tips.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/areas-streets/walking-street/

Area	**South Pattaya, from the end of Beach Road to Bali Hai pier**
Length	**Under 1 km**
Traffic	**Pedestrian-only in the evening**
Open	**Evening until around 4am (designated nightlife zone)**
Prices	**The highest in Pattaya**
Getting there	**Baht bus to South Pattaya Road, then walk**

Walking Street runs from the south end of Beach Road towards Bali Hai pier. In the evening it closes to traffic and fills with neon signs, nightclubs, live music bars, seafood restaurants and street performers. It's the busiest and most expensive part of Pattaya's nightlife, and the one most first-time visitors want to see at least once.


Photo: Vyacheslav Argenberg, CC BY 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

Hours

Things get going after dark, roughly from 7 or 8pm, and the street is busiest from about 10pm. Walking Street is in one of Pattaya's designated nightlife zones, where venues can stay open until around 4am. In the daytime it's an ordinary street with traffic, a few restaurants and closed shutters.

Many bars close on the five Buddhist holy days, when ordinary bars can't sell alcohol (licensed entertainment venues can), and on election days. See alcohol ban days, Ok Phansa and laws visitors break.

What's there

- **Nightclubs**: big clubs with DJs, mostly upstairs or set back from the street, busiest after midnight.
- **Live music bars**: cover bands most nights. See live music.
- **Beer bars and pubs**, seafood restaurants on the sea side, and fast food.
- **Ladyboy cabaret**: see cabaret shows.

What things cost

PLACE	WHAT TO EXPECT (APPROX.)
Beer bar or pub	Above the ฿85 everyday beer price
Nightclub	Entry is often free; drinks cost more than in bars, and table packages more again

These are rough guides; prices vary between venues and change often. The everyday baseline from the bars we ride past is on drink prices. Ask the price before ordering, and check each slip.

Getting there

- The main baht bus loop turns off before Walking Street; get off on South Pattaya Road or Beach Road near the start and walk the last part.
- Bolt and Grab drop at the Beach Road end. Late at night, getting a ride from the Bali Hai end can be easier.
- Scooters can't ride through in the evening; park before the barriers.

Safety and good sense

- Keep your phone and wallet in a front pocket; it's very crowded.
- Ignore touts with menus or picture boards and choose venues yourself.
- If a bill looks wrong, ask calmly for the slips. If there's a real problem, call the Tourist Police on 1155. See emergency numbers.
- Agree prices before photos with costumed performers or animals.
- More: night out safety and common scams.

Nearby

- Bali Hai pier, for ferries to Koh Larn by day.
- Pratumnak hill and the viewpoint just south.
- Rooftop bars for a calmer drink with a view first.

- Prefer cheaper, quieter nights? Try Soi Buakhao, LK Metro or Tree Town.

Know before you go

- The street is closed to traffic in the evening, so walk in from Beach Road or Second Road.
- See Bali Hai pier.
- See nightclubs.

AREAS & STREETS

Jomtien

The quieter beach town just south of Pattaya, over Pratumnak hill: a long beach, seafood, water sports, the immigration office, and a more relaxed nightlife.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/areas-streets/jomtien/

Where	**South of central Pattaya, over Pratumnak hill**
Beach	**About 6 km, often quieter than Pattaya Beach**
Getting there	**Green baht bus along Thappraya Road, up to ฿20**
Good for	**Long stays, retirees, families, water sports**
Immigration office	**Jomtien Soi 5**

Quick answer: Jomtien is the beach town just south of central Pattaya, over Pratumnak hill, about 10 to 15 minutes away by road. Its beach runs for about 6 km, it's calmer than Pattaya Beach, and it's popular with long stayers, retirees and families. Pattaya's immigration office is here, on Soi 5. The green baht bus runs from South Pattaya over Thappraya Road for up to ฿20. Choose Jomtien for space and a slower pace; choose central Pattaya if you want to walk to the nightlife.

Jomtien has a long beach, plenty of seafood restaurants and a slower pace, so many longer stay visitors and expats choose to live here. It also has a large Russian-speaking community.

Jomtien at a glance

WHAT	TYPICAL	NOTES
Distance from central Pattaya	About 10 to 15 minutes by road	Over Pratumnak hill via Thappraya Road
Baht bus	Up to ฿20	Green route, from Second Road near South Pattaya Road or along Thappraya Road
Beach length	About 6 km	Some sources say 5 km
North end	Dongtan Beach	Promenade and a well known LGBTQ+ beach area
Night market	Early evening to about 10:30 or 11pm	Near Jomtien Beach Road; sources differ on the exact spot
Immigration office	Jomtien Soi 5	Weekdays only. See the office guide

Who Jomtien suits

SUITS	LESS SUITED TO
Retirees and long stays	People who want to walk home from Walking Street
Families who want a calmer beach	Anyone who wants the busiest nightlife every night
Kitesurfers and water sports fans	Visitors without transport who want to see all of Pattaya
People who want more space for the money	

Pro tip: for a retiree, I'd pick Jomtien. It can save money and it's a lighter experience than the middle of the city. For me it feels a bit far from the excitement, so I prefer Central, North and South Pattaya. It depends on who you are.

The beach

- Jomtien Beach runs for about 6 km, so pick a section close to where you are staying.
- The northern end near Dongtan Beach is lively, with beach chairs and a promenade. See Dongtan Beach.
- Further south the beach gets quieter and wider.
- Walk it at sunset. See Jomtien beach walk.
- Watch the flags and currents, especially in the rainy season. See beach safety.

Water sports

- Jomtien is the main spot for kitesurfing and windsurfing in the area, especially in the windy months. See kitesurfing in Jomtien.
- Jet skis and banana boats are available. Agree prices first, photograph the jet ski before you ride, and pay after. See common scams.

Food

- Seafood restaurants line the beach road. See seafood restaurants.
- Jomtien's night market, near Jomtien Beach Road, opens in the early evening with street food, snacks and clothes. Sources give closing times of 10:30pm to 11pm. See night markets.

- Thappraya Road has cheaper local food on the way in. See Thappraya Road.

Nightlife

The nightlife is smaller and calmer than central Pattaya, with beach bars, pubs and a well known LGBTQ+ area near Dongtan. See Jomtien bars and LGBTQ+ nightlife.

Living here

- Many condos offer good value for longer stays, and you often get more space for the money than in the centre. See renting a condo.
- Pattaya's immigration office is on Jomtien Soi 5, which is handy for 90-day reports and extensions. See Jomtien immigration office.
- A scooter or car makes life much easier here, since the big malls and hospitals are in central and north Pattaya. See buying a scooter.
- Compare areas on where to stay and retiring in Pattaya.

Getting there

- **Baht bus:** the green route runs from Second Road near the South Pattaya Road junction, along Thappraya Road and over the hill to Jomtien Beach Road, both ways. Up to ฿20 per person since the April 2026 fare change. See baht bus routes.
- **Bolt and Grab:** easy both ways, and usually quick outside rush hour. See Bolt and Grab.
- **Scooter:** a short ride over Thappraya Road or along the coast road through Pratumnak.

Common questions

Is Jomtien better than Pattaya? It depends what you want. Jomtien is calmer, with a longer beach and more space for your money. Central Pattaya has more nightlife, shopping and things within walking distance.

How far is Jomtien from Walking Street? A few kilometres, about 10 to 15 minutes by Bolt, Grab or scooter, over Pratumnak hill.

How much is the baht bus to Jomtien? Up to ฿20 per person on the green route along Thappraya Road. Pay the driver when you get off.

Is Jomtien good for families? Yes, many families prefer it for the quieter beach and calmer evenings. Pick a stretch away from the busiest bars.

Is Jomtien Beach good for swimming? Yes, on calm days. Watch the flags, stay clear of jet ski and kite areas, and take care in the rainy season.

Nearby

Pratumnak is just north, and Na Jomtien is just south.

AREAS & STREETS

Naklua

Pattaya's quieter, more local north end: Wong Amat Beach, the renovated Lan Pho seafood market and park, the Sanctuary of Truth, its own Wan Lai day, living here and getting there by baht bus.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/areas-streets/naklua/

Area	**North Pattaya, past the Dolphin roundabout**
Known for	**Seafood, Wong Amat Beach, the Sanctuary of Truth**
Main festivals	**Wan Lai Naklua (18 April in 2026), Loy Krathong at Lan Pho Park**
Rent	**Beachfront one-beds about ฿15,000 to ฿35,000 and up**
Getting there	**Naklua baht bus from the Dolphin roundabout, or Bolt and Grab**
Pace	**Quieter and more local than central Pattaya**

Quick answer: Naklua is the north end of Pattaya, past the Dolphin roundabout at the top of Beach Road. It was a fishing community before Pattaya grew around it, and it still feels more local: the Lan Pho seafood market and park, Thai shophouses, seafood restaurants, the quiet Wong Amat Beach and the huge wooden Sanctuary of Truth. It suits families, couples and long-stayers who want calm evenings but a short ride to the centre. Naklua baht buses run north from the Dolphin roundabout along Naklua Road, for up to ฿20.

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Where	North of the Dolphin roundabout and North Pattaya Road
Known for	Lan Pho seafood market, Wong Amat Beach, Sanctuary of Truth
Good for	Families, couples, long stays, seafood lovers
Nights	Quiet; restaurants rather than nightlife
Rent (approx.)	Beachfront and Wong Amat one-beds about ฿15,000 to ฿35,000 and up; older buildings cheaper
Getting there	Naklua baht bus, up to ฿20; Bolt and Grab

Pro tip: my pick for a couple: "Don't come to Pattaya, but if you absolutely have to, maybe Naklua." There are German areas in Naklua, too.

Who it suits

- **Families:** a calmer beach, a waterfront park and quiet nights. See Pattaya with kids.
- **Couples:** sea views, seafood dinners and the centre close enough for a night out. See Pattaya for couples.
- **Long-stayers and retirees** who want a local feel. See retiring in Pattaya.
- **Not ideal if** you want to walk home from the nightlife every night.

What is there

- **Wong Amat Beach:** about 1.3 km of sand with no beach road behind it, backed by hotels and condo towers, usually calmer than Pattaya Beach. Watch for rocks in places. See Wongamat Beach.
- **The Lan Pho seafood market:** buy seafood by weight and have it cooked at a cook shop nearby. Pattaya City rebuilt it as a modern market hall for up to 60 vendors; work was about 90% done in February 2025. See Naklua fish market.
- **Lan Pho Park:** a shady waterfront park next to the market, a family meeting point and the stage for big local festivals.
- **The Sanctuary of Truth:** a giant hand-carved wooden building on the shore at the end of Soi Naklua 12; work began in 1981 and carvers are still adding to it. Day tickets are ฿500 for adults and night tickets ฿700. See Sanctuary of Truth for hours and dress code.
- **Seafood restaurants** along Naklua Road and the waterfront, often cheaper than on Beach Road. See seafood restaurants.
- **Pattaya Patamakun Hospital,** the public district hospital, formerly called Banglamung Hospital. See hospitals and clinics.

"Old Town Naklua"

In April 2026 Pattaya City said it was moving ahead with an "Old Town Naklua" plan around the Lan Pho market: a multipurpose pier where you could watch fishing boats land and buy the catch, alongside efforts to keep the area's fishing culture and coastal way of life. No dates or budget had been published, so expect the area to keep changing over the next few years.

Festivals

- **Wan Lai Naklua:** Naklua holds its own water festival day after Songkran. In 2026 it was on 18 April at Lan Pho Naklua and Naklua Public Park, the day before Pattaya's main Wan Lai on 19 April. See Songkran and Wan Lai.

- **Loy Krathong:** Pattaya City's main celebration is at Lan Pho Public Park. In 2026 Loy Krathong falls on Tuesday 24 November. Expect heavy traffic in Naklua that evening. See Loy Krathong in Pattaya.

What it's like day and night

- **Morning:** the market is at its busiest, and the beach and park are cool and quiet.
- **Afternoon:** beach time at Wong Amat, or the Sanctuary of Truth before the late heat.
- **Evening:** seafood dinners at Lan Pho and along Naklua Road, and families in the park.
- **Night:** much quieter than the centre. There are local bars and restaurants, but nightlife means a short ride south past the Dolphin roundabout.

Getting there

- **Naklua baht bus:** wave one down on the north side of the Dolphin roundabout or anywhere along Naklua Road heading north. Press the buzzer to stop and pay the driver after you get off. Longer runs like Naklua cost up to ฿20, though some guides still list ฿10, so ask before you get in. See baht bus routes and fares.
- **In the evening** the unofficial Soi Buakhao and Third Road route also runs up past Terminal 21 and on to Naklua.
- **Bolt and Grab** are easy, about 10 to 15 minutes from central Pattaya outside rush hour. See Bolt and Grab.

Living here

- **Rent:** our cost of living guide puts a one-bed condo on the beachfront, Wong Amat and Naklua at about ฿15,000 to ฿35,000 a month and up on a one-year lease. Older low-rise buildings away from the beach cost less. See renting a condo.
- **Pros:** fresh markets and local food close by, a calm beach, quiet nights, a public hospital in the area, and the centre and Terminal 21 a short ride away.
- **Cons:** beachfront rents are high, you'll ride or take a baht bus for nightlife, and parts of Naklua flood in heavy rain. Check a building's access road before you sign. See flood season.
- Compare areas in where to stay.

Safety

Naklua is one of Pattaya's calmer areas. Take the usual care with traffic on Naklua Road, especially crossing it, and on the roundabout. At the beach, watch for rocks and jet skis. At the market, check the price per kilo and the weight before anything is cooked. See common scams.

Tips

- Go to the Lan Pho market in the morning for the best choice, or the evening to eat.
- Visit the Sanctuary of Truth early to beat the heat, or book the night session.
- Wong Amat is a good beach for children. See Pattaya with kids.

Common questions

Is Naklua part of Pattaya? Yes. It's the north end of the city, past the Dolphin roundabout.

How do I get to Naklua from Beach Road? Take the main baht bus loop to the Dolphin roundabout, then wave down a Naklua baht bus on the north side. Expect up to ฿20. Or use Bolt or Grab.

Is Naklua good for families? Yes. Wong Amat Beach is calmer, Lan Pho Park is a family favourite, and nights are quiet.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya Mail, Old Town Naklua plan (23 April 2026); Pattaya Mail, Wan Lai Naklua and Pattaya dates (11 April 2026); The Thaiger, Lan Pho market renovation (13 February 2025); Pattaya Mail, Naklua market area as a family hub (1 September 2025); Pattaya Mail, Wong Amat Beach (2 August 2025, about 1.3 km); our own baht bus guide, Sanctuary of Truth, Loy Krathong and cost of living pages, each with their own sources. Guides disagree on the Naklua baht bus fare.

AREAS & STREETS

Pratumnak Hill

The green hill between Pattaya and Jomtien: the free Big Buddha and city viewpoint, small coves like Cosy Beach, quiet condo living, rents, the 2026 road works, and how to get up and down.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/areas-streets/pratumnak/

Area	**The hill between Pattaya and Jomtien, about 98 m high**
Known for	**Big Buddha, the viewpoint, small beaches, quiet condos**
Big Buddha and viewpoint	**Both free; viewpoint listed 7am to 10pm**
Getting there	**Bolt, Grab or a motorbike taxi; green baht bus on Thappraya Road below, up to ฿20**
Rent	**One-bed condo about ฿12,000 to ฿25,000 a month**
Temple dress	**Shoulders and knees covered**

Quick answer: Pratumnak is the green, hilly headland between South Pattaya and Jomtien: quiet streets, trees and condos, a few small coves, and the city's best free views. At the top are the 18-metre golden Big Buddha at Wat Phra Yai and the Pattaya City viewpoint over the bay, listed as open 7am to 10pm. Walking Street is a few minutes away on one side and Jomtien on the other. Baht buses don't climb the hill; the green baht bus runs along Thappraya Road at the bottom for up to ฿20, so most people use Bolt, Grab, a motorbike taxi or a scooter. It suits people who want calm without being far from anything, and one-bed condos rent for about ฿12,000 to ฿25,000 a month.

Pratumnak at a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Where	The headland between South Pattaya and Jomtien, behind Bali Hai pier
Height	About 98 m, the highest natural point in Pattaya City
Big Buddha (Wat Phra Yai)	Free; 18 m gilded seated Buddha built in 1977; dress code
Pattaya City viewpoint	Free; listed as open 7am to 10pm; sign lit in the evening
Beaches	Small coves on the west side, such as Cosy Beach; Dongtan Beach just south
Getting there	Bolt, Grab, motorbike taxi or scooter; green baht bus on Thappraya Road, up to ฿20
Rent	One-bed condo about ฿12,000 to ฿25,000 a month on a one-year lease
Feel	Quiet and green, with little nightlife on the hill itself

What is there

- **The Big Buddha (Wat Phra Yai):** a working temple dating back to the 1940s, with an 18-metre gilded seated Buddha added in 1977, reached by a staircase lined with naga serpents. Around it are smaller Buddhas, one for each day of the week. See Big Buddha and viewpoint.
- **The Pattaya City viewpoint:** above Bali Hai pier, the classic view north over Pattaya Bay, with the PATTAYA CITY letters on the hillside. Pattaya Mail reported in March 2025 that the sign would be lit from 6:30pm, with light shows in the evening. Best at sunset and after dark. See night viewpoints.
- **Monuments:** the same hilltop has a monument to Admiral Prince Abhakara, regarded as the father of the Royal Thai Navy, and Wat Khao Phra Bat. Thai visitors come to pay respects, so keep it respectful.
- **Small beaches:** coves on the sea side of the hill, such as Cosy Beach, are reached by roads and steps and are much quieter than Pattaya or Jomtien. Dongtan Beach at the north end of Jomtien is just below the hill.
- **Cafés with sea views.** See cafés and coffee.

The Thai name, Khao Phra Tamnak, means "palace hill".

A walk over the hill

The roads over Pratumnak make a good early morning or sunset walk: up from the Bali Hai end of Walking Street to the viewpoint, on to the Big Buddha, and down the Jomtien side to a cove. Allow one to two hours with stops. See Pratumnak walk and sunset spots. Runners use the hill for climbs; see running and cycling.

Getting there

- There is no regular baht bus over the top of the hill.
- The green baht bus runs from Second Road near the South Pattaya Road junction along Thappraya Road to Jomtien, both ways, for up to ฿20. From the bottom it is a walk uphill. See Thappraya Road and baht bus routes.
- Bolt, Grab or a motorbike taxi is easiest. Registered riders wear blue vests since October 2026. See Bolt and Grab and motorbike taxis.
- By scooter, the roads to the viewpoint have tight bends, so ride slowly.

Road works in 2026

- In September 2026, Pattaya Mail reported a soil collapse that left a large hole in the Big Buddha Hill road, a popular running route, with concrete blocks around it. Crews were to patch the worst sections within about two weeks, and bigger repairs are budgeted to start in 2027. Watch for uneven surfaces, especially after rain.
- In October 2026, Pattaya Mail reported new road surfaces, footpaths and street lighting going in along Second Road leading up the hill. To report broken footpaths or lights, call the Pattaya City call centre on 1337.

Living here

- Pratumnak has many low-rise and mid-rise condos, many with sea views. One-bed condos rent for about ฿12,000 to ฿25,000 a month on a one-year lease, more than on Soi Buakhao or Jomtien's back streets. See cost of living.
- For a short stay, Pratumnak condos on Airbnb can be very cheap, often ฿600 to ฿800 a night, but you won't be walking to the action. See where to stay.
- It is quiet at night, so most residents ride or take a car into Pattaya or Jomtien for food and nightlife. It is popular with long-stayers. See noise and sleep.
- Check how far your building is from a supermarket, pharmacy and hospital, and how steep the walk is, before you sign. See renting a condo.

Tips

- Cover your shoulders and knees at the Big Buddha temple. See temple customs.
- The hill is steep in places, and walking up in the midday heat is hard work. See heat and sun safety.
- Go to the viewpoint early if you want a photo without the crowds; sunset is its busiest time.
- Watch out for monkeys near the temple, and keep food in a closed bag.
- Steps down to the coves can be slippery after rain.

Common questions

Is Pratumnak a good place to stay in Pattaya? For quiet, views and small beaches, yes. For nightlife on your doorstep, no: you'll need a ride into Central Pattaya or Walking Street.

How do I get to Pratumnak Hill? Bolt, Grab, a motorbike taxi or a scooter. The green baht bus runs along Thappraya Road at the bottom for up to ฿20, then it is a walk uphill.

Is the Big Buddha on Pratumnak free? Yes, and so is the Pattaya City viewpoint, which is listed as open 7am to 10pm.

How much is rent on Pratumnak? About ฿12,000 to ฿25,000 a month for a one-bed condo on a one-year lease, depending on the building and view.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Wikipedia, Khao Phra Tamnak for the hill's height, name and the Big Buddha's height and date; Pattaya Mail, Big Buddha Hill road repairs (12 September 2026); Pattaya Mail, new roads, footpaths and lighting toward Pratumnak Hill (15 October 2026). Opening hours, the sign lighting, rents and baht bus fares come from our Big Buddha and viewpoint, cost of living and Thappraya Road pages, each with its own sources.

Nearby

Jomtien is just south and Walking Street is just north.

AREAS & STREETS

Soi Chaiyapoon

A small, busy soi off Soi Buakhao with cheap bars, LGBTQ-friendly bars, cafés, food and guesthouses, popular with expats and regulars. What it's like, prices nearby, getting there and tips.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/areas-streets/soi-chaiyapoon/

Area	**Central Pattaya, off Soi Buakhao, running to Third Road**
Known for	**Cheap drinks, LGBTQ-friendly bars, happy hours**
Best time	**Evenings**
Nearby	**Soi Buakhao, Tree Town, LK Metro**

Soi Chaiyapoon is a short side street in central Pattaya that runs from Soi Buakhao towards Third Road, close to Soi Lengkee. It's packed with small bars, cafes, cheap restaurants and guesthouses, and it's known for its relaxed, LGBTQ-friendly bars.

Quick answer: Soi Chaiyapoon is a short, lively side street in the Soi Buakhao area, best in the evening. Think small open-fronted bars with pool tables, long happy hours and some of the cheapest drinks in central Pattaya, plus cafés, cheap food and guesthouses. The crowd is mostly expats and regulars, mixed and relaxed, and everyone is welcome. Get there on foot from Soi Buakhao or Third Road, or on the ฿15 Soi Buakhao baht bus.

Soi Chaiyapoon at a glance

THING	DETAILS
—	—
Where	Central Pattaya, between Soi Buakhao and Third Road
Vibe	Relaxed, local, LGBTQ-friendly, mostly regulars
Known for	Cheap drinks, happy hours, pool tables
Also here	Cafés, cheap restaurants, guesthouses
Best time	Evenings; quiet in the morning
Nearby	Soi Buakhao, Tree Town, LK Metro, Soi Diana

What it's like

- Small open-fronted bars with pool tables and loud music.
- Some of the cheapest drinks in central Pattaya, with long happy hours.
- A mostly expat and regular crowd. Newcomers are welcome; the regulars will often invite you into a game of pool.
- Cafés and small restaurants serving breakfasts, Thai food and pub dishes.
- Guesthouses and small hotels, cheaper than on the beach side of town.

Day and night

By day Soi Chaiyapoon is quiet: cafés serve breakfast, guesthouse guests head out, and bar staff clean up. From late afternoon, happy hours start and the pool tables fill; it's busiest from about 20:00 until late. If you want a look without the crowds, come for an early-evening drink or a meal before 19:00.

Food on and around the soi

Cafés on the soi serve Western breakfasts and pub food, and Thai street food is a minute away on Soi Buakhao. The Soi Buakhao market at the south end of Soi Buakhao is the place for cheap food and shopping; older guides call it the Tuesday and Friday market, while a 2025 guide says it runs daily until about 18:00, so sources disagree. Late at night, 7-Eleven and street carts keep going. See street food and late-night food.

Prices nearby

Soi Chaiyapoon sits in the cheaper inland part of central Pattaya. On our Soi Buakhao page, checked in 2026, a plate of pad kra pao was ฿35 to ฿80 at street shops and small restaurants, a basic foot massage ฿200 and a Thai body massage ฿300 before tip. Simple hotel rooms near Soi Buakhao were around ฿600 a night when Jonny looked in October 2026. Drinks prices change with happy hours, so check the board outside each bar.

Getting there

Walk in from Soi Buakhao, or from Third Road at the other end. It's a few minutes on foot from Tree Town and LK Metro. From Second Road, walk in along Soi Diana. Baht buses run up and down Soi Buakhao all evening for ฿15. See baht bus routes.

Staying on Soi Chaiyapoon

It's a central, good-value base, especially for long stays on a budget. The trade-off is noise: bars play music late, and scooters come and go. Light sleepers should ask for a back room or a high floor, or stay on a quieter soi nearby and walk in. See where to stay in Pattaya.

Tips

- Check your check bin before paying, as anywhere.
- The soi is narrow and busy with scooters; watch your step.
- Carry small notes; many places struggle to change a ฿1,000 note.
- Heavy rain can flood the Soi Buakhao area quickly. See flood season.
- Going out? Read staying safe on a night out and bar etiquette, and set a budget before you start. See nightlife on a budget.
- Not drinking? Cafés and food stalls nearby make it easy. See Pattaya at night without drinking.

Common questions

Where is Soi Chaiyapoon? In central Pattaya, running from Soi Buakhao towards Third Road, close to Soi Lengkee and Tree Town.

Is Soi Chaiyapoon LGBTQ-friendly? Yes, it's known for relaxed LGBTQ-friendly bars, and the whole street is mixed and welcoming.

Is Soi Chaiyapoon cheap? It has some of the cheapest drinks in central Pattaya, with long happy hours.

How do I get to Soi Chaiyapoon? Walk in from Soi Buakhao or Third Road, or take the ฿15 Soi Buakhao baht bus.

Is Soi Chaiyapoon safe at night? It's busy and well lit, and most visitors have no problems. Watch your belongings, check your bill, and take care with scooters on the narrow soi.

Is Soi Chaiyapoon noisy? Yes, in the evening and late at night. Rooms on the soi itself get bar music; quieter side streets are a short walk away.

Know before you go

- It sits between Soi Buakhao and Third Road, so it is easy to explore on foot.
- See Soi Buakhao.
- See where to stay in Pattaya.

Sources

- Our Soi Buakhao page (2026 prices, including Jonny's own October 2026 hotel price) and baht bus page.

AREAS & STREETS

Beach Road

Pattaya's seafront road, from the Dolphin roundabout to Walking Street: the beach, malls, hotels, sois and the main baht-bus route.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/areas-streets/beach-road/

Runs	**Dolphin roundabout to Walking Street, about 3 km**
Thai name	**Pattaya Sai Nueng (Pattaya First Road)**
Baht buses	**Southbound along the beach, ฿15**
Sois	**Numbered 1 to 16, north to south**
Traffic	**One way, southbound**
Smoking on the beach	**Banned, city fine up to ฿5,000**

Quick answer: Beach Road (Pattaya Sai Nueng, "Pattaya First Road") is the seafront road that runs about three kilometres from the Dolphin roundabout in the north to Walking Street in the south. Traffic, including the baht buses, runs one way, south. A baht bus ride along it costs ฿15; to go back north, walk one block inland to Second Road. It's flat, easy to walk end to end in about 40 minutes, and best at sunset.


Beach Road, Pattaya
Photo: Ruslik0, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

It's the city's front door: the beach and its promenade on one side, hotels, malls, bars, restaurants and the numbered sois on the other.

Beach Road at a glance

PART	WHAT YOU'LL FIND	GOOD TO KNOW
North end, Dolphin roundabout to about Soi 4	Big hotels, quieter beach, the road on to Naklua	The calmest stretch of sand
Sois 1 to 6	Hotels, condos, cafés and small bars	Soi 6 is a bar street; many visitors just walk past
Middle, around Central Pattaya Road	Central Festival, food courts, the busiest promenade	The easiest place to meet people, shop or cool off
Sois 7 to 13	Hotels, restaurants, massage shops, Soi 7 and Soi 8	Lively after dark
South end, Royal Garden Plaza to Walking Street	Royal Garden Plaza, restaurants, the busiest crossings	Baht buses often turn off before Walking Street

What's along it

- Pattaya Beach and its promenade, best at sunset. The beach is narrower in the middle and wider at the ends.
- Central Festival and Royal Garden Plaza. See shopping malls.
- The numbered sois, from Soi 1 in the north to Soi 16 by Walking Street, including Soi 6 and Soi 7 and Soi 8.
- Hotels of every level, from big international brands to small guesthouses one soi back. See where to stay.

Getting around

- Baht buses run one way, south along Beach Road, for ฿15 per person. Wave one down, climb in, and press the buzzer to get off. To go north, walk across to Second Road.
- The road is one way for all traffic, heading south. Cars and scooters going north use Second Road.
- Trucks on the loop often turn off onto South Pattaya Road before Walking Street, so walk the last stretch.
- Bolt and Grab pick up along Beach Road. Set the pin on the right side of the road, or you'll wait while the driver loops round.
- It's flat and walkable end to end in about 40 minutes. Early morning and after sunset are the coolest times.

When to go

TIME	WHAT IT'S LIKE
Early morning	Quiet, cooler, joggers and cleaners on the beach
Midday	Hot and bright. Find shade, a mall or a café
Sunset, about 17:30 to 18:30	The best time on the promenade, busy but relaxed
Evening	Lights, traffic and crowds, especially near Central Festival and Walking Street
Event nights	The road can close for fireworks, festivals and countdowns. See the events calendar

Rules and tips

- Smoking is banned on Pattaya Beach and the beachfront footpaths. Pattaya City set a fine of up to ฿5,000 in 2025; enforcement is patchy, but don't risk it. See laws visitors break.
- Watch for scooters at the promenade crossings and when you step off a baht bus. Use the marked crossings and look both ways, even on a one-way road.
- Parts of Beach Road flood in heavy rain, usually for a short time. See flood season.
- Beach chairs and umbrellas are rented by the day. Ask the price before you sit down.
- Keep your phone and wallet in front of you on the busiest stretches at night.

Common questions

Is Beach Road one way? Yes. All traffic, including baht buses, goes south. Use Second Road to go north.

How much is a baht bus on Beach Road? ฿15 per person on the normal route, since April 2026. Don't tell the driver where you're going before you get in, or it may become a private hire.

How long is Beach Road? About three kilometres, from the Dolphin roundabout to Walking Street, around 40 minutes on foot.

Is it a good place to stay? It's the most central, with the sea on your doorstep, but also the noisiest and often the priciest. One soi back is usually quieter and cheaper. See where to stay.

Can you smoke on Pattaya Beach? No. The beach and the beachfront footpaths are smoke-free, with a fine of up to ฿5,000.

Where does Beach Road start and end? At the Dolphin roundabout in North Pattaya, and at the entrance to Walking Street in the south. North of the roundabout the road continues into Naklua.

Is Beach Road safe at night? Generally yes: it is busy and well lit. Watch for scooters at crossings, keep valuables in front of you, and ask prices before you sit down anywhere.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya Mail local reporting on the beach smoking ban and baht bus fares; Pattaya City announcements. Our own nightly ride videos cover the whole road.

Know before you go

- Traffic runs one way, south along the beach.
- See baht bus routes.
- See Pattaya Beach.
- See Second Road, the road back north.

AREAS & STREETS

Second Road

The busy one-way road one block inland from Beach Road: hotels, malls, cabaret shows, the northbound half of the ฿15 baht-bus loop, and the links to Soi 6, 7 and 8.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/areas-streets/second-road/

Runs	**Parallel to Beach Road, one block inland**
Thai name	**Pattaya Sai Song**
Baht buses	**Northbound, ฿15**
Known for	**Hotels, malls, cabaret shows, Soi 6, 7 and 8**

Second Road (Pattaya Sai Song) runs parallel to Beach Road, one block inland, from North Pattaya down to South Pattaya. It's busier with traffic than Beach Road and packed with hotels, shops, bars and restaurants.


Second Road, Pattaya
Photo: calflier001, CC BY-SA 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons

Quick answer: Second Road is the road back north. Beach Road traffic runs one way south, Second Road runs one way north, and together they make Pattaya's main loop. Wave down any baht bus heading north on Second Road and it costs ฿15 per person. Most visitors use it to get between Central Festival, the middle sois and Terminal 21 at the north end, and to reach Soi Buakhao and LK Metro a short walk inland.

Second Road at a glance

PART	WHAT YOU'LL FIND	GOOD TO KNOW
—	—	—
North end, Dolphin roundabout area	Terminal 21, Central Marina, big hotels	Where the loop turns back south onto Beach Road
Sois 1 to 8	Hotels, condos, the inland ends of Soi 6, 7 and 8	Soi 6, 7 and 8 are bar streets; many people just walk past
Middle, around Central Pattaya Road	Shops, banks, money exchanges, Central Festival a block away	The busiest stretch for errands
South, towards South Pattaya Road	Mike Shopping Mall, Pattaya Night Bazaar, Soi Diana and Soi Chaiyapoon	Short walks to Soi Buakhao, LK Metro and Walking Street

What's along it

- The inland ends of Soi 6 and Soi 7 and Soi 8.
- Cabaret shows such as Tiffany's and Alcazar. See cabaret shows.
- Mike Shopping Mall, Pattaya Night Bazaar and countless small shops. See shopping malls.
- Soi Diana and Soi Chaiyapoon, which link Second Road inland to Soi Buakhao.
- LK Metro, a short walk inland.

Pro tip: riding past Pattaya Night Bazaar on Second Road in October 2026, he called it "a great cheap place to pick up a suitcase". Handy if you've bought too much to carry home.

Getting around

Baht buses run north along Second Road for ฿15, the opposite direction to Beach Road, so the two roads make the main city loop. Stand on the left-hand side of Second Road, wave one down, and press the buzzer when you want to stop. Pay the driver through the window after you get off, in small notes.

For Jomtien, the trucks leave from Second Road near the South Pattaya Road junction. If you want to go south, walk one block to Beach Road. Bolt and Grab pick up anywhere along the road, but in heavy traffic a baht bus or walking is often faster.

Walking and crossing

Second Road is busy almost all day and well into the night, and the traffic is one way, so look right before you step out. Scooters squeeze along the inside, and some ride the wrong way. Use the traffic lights and the marked crossings near the malls and big junctions. Pavements are narrow in places, with stalls, poles and parked scooters, so you'll often walk in single file.

At night the middle and south of the road are lively and well lit. Keep your phone in a front pocket and your bag on the side away from the traffic. See staying safe on a night out.

Staying on Second Road

Hotels on Second Road are usually cheaper than the same standard on Beach Road, and you're still only a two or three minute walk from the sand. The trade-off is noise: traffic, bars and late music. Ask for a room at the back, or on a high floor. For a quieter base, look at the sois between Second Road and Beach Road, or further north towards Naklua. See where to stay.

Tips

- Crossing Second Road takes patience; use the traffic lights where you can.
- The road was resurfaced in 2026, but drains still back up in heavy rain. See flood season.
- Shops and exchange booths cluster here; compare a few exchange rates before changing big amounts. See exchanging money.

Common questions

Is Second Road in Pattaya one way? Yes. All traffic, including the baht buses, runs north. Use Beach Road to go south.

How much is a baht bus on Second Road? ฿15 per person on the Beach Road and Second Road loop.

What is the difference between Beach Road and Second Road? Beach Road runs along the sand and goes south; Second Road is one block inland, busier with traffic and shops, and goes north.

Is Second Road a good place to stay? It's central and usually cheaper than Beach Road, but noisy. Light sleepers should ask for a back room.

How far is Second Road from the beach? One block: usually a two to five minute walk through any of the numbered sois.

Know before you go

- Traffic runs one way, north, the opposite direction to Beach Road.
- See baht bus routes.
- See the big malls.

Sources

- Our own baht bus routes and fares page (fares and directions checked November 2026).
- Jonny James ride video, 25 October 2026 (Pattaya Night Bazaar quote).

AREAS & STREETS

Thepprasit Road

The long road linking Sukhumvit with Jomtien, home to Pattaya's biggest weekend night market, plus big stores, restaurants and condos.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/areas-streets/thepprasit-road/

Runs	**From Sukhumvit Road to Thappraya Road, near Jomtien**
Night market	**Busiest Friday to Sunday, about 5pm to 11pm**
Market payment	**Mostly cash, some Thai QR**
Known for	**Street food, cheap shopping, big stores**
Getting there	**Bolt, Grab or scooter**

Quick answer: Thepprasit Road links Sukhumvit Road with Thappraya Road on the way to Jomtien, running between Central and South Pattaya on one side and Jomtien on the other. It's a busy local road of big stores, car showrooms, restaurants and condos, and it is best known for the Thepprasit night market, Pattaya's biggest, busiest from Friday to Sunday evenings from about 5pm to 11pm. There's no regular baht bus along it, so most people come by Bolt, Grab or scooter.


Thepprasit Road, Pattaya
Photo: ThepprasitNightMarket, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Runs	Sukhumvit Road to Thappraya Road, near Jomtien
Known for	Thepprasit night market, big stores, local restaurants
Night market	Busiest Friday to Sunday, about 5pm to 11pm
Food prices	Mostly ฿20 to ฿120 a dish at the market
Getting there	Bolt, Grab, scooter; no regular baht bus on the road itself
Nearby	Jomtien, Thappraya Road, Sukhumvit Road

Thepprasit night market

- The Thepprasit night market is a big open-air market of food stalls, clothes, gadgets and household goods.
- Most guides say it is busiest, and fullest, from Friday to Sunday, roughly 5pm to 11pm. Some list it as open every evening, with far fewer stalls on weeknights. If you only go once, go at the weekend.
- Hundreds of food stalls: grilled seafood, skewers, noodles, fried snacks, desserts, fresh fruit and fruit shakes, mostly ฿20 to ฿120 a dish.
- Cheap clothes, phone accessories, souvenirs, toys and household bits. Prices are usually marked or quick to ask; light bargaining is fine for clothes, not for food.
- Seating is limited: many people eat while walking, or take food back to a condo.
- See night markets, street food and cheap eats.

When to go

TIME	WHAT IT'S LIKE
5pm to 6pm	Stalls setting up, easy parking, cooler as the sun drops
6pm to 8pm	The best time: everything open, busy but moving
8pm to 10pm	Busiest, especially Saturday; slow walking in the main lanes
Weeknights	Quieter and smaller; some evenings very few stalls
Rainy evenings	Many stalls close early or don't open. See rainy season survival

Along the road

- Large stores and hypermarkets, home and DIY stores, and car and motorbike showrooms. See supermarkets and groceries.
- Local Thai restaurants and cafés, popular with residents rather than tourists.
- Condo buildings and housing estates, between the busier centre and Jomtien. See where to stay.

What to eat at the market

- Grilled seafood: squid, prawns and fish, priced by the piece or by weight. Check the price before they cook it.

- Moo ping and other skewers, usually ฿10 to ฿20 each.
- Pad thai, fried rice and noodle soups, cooked to order.
- Som tam (papaya salad): ask for “mai phet” if you don’t want it very spicy.
- Mango sticky rice, roti, coconut ice cream and fruit shakes for dessert.

See Thai dishes to try and ordering food in Thai.

Make an evening of it

- Watch the sunset on Jomtien Beach first, then head up to the market around 6pm.
- Or go early, eat, and walk the quieter Thappraya side before the late crowds arrive.
- Families: the market is easy with kids before 8pm, when it’s less packed. See Pattaya with kids.

Getting there

- There’s no regular baht bus along Thepprasit itself. Bolt or Grab is easiest; set the pickup point carefully when leaving, because the market area gets crowded. See Bolt and Grab in Pattaya.
- By scooter, parking around the market fills up fast after 7pm. Watch for traffic turning in and out of the market, and park where others park.
- Motorbike taxis wait nearby when it’s busy. See motorbike taxis.

Tips

- Go around 6pm, before the biggest crowds.
- Bring small notes; many stalls are cash only, and others take Thai QR. See QR payments.
- Take a bag for shopping and wet wipes for sticky fingers.
- Keep phones and wallets in front of you in the busy lanes.
- Drink water: it stays hot and humid after dark.

Common questions

What days is Thepprasit night market open? It is busiest Friday to Sunday, roughly 5pm to 11pm. Some sources list it as open daily, but weeknights are much quieter, so check before you make a special trip.

Is Thepprasit night market cash only? Mostly cash, with some stalls taking Thai QR payments. Bring small notes.

How do I get to Thepprasit night market? Bolt, Grab or scooter. There’s no regular baht bus on Thepprasit Road.

Is Thepprasit night market good for food? Yes, it’s one of the best places in Pattaya to try lots of cheap street food in one go.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Thai Holiday Guide, Thepprasit night market; Thailand Magazine, Pattaya weekend market. Sources disagree on weeknight opening.

Know before you go

- The night market is busiest on weekend evenings. Go early for easier parking.
- See night markets.
- See Thappraya Road.

AREAS & STREETS

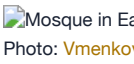
East Pattaya & Mabprachan Lake

East Pattaya, the “Darkside” across Sukhumvit Road: where many expat families and long-stayers live, with houses and gated villages, international schools, golf, Mabprachan Lake, rents, flooding and getting around.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/areas-streets/east-pattaya/

Where	**East of Sukhumvit Road, from Pong down to Huay Yai**
Nickname	**The Darkside**
Known for	**Houses and gated villages, schools, golf, Mabprachan Lake**
Best for	**Families and long-stayers who want space**
Getting around	**Car or scooter; baht buses only on Sukhumvit**

Quick answer: East Pattaya is everything inland of Sukhumvit Road, nicknamed “the Darkside”. Instead of beach towers and bars you get housing estates (moobaan), gated villas, international schools, golf courses and Mabprachan Lake. It’s where many expat families and long-stay residents live for a house with a garden and quiet nights. The catch is transport: baht buses only run along Sukhumvit itself, so you’ll want a car, a scooter or ride apps. Jonny’s own pick for families is East Pattaya.


Mosque in East Pattaya, east of Sukhumvit Road
Photo: Vmenkov, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Where	East of Sukhumvit Road and the railway line, from Pong in the north to Huay Yai in the south
Nickname	The Darkside
Housing	Houses, townhouses and pool villas in villages and gated estates; some condos near Sukhumvit
Good for	Families, long stays, pet owners, golfers
Rent (approx.)	Condos about ฿7,000 to ฿12,000; houses from about ฿15,000 a month
Getting around	Car or scooter; Bolt and Grab; baht buses along Sukhumvit only
Watch out for	Flash flooding on low roads in heavy rain; long trips to the beach

Pro tip: my pick for a family is East Pattaya, the Darkside. If you’re here to save money, or you only go out about once a week, you can get a lot more space out there, like a house on the Darkside. And if you learn some Thai, you may save money and get a more authentic experience outside the city.

Why it’s called the Darkside

“Darkside” is just a nickname, and it isn’t a comment on safety. Explanations differ: property guides say it dates from when the roads east of Sukhumvit had few street lights, and the area stayed dark at night while central Pattaya lit up. It developed later than the beach side of town; today it’s a large, settled residential area.

Where it is

- **West edge:** Sukhumvit Road (Highway 3) and the railway line just east of it. Pattaya railway station is on this side. See train to Pattaya.
- **Areas you’ll hear named:** Nongprue, Khao Talo, Khao Noi, Siam Country Club road, Mabprachan and Pong, with rural Huay Yai to the south.

Where do expats live in Pattaya?

Across the city, but East Pattaya is one of the main answers for families and people staying years rather than months: estate agencies describe it as popular for larger houses, quiet neighbourhoods and gated communities. Other common choices are Jomtien and Pratumnak for condos near the beach, Naklua for a quieter, more local north end, and Soi Buakhao for people who want to be central. Compare them in where to stay.

Who it suits

- **Families:** houses with gardens, and international schools out this side. See international schools.
- **Pet owners:** houses are usually easier than condos with a dog. See living with a dog.
- **Golfers:** several courses, including Siam Country Club’s, are in the countryside east of Sukhumvit. See golf in Pattaya.
- **Not ideal if** you don’t ride or drive, or you want to walk to the beach and nightlife.

What it’s like day and night

- **Day:** residential and practical: village markets and street food, cafés, schools, and the hypermarkets and DIY stores along Sukhumvit. See supermarkets and groceries and cafés and coffee.
- **Evening:** people head to Mabprachan Lake, the area's green heart, where a running and cycling lane of about 2 km on the dam is open daily until 9pm (Pattaya Mail, July 2026).
- **Night:** quiet. Nightlife means a ride into town. See night transport.

Living here

TYPE	ROUGH MONTHLY RENT
One-bed condo	About ฿7,000 to ฿12,000
2 to 3 bedroom house	About ฿15,000 to ฿40,000
Pool villa	More; one agency lists about ฿45,000 and up

Ranges come from our cost of living and renting a house guides. One estate agency quotes higher figures, about ฿25,000 to ฿45,000 for 3-bedroom homes, so prices depend a lot on the village and the agent.

- **Pros:** space, gardens, quiet nights, more home for the money, easy parking.
- **Cons:** you need transport for almost everything, and some low roads flood in heavy rain.
- Foreigners generally can't own land in their own name, so get independent legal advice before buying a house. See buy vs rent.

Getting around

- **Scooter or car:** the normal way to live here. See renting a scooter and getting a Thai driving licence.
- **Baht buses:** both ways along Sukhumvit, with cross-town routes on North, Central and South Pattaya Roads to Beach Road. Expect ฿15, up to ฿20 on longer runs. They don't go into the villages. See baht bus routes and fares.
- **Bolt and Grab:** work well, but pickups in outlying villages can take longer, especially late. See Bolt and Grab.
- **Crossing Sukhumvit:** it's wide and fast. Use footbridges and lights on foot, and take U-turns slowly on a scooter.

Safety

- **Flooding:** heavy rain causes flash flooding on low roads, especially around Khao Talo and the railway road. On 23 September 2026 the railway road behind Wat Tham Samakkhi was closed by floodwater. A drainage project to carry Khao Talo runoff to the Huai Yai canal is due for completion on 2 January 2027. Ask about flood history before renting. See flood season.
- **Roads at night:** ride with lights on, watch for potholes and slow down on unfamiliar village roads. See road accidents.

Common questions

What is the Darkside in Pattaya? The local nickname for East Pattaya, the area inland of Sukhumvit Road. It's usually explained by the lack of street lights and nightlife in years past, not by crime.

Is East Pattaya safe? It's a quiet residential area. The bigger everyday risks are road safety on Sukhumvit and dark village roads, and flash flooding in heavy rain.

Where do expats live in Pattaya? All over, but East Pattaya is a favourite for families who want a house. Jomtien, Pratumnak, Naklua and Soi Buakhao are other common choices.

Can you live in East Pattaya without a scooter? It's possible near Sukhumvit, using baht buses on the highway and ride apps, but most residents in the villages drive or ride.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya Mail, East Pattaya flooding (24 September 2026); Pattaya Mail, East Railway Road drainage phase 2 (27 April 2026, completion due 2 January 2027); Pattaya Mail, chronic flooding near Khao Talo (July 2024); Pattaya Mail, Mabprachan running lane (23 July 2026); Cornerstone, East Pattaya (estate agency: area boundaries, schools, rent ranges, 2026); our own baht bus guide, cost of living and renting a house guides. Property guides tell the "Darkside" origin differently; rent figures differ between sources.

Know before you go

- You will need your own transport, baht buses are rare out here.
- See renting a house.
- See Mabprachan Lake.

AREAS & STREETS

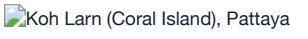
Koh Larn (Coral Island)

The island 45 minutes from Bali Hai pier: ferries, beaches, getting around and how to make a day of it.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/areas-streets/koh-larn/

Ferry	**From Bali Hai pier, about 45 minutes**
Fare	**฿30 or ฿40 one way, cash (reports differ in 2026)**
Last boat back	**Usually around 18:00 from Na Ban, check at the pier**
Speedboat	**About ฿150 to ฿300 a seat, private boat about ฿1,500 to ฿2,500**
Best beaches	**Tawaen (busy), Samae and Nual (quieter)**

Quick answer: Koh Larn is the island you can see from Pattaya Beach, about 7 km offshore. Take the public ferry from Bali Hai pier at the end of Walking Street: about 45 minutes, ฿30 or ฿40 one way in cash (2026 reports differ, so have ฿40 ready). Speedboats take 15 to 20 minutes for about ฿150 to ฿300 a seat. On the island, shared trucks and motorbike taxis run from Na Ban pier to the beaches. Go early on a weekday and catch a boat back well before the last one, usually around 18:00.


Koh Larn (Coral Island), Pattaya
Photo: Ilya Plekhanov, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons

Many people call it Coral Island. The water is clearer than in Pattaya Bay, the beaches are proper sand, and the cheap public ferry makes it one of the easiest day trips from the city.

Koh Larn at a glance

WHAT	TYPICAL COST OR TIME	NOTES
Public ferry, Bali Hai to Na Ban	฿30 or ฿40 one way, about 45 min	Cash at the pier. Sources disagree on the 2026 fare
Public ferry, Bali Hai to Tawaen	Same fare	Only some sailings go straight to Tawaen Beach
Shared speedboat	About ฿150 to ฿300 per seat, 15 to 20 min	Often leaves only when full
Private speedboat	About ฿1,500 to ฿2,500 per boat	Agree the price, the beach and the return time first
Shared truck on the island	Roughly ฿40 to ฿70 per person	Fixed fare per beach, from Na Ban pier
Beach chair and umbrella	About ฿100 to ฿200	Some restaurants waive it if you order
Last public ferry back	Usually around 18:00	Check the board at the pier on the way out

Getting there

- **Public ferry** from Bali Hai pier, at the end of Walking Street. It takes about 45 minutes and you pay in cash at the pier or on board. Boats go to Na Ban pier in the village, with a few daily sailings straight to Tawaen Beach. The long-standing fare was ฿30; several 2026 reports say ฿40 on some or all sailings, citing fuel costs, while an August 2026 Pattaya Mail guide still gives about ฿30. Neither figure comes from an official tariff, so check the sign at the ticket window.
- **Speedboats** from Bali Hai take about 15 to 20 minutes. A seat on a shared boat costs about ฿150 to ฿300 one way depending on the operator and the beach. Buy at a booth on the pier rather than from someone who approaches you on the street.
- **Getting to Bali Hai**: a baht bus down Beach Road gets you most of the way for ฿15; walk the last part through Walking Street, which is quiet in the morning. A Bolt or Grab can drop you at the pier entrance.
- The timetable is not published in one reliable place and changes with the season. Ferries run through the day from early morning, with extra sailings at weekends and on holidays. Photograph the timetable board at Bali Hai before you leave.

The beaches

BEACH	FEEL	GOOD FOR
Tawaen	The biggest and busiest, rows of chairs, restaurants	Easy first visit, direct ferry on some sailings
Samae	Wide, a little calmer, on the west side	Sunset, a longer swim
Ta Yai	Small and quiet	Escaping the crowds
Tien	Small bay, fewer facilities	A quieter afternoon
Nual (Monkey Beach)	Small, at the southern tip	A short visit; keep food away from the monkeys

For more on each one, see Koh Larn beaches.

Getting around the island

- Shared trucks wait at Na Ban pier and run to each beach for a fixed fare, roughly ฿40 to ฿70 per person depending on the beach. Ask the price before you get in.
- Motorbike taxis cost a little more and are faster for one person.
- Scooters can be rented near the pier for a few hundred baht a day. The island roads are steep and twisty, and scooter accidents are common, so only ride if you are confident and wear a helmet. See renting a scooter.
- There are viewpoints above the village and at the southern end. A truck driver will take you for an agreed price if you don't want to ride.

A simple day on Koh Larn

- Leave Bali Hai on a morning ferry, ideally before 10:00 on a weekday.
- Take a truck from Na Ban to a quieter beach like Samae or Ta Yai, or stay on a direct boat to Tawaen.
- Have lunch at a beach restaurant and ask the price of seafood by weight before it's cooked.
- Head back to Na Ban by mid afternoon and take a ferry before the last one, leaving time for a slow truck or a queue.

If you would rather stay a night, the island is calm after the day crowds leave. See staying overnight on Koh Larn.

What it costs for a day

ITEM	ROUGH COST PER PERSON
Ferry both ways	฿60 to ฿80
Trucks on the island	฿80 to ฿140
Beach chair	฿100 to ฿200
Lunch and drinks	฿200 to ฿500
Total, by ferry	About ฿450 to ฿900

Speedboats, water sports and seafood can push this up a lot. Prices were gathered from 2026 reports and change often; check on the day.

Tips

- Bring cash; many places on the island don't take cards. ATMs on the island are few, so bring enough from Pattaya.
- Go on a weekday if you can. Weekends and holidays are packed.
- Boats are cancelled when the sea is rough, mostly from May to October. If red flags are up, wait for another day.
- Photograph any jet ski or scooter before you use it, with the operator watching. See common scams.
- Take reef-safe sun cream, water and a hat. Shade on the beaches is mostly the paid umbrellas.
- Keep valuables in a dry bag. Theft from bags left on the sand happens on busy days.

Common questions

How much is the ferry from Pattaya to Koh Larn? The public ferry from Bali Hai pier costs ฿30 or ฿40 one way, paid in cash. Reports from 2026 disagree, so carry ฿40 per person each way. Speedboats cost about ฿150 to ฿300 a seat.

What time is the last ferry back from Koh Larn? Usually around 18:00 from Na Ban pier. Times change by season, so check the board when you arrive and aim for an earlier boat.

Which Koh Larn beach is best? Tawaen is the easiest and busiest. Samae is wider and calmer, and Ta Yai or Tien suit you if you want quiet. See Koh Larn beaches.

Is Koh Larn worth it? For most visitors, yes. It's the closest place to Pattaya with clear water and proper beaches, for a few hundred baht. If you want a bigger island, compare Koh Samet vs Koh Larn.

Can I go to Koh Larn in rainy season? Yes, on calm days. Boats are cancelled in rough seas, mostly from May to October, and the water is less clear after storms.

Know before you go

- See Koh Larn beaches.
- See staying overnight.
- See Koh Samet vs Koh Larn.
- See more day trips from Pattaya.

AREAS & STREETS

Bang Saray

Bang Saray (Bang Sare), a fishing village about 20 km south of Pattaya in Sattahip: a working fishing harbour, seafood restaurants by the piers, a quiet, simple beach and a Saturday evening market.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/areas-streets/bang-saray/

Where	**About 20 km south of Pattaya, in Sattahip district**
Known for	**Seafood, the working fishing harbour, a quiet beach**
Best times	**Early morning for the boats, Saturday evening market**
Beach	**Simple and quiet; few or no rented chairs**
Getting there	**Car, scooter, Bolt or Grab, about 30 to 40 minutes**
Thai name	**บางเสร่ (Bang Sare)**

Quick answer: Bang Saray (also spelled Bang Sare) is a fishing village on the coast south of Pattaya, in Sattahip district, roughly 20 km from the city along Sukhumvit Road. People come for seafood cooked near the piers where the boats land, a quiet beach with none of central Pattaya's noise, and a slower pace. It suits a half-day trip, a weekend away or a long stay for people who want to be well outside the city. Plan on a car, scooter or ride app: our baht bus guide doesn't cover a regular route this far south.


Bang Saray, Pattaya
Photo: Pattaya Patrol, CC BY-SA 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Where	Sattahip district, about 20 km south of central Pattaya (guides say 16 to 25 km, depending where you start)
Known for	A working fishing harbour and seafood restaurants by the piers
Beach	A modest curve of sand with trees behind it; quiet, few facilities
Best times	Early morning for the fishing boats; Saturday evening for the market
Getting there	Car or scooter, Bolt or Grab; about 30 to 40 minutes
Combine with	Khao Chi Chan, Wat Yansangwararam, Nong Nooch

Who it suits

- **Seafood lovers** who want to eat close to where the catch comes in.
- **Day trippers** pairing a meal with the sights south of Pattaya.
- **People who want quiet:** Thai Holiday Guide notes there are no jet-ski touts, and Pattaya Mail reported in January 2026 that some residents head to Bang Saray for a quieter beach.
- **Not ideal if** you want nightlife, lots of English spoken, or to get around without your own transport.

The fishing harbour

Bang Saray is still a working fishing village. Thai Holiday Guide describes a harbour about 120 years old, where boats bring in catches from trawling, hand lines, crab traps and squid jigging. Early morning is the busiest time to watch the boats come in. In October 2025, Pattaya Mail reported that the local MP and the Chonburi Provincial Fisheries Office reorganised the Bang Saray fishing pier for safety and order, moving damaged boats and redesigning it to serve local fishermen. It's a workplace first: keep out of the crews' way.

Eating seafood here

- Seafood restaurants cluster around the piers, cooking fish bought from the boats. Expect grilled fish, steamed crab, prawns and spicy seafood soups.
- Seafood is usually priced by weight. Ask the price per kilo, and how much the piece you chose weighs, before it's cooked. See seafood restaurants.
- Go for a late lunch and stay into the evening, or come for an early dinner before driving back in daylight.

The beach

Bang Saray's beach is a modest curve of sand backed by casuarina trees, with local shops and convenience stores nearby. Thai Holiday Guide says there are no rented umbrellas or chairs and little shade on the sand itself, so bring your own shade and water. It's pleasant for a walk and a quiet sit. For a fully set-up swimming beach with chairs, Jomtien or Na Jomtien are better. Check beach safety before you swim.

Saturday evening market

A walking street market runs on Saturday evenings from around 5pm in the lanes near the fishing piers, mostly with a local crowd. See night markets for what to expect and street food for what to try.

What it's like day and night

- **Morning:** the harbour is at its busiest as boats land their catch.
- **Afternoon:** quiet and hot; lunch by the water is the main event.
- **Evening:** calm. Apart from Saturday's market, there is essentially no nightlife.

Getting there

- **By car or scooter:** head south on Sukhumvit Road past Jomtien and Nong Nooch, then turn towards the coast. Allow 30 to 40 minutes from central Pattaya, more in traffic. See Sukhumvit Road and renting a scooter.
- **Bolt or Grab:** easy on the way out; finding a ride back can take longer, so open the app before you finish your meal. See Bolt and Grab.
- **Songthaew:** our baht bus guide covers Pattaya's in-town routes, not Bang Saray. Some travel guides say local songthaews run along the coast road between Bang Saray, Jomtien and Pattaya; others call them limited. If you try one, ask the fare before you get in, and don't count on one for the trip back.
- Show your driver the Thai name, บางเสร่, if needed.

Nearby

- Khao Chi Chan, the Buddha image on a cliff, and Wat Yansangwararam, a few minutes apart.
- Nong Nooch Garden and the water parks off Sukhumvit Road on the way.

Living or staying here

Bang Saray has small resorts, villas and some housing estates, and suits people who want a quiet coastal base and don't mind the drive. The trade-offs are real: big supermarkets, malls and Pattaya's main hospitals are back in town, ride apps are slower to arrive, and evenings are very quiet. You will want your own car or scooter. Compare it with closer quiet areas in where to stay.

Tips

- Arrive early in the morning for the boats, or for a late lunch and sunset.
- Bring cash and small notes for the market and smaller restaurants.
- Bring your own shade, water and sun cream for the beach. See heat and sun safety.
- If you're driving back after dark, take it slowly: Sukhumvit is fast. See road accidents.

Common questions

How far is Bang Saray from Pattaya? About 20 km south of central Pattaya, or 30 to 40 minutes by road. Guides quote anything from 16 to 25 km, depending on where in Pattaya they measure from.

Is there a baht bus to Bang Saray? Not on the in-town routes in our baht bus guide. Some travel guides mention local songthaews along the coast road, others say they're limited. A car, scooter or ride app is the reliable choice.

Is Bang Saray beach good for swimming? It's quiet and pleasant, but simple: little shade and no rented chairs. For a set-up swimming beach, Jomtien is better.

When is the best time to visit Bang Saray? Early morning to see the fishing boats, lunchtime for seafood, or Saturday evening for the walking street market.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Thai Holiday Guide, Bang Sare (updated July 2026: about 20 km, harbour, beach, Saturday market, songthaews); Pattaya Mail, Bang Saray fishing pier (8 October 2025); Pattaya Mail, smoke-free beaches (26 January 2026); Love Thailand, Bang Sa-re (about 16 km, route past Nong Nooch); our own baht bus guide. Sources disagree on the distance and on how often songthaews run.

Know before you go

- It is quieter than Pattaya, good for seafood and a slower pace.
- See seafood restaurants.
- See Khao Chi Chan.

AREAS & STREETS

Wongamat Beach

Wongamat (Wong Amat) Beach in Naklua, north Pattaya: about 1.3 km of quieter sand near the Sanctuary of Truth, backed by hotels and condo towers, with shade trees, rocky patches and no beach road.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/areas-streets/wongamat-beach/

Area	**Naklua, north Pattaya**
Length	**About 1.3 km, no beach road behind it**
Vibe	**Quieter than Pattaya Beach; hotels and condo towers**
Watch for	**Rocky patches, more exposed at low tide**
Nearby	**Sanctuary of Truth, Lan Pho seafood market**
Getting there	**Naklua baht bus, then walk; or Bolt and Grab**

Quick answer: Wongamat (also spelled Wong Amat) is a beach of about 1.3 km in Naklua, at the north end of Pattaya, close to the Sanctuary of Truth. Unlike Pattaya Beach there is no beach road along it, so it feels calmer: the sand is backed by resort hotels and condo towers rather than traffic and bars. It suits families, couples and anyone who wants a quieter beach day. Watch for rocky patches, especially at low tide. The Naklua baht bus runs from the Dolphin roundabout, and from Naklua Road you walk down to the sand.

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Where	Naklua, north of the Dolphin roundabout
Length	About 1.3 km
Behind the beach	Resort hotels and condo towers; no beach road
Good for	Families, couples, a quiet day by the sea
Watch for	Rocks in places, jet skis, limited parking
Getting there	Naklua baht bus (up to about ฿20) then walk, or Bolt and Grab
Nearby	Sanctuary of Truth, Lan Pho seafood market

Who it suits

- **Families:** quieter sand and shade from rows of big trees make it easier with children than the central beach. See Pattaya with kids.
- **Couples and slower trips:** a calm beach by day and a quiet area at night. See Pattaya for couples.
- **Not ideal if** you want to walk out of your hotel into nightlife. Central Pattaya is a short ride away, not a short walk.

What it's like by day

Pattaya Mail describes Wongamat as a former fishing village that now feels close to a private beach: steady visitors even in low season, busier from November to February, but rarely crowded. Expect:

- A curving stretch of sand, smaller than Pattaya or Jomtien beach, with shade under trees in places.
- Natural rock formations along the curve. They make the beach pretty, but they also limit where you can swim. Pattaya City cleared sharp rocks and debris after fishermen raised safety concerns in September 2025, and said it would keep monitoring the beach.
- Small stalls selling cold drinks and snacks, plus hotel restaurants facing the sand. See beach clubs for paid sunbeds and pools.
- Jet skis at busier times. Read adventure activities before you hire one.

And at night

With no beach road and few bars, Wongamat goes quiet after sunset. Evening life means hotel restaurants, a seafood dinner in Naklua, or a ride into town. It is one of the better areas for a good night's sleep. See noise and sleep. For sunset, the beach faces west across the bay. See sunset spots.

Swimming and water

- Travel guides describe the water as calmer and often clearer than central Pattaya on calm days. We found no recent official water test results for Wongamat itself, so judge conditions on the day.
- Rocks are more exposed at low tide. Water shoes help, and look before you wade in.
- Swim where hotels have marked a swimming area, and stay well away from jet skis. See beach safety and jellyfish and sea creatures.

Beach rules worth knowing

- Pattaya's beaches are designated smoke-free (Pattaya Mail, January 2026), though residents say enforcement is patchy. Don't smoke on the sand.
- In May 2026 Pattaya City said you can sit on the beach with your own mat or chair, but tents, overnight camping, bonfires and loud music are banned, and unlicensed chair and mat rental is being cleared.
- Agree any price for chairs, food or water sports before you start. See common scams.
- Photograph a jet ski from every side, with the owner watching, before you ride.

Eating and shopping nearby

- The Lan Pho seafood market in Naklua sells seafood by weight, with cook shops nearby that will cook what you buy. See seafood restaurants.
- Naklua Road and the sois behind the beach have local Thai restaurants, cafés and convenience stores, usually cheaper than eating at a beachfront hotel.

Getting there

- **Baht bus:** take the Naklua route, which runs north from the Dolphin roundabout along Naklua Road. Wave one down on the north side of the roundabout, press the buzzer when you want to get off, and walk down a soi towards the sea. Longer runs like Naklua cost up to ฿20, though some guides still list ฿10. See baht bus routes and fares.
- **Bolt or Grab:** roughly 10 to 15 minutes from central Pattaya outside rush hour, and the easiest choice in the evening. See Bolt and Grab.
- **Scooter or car:** parking near the beach is limited, so arrive early at weekends.

Living or staying here

Wongamat is one of Pattaya's pricier areas, with many luxury beachfront condo towers built in the 2010s. Our cost of living guide puts a one-bed condo on the beachfront at Wong Amat and in Naklua at about ฿15,000 to ฿35,000 a month and up on a one-year lease. You pay for the quiet and the views in rent, and in a ride every time you head into town. Compare areas in where to stay.

Safety

Wongamat is a calm, residential area. The main risks are at the water's edge: rocks, jet skis and the sun. See heat and sun safety.

Common questions

Is Wongamat Beach better than Pattaya Beach? It's quieter and calmer, with no beach road behind it, and many people find it cleaner. It is smaller, with rocky patches, and has far less going on at night.

Is Wongamat Beach good for kids? Generally yes: it's quieter, with shade in places. Watch for rocks in the shallows and for jet skis, and swim in marked areas.

How do I get to Wongamat Beach by baht bus? Take the Naklua baht bus from the north side of the Dolphin roundabout, get off on Naklua Road and walk down a soi to the beach. Expect up to ฿20.

Is Wongamat the same as Wong Amat? Yes, both spellings are used for the same beach in Naklua.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya Mail, Wong Amat Beach in low season (2 August 2025: about 1.3 km, rocks, shade, parking, crowds); Pattaya Mail, rocks cleared from Wong Amat Beach (9 September 2025); Pattaya Mail, smoke-free beaches (26 January 2026); Pattaya Mail, free beach use with personal gear (1 May 2026); Wikipedia, Wong Amat Beach (length, no beach road, condo development); Thailand Magazine, Wong Amat Beach (stalls, swimming areas); our own baht bus guide. Travel guides disagree on baht bus fares to Naklua.

Know before you go

- The beach is calmer than central Pattaya, popular with families.
- See Sanctuary of Truth.
- See Naklua.

AREAS & STREETS

Dongtan Beach

Dongtan Beach at the north end of Jomtien: a relaxed, tree-shaded stretch popular with LGBTQ+ visitors and families, close to Pratumnak and the Jomtien Complex. What it's like, rules and getting there.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/areas-streets/dongtan-beach/

Where	**North end of Jomtien Beach**
Vibe	**Relaxed, shady, LGBTQ+ friendly**
Nearby	**Jomtien Complex, Pratumnak Hill**
Getting there	**Bolt or Grab, or baht bus to Jomtien**

Dongtan Beach is the northern stretch of Jomtien Beach, just south of Pratumnak Hill. It's shaded by trees, calmer than central Pattaya, and a long-time favourite of LGBTQ+ visitors as well as families and long-stay residents.

Quick answer: Dongtan is the easy-going top end of Jomtien's roughly 6 km beach: trees along a pedestrian promenade, rows of chairs and umbrellas, vendors, and a relaxed, mixed crowd. It is Pattaya's best-known LGBTQ+-friendly beach, with the Jomtien Complex bars a short walk away. Get there by Bolt or Grab in about 10 to 15 minutes from central Pattaya, or by baht bus towards Jomtien. Don't smoke on the sand: Pattaya bans smoking on its beaches.

Dongtan at a glance

THING	DETAILS
—	—
Where	North end of Jomtien Beach, below Pratumnak Hill
Beach	Part of Jomtien's roughly 6 km of sand, with a tree-lined promenade
Crowd	LGBTQ+ visitors, families, long-stay residents
Facilities	Chairs and umbrellas, food and drink vendors, cafés across the road
Rules	No smoking on the beach; chairs are banned on some beaches on set days
From central Pattaya	About 10 to 15 minutes by Bolt or Grab

What it's like

- A pedestrian promenade with trees along the sand, good for a shady walk.
- Beach chairs and umbrellas to rent, and food and drink vendors who come to you.
- Gay-friendly sections of the beach, and a welcoming, relaxed crowd. Everyone is welcome.
- Quieter than Pattaya Beach, with fewer boats close to shore.
- Late afternoon is the liveliest time, as people come down for the sunset.

Nearby

- The Jomtien Complex, the centre of Pattaya's LGBTQ+ nightlife, just inland. See LGBTQ+ nightlife.
- The Big Buddha and Pattaya viewpoint on Pratumnak Hill, a short ride up the hill.
- The rest of Jomtien Beach, which runs south for kilometres. See the Jomtien beach walk.
- Jomtien immigration office, if you have visa errands.

Rules to know

- **No smoking on the beach.** Dongtan was named in Thailand's 2018 beach smoking ban, and Pattaya City banned smoking on all its beaches and the footpaths beside them in 2025, with fines reported at up to ฿5,000. Use the marked smoking areas, if any, or the other side of the road.
- **Chair-free days.** Chairs are banned on some beaches on certain days so the sand can be cleaned and used freely. If the chairs are gone, bring a towel.
- **Swimming.** Watch for flags, and avoid swimming near drains after heavy rain. See beach safety.

Getting there

Bolt or Grab from central Pattaya takes about 10 to 15 minutes. Baht buses run between Pattaya and Jomtien, with trucks leaving from Second Road near the South Pattaya Road junction and along Thappraya Road; fares are up to ฿20. Ask for Dongtan or get off where Thappraya Road meets the beach. See baht bus routes.

On foot from Pratumnak, it's downhill through the quiet sois. Coming back up in the heat is harder, so take a ride.

Who it suits

- **LGBTQ+ travellers** looking for a relaxed beach day and nightlife within walking distance.
- **Families** who want shade and a calmer sea than Pattaya Beach.
- **Long-stay residents** in Pratumnak and north Jomtien, who use it as their everyday beach.
- **Walkers and runners**, since the promenade starts here and runs south along the whole beach.

It's less suited to anyone wanting water sports or a party beach; for those, head further south on Jomtien or to Koh Larn. See Koh Larn.

When to go

- Weekday mornings are quietest.
- Late afternoon into sunset is the social time; the beach faces west. See sunset spots.
- November to April has the calmest sea and least rain.

Tips

- Agree prices for chairs before you sit down.
- Bring cash in small notes for chairs, drinks and vendors.
- Shade from the trees moves through the day; ask for a chair that will stay in the shade.
- Keep valuables with you if you swim, or take turns.
- Bring a towel or mat for chair-free days, and a bag for your rubbish; bins can be few and far between at busy times.
- Public toilets are limited; cafés across the road usually let customers use theirs.

Common questions

Is Dongtan Beach a gay beach? It's Pattaya's best-known LGBTQ+-friendly beach, with gay-friendly sections, but everyone is welcome, including families.

Where is Dongtan Beach? At the north end of Jomtien Beach, just south of Pratumnak Hill.

Can you smoke on Dongtan Beach? No. Smoking is banned on Pattaya's beaches, with fines.

How do I get to Dongtan Beach from Pattaya? Bolt or Grab in about 10 to 15 minutes, or a baht bus towards Jomtien.

Know before you go

- See Jomtien beach walk.
- See sunset spots.

Sources

- Pattaya Mail: "Pattaya imposes 5,000 baht fine for smoking on beaches and footpaths" (July 2025).
- Pattaya Mail and Khaosod English on the 2018 national beach smoking ban (Dongtan named as Pattaya's beach in the pilot).
- Our Jomtien, baht bus and beach chairs pages (checked 2026).

AREAS & STREETS

Soi Diana

Soi Diana (Soi 13/4) in central Pattaya: a busy connector between Second Road and Soi Buakhao, with restaurants, bars, massage shops, hotels and LK Metro just off it. What's there, getting there and tips.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/areas-streets/soi-diana/

Also called	**Soi 13/4**
Runs	**From Second Road towards Soi Buakhao**
Nearby	**LK Metro, Soi Buakhao, Tree Town**
Vibe	**Busy day and night, mixed bars and shops**

Soi Diana, officially Soi 13/4, runs inland from Second Road towards Soi Buakhao in central Pattaya. It's a busy everyday street that also links up with LK Metro, so it's on the way to some of the city's most popular nightlife.

Quick answer: Soi Diana is a short, busy street in the middle of Pattaya, linking Second Road with Soi Buakhao. By day it's shops, massage, money exchange and food; by evening it fills with people heading to sports pubs, restaurants and LK Metro just off the soi. It's a handy, central base with cheap food nearby, but it's noisy at night. Get there on the ฿15 baht bus along Second Road and walk in.

Soi Diana at a glance

THING	DETAILS
—	—
Official name	Soi 13/4 (Pattaya Sai 2, Soi 13/4)
Runs	From Second Road inland towards Soi Buakhao
Links to	LK Metro, Soi Buakhao, Tree Town, Soi Chaiyapoon
Busiest	Early evening into the night
Good for	Food, sports pubs, a central budget base
Watch for	Narrow pavements, scooters, late-night noise

What's there

- Bars and pubs, from small beer bars to sports pubs showing football and other big games. See sports bars.
- Restaurants and street food, Thai and Western: breakfasts, pub food and cheap Thai dishes.
- Massage shops, convenience stores, money exchange and hotels.
- The entrance to LK Metro's bars just off the soi.

Where it fits

Central Pattaya works like a grid. Second Road runs north, Soi Buakhao runs south to north a few blocks inland, and short connector streets like Soi Diana and Soi Chaiyapoon link them. From Soi Diana it's a few minutes on foot to Second Road, about ten to Beach Road, and a short walk to Soi Buakhao's markets and cheap food. See Pattaya Klang for how the main roads fit together.

Prices nearby

Soi Diana sits between the beach side of town and Soi Buakhao, and prices fall the further inland you go. On our Soi Buakhao page, checked in 2026, a basic street-shop foot massage was ฿200 and a Thai body massage ฿300 before tip, a haircut ฿150, and a plate of pad kra pao ฿35 to ฿80 at small places. Expect similar or slightly higher prices on Soi Diana itself, and more on Beach Road.

ITEM	TYPICAL PRICE NEARBY (2026)
—	—
Pad kra pao at a street shop	฿35 to ฿80
Foot massage, basic shop	About ฿200 before tip
Thai body massage, basic shop	About ฿300 before tip
Baht bus on Second Road or Soi Buakhao	฿15
ATM withdrawal with a foreign card	About ฿220 to ฿250 fee

Many small shops struggle to change a ฿1,000 note, so break big notes at a convenience store. Every ATM withdrawal with a foreign card costs a fixed fee, so take out larger amounts less often. See ATM fees.

When to go

Busy all day with traffic and shoppers, and lively from early evening into the night. If you want to look around without the crowds, late morning is the calmest time. Big football nights fill the sports pubs.

Staying on or near Soi Diana

Hotels and guesthouses around Soi Diana are often cheaper than on Beach Road, and you're in the middle of everything. The trade-off is noise: music, traffic and people until late. Light sleepers should ask for a room at the back or on a high floor, or stay a few streets away. See where to stay.

Getting there

Walk in from Second Road, or take a baht bus along Second Road and hop off at Soi 13. Baht buses on the Beach Road and Second Road loop cost ฿15 and run north on Second Road. Coming from Soi Buakhao, the Soi Buakhao baht bus passes the other end. See baht bus routes.

Tips

- The road is narrow and busy; watch for scooters, including some going the wrong way.
- Carry small notes for food stalls and baht buses.
- Prices on menus are usually fair, but check a drinks menu before ordering, as you would anywhere.
- Heavy rain can flood the streets around Soi Buakhao quickly. See flood season.
- Combine it with LK Metro and Tree Town for an easy night out, or with Soi Buakhao for food.
- Going out? Read staying safe on a night out and bar etiquette first.

Common questions

What is Soi Diana in Pattaya? Soi 13/4, a busy connector street between Second Road and Soi Buakhao, with food, bars, massage shops and hotels.

Is Soi Diana the same as LK Metro? No. LK Metro is a separate set of lanes just off Soi Diana.

How do I get to Soi Diana? Take a baht bus north along Second Road for ฿15 and get off at Soi 13, then walk in.

Is Soi Diana a good place to stay? It's central and good value, but noisy at night.

Know before you go

- It is busiest in the evening, with food and bars along the soi.
- See Second Road.
- See sports bars.

Sources

- Our baht bus routes and fares, Soi Buakhao and flood season guides (checked November 2026, with their own sources).

AREAS & STREETS

Thappraya Road

Thappraya Road, the busy link between South Pattaya and Jomtien over Pratumnak Hill: restaurants, bars, clinics and labs, the green baht bus, and the Jomtien Complex at its southern end.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/areas-streets/thappraya-road/

Runs	**South Pattaya to Jomtien, over Pratumnak Hill**
Along it	**Restaurants, bars, clinics, condos**
Baht bus	**Green route, up to ฿20**
Don't confuse with	**Thepprasit Road**

Thappraya Road runs from South Pattaya over the edge of Pratumnak Hill down to Jomtien. It's the main route between the two, lined with condos, restaurants, bars and services.

Quick answer: Thappraya is the road you take from Pattaya to Jomtien. The green baht bus runs along it both ways from Second Road near the South Pattaya Road junction, for up to ฿20. Along the way you'll find condos, restaurants, quieter bars, health clinics and budget labs, and at the Jomtien end the Jomtien Complex and Dongtan Beach. It's not the same as Thepprasit Road, which has the weekend night market.

Thappraya Road at a glance

THING	DETAILS
—	—
Runs	South Pattaya, over the edge of Pratumnak Hill, down to Jomtien Beach Road
Baht bus	Green route, both ways, up to ฿20 since the April 2026 fare change
Known for	Restaurants, cafés, quieter bars, clinics and labs, condos
Jomtien end	Jomtien Complex, Dongtan Beach
Traffic	Busy at rush hour, especially on the hill
Don't confuse with	Thepprasit Road, further inland

What's along it

- Restaurants from Thai to European, and plenty of cafés.
- Bars and pubs, quieter than central Pattaya.
- Clinics and labs, including budget STI testing. GD Lab on Thappraya is one of the budget labs our health page lists, with basic STI blood panels from around ฿700 to ฿1,300 at budget labs. See sexual health testing.
- Condo buildings, many popular with long-stay residents who want to be between Pattaya and Jomtien.
- At the Jomtien end, the Jomtien Complex and Dongtan Beach. See LGBTQ+ nightlife.

Thappraya or Thepprasit?

The names sound alike but they're different roads, and taxi drivers do mix them up.

	THAPPRAYA ROAD	THEPPRASIT ROAD
—	—	—
Where	Pattaya to Jomtien, over Pratumnak Hill	From Sukhumvit Road to the Thappraya Road end, near Jomtien
Known for	Restaurants, clinics, condos, the green baht bus	The Friday to Sunday night market, big stores
Night market	No	Yes, about 17:00 to 23:00, Friday to Sunday

See Thepprasit Road. When booking a Bolt or Grab, check the pin on the map, not just the name.

Getting around

- **Baht bus:** the green route runs from Second Road near the South Pattaya Road junction, along Thappraya Road and over the hill to Jomtien Beach Road, both ways, for up to ฿20. Wave one down anywhere along the road. See baht bus routes.
- **Bolt and Grab** pick up anywhere on the road. See Bolt and Grab.
- **Walking:** fine on the flat sections, but the pavement is narrow and broken in places, and the hill is hard work in the heat.
- Traffic can be heavy at rush hour.

Health checks on Thappraya

Thappraya is one of the easiest places in Pattaya to get a quick health check. Budget labs here and on Third Road do walk-in blood tests, with a basic STI panel from around ฿700 to ฿1,300 according to our 2026 price check, and results often the same or next day. For a doctor's consultation, PEP or PrEP, a full-service clinic such as PULSE is the better choice. If you think you've been exposed to HIV, PEP must start within 72 hours, so go straight away. See sexual health testing and hospitals and clinics.

Nearby

- Thepprasit Road and its Friday to Sunday night market start near the Jomtien end, a short ride away.
- The Big Buddha and viewpoint are up the hill on Pratumnak.
- Dongtan Beach and the Jomtien promenade are at the bottom.

Living on or near Thappraya

Thappraya suits people who want Jomtien's calmer pace with central Pattaya ten minutes away. Condos here are close to the Jomtien immigration office, the Pratumnak viewpoint and two beaches. Rooms facing the road get traffic noise, so look at the back of the building or on a high floor. See where to stay.

Tips

- Take care crossing; traffic comes fast downhill, and scooters overtake on both sides.
- In heavy rain, water runs down the hill and the low end can flood. See flood season.
- For a walk, combine it with the Pratumnak walk and finish on the beach at Dongtan.

Common questions

Where is Thappraya Road? It runs from South Pattaya over the edge of Pratumnak Hill to Jomtien Beach Road.

How do I get from Pattaya to Jomtien? Take the green baht bus along Thappraya Road for up to ฿20, or Bolt or Grab.

Is Thappraya Road the same as Thepprasit Road? No. Thepprasit is further inland and has the weekend night market.

Is there an STI testing lab on Thappraya Road? Yes, GD Lab is one of the budget labs listed on our sexual health testing page.

Know before you go

- The road climbs over Pratumnak hill, so it is busy at rush hour.
- See Jomtien.
- See Pratumnak.

Sources

- Our baht bus and Jomtien pages (green route, fares since April 2026).
- Our sexual health testing page (labs and price ranges, checked 2026, with its own sources).
- Our Thepprasit Road page (night market days and hours).

AREAS & STREETS

Pattaya Klang (Central Pattaya Road)

Pattaya Klang, the Central Pattaya Road running inland from Beach Road to Sukhumvit: shops, banks, a 24-hour hospital, hotels and food, baht buses, and how it links the city's main streets.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/areas-streets/pattaya-klang/

Runs	**Beach Road inland to Sukhumvit Road**
Crosses	**Second Road, Soi Buakhao, Third Road**
Along it	**Shops, banks, hotels, restaurants, a private hospital**
Traffic	**Busy, especially at rush hour**

Pattaya Klang, or Central Pattaya Road, is one of the three main roads running inland from the sea, between North Pattaya Road and South Pattaya Road. It's more about everyday errands than nightlife.

Quick answer: Pattaya Klang ("klang" means middle) is the main road through the centre of the city, from Beach Road east to Sukhumvit Road. It is where people go for banks, phone shops, pharmacies, a 24-hour private hospital and everyday food, not for sightseeing. The name is also used for the whole Central Pattaya area around it. If you stay nearby, you are a short walk from Beach Road, Second Road and the north end of Soi Buakhao.

Pattaya Klang at a glance

STRETCH	WHAT YOU'LL FIND	GOOD TO KNOW
—	—	—
Beach Road to Second Road	The beach end, the Central Festival area, hotels	The busiest stretch for visitors
Second Road to Soi Buakhao	Banks, money exchanges, phone shops, pharmacies, food	Soi Buakhao starts here and runs south
Soi Buakhao to Third Road	Hotels, serviced apartments, local restaurants	The Soi Buakhao baht bus turns along here
Third Road to Sukhumvit	Car showrooms, offices, bigger shops	The way out to East Pattaya and the motorway

What's along it

- Shops, supermarkets, banks and money exchanges.
- Hotels and serviced apartments at every price.
- Restaurants, cafes and street food, busiest in the evening.
- **Pattaya Memorial Hospital**, a private hospital with 24-hour emergency care. See hospitals and clinics.

How it connects

Starting at Beach Road, it crosses Second Road, Soi Buakhao and Third Road before reaching Sukhumvit Road. That makes it a handy route between the beach and East Pattaya.

Think of the city as a grid: Beach Road, Second Road, Soi Buakhao, Third Road and Sukhumvit run north to south, and North, Central and South Pattaya Roads cross them from the sea inland. Once you know those eight roads, most of Pattaya makes sense.

Getting around

- **Baht buses:** cross-town trucks run along North, Central and South Pattaya Roads between the beach and Sukhumvit. The Soi Buakhao and Third Road route also uses Central Pattaya Road between Soi Buakhao and Third Road. In-town rides are ฿15. See baht bus routes.
- **Bolt and Grab** pick up anywhere along it. See Bolt and Grab.
- **Walking:** traffic is heavy at rush hour, so walking short distances is often faster. The whole road is too long to walk comfortably in the midday heat.

Who it suits

Pro tip: his own pick for a young solo traveller is Central Pattaya, "100%". For retirees he picks Jomtien, and for families East Pattaya. See where to stay.

Staying near Pattaya Klang puts the beach, the malls and Soi Buakhao's cheap food all within a short walk or one baht bus ride. It suits first-timers who want to be in the middle of things without sleeping on a bar street. Expect traffic noise on the main road itself; side streets are quieter.

Dog owners: Jonny's favourite daycare, Pawsome Space, is just off Pattaya Klang Road, at ฿200 a day. See living with a dog.

Rain and traffic

- Central Pattaya Road is one of the low-lying roads that floods first in heavy rain, often by 10 to 60 cm. Don't ride a scooter through deep water. See flood season.

- On big event nights, such as the fireworks festival, the city has made Central Pattaya Road one way out of town after the last show in recent years. See fireworks festival.
- Early-morning parking bans have applied on Central Pattaya Road in recent years. If you rent a car or scooter, check the signs.

Tips

- Crossing takes care; use the traffic lights where you can.
- Many bank branches here can help with opening an account. See Thai bank account.
- Pharmacies and phone shops are easy to find here if you need a SIM, a charger or basic medicine. See SIM cards.

Common questions

What does Pattaya Klang mean? “Klang” is Thai for middle or central. Pattaya Klang is Central Pattaya Road, and also the central part of the city around it.

Is Central Pattaya a good area to stay? For a first visit, yes: it’s central, well connected and cheaper than beachfront. Main-road rooms can be noisy.

How do I get from Pattaya Klang to Sukhumvit Road? Take a cross-town baht bus east along the road, or Bolt or Grab. Walking is possible but long in the heat.

Is there a hospital on Central Pattaya Road? Yes, Pattaya Memorial Hospital, a private hospital with 24-hour emergency care.

Know before you go

- See Beach Road.
- See the big malls.

Sources

- Our own pages, checked November 2026: baht bus routes and fares, hospitals and clinics, flood season and fireworks festival, each with its own sources.
- Jonny James, area picks and dog daycare price, from his own notes (November 2026).

AREAS & STREETS

Na Jomtien

Na Jomtien, south of Jomtien: quieter beaches, resorts and new condos, water parks and day-trip sights nearby, and a calmer base for longer stays. Who it suits and how to get around.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/areas-streets/na-jomtien/

Where	**South of Jomtien, along Sukhumvit**
Vibe	**Quiet beaches, resorts, condos**
Nearby	**Water parks, Nong Nooch, Bang Saray**
Transport	**Easiest with your own scooter or Bolt and Grab**

Na Jomtien starts where Jomtien Beach ends and continues south along the coast. It's much quieter than central Pattaya, with long stretches of beach, big resorts and new condo developments.

Quick answer: Na Jomtien is Pattaya's quiet southern stretch: big resorts and condo towers, beaches with far fewer chairs and vendors, and seafood by the sea. It suits families, long-stay visitors and anyone who wants peace. The catch is distance. Central Pattaya is roughly 20 to 30 minutes away by car, baht buses are sparse, and most residents get around by scooter, car or Bolt and Grab.

Na Jomtien at a glance

THING	WHAT TO EXPECT
—	—
Where	South of Jomtien Beach, between the sea and Sukhumvit Road
Vibe	Quiet, spread out, resort and condo living
Beaches	Long, calmer, fewer vendors than Jomtien
Food	Seafood by the sea, resort restaurants, small Thai places along Sukhumvit
Nightlife	Very little; go to Jomtien or Pattaya
Getting around	Scooter, car, Bolt or Grab; few baht buses
Best for	Families, long stays, remote workers, retirees who drive

What it's like

- Quiet beaches with fewer chairs and vendors than Jomtien. Mornings and weekdays can feel almost empty.
- Large resorts and condo towers, popular for longer stays. Newer buildings often have big pools and gyms, which matters when the nearest café is a drive away.
- Local seafood restaurants by the sea.
- Several water parks are close by, and Nong Nooch Garden is a short drive further south.

Getting around

Baht buses along Sukhumvit reach the area, but distances are big and the beach roads are a long walk from the main road. Most residents use a scooter, car, or Bolt and Grab. See renting a scooter and Bolt and Grab.

If you don't ride or drive, pick a condo or resort with a shuttle, or one close to Sukhumvit. Count the cost of app rides into your budget: a few trips into town each week add up. Sukhumvit Road is fast and busy, so take care crossing it, and use the U-turn bridges and lights where you can.

Visiting for a beach day

You don't have to stay here to enjoy it. From central Pattaya or Jomtien, a Bolt or Grab is the simplest way down; set the pin on the beach road, not Sukhumvit, or you'll face a long walk in the heat. Bring water, sun cream and cash, because there are fewer shops and vendors than in Jomtien. Weekdays are quietest; on Thai holidays, families arrive with picnics and the seafood restaurants fill up. Book or check your ride back before sunset, as app cars are fewer down here in the evening. See beach safety before swimming: don't assume a lifeguard is on duty on the quieter stretches.

Things to do nearby

- Water parks: tickets roughly ฿800 to ฿1,700, cheaper online and on weekdays.
- Nong Nooch Garden, the big tropical garden south of Na Jomtien.
- Bang Saray, a fishing village about 25 km south of Pattaya with seafood, a quiet beach and a fishing pier.
- Jomtien for more restaurants, bars and the beach road.

Living in Na Jomtien

For long stays, Na Jomtien offers more space for the money than central Pattaya, newer buildings and a calmer daily routine. In return you give up walkability: supermarkets, gyms outside your building, hospitals and immigration all mean a ride. The Jomtien immigration office is the closest part of town you'll need regularly. See renting a condo.

Check a few things before you sign: how far the building is from Sukhumvit, whether there are shops within walking distance, how busy the beach in front is at weekends, and whether new construction next door will block your view or make noise for the next year.

Is it for you?

Great if you want peace and a beach on your doorstep; less so if you want to walk to bars and restaurants. If you're on your first trip, staying in Jomtien or central Pattaya and visiting Na Jomtien for a beach day is often the better mix. See where to stay.

Pro tip: his own area picks: retiree, Jomtien; young solo traveller, Central Pattaya; family, East Pattaya; couple, "maybe Naklua". Na Jomtien works for people who like Jomtien's pace but want even more quiet.

Common questions

Where is Na Jomtien? South of Jomtien Beach, along the coast and Sukhumvit Road, in the direction of Sattahip.

Is Na Jomtien good for families? Yes: quiet beaches, resort pools and water parks nearby. You'll want a car or app rides.

Is Na Jomtien far from Walking Street? Roughly 20 to 30 minutes by car, longer in traffic.

Can you get around Na Jomtien without a scooter? Yes, with Bolt and Grab and the occasional baht bus on Sukhumvit, but it costs more time and money.

Know before you go

- It is spread out, so a scooter or car helps.
- See water parks.
- See Bang Saray.

Sources

- Our water parks, Bang Saray and where to stay guides (prices and distances checked 2026, with their own sources).
- Jonny James, area picks from his own notes (November 2026).

AREAS & STREETS

Sukhumvit Road in Pattaya

Sukhumvit Road, the highway running north to south through east Pattaya: big supermarkets, hospitals, car dealers, intercity buses, and why it's tough to cross.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/areas-streets/sukhumvit-road/

What	**The main highway through Pattaya (Highway 3)**
Along it	**Hypermarkets, hospitals, car dealers, bus stops**
Divides	**Central Pattaya from East Pattaya**
Baht buses	**Both ways along Sukhumvit, up to about ฿20**
Safety	**Wide and fast; use bridges and lights**

Quick answer: Sukhumvit Road (Highway 3) is the main highway along Thailand's eastern coast, and in Pattaya it runs north to south a few kilometres inland, roughly parallel to the beach. Everything east of it is often called East Pattaya. It's where you find hypermarkets, hospitals, car dealers, big attractions and the intercity bus stops. Baht buses run both ways along it for up to about ฿20. It is wide, fast and hard to cross, so use the footbridges and traffic lights.

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Road	Highway 3, Bangkok to the eastern coast
In Pattaya	North to south, a few km inland; divides central Pattaya from East Pattaya
Along it	Hypermarkets, hospitals, car and motorbike dealers, furniture stores, attractions
Baht buses	Both ways along Sukhumvit, up to about ฿20
Big junctions	North, Central and South Pattaya Roads and Thepprasit Road
Safety	Wide and fast; U-turns instead of junctions; use bridges and lights

What's along it

- Big supermarkets and hypermarkets for bulk shopping. See supermarkets.
- Hospitals and clinics. See hospitals and clinics.
- Car and motorbike dealers, furniture and hardware stores. See buying a scooter and buying a car.
- Attractions such as Mini Siam. See Art in Paradise and Mini Siam.
- Further south, the turn-offs for Nong Nooch Garden, Ramayana Water Park and the Khao Chi Chan area.

How it connects to the rest of Pattaya

- **North Pattaya Road** runs from the Dolphin roundabout to Sukhumvit, near the bus stations for Bangkok.
- **Central Pattaya Road** and **South Pattaya Road** link Beach Road and Second Road with Sukhumvit.
- **Thepprasit Road** runs from Sukhumvit towards Jomtien, past the big night market.
- Further north, Sukhumvit carries on to Naklua's inland side, Si Racha and Bangkok; south, to Sattahip and Rayong.

Getting around

- Baht buses run along Sukhumvit in both directions, on different routes from the central loop. Wave one down on the side heading your way. Expect up to about ฿20 for longer runs, and ask before you get in. See baht bus routes and fares.
- Cross-town baht buses on North, Central and South Pattaya Roads link Sukhumvit with Beach Road and Second Road.
- Intercity buses and vans to Bangkok and other cities stop along Sukhumvit. See buses to Pattaya.
- Bolt and Grab work well along the whole road. See Bolt and Grab.

Safety

- Sukhumvit is wide and fast, with U-turns instead of junctions. Use pedestrian bridges and traffic lights to cross; don't run across.
- On a scooter, keep left, watch for trucks and buses pulling in, and take U-turns slowly. See road rules and fines.
- Police checkpoints are often set up on the big junctions. See police checkpoints.
- Flooding can affect underpasses and low sections in heavy rain. See flood season.

Living near Sukhumvit

- Condos and housing estates near Sukhumvit are usually cheaper than near the beach, with easy access to big shops and hospitals.

- The trade-off is traffic noise near the road, and needing a scooter or ride apps to reach the beach.
- See where to stay and renting a house.

Common questions

Is Sukhumvit Road in Pattaya the same as in Bangkok? Yes, it is the same highway, Highway 3, running from Bangkok down the eastern coast.

How do I get from Sukhumvit to the beach? Take a cross-town baht bus along North, Central or South Pattaya Road, or a ride app.

Is it safe to walk along Sukhumvit? Footpaths are patchy and traffic is fast. Walk short stretches only, and use the footbridges to cross.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: our own baht bus guide (fares since 10 April 2026, reported by Pattaya Mail) and our nightly ride footage of the area.

Know before you go

- Use the pedestrian bridges to cross; the road is wide and fast.
- See walking in Pattaya.

AREAS & STREETS

Mabprachan Lake

Mabprachan Lake, the reservoir in East Pattaya that supplies much of the city's water: a new 2 km running and cycling lane, sunsets, quiet housing estates around it, and how to get there.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/areas-streets/mabprachan-lake/

Where	**East Pattaya, about 15 minutes' drive from the city**
What	**Pattaya's main raw water reservoir**
Exercise lane	**About 2 km on the dam, open daily until 9pm**
Known for	**Running, cycling, sunsets, quiet villages**
Getting there	**Car, scooter, Bolt or Grab; no regular baht bus**

Quick answer: Mabprachan Lake (Mabprachan Reservoir) is a large reservoir in East Pattaya, about 15 minutes' drive inland from the city, and Pattaya's main source of raw water. Locals and expats come for the open views, sunsets and exercise: in July 2026 Pattaya Mail reported a bright blue running and cycling lane of about 2 km on the dam, open daily until 9pm, with bike rental, parking and food vendors nearby. The roads around it are lined with housing estates, which is why many long-stay residents and families live out here. You'll need a car, scooter or ride app; no regular baht bus runs to the lake.

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Where	East Pattaya, inland from Sukhumvit Road, on the edge of Nongprue and Pong
What it is	A water-supply reservoir, Pattaya's main raw water source
Exercise lane	About 2 km on the dam, open daily until 9pm
Facilities	Bike rental, parking, food and drink vendors nearby
Best time	Early morning or late afternoon into sunset
Getting there	Car, scooter, Bolt or Grab; about 15 minutes from the city
Nearby	Huay Yai, Horseshoe Point riding centre, golf courses

Who it suits

- **Runners and cyclists** looking for open space away from traffic. See running and cycling.
- **Families and long-stay residents** who want a house with a garden and a slower pace. See renting a house.
- **Visitors** after a quiet sunset outside the city.
- **Not ideal if** you don't drive or ride: it's a car and scooter area.

What's new: the running and cycling lane

In July 2026 Pattaya Mail reported a new running and cycling lane of about 2 km on the reservoir's dam, painted bright blue and open daily until 9pm, with bicycle rental, plenty of parking and food vendors close by. Earlier in the year, in February 2026, Nongprue Municipality and the Royal Irrigation Department resurfaced the dam road around the reservoir ahead of the Nongprue City Run. The dam road was already a favourite with joggers and cyclists.

What it's like day and night

- **Early morning:** the coolest time for a run or ride, before the heat builds. See heat and sun safety.
- **Midday:** hot; most people come early or late instead.
- **Late afternoon and sunset:** the busiest and best time. Pattaya Mail has described sunset watchers, runners and cyclists gathering as the day cools.
- **Night:** quiet. The lane is open until 9pm; after that the area is mostly residential and dark compared with the city.

The lake itself

Mabprachan is a working water-supply reservoir, not a beach. After a dry spell it can run low, and after good rains it refills: in May 2025 the Provincial Waterworks Authority said it was more than 80% full. Follow any posted signs about swimming and fishing. In July 2025 The Pattaya News reported that Nongprue and Pong municipalities investigated a suspected wastewater discharge from a drainage outlet near the cycling area; Nongprue ordered nearby businesses to stop discharging while the water was tested. No final findings had been reported.

Eating and shopping

- Food and drink vendors set up near the dam, and there are restaurants on the roads around the lake. Pattaya Mail has also reported small bars opening nearby, mainly serving foreign residents from the villages along Soi Siam Country Club, Soi Nernplabwan and Soi Khao Talo.

- For a big shop, residents drive to the hypermarkets on Sukhumvit Road. See supermarkets and groceries.

Things to do nearby

- Horse riding at Horseshoe Point in Pong, near the lake. See horse riding and outdoors.
- Golf: several courses are in the countryside east of Sukhumvit. See golf in Pattaya.
- Longer rides into the Huay Yai countryside. See scooter rides.

Getting there

- **By scooter or car:** about 15 minutes from the city, longer at rush hour, heading inland across Sukhumvit Road. There's parking near the dam. See renting a scooter.
- **Bolt or Grab:** easy on the way out. Rides back can take longer to find, especially late, so book before you finish. See Bolt and Grab.
- **Baht bus:** the Sukhumvit Road route runs up and down the highway, not out to the lake, so there's no regular baht bus here. See baht bus routes.

Living around the lake

- **Pros:** houses with gardens, space for pets and children, quiet nights and the lake on your doorstep. Several international schools are in East Pattaya; see international schools.
- **Cons:** you drive for almost everything, and the beach and nightlife are a ride away.
- **Rent:** our renting a house guide puts a 2 to 3 bedroom house at about ฿15,000 to ฿40,000 a month, more for pool villas. One East Pattaya estate agency lists higher ranges, about ฿25,000 to ฿45,000 for 3-bedroom homes and ฿45,000 and up for private pool villas, so prices vary a lot by village and finish.
- **Flooding:** parts of East Pattaya flood in heavy rain, and in September 2026 a road near Khao Talo was closed by floodwater. Ask neighbours about a house's flood history before you sign. See flood season.

Safety

- The dam lane keeps runners and cyclists away from traffic, but the roads around the lake carry cars and trucks. Use lights after dark and wear a helmet. See road accidents.
- Carry water; it's hot out in the open.
- If you run or ride on the village roads, read up on stray dogs and rabies first.

Common questions

Can you swim in Mabprachan Lake? It's a water-supply reservoir rather than a swimming spot. Follow the posted signs, and go to the beach to swim.

Is Mabprachan Lake good for running? Yes. The dam has a dedicated lane of about 2 km, open daily until 9pm, and the dam road around the reservoir was resurfaced in 2026.

How do I get to Mabprachan Lake without a scooter? Bolt or Grab, about 15 minutes from the city. There's no regular baht bus to the lake.

Is Mabprachan a good place to live? It suits families and long-stay residents who want a house, a garden and quiet, and who drive. It's less suited to people who want to walk to the beach or nightlife.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya Mail, new running and cycling lane at Mabprachan Reservoir (23 July 2026); Pattaya Mail, dam road resurfacing (7 February 2026); Pattaya Mail, water supply (24 May 2025); The Pattaya News, wastewater investigation (16 July 2025); Pattaya Mail, sunset watchers at Mabprachan (February 2022); Pattaya Mail, East Pattaya flooding (24 September 2026); Cornerstone, East Pattaya (estate agency rent ranges, 2026); our own baht bus guide. Rent figures differ between sources.

Know before you go

- Mornings at the lake are cool and quiet, good for a walk or ride.
- See scooter rides.
- See living with a dog.

AREAS & STREETS

Huay Yai

The countryside south-east of Pattaya: Khao Chi Chan, the Silverlake vineyard, horse riding and outdoor activities, quiet villages and houses with land, and what living out here is really like.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/areas-streets/huay-yai/

Where	**South-east of central Pattaya, inland from Na Jomtien**
Known for	**Countryside, viewpoints, quiet housing**
Nearby	**Khao Chi Chan, Silverlake vineyard, Nong Nooch**
Getting there	**Car or scooter, about 25 to 40 minutes**

Huay Yai is the large rural district inland from Na Jomtien. It is farms, hills and housing estates, a world away from Walking Street but only a short drive from it.

Quick answer: Huay Yai is Pattaya's countryside: farms, fruit orchards, hills and housing estates, about 25 to 40 minutes from the city by car or scooter. Visitors come for Khao Chi Chan's giant cliff-face Buddha (free entry), the Silverlake vineyard next door, horse riding and quiet roads for cycling. Expats who live here usually want a house with land, a garden for the dogs and peace, and accept that everything means a drive.

Huay Yai at a glance

THING	DETAILS
—	—
Where	Inland, south-east of Pattaya and Na Jomtien
From central Pattaya	About 25 to 40 minutes by road
Top sights	Khao Chi Chan (free), Silverlake vineyard, Nong Nooch nearby
Outdoors	Horse riding, ATV and buggy tours, cycling
Living	Houses with land, housing estates, quiet
Transport	Your own car or scooter; very few baht buses

Sights nearby

- Khao Chi Chan, the giant Buddha outline inlaid with gold on a cliff face, about 15 km south of Pattaya and free to visit. Go in the morning or late afternoon for softer light.
- The Silverlake vineyard next door: a winery with gardens and a café, an easy add-on to Khao Chi Chan.
- Nong Nooch Garden, the big tropical garden, a short drive towards the coast.
- Quiet roads that are popular for weekend cycling and scooter rides. See running and cycling.

Outdoor activities

Most of Pattaya's outdoor activities are out here and around Pong and Mabprachan Lake: horse riding lessons and trail rides, ATV and buggy tours on dirt tracks, and paintball, archery and shooting ranges. Go early morning or late afternoon; midday in the open countryside is very hot. See horse riding and outdoors and adventure activities.

A half-day loop

Leave Pattaya in the morning, visit Khao Chi Chan while the light is soft, have lunch or coffee at Silverlake, then drive back through the countryside or add Nong Nooch in the afternoon. With your own transport it's an easy half day; by Bolt or Grab, agree a return trip or a waiting time, as cars are scarce out here.

Living there

Huay Yai suits people who want a house, land and quiet. Many expats with dogs live out here. See living with a dog. You will need your own transport.

The trade-offs are real:

- **Distance:** supermarkets, hospitals and immigration are a drive away. Check how far the nearest 24-hour hospital is before you commit. See hospitals and clinics.
- **Services:** fibre internet and deliveries reach many estates, but not every road; ask neighbours.
- **Wildlife and dogs:** snakes, insects and roaming dogs are part of rural life.
- **Power and water:** outages can last longer than in town; many houses keep a water tank and pump.
- **Buying land:** foreigners can't own land in their own name in Thailand. Most rent, or lease. See buy vs rent.

Who it suits

YOU ARE…	HUAY YAI?
—	—
A visitor on a short trip	Visit for half a day; stay in town
A family with a car	Good for a house, garden and space
A retiree who drives	Peaceful, if you're happy to drive for errands
Someone with dogs	One of the best options in the Pattaya area
A young solo traveller	Too far from the action
Someone who doesn't drive	Hard; app rides are scarce and slow out here

Before you sign a lease, spend a weekday and a weekend there. Drive the route to the hospital and the supermarket at rush hour, and listen for dogs, roosters, construction and karaoke at night.

Getting there

Drive south on Sukhumvit Road and head inland. Most sights are 25 to 40 minutes from central Pattaya. See renting a car or renting a scooter. Country roads are dark at night, with animals and unlit vehicles, so drive slowly after sunset.

Common questions

Where is Huay Yai? A rural district inland from Na Jomtien, south-east of central Pattaya.

What is there to do in Huay Yai? Khao Chi Chan, the Silverlake vineyard, horse riding, ATV tours and cycling, with Nong Nooch nearby.

Is Huay Yai a good place to live? For a quiet life with a house and garden, yes, if you drive. It's not for people who want to walk to restaurants and bars.

Is Khao Chi Chan free? Yes, entry is free.

How far is Huay Yai from Pattaya? Most of it is 25 to 40 minutes by car from central Pattaya, depending on where you're going and the traffic on Sukhumvit.

Can I get to Huay Yai by baht bus? Not easily. Baht buses run along Sukhumvit, but the villages and sights are well inland, so use your own transport or Bolt and Grab.

Know before you go

- This is a rural area, so plan fuel, food and water for longer rides.
- See horse riding and outdoors.
- See Khao Chi Chan.

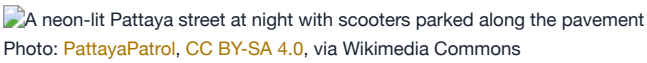
Sources

- Our Khao Chi Chan, horse riding and outdoors and Mabprachan Lake pages (distances, free entry and activities, checked 2026).

SECTION

🍻 Nightlife

Nightlife is the reason a lot of people come to Pattaya. These pages explain where to go, how the different kinds of bars work, what drinks cost, and how to enjoy a night out without getting overcharged. Prices come from the nightly rides and get checked regularly; the Pattaya map shows every featured bar with its prices.


A neon-lit Pattaya street at night with scooters parked along the pavement
Photo: PattayaPatrol, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

Where to go

AREA	WHAT IT'S LIKE	PRICES
Walking Street	Neon strip, clubs, live music, street performers, open until about 4am	Highest
Soi 6	Short, packed bar street, busy from the afternoon	Above average
LK Metro	L-shaped soi of beer bars	Average
Soi Buakhao	Long road of beer bars, markets and food	Low
Tree Town	Open-air beer bars and pool	Low
Soi 7 and Soi 8	Big beer-bar complexes off Beach Road	Average
Soi Chaiyapoon	Small soi with LGBTQ-friendly bars and beer bars	Low
Jomtien	Beach bars and the LGBTQ+ Jomtien Complex	Average

Kinds of bars

- **Beer bars**: open-air, pool tables, the cheapest and most relaxed.
- **Clubs**: DJs, late nights, mainly on Walking Street.
- **Pubs, sports bars and live music**: see live music.
- **Rooftop bars** for a view: see rooftop bars.
- **LGBTQ+ venues**: see LGBTQ+ nightlife and cabaret shows.

How they work and what the check bin is: how Pattaya bars work.

What it costs

In the beer bars we ride past, a beer is usually ฿80 to ฿90 and a mixed drink about ฿180. Walking Street and clubs cost much more. Full tables and a night-out budget: drink prices, plus happy hours to cut the bill.

When to go

- Soi 6 is busy from the afternoon; most other areas from about 8pm.
- Most bars close around 1 or 2am. Walking Street and other designated nightlife zones can stay open until about 4am.
- Friday and Saturday are the busiest nights, and November to March is high season.
- Most shops and bars can't sell alcohol on the five Buddhist holy days (hotels and licensed entertainment venues can), and sales also stop on election days. See alcohol ban days.

Etiquette and staying safe

- Be friendly and polite; staff remember good customers.
- Ask prices first, check your slips, and pay in cash.
- Don't film people without asking.
- Read bar etiquette, night out safety and common scams.
- Getting home: baht buses run late on the main loop; Bolt and Grab run all night.

Ride along

Every street here is filmed in 360° on our rides. Watch them on YouTube to see a street before you go, and ask questions in the W Forum.

NIGHTLIFE

How Pattaya’s Bars Work

Beer bars, clubs and sports bars: what each kind of venue is like and how paying works.

Verified October 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/nightlife/how-pattaya-bars-work/

Paying	**Pay as you go, bill kept in a check bin**
Closing	**Mostly 2am; up to 4am in nightlife zones**
Dress	**Casual everywhere except some clubs**
Pool	**Often free at beer bars**

Pattaya has hundreds of bars, and they aren’t all the same. Knowing the main types helps you pick the right place and avoid surprises on the bill.

Beer bars

Open-air bars, often several sharing one roof, with stools around the counter and usually a pool table. They’re the most common and the cheapest, and staff will chat, play pool or Connect Four with you. Soi Buakhao, Tree Town and Soi 7 and 8 are full of them.

Nightclubs

Big clubs with DJs and live music, mostly on Walking Street. Some have a cover charge or a drink minimum on busy nights, and they stay open late.

Sports and pool bars

Bars built around big screens, football and pool. Good for a quieter drink or watching a match.

How paying works

- Most bars run a tab: each drink comes with a small slip that goes in a cup, the “check bin”, in front of you.
- You pay when you leave. Count the slips first; mistakes happen.
- Small change or a tip for the staff who looked after you is appreciated but not required.

Closing times

Most bars in Thailand close at 2am. Pattaya’s designated nightlife zones, including Walking Street, can stay open until around 4am, so closing times vary even on the same street.

NIGHTLIFE

Drink Prices

Real Pattaya bar prices from the bars we ride past every night: beer ฿60 to ฿120 (typically ฿85), mixed drinks ฿100 to ฿215 (typically ฿180), and how prices change by area and type of bar.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/nightlife/drink-prices/

Beer (featured bars)	**฿60 to ฿120, typical ฿85**
Mixed drink (featured bars)	**฿100 to ฿215, typical ฿180**
Pool	**Free at many featured bars**
Cheapest areas	**Soi Buakhao, Tree Town, LK Metro, Soi Chaiyapoon**
Most expensive	**Walking Street, clubs, hotel bars**

Quick answer: In an ordinary Pattaya beer bar in 2026, a bottle of Thai beer costs about ฿85 (range ฿60 to ฿120) and a mixed drink about ฿180 (range ฿100 to ฿215), based on the 28 featured bars on our JJ Map. Soi Buakhao, Tree Town and Soi Chaiyapoon are the cheapest areas; Walking Street, clubs and hotel rooftops cost the most, often with 10% service charge and 7% VAT on top. Happy hours, draught beer and Thai brands bring the bill down. Bars and shops can sell from 11am to midnight, except on Buddhist holy days.


A cold mug of Chang beer
Photo: PattayaPatrol, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

These prices come from the bars featured on the JJ Map, which we ride past every night and log as we go. They're mostly open-air beer bars in central Pattaya, so treat them as the everyday baseline. Read how Pattaya bars work if it's your first time.

The everyday baseline (featured bars)

ITEM	RANGE	MOST BARS
Beer (bottle)	฿60 to ฿120	฿80 to ฿90, typical ฿85
Mixed drink	฿100 to ฿215	฿170 to ฿190, typical ฿180
Pool	Free at many bars, otherwise about ฿20 a game	

Based on the 28 featured venues on the map as of October 2026. Tap a gold star on the map to see each bar's own prices. Prices move a little with the season, and a bar can change its board overnight, so the map is a guide, not a promise.

What a drink costs in different places

WHERE YOU DRINK	BEER	COCKTAIL OR MIXED DRINK	EXTRAS
Beer bar (featured bars)	About ฿85	About ฿180	Usually none; price on the board
Pub or sports bar	Similar to beer bars	A little more	Food, football on TV
Live music bar	A little above beer bars	A little above beer bars	Bands most nights
Nightclub	Above bar prices	Above bar prices	Tables and bottles cost extra
Hotel rooftop, Holiday Inn (Sept 2026 menu)	฿150	฿300 to ฿320	Plus 10% service charge and 7% VAT
Hotel rooftop, Hard Rock (Nov 2026 menu)		฿420 to ฿490	Tax included

The two rooftop rows are from the hotels' own published menus; see rooftop bars for the full list and opening hours. Elsewhere, the row is a comparison with the featured-bar baseline, not a survey.

How prices change by area

WHERE	COMPARED WITH THE BASELINE
Soi Buakhao, Tree Town, Soi Chaiyapoon	At or below it; some of the cheapest beer in town
LK Metro	Around it in the beer bars
Soi 7 and Soi 8	Around it
Soi 6	Above it
Beach Road seafront bars	Above it
Walking Street	Well above it, especially clubs

WHERE	COMPARED WITH THE BASELINE
Rooftop and hotel bars	Well above it, but with a view

The pattern is simple: the closer you are to the busiest tourist strip or the higher the floor, the more you pay. A short walk off the main strip usually brings prices back toward the baseline.

Reading the menu and the bill

- **Look for "++" or "net".** A price with ++ means 10% service charge and 7% VAT are added at the end, so a ฿300 cocktail becomes about ฿353. "Net" means the price you see is the price you pay. Most beer bars show net prices; hotels and some restaurants add the ++.
- **Check the size.** Small and large bottles are on the same board at different prices; check which one you are ordering.
- **The check bin.** Each drink adds a slip to the cup on your table. Glance at it now and then, and count the slips before you pay. If something looks wrong, ask calmly straight away; it is usually a mix-up with the next table.
- **Tipping** is optional. Leaving the change or ฿20 to ฿100 for staff who looked after you is appreciated. See tipping in Thailand and bar etiquette.
- **Cash.** Small bars mostly want cash in small notes, and some now take a Thai bank QR payment. Always pay in baht. See cash, cards or QR and ATM fees.

Ways to pay less

- Happy hours, usually until 8 or 9pm, and two-for-one offers.
- Draught beer instead of bottles, and beer towers for a group.
- Thai beers (Chang, Leo, Singha) are cheaper than imported ones.
- For a group, a bottle of spirits with mixers can cost less than many single drinks. Ask the price of the bottle and the mixers before you order.
- Drink in the cheaper areas at the top of the area table.
- Buy your own drinks. Rounds for the bar, or for people you've just met, are where a cheap night stops being cheap.

Pro tip: Buy your own drinks only. Once you start buying for others, it becomes a pattern. Shop around: I'm happy at cheap places with a cheap beer and a game of pool, and a big night out is now once every few months for me.

Budget for a night out

NIGHT	ROUGHLY
Three beers at a beer bar	฿180 to ฿360
A few beers in beer bars, a game of pool	฿300 to ฿600
Two cocktails at a hotel rooftop at sunset	About ฿700 to ฿1,000, with service and VAT where added
Walking Street and a club	฿2,000 and up

Add transport: ฿15 by baht bus in the centre, more by Bolt, Grab or motorbike taxi late at night. A friend of mine once brought ฿1,500 for a night out on our second trip, and it went fast, so decide your number before you leave the room and carry roughly that in cash. More prices: what things cost and nightlife on a budget.

When you can buy a drink

- **Normal days:** shops and most bars and restaurants can sell alcohol from 11am to midnight. The old 2pm to 5pm break ended in May 2026. Licensed entertainment venues, hotels and airports have their own hours.
- **Buddhist holy days:** on the five holy days 7-Eleven, supermarkets and ordinary bars can't sell alcohol; hotels, licensed entertainment venues and international airport terminals can, under the rules in force from 7 November 2026. Since November 2025, customers drinking at a venue during banned times can also be fined. See alcohol ban days for the 2027 dates.
- **Elections** bring short bans, usually 6pm the day before to 6pm on the day.
- The legal drinking age is 20.

Not drinking? Still fine

Plenty of people in Pattaya bars drink soft drinks, water or coffee, and nobody minds as long as you order something. For whole evenings built around something other than alcohol, see a night out without drinking.

Common questions

How much is a beer in Pattaya? In ordinary beer bars about ฿85 for a bottle of Thai beer in 2026, with most between ฿80 and ฿90. Hotel rooftops charge about ฿150 or more plus service and VAT.

Where is the cheapest beer in Pattaya? Beer bars on and around Soi Buakhao, Tree Town and Soi Chaiyapoon, especially during happy hour.

What does ++ mean on a Pattaya menu? 10% service charge and 7% VAT are added to the listed price, about 17.7% in total.

Do I need to tip in a bar? No. Leaving the change or ฿20 to ฿100 is a kind extra, not an obligation.

Can I buy alcohol on Buddhist holidays? Not at 7-Eleven or ordinary bars. Hotels, licensed entertainment venues and international airports may still sell.

Sources

Bar prices: JJ Map featured venues, logged on our rides, October 2026. Rooftop prices: Holiday Inn Pattaya Rooftop Terrace menu (September 2026) and Hard Rock Hotel Pattaya menu (November 2026), as listed on our rooftop bars page. Sale hours and holy-day rules, checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya Mail, 11am to midnight from 29 May 2026; Nation Thailand, holy-day exemptions (Royal Gazette, 6 November 2026); The Thaiger, customer fines.

NIGHTLIFE

Bar Etiquette & Check Bins

How to behave in a Pattaya bar: check bins, tipping, ringing the bell, pool table manners, paying, and avoiding a bad bill, with 2026 prices and what to do if something goes wrong.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/nightlife/bar-etiquette/

Bill	**Slips in a check bin, paid when you leave**
Tipping	**Small tips appreciated, not required**
Ring the bell	**You buy everyone a drink**
Respect	**Polite and patient wins**

Pattaya's bars are relaxed, but a few habits make the night smoother for you and the staff.

Quick answer: Every drink you order comes with a slip that goes into a cup in front of you, the "check bin"; you pay the total when you leave, so glance at it as you go. Don't ring the bell over the bar unless you mean to buy a drink for everyone. Tipping is optional: leave the change or ฿20 to ฿100 if the staff looked after you. At the pool table, put a coin on the rail to claim the next game. If a bill looks wrong, ask calmly at once. Stay polite and the night stays easy.

The rules at a glance

SITUATION	WHAT TO DO
—	—
Ordering	Prices are usually on a board or menu; ask if not
The bill	Slips go in the check bin; pay the total when you leave
Ringing the bell	Only if you want to buy a drink for everyone in the bar
Tipping	Optional: the change or ฿20 to ฿100
Pool	Coin on the rail for next game; winner usually stays on
Paying	Cash in small notes; some bars take QR
Smoking and vaping	Vaping is illegal in Thailand; ask before smoking
A wrong bill	Ask politely straight away; stay calm

The check bin

Every drink comes with a slip that goes in a cup in front of you. You pay the total when you leave. Glance at it now and then, and if a slip looks wrong, ask politely straight away rather than at the end of the night. If you move seats or bars, settle up first so slips don't follow you. When you pay, the staff add it up in front of you; count your change.

Ringing the bell

Many bars have a bell hanging over the counter. Ringing it means you're buying a drink for everyone in the bar, staff included. It gets a big cheer, and a big bill, so only ring it on purpose.

Pro tip: in his first year and a half he rang bar bells and didn't track his money: "a great time, but very irresponsible". These days he buys his own drinks only, and is happy at cheap places with a cheap beer and a game of pool.

Tipping

Leaving your change, or ฿20 to ฿100 for staff who looked after you, is appreciated but not expected. Tips go straight into the staff's pockets, so a small one goes a long way. See tipping in Thailand.

Pool table manners

- Pool in beer bars is often free, otherwise about ฿20 a game.
- To claim the next game, put a coin on the table rail.
- Winner stays on in most bars, so a good player can hold the table all night.
- Staff often rack the balls for you; a thank-you or a small tip is nice.
- Bar staff love a game and will often play you; it's friendly, not a hustle.

See pool and karaoke and pool in Pattaya.

Paying

Cash is king in small bars, so carry small notes; many can't change ฿1,000 easily. Some bars now take QR payment through a Thai bank app. Always pay in baht. See cash, cards or QR. At featured bars on our map in 2026, beers typically cost about ฿85 (range ฿60 to ฿120); see drink prices.

Keep it friendly

- Thai culture values staying calm. Raising your voice rarely gets a problem fixed.
- Ask before taking photos of staff.
- Staff calling you in is normal; a smile and a no is fine.
- Don't touch people's heads, and don't point with your feet. See Thai etiquette.
- Vapes and e-cigarettes are illegal in Thailand, with heavy fines. If you smoke, ask where you can. See laws visitors break.

If something goes wrong

- A wrong bill: ask to go through the slips together, calmly. Most mistakes are honest and get fixed.
- Still a problem: pay what you agree is right, keep the slips, and ask for the manager. Don't get into an argument late at night.
- Need help: the Tourist Police speak English on 1155. See tourist police and staying safe on a night out.

Common questions

What is a check bin in Pattaya? A cup at your seat where the bar puts a slip for every drink. You pay the total when you leave.

What happens if you ring the bell in a Thai bar? You buy a drink for everyone in the bar, staff included.

Do you tip in Pattaya bars? It's optional. Leave the change or ฿20 to ฿100.

How do you get a game of pool in a Pattaya bar? Put a coin on the table rail to claim the next game.

Sources

- Our tipping, pool and karaoke, drink prices and laws pages (checked 2026).
- Jonny James, from his own notes and interview (November 2026).

NIGHTLIFE

Staying Safe on a Night Out

Practical safety tips for a night out in Pattaya: money and phone, drink spiking and methanol, alcohol hours and ID, drugs and vapes, bill disputes, getting home, and the numbers to save before you go.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/nightlife/night-out-safety/

Tourist Police	**1155 (English, 24 hours)**
Police	**191**
Ambulance	**1669**
Online fraud	**1441**
Drinking age	**20; carry a copy of your passport**
Drugs and vapes	**Illegal, with heavy penalties**

Quick answer: Pattaya is a safe night out for most people if you keep a few habits: carry only the cash you need, keep your drink with you and don't accept drinks from strangers, check your bill as you go, stay away from drugs and vapes, and plan your ride home before you start. The UK Foreign Office warns that drink spiking happens in Thai tourist areas, to men and women, and that attacks are most common near bars late at night. Save **1155** (Tourist Police, English, 24 hours), **191** (police) and **1669** (ambulance) in your phone. Shops and most bars stop selling alcohol at midnight, and customers can now be fined for drinking at a venue in banned hours.

At a glance

RISK	WHAT TO DO
Drink spiking	Keep your drink with you, watch it poured, don't accept drinks from strangers
Methanol in spirits	Stick to sealed bottles and proper bars; get help fast if someone is very unwell
Wrong bill or change	Check your slips as you go, carry small notes, count your change
Phone and bag snatching	Phone in a front pocket, bag on the side away from the road
Drugs and vapes	Don't buy, carry or use them: both are illegal
Getting home	A car on Bolt or Grab; never ride a scooter after drinking
Trouble	1155 Tourist Police, 191 police, 1669 ambulance

Before you go out

- Save 1155, 191 and 1669 in your phone. See emergency numbers.
- Charge your phone and carry a small power bank.
- Save your hotel or condo address in Thai, as a screenshot and as a place in your ride app.
- Tell a friend where you are going, especially if you're out alone.

Money, phone and passport

- Carry only the cash you need for the night, in small notes, and leave your cards and passport in the room safe.
- Police may ask to see your passport. A copy of the photo page is usually enough at night; if they need the original, you can be asked to bring it to a police station.
- Keep your phone in a front pocket in crowds, and don't hold it out at the roadside: bag-snatchers on motorbikes are a known risk.

Pro tip: watch your change. A cashier claiming your ฿1,000 note was ฿100 is rare, but it happens. The notes look similar.

Drinks

- Watch your drink being poured, keep it with you, and don't accept drinks from strangers. Spiking happens to men and women.
- Drink from sealed bottles or drinks you watched being made. The Foreign Office says methanol in illicit spirits has caused deaths, can't be tasted or smelled, and that even small amounts can kill. Get urgent medical help, on 1669, if anyone feels very unwell after drinking.
- Bar drinks are often stronger than at home, and heat makes alcohol hit harder. Pace yourself and drink water between drinks. See hangovers and dehydration.
- If a friend suddenly seems far drunker than they should be, stay with them, get them somewhere safe and get medical help.

Alcohol rules and ID

- Shops, 7-Eleven and most bars and restaurants can sell alcohol from 11am to midnight. Licensed entertainment venues and hotels follow their licence hours, up to about 4am in Pattaya's designated nightlife zones.
- Since November 2025, customers, not just bars, can be fined up to ฿10,000 for drinking at a venue in banned hours.

- On five Buddhist holy days most shops and ordinary bars can't sell alcohol. See Buddhist holidays and alcohol.
- The legal drinking age is 20, and venues can check ID. Carry a copy of your passport photo page, or your ID card if you live here.

Drugs, cannabis and vapes

- Even small amounts of illegal drugs can bring heavy fines or prison, and Class A drugs can carry the death penalty. Don't buy, carry or accept drugs, including from someone friendly in a bar.
- Cannabis is now for medical use only, with a Thai prescription. An open shop doesn't make a sale to you legal.
- Vapes and e-cigarettes are illegal to own or use, with no tourist exception. The Foreign Office puts typical fines at ฿5,000 to ฿30,000, and cases can mean detention and court.
- More on laws visitors break.

Bills, arguments and fights

- Check the slips in your check bin as you go. If a bill looks wrong, ask politely at once and go through it line by line. See bar etiquette and drink prices.
- Stay calm and walk away from arguments, even if you're right. Losing your temper in public goes badly in Thailand and makes police involvement more likely.
- If you can't sort out a bill, call the Tourist Police on 1155 rather than escalating.

Scams to know

Overcharging, fake officials and friendly strangers with a deal are the usual ones. See common scams. If money has left your bank account through online fraud, call 1441 at once so the account can be frozen, then report to the police.

Getting home

- Never ride a scooter after drinking. Police run night checkpoints with breath tests, fines start at ฿5,000, and your insurance may not pay. See police checkpoints.
- A car booked on Bolt or Grab is the safest way home: check the plate, and share the trip with a friend.
- Baht buses run late on the main loop for ฿15, but there are fewer after midnight. Motorbike taxis are quick, but after drinks a car is safer. See night transport.
- Walking? Stick to busy, lit main roads and avoid empty beaches late at night. Hungry first? See late night food.

If something goes wrong

- Call the Tourist Police on 1155. They speak English and answer 24 hours. See Tourist Police.
- For a crime happening now, call 191. For an ambulance, 1669.
- Lost passport or stolen phone: get a police report first; you will need it for the embassy and for insurance.
- Travelling alone? See solo female travel, which covers getting home and help in English.

Common questions

Is Pattaya safe at night? For most visitors, yes. The main risks are spiked or fake drinks, theft, bill disputes and scooter accidents after drinking, and simple habits cover all of them.

What number do I call for help in Pattaya? 1155 for the Tourist Police, who speak English and answer 24 hours. 191 for police and 1669 for an ambulance.

Can I be fined for drinking after midnight? Yes, at a venue that isn't allowed to serve then. Since November 2025 customers can be fined up to ฿10,000.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: UK Foreign Office, Thailand safety and security (drink spiking, attacks near bars late at night, methanol, bag-snatching, passport copies, vapes, drugs and cannabis); The Thaiger, Thailand's drinking laws (October 2025) (age 20, customer fines up to ฿10,000 from 8 November 2025); Pattaya Mail, sale hours 11am to midnight from 29 May 2026; Pattaya Mail, October 2025 (4am closing in designated Pattaya zones); our night transport, solo female travel and common scams pages (1155, 1441, fares and fines). General safety information, not legal advice.

NIGHTLIFE

LGBTQ+ Nightlife

Pattaya's gay and LGBTQ+ scene: Jomtien Complex, Boyztown, Sunee Plaza and Dongtan Beach, what each is like and how to get there.

Verified October 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/nightlife/lgbtq-nightlife/

Busiest area	**Jomtien Complex, near Dongtan Beach**
Historic strip	**Boyztown, Pattayaland Soi 3**
Quieter bars	**Sunee Plaza**
Beach	**Dongtan Beach, Jomtien**

Pattaya has one of the biggest and most relaxed gay and LGBTQ+ scenes in Asia. Thailand is generally welcoming, and in 2025 it became the first country in Southeast Asia to recognise same-sex marriage.

The main areas

- **Jomtien Complex**: a covered walking street of bars, restaurants and show bars near Dongtan Beach in Jomtien. Today it's the busiest part of the scene.
- **Boyztown**: around Pattayaland Soi 3, between Beach Road and Second Road in South Pattaya, close to Walking Street. The city's original gay nightlife strip, smaller than it once was but still lively.
- **Sunee Plaza**: a quieter, more local cluster of bars off Pattaya Third Road, popular with regulars.
- **Dongtan Beach**: the northern stretch of Jomtien Beach, a popular gay-friendly beach by day.

Events

Pattaya hosts LGBTQ+ events through the year, including pride celebrations and big circuit parties. Dates change each year; check the organisers' pages.

Tips

- Show bars and clubs usually have a drink minimum rather than a cover charge. Ask prices first, as on any night out. See how Pattaya's bars work.
- Everyone you spend time with must be over 18, and the usual safety advice applies. See staying safe on a night out.
- For dating apps and meeting people safely, see dating in Thailand.
- Chat with locals and regulars in our Telegram community.

Good to know

- Pattaya is generally relaxed and welcoming for LGBTQ+ visitors.
- Public displays of affection are best kept low key for everyone in Thailand. See Thai etiquette.
- Keep an eye on your drink and belongings. See night out safety.
- Getting home: see night transport. Never ride a scooter after drinking.

NIGHTLIFE

Happy Hours & Drink Deals

How to drink for less in Pattaya: happy hours, two-for-one deals, beer towers and buckets, and where the cheapest drinks are.

Verified October 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/nightlife/happy-hours/

Typical happy hour	**Afternoon to early evening, often until 8 or 9pm**
Common deals	**Two-for-one, discounted draught, cheap buckets**
Cheapest areas	**Soi Buakhao, Tree Town, Soi Chaiyapoon**
Tip	**Check the board, then check your check bin**

Most Pattaya bars run a happy hour, and it can halve the price of a night out. The everyday baseline is on drink prices; these are the ways to beat it.

Common deals

- **Happy hour**: usually from the afternoon until 8 or 9pm, with cheaper beer and mixers.
- **Two-for-one** on beer or cocktails, especially early evening.
- **Beer towers and buckets**: good value for a group.
- **Draught beer** is often cheaper than bottles.

Where drinks are cheapest

- Soi Buakhao, Tree Town and Soi Chaiyapoon have some of the lowest everyday prices.
- Beach Road and Walking Street cost more.
- The interactive map shows beer and drink prices for featured bars.

Tips

- Happy-hour prices often end at a set time; orders after that are full price.
- Count your slips before paying. See bar etiquette.
- Alcohol isn't sold on some Buddhist holidays. See Ok Phansa and laws visitors break.

Making the most of it

- Happy hours are often in the late afternoon and early evening. Combine them with a sunset. See sunset spots.
- Eat before or during, cheap drinks on an empty stomach hit hard in the heat.
- See nightlife on a budget.

NIGHTLIFE

Rooftop & Sky Bars

Drinks with a view over Pattaya Bay and Jomtien in 2026: hotel rooftop bars with their published hours and menu prices, happy hours, service charge and VAT, dress, sunset times, and the alcohol rules.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/nightlife/rooftop-bars/

Sunset	**About 5:45pm in November, 6:45pm in early July**
Cocktails	**About ฿300 to ฿490 on 2026 hotel menus, before or with tax**
Watch for	**10% service charge plus 7% VAT on many hotel menus**
Happy hour	**Holiday Inn's rooftop, buy one get one free 7pm to 9pm**
Dress	**Smart casual at hotel bars**
Holy days	**Hotel bars may still serve when ordinary bars can't**

Quick answer: Pattaya's rooftop bars are mostly in big hotels: Horizon on the 34th floor of Hilton Pattaya above Central Festival, Holiday Inn's Rooftop Terrace, two rooftops at Siam@Siam on Second Road, and sky bars over Jomtien. Expect several times beer-bar prices: Holiday Inn's September 2026 rooftop menu lists beer at ฿150 and cocktails at ฿300 to ฿320, plus 10% service charge and 7% VAT, while Hard Rock's November 2026 menu lists cocktails at ฿420 to ฿490 with tax included. Go for sunset, about 5:45pm in November, and arrive early. Hotel bars may still serve on Buddhist holy days.


Rooftop & Sky Bars, Pattaya
Photo: PattayaPatrol, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

At a glance

VENUE	WHERE	HOURS (AS LISTED)	PRICES WE FOUND
Horizon, Hilton Pattaya	34th floor, above Central Festival, Beach Road	About 4pm to 1am	Not published; check on arrival
Rooftop Terrace, Holiday Inn Pattaya	Level 25, Executive Tower	5pm to 11pm	Beer ฿150, cocktails ฿300 to ฿320, plus service and VAT
BARBÙ, Siam@Siam Design Hotel	24th floor, Second Road	9am to 11pm	Food menu plus service and VAT; ฿500 entry credit reported for non-guests
Skybar Summer Club, Siam@Siam	27th floor, Second Road	Morning until late; listings differ	฿500 entry credit reported for non-guests
Moon Deck, Hard Rock Hotel	Raised deck over Beach Road	5pm to midnight	Singha ฿180, cocktails ฿420 to ฿490, tax included

Hours and prices come from each hotel's own website or menu where we found one. Menus change; check before you go.

Where to go

- **Horizon at the Hilton**: the best-known, on the 34th floor of Hilton Pattaya, which sits above Central Festival on Beach Road, looking straight out over the bay. A November 2026 travel guide lists it daily from 4pm to 1am. Guides describe an early-evening two-for-one deal; we couldn't confirm it with the hotel.
- **Rooftop Terrace, Holiday Inn Pattaya**: level 25 of the hotel's Executive Tower, about 107 metres up. Open daily 5pm to 11pm, with buy-one-get-one-free on selected drinks from 7pm to 9pm. Its September 2026 menu has mocktails at ฿170 and pizzas from ฿430 as well as the drinks above, all before service and VAT.
- **Siam@Siam Design Hotel**, Second Road: two rooftops. BARBÙ, a Mediterranean restaurant and bar on the 24th floor, was reported open in October 2025 and is listed daily from 9am to 11pm. Skybar Summer Club, on the 27th floor with a pool, opens in the morning and runs until late, though listed hours differ. Thailand Magazine and a travel guide report a ฿500 charge for non-guests that you spend on food and drinks, and the guide says Skybar is for over-18s. The hotel's own pages don't give the charge, so ask before you go.
- **Moon Deck, Hard Rock Hotel**: a raised deck over Beach Road and the sea rather than a true rooftop. In the rainy season the indoor cafe may open instead. See live music for its nightly band.
- **Jomtien**: D Varee Jomtien Beach has a top-floor sky bar over Jomtien Beach. A January 2026 Wongnai feature, sponsored by the venue, calls it ZAMĀ Skybar, with DJ sets and shows; some guides still list it as D.I.B Sky Bar. See Jomtien.
- **Second Road**: Meliá Pattaya opened Yitong, a Chinese restaurant and sky bar on its 12th floor, in May 2025.
- **Pratumnak Hill** has hillside restaurants and bars with views across the bay. See Pratumnak Hill.

What it costs

For comparison, beer at our featured bars runs about ฿60 to ฿120 (see drink prices). Read the small print on hotel menus. "Plus plus" prices add 10% service charge, then 7% VAT on top, about 17.7% in all. A ฿300 cocktail on Holiday Inn's menu comes to about ฿353, and a ฿150 beer to about ฿177. Hard Rock's menu already includes both. Happy hours help; see happy hours.

When to go

- **Sunset**: Pattaya faces west over the Gulf of Thailand. Sunset is about 5:48pm in November and about 6:47pm in early July. Arrive 30 to 45 minutes before to get a seat by the edge. See sunset spots.
- **Weekends**: busiest; book if you can.
- **Fireworks and New Year's Eve**: bay-facing rooftops are popular and fill up early. See fireworks festival and New Year countdown.
- **Rainy season**: open decks close in storms and strong wind.

Alcohol rules to know

- Shops and ordinary bars can sell alcohol from 11am to midnight; the old 2pm to 5pm break ended in May 2026.
- On the five Buddhist holy days, ordinary bars, shops and 7-Eleven can't sell alcohol, but hotels recognised under hotel law and licensed entertainment venues may. A hotel rooftop is often one of the few places serving; ask ahead. The 2027 dates are 21 February, 20 May, 18 and 19 July, and 15 October (expected). See Buddhist holidays and alcohol ban days.
- Some hotel venues set age limits: Hard Rock limits entry after 10pm to over-20s.

Tips

- Smart casual is the safe choice at hotel bars; vests and flip-flops may be turned away.
- Mocktails and fresh juices are on every menu if you're not drinking. See a night out without drinking.
- Getting home: take Bolt, Grab or a baht bus, never a scooter after drinking. See night transport.

Common questions

What is the best rooftop bar in Pattaya? Horizon on the 34th floor of Hilton Pattaya is the best-known, right above Central Festival with a view across the whole bay. Holiday Inn's Rooftop Terrace and Siam@Siam's rooftops are other hotel options, and Jomtien has its own sky bar.

How much is a cocktail at a Pattaya rooftop bar? On 2026 hotel menus we checked, about ฿300 to ฿490. Some menus add 10% service and 7% VAT on top, so check whether prices are net.

Can I get a drink on a Buddhist holy day? Ordinary bars can't sell alcohol, but hotels and licensed entertainment venues may, so a hotel rooftop bar is a good bet. Ask first.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Holiday Inn Pattaya, Rooftop Terrace (hours, happy hour) and its menu revised 2 September 2026; Hard Rock Hotel Pattaya, Eat and Drink (Moon Deck) and its November 2026 menu; Siam@Siam, BARBÙ; The Thaiger, BARBÙ opening (17 October 2025); Thailand Magazine, Siam@Siam sky bar (undated); Thai Holiday Guide, Pattaya rooftop bars (updated 9 November 2026); Wongnai, ZAMĀ Skybar (23 January 2026, sponsored); Journal des Palaces, Meliá Pattaya sky bar press release (7 May 2025). Sunset times follow our sunset spots page and alcohol rules our alcohol ban days page. We couldn't open Hilton's own page, so Horizon's hours come from a travel guide.

Timing your visit

- Arrive before sunset to get a good seat, they fill up fast.
- Rain and wind can close open-air decks. Check the weather. See weather by month.
- For free views see night viewpoints.

NIGHTLIFE

Live Music Bars

Where to hear live bands in Pattaya in 2026: Beach Road hotel and brewpub stages, Walking Street rock bars, Soi Buakhao tribute nights and free beach festivals, with sourced drink prices, start times and the alcohol rules.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/nightlife/live-music/

Main areas	**Beach Road, Walking Street, Soi Buakhao, hotel bars**
Styles	**Rock and cover bands, Thai pop, blues and acoustic**
Start time	**Bands usually from about 8pm or 9pm**
Cost	**Usually no entry charge; you pay through the drinks**
Hotel stage example	**Hard Rock Cafe, beer ฿180, cocktails ฿420 to ฿490**
Free festivals	**Pattaya Music Festival in March; a beach jazz festival in November**

Quick answer: Pattaya has live bands every night of the week, mostly rock, pop and Thai cover bands that start around 8pm or 9pm. Beach Road has the easiest choices: Hard Rock Cafe Pattaya lists a live band every day from 8pm to 11:45pm, and reviewers of Hops Brewhouse mention a band in the evening with its house-brewed beer. Walking Street has several rock bars that play late, and Rock Factory on Soi Buakhao hosts tribute nights. Most places charge no entry, but drinks cost more than at beer bars: about ฿180 for a Singha and ฿420 to ฿490 for a cocktail at Hard Rock. For free music, the city's beach festivals run in March and November. Shops and ordinary bars sell alcohol from 11am to midnight.


Live band on stage in Pattaya
Photo: PattayaPatrol, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

At a glance

WHERE	WHAT YOU'LL FIND	EXAMPLE
Beach Road	Hotel and brewpub bands, early evening to late	Hard Rock Cafe Pattaya, Hops Brewhouse
Walking Street	Rock and cover-band bars, playing late	Several bars; line-ups change often
Soi Buakhao	Rock bar with tribute and themed nights	Rock Factory
Hotel pubs	Occasional themed band nights	Dicey Reilly's at Avani Pattaya Resort
The beach	Free festival stages	Pattaya Music Festival (March), jazz festival (November)

Where to hear a band

- **Hard Rock Cafe Pattaya**, at Hard Rock Hotel on Beach Road: the hotel's website lists a live band every day from 8pm to 11:45pm, with the cafe open 2pm to midnight. Entry after 10pm is limited to guests aged 20 and over. Its November 2026 menu prices a Singha at ฿180 (a pint ฿300), imported bottled beers ฿250 to ฿350, cocktails ฿420 to ฿490 and zero-proof cocktails from ฿250, including service charge and VAT.
- **Hops Brewhouse**, on Beach Road: a brewpub with its own beer. Wongnai lists it open daily from 2pm to 11pm, and reviewers up to 2025 mention a live band in the evening, one giving 8:30pm as the start.
- **Rock Factory**, on Soi Buakhao: a rock venue that hosts ticketed tribute shows, such as a Nirvana tribute in July 2025 sold through Megatix. Check its social pages for the current line-up.
- **Walking Street**: several big rock and cover-band bars play until late, alongside clubs. Names and bands change often, so we only name places with recent sources. See nightclubs.
- **Hotel pubs**: some hotels put on themed band nights. Dicey Reilly's at Avani Pattaya Resort, for example, held a 1990s rock night with Thai rock artists on 31 October 2026, with table packages from ฿3,500 net for four, Pattaya Mail reported.
- **Jomtien and the side sois** have smaller blues, acoustic and Thai music bars. See Jomtien bars.

Free festivals and concerts

- **Pattaya Music Festival**: free concerts on Fridays and Saturdays through March, on a different stage each weekend: Pattaya Beach, Jomtien, Koh Larn and Naklua. The 2026 festival ran from 6 to 28 March; 2027 dates aren't announced yet.
- **Pattaya International Jazz Festival**: free, on Central Pattaya Beach, organised by Pattaya City and the Chonburi Provincial Administrative Organisation. The 2026 edition ran on 6 and 7 November from 4pm to midnight, with Kenny G headlining on the 7th.
- Check the events calendar for what's on.

What to expect

- Bands usually start around 8pm or 9pm and play several sets, with breaks between.
- Most places don't charge entry; drinks cost more than at beer bars. For comparison, beer at our featured bars runs about ฿60 to ฿120. See drink prices.
- Hotel venues often add 10% service charge and 7% VAT to menu prices; Hard Rock's menu already includes them. Check the small print.
- Expect classic rock, pop and Thai hits. Requests and tips for the band are welcome.

- Weekends are busiest; arrive early for a table near the stage.

Alcohol rules to know

- Shops and ordinary bars can sell alcohol from 11am to midnight; the old 2pm to 5pm break ended in May 2026. Licensed entertainment venues in the nightlife zones keep later hours.
- On the five Buddhist holy days, ordinary bars and restaurants can't sell alcohol, but hotels and licensed entertainment venues may. Many music bars close or serve soft drinks only. The 2027 dates are 21 February, 20 May, 18 and 19 July, and 15 October (expected). See Buddhist holidays and alcohol ban days.
- Not drinking? Every venue serves soft drinks and mocktails. See a night out without drinking.

Getting home safely

- Use Bolt, Grab or a baht bus (฿15 on the normal loop), and never ride a scooter after drinking. See night transport.
- Keep an eye on your drink and your bill. See staying safe on a night out; the Tourist Police number is 1155.

Common questions

Where can I hear live music in Pattaya tonight? Beach Road is the safest bet: Hard Rock Cafe lists a band every day from 8pm, and reviewers mention evening bands at Hops Brewhouse. Walking Street has several late rock bars.

Do Pattaya live music bars charge entry? Usually not. You pay through the drinks, which cost more than at beer bars. Ticketed tribute shows and special nights are the exception.

What time do bands start? Usually around 8pm or 9pm, with several sets through the night.

Is there live music on Buddhist holy days? Ordinary bars can't sell alcohol, so many close or go quiet. Hotels and licensed entertainment venues may still serve; ask ahead.

Are there free concerts in Pattaya? Yes. The Pattaya Music Festival runs on March weekends, and the city's beach jazz festival was held in early November in 2026.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Hard Rock Hotel Pattaya, Eat and Drink (band times, hours, age rule) and its November 2026 Hard Rock Cafe menu; Wongnai, Hops Brewhouse listing and reviews; Megatix, tribute show at The Rock Factory (26 July 2025); Pattaya Mail, 90s rock night at Dicey Reilly's (29 October 2026); The Nation, Pattaya jazz festival 6 and 7 November 2026; Pattaya Mail, jazz festival line-up (4 November 2026). Alcohol rules follow our alcohol ban days page. Line-ups and prices change; check with the venue.

Planning your night

- Bands usually start later in the evening and play several sets.
- Big free concerts happen during the Pattaya Music Festival.
- Getting home: see night transport. Never ride a scooter after drinking.

NIGHTLIFE

Soi Buakhao Bars by Type

The kinds of bars you will find along Soi Buakhao and Tree Town, what each is like, and typical drink prices, so you know where to go for your kind of night.

Verified October 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/nightlife/soi-buakhao-bars/

Area	**Soi Buakhao and Tree Town, central Pattaya**
Beer	**Often cheaper than Beach Road and Walking Street**
Busiest	**Evenings in high season**
Best for	**Relaxed, budget nights out**

Soi Buakhao is the long street parallel to Second Road, and it is one of the cheapest places in Pattaya for a night out. For the street itself, see Soi Buakhao.

Open-air beer bars

The classic Pattaya bar: an open shop front, a horseshoe counter, music and cheap beer. Relaxed and friendly. Most have happy hours. See happy hours.

Sports bars

Big screens for football, rugby and fights, often with Western food. See sports bars.

Live music

A few bars have bands most nights, from covers to Thai rock. See live music.

Pool bars

Many bars have a pool table; a game is usually free if you are buying drinks. See pool and karaoke.

Tree Town

The bar complex off Soi Buakhao with bands, food stalls and beer bars in one place. Parking and the toilets cost a few baht. See Tree Town.

Prices and tips

- Draught beer and small bottles are often cheaper here than on Beach Road. Compare with drink prices.
- Check the bill before you pay.
- For a cheap night, read nightlife on a budget.

Around the area

- The area is known for cheap food too. See Soi Buakhao and cheap eats.
- Baht buses run along the road, and it is walkable to Second Road. See baht bus routes.

NIGHTLIFE

Jomtien Bars by Type

The kinds of bars you will find in Jomtien, from beach bars to sports bars and the LGBTQ+ strip, and what a night out here is like compared with central Pattaya.

Verified October 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/nightlife/jomtien-bars/

Area	**Jomtien Beach Road and the sois behind it**
Vibe	**Quieter and more relaxed than central Pattaya**
LGBTQ+	**Jomtien Complex area**
Getting back	**Baht bus along Thappraya Road, or an app taxi**

Jomtien is the long beach south of Pratumnak Hill. Its nightlife is calmer than Walking Street, with more locals, long-stay expats and families around. For the area itself, see Jomtien.

Beach bars

Chairs on the sand, cold drinks and sunset views. Many beach bars close earlier than town bars, so go for sunset and early evening.

Beer bars

Small open-air bars line the sois behind Jomtien Beach Road. Prices are usually close to Soi Buakhao. See Soi Buakhao bars to compare.

Sports bars and pubs

British and European-style pubs show football and serve Western food, popular with long-stay residents. See sports bars.

LGBTQ+ nightlife

The Jomtien Complex area is the centre of Pattaya's gay nightlife, with bars and shows. See LGBTQ+ nightlife.

Live music

A few bars have bands on weekends. Check their pages for the week's line-up. See live music.

Getting back

Baht buses run along Thappraya Road towards central Pattaya. Late at night, Bolt or Grab is easier. See Thappraya Road.

More in Jomtien

- Jomtien is quieter than central Pattaya and good for an easy evening. See Jomtien.
- Walk the beach before dinner. See Jomtien beach walk.

NIGHTLIFE

Pattaya at Night Without Drinking

Pattaya after dark for people who do not drink, or want a night off: night markets, shows, Muay Thai, rooftop views, massage, live music and late-night food, with 2026 prices and the alcohol rules.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/nightlife/night-out-without-drinking/

Best picks	**Night markets, cabaret, Muay Thai, massage**
In bars	**Soft drinks, mocktails and alcohol-free beer are common**
Late food	**Street food and 24-hour shops**
No-alcohol days	**Five Buddhist holy days (most shops and bars) and election days**

Pattaya is famous for its bars, but there is plenty to do at night without a drink in your hand.

Quick answer: Start with a night market for dinner (dishes about ฿20 to ฿120), then pick one show: a cabaret (from around ฿450) or a Muay Thai fight night (from around ฿1,500 at the stadium). Finish with a late massage or the city lights from a viewpoint. If friends are going to bars, live-music venues usually have no cover charge and are happy to serve soft drinks, mocktails and alcohol-free beer. Nobody will push you to drink.

Your night at a glance

IDEA	ROUGH COST (2026)	WHEN
—	—	—
Night market dinner	About ฿20 to ฿120 a dish	From about 17:00; Thepprasit Friday to Sunday
Cabaret show	About ฿450 to ฿2,200	Several shows each evening, about 70 minutes
Muay Thai fight night	From around ฿1,500 at the stadium	Most nights, from about 19:00
Thai or foot massage	About ฿200 to ฿350 an hour	Many shops open late
Live music with a soft drink	Usually no cover; drinks a bit pricier	Bands from about 21:00
Viewpoint or rooftop	Free at viewpoints; rooftop drinks ฿200 to ฿400	Sunset and after dark

Prices come from our own guides to each activity, checked in 2026 (see Sources).

Night markets

Food, shopping and people-watching. Thepprasit is the biggest, from Friday to Sunday, roughly 17:00 to 23:00; Jomtien's runs most evenings, and Soi Buakhao's is central. Go hungry and share lots of small dishes. See night markets.

Shows

Cabaret shows are colourful, family-friendly and alcohol-free if you like. They last about 70 minutes, with several shows each evening. See cabaret shows. Muay Thai fight nights are another option, with fights most nights from about 19:00; see Muay Thai.

Live music with a soft drink

Bars are happy to serve soft drinks, mocktails and alcohol-free beer. Fresh fruit shakes are everywhere too. Bands usually start around 21:00 on Walking Street, Beach Road and in Jomtien. See live music.

Massage

Many massage shops stay open late. A Thai or foot massage is about ฿200 to ฿350 an hour, plus a tip of ฿50 to ฿100. See massage in Pattaya.

Views

Rooftop bars and viewpoints are great after dark, even with a juice. The Pattaya City viewpoint on Pratumnak Hill is free and shows the whole bay lit up. See rooftop bars and night viewpoints.

Active nights

- Evening runs or walks along the Jomtien promenade or Beach Road, once the heat drops. See running and cycling.
- Bowling, cinemas and arcades in the malls, open until about 22:00. See cinemas and bowling.
- An evening Muay Thai or fitness class at a gym. See gyms and fitness.

Late-night food

Street food stalls and 24-hour convenience stores keep the city fed. See street food and late-night food.

Ideas by night of the week

- **Friday to Sunday:** Thepprasit night market is open, the biggest in town, from about 17:00. Combine it with a cabaret show.
- **Any weeknight:** Jomtien night market for dinner, then a massage and a walk on the promenade.
- **Fight nights:** Muay Thai runs most nights from about 19:00; check the card before you go.
- **Rainy nights:** a mall cinema or bowling, then late food. See rainy day attractions.

Alcohol rules worth knowing

- **Sale hours:** shops and most restaurants sell alcohol from 11:00 to midnight. The old 14:00 to 17:00 afternoon ban was trialled away from December 2025 and made permanent in May 2026, according to reports. Licensed hotels, international airports and licensed entertainment venues have their own exemptions.
- **Dry days:** on the five Buddhist holy days most shops, 7-Eleven and ordinary bars and restaurants can't sell alcohol (hotels and licensed entertainment venues can), sales also stop on election days, and many bars close. It's a good night to try these ideas. See Buddhist holidays and alcohol ban days and the events calendar.

Saying no

In Thailand nobody expects you to explain. A smile and "mai duem" (I don't drink) or simply ordering a Coke is enough. In bars, it's polite to buy something; a soft drink counts.

Common questions

Is Pattaya fun if you don't drink? Yes: night markets, shows, Muay Thai, massage, viewpoints and live music all work without alcohol.

Can I go into bars and just order soft drinks? Yes. Soft drinks, mocktails and alcohol-free beer are normal orders.

What time does alcohol sale stop in Thailand? Shops and most restaurants sell from 11:00 to midnight in 2026. Licensed venues may have longer hours.

Are there days when alcohol isn't sold in Pattaya? Yes. On the five Buddhist holy days most shops and bars can't sell it (hotels and licensed entertainment venues can), and sales also stop on election days.

Sources

- Our guides to night markets, cabaret, Muay Thai, massage, live music and rooftop bars (prices and times checked 2026).
- Tilleke and Gibbins: "Thailand to temporarily lift afternoon alcohol sales ban" (trial from December 2025), and 2026 reports in Business Today and Vinetur on the ban ending permanently (May to June 2026).

NIGHTLIFE

Playing Pool in Pattaya

Where to play pool in Pattaya: free bar tables, the best pool halls, killer pool nights, snooker, leagues, table etiquette and playing for a drink.

Verified October 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/nightlife/pool-in-pattaya/

Bar tables	**Free, you just buy a drink**
Pool halls	**All charged by the hour**
Pool halls	**S1, Mega Break, Double Kiss, Daisy D's**
Next game	**Name on the whiteboard or a coin on the rail; winner usually stays**
Ball in hand	**Anywhere on the table, in almost every bar**

Pool is one of the biggest things to do in Pattaya. Almost every bar has a table, bar tables are free to play, and on any night of the week you can find a game, a killer pool night or a tournament. Here's where I play and how it works.



Photo: Jonny James

Pro tip: one of the cheap bar pool tables I've come across in Pattaya.

How bar pool works

- **Bar tables are free.** In sports bars, night bars, beer bar areas and places like Cloud 9 Reloaded, you just buy a drink while you play. Pool halls are different: they all charge by the hour.
- **Getting on the table:** busy bars keep a whiteboard. Write your name on the list and wait your turn. In quieter bars, put a coin on the rail to claim the next game.
- **Winner stays** in most bars, so a good player can hold the table all night.
- **Staff rack the balls for you** in most bars.
- Some bars have a table that almost nobody uses, which is great if you just want to practise.
- **Rules vary from bar to bar**, but one is almost universal: ball in hand means anywhere on the whole table, not just behind the line. See pool rules in Pattaya.

Pool halls

For proper tables and serious players, go to a pool hall. All of them charge by the hour:

- **S1 Pool Hall** on Soi Buakhao: great tables and lots of tournaments. It hosted the Pattaya Open, a World Nineball Tour event, in March 2026.
- **Mega Break** on Soi Diana: older and well established, in a handy central spot.
- **Daisy D's** in Jomtien: a few outside tables, open early, and small dogs are allowed at the outside tables.
- **Double Kiss** on Third Road: nice tables, and small pets are allowed.

Map of pool halls and pool areas

Gold circles are the busiest pool areas; tap a pin for each hall, snooker club or bar.

Where to find free bar tables

- **Myth Night:** a great beer bar complex with free pool tables.
- **Tree Town and Soi Chaiyapoon:** packed with pool tables.
- **Rompho, in Jomtien:** lots of tables too.
- **Soi Night Out:** many free tables.
- **Soi 8:** Sharkie Beach Bar, right at the beach end of the soi, has great free pool on a nice small table, good people and cheap drinks.
- **Soi 6** is fairly light on pool, with only a handful of tables. **Soi 7** has a few more, but the air-con bars have few tables; the open-air bars towards the street have more.

For serious players: Cloud 9 Reloaded

Cloud 9 Reloaded has two really nice tables inside, great food, cheap drinks and a professional feel. It isn't pet friendly. Don't go in drunk or play as a total beginner: they may ask you to leave if you hit the balls too hard, and they don't allow slop. Slop means balls that go in by luck; there, a shot only counts if it goes in the way you meant it to.

Killer pool

Almost every night of the week a bar somewhere runs killer pool. Everyone pays a small entry, each player gets a few lives, and you lose a life every time you miss. The last player left takes the pot. It's a great way to meet people and play lots of different players. Full rules: pool rules in Pattaya.

Snooker

Snooker is played on a much bigger table with smaller balls, and is usually charged by the hour in snooker and pool halls. I like to play casually at Friendly Karaoke and Restaurant in South Pattaya, which is more of a snooker place; it's one of the spots in my 7 secret Pattaya spots.

More places in South Pattaya:

- Sky Zoone: a small, earthy, very local hall that feels more Thai or Filipino style than the other pool halls. I wouldn't expect many foreigners to play there regularly.
- Yen Sabai Snooker & Pool Club: a newer pool and snooker club with only a handful of reviews so far, all five stars.
- KG Snooker Club: well rated for snooker.
- โต๊ะสนุ๊กกรมที่ดิน: a well-rated snooker place that only shows up on maps under its Thai name.

Leagues and competitions

There are pool leagues and regular competitions in Pattaya, plus bigger events at the pool halls. Ask at S1, Mega Break or your local bar about league nights. Upcoming pool events go on our events calendar.

Playing for a drink

Many regulars and bar staff play a lot of pool, every day. If you don't play often, expect to lose, and expect to be asked for a drink if they win. Some will ask up front: "Play for drink?" That usually means if you win, nobody buys a drink, but if they win, you buy them one. It's a bit one-sided, but not always.

- **The Dark Horse Tavern in Tree Town** has lots of good players, and there it works both ways: if you win, they buy you a drink.
- **Bars on Soi Chaiyapoon, like Whiskey Lounge**, have incredibly strong, competitive small-table players. If you want a real challenge, go there, but expect to play for a drink.

My favourite way to play

My personal favourite is the small 6 and 7 foot bar tables in Tree Town, with rough felt and worn balls. I like the action and the difficulty of a rough table.

Learn and watch

- **Dr. Dave Billiards** is one of my favourite pool teachers: free videos and articles on everything from aiming to spin.
- **Chris Melling**, "The Magician", is my favourite player to watch. He's doing an exhibition evening at Daisy D's in Jomtien on 25 November 2026: ฿1,500 to play, get a photo and a signing, or ฿500 entry only, with a signed cue raffle and prizes. I'll be there playing with him as a patron. See the events calendar.

Know before you go

- Pool rules in Pattaya: Thai bar pool, killer pool and snooker.
- Bar etiquette and drink prices.
- Pool halls and karaoke.
- Bringing a dog? See dog-friendly places.

NIGHTLIFE

Sports Bars in Pattaya

Where to watch football, rugby, F1 and fights in Pattaya, what time the big games kick off in Thailand, alcohol hours for late games, and what a night at a sports bar costs.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/nightlife/sports-bars/

Areas	**Beach Road, Soi 7 and 8, Soi Buakhao, Myth Night, Jomtien**
UK 3pm kick-off	**10pm in Thailand now, 9pm from 28 March 2027**
Champions League 9pm CET	**3am in Thailand in winter**
Beer	**Around the ฿85 everyday price, more on big nights**
Alcohol	**Ordinary bars stop selling at midnight**

Quick answer: Pattaya has plenty of pubs and bars with big screens, mainly on Beach Road and Soi 7 and 8, around Soi Buakhao, LK Metro and Myth Night, and in Jomtien. With the UK on winter time since 25 October 2026, Thailand is 7 hours ahead: a 3pm Premier League kick-off is 10pm in Pattaya, and a 9pm (Central European) Champions League game starts at 3am. Ordinary bars must stop selling alcohol at midnight, so for late games check the bar will stay open and serve. Beer is usually around the everyday ฿85 price, and pub meals often cost ฿200 to ฿450.

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Main areas	Beach Road, Soi 7 and 8, Soi Buakhao, LK Metro, Myth Night, Jomtien
Time difference	Thailand is 7 hours ahead of the UK until 28 March 2027, then 6
Cost to watch	Usually free; you buy drinks and food
Beer	About ฿60 to ฿120, typically ฿85
Pub meals	Often ฿200 to ฿450; Sunday roasts widely offered
Late games	Ordinary bars stop selling alcohol at midnight
At home	Premier League streams on Monomax; some games free on Mono29

Where to look

- **Beach Road and Soi 7 and 8:** pubs with screens facing the street and a tourist crowd.
- **Soi Buakhao and LK Metro:** expat pubs with cheaper drinks and pub food. See Soi Buakhao bars.
- **Myth Night and Tree Town:** open-air beer bar complexes with big screens at many bars, and calmer than the pubs on a big match night.
- **Jomtien:** quieter British and European-style pubs popular with long-stay residents. See Jomtien bars.
- Many beer bars also have a TV. Ask the staff to put your game on; they usually will if it's quiet.

Football kick-off times in Thailand

Thailand doesn't change its clocks. The UK went back to GMT on 25 October 2026 and goes forward to BST on 28 March 2027.

UK KICK-OFF	PATTAYA TIME NOW (TO 27 MAR 2027)	PATTAYA TIME FROM 28 MAR 2027
Saturday 12:30pm	7:30pm	6:30pm
Saturday 3:00pm	10:00pm	9:00pm
Saturday 5:30pm	12:30am (Sunday)	11:30pm
Sunday 2:00pm	9:00pm	8:00pm
Sunday 4:30pm	11:30pm	10:30pm
Friday or Monday 8:00pm	3:00am (next day)	2:00am (next day)

Champions League games kick off at 9pm Central European Time, with a few at 6:45pm. That is 3am and 12:45am in Pattaya until the end of March, then 2am and 11:45pm. The 2026/27 league phase runs until 27 January 2027, when all 18 games are played on one night.

Other sports

- **F1:** European races usually start at 3pm local time, about 8pm or 9pm in Pattaya. Asian races are in the afternoon.
- **UFC and US boxing:** big Saturday-night cards in the US usually land on Sunday morning in Thailand. Normal alcohol sales start at 11am, so plan on coffee and breakfast.

- **NFL:** Sunday afternoon games in the US run from about 1am on Monday in Pattaya during the northern winter.
- **Rugby and cricket:** games in Australia and New Zealand fall in the Thai morning or afternoon; European rugby is in the evening.
- **Muay Thai:** watch it live instead. See Muay Thai.

Late games and alcohol hours

- Shops and most bars and restaurants can sell alcohol from 11am to midnight.
- Licensed entertainment venues and hotels follow their own licence hours. In Pattaya's designated nightlife zones, venues can stay open until about 4am.
- Since November 2025, customers can be fined up to ฿10,000 for drinking at a venue during banned hours. A pub that stays open for a 3am kick-off may only be allowed to serve coffee and soft drinks.
- On five Buddhist holy days, ordinary bars and restaurants can't sell alcohol at all, while licensed entertainment venues and hotels can. Check the dates before you plan a big match night: Buddhist holidays and alcohol.
- The legal drinking age is 20.

What it costs

Watching is usually free. Beer in the bars we list runs about ฿60 to ฿120, typically ฿85, with happy hours before the evening games. Pub main meals often cost ฿200 to ฿450, and breakfast deals ฿99 to ฿250. Some pubs charge more on big nights or ask for a minimum spend for a reserved table. See drink prices, happy hours and Western food.

Big match days

- Arrive early or book a table. Derby days, title deciders and finals fill the best pubs.
- Check the bar is showing your match: many put a board outside, or ask on their Facebook page.
- Many bars show several games at once. Ask which screen has yours, and whether the sound will be on.
- Rival fans share pubs here. Keep it friendly: arguments in bars go badly in Thailand. See night out safety.
- Getting home late? Book a car on Bolt or Grab, and don't ride after drinking. See night transport.

Watching at home

In Thailand the Premier League belongs to JAS for the 2025/26 to 2030/31 seasons. It streams on Monomax, and some matches are free on the Mono29 TV channel. See TV and streaming for prices and other services.

Common questions

What time is a 3pm Premier League game in Thailand? 10pm until 27 March 2027, while the UK is on GMT. From 28 March it's 9pm.

Can I watch the Champions League in a Pattaya bar? Yes, but games mostly start at 3am Thai time in winter. Ask the pub in advance whether it will open, and remember that ordinary bars can't sell alcohol after midnight.

Do sports bars charge to watch? Usually not. You buy drinks and food; some pubs set a minimum spend for reserved tables on big nights.

Where can I watch rugby or F1 in Pattaya? The bigger pubs on Beach Road, Soi 7 and 8, Soi Buakhao and in Jomtien show most major sport. Ask a day ahead for less common events.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: GOV.UK, when the clocks change (back 25 October 2026, forward 28 March 2027); UEFA, 2026/27 Champions League league phase fixtures (21:00 CET, some 18:45; league phase to 27 January 2027); The Thaiger, JAS Premier League rights 2025/26 to 2030/31 (June 2025); Pattaya Mail, alcohol sales 11am to midnight from 29 May 2026; The Thaiger, drinking laws (October 2025) (customer fines, age 20); Pattaya Mail, October 2025 (4am closing in designated Pattaya zones); our drink prices and Western food pages. UK kick-off slots are the usual ones; TV picks move individual games, so check the fixture.

NIGHTLIFE

Pool Halls and Karaoke in Pattaya

Pool and karaoke in Pattaya: free bar tables and pool halls in brief, then karaoke nights in pubs, private karaoke rooms, how room pricing works, etiquette and the rules on age and hours.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/nightlife/pool-karaoke/

Pool in bars	**Usually free while you buy a drink**
Pool halls	**Charged by the hour**
Pub karaoke	**Free to sing; you buy drinks**
Karaoke rooms	**Room charge, plus food and drinks**
Next game	**Name on the board or a coin on the rail**
Age	**20 and over in licensed venues**

Quick answer: Pool is everywhere in Pattaya: most bars have a table you can play for free while you buy a drink, and pool and snooker halls charge by the hour for better tables. Our playing pool in Pattaya guide covers where to play and pool rules in Pattaya covers the house rules. For karaoke you have two choices: a karaoke night in a pub, where singing is free and you just buy drinks, or a private karaoke room (KTV) for your group, charged for the room plus food and drinks. Before you book a room, ask for the full price in writing: room rate, minimum spend and any service charge. Licensed entertainment venues are for adults 20 and over.

At a glance

OPTION	WHAT IT COSTS	BEST FOR	ASK FIRST
Bar pool table	Usually free while you drink	Casual games, meeting people	House rules, how to get on the table
Pool or snooker hall	Charged by the hour	Proper tables, practice, serious players	Hourly rate and closing time
Killer pool night	A small entry; the winner takes the pot	Playing lots of different people	Entry fee and start time
Pub karaoke night	Free to sing; you buy drinks	Brave singers and groups who want a crowd	Which nights, how the queue works
Private karaoke room	Room charge plus food and drinks	Groups, birthdays, singing without an audience	Rate per hour, minimum spend, service charge, closing time

Pool: the short version

- **Bar tables:** almost every beer bar area has tables. In busy bars you write your name on a board; in quieter ones you put a coin on the rail to claim the next game. The winner usually stays on. See playing pool in Pattaya, which has a map of halls and the busiest pool areas.
- **House rules vary,** but ball in hand almost always means anywhere on the table. Ask before you break. Full rules for bar 8-ball, killer pool and snooker are on pool rules in Pattaya.
- **Pool and snooker halls** charge by the hour, have better tables and run tournaments. Rates differ by hall and time of day, so ask at the counter.
- **Tournaments** go on our events calendar. For cheap tables, see nightlife on a budget.

Karaoke in Pattaya

Karaoke is a big part of Thai nightlife, and in Pattaya you'll meet it in three forms.

- **Pub karaoke nights.** Some pubs and bars bring out a karaoke machine on set nights. You add your song to the list, wait your turn and sing to the room. There's normally no charge to sing; you just buy drinks at normal prices.
- **Private karaoke rooms (KTV).** A room for your group with a screen, microphones and a song system, with food and drinks brought to the room. These suit birthdays, work groups and friends who would rather not sing to strangers.
- **Karaoke in restaurants.** Some Thai restaurants have a karaoke screen or a few private rooms, with a mostly Thai menu. Ask about the room rules and prices the same way.

Song lists usually include English as well as Thai songs, and some systems carry other languages, but each venue's system is different. If you have a favourite, ask the staff to search for it before you pay for a room.

How karaoke room pricing works

There is no standard price. Ask, and get the answer in writing or on a menu, before you go in:

- **Room rate:** per hour, or a package for a set time. Bigger rooms cost more.
- **Minimum spend:** some rooms have no hourly rate but require you to spend a set amount on food and drinks.
- **Extras:** service charge and VAT may be added to the bill, and bottles and mixers are usually priced separately.

- **Overtime:** what happens if you stay past your booked time.
- **Closing time:** licensed entertainment venues follow their licence hours, and ordinary restaurants and bars stop selling alcohol at midnight.

If prices aren't shown, or the answer keeps changing, pick another venue. Check the bill against the menu before you pay, and ask about anything you don't recognise, calmly. See bar etiquette.

Karaoke etiquette

- One song at a time, then pass the microphone on. Don't keep adding songs to the front of the queue.
- Clap for everyone, however it went. Nobody expects a good voice.
- Keep the volume reasonable late at night. Residents in Pattaya's busier areas complain about late karaoke and loud music, and in February 2025 the city ordered a Soi Diana bar complex to contain its noise after complaints.

Rules worth knowing

- **Age:** the legal drinking age in Thailand is 20, and licensed entertainment venues, karaoke included, should not let in anyone younger. Carry ID or a copy of your passport photo page.
- **Alcohol hours:** shops and most bars and restaurants sell alcohol from 11am to midnight. Licensed entertainment venues and hotels follow their own licence hours. Since November 2025, customers can be fined up to ฿10,000 for drinking at a venue in banned hours.
- **Holy days:** on five Buddhist holy days, ordinary bars and restaurants can't sell alcohol, while licensed entertainment venues and hotels can. See Buddhist holidays and alcohol.
- **Smoking and vapes:** smoking is banned in many public places, with fines of up to ฿5,000, and vapes are illegal to own or use. Smoke only where the venue shows it's allowed. See laws visitors break.

Tips for a good night

- Eat first or order food to the room: a long karaoke session on an empty stomach goes wrong fast.
- Agree how you'll get home before you start. A car on Bolt or Grab is easiest late at night. See night transport.
- Not drinking? Karaoke is one of the best sober nights out. See a night out without drinking.

Common questions

Is pool free in Pattaya bars? In most bars, yes, as long as you're buying drinks. Pool and snooker halls charge by the hour.

How much is a karaoke room in Pattaya? It depends on the venue, room size and time. Expect a room rate or a minimum spend, plus food and drinks and possibly a service charge. Ask for the full price before you start.

Can under-20s go to karaoke in Pattaya? Not to licensed entertainment venues, which are for 20 and over. A family karaoke room in an ordinary restaurant may be different; ask the venue.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: The Thaiger, Thailand's drinking laws (October 2025) (drinking age 20, customer fines from 8 November 2025); Pattaya Mail, sale hours 11am to midnight from 29 May 2026 (licensed entertainment venues and hotels on their own conditions); Pattaya Mail, 26 February 2025 (city inspection and soundproofing order after noise complaints, including late karaoke); UK Foreign Office, Thailand safety and security (vapes, smoking fines, passport copies); our pool, pool rules and holy-day alcohol pages. We don't list karaoke venues by name: we couldn't find a reliable 2025 or 2026 source showing which ones are operating, and prices differ widely.

Related guides

- Playing pool in Pattaya and pool rules
- Live music and sports bars
- Staying safe on a night out

NIGHTLIFE

Pool Rules in Pattaya: Thai Bar Pool, Killer Pool and Snooker

The rules you'll actually meet in Pattaya: Thai bar 8-ball (ball in hand anywhere), killer pool, and snooker basics, plus how house rules vary.

Verified October 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/nightlife/pool-rules/

Ball in hand	**Anywhere on the table**
House rules	**Vary a lot; ask before you break**
Killer pool	**Lose a life when you miss; last player standing wins**
Snooker	**15 reds and 6 colours; a foul gives at least 4 points away**

Pool rules in Pattaya vary a lot from bar to bar. Before your first game in a new bar, ask how they play, or watch a game first. Here are the rules you'll meet most often. For where to play, see playing pool in Pattaya.

The one rule almost everyone follows

Ball in hand means anywhere on the table. After a foul, your opponent can place the cue ball anywhere on the whole table, not just behind the head string (the "kitchen") as in some countries.

Thai bar 8-ball

This is the usual bar game. House rules change the details, but it normally goes like this:

- **Rack:** 15 balls in a triangle, the 8 ball in the middle. Staff usually rack for you.
- **Break:** usually the winner of the last game breaks, or the challenger, depending on the bar.
- **Open table:** after the break, the table is open until someone pots a ball fairly. That player takes that group, solids (1 to 7) or stripes (9 to 15).
- **Your turn:** keep shooting as long as you pot one of your own balls.
- **Fouls:** potting the cue ball, missing every ball, hitting your opponent's ball first or knocking a ball off the table. Your opponent gets ball in hand anywhere.
- **The 8 ball:** once your group is cleared, pot the 8 to win. Most bars want you to call the pocket for the 8.
- **You lose if you** pot the 8 too early, pot it in the wrong pocket, or scratch (pot the cue ball) while potting the 8.

House rules to ask about

- Do you have to call every shot, or just the 8?
- What happens if you pot the 8 on the break?
- Is slop allowed? Slop means balls that go in by luck. In casual bars it usually counts; in serious venues it doesn't.
- Who breaks: winner or challenger?
- Does a foul give one shot or two? In British-style games a foul can give two visits.

Killer pool

Killer is a group game, often run as a bar night with a small entry and the pot to the winner.

- **Lives:** each player starts with the same number of lives, usually three.
- **Order:** players take turns in a set order, often drawn from a list.
- **Your shot:** you get one shot and must pot a ball. If you pot, you keep your life. If you miss or foul, you lose a life.
- **Fouls:** potting the cue ball or missing every ball costs a life. Some bars take a life for potting the black too early.
- **Re-racks:** when the table is cleared, the balls are racked again and play carries on.
- **Winning:** players drop out when they lose their last life. The last player left wins the pot.
- **Variations:** some nights let you "buy back" in once, and some make the last two players play a frame for the win. Ask the organiser.

Snooker

Snooker is played on a much bigger table, with 15 red balls and 6 colours.

- **Values:** red 1, yellow 2, green 3, brown 4, blue 5, pink 6, black 7.
- **The order:** pot a red, then any colour, then a red, and so on. Reds stay down; colours come back to their spots.
- **The end:** once every red is gone, pot the colours in order from yellow to black.
- **Fouls:** missing the right ball, hitting the wrong ball first or potting the cue ball gives your opponent points: the value of the ball involved, with a minimum of 4.
- **Winning:** the player with the most points when the frame ends wins it.

Etiquette at the table

- Don't walk past or stand in a player's line while they're shooting.

- Wait for the balls to stop before you take your shot.
- Shake hands at the end of a game, win or lose.
- If you're playing for a drink, agree what that means before you break. See playing for a drink.
- See bar etiquette.

NIGHTLIFE

Pattaya Nightlife on a Budget

How to have a good night out in Pattaya without overspending: cheap areas, happy hours, free pool and live music, alcohol hours, getting around for ฿15 and a sample budget.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/nightlife/nightlife-on-a-budget/

Cheapest areas	**Soi Buakhao, Tree Town, Myth Night, LK Metro**
Happy hours	**Usually until about 8 or 9pm**
Alcohol sales	**11am to midnight in shops and most bars**
Getting around	**Baht bus ฿15 on the main loop**
Easy budget	**About ฿500 for a good night**

Quick answer: A good night out in Pattaya can cost about ฿500 if you eat at a street stall, drink in the cheaper bar areas like Soi Buakhao, Tree Town and Myth Night during happy hour, play pool on a free bar table, and ride the baht bus for ฿15. Costs climb fast on Walking Street, in clubs and rooftop bars, in taxis at closing time, and when nobody is watching the bill. Shops and most bars sell alcohol from 11am to midnight; only licensed entertainment venues and hotels serve later, at higher prices.

Sample budget

PART OF THE NIGHT	ROUGHLY (NOV 2026)
Street food dinner	฿40 to ฿100
Three or four beers at happy-hour or beer bar prices	฿200 to ฿350
Pool on a bar table	Free in most bars while you drink
Baht bus there and back	฿30
Late snack at 7-Eleven or a night market	฿50 to ฿100
Total	About ฿350 to ฿600

Beer prices come from our drink prices page, where an ordinary beer in the bars we list runs about ฿60 to ฿120, typically ฿85. Food prices are from street food. A car home on a ride app costs more than the bus; the app shows the price before you book.

Drink where it's cheap

- **Soi Buakhao, Tree Town, Myth Night and LK Metro** sit within a few minutes' walk of each other in central Pattaya and have some of the cheapest drinks in town. You can eat, play pool and move between them without transport. See Soi Buakhao bars.
- **Soi Chaiyapoon** is another cheap strip with lots of pool tables.
- **Walking Street, clubs, rooftop and hotel bars** cost far more. Walk through for the atmosphere, but don't base your night there. See rooftop bars if you want one special view.
- **Jomtien** has quieter bars if you're staying there. See Jomtien bars.

Use happy hours

Many bars run happy hours from the afternoon until about 8 or 9pm, with two-for-one deals or cheaper draught beer. Start early, eat, then slow down when prices go back up. Read the board outside, and check that your slips show the happy-hour price. See happy hours.

Know the alcohol hours

- Since 29 May 2026, shops, 7-Eleven and most bars and restaurants can sell alcohol from 11am to midnight. The old 2pm to 5pm break is gone.
- Licensed entertainment venues and hotels follow their own licence hours. In Pattaya's designated nightlife zones, such as Walking Street, that can be until about 4am. Late venues are the expensive ones.
- Since November 2025, customers can be fined up to ฿10,000 for drinking at a venue during banned hours, not just the bar. Don't ask an ordinary bar for "one more" after midnight.
- On five Buddhist holy days a year most shops and ordinary bars can't sell alcohol at all. Check the dates on Buddhist holidays and alcohol.
- The legal drinking age is 20, and venues can ask for ID.

Free and cheap things to do

- **Pool:** most bar tables are free while you buy a drink, and killer pool nights cost a small entry. See playing pool in Pattaya.
- **Live music:** many venues have no cover charge, though drinks cost a little more. See live music.
- **Sport on TV:** beer bar areas have big screens and don't charge to watch. See sports bars.
- **Not drinking?** A night can be great without it. See a night out without drinking and night markets.

Keep the bill honest

- Every drink comes with a slip in the cup in front of you, the check bin. Glance at it as you go, and query a wrong slip straight away, calmly.
- Know what the bar bell means before you touch it. See bar etiquette.
- Carry small notes and count your change. ฿100 and ฿1,000 notes are easy to mix up in a dark bar.
- Set a cash limit for the night and leave the rest, and your cards, in your room.

Getting around for less

- Baht buses cost ฿15 on the main Beach Road and Second Road loop, and up to about ฿20 on longer runs, since 10 April 2026. Flag one that already has passengers and don't name a destination, or it can become a pricey charter. See baht bus routes and fares.
- Fewer trucks run after midnight. For the trip home, a car on Bolt or Grab shows its price before you book; compare both apps, and prices often drop if you wait out the closing-time rush.
- Never ride a scooter after drinking: fines start at ฿5,000. See night transport.

What blows a budget

- Starting on Walking Street or in a club instead of finishing there.
- Drinking without eating, then paying for expensive food at 3am.
- Beachfront restaurants and bars, where the same drink or shake can cost several times the street price.
- Taxis or motorbike taxis without agreeing the price first, and losing track of your slips.

Pro tip: tourist markups are real. I've seen a smoothie that costs ฿40 at a market sold for ฿280 at a beach restaurant. I try to keep food and entertainment to ฿500 a day, though ฿1,000 is more realistic. I generally don't drink, and I don't smoke, vape or use cannabis. Those costs add up.

Common questions

How much do I need for a night out in Pattaya? About ฿500 covers street food, three or four beers in the cheaper areas and a baht bus each way. Clubs, Walking Street and rooftop bars need much more.

Where is the cheapest beer in Pattaya? The beer bar areas around Soi Buakhao, Tree Town, Myth Night, LK Metro and Soi Chaiyapoon, especially during happy hour. Our drink prices page lists typical prices.

Can I buy beer at 7-Eleven late at night? Only until midnight. Shops, 7-Eleven and most bars sell alcohol from 11am to midnight, and not at all on the Buddhist holy days.

Is it cheaper to drink in my room first? Usually, if you buy during legal sale hours. Keep it in your room: drinking is banned at temples, schools, hospitals and petrol stations, and best avoided in parks and public places.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya Mail, alcohol sales 11am to midnight from 29 May 2026; Nation Thailand, December 2025 sale hours and exemptions for licensed entertainment venues and hotels; The Thaiger, Thailand's drinking laws (October 2025) (drinking age 20, customer fines up to ฿10,000 from 8 November 2025, places where drinking is banned); Pattaya Mail, October 2025 (4am closing already allowed in designated Pattaya zones; plans to extend it nationwide were reported, and we found no confirmation they took effect); our baht bus, night transport and drink prices pages. Prices vary by bar and season.

Related guides

- Pattaya on 1,000 baht a day
- Cheap eats and late night food
- Staying safe on a night out
- Common scams

NIGHTLIFE

Nightclubs in Pattaya

Pattaya's nightclubs, mostly on Walking Street: what they're like, when they get busy, entry and drink prices, dress code and staying safe.

Verified October 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/nightlife/nightclubs/

Where	**Mostly Walking Street**
Busy	**After midnight**
Entry	**Often free; drinks cost more than bars**
Closing	**Around 4am in the nightlife zone**

Pattaya's biggest clubs are on Walking Street, with DJs, live acts and a mixed crowd of tourists, expats and Thais. Clubs are a different scene from the city's beer bars.

What to expect

- Big clubs with DJs and dance floors, mostly upstairs or set back from the street.
- The crowd builds after midnight and peaks around 1 to 3am.
- In the nightlife zone, venues can stay open until about 4am.

Prices

- Entry is often free, sometimes with a drink included on busy nights.
- Drinks cost more than in bars. Table packages with a bottle cost much more. See drink prices.

Dress code and ID

- Smart casual works everywhere; some clubs refuse flip-flops and vests.
- Carry ID or a passport copy; clubs check it.

Staying safe

- Watch your drink and keep it with you.
- Keep your phone and wallet secure in crowds.
- Go home by Bolt or Grab, not on a scooter. See night out safety.

More: nightlife, live music and rooftop bars.

Before you go

- Clubs get busy late, often after midnight.
- Bring your passport or a copy, ID checks are common.
- Getting home: see night transport. Never ride a scooter after drinking.

NIGHTLIFE

Late Night Food in Pattaya

Where and what to eat after midnight in Pattaya: late food markets like Sophon, street stalls, 24-hour 7-Eleven, delivery apps, Thai late-night dishes and tips for eating safely.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/nightlife/late-night-food/

Latest markets	**Sophon (about 3pm to 2am), Runway (about 4pm to 1am)**
24 hours	**7-Eleven and other convenience stores**
Street stalls	**Soi Buakhao and Tree Town run late**
Delivery	**Grab and LINE MAN; foodpanda left Thailand in 2025**
Alcohol	**Shops stop selling at midnight**

Quick answer: After midnight in Pattaya, the easy options are 7-Eleven and other 24-hour convenience stores, the late food markets (Sophon food market off Third Road is listed until about 2am, and Runway Market on Second Road until about 1am), street stalls around Soi Buakhao and Tree Town, and delivery apps such as Grab and LINE MAN. Pick busy stalls where food is cooked in front of you. Shops stop selling alcohol at midnight, so a late snack is the better plan than one more beer. Opening hours change, so check before a special trip.

At a glance

OPTION	HOURS (APPROXIMATE)	GOOD FOR
7-Eleven and other convenience stores	24 hours, most branches	Toasties, ready meals, water, rehydration drinks
Sophon food market (Soi Durian, off Third Road)	About 3pm to 2am	A sit-down spread of Thai and other dishes
Runway Market (Second Road)	About 4pm to 1am	Food, a late stroll, the Ferris wheel
Street stalls around Soi Buakhao and Tree Town	Many run late into the night	Grilled skewers, noodles, rice dishes, roti
Delivery apps	Depends on each restaurant	Eating in your room

Market hours are from listings and recent guides, which don't always agree. See night markets for days and times.

Late food markets

- **Sophon food market** is an open-air food court off Third Road, popular for late meals. In Thai, late markets are often called ตลาดโต้รุ่ง (talat to rung), a market that runs until dawn: a handy word to look for on signs.
- **Runway Market** on Second Road runs from the late afternoon into the small hours, with food stalls, shopping and a big Ferris wheel.
- **Thepprasit night market** is the biggest, but it's an evening market that closes at about 10:30 to 11pm, so go before your night out, not after.
- Bring small notes: many stalls are cash only.

Pro tip (prices as of Nov 2026): when I'm on a tight budget, it's lots of meals and snacks from 7-Eleven, Tops and Mini Big C. At Sophon Market, which listings show open until about 2am, I get yakisoba for ฿65, a coconut shake for ฿40 and a Bavarian cream doughnut for ฿25. Check the hours before you go, because they can change.

Street food after dark

- Stalls near the main nightlife areas often run until late. Around Soi Buakhao look for roti, kebabs, grilled pork skewers, pad thai and Isaan stalls; a local guide calls after 10pm the best time.
- Typical dishes cost about ฿40 to ฿80, and a grilled pork skewer about ฿10. See street food and cheap eats.
- Noodle soup, fried rice and pad kra pao are quick, hot and filling. See noodle dishes.

What Thai people eat late

- **Jok:** soft rice porridge, often with pork and egg. Gentle on the stomach.
- **Khao tom:** rice soup, sometimes served at shops that open in the evening and run late.
- **Noodle soup:** pick the noodle and the meat, then season it yourself from the jars on the table.
- **Moo ping and sticky rice:** grilled pork skewers, easy to eat walking home.
- **Roti:** fried flatbread with banana, egg or condensed milk, a sweet way to end the night.

Convenience stores

- 7-Eleven and other convenience stores are open 24 hours at most branches.
- Staff will heat toasted sandwiches and ready meals for you at the counter.
- Good for water, electrolyte drinks and snacks before bed. See hangovers and dehydration.

- Alcohol sales stop at midnight and start again at 11am, and not at all on five Buddhist holy days. See Buddhist holidays and alcohol.
- Bigger shops for groceries: see supermarkets.

Delivery

- Grab and LINE MAN are the big food delivery apps. foodpanda ended its Thai service on 23 May 2025, so ignore older guides that recommend it.
- Each restaurant sets its own hours, so the choice shrinks after midnight. Check the app before you leave the bar, not after.
- Set your pin carefully and add the room number and building name in the notes. In condos and hotels, you may need to meet the rider in the lobby.
- See food delivery apps.

Eating safely

- Pick busy stalls where food is cooked hot in front of you.
- Avoid food that has been sitting out for hours, and anything lukewarm that should be hot.
- Drink bottled water or water from refill machines. See drinking water.
- If you get sick with vomiting or diarrhoea, drink plenty of fluids and see a pharmacist or doctor if it doesn't settle, or straight away if there's blood, a high fever or signs of dehydration. See food poisoning.

Getting home

Use a ride app or a baht bus, and don't ride a scooter after drinking. If a stall isn't on a main road, walk back to one before you book a car. See night transport and night out safety.

Common questions

What is open after midnight in Pattaya for food? 7-Eleven and other convenience stores around the clock, late markets such as Sophon (listed until about 2am) and Runway (about 1am), street stalls near Soi Buakhao and Tree Town, and some restaurants on delivery apps.

Can I buy beer with my late snack? Not after midnight in shops or ordinary bars and restaurants. Sales restart at 11am.

Is street food safe late at night? Generally, if the stall is busy and cooks your food fresh and hot. Skip anything that has been sitting out.

Does foodpanda work in Pattaya? No. It stopped in Thailand in May 2025. Use Grab or LINE MAN.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: The Thaiger, foodpanda ends Thai service on 23 May 2025 (Grab and LINE MAN as the main rivals); Visit Thailand Today, Sophon food market listing (daily, about 3pm to 2am); Pattaya.com, street food (late stalls on Soi Buakhao; Thepprasit closing about 10:30pm); Pattaya Mail, alcohol sales 11am to midnight from 29 May 2026; our night markets and street food pages. Market hours come from listings, not the operators, and they change.

SECTION

🛺 Getting Around

Getting around Pattaya is cheap once you know how. Start with the baht buses, the shared trucks that loop around town for ฿15, then see how to get here from the airports, which ride apps work, and what to know before renting a scooter.

Quick answer: Inside Pattaya, the baht bus is king: ฿15 a ride in town, up to ฿20 on longer runs (since 10 April 2026), running south on Beach Road and north on Second Road, 24 hours a day. Bolt and Grab work well for door-to-door trips, and motorbike taxis in numbered vests cost about ฿40 to ฿80 for a short hop. From Suvarnabhumi airport, a private transfer is about ฿1,100 to ฿1,800 and the airport bus ฿140 to ฿170. Only rent a scooter if you have the right licence and always wear a helmet.

Your options at a glance (2026)

OPTION	TYPICAL COST	BEST FOR	READ MORE
—	—	—	—
Baht bus	฿15 in town, up to ฿20 longer runs	Beach Road, Second Road, Jomtien, Naklua	Baht buses
Bolt or Grab	Price shown in the app	Door to door, luggage, late at night	Bolt and Grab
Motorbike taxi	About ฿40 to ฿80 a short trip	Beating traffic alone	Motorbike taxis
Scooter rental	Daily or monthly rates	Confident riders with the right licence	Renting a scooter
Walking	Free	Short distances, early or late	Walking
Airport transfer from BKK	About ฿1,100 to ฿1,800 private sedan	Arriving with luggage	Airport transfers
Airport bus from BKK	About ฿140 to ฿170	Budget arrivals	Bangkok to Pattaya

Prices come from the linked pages, each checked in 2026. Baht bus fares rose on 10 April 2026; some older guides still say ฿10.

Start here

- Baht buses: routes, fares and how to stop one.
- Bolt and Grab: compare both before booking.
- Bangkok to Pattaya: about 1.5 to 2 hours by road from Suvarnabhumi.
- Renting a scooter: licence, helmet and the walk-around video.
- First trip checklist: what to sort before you fly.

How the transport pages fit together

- **Getting here and leaving:** Bangkok to Pattaya, arriving at Bangkok airport, airport transfers, U-Tapao airport, buses, the train, comparing airlines and leaving Thailand.
- **Around town:** baht buses, Bolt and Grab, motorbike taxis, getting around at night, walking and Bali Hai pier for the islands.
- **Riding and driving:** renting or buying a scooter, learning to ride, scooter rides, insurance, car rental and buying a car.
- **Licences and the law:** the International Driving Permit, a Thai driving licence, road rules and fines, road signs, police checkpoints and vehicle tax and plates.
- **Before your first trip:** the first trip checklist, first-timer mistakes and what's changing.

Riding a scooter: the honest version

Thailand's roads are among the world's most dangerous. To ride legally you need an International Driving Permit that covers motorcycles plus your home licence, or a Thai licence. Police checkpoints check your licence, helmet, tax sticker and plates. Without the right licence, most travel insurance won't pay out after a crash. Record a full walk-around video before you rent, and always wear a helmet, rider and passenger.

Pro tip: when he isn't riding himself, he prefers motorbike taxis, "so much faster" through traffic: "Motorbike taxis, Grab, Bolt, you name it." In high season, plan ahead or you can lose a lot of time in traffic.

Getting around at night

Baht buses run 24 hours a day on the main routes, though they're fewer late at night. Bolt and Grab work all night and show the price before you book; motorbike taxis wait at soi corners. Never ride a scooter after drinking: police set up checkpoints, and crashes rise sharply at night. See getting around at night and police checkpoints.

Common questions

How much is a baht bus in Pattaya? ฿15 in town and up to ฿20 on longer runs, since 10 April 2026. Pay the driver in cash after you get off.

Do Grab and Bolt work in Pattaya? Yes, both, for cars and motorbike taxis. Compare prices before booking.

How do I get from Bangkok airport to Pattaya? A private transfer (about ฿1,100 to ฿1,800) or the airport bus (about ฿140 to ฿170). The drive takes 1.5 to 2 hours.

Can tourists rent a scooter in Pattaya? Yes, but legally you need an IDP covering motorcycles plus your home licence, and a helmet.

Do baht buses run at night in Pattaya? Yes, 24 hours a day on the main routes, but less often late at night.

How do I get from U-Tapao airport to Pattaya? About ฿1,000 by taxi at the counter, or about ฿600 to ฿800 by app. See U-Tapao airport.

Sources

- Our baht bus, airport transfer, Bangkok to Pattaya, motorbike taxi, scooter and checkpoint pages, each checked in 2026 with its own sources.
- Jonny James ride video, 4 September 2026 (motorbike taxis).

GETTING AROUND

Baht Bus Routes & Fares

Where Pattaya's baht buses go, what they cost (฿15), and how to ride one without paying a charter price.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/getting-around/baht-bus-routes-fares/

Fare	**฿15 in town, up to ฿20 on longer runs (since 10 Apr 2026)**
Pay	**Cash to the driver, after you get off**
Main loop	**South on Beach Rd, north on Second Rd**
Stop it	**Press the buzzer**
Runs	**24 hours a day**

Baht buses are the pickup trucks with two benches in the back that run fixed routes around Pattaya. They're the cheapest way to get around town, they run 24 hours a day, and once you know the routes they're easy to use.

Quick answer: A baht bus ride in town costs **฿15 per person**, and up to **฿20** on longer runs such as Jomtien or Naklua (fares set by the operators on 10 April 2026, the first rise in over 30 years). Wave one down heading your way, climb in the back without saying where you are going, press the buzzer to stop, and pay the driver in cash after you get off.

What a ride costs

A ride on the main in-town routes costs **฿15 per person**, including the Beach Road and Second Road loop that most visitors use. Jonny confirmed the ฿15 fare on the main loop in October 2026.

The fare went up from ฿10 on 10 April 2026. Pattaya Mail reported the new structure from the Pattaya Songthaew Operators Cooperative as ฿15 for trips of 1 to 10 km and a maximum of ฿20 for longer routes. The cooperative named fuel and living costs as the reason, and says more than 712 trucks run in the city.

- Longer routes, like Jomtien, Naklua or further along Sukhumvit Road, can cost more. Ask the driver before you get in.
- Pay the driver in cash through the passenger window when you get off. Keep coins and small notes handy, since change for a ฿1,000 note is a big ask.
- Each person pays, children included unless they sit on your lap.

TRIP	FARE PER PERSON	NOTES
Beach Road and Second Road loop	฿15	The route most visitors use
Other in-town trips, 1 to 10 km	฿15	Cross-town roads, Soi Buakhao, Third Road
Longer runs (Jomtien, Naklua, further along Sukhumvit)	Up to ฿20	Sources differ by route: some guides still list ฿10 for Naklua. Ask before you get in.
Before 10 April 2026	฿10	Older guides and videos still show this
Charter (whole truck)	Agreed with the driver	No fixed rate: agree a price for the truck, not per person

How to ride

1. Wait at the roadside and wave at a truck heading your way. There are no fixed stops on the main loop.
2. Check the direction first: on the main loop, trucks go **south along Beach Road** and **north along Second Road**.
3. Climb into the back and sit down. Don't tell the driver where you're going; just get in.
4. When you want to get off, press the buzzer on the roof.
5. Hop off, walk to the passenger window and pay.

The routes

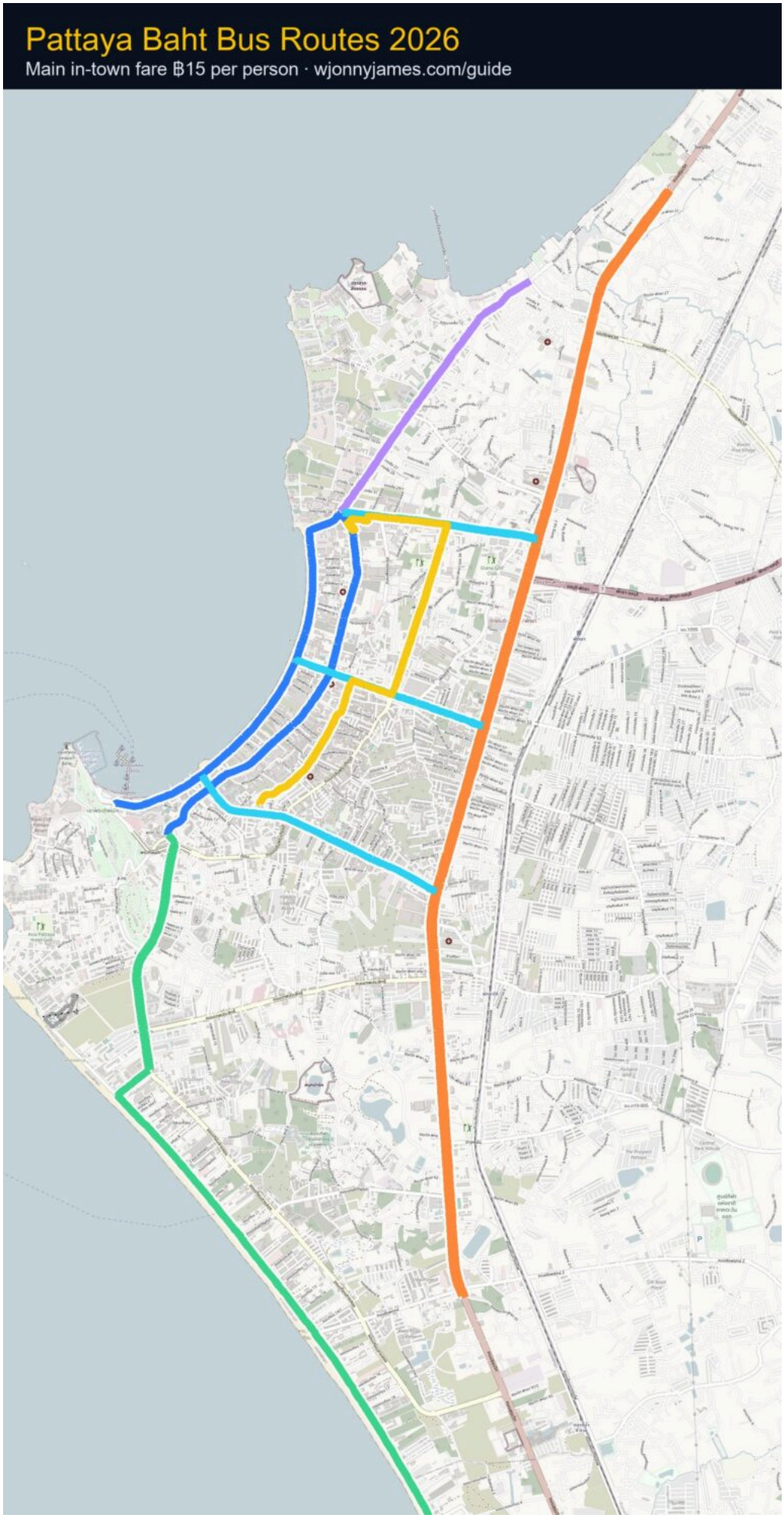
The coloured lines are the main baht-bus routes, drawn on the real streets. Tap a line for the fare and where it goes.

- **Beach Road & Second Road loop** (blue): the main in-town loop, ฿15.
- **Pattaya to Jomtien** (green): along Thappraya Road over the hill to Jomtien Beach Road, running both ways along the beach road. There's no Jomtien Second Road route any more: it stopped when Jomtien Beach Road went back to two-way traffic.
- **Naklua** (purple): north from the Dolphin roundabout along Naklua Road.
- **Sukhumvit Road** (orange): up and down the main highway on the inland side of town.
- **Cross-town** (cyan): North, Central and South Pattaya Roads, linking Beach Road and Second Road with Sukhumvit.
- **Soi Buakhao & Third Road** (yellow): up and down every night, from South Pattaya Road along Soi Buakhao, along Central Pattaya Road to Third Road, then up Third Road to North Pattaya Road, Terminal 21 and on to Naklua. It isn't an official route, but trucks run it all evening.

Where to catch each route

ROUTE	WHERE TO WAVE ONE DOWN	DIRECTION
Beach Road and Second Road loop	Anywhere along either road	South on Beach Road, north on Second Road
Pattaya to Jomtien	Second Road near the South Pattaya Road junction, or along Thappraya Road	Both ways along Jomtien Beach Road
Naklua	The north side of the Dolphin roundabout, or along Naklua Road	North from the roundabout
Sukhumvit Road	Along Sukhumvit, on the side heading your way	Both ways
Cross-town	North, Central and South Pattaya Roads	Between Beach Road and Sukhumvit
Soi Buakhao and Third Road	Along Soi Buakhao in the evening	Both ways, all evening

The simplest check is the direction of travel and whether there are already passengers in the back.


Pattaya Baht Bus Routes 2026
Main in-town fare ฿15 per person · wjonnyjames.com/guide



Pattaya baht bus routes, 2026. Tap to open the full-size map.

When baht buses run

Baht buses run 24 hours a day, every day. They are busiest from late afternoon through the evening. Late at night there are fewer trucks on the road, but there are fewer people waiting too, so you might wait a little longer than usual.

Avoid an accidental charter

If you climb into an **empty** truck, or tell the driver where you want to go before you get in, he may treat it as a private charter and ask for a lot more than ฿15. Pick a truck that's already heading your way with people in the back, and just get in.

Chartering a whole truck is fine for a group, the airport run, or a trip off the regular routes. Agree the price before you set off.

- Agree the price for the whole truck before you get in, and say the number of people.
- Open Bolt or Grab first and check what a car costs for the same trip. That gives you a fair number to work from.
- Have the right money ready. "No change" is a common way for the price to creep up.
- If you only wanted a normal ride and the driver says "charter", wave him on and wait for the next truck with passengers in it.

Baht bus or something else?

OPTION	TYPICAL COST	BEST FOR
Baht bus	฿15 to ฿20 per person	Trips along the fixed routes, day and evening
Motorbike taxi	Agreed per trip, or shown in the app	Getting through traffic fast, alone
Bolt or Grab	Price shown in the app before you book	Door to door, luggage, late at night
Walking	Free	Short hops along Beach Road

When he isn't riding his own scooter, Jonny's own pick is a motorbike taxi or a bike on Grab or Bolt: "so much faster" through traffic, especially in high season, when a baht bus can get stuck on Beach Road or Second Road.

Staying safe on a baht bus

- Sit down and hold the rail. Trucks pull away and brake hard, and the back is open.
- Don't stand on the rear step unless every seat is taken and you can hold on with both hands. Locals do it; it is the riskiest place to be.
- Keep your phone and bag on your lap or between your feet, away from the open sides.
- Get off only once the truck has fully stopped, and look for scooters passing on the left before you step down.
- In heavy rain the benches get wet and the sides let water in. A car may be the better choice.

If something goes wrong

Note the truck's number plate or the number painted on the side. You can report drivers to the Department of Land Transport on its hotline **1584**, or to the Tourist Police on **1155**, who speak English. For a few baht of overcharging, most people simply pay the posted fare, say thank you and walk away.

Tips

- Baht buses run all night. There are fewer trucks late at night, so you might wait a little longer.
- Trucks on the main loop often turn off Beach Road onto South Pattaya Road before Walking Street. Walk the last bit.
- For door-to-door trips, Bolt and Grab are often cheap too. Compare before you ride.
- Hold on when the truck moves off. The back is open and the benches are hard.

- Want to sound like a local? Call them songthaews (สองแถว), said **SONG-tao** (Thai: sɔ̌ːŋ tʰɛ̌ːw, both syllables with a rising tone). It means “two rows”, after the two benches in the back.

Getting to other areas

- Naklua: change at the Dolphin roundabout. See Naklua.
- Jomtien: trucks run along Thappraya Road. See Jomtien.
- For trips off the routes, a ride app is often easier. See Bolt and Grab.
- **Thepprasit Road and the night market:** there is no all-day loop here like the main routes. On market days (Friday, Saturday and Sunday), dedicated baht buses run up and down Thepprasit Road through the afternoon and evening for the Thepprasit Night Market crowds. Monday to Thursday, regular baht buses don’t usually run along it, so walk or take Bolt, Grab or a taxi. See Thepprasit Road.

Riding with luggage or kids

- Big suitcases do not fit well. Use a car for airport runs. See airport transfers.
- Hold on to children, the trucks start and stop suddenly.

During festivals

- Songkran turns baht buses into water targets. See Songkran and Wan Lai.
- Routes divert when Beach Road closes for big events. See events calendar.

Common questions

How much is a baht bus in Pattaya?

฿15 per person for in-town trips up to about 10 km, and up to ฿20 on longer runs, since 10 April 2026. Before that it was ฿10.

Do baht buses run 24 hours?

Yes, baht buses run 24/7. There are fewer trucks late at night, but fewer passengers too, so the wait might be a little longer.

How do I stop a baht bus?

To get on, wave at the driver from the roadside. To get off, press the buzzer on the roof of the truck. The driver will pull over at the next safe spot.

Do I pay before or after?

After. Get off first, then walk to the passenger window at the front and hand the driver the fare in cash.

Do foreigners pay more?

The posted fare is the same for everyone. Pattaya Mail has reported complaints about foreigners being asked for more, mostly on charters and in high season. Pay the normal fare with the right money and you rarely have a problem.

Can I take a baht bus to Bangkok or the airport?

Not on the regular routes. For Bangkok and the airports, see Bangkok to Pattaya and airport transfers. A charter to U-Tapao is possible, but a car is usually more comfortable with luggage.

Can I pay by card or QR code?

No. Baht buses take cash only. Coins and ฿20 notes are easiest.

Related guides

- Train to Pattaya
- Buses Between Bangkok and Pattaya
- Walking in Pattaya: Pavements, Crossings and Safety
- Pattaya Klang (Central Pattaya Road)
- Budget for a Week in Pattaya
- Bangkok to Pattaya
- Motorbike Taxis

GETTING AROUND

Bangkok to Pattaya

Every way from Bangkok and its two airports to Pattaya compared: taxi, private transfer, airport bus, city buses, minivans and the train, with prices, times, tolls and where each one drops you.

Verified October 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/getting-around/bangkok-to-pattaya/

Distance	**About 150 km from central Bangkok, about 120 km from Suvarnabhumi**
Time by road	**1.5 to 2 hours from BKK, 2 to 3 hours from DMK or the city**
Taxi or transfer	**About ฿1,100 to ฿1,800 from BKK, tolls usually included**
Airport bus	**About ฿140 to ฿170 from BKK, roughly hourly**
Cheapest taxi we've found	**฿1,000 (W Member Pro)**

Pattaya is about 150 km south-east of central Bangkok, and every route is by road except one slow daily train. The good news: Suvarnabhumi airport (BKK) sits on the Pattaya side of Bangkok, right by Motorway 7, so from there it's an easy 1.5 to 2 hour run. This page compares every option, then explains which airport is easier, where you get dropped in Pattaya, and how to avoid the common mistakes.


Buses at the Suvarnabhumi Airport public transport centre
Photo: Patiparn.Nice2002bkk, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

The options at a glance

OPTION	FROM	PRICE (APPROX.)	TIME	DROPS YOU AT
Taxi or private transfer	BKK	฿1,100 to ฿1,800 per car	1.5 to 2 hrs	Your hotel door
Taxi or private transfer	DMK or central Bangkok	฿1,400 to ฿2,200 per car	2 to 3 hrs	Your hotel door
Airport bus (Roong Reuang, route 389)	BKK	฿140 to ฿170	About 2 hrs	North Pattaya bus station, Thappraya Road, Jomtien
Bell Travel coach	BKK and DMK	From about ฿250 (BKK), about ฿350 (DMK)	2 to 3 hrs	Bell office, North Pattaya, with hotel drop-off in central Pattaya
City bus	Ekkamai or Mo Chit	฿130 to ฿160	2.5 to 3 hrs	Pattaya bus terminal, North Pattaya Road
Minivan	Victory Monument area	฿150 to ฿250	2 to 3 hrs	Varies, often Central Pattaya
Train (3rd class)	Hua Lamphong, once a day	About ฿31	About 3 hrs 40 min	Pattaya railway station, east of Sukhumvit Road

Prices are approximate, change from time to time, and can be different at weekends and holidays. Check with the operator before you travel.

Taxi or private transfer

The easiest option, and the one most people take after a long flight. A car takes you from the arrivals hall to your hotel door with no changes.

- **From BKK:** fixed-price transfers booked in advance usually cost about ฿1,100 to ฿1,800 for a sedan, a bit more for an SUV or van. The cheapest we have found is ฿1,000; the details are in this W Member Pro post.
- **Metered taxi from the airport rank:** possible, but agree the total before you leave, including the ฿50 airport surcharge and the motorway tolls. Many drivers quote a flat fare for Pattaya instead of using the meter.
- **Tolls:** the motorway tolls between Bangkok and Pattaya add up to roughly ฿100 to ฿150 one way. Most fixed-price transfers include them; ask if you're not sure.
- **Bolt and Grab** also do airport to Pattaya rides. Check the price in the app; see Bolt and Grab in Pattaya.

Tip: have your hotel's address in Thai and its Google Maps pin ready to show the driver.

Airport bus from Suvarnabhumi (BKK)

The cheapest sensible option from BKK. Roong Reuang Coach runs route 389 from the bus counters on the ground floor (level 1) of the airport, roughly every hour from early morning to late evening.

- Fare: about ฿140 to ฿170, depending on where you get off.
- Stops: North Pattaya bus station, then along Second Road and Thappraya Road towards Jomtien. Ask the driver which stop is closest to your hotel.
- From the stop, finish with a baht bus, Bolt or Grab, or a motorbike taxi if you travel light.

Bell Travel coach (BKK and DMK)

Bell Travel runs coaches from both airports to its own office in North Pattaya, and includes a drop-off at hotels in the central Pattaya area. It costs more than the 389 bus but saves the last leg. Book online or at their airport counter; seats can sell out at busy times.

Buses from Bangkok city: Ekkamai and Mo Chit

If you're already in Bangkok, buses leave from the Eastern Bus Terminal at **Ekkamai** (next to BTS Ekkamai) and the Northern Bus Terminal at **Mo Chit**. They're air-conditioned coaches with reserved seats and arrive at the Pattaya bus terminal on North Pattaya Road. Full details are on buses between Bangkok and Pattaya.

The train

One slow third-class train a day runs from Hua Lamphong in Bangkok to Pattaya, early in the morning. It costs about ฿31 and is a nice ride if you have time, but it takes around 3 hours 40 minutes and the station is east of Sukhumvit Road, away from the beach. See the train to Pattaya.

Suvarnabhumi (BKK) or Don Mueang (DMK)?

	SUVARNABHUMI (BKK)	DON MUEANG (DMK)
Airlines	Most international and full-service flights	Mostly low-cost airlines (AirAsia, Nok Air, Thai Lion)
Side of Bangkok	East, on the Pattaya side	North, on the far side of the city
Time to Pattaya	About 1.5 to 2 hrs	About 2 to 3 hrs, more in traffic
Taxi price	Lower	Higher, because of the distance and city traffic
Direct bus	Roong Reuang 389, roughly hourly	Fewer direct options; Bell Travel and some airport buses

If you can choose, BKK is the easier airport for Pattaya. Flying from elsewhere in Thailand or Asia? Also check U-Tapao airport, only about 45 km from Pattaya.

Where you arrive in Pattaya

- **Pattaya bus terminal** (North Pattaya Road): city buses from Ekkamai and Mo Chit, and the first stop of the 389. Baht-bus drivers waiting here often quote a charter price; walking out to the main road and flagging a passing one is usually cheaper.
- **Bell Travel office** (North Pattaya): then the included hotel drop-off.
- **Thappraya Road and Jomtien**: later stops of the 389, handy if you stay in Jomtien or Pratumnak.
- Not sure where to stay yet? See where to stay in Pattaya.

Going back to the airport

The same options run in reverse. Allow at least three hours from Pattaya to an international flight at BKK, more on Friday and Sunday evenings and around holidays, when the motorway into Bangkok slows down. Book a transfer the day before, or check the bus times, so you're not hunting for a ride on the day.

Tips

- Avoid leaving Bangkok in the evening rush hour if you can.
- Agree the full price, including tolls and the airport surcharge, before you set off.
- Get a SIM or eSIM at the airport so you can use Bolt or Grab and maps; see SIM cards and eSIMs.
- Fill in the TDAC arrival card before you fly to save time at immigration.
- Get some baht for the first ride. See ATM fees and exchanging money.

Travel times to expect

- By car the trip usually takes around 1.5 to 2 hours, longer in Friday and holiday traffic.
- Buses take a little longer because of stops and terminals.
- Allow extra time around Songkran and New Year. See Thai public holidays.

GETTING AROUND

International Driving Permit (IDP) for Thailand

Do you need an International Driving Permit in Thailand? Yes, with your home licence. Which type your country issues (1949 or 1968), why the motorcycle category matters, how long it covers you, checkpoints, fines and insurance.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/getting-around/international-driving-permit/

Get it	**In your home country, before you travel**
Types accepted	**1949 Geneva (1 year) and 1968 Vienna (up to 3 years)**
Motorbikes	**Your IDP and home licence must both cover motorcycles**
Carry	**The IDP plus your physical home licence**
No IDP or wrong category	**Fine, possible impound, insurance may not pay**
Staying long term	**Get a Thai driving licence**

Quick answer: Yes. To ride a scooter or drive a car in Thailand as a visitor, you need your home driving licence **and** an International Driving Permit (IDP), and for a scooter both must include the motorcycle category. Thailand accepts both kinds of IDP: the 1949 Geneva permit (valid one year) and, since 1 May 2021, the 1968 Vienna permit (valid up to three years). You get it in the country that issued your licence, before you travel. Rental shops often don't ask, but police at checkpoints do, and your insurance may not pay out without one.

At a glance

QUESTION	ANSWER
Do I need one?	Yes, with your home licence, for cars and scooters
Which type?	Whichever your country issues for Thailand; Thailand accepts 1949 and 1968
How long is it valid?	1949: one year. 1968: up to three years, or until your licence expires
Where do I get it?	From the official issuer in your home country
Can I get one in Thailand?	Not for a foreign licence
Scooter on a car licence?	No: you need the motorcycle category on both documents
Living here?	Get a Thai driving licence

What an IDP is

- An IDP is a small booklet that translates your home licence into several languages. It isn't a licence on its own: it's only valid together with your physical home licence.
- You get it in the country that issued your licence, usually before you travel. You can't get one in Thailand for a foreign licence.
- Digital licences on a phone app are not accepted; carry the plastic card.

Which type: 1949 or 1968

- There are two kinds of IDP: the 1949 Geneva Convention permit (valid for one year) and the 1968 Vienna Convention permit (valid for up to three years, and never longer than your licence).
- Thailand has recognised the 1949 permit for decades, and from 1 May 2021 licences issued under the 1968 convention can also be used here.
- Most countries issue only one type for a given destination, so you usually don't choose. The UK government, for example, lists the 1968 IDP for Thailand (£5.50 from PayPoint shops). The US, Canada, Australia and Japan issue the 1949 type.
- If your country belongs to neither convention, an IDP from it won't be recognised; you would need a Thai licence. Check with the Thai embassy before you rely on it.

Motorbikes: the category matters

This is where most visitors get caught out. **To ride a scooter legally, your IDP and your home licence must both include the motorcycle category** (usually category A). A car-only licence with a car-only IDP does not let you ride a scooter, even a small 125cc one.

- If you don't have a motorcycle licence at home, you're riding unlicensed in Thailand, whatever the rental shop says.
- Riding without a valid licence also puts you under the lower 0.02% drink-drive limit. See road rules and fines.
- See renting a scooter and learning to ride.

Where to get one

- Apply through the official issuer in your home country: usually the national motoring association, the licensing authority or an agent they name. It typically takes a passport photo, your licence and a small fee, and is often same-day.
- Get it before you leave. Some issuers only accept applications in person in the home country.

- Avoid websites selling an “international driver’s license” online. These aren’t official IDPs, and Thai police won’t accept them.

How long you can use it

- Visitors can drive on an IDP and home licence during their stay, as long as both are valid.
- We couldn’t find an official day limit for tourists. Guides commonly cite about 90 days as a practical limit, and some rental companies and insurers use their own limits, sometimes shorter, so check your policy.
- If you live in Thailand, especially on a non-immigrant visa, get a Thai driving licence. It’s cheaper in the long run, it’s what police and insurers expect from residents, and it makes renting and buying easier. See getting a Thai driving licence.
- An IDP can help when you apply for a Thai licence, but the rules on which tests you skip have changed, so check that page first.
- Once you hold a Thai licence, the Department of Land Transport can issue you a Thai IDP for driving abroad; it has asked foreign applicants for a work permit or smart visa.

Checkpoints and fines

- Police checkpoints in Pattaya regularly check helmets and licences. See police checkpoints.
- Riding without a valid licence means a fine, often ฿1,000 to ฿2,000, and the bike can be impounded until it’s paid. We found out the hard way: see My First Thai Traffic Stop.
- Paying a fine doesn’t make you legal for the rest of the day; you can be stopped again.
- Keep the IDP and licence on you, not in the hotel safe. Not carrying a licence is itself a fine of up to ฿1,000.

Insurance

- Travel insurance often excludes accidents when you ride without the right licence, and Thai hospital bills after a crash can be huge.
- Check your policy wording before you ride. See motorbike insurance and travel insurance.

Be safe

Thailand’s roads are among the most dangerous in the world. Wear a helmet, never ride after drinking, and take it slowly until you know local traffic. See road rules and fines and what to do after a road accident.

Common questions

Do I need an International Driving Permit in Thailand? Yes. A visitor needs an IDP together with their home licence, for cars and scooters.

Does Thailand accept the 1968 IDP? Yes. Thailand accepts both the 1949 and the 1968 permits; licences issued under the 1968 convention have been usable here since 1 May 2021.

Can I ride a scooter with a car-only IDP? No. Your IDP and home licence must both show the motorcycle category.

Can I get an IDP in Thailand? Not for a foreign licence. Get it at home before you travel, or get a Thai licence if you live here.

Is an online “international driver’s license” valid? No. Only an IDP from your country’s official issuer counts.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: GOV.UK, international driving permits (1968 IDP listed for Thailand, £5.50 at PayPoint); The Nation, new international driving permit from 1 May 2021 (1968 convention licences usable in Thailand; Thai IDPs); The Thaiger, international driving permits in Thailand (March 2026) (which countries issue which type, motorcycle category, practical 90-day guidance). Some older guides say Thailand only recognises the 1949 permit; that predates 2021. This is general information, not legal advice.

Related guides

- Getting a Thai Driving Licence
- Renting a Scooter
- Police Checkpoints: What Riders Need to Know
- Thai Road Rules and Traffic Fines

GETTING AROUND

Pattaya Airport Transfers

How to book a transfer between Pattaya and Suvarnabhumi, Don Mueang or U-Tapao: private cars, vans, shared minibuses, hotel transfers and ride apps, with prices and what to check before you pay.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/getting-around/airport-transfers/

BKK to Pattaya	**About ฿1,100 to ฿1,800 for a private sedan**
DMK to Pattaya	**About ฿1,400 to ฿2,200 for a private sedan**
U-Tapao to Pattaya	**Taxi about ฿1,000 to ฿1,200; airport minibus ฿150 to Big C South Pattaya**
Van (up to about 9 people)	**Roughly ฿1,800 to ฿2,500 from BKK**
Book	**A day or more ahead, especially for late-night arrivals**

A pre-booked transfer is the least stressful way between an airport and your Pattaya hotel: the driver meets you in arrivals with a name sign, the price is fixed, and tolls are usually included. This page covers the transfer options for all three airports. For buses, the train and a full comparison, see Bangkok to Pattaya.


The motorway spur road at Suvarnabhumi Airport with the passenger terminal
Photo: User:Mattes, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons

Transfer types

TYPE	BEST FOR	PRICE FROM BKK (APPROX.)	NOTES
Private sedan	1 to 3 people, 2 big bags	฿1,100 to ฿1,800	Door to door, fixed price
Private SUV	3 to 4 people, more luggage	฿1,400 to ฿2,000	Check the boot size if you have golf bags
Private van	Groups up to about 9	฿1,800 to ฿2,500	Cheapest per person for groups
Shared minibus	Solo travellers	฿300 to ฿500 per person	Stops at several hotels, so slower
Hotel transfer	Not wanting to arrange anything	Often higher than independent firms	Booked through your hotel
Bolt or Grab	Flexible plans	Varies with demand	Check the price in the app before booking

Prices are approximate and change; they rise late at night and over holidays. The cheapest car we have found from Bangkok is ฿1,000; see this W Member Pro post.

Suvarnabhumi (BKK)

Most international flights land here. It is on the Pattaya side of Bangkok, so transfers take about 1.5 to 2 hours. Drivers usually meet you at the arrivals hall exit with a sign; agree in advance which door, and send your flight number so they track delays.

Don Mueang (DMK)

The low-cost airline airport, north of Bangkok. The drive to Pattaya crosses the city, so allow 2 to 3 hours and expect a higher price than from BKK.

U-Tapao (UTP)

About 40 to 50 km south of Pattaya, with mostly domestic and some seasonal international flights. The taxi counter in front of Terminal 1 runs 24 hours, typically about ฿1,000 to ฿1,200 (agree the price first). The airport minibus costs ฿150 to Big C South Pattaya, three times a day; book a day ahead. See U-Tapao airport.

What to check before you pay

- Is the price per car or per person?
- Are motorway tolls and the airport surcharge included?
- Waiting time if your flight is late, and whether there is a charge for extra waiting.
- Child seats if you need them (ask; they are not standard).
- Drop-off at a condo or a hotel down a small soi: give the exact Google Maps pin.
- Pay on arrival or a deposit only, where possible, and keep the booking confirmation on your phone.

Going back to the airport

Book the return trip a day ahead. Leave Pattaya at least three hours before an international flight from BKK, and earlier on Friday and Sunday evenings or around Thai holidays, when traffic into Bangkok builds up. Check the events calendar for big holiday weekends.

Tips

- Have a little cash in baht for tips or tolls in case they are not included. See ATM fees.
- A local SIM or eSIM lets you message the driver. See SIM cards and eSIMs.
- Once you are settled, getting around town is cheap: see baht bus routes and fares.

Travelling with kids or lots of bags

- Ask for a van if you have more than two big suitcases.
- Request a child seat in advance, many drivers do not carry one.
- See Pattaya with kids and Pattaya with a baby.

GETTING AROUND

Bolt & Grab in Pattaya

Using Bolt and Grab in Pattaya: cars and motorbike taxis, prices and surge, paying, pickup tips, safety, and when a baht bus is the better choice.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/getting-around/bolt-grab-pattaya/

Apps	**Bolt and Grab both work in Pattaya**
Options	**Cars and motorbike taxis**
Pay	**Cash or card in the app**
Tip	**Compare both apps before booking**

Quick answer: Grab and Bolt both work across Pattaya, Jomtien and Naklua, for cars and motorbike taxis, and you see the price before you book. Both are certified by Thailand's Department of Land Transport. Grab also does food delivery and groceries, and card payment on it has been reliable for Jonny; Bolt is often a little cheaper on a given trip, so it's worth having both and comparing. For one person along the main roads, a ฿15 baht bus is still far cheaper.

Bolt and Grab both work well in Pattaya and are the easiest way to get door to door without haggling. You see the price before you book.

Grab and Bolt at a glance

	GRAB	BOLT
Rides	Cars, bigger cars, motorbike taxis	Cars and motorbike taxis
Food and groceries	GrabFood and GrabMart	Rides only, in Jonny's use
Paying	Cash or card, card reliable for Jonny	Cash or card, card gave Jonny trouble
Price	Shown before you book, rises in rain and rush hour	Shown before you book, often a little cheaper
Savings	Coupon packs and GrabUnlimited (below)	Occasional in-app promotions
Licensed	Certified by the Department of Land Transport	Certified by the Department of Land Transport

Which one I use

I've used Grab hundreds of times in Pattaya, for rides and for food, and it's the app I'd tell a friend to download first. In my experience it's usually a little cheaper, and paying by card just works. I had repeated problems paying by card on Bolt, so if you plan to ride cashless, Grab is the safer bet. Bolt is still worth having as a backup to compare prices.

- **Grab:** rides, food delivery, groceries (Grab Mart) and more in one app. Card payment has been reliable for me.
- **Bolt:** rides only, sometimes cheaper on a given trip. Card payment gave me trouble, so keep cash handy if you use it.

Getting set up

- Download both apps before you arrive and register with your phone number.
- A Thai SIM or eSIM helps, drivers often call or message. See SIM cards and eSIMs.
- Add your card in Grab right away so you never need exact change.

Cars or motorbikes

- Both apps offer cars and motorbike taxis.
- A motorbike is cheaper and quicker through traffic for one person.
- Take a car with luggage, in the rain, or for longer trips.

Save money with Grab coupon packs

This is the part most visitors miss. Grab sells monthly **coupon packs** (look for "Packages" or "Subscriptions" in the app) that bundle dozens of discount vouchers for rides, food, Mart and more. The one in my screenshot cost 54 baht for 6 months and gives 34 vouchers every month, like 15% off food orders. Use two or three and it has paid for itself.


Grab coupon pack showing 34 vouchers per monthly cycle for 54 baht
My GrabFood pack: 54 baht for 6 months, 34 vouchers every cycle

Pro tip: Check the packages section every time you open the app. The offers change, and stacking a pack voucher on a ride or food order can save you a ton over a month.

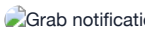
Grab Unlimited: free delivery for 99 baht

If you order food a lot, **GrabUnlimited** is a no-brainer. I pay 99 baht for 12 months and it cuts delivery fees on eligible orders. It pays for itself in the first couple of orders.


GrabUnlimited subscription, 99 baht for 12 months
GrabUnlimited: 99 baht a year

Food delivery with GrabFood

GrabFood is Thailand's version of DoorDash or Uber Eats, and almost every restaurant in Pattaya is on it. Missing items happen far less than I was used to with Uber Eats in the States. I'd guess about 1 order in 40 is missing something small, like a soda or a side. When it happens, report it in the app under the order and Grab refunds quickly.


Grab notification confirming a 89 baht refund
A refund notification after I reported a missing item

Also see cheap eats.

Prices

- Prices rise when demand is high, such as rain, rush hour, and after big events.
- Compare both apps, the cheaper one changes from trip to trip.
- Waiting a few minutes or walking to a quieter street can lower the price.

Paying

- Pay in cash or add a card in the app. Card payment has been smooth on Grab for me, less so on Bolt.
- Keep small notes for cash rides, drivers may not have change.
- Tips are not expected but are appreciated. See tipping.

When a driver goes quiet

Out of hundreds of orders I've only had a handful of problems. The most common is a driver who accepts the ride and then doesn't move or reply.

Pro tip: If the driver hasn't moved on the map within about 2 minutes of accepting, cancel and find a new driver. Don't wait it out.

Pickup tips

- Set the pin exactly where you are standing, especially on one-way roads like Beach Road and Second Road.
- Check the plate number before you get in.
- Hotels and malls often have a set pickup point.

Are Grab and Bolt legal in Thailand?

Yes. Ride-hailing apps have been legal in Thailand since the Department of Land Transport began certifying them, and in June 2026 the department listed eight certified platforms, including Grab, Bolt, inDrive, LINE MAN and Maxim. Under rules tightened in 2025 the drivers must also be registered for public transport, and the apps were given three months from June 2026 to remove drivers who aren't.

- In practice, motorbike riders on the apps should have a yellow plate. Reports differ on cars: some say yellow plates, others say a private car with an official ride-hailing sticker is allowed.
- Either way, the plate number and the driver's photo in the app must match the vehicle that turns up. If they don't, cancel and report it in the app.
- You can still meet a local taxi or motorbike driver who objects to app cars at a pickup point, mostly at piers and bus stations. Walk a little away and set the pin there.

Safety

- Share your trip with a friend from the app.
- Ask for a helmet on motorbike rides.
- See night transport.

Apps or baht bus?

- On the Beach Road and Second Road loop, a baht bus is hard to beat on price. See baht bus routes and fares.
- For trips off the main routes, late at night, or with bags, an app is often better value than chartering a truck.
- Also see motorbike taxis.

Common questions

Is Grab or Bolt cheaper in Pattaya? It changes from trip to trip. Bolt is often a little cheaper, Grab often has coupons that close the gap. Check both before you book.

Can I use Grab or Bolt without a Thai SIM? You need data to book and the driver may call or message you, so a Thai SIM or eSIM makes it much easier. Grab lets you chat in the app, and the messages can be translated.

Do Grab and Bolt go to the airport? Yes, both can take you from Pattaya to Suvarnabhumi or U-Tapao. For other options, see airport transfers.

Is a motorbike taxi on the app safe? It's the fastest way through traffic for one person. Ask for a helmet, hold on, and take a car with luggage, at night after drinking, or in heavy rain.

Do I tip the driver? It isn't expected. Rounding up a cash fare or adding a small tip in the app is appreciated.

GETTING AROUND

Renting a Scooter

Renting a scooter in Pattaya: the licence you really need, helmets and checkpoints, prices and deposits, checking the bike, insurance, and how to ride safely.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/getting-around/renting-a-scooter/

Licence	**International Driving Permit with motorcycles, plus your home licence**
Helmet	**Always, for rider and passenger**
Before you rent	**Record a full walk-around video**
Which bike	**Small scooter for the city; a bigger bike for trips between cities**
Be safe	**Thailand's roads are among the world's most dangerous**

A scooter is the most flexible way to get around Pattaya, and rental shops are everywhere. It is also where many visitors get into trouble, with the police or on the road.

Licence

- You need a motorcycle licence that is valid in Thailand: a Thai licence, or an International Driving Permit that covers motorcycles alongside your home licence.
- Many shops will not ask, but the police at checkpoints will.
- Travel insurance may not cover you without one. See getting a Thai driving licence.
- How to get an IDP and which type you need: see International Driving Permit (IDP) for Thailand.

Helmets and checkpoints

- Helmets are required for the rider and passenger.
- Police checkpoints are common in Pattaya, especially for helmets and licences. See police checkpoints.
- We found out the hard way: a ฿2,000 fine and an impounded scooter, all explained in My First Thai Traffic Stop.

Prices and deposits

- Daily rentals are cheap, and weekly or monthly rentals cost much less per day. Prices vary by shop, season and bike size.
- **Monthly prices for a basic 125cc scooter:** I've rented a Yamaha Filano 125 and a Giorno 125 for ฿3,500 a month. I've seen them as low as ฿2,000 a month in the low season and ฿4,000 to ฿5,000 in the peak season.
- Leave a cash deposit, not your passport. A passport copy is fine.
- Check what fuel level the bike should be returned with.

Which scooter to rent

- **For the city, a 125cc scooter is all you need.** My favourite is the Yamaha Filano 125: comfortable, nimble and easy to flick through Pattaya traffic. It's also easy to move around a parking spot, up hills, over bumps and in tight car parks.
- **Bigger scooters** like the Honda ADV 350 or Yamaha XMAX 300 have more highway speed and could take you to Bangkok, but they're much less manoeuvrable in the city. For trips out of town I'd just take a car or a ride app instead. See Bangkok to Pattaya.
- **An older bike can be a good thing.** A friend of mine had a bad crash on a rental that already had heavy wear and tear. The damage was cosmetic, mostly deep scratches, and the shop didn't charge him anything extra. On a brand-new bike, the same crash could have been an expensive bill.

Pro tip: rent or try a few before you buy, because everyone wants different things. I ended up buying a Grand Filano after riding on the back of one on a ride-app trip. See buying a scooter.

Checking the bike

- **Film a full walk-around video** of the scooter before you ride off, slowly, close up on every panel, with the shop in the background if you can. Add photos of any scratches. I've always done this, and I've never had a problem.
- Test the brakes, lights, horn and indicators.
- Check the tyres and make sure the registration and insurance papers are with the bike.

Common rental scams

Most shops in Pattaya are honest, and I've never had an issue myself. These are the tricks to watch for:

- **Charging you for old damage.** The shop points to scratches that were already there and asks you to pay. Your walk-around video is your proof.
- **Inflated repair bills.** Small scratches quoted at thousands of baht. As a guide, a full set of new plastic panels for a 125cc scooter costs around ฿7,000, so make sure any estimate makes sense. For a single scratched panel, ask for the price of that part, or get a quote from another repair shop.
- **Holding your passport.** A shop with your passport can name its price. Leave a cash deposit and a copy instead.

- **“Stolen” bikes.** In rare cases a bike goes missing with a spare key still at the shop. Use your own lock, park in busy, well-lit places, and photograph where you parked.
- **Fuel games.** Agree the fuel level when you collect the bike. When I forgot to fill mine back up, I was charged ฿100 for a quarter of a tank: fair, but easy to avoid.

Good shops are reasonable. When I put a small scratch on a brand-new scooter, the shop didn’t charge me at all; they just polished it out on the spot.

Fuel

- Petrol stations are everywhere, but you’ll also see small shops and stalls by the roadside with glass bottles of fuel lined up out front. They’re cheap, convenient and great for a quick top-up.
- Check the fuel level when you collect the bike and return it the same.
- Don’t run out. It’s not the end of the world, but pushing a scooter in the heat still sucks.

Insurance

- Every bike should have basic compulsory insurance, but it covers very little.
- Ask what happens if the bike is damaged or stolen, and who pays.
- See motorbike insurance and travel insurance.

Riding safely

- Never ride after drinking.
- Ride slowly until you understand local traffic. Watch for cars turning across you and bikes riding against the traffic.
- Wet roads are slippery, especially at the start of a rain shower.
- New to riding? See learning to ride and road rules and fines.

If something goes wrong

- In an accident call 1669, then your rental shop and insurer. See what to do after a road accident.
- If the shop claims damage you did not cause, show your photos and call the Tourist Police on 1155. See common scams.

Alternatives

Ride apps, baht buses and motorbike taxis are easy if you would rather not ride. See Bolt and Grab and baht buses. Staying long term? See buying a scooter.

GETTING AROUND

Pattaya First-Timer Mistakes to Avoid

The mistakes first-time visitors make in Pattaya, from the new 30-day visa exemption and airport exchange rates to riding without a licence, jet ski deals, alcohol rules and love scams, and how to avoid them.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/getting-around/first-timer-mistakes/

Visa exemption	**30 days since 15 Sep 2026; overstay is ฿500 a day**
Before you fly	**TDAC arrival card, travel insurance, IDP with motorcycles if you'll ride**
Biggest money waste	**Bad exchange rates, ATM fees and home-currency conversion**
Biggest risk	**Riding a scooter without a licence or helmet**
Check	**Every bill and every note before you pay**
Scam or fraud	**Tourist Police 1155; online fraud 1441**

Quick answer: Most first trips to Pattaya go great, and the mistakes people make are easy to avoid. The big ones in 2026: assuming you still get 60 days (the visa exemption is 30 days since 15 September 2026), forgetting the online TDAC arrival card, changing all your money at the airport, riding a scooter without a motorcycle licence or helmet, renting jet skis without photos, not agreeing prices first, and handing over money or your heart too fast. Check every bill, keep your passport yourself, and if something goes wrong, call the Tourist Police on 1155.

At a glance

MISTAKE	DO THIS INSTEAD
Planning on 60 days	The visa exemption is 30 days; extend once by up to 30 for ฿1,900
No TDAC	Fill in the free online arrival card within 3 days before you land
Changing everything at the airport	Change a little; use a money changer in town
Choosing your home currency at an ATM or card machine	Always choose baht
Riding without a motorcycle licence	IDP and home licence both with motorcycles, or a Thai licence
Passport as a rental deposit	Give a copy and a cash or card deposit
No price agreed	Agree it before any ride, jet ski or service without a menu
Buying a SIM from a stranger	Official store or airport counter, with your passport

Before you fly

- **The 30-day rule.** Since 15 September 2026, visa-exempt visitors get 30 days, extendable once by up to 30 more at an immigration office for ฿1,900. Overstaying, even by a day, costs ฿500 a day, up to ฿20,000, and long overstays can mean a ban. See visa extension.
- **The TDAC.** Every foreign visitor fills in the free Thailand Digital Arrival Card online within the three days before arrival. Use the official site only. See TDAC arrival card.
- **Insurance.** Get travel insurance with medical cover, and read what it says about scooters. See travel insurance.
- **The IDP.** If you might ride or drive, get an International Driving Permit at home. You can't get one here for a foreign licence. See International Driving Permit.

Money

- **Changing all your cash at the airport.** Change a little there, then use a licensed money changer in town. See exchanging money.
- **Small ATM withdrawals.** Foreign cards pay about ฿220 to ฿250 per withdrawal, so take fewer, larger amounts. See ATM fees.
- **Paying in your home currency.** When an ATM or card machine offers your home currency, decline and choose baht. See cash or card.
- **Not checking the bill or the notes.** Mistakes happen. Count your change, and look at the notes you hand over: the ฿1,000 and ฿100 notes are easy to mix up in a dim light.
- **Paying beach prices for everything.** The same drink can cost several times more on the beachfront than at a market.

Pro tip: I've seen a ฿40 market smoothie sold for ฿280 at a beach restaurant. And once in a while a cashier will say your ฿1,000 note was a ฿100. It's rare, but it happens, because they look similar. My own first visit was two weeks, and that was too short.

Getting around

- **Riding a scooter without a valid licence or a helmet.** You need a motorcycle licence valid in Thailand, and helmets are compulsory for rider and passenger. Since April 2026 the maximum fine for no helmet is ฿2,000, a bike ridden without a licence can be impounded, and insurance may not pay. See renting a scooter and road rules and fines.
- **Leaving your passport as a rental deposit.** Offer a copy and a cash deposit instead.

- **Not agreeing the price first.** Motorbike taxis have no meter; registered riders wear numbered vests, blue since October 2026. Agree the fare before you get on. See motorbike taxis.
- **Overpaying for short rides.** The baht bus is ฿15 on the normal loop, up to about ฿20 for longer runs; Bolt and Grab show the price upfront.

Activities

- **Renting jet skis without photos.** Damage claims for old scratches are a known problem. Film the jet ski from every side before you ride, with the operator watching. See common scams.
- **Booking the first tour you're offered.** Compare prices and what's included. See tours from Pattaya.

Health

- **Too much sun on day one.** Midday sun is strong all year. See heat and sun safety.
- **Drinking tap water.** Most people, Thais included, don't. Bottled and refill water is cheap. See drinking water.

Rules that catch people out

- **Vaping** is illegal in Thailand, even for personal use. Smoking on the beach can cost up to ฿5,000. See laws visitors break.
- **Alcohol hours.** Normal sale hours are 11am to midnight. On the five Buddhist holy days most shops, 7-Eleven, supermarkets and ordinary bars can't sell alcohol, though hotels and licensed entertainment venues may. See Buddhist holidays and alcohol.
- **SIM cards.** Since 16 May 2026, new SIMs are registered in person with a face check, and you can hold up to three per network. Buy from an official store or airport counter, never a SIM someone else registered. See SIM cards and eSIMs.
- **Respect.** Criticising the monarchy is a crime, and temples expect covered shoulders and knees. See Thai etiquette.

Money and your heart

The most expensive mistake isn't a bad exchange rate. It's moving too fast with someone you've just met. A love scam is when someone builds a relationship to get money from you, and it can happen to anyone, in person or online. The warning signs are mostly money and pressure: requests to help family, pay a bill or put something valuable in their name. Never hand over more than you could afford to lose. See love scams and dating in Thailand.

Pro tip: in my experience, love scams are by far the #1 way people get hurt here. If you're a tourist, Pattaya isn't the place to find love. Adjust your expectations, and learn the difference between really wanting to help and feeling obligated.

Common questions

How long can I stay in Thailand without a visa? Since 15 September 2026, visa-exempt visitors get 30 days, extendable once by up to 30 days for ฿1,900 at immigration.

Is it better to exchange money at the airport or in Pattaya? In town. Change just enough at the airport for your first day, then compare licensed money changers.

Can I ride a scooter in Pattaya with a car licence? No. Your home licence and IDP must both include motorcycles, or you need a Thai motorcycle licence.

Who do I call if I'm scammed? The Tourist Police on 1155. For online fraud where money has left your account, call 1441 straight away so the account can be frozen.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Royal Thai Embassy Colombo, TDAC (updated March 2026) (mandatory for foreign visitors, within 3 days before arrival). The visa, alcohol, baht bus, motorbike taxi, SIM and scam-hotline facts were checked today for the linked guide pages, which list their own sources. Jonny's smoothie, banknote and first-trip points are his own experience. General information only; rules change, so check before you travel.

More quick wins

- Start with the first trip checklist.

GETTING AROUND

Buying a Scooter in Pattaya

Buying a new or used scooter as a foreigner in Pattaya: prices, the paperwork to register it in your name, yearly tax and compulsory insurance (often about ฿600 a year all in), what to check on a second-hand bike, and Jonny's own Grand Filano purchase.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/getting-around/buying-a-scooter/

New 125 to 160cc scooter	**Roughly ฿55,000 to ฿80,000**
Used scooter	**Roughly ฿15,000 to ฿45,000**
Register in your name	**Passport plus a residence certificate**
Every year	**Road tax (฿100) and compulsory insurance (Por Ror Bor, about ฿323 for 76 to 125cc)**
Registration book	**The "green book"; make sure it matches the bike**
You still need	**A motorcycle licence valid in Thailand**

Quick answer: Foreigners can buy a scooter and register it in their own name in Pattaya. A new 125 to 160cc scooter costs roughly ฿55,000 to ฿80,000 and a used one roughly ฿15,000 to ฿45,000. To register it you usually need your passport and a residence certificate; a new-bike dealer does the paperwork for you. After that it costs little to keep legal: road tax is ฿100 a year for a private motorbike, and the compulsory insurance (Por Ror Bor) is about ฿323 a year for a 76 to 125cc bike. You still need a motorcycle licence valid in Thailand to ride it.


A Honda Click 125 scooter at a Thai dealer
Photo: Chanokchon, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

New or used?

	NEW	USED
Price (125 to 160cc, approx.)	฿55,000 to ฿80,000	฿15,000 to ฿45,000
Paperwork	Done by the dealer	You transfer it at the DLT
Risk	Low	Check the condition and the papers
Resale	Holds value reasonably well	Holds value well if it's a popular model

Popular models keep their value and are easy to get parts for. Dealers may offer finance, but foreigners usually need a long-stay visa and a Thai bank account for it.

Buy or keep renting?

Renting is simpler for short stays: no registration, and repairs are the shop's problem (see renting a scooter). For several months or longer, buying usually works out cheaper, and a popular model sells again easily. Not sure which bike suits you? Rent one or two models first.

Pro tip (as of Nov 2026): I bought a Grand Filano new, the ABS version, for about ฿66,000 to ฿70,000 (Yamaha listed it at ฿69,200 at the 2026 Bangkok Motor Show, Thairath reported). I discovered it riding on the back of one on a ride-app trip: comfortable, quiet, smooth, with a big seat. It's light, flickable and good for parking, the hybrid has fantastic fuel economy, and annual insurance and registration are very cheap. I bought in North Pattaya. The paperwork took about 10 minutes, I rode off, and a month later the permanent plate was swapped on. An agent got my motorbike and car licences for about ฿11,000, but I still did two full days of school. Rent or try a few first; everyone wants different things. Rules vary by office, so see Thai driving licence.

About the Grand Filano

For anyone curious about Jonny's bike: the 2026 Yamaha Grand Filano Hybrid lists at ฿64,700 for the standard version and ฿69,200 for the ABS version. Ask the dealer whether registration and Por Ror Bor are included in the price. It has a 125cc "Blue Core Hybrid" engine with an electric assist and stop-start, a 4.4 litre tank, and weighs about 102 kg in ABS form. Yamaha claims up to 62.5 km per litre; real riding will be lower. Prices vary by dealer.

Registering it in your name

Scooters are registered with the Department of Land Transport (DLT); Pattaya's office is in Banglamung. To register a bike in your name you usually need:

- Your passport.
- A residence certificate from immigration (or your embassy), which needs your TM.30 address report on file. See TM.30 explained.
- For a used bike: the seller, their ID and the registration book (the "green book", sometimes called the blue book), plus a signed transfer form.

New-bike dealers handle registration for you, and you ride on a temporary red plate until the permanent one arrives. Requirements change; check with the DLT or a reputable dealer first.

Every year

- **Compulsory insurance** (Por Ror Bor): cheap, and it covers injuries to people, not damage to the bike. Published 2026 rates are about ฿323 a year for 76 to 125cc and about ฿430 for 126 to 150cc.
- **Road tax**: ฿100 a year for a private motorbike, whatever the size. Paying late adds 1% of the tax per month.

- **Inspection:** bikes five years old or more, counted from first registration, need a private inspection (a "tor ror or" centre) before the tax can be renewed.
- You can renew tax and insurance at the DLT, through many insurance and tax shops, or through an agent for a small fee. Through an agent, Jonny paid about ฿600 for his tax and Por Ror Bor together in 2026.
- Consider extra insurance for theft and damage. See motorbike insurance and vehicle tax and plates.

Checking a used scooter

- The engine and frame numbers must match the green book.
- The name in the green book must be the seller's (or come with a signed transfer).
- Check tyres, brakes, lights and the horn; test ride it.
- Ask when tax and insurance were last paid; the sticker shows the tax date.
- Check it's road legal: both mirrors fitted and the original or a legal exhaust. Missing mirrors and loud modified exhausts are fined at checkpoints.
- Be wary of a bike with no book, a "book coming later" promise, or a price far below similar bikes. Facebook Marketplace is full of good bikes and also scams; see second-hand buy and sell.

Running costs

- Fuel is cheap on a 125cc scooter, and servicing at a local shop is inexpensive. In an October 2026 video Jonny paid ฿450 at a cheap motorbike shop for new grips fitted and an oil change.
- Prices for repairs can vary a lot. Jonny lists being overcharged for motorcycle work as a foreigner among the overcharges he has met himself, so ask the price before work starts.
- Budget for a good helmet and a strong lock. Park in marked bays, not on red-and-white kerbs, where bikes can be clamped or towed.

You still need a licence

Owning a bike doesn't change the rules: you need a motorcycle licence valid in Thailand and a helmet. See Thai driving licence, International Driving Permit and our ฿2,000 traffic stop. Not staying long? See renting a scooter. Parking tips for the busy streets: Soi 6.

Selling it later

- Keep the registration book and service receipts, buyers want to see them.
- Transfer the ownership officially, or you may stay liable for fines.
- See second-hand buy and sell.

Common questions

Can a foreigner buy a scooter in Thailand? Yes. You can buy and register it in your own name, usually with your passport and a residence certificate.

How much is a new scooter in Pattaya? Roughly ฿55,000 to ฿80,000 for a 125 to 160cc model in 2026. Jonny's Grand Filano ABS was about ฿66,000 to ฿70,000.

How much does it cost each year to keep a scooter legal? Road tax is ฿100 and Por Ror Bor about ฿323 for a 76 to 125cc bike, plus an inspection for bikes five years or older. Through an agent, expect a few hundred baht more.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Autospinn, motorcycle tax rates (฿100 a year, late fee, inspection for bikes five years or older); Chiang Rai Times, insurance costs (updated August 2026) (Por Ror Bor ฿323.14 for 76 to 125cc, ฿430.14 for 126 to 150cc); Car250, Yamaha Grand Filano Hybrid prices and economy (September 2026); Checkraka, Grand Filano Hybrid ABS 2026 specs. Jonny's ฿600 tax and Por Ror Bor figure is from his traffic stop post. Registration rules vary by office; check with the Banglamung DLT.

GETTING AROUND

Arriving at Bangkok Airport: Step by Step

What to do after you land at Suvarnabhumi or Don Mueang in 2026: the TDAC arrival card, the 30-day visa exemption, immigration queues and e-gates, SIM rules, cash, and getting to Pattaya.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/getting-around/bangkok-airport-arrival/

Before you fly	**Free TDAC at tdac.immigration.go.th, within 3 days of arrival**
Visa exemption	**30 days since 15 Sep 2026 for about 60 countries**
Immigration	**Peak queues mid-afternoon; e-gates mainly for returning visitors**
SIM	**In person with passport and a face check**
To Pattaya	**About 1.5 to 2 hours by road from Suvarnabhumi**
Cheapest ride	**Airport bus from Level 1, Gate 8, about ฿135**

Quick answer: Fill in the free Thailand Digital Arrival Card (TDAC) at tdac.immigration.go.th in the three days before you land. If your country is on the visa exemption list, you get up to 30 days on arrival since 15 September 2026. After landing, follow the signs to immigration, collect your bags and walk through customs. SIM desks in arrivals register you with your passport and a face check. Use a bank ATM or change a little cash, then take the airport bus (about ฿135 from Level 1, Gate 8), a private transfer or a taxi to Pattaya, about 1.5 to 2 hours from Suvarnabhumi.

At a glance

STEP	WHAT TO KNOW
Before you fly	TDAC online, free, within 3 days before arrival; check your visa
Immigration	Queues are longest in the afternoon; first-time visitors use staffed desks
Customs	Green channel if nothing to declare; declare foreign cash over US$20,000
SIM	Passport and face check in person; eSIM before you fly is easiest
Cash	Foreign-card ATMs charge about ฿220 to ฿250 per withdrawal
To Pattaya	Bus about ฿135, private car about ฿1,100 to ฿1,800 from Suvarnabhumi

1. Before you fly

- **TDAC:** every non-Thai traveller, including children, needs a Thailand Digital Arrival Card for each entry. It is free at **tdac.immigration.go.th**. Sites that charge are agents. Do it in the three days before you arrive. See TDAC arrival card.
- **Visa:** since 15 September 2026, citizens of about 60 countries and territories can enter without a visa for up to 30 days. You can extend once at an immigration office by up to 30 more days for ฿1,900. If you know you want longer, get a tourist visa before you fly. See visa options and visa extension.
- **Onward ticket:** airlines and immigration may ask for proof that you will leave within your permitted stay. Have it on your phone.

2. Immigration

Follow the “Arrivals” and “Passport control” signs. Have your passport, your TDAC confirmation and your onward ticket ready.

Suvarnabhumi is busy. In August 2026 The Nation reported 5,000 to 6,000 arrivals an hour at immigration in the afternoon peak, from 1pm to 5pm, with about 70,000 international arrivals a day. Keep water with you and expect a queue.

Automated e-gates are opening to more nationalities. The Immigration Bureau approved in principle adding passport holders from 31 more countries in a phased rollout. First-time visitors still have their photo and fingerprints taken at a staffed desk; returning visitors whose details are already on record are the ones who can use the gates. Thailand Privilege members get fast-track help. See Thailand Privilege visa.

Forgot the TDAC? You can still complete it on your phone before you reach the desk using the airport Wi-Fi.

3. Bags and customs

Collect your bags and walk through the green channel if you have nothing to declare. Declare foreign cash worth more than US$20,000. Vapes and e-cigarettes are illegal in Thailand, so don’t bring them. See laws visitors break.

4. SIM card

SIM and eSIM counters for the main networks are in the arrivals hall. Since 16 May 2026, new SIMs are registered in person with your passport and a face check, and foreigners can hold at most three SIMs per network. Airport counters are convenient but often cost more than shops in town. A travel eSIM bought before you fly avoids the counter. See SIM cards and eSIMs.

5. Cash

Change only a little at the airport; rates are usually better at licensed money changers in town. Thai bank ATMs charge foreign cards about ฿220 to ฿250 per withdrawal, so take out larger amounts less often. Decline the ATM's offer to convert to your home currency. See exchanging money and ATM fees.

6. Getting to Pattaya

OPTION	COST (APPROX.)	TIME	NOTES
Airport bus to North Pattaya	About ฿135	About 2 hours	Level 1, Gate 8 at Suvarnabhumi
Airport bus to Jomtien	About ฿158	About 2 hours	Ends at Jomtien bus station, Thappraya Road
Bell Travel coach	From about ฿250 (BKK)	2 to 3 hours	Hotel drop-off in central Pattaya
Private transfer	About ฿1,100 to ฿1,800 per car	1.5 to 2 hours	Door to door, tolls usually included
Metered taxi from the rank	Agree the total first	1.5 to 2 hours	฿50 airport surcharge plus tolls of about ฿100 to ฿150

- **Bus:** the cheapest option. Timetables published online disagree, so check the next departure at the counter. See buses to Pattaya.
- **Private transfer or taxi:** best for groups, families, lots of luggage or late arrivals. Use the official public taxi rank or a pre-booked transfer, never someone who approaches you in the hall. See airport transfers.
- **Don Mueang (DMK):** fewer direct buses and a longer drive. Bell Travel and private transfers are the usual choices.
- Full comparison: Bangkok to Pattaya.

In Pattaya

Your bus or car drops you at the North Pattaya terminal, Jomtien or your hotel. From the bus terminal, take a ride app or flag a passing baht bus on the main road: ฿15 on the normal loop since 10 April 2026. See baht bus routes and fares.

Flying into U-Tapao?

It is much closer to Pattaya, about 40 to 50 km south, with mostly domestic and some seasonal international flights. There is a taxi counter and an airport minibus to South Pattaya. Do your TDAC before you fly. See U-Tapao airport.

If something goes wrong

- Lost bags: report at the airline desk in the baggage hall before you leave, and keep the reference number.
- Someone offering a taxi in the hall or charging for "help" with forms: walk away and use official counters. Scam hotline: 1441. See common scams.
- Lost passport or a crime: the Tourist Police hotline is 1155. See Tourist Police.

Common questions

How long can I stay without a visa? Up to 30 days per entry since 15 September 2026 if your country is on the exemption list, extendable once by up to 30 days for ฿1,900. Check the list for your passport.

Do I need to fill in an arrival card? Yes, the online TDAC, free at tdac.immigration.go.th, within three days before you arrive. There is no paper card.

Can I use the immigration e-gates? Usually not on your first visit. First-time visitors register at a staffed desk. Returning visitors from eligible countries can use the gates as they open to more nationalities.

What is the cheapest way from the airport to Pattaya? The airport bus from Level 1, Gate 8 at Suvarnabhumi, about ฿135 to North Pattaya or ฿158 to Jomtien.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: TAT News, 30-day visa exemption from 15 September 2026; The Nation, Suvarnabhumi auto gates and immigration upgrades (17 August 2026); Airport Pattaya Bus, Suvarnabhumi to Pattaya fare and boarding point. TDAC, visa extension, SIM, ATM, taxi and transfer details follow our linked pages, each checked separately. Rules change often; check before you fly.

Related guides

- First trip checklist
- Pattaya first-timer mistakes to avoid
- Travel insurance

GETTING AROUND

Leaving Thailand: Departure Checklist

Flying home from Pattaya: getting to the airport on time, checking your visa dates, VAT refunds for tourists, the 2026 power bank and baggage rules, cash limits and spending your last baht.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/getting-around/leaving-thailand/

To Suvarnabhumi	**About 1.5 to 2 hours by road, then 3 hours at the airport**
Overstay	**฿500 a day, up to ฿20,000, paid when you leave**
VAT refund	**฿2,000 or more per shop per day; take the goods out within 60 days**
Customs check	**Needed only if your VAT refund goods total ฿20,000 or more**
Power banks	**Hand luggage only, two at most, no use during the flight**
Cash	**Declare ฿50,000 or more in baht, or over US$20,000 in foreign currency**

Quick answer: Most people fly home from Suvarnabhumi (BKK), 1.5 to 2 hours from Pattaya by road, so leave about five hours before an international flight. Check your last entry or extension stamp first: overstaying costs ฿500 a day, up to ฿20,000. For a VAT refund, keep goods, forms and receipts together; you need a customs stamp before check-in only if they total ฿20,000 or more. Power banks go in hand luggage, two at most. There's no form to fill in to leave.

At a glance

TASK	WHEN	DETAIL
Check your permitted stay	A week before	Overstay ฿500 a day, up to ฿20,000
Leave Pattaya	About 5 hours before an international flight	1.5 to 2 hours on the road, more on Friday and Sunday evenings
Arrive at Suvarnabhumi	3 hours before an international flight	Check your airline's check-in closing time
Customs for VAT refund	Before check-in	Only if VAT refund goods total ฿20,000 or more
Pack power banks	Hand luggage	Two at most, labelled with capacity, no use in flight

Getting to the airport

- **Suvarnabhumi (BKK)** is on the Pattaya side of Bangkok, so the drive takes about 1.5 to 2 hours. A fixed-price car usually costs about ฿1,100 to ฿1,800, tolls often included. See airport transfers.
- **The airport bus** from Pattaya to Suvarnabhumi is the cheap option, at about ฿140 to ฿170. See Bangkok to Pattaya for every option in reverse.
- **Don Mueang (DMK)**, the low-cost airline airport, is on the far side of Bangkok. Allow 2 to 3 hours on the road.
- **U-Tapao (UTP)** is under an hour away, but has mostly domestic flights. See U-Tapao airport.
- Traffic into Bangkok is worst on Friday and Sunday evenings and around holidays. Book your ride the day before, especially for very early flights.

Visa dates and overstays

- Check the date on your last entry stamp or extension stamp. Since 15 September 2026, the visa exemption for most nationalities is 30 days, not 60, so people used to the old rule get caught out.
- Overstaying costs ฿500 a day, up to ฿20,000, paid to immigration at the airport before you can leave. Long overstays can also mean a ban from coming back.
- If you need more time, extend before your stay runs out. See extending your stay.
- The TDAC is filed before you arrive, not when you leave.

VAT refunds for tourists

Thailand's VAT is 7%, a rate the government has kept until 30 September 2027. Visitors can claim much of it back on goods they take home.

When you buy

- Shop at stores showing the "VAT Refund for Tourists" sign, or ask before you pay. Not every shop takes part, even in the big malls such as Central and Terminal 21.
- Spend at least ฿2,000, including VAT, at one shop on one day.
- Show your passport and ask for the refund form (P.P.10) and the original tax invoice.
- Take the goods out of Thailand within 60 days of buying them.

At the airport

- **Under ฿20,000 in total:** no customs stamp is needed. Go straight to check-in.
- **฿20,000 or more:** before check-in, take the goods, forms and invoices to the "Customs Inspection for VAT Refund" counter for a stamp.
- **Luxury goods**, such as jewellery, gold, watches, glasses, pens, phones, laptops, tablets, handbags and belts worth ฿40,000 or more each, or anything worth ฿100,000 or more, must be shown again after immigration. Carry them in your hand luggage.

- After immigration, hand your forms in at the VAT Refund for Tourists office, or drop them in the box outside if you have no luxury goods.
- Refunds up to ฿30,000 can be paid in cash, to a card, or by some e-wallets; over ฿30,000, by card only. A processing fee is taken off.
- Some downtown refund points pay up to ฿12,000 in cash before you fly, but the goods must leave Thailand within 14 days and you still drop the forms at the airport.

Packing rules

- **Power banks:** since June 2026, Thailand follows the international rules. Hand luggage only, two at most, and you can't use them or charge them during the flight. Up to 100 Wh (about 20,000 mAh) is fine; 101 to 160 Wh needs airline approval; unlabelled power banks aren't allowed.
- **Liquids** over 100 ml go in checked bags.
- **Checked bags may be opened.** Since 16 October 2026, security can open a checked bag if the scan raises questions. The inspection is filmed, and a notice is left inside. A TSA-approved lock makes this easier, and valuables, fragile things, documents and medicine belong in hand luggage.
- **Buddha images and antiques** need a permit from the Fine Arts Department to leave Thailand. Ask the shop about the permit before you buy, and don't take antiques out without paperwork. See souvenir shopping.
- **Cash:** declare ฿50,000 or more in Thai baht, or foreign currency worth over US$20,000, to customs when you leave.

Last baht

- Spend your coins in Pattaya. Exchange offices abroad rarely take Thai coins.
- Notes can be changed back at the airport exchange counters, but the rate is often worse than in town. See exchanging money.
- Keep a few hundred baht for the ride, the tolls and a drink at the airport.

At the airport

- Arrive about three hours before an international flight, with VAT refund forms and goods ready to show before check-in.
- Keep your passport, boarding pass and any extension paperwork together for immigration.

Common questions

Do I need to fill in a departure card when leaving Thailand? Not when you fly. The old paper TM6 arrival and departure card was shelved at airports in 2022, and the TDAC that replaced it is only filed before you arrive. At immigration you show your passport and boarding pass.

What happens if I overstay by a day or two? You pay ฿500 a day at the airport before you can leave, up to ฿20,000.

What is the minimum for a VAT refund in Thailand? ฿2,000, including VAT, at one shop on one day, from a shop in the "VAT Refund for Tourists" scheme. The goods must leave Thailand with you within 60 days.

Do I need a customs stamp for my VAT refund? Only if your VAT refund goods add up to ฿20,000 or more. Below that, go straight to the refund office after immigration.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Airports of Thailand, Don Mueang VAT refund guide (฿20,000 customs rule, luxury goods, refund limits, downtown refunds); Revenue Department, VAT Refund for Tourists conditions (฿2,000 minimum, 60 days, P.P.10); Nation Thailand, January 2024 (customs threshold raised from ฿5,000 to ฿20,000); Nation Thailand (7% VAT kept until 30 September 2027); ScandAsia, 4 June 2026 (CAAT power bank rules); U-Tapao airport news (CAAT checked baggage inspections from 16 October 2026); Royal Thai Embassy, local law and customs (cash declaration, Buddha image permits); Bangkok Post, 2022 (TM6 forms shelved at airports); TAT Newsroom, September 2026 (30-day exemption). The three-hour advice is common airline guidance; check your airline's check-in closing time. Refund fees and the luxury goods list can change.

GETTING AROUND

U-Tapao Airport to Pattaya

Pattaya's closest airport, about 40 to 50 km south: which airlines fly there in 2026, the ฿150 airport minibus, taxis, transfers and ride apps into town, and flying out.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/getting-around/u-tapao-airport/

Distance	**About 40 to 50 km south of central Pattaya**
Time	**About 45 minutes to an hour by road**
Minibus	**฿150 to Big C South Pattaya, 3 a day, tell them a day ahead**
Taxi	**Counter at Terminal 1, 24 hours; agree the price first**
Flights	**Mostly domestic, plus seasonal international flights**

Quick answer: U-Tapao (UTP), officially U-Tapao Rayong-Pattaya International Airport, is Pattaya's closest airport, about 40 to 50 km south near Sattahip. It's much smaller than Bangkok's airports, with mostly domestic flights, such as Bangkok Airways from Koh Samui and Phuket, plus some seasonal international ones. To get to Pattaya, take a taxi from the counter (travel guides put it at about ฿1,000 to ฿1,200 to central Pattaya), book a private car or ride app, or catch the ฿150 minibus to Big C South Pattaya, which runs three times a day. The drive takes about 45 minutes to an hour.

At a glance

OPTION	PRICE	TIME	GOOD TO KNOW
Airport minibus (Suvarnabhumi Burapha)	฿150 per person	Not published	To Big C South Pattaya; leaves 12:30, 14:00 and 17:00; tell them a day ahead
Taxi from the counter	About ฿1,000 to ฿1,200 to central Pattaya (travel guides)	45 minutes to an hour	Loma Pattaya Taxi Co-operative, 24 hours, in front of Terminal 1
Limousine or private car	Ask for a quote	45 minutes to an hour	Vanatana, outside Terminal 2, during flight hours; or pre-book a transfer
Bolt or Grab	Shown in the app	45 minutes to an hour	Check there are drivers nearby before you rely on it
Rental car	From the desk	You drive	S.M.T. Rent A Car at the airport

Getting to Pattaya

Airport minibus. Suvarnabhumi Burapha runs a minibus from outside Terminal 2 to Big C South Pattaya for ฿150 per person. It leaves the airport at 12:30, 14:00 and 17:00 every day, and the company asks you to tell its staff at least a day before you travel. Times can change without notice, so check on its website or LINE (@SWBBUS) first. From Big C, take a baht bus (฿15 on the normal loop), a motorbike taxi (riders now wear blue vests, some still orange) or a Bolt or Grab to your hotel.

Taxi from the counter. The airport's taxi partner, Loma Pattaya Taxi Co-operative, works from the car park in front of Terminal 1, 24 hours a day, and covers Pattaya, Jomtien and Naklua. The airport doesn't publish fares. Travel guides put a counter taxi to central Pattaya at about ฿1,000 to ฿1,200, so confirm the total, including any tolls, before you get in.

Private car or limousine. Vanatana runs sedans, SUVs and vans from outside Terminal 2 to Pattaya, Jomtien and beyond during flight hours. A pre-booked transfer is the least stress with family or lots of bags. See airport transfers.

Bolt and Grab. Both can be cheaper than the counter, but U-Tapao is outside town, so check the price and that drivers are nearby before you rely on one. See Bolt and Grab.

Rental car. S.M.T. Rent A Car has a desk at the airport. See car rental and international driving permits before you drive.

Flights in 2026

U-Tapao's timetable is small and changes by season, so always check with the airline. In autumn 2026 the scheduled routes included:

- **Bangkok Airways** to and from **Koh Samui** and **Phuket**, the airport's best-known domestic routes.
- **Thai Lion Air** to and from **Udon Thani**, restarted in October 2026, four days a week (Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Sunday).
- **Ezy Airlines**, which started flights in late September 2026 linking U-Tapao with **Surat Thani** and **Hua Hin**.
- **SiamWings Airlines**, which has made U-Tapao its first Thai base and flies Airbus A330s. Its first winter-season flight landed on 23 October 2026 with 336 passengers.

The airport's airline list also includes AirAsia and several Russian, Chinese and Central Asian carriers, many flying seasonally or as charters. Most long-haul visitors still land at Suvarnabhumi in Bangkok.

Arriving from abroad

- File your TDAC (Thailand Digital Arrival Card) online within 3 days before you arrive. It's free at tdac.immigration.go.th, and the airport reminds international passengers to do it.
- Since 15 September 2026, the visa exemption for most nationalities is 30 days. See extending your stay.
- The airport lists money exchange and free Wi-Fi among its services. Get some small notes for the minibus or baht bus.

Flying out of U-Tapao

- From Pattaya, the same minibus leaves for the airport at 09:30, 12:00 and 15:00, with hotel pickups in Pattaya. Tell the company at least a day ahead.
- A taxi or Bolt and Grab from central Pattaya takes about 45 minutes to an hour. Leave extra time in rush hour.
- Power banks go in your hand luggage only, two at most. See leaving Thailand for the 2026 packing and VAT refund rules.

Diversions and late flights

While work on a second runway goes on, U-Tapao normally closes for parts of the night. When storms hit Bangkok, U-Tapao takes diverted flights: from 28 September to 4 October 2026, the navy kept it open around the clock for flights that couldn't land at Suvarnabhumi or Don Mueang. If your Bangkok flight lands here instead, you're actually closer to Pattaya.

What's changing

The airport is run by the Royal Thai Navy and shares its runway with a navy air base. Its passenger terminal handles about 3 million passengers a year. A second runway is being built, and a bigger airport city project led by Bangkok Airways, BTS Group and Stecon is under way, tied to the planned high-speed rail line from Bangkok's airports. Timelines have slipped before. See what is changing.

Tips

- Have your hotel address in Thai on your phone, and agree any price that isn't on an app before you get in.
- Arriving in the evening? Book a car ahead: the minibus's last run is at 17:00.
- Flying into Bangkok instead? See Bangkok to Pattaya.

Common questions

How far is U-Tapao from Pattaya? About 40 to 50 km, depending on where you're staying. Jomtien is closer than North Pattaya. By road it's usually 45 minutes to an hour.

Is there a bus from U-Tapao to Pattaya? Yes. Suvarnabhumi Burapha runs a minibus to Big C South Pattaya for ฿150, leaving the airport at 12:30, 14:00 and 17:00. Tell the company a day ahead.

How much is a taxi from U-Tapao to Pattaya? The airport doesn't publish fares. Travel guides put the counter price to central Pattaya at about ฿1,000 to ฿1,200. Confirm the total before you get in.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: U-Tapao airport, Suvarnabhumi Burapha minibus (฿150 to Big C South Pattaya, times); Suvarnabhumi Burapha timetable (same times, hotel pickups); U-Tapao airport, Loma Pattaya Taxi (24 hours, Terminal 1); U-Tapao airport, Vanatana (limousines); U-Tapao airport, airline information; U-Tapao airport news of 20 October 2026 (Thai Lion Air, Udon Thani), 30 September 2026 (Ezy Airlines) and 23 October 2026 (SiamWings, terminal capacity); Wikipedia, U-Tapao International Airport (Bangkok Airways routes, distance, expansion); Nation Thailand, September 2026 (24-hour opening for diversions, night closures). Taxi prices come from travel guides, not an official fare list, and other guides quote about ฿200 for the minibus. We couldn't confirm a typical Bolt or Grab fare from the airport.

Related guides

- Pattaya Airport Transfers
- Arriving at Bangkok Airport: Step by Step
- Leaving Thailand: Departure Checklist
- Vegetarian Festival (Nine Emperor Gods)

GETTING AROUND

Buses Between Bangkok and Pattaya

The cheapest comfortable way between Bangkok and Pattaya: Ekkamai, Mo Chit and airport buses, 2026 fares from about ฿135, timetables, tickets, and getting to your hotel at the other end.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/getting-around/buses-to-pattaya/

From Ekkamai	**From about ฿144, roughly hourly, 2 to 3 hours**
From Mo Chit 2	**From about ฿155, 2.5 to 3 hours**
From Suvarnabhumi	**About ฿135 to North Pattaya, ฿158 to Jomtien, about 2 hours**
Operator	**Roong Reuang Coach on the main routes**
Arrives	**Pattaya bus terminal, North Pattaya Road**
Fares	**Move with diesel prices; agents charge more**

Quick answer: Buses are the cheapest comfortable way between Bangkok and Pattaya. Roong Reuang Coach runs air-conditioned coaches with reserved seats from the Eastern Bus Terminal at Ekkamai (from about ฿144), the Northern Bus Terminal at Mo Chit 2 (from about ฿155) and Suvarnabhumi airport (about ฿135 to North Pattaya, ฿158 to Jomtien). The trip takes about 2 hours from the airport and 2 to 3 hours from the city, depending on traffic. Buy at the terminal counter for the lowest price. Fares were adjusted with diesel prices several times in 2026, so treat these as a guide.

At a glance

FROM	FARE (NOV 2026)	JOURNEY	ARRIVES
Ekkamai (Eastern Bus Terminal)	From about ฿144	2 to 3 hours	Pattaya bus terminal, North Pattaya Road
Mo Chit 2 (Northern Bus Terminal)	From about ฿155	2.5 to 3 hours	Pattaya bus terminal, North Pattaya Road
Suvarnabhumi airport (BKK)	About ฿135	About 2 hours	Pattaya bus terminal, North Pattaya Road
Suvarnabhumi airport (BKK)	About ฿158	About 2 hours	Jomtien bus station, Thappraya Road
Don Mueang airport (DMK)	About ฿155 to ฿164	2.5 hours or more	Pattaya bus terminal

Fares are counter prices quoted by an independent bus guide that cites the operator, checked in November 2026. Booking agents often charge more for the same seat.

Which terminal to use

- **Ekkamai (Eastern Bus Terminal)** is next to BTS Ekkamai station on the Sukhumvit line, so it's the easiest from Sukhumvit hotels. It has the most departures: a November 2026 guide lists roughly hourly buses from 05:00 to 22:00.
- **Mo Chit 2 (Northern Bus Terminal)** suits north Bangkok and Don Mueang. It is a short taxi or local bus ride from BTS Mo Chit, not at the station itself. The same guide lists hourly buses from 05:00 to 18:00.
- **Suvarnabhumi airport**: the bus leaves from Level 1, near Gate 8. Timetables disagree: some guides list roughly hourly buses from early morning to late evening, while the airport bus booking site listed fewer departures, between 07:30 and 18:30, when we checked. Check before you fly, and see arriving at Bangkok airport.
- **Don Mueang airport**: fewer direct buses. Bell Travel runs coaches from both airports with hotel drop-off in central Pattaya. Compare all the options on Bangkok to Pattaya.

Buying tickets

- Buy at the terminal counter for the lowest fare. Pay in cash to be safe.
- You can also book online through the operator's booking system or agents such as 12Go. Online booking adds a service charge, and agent prices we saw for Ekkamai were well above the counter fare.
- Book ahead before long weekends and Thai holidays, when buses sell out. See Thai public holidays.
- Keep your passport handy; some counters ask for it.
- Arrive at least 15 minutes before departure.

Why the fares move

Interprovincial bus fares in Thailand are set by the Department of Land Transport using a cost formula tied to diesel prices. In 2026 the department approved a rise of 5 satang per kilometre per seat on large buses from 6 April after a diesel price shock, with fares frozen until 19 April for Songkran, then cut fares by 3 satang per kilometre per seat from 29 April as diesel fell. On a trip the length of Bangkok to Pattaya, about 150 km, these changes are a few baht either way, but they explain why websites show different prices.

On the bus

- Coaches are air-conditioned with reserved seats. Bring a light jacket: the air conditioning is often cold.

- One suitcase plus hand luggage usually goes under the bus. Ask at the counter about very large items such as bikes or surfboards.
- Keep your passport, phone and money with you, not in the hold.
- Leaving Bangkok in rush hour can add an hour. Allow extra time if you have a flight or a booking to make.

Arriving in Pattaya

Most buses arrive at the Pattaya bus terminal on North Pattaya Road, near Sukhumvit Road. The airport bus also runs to Jomtien bus station on Thappraya Road, handy for Jomtien and Pratumnak.

From the North Pattaya terminal:

- **Baht bus:** drivers waiting at the terminal may quote a private charter price. Walking out to the main road and flagging a passing baht bus is usually cheaper: ฿15 on the normal loop since 10 April 2026.
- **Bolt or Grab:** easiest with luggage, a fixed price in the app. See Bolt and Grab.
- **Motorbike taxi:** fine with a small bag. Riders wear blue vests since 16 October 2026; agree the price first. See motorbike taxis.

Going back to Bangkok

Buses leave the same North Pattaya terminal for Ekkamai, Mo Chit 2 and Suvarnabhumi, at about the same fares. For a flight, leave plenty of time: traffic into Bangkok is unpredictable, and the airport bus has fewer departures late in the day. See leaving Thailand.

Bus or something else?

OPTION	GOOD FOR	CATCH
Bus	Solo travellers and couples on a budget	You still need to get from the terminal to your hotel
Bell Travel coach	Airport arrivals who want hotel drop-off	Costs more than the bus
Private transfer or taxi	Groups, families, lots of luggage, late arrivals	About ฿1,100 to ฿1,800 from BKK
Train	Slow travel and saving money	One train a day, about 3 hours 40 minutes

Common questions

How much is the bus from Bangkok to Pattaya? From about ฿144 at Ekkamai and ฿155 at Mo Chit 2 at the counter in November 2026, and about ฿135 from Suvarnabhumi airport. Agents charge more.

How long does the bus take? About 2 hours from Suvarnabhumi and 2 to 3 hours from Ekkamai or Mo Chit, longer in rush hour or on holiday weekends.

Where does the Bangkok bus stop in Pattaya? At the Pattaya bus terminal on North Pattaya Road. Airport buses also go to Jomtien bus station on Thappraya Road.

Do I need to book ahead? Usually not on weekdays. Book before long weekends and holidays, when seats sell out.

Is the bus or a taxi better from the airport? The bus is far cheaper for one or two people. For a group, a late-night arrival or lots of luggage, a private transfer is easier.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Bangkok Pattaya Bus Guide, fares by terminal and timetable (an independent guide citing Roong Reuang Coach; fares last checked 12 November 2026); Airport Pattaya Bus, Suvarnabhumi to Pattaya timetable and fare; The Nation, interprovincial bus fares cut as diesel eases (29 April 2026); The Nation, DLT confirms 6 April fare rise. Timetables published by different sites disagree; confirm at the counter before you travel.

Related guides

- Train to Pattaya
- Arriving at Bangkok Airport: Step by Step
- Bangkok Day Trip from Pattaya
- Pattaya First-Timer Mistakes to Avoid

GETTING AROUND

Compare Airlines in Thailand: Prices, Ratings & Booking Tips

Thai AirAsia, Nok Air, Thai Lion Air, VietJet, Bangkok Airways and Thai Airways compared: typical fares, bags, perks and catches, plus where to book cheap and the onward ticket rule.

Verified October 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/getting-around/compare-airlines/

Cheapest	**Thai AirAsia, Thai Lion Air and Thai VietJet, often ฿900 to ฿2,500 one way**
Most comfortable	**Bangkok Airways and Thai Airways, bags and snacks included**
Search with	**Google Flights to compare, Skiplagged for the cheapest fares**
Onward ticket	**Have proof of a flight out of Thailand ready at immigration**

Flying around Thailand is cheap. A one-way domestic flight, such as Bangkok to Phuket, is often ฿900 to ฿2,500 on a budget airline if you book a few weeks ahead. My first round trip to Phuket in 2017 cost about $100, and you can still find fares like that today. The catch is that the cheapest ticket isn't always the cheapest trip once you add bags and seats.

The airlines compared

Prices are typical one-way economy fares on busy domestic routes, booked a few weeks ahead. They change all the time, so treat them as a rough guide. The rating is our own take on overall value and comfort, not an official score.

AIRLINE	TYPICAL ONE-WAY FARE	OUR RATING	INCLUDED	WATCH OUT FOR
Thai AirAsia	฿900 to ฿2,500	★★★★☆	Small carry-on (7 kg), huge route network	Checked bags, seats and food all cost extra
Thai Lion Air	฿900 to ฿2,300	★★★☆☆	Often includes a small checked bag	Delays are common, older cabins
Thai VietJet	฿800 to ฿2,200	★★★☆☆	Very cheap promo fares	Strict bag weights, extras add up fast
Nok Air	฿1,000 to ฿2,800	★★★☆☆	Often includes a checked bag and a snack	Smaller network, flights from Don Mueang
Bangkok Airways	฿2,000 to ฿4,500	★★★★★	Checked bag, free lounge for all passengers, snacks	Pricier, the main airline to Koh Samui
Thai Airways	฿1,800 to ฿4,500	★★★★☆	Checked bag, seat choice, full service	Pricier, flights mostly from Suvarnabhumi

Which one should you pick?

- **Cheapest trip, light packer:** Thai AirAsia or Thai VietJet with carry-on only.
- **Bringing a suitcase:** compare the total price with bags. Nok Air, Thai Lion Air or Thai Airways often work out the same or cheaper.
- **Comfort or Koh Samui:** Bangkok Airways. The free lounge is a nice touch.
- **Flying from near Pattaya:** U-Tapao airport has a smaller list of domestic routes. Check it before driving to Bangkok. See U-Tapao airport.

Where to find cheap flights

- **Google Flights** is the best place to compare. Search with flexible dates, then book direct with the airline.
- **Skiplagged** is my favourite site for finding the cheapest fares. Some of its deals are "hidden city" tickets, where you get off at the stopover. Only use those with carry-on bags, and never on a return ticket, because the airline cancels the rest of the trip if you skip a leg.
- **Book with the airline directly** if you can. Changes and refunds are much easier than through a third party.

Avoid booking flights on hotel sites

Hotel and package sites often show flights, but they are usually more expensive than booking with the airline, with fewer change options. Use them for rooms, and book flights on Google Flights, Skiplagged or the airline's own site.

Budget airline tips

- Add checked bags when you book. It costs much more at the airport.
- Weigh your carry-on. Budget airlines do check, and the fees for going over are steep.
- Check which Bangkok airport you fly from. Don Mueang (DMK) and Suvarnabhumi (BKK) are an hour apart. See arriving at Bangkok airport.
- Leave at least 3 hours between connecting flights on separate tickets.

The onward ticket rule

An onward ticket is proof that you will leave Thailand, usually a booked flight out of the country before your visa or visa-free stay ends. Airlines can ask for it at check-in before you fly to Thailand, and Thai immigration can ask to see it when you arrive. Most of the time nobody asks, but if they do and you can't show one, you can be refused boarding or entry.

- **Easiest:** book your real flight home or onward before you arrive.

- **Not sure when you'll leave?** Book a cheap budget flight to a nearby country, or a refundable ticket you can cancel later.
- **Onward ticket rental:** services such as OnwardTicket sell a real reservation for a small fee that expires after a day or two. Many travellers use them, but check the airline accepts it.
- **Privilege visa holders:** with a Thailand Privilege (Elite) visa, in my experience immigration usually doesn't ask for anything. You're waved through quickly with no hassle. See Thailand Privilege visa.

More on entry rules in visa options and first trip checklist.

Related guides

- U-Tapao Airport to Pattaya
- Bangkok to Pattaya
- Leaving Thailand: Departure Checklist
- Pattaya Airport Transfers

GETTING AROUND

Train to Pattaya

The slow, cheap and scenic way from Bangkok: one ordinary train a day each way for about ฿31, plus a faster air-conditioned weekend special. Times, stops, tickets and tips.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/getting-around/train-to-pattaya/

Daily train	**283 out (06:55 from Bangkok), 284 back (14:21 from Pattaya)**
Bangkok station	**Hua Lamphong, not Krung Thep Aphiwat**
Fare	**About ฿31, third class, tickets on the day**
Time	**Roughly 3 hours 40 minutes**
Weekends	**Air-conditioned special 997/998, book ahead**
Check first	**SRT hotline 1690**

Quick answer: One ordinary train a day runs each way between Bangkok and Pattaya. Train 283 leaves Bangkok's Hua Lamphong station at about 06:55 and reaches Pattaya at about 10:35; train 284 leaves Pattaya at about 14:21 and gets back to Hua Lamphong at about 18:15. It's third class only, with fans and open windows, and the fare is about ฿31. You buy the ticket at the station on the day. A faster air-conditioned special (997 and 998) runs at weekends and should be booked ahead. Floods cancelled these trains for a time in late September 2026, so check with the State Railway of Thailand (SRT, hotline 1690) before you go.

At a glance

	DAILY TRAIN 283 / 284	WEEKEND SPECIAL 997 / 998
Runs	Every day	Saturdays and Sundays
Bangkok to Pattaya	06:55 from Hua Lamphong, arrives about 10:35	06:45 from Hua Lamphong, arrives about 09:14
Pattaya to Bangkok	14:21 from Pattaya, arrives about 18:15	16:26 from Pattaya, arrives about 18:55
Class	Third class, fans, bench seats	Air-conditioned, reserved seats
Fare	About ฿31	About ฿170 in one 2026 guide; confirm with SRT
Tickets	At the station on the day	Book in advance

Times are from 2026 timetables and can change; the afternoon train back often runs late.

The daily train

Train 283 starts at Hua Lamphong (Bangkok railway station) and runs to Chuk Samet near Sattahip, stopping at Pattaya on the way. Train 284 runs the other way. They are the only trains that run every day between Bangkok and Pattaya.

- **Third class only:** fans, open windows and bench seats. There are no reservations, so you sit where you find space.
- **Tickets:** sold at the station counter on the day, usually from about two hours before departure. You can't book this train online.
- **Fare:** about ฿31 one way (2026 guides report ฿30 to ฿32). Have small notes ready.
- **Food:** there's no dining car. Bring water and snacks.

Where to get on in Bangkok

The Pattaya trains still leave from Hua Lamphong, the old Bangkok station, not the new Krung Thep Aphiwat Central Terminal that most long-distance trains moved to. Hua Lamphong has its own MRT Blue Line station. The train also stops in the city on its way out, which can save you the trip to Hua Lamphong. On the 2026 timetable, 283 calls at Makkasan at about 07:16 and Asoke at about 07:22. Makkasan is close to the Airport Rail Link station of the same name.

Stops on the way

STOP	TRAIN 283 (MORNING)	TRAIN 284 (AFTERNOON)
Bangkok (Hua Lamphong)	Leaves 06:55	Arrives 18:15
Chachoengsao Junction	08:59	16:20
Si Racha Junction	10:13	14:52
Pattaya	10:35	14:21
Suan Nong Nuch	11:04	13:52
Chuk Samet (end of line)	Arrives 11:45	Leaves 13:05

Chachoengsao is known for Wat Sothon and the old Ban Mai riverside market, if you want to break the trip. Si Racha is an easy stop for a day out; see Si Racha. Suan Nong Nuch is the halt for Nong Nooch Garden, though check how you'll get from the halt to the entrance before relying on it.

The weekend special

On Saturdays and Sundays the SRT runs special trains 997 and 998 between Bangkok and Chuk Samet, aimed at day-trippers heading for the beaches. On the 2026 timetable, 997 leaves Hua Lamphong at 06:45 and reaches Pattaya at about 09:14, more than an hour faster than the daily train. 998 leaves Pattaya at about 16:26 and gets back to Bangkok at about 18:55. These trains are air-conditioned with reserved seats, so book ahead through the SRT's D-Ticket system or at a station. One 2026 guide gives the fare as about ฿170; we couldn't confirm it on an official page, so check the price when you book. One timetable site lists the special as daily while others say weekends only: assume weekends unless the SRT tells you otherwise.

Flood and service warnings

In late September 2026, heavy rain flooded parts of the Eastern Line and the SRT cancelled several trains, including 283, 284, 997 and 998, refunding special-train tickets in full. The SRT began restoring Eastern Line services in stages from 30 September; we couldn't find a notice saying exactly when the Pattaya trains returned. Before you travel, call the SRT hotline on 1690 (24 hours) or check the SRT's train tracking site.

Pattaya station

Pattaya railway station is on the east side of Sukhumvit Road, about 3 km from the beach, so you can't easily walk to the hotels. Bolt, Grab, a motorbike taxi or a baht bus will get you into town. See Bolt and Grab and motorbike taxis.

Is it worth it?

For speed or comfort, take a bus (about 2 to 3 hours, all day) or a taxi. The train suits slow travel, countryside views and very tight budgets, not heavy luggage or a flight connection. Every option side by side: Bangkok to Pattaya.

Tips for the train

- Arrive 30 to 45 minutes early, especially on weekends and holidays when the train fills up.
- Sit on the shady side and bring water, snacks and a hat; the carriages get hot by late morning. See heat and sun safety.
- Keep your bag beside you rather than on a far rack, and hold on to your phone near the open windows.
- Leave time to spare on the way back; don't plan an evening flight around 284 arriving on time.

Common questions

Is there a train from Bangkok to Pattaya? Yes. Train 283 runs every day from Hua Lamphong at about 06:55, arriving about 10:35. On weekends the faster air-conditioned special 997 leaves at 06:45.

How much is the train to Pattaya? About ฿31 in third class on the daily train. The weekend special costs more; one 2026 guide says about ฿170.

Can I book the Pattaya train online? Not the daily ordinary train: tickets are sold at the station on the day. The weekend special can be booked in advance.

Is there a train from Suvarnabhumi Airport to Pattaya? No direct one. You would need the Airport Rail Link into the city and a very early start to meet the morning train, so most arrivals take a bus or taxi. See arriving at Bangkok Airport.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Rail Thailand timetables for train 283, 284, 997 and 998 (updated January 2026); Thai Train Guide, Ordinary No. 283 (tickets on the day, Hua Lamphong); Cornerstone, Bangkok to Pattaya train guide (June 2026) (fares); Bangkok Biz News, Eastern Line closures and cancelled trains (27 September 2026); Pattaya Mail, SRT restores Eastern Line trains (1 October 2026). We couldn't find a current official SRT fare page for these trains; confirm with the SRT on 1690.

Related guides

- Bangkok to Pattaya
- Arriving at Bangkok Airport: Step by Step
- Vehicle Tax, Number Plates and Inspections
- Pattaya First-Timer Mistakes to Avoid

GETTING AROUND

Motorbike Taxis

The registered riders in numbered vests at stands across Pattaya: how they work, the switch from orange to blue vests, what short trips cost, helmets and the law, and riding safely.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/getting-around/motorbike-taxis/

Look for	**Registered riders in numbered vests, now blue (some still orange)**
Riders	**5,281 registered, at about 560 approved stands**
Short trip	**About ฿40 to ฿80; national maximum ฿25 for the first 2 km**
Pay	**Cash, agree the price before you get on**
Helmet	**Required for passengers too; fines up to ฿2,000**

Quick answer: Motorbike taxis are the fastest way through Pattaya traffic for one person. Registered riders wait at stands on main roads and soi corners and wear numbered vests. In October 2026 Pattaya and the rest of Banglamung district switched those vests from orange to blue, though you'll still see some orange ones. There's no meter: agree the price before you get on. Short hops in town usually cost about ฿40 to ฿80, more from tourist hotspots and late at night. Passengers must wear a helmet too, so ask for one.

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Who	5,281 registered riders at about 560 approved stands in Banglamung, which includes Pattaya
Vests	Numbered; blue since October 2026, some still orange
Price	No meter; agree first. Short trips about ฿40 to ฿80
National maximum	฿25 for the first 2 km (Ministry of Transport rate)
Pay	Cash, ideally small notes
Helmet	Required for passengers; fines up to ฿2,000
Complaints	Pattaya City 1337, Department of Land Transport 1584

How they work

- Riders gather at a stand, called a *win* in Thai, usually at the mouth of a soi or outside a mall, market or hotel.
- Walk up to the stand, say where you want to go, and agree the price with the rider who takes you.
- Show your destination on a map app if the name isn't well known. A landmark, such as a 7-Eleven or hotel, works better than a soi number.
- Registered taxi bikes should carry yellow number plates, and the rider wears a vest with a number on it. That number is what you quote if you need to complain.

Blue vests or orange?

For years Pattaya's riders wore orange vests. A Chonburi subcommittee for Banglamung district approved blue vests in November 2025, and the new look was launched on 16 October 2026 to give registered riders a clearer identity.

The change has been bumpy. Riders told Pattaya Mail in late October 2026 that the dark blue is harder to see at night, that some tourists weren't sure blue-vest riders were official, and that tailors couldn't make the new vests fast enough, so some night queues kept their orange ones. At least one rider went back to orange by choice. So for now, a numbered blue or orange vest at a proper stand both mean a registered rider.

Prices

There's no meter, and prices are agreed per trip.

DISTANCE	NATIONAL MAXIMUM (MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT)
First 2 km	฿25
2 to 5 km	Plus ฿5 per km
5 to 15 km	Plus ฿10 per km
Over 15 km	Agreed in advance

That table dates from 2015 and real Pattaya prices are usually higher. Travel guides commonly quote about ฿40 to ฿80 for a short hop in town. Pattaya Mail reported in 2025 that riders around Walking Street, Bali Hai Pier and Beach Road can ask double or triple the usual price, especially at night and in high season.

- Agree the price before you get on, and confirm it's for the whole trip, not per person or per kilometre.

- Have small notes ready. Riders may not have change for ฿500 or ฿1,000.
- If a price sounds high, walk to the next stand or check the fare on a ride app.

Pro tip: If I'm not driving myself, I prefer motorbike taxis. They're so much faster through traffic, and in high season you can lose a lot of time if you don't plan ahead. Motorbike taxis, Grab, Bolt, you name it. Just get on a motorbike.

Helmets and the law

- Thai law requires riders and passengers to wear helmets. Since June 2025, police have enforced fines of up to ฿2,000, and the rider pays double if the passenger has no helmet.
- Ask for a helmet before you set off, and don't ride without one.
- Police checkpoints in Pattaya do stop motorbikes. See police checkpoints.

Riding safely

- Hold the grab rail or the back of the seat, keep your knees in, and sit still in corners.
- Keep bags on your lap or between you and the rider, not hanging off one side.
- Keep your legs clear of the exhaust pipe, usually on the right side. It gets hot enough to burn bare skin.
- Ask the rider to slow down if you're uncomfortable. If a rider seems drunk or rides badly, get off at the next safe spot.
- After drinks, a car is a safer choice than any motorbike. See getting home late at night.
- Know what to do if something goes wrong. See road accidents and motorbike insurance.

Motorbike taxis or apps?

- **Bolt and Grab** both offer motorbike rides with the price shown up front, which takes the haggling out. Riders reported more competition from app riders, especially Bolt, in 2026. See Bolt and Grab.
- **Stand riders** need no phone or data, and are quickest when you're right by a stand.
- A baht bus is cheaper if it's going your way and you're not in a hurry.

Complaints

If you're badly overcharged or the riding is dangerous, note the vest number and the stand. Pattaya Mail lists the Pattaya City hotline 1337 and the Department of Land Transport hotline 1584. For crime or emergencies, see tourist police.

Common questions

How much is a motorbike taxi in Pattaya? Short trips in town usually cost about ฿40 to ฿80. The national maximum is ฿25 for the first 2 km, but tourist areas often charge more, especially at night.

What colour vests do Pattaya motorbike taxis wear? Blue since October 2026, replacing orange. Some riders still wear orange while new vests are made. Look for a numbered vest at a proper stand.

Do I have to wear a helmet on a motorbike taxi? Yes. Passengers are covered by the helmet law, with fines of up to ฿2,000. Ask the rider for one.

Are motorbike taxis safe? They're a normal part of daily life here, but any motorbike is riskier than a car. Wear a helmet, hold on, and take a car after drinking.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya Mail, 17 October 2026 (blue vests, 5,281 riders, stands); Pattaya Mail, 20 October 2026 (tourist confusion, Bolt competition); Pattaya Mail, 22 October 2026 (orange vests still in use, 564 stands); Pattaya Mail, August 2025 (tourist-area prices, hotlines 1337 and 1584); Coconuts Bangkok, November 2015 (Ministry of Transport fare table); Pattaya Mail, June 2025 (helmet fines). Reports give 554 or 564 stands; the ฿40 to ฿80 range is from travel guides, not an official tariff. We couldn't find a Pattaya-specific fare table from the Department of Land Transport.

Related guides

- Getting Home Late at Night
- Bangkok to Pattaya
- The Best Scooter Rides Around Pattaya
- Renting a Scooter

GETTING AROUND

Getting a Thai Driving Licence

How foreigners get a Thai car or motorcycle licence at the Banglamung land transport office: who qualifies, documents, the residence certificate, tests, fees and renewals.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/getting-around/thai-driving-licence/

Office	**Banglamung Land Transport Office (DLT)**
Need	**Passport, non-tourist visa, residence certificate or work permit, medical certificate**
Tests	**Eyesight and reaction tests, 50-question written test (45 to pass)**
First licence	**2 years, then 5-year renewals**
Fees	**About ฿105 to ฿205 for a first licence**
Book ahead	**Banglamung limits foreigners each day**

Quick answer: If you live in Pattaya on a long-stay visa, you can get a Thai car and motorcycle licence at the Banglamung Land Transport Office. You need your passport with a non-tourist visa, a residence certificate from Jomtien immigration (or a work permit showing your address), and a medical certificate under 30 days old. Expect aptitude tests, a road safety video and a 50-question written test, plus a practical test for new drivers. The first licence lasts two years and costs about ฿105 to ฿205. Rules keep changing, so check before you go.

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Where	Banglamung Land Transport Office, the DLT office for Pattaya
Visa	Non-immigrant visa or extension is the safe route
Proof of address	Residence certificate from immigration, or a work permit with your address
Medical certificate	From a clinic or hospital, under 30 days old
Tests	Colour, reaction and depth perception; road safety video; written test
Written test	50 multiple-choice questions, 45 correct to pass
Validity	First licence 2 years, then 5-year renewals

Who can get one

The safe route is a non-immigrant visa or an extension based on one, such as a retirement, marriage, education or business visa. Guides differ on tourist visas: some say DLT offices refuse them, while the Pattaya City Expats Club says people who entered on a tourist visa or a Destination Thailand Visa (DTV) get only a two-year licence. In July 2025 Pattaya Mail also reported an internal rule at the Banglamung and Rayong offices: if your visa or extension has less than a year left, you get a two-year licence, even at renewal. Ask the office what you will get with your visa.

What to bring

- Your passport, plus copies of the photo page, your visa or extension stamp and your latest entry stamp.
- A **residence certificate**, or a work permit showing your current address.
- A **medical certificate** issued in the last 30 days.
- Your **home licence**, if you have one, and an International Driving Permit, with copies of both sides. A licence that isn't in English may need a certified translation from your embassy.
- Proof that you finished the online road safety video, if you did it at home.

Residence and medical certificates

The **residence certificate** comes from the Jomtien immigration office. Your landlord or condo must have filed your TM30 address report first, or immigration can't issue it. Reported fees range from free to about ฿500. The Thaiger says the DLT treats it as valid for 30 days, so get it shortly before your visit. See Thai paperwork tips.

The **medical certificate** comes from a clinic or hospital and must be under 30 days old. The DLT has a newer form with a medical history section you fill in, but the expats club reports that Banglamung still accepts the older form many clinics use, which has cost about ฿100 to ฿300.

Converting or learning

If you hold a valid licence from home, you convert it. You skip the practical test and the five-hour class, but still do the aptitude tests and road safety video. Sources disagree on the written test: a 2025 DLT draft proposed it for every foreign applicant, and The Thaiger reported in November 2025 that it now applies, while the expats club page, which mentions changes from May 2026, still says IDP holders are exempt. Study for it anyway.

If you have never held a licence, you take five hours of training (at the DLT, online, or at a DLT-certified driving school), then the written and practical tests. The DLT class is often only in Thai. Certified schools often teach in English and give you a certificate that replaces it, but you still take the DLT tests.

The tests

- **Aptitude**: colour blindness, reaction time (a brake pedal test), and often depth perception and peripheral vision.
- **Road safety video**: since May 2026 Banglamung has reportedly asked applicants to watch it at the office, even if they did it online.
- **Written test**: 50 multiple-choice questions on a computer, 45 right to pass, covering Thai road rules and road signs.
- **Practical test**, new drivers only: in your own vehicle on the DLT course. For a car it includes straight-line driving forward and in reverse, parallel parking and an L-shaped reverse park.

Fees

LICENCE	CAR	MOTORCYCLE
First licence, 2 years	฿205	About ฿105 to ฿155 (sources differ)
5-year licence or renewal	฿505	฿255

Add the medical certificate, any residence certificate fee and translations.

Renewing

Before your two-year licence runs out, exchange it for a five-year licence with the same paperwork and a new medical certificate. Sources differ on how early you can do this, so ask a few months ahead. Licences expire on your birthday. If one has been expired for over a year you may have to resit the written test, and after three years the practical test too.

Booking and agents

The expats club says Banglamung limits how many foreigners it handles each day, so get an appointment first. Sources disagree on whether foreigners can book through the DLT Smart Queue app, so check the club's Banglamung page or ask at the office.

Some people pay an agent for the booking and paperwork, but you still attend and take the tests yourself.

Pro tip: he used an agent to get his motorbike and car licences, for about ฿11,000, and still had to do two full days of school, which he found annoying.

Why it's worth having

- It's what police want to see at checkpoints, and riding without the right licence is one of the most common reasons visitors are fined. See road rules and fines.
- Car and motorcycle licences are separate, so get both if you ride and drive. New to riding? See learning to ride.

Common questions

Can I get a Thai driving licence on a tourist visa? It is uncertain. Some guides say DLT offices refuse tourist visas; the expats club says tourist visa and DTV holders get a two-year licence at most. A non-immigrant visa or extension is the safe route.

Do I have to take the written test if I have a licence from home? Probably. It was reported in 2025 to be compulsory for all foreigners, though some sources still say IDP holders are exempt.

How much does a Thai driving licence cost? About ฿205 for a two-year car licence and about ฿105 to ฿155 for a motorcycle, then ฿505 and ฿255 for five-year licences, plus the medical certificate.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya City Expats Club, Thai driving licence (documents, fees, Banglamung practice); The Thaiger, foreigner's guide, November 2025; The Nation, DLT draft rules for foreigners, June 2025; Pattaya Mail, Banglamung licence confusion, July 2025; Roojai, Thai licence for foreigners. We could not find a current English page on the official DLT website listing foreigners' requirements, and these sources disagree on the written test, motorcycle fees and renewal timing. Ask the Banglamung office before you go.

Related guides

- Thai Road Rules and Traffic Fines
- Renting a Car in Pattaya
- Motorbike Insurance Explained
- Buying a Car in Thailand as a Foreigner

GETTING AROUND

Bali Hai Pier

The pier at the south end of Walking Street where ferries and speedboats leave for Koh Larn: fares, timetable tips, parking, the red-flag rule after the November 2026 collision, and getting there.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/getting-around/bali-hai-pier/

Where	**South end of Walking Street and Beach Road**
Ferries to	**Koh Larn (Na Ban pier, some sailings to Tawaen Beach)**
Ferry fare	**About ฿30 to ฿40 each way, cash; reports differ, check on the day**
Speedboats	**About ฿150 to ฿300 a seat shared, 15 to 20 minutes**
Parking	**City garage ฿30 an hour or ฿250 a day (2025); free Blue Zone on weekends and long holidays**
Safety	**Life jackets compulsory; no small boats under a red flag**

Quick answer: Bali Hai Pier is the big pier at the south end of Walking Street, where public ferries and speedboats leave for Koh Larn. The public ferry takes about 45 minutes and costs about ฿30 to ฿40 each way in cash: Pattaya Mail reported a rise to ฿40 from 10 April 2026, but its August 2026 guide still says about ฿30, so have ฿40 ready. Shared speedboats take 15 to 20 minutes for about ฿150 to ฿300 a seat. Wear the life jacket on every boat. After a speedboat collision near the pier on 9 November 2026, officials raised a red flag that kept small boats ashore while the ferries kept running, so check what's sailing on the day.

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Location	South end of Walking Street and Beach Road, below Pratumnak Hill
Public ferry	About 45 minutes to Na Ban pier; some sailings go straight to Tawaen Beach
Ferry fare	About ฿30 to ฿40 one way, cash at the pier or on board
Shared speedboat	About ฿150 to ฿300 a seat, 15 to 20 minutes
Private speedboat	About ฿1,500 to ฿2,500 per boat
Timetable	Not published in one reliable place; photograph the board at the pier
Last boat back	Usually early evening; ask before you leave Bali Hai
Parking	City garage ฿30 an hour or ฿250 a day; free Blue Zone on weekends and long holidays

The public ferry

The cheap way to Koh Larn is the slow public ferry. Most sailings go to Na Ban pier in the island's village, where shared trucks and motorbike taxis take you to the beaches. Some sailings go straight to Tawaen Beach, the busiest beach, and each pier has its own timetable.

The fare is the confusing part in 2026. The ฿30 fare dated from 2010. Pattaya Mail reported a flat ฿40 for adults and children from 10 April, citing fuel costs, but its August 2026 guide still says about ฿30. Bring small notes.

There is no single official timetable online, guides disagree, and the schedule changes with the season and the weather. Ferries run through the day from morning, and the last public boats back generally leave in the early evening. Our Koh Larn page has the usual pattern. Photograph the timetable board at Bali Hai before you board, and ask which pier and time your return boat leaves from.

Speedboats

Shared speedboats cross in 15 to 20 minutes for about ฿150 to ฿300 a seat, depending on the operator and the beach. They often leave only when full. A private speedboat costs about ฿1,500 to ฿2,500 for the boat. Buy at a booth on the pier rather than from someone who approaches you on the street, and agree the price, the beach and the return time before you pay. For tours with lunch and water sports, see island hopping.

The pier was renovated in 2025 with six new floating pontoons for speedboat passengers. Two of them have ramps for older passengers, wheelchair users and people with heavy luggage. A roofed, shaded walkway with ramps runs along the terminal.

Boat safety and the red flag

- **Life jackets are compulsory** for every passenger, on the ferry as well as on speedboats. Put it on before the boat leaves.
- **Check the flag.** When officials raise a red flag at Bali Hai, small boats and speedboats may not leave. Around 11pm on 9 November 2026, a speedboat carrying 27 passengers hit a fishing boat near the pier and several passengers were hurt. Officials then raised a red flag that kept small boats ashore, allowing only larger passenger vessels meeting safety rules to carry tourists, while ferries continued. No end date was given, so ask at the pier.
- Avoid boats after dark, and book with an operator you can find again.
- May to October brings rougher seas and cancellations. See weather by month.
- Accidents at sea: call 1196. See emergency numbers.

Getting there

- **Baht bus:** ride a baht bus south along Beach Road for ฿15, get off near the end, and walk the length of Walking Street to the pier. In the morning Walking Street is quiet and easy to walk.
- **App taxi:** a Bolt or Grab can drop you at the pier entrance.
- **Motorbike taxi:** quick for one person with a small bag. Agree the price first. See motorbike taxis.

Parking

In August 2025 Pattaya Mail reported that the city garage at Bali Hai charges ฿30 an hour or ฿250 a day, and that the city offers free parking in the Blue Zone near the pier on weekends and long holidays. People have been reported steering drivers away from the city parking to private lots charging up to ฿300 a day, and the mayor banned soliciting. Park in the official city areas, and report problems to the Pattaya call centre on 1337. Parking fills early on weekends and Thai holidays.

At the pier

- Pattaya City said in late October 2026 that the long-delayed public toilets at the pier were about 90% complete and expected to open in mid-November 2026, replacing the temporary mobile toilets.
- The city council has asked for a study to redesign the pier area; no construction dates are set.
- The big PATTAYA CITY sign on Pratumnak Hill is just above the pier, a popular photo stop.
- Bring cash. Ferry tickets and the shared trucks on Koh Larn are paid in cash.

Coming back

- Ask what time the last ferry leaves from your pier on Koh Larn and arrive early. The last boats get full, and missing them means a private speedboat or a night on the island. See Koh Larn overnight.
- Baht buses wait near the pier entrance. Drivers waiting there may quote a private charter price; walking out to Beach Road and flagging a passing one at ฿15 is usually cheaper.

Common questions

How much is the ferry from Bali Hai to Koh Larn? About ฿30 to ฿40 one way in cash. Pattaya Mail reported ฿40 from 10 April 2026, while its August 2026 guide still gives about ฿30, so have ฿40 ready.

Are speedboats running? Usually, but not under a red flag, as after the 9 November 2026 collision. Ask at the pier on the day.

Where do I park for Koh Larn? Use the city garage (about ฿30 an hour or ฿250 a day in 2025) or the free Blue Zone on weekends and long holidays. Ignore people waving you into private lots.

Which beach should I pick? Tawaen is the busiest and easiest; Samae and Nual are quieter. See Koh Larn beaches.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya Mail, ferry fare rises to ฿40 from 10 April (2026); Pattaya Mail, free weekend parking and shaded walkway (1 May 2026); Pattaya Mail, Koh Larn ferry guide (16 August 2026); Pattaya Mail, boat restrictions after the speedboat collision (11 November 2026); Pattaya Mail, Bali Hai parking enforcement (August 2025); Pattaya Mail, Bali Hai pier pontoons (May 2025); Pattaya Mail, Bali Hai toilets (27 October 2026); Pattaya Mail, council pushes pier redesign (1 October 2026). Fares, times and parking rules change; confirm at the pier.

GETTING AROUND

Getting Home Late at Night

How to get home safely in Pattaya after midnight: Bolt and Grab, baht buses at night, motorbike taxis in blue (or orange) vests, agreeing prices, and staying safe after drinks.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/getting-around/night-transport/

App rides	**Bolt and Grab show the price first and track the trip**
Baht buses	**Still on the main loop late at night, but fewer; ฿15 a ride**
Motorbike taxis	**Numbered vests, now blue (some orange); agree the price first**
After drinks	**Take a car, never ride your own scooter**
Help	**Tourist Police 1155, English speaking, 24 hours**

Quick answer: The safest way home late at night in Pattaya is a car booked on Bolt or Grab: you see the price before you book, the driver and plate are on your screen, and you can share the trip live with a friend. Baht buses keep running on the main Beach Road and Second Road loop late into the night for ฿15 a ride, but there are fewer of them. Motorbike taxis are quick, but after drinks a car is safer. If you've been drinking, don't ride your own scooter home.

At a glance

OPTION	LATE-NIGHT COST	BEST FOR	WATCH OUT FOR
Bolt or Grab car	Shown in the app before you book; rises when busy	Door to door, after drinks, in the rain	Surge prices at closing time; check the plate before you get in
Baht bus on the main loop	฿15 per person (up to about ฿20 on longer runs)	Beach Road and Second Road	Fewer trucks late; an empty truck may want a charter price
Motorbike taxi stand	Agreed per trip, often more at night	A quick hop when you're sober	No meter; agree first and ask for a helmet
Your own scooter	Not an option after drinking	Nothing, once you've had a drink	Night breath tests, heavy fines, insurance that won't pay

Bolt and Grab: the default after dark

Both apps run late into the night in Pattaya, with cars and motorbikes. For the trip home, pick a car.

- **The price is fixed before you book.** No haggling at 2am. Prices rise at closing time and in the rain; waiting ten minutes can bring them down.
- **Check the car before you get in.** Match the plate, car and driver's photo to the app. If anything doesn't match, don't get in.
- **Use the safety tools.** Grab's app has an emergency button and Share My Ride, which sends your live location and the driver's details to someone you trust. Bolt has an SOS button and trip sharing too, and says it checks in automatically if a car stops for too long.
- **Set the pickup somewhere easy.** Walking Street and the busiest sois are closed to cars or jammed late at night. Walk to the nearest main road and set the pin there.
- **Save your address before you go out** as a place in the app, and as a screenshot in Thai for drivers who don't read English.

Baht buses at night

Baht buses run day and night on the main Beach Road and Second Road loop, but there are fewer trucks after midnight, so you may wait. Some travel guides say other routes get patchy after about 1am or 2am.

- The fare is ฿15 per person on the normal loop, and up to about ฿20 on longer runs such as Jomtien or Naklua. It went up from ฿10 on 10 April 2026. See baht bus routes and fares.
- Wave down a truck that already has people in the back and climb in without saying where you're going. An empty truck, or telling the driver your destination, can turn it into a charter at a much higher price. Chartering for a group is fine: agree the price for the whole truck first.
- Sit down, hold the rail, and pay in cash at the passenger window after you get off.

Motorbike taxis at night

Registered riders wait at stands and wear numbered vests. Pattaya switched the vests from orange to blue in October 2026, but some riders still wear orange, including on night shifts; either colour at a proper stand is fine. The dark blue is hard to see at night, so look for the number. See motorbike taxis.

- There's no meter. Agree the price before you get on. Prices around Walking Street and Beach Road are often higher at night.
- Ask for a helmet. Passengers must wear one too, and fines go up to ฿2,000.
- After a few drinks, a car is the safer choice: holding on at night, with scooters all around, is harder than it sounds. Never ride with a rider who seems to have been drinking.

Never ride after drinking

- The legal limit is 0.05% blood alcohol, and lower for newer licence holders. Fines run from ฿5,000 to ฿20,000, or up to a year in jail. See road rules and fines.

- Police run checkpoints at night in Pattaya, including breath tests. See police checkpoints.
- Insurance often won't pay out if you were over the limit or riding without a valid licence. See motorbike insurance.
- Leave the scooter where it is, take a photo of where you parked, and collect it in the morning.

Getting home safely

- Go out with a charged phone and a few hundred baht in small notes kept apart from your wallet.
- Share your trip in the app, or send a friend the car's plate number.
- If you're very drunk, ask a friend or venue staff to book the car and see you into it. Hungry first? See late night food.
- Walking home? Stick to lit main roads, keep your phone in your pocket, and give street dogs a wide berth at night. See walking in Pattaya and stray dogs.
- Something goes wrong? The Tourist Police on 1155 speak English and answer 24 hours. For a crime happening now, call 191; for an ambulance, 1669. See emergency numbers and night-out safety.

Common questions

Do baht buses run all night in Pattaya? On the main loop, yes, but far fewer after midnight, so expect to wait. A normal ride costs ฿15.

Is Grab or Bolt safe late at night? They're the safest common option: the price is fixed, the trip is tracked, and both apps have an emergency button and live trip sharing. Always check the plate before you get in.

Can I ride my scooter home after a couple of drinks? Don't. Police breath-test at night checkpoints, fines start at ฿5,000, and your insurance may not cover a crash.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: our baht bus routes and fares page (฿15 fare since 10 April 2026, trucks running day and night); Pattaya Mail, 17 October 2026 (blue vests from 16 October 2026); Pattaya Mail, 22 October 2026 (night visibility, orange vests still in use); Pattaya Mail, August 2025 (higher prices at Walking Street and Beach Road); Grab Thailand, Safer Rides (emergency button, Share My Ride); The Thaiger, January 2024 (Bolt SOS, trip sharing and trip monitoring); Paultan, 2 September 2026 (drink-driving and helmet fines). Late-night baht bus hours aren't published: our page says trucks run around the clock, while some travel guides say service thins out after 1am or 2am.

GETTING AROUND

First Trip to Pattaya Checklist

Everything to sort out before and on your first day in Pattaya: the 30-day visa exemption, the free TDAC arrival card, money and ATMs, SIM registration with a face check, apps, getting from the airport, the rules that catch first-timers out, and what to pack. Checked 13 Nov 2026.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/getting-around/first-trip-checklist/

Passport	**Valid at least 6 months, with an onward ticket**
Stay	**30 days on a visa exemption (since 15 Sep 2026), extendable once**
Arrival card	**TDAC, free, within 3 days before you arrive**
SIM	**Bought in person with your passport and a face check**
Cash	**ATMs charge foreign cards about ฿220 to ฿250; always pay in baht**
Plugs	**220V, sockets for flat and round two-pin plugs**

Quick answer: Before a first trip to Pattaya, check four things: your passport has at least six months left, your nationality gets the visa exemption (30 days since 15 September 2026, extendable once by up to 30 days for ฿1,900), you have a return or onward ticket, and you fill in the free Thailand Digital Arrival Card (TDAC) online in the three days before you land. Then sort two cards and some cash, a SIM or eSIM, the Bolt and Grab apps, and your ride from the airport. On arrival, remember that vapes are illegal, smoking on the beach can cost up to ฿5,000, and shops sell alcohol only from 11am to midnight.

At a glance

WHEN	WHAT TO DO
When you book	Check your passport and visa rules; book a return or onward flight
Before you fly	Travel insurance; tell your bank; install apps
3 days before	Fill in the free TDAC at tdac.immigration.go.th
At the airport	SIM or eSIM, a little cash, transport to Pattaya
First day	Get your bearings, learn the baht bus, save emergency numbers
Before day 30	Leave, or extend once at Jomtien immigration

Passport, visa and entry

- **Passport:** valid for at least six months, with blank pages. Keep a copy of the photo page apart from the original.
- **Visa exemption:** since 15 September 2026, passport holders from about 60 countries get 30 days for tourism on arrival (15 days for a few nationalities). You can extend once, by up to 30 days, at the Jomtien immigration office for ฿1,900. Want longer? Look at a 60-day tourist visa before you fly. See visa extension and visa options.
- **Overstay:** ฿500 a day, up to ฿20,000, and long overstays bring bans.
- **Onward ticket:** airlines often check it before you board, and immigration can ask too.
- **Money at the border:** immigration can ask to see funds. TAT's July 2026 reminder gives ฿10,000 per person for transit and some visa-exempt cases and ฿20,000 for tourist visa holders (children under 12 exempt). Many embassy pages quote ฿20,000 for everyone, so having that much in cash or on a card is the cautious choice.
- **TDAC:** every non-Thai traveller, children included, fills in the Thailand Digital Arrival Card at **tdac.immigration.go.th** within the three days before arrival. It is free: sites that charge are agents. See TDAC arrival card.
- **Tourist entry fee:** a proposed ฿300 fee for air arrivals was still under consideration in 2026 reports, and we found no report that it has started.

Before you fly

- Buy travel insurance. Motorbike accidents are often only covered with a valid licence and a helmet. See travel insurance.
- Tell your bank you're travelling, and bring two cards kept in different places in case one is blocked.
- Bring some cash in large, clean notes; money changers in town usually beat the airport and ATMs. See exchanging money.
- Bring regular medicine in its original packaging with a copy of the prescription. Ask a doctor or pharmacist if you're unsure it's allowed.

Apps to install

- **Bolt and Grab** for cars and motorbike taxis at a fixed price. See Bolt and Grab.
- **LINE**, the messaging app hotels, shops and pharmacies use. See LINE app guide.
- **Google Maps and Translate**, with Thai downloaded for offline use.

Money on day one

- Foreign cards pay about ฿220 to ฿250 per ATM withdrawal, so take out larger amounts less often. See ATM fees.

- When an ATM or card machine offers to charge you in your home currency, decline and pay in baht.
- ATMs mostly give ฿1,000 notes. Break them at 7-Eleven, a supermarket or a mall, because baht buses, street stalls and motorbike taxis often can't change them. See cash vs card.

Phone and internet

A travel eSIM bought before you fly is easiest for a short trip; for a Thai number, buy a tourist SIM at the airport. Since 16 May 2026, new SIMs are registered in person with your passport and a live face check, and foreigners can hold at most three SIMs per network. See SIM cards and eSIMs.

Getting to Pattaya

From Suvarnabhumi (BKK) it's about 1.5 to 2 hours by road: a taxi or transfer is about ฿1,100 to ฿1,800, the airport bus about ฿140 to ฿170. Allow 2 to 3 hours from Don Mueang. Landing late? Book a transfer ahead. See Bangkok to Pattaya, airport transfers and arriving at Bangkok airport.

Getting around town

- **Baht buses** (songthaews) cost ฿15 on the normal loop since 10 April 2026, up to about ฿20 for longer runs. See baht bus routes and fares.
- **Motorbike taxis** wear blue vests since 16 October 2026. Agree the price first. See motorbike taxis.

Rules that catch first-timers out

- **Vapes are illegal** to bring in, own or use, with no tourist exception.
- **Smoking on the beach**: fines up to ฿5,000.
- **Alcohol** is sold from 11am to midnight. On five Buddhist holy days most shops and ordinary bars can't sell it. See Buddhist holidays and alcohol.
- **Cannabis** is for medical use with a Thai prescription only.
- **Your passport:** police can ask to see it. Carry it or a copy.
- Full list: laws visitors break.

What to pack

- Light, breathable clothes, sandals, and something that covers shoulders and knees for temples. See temple customs.
- Sunscreen, sunglasses and a hat. See heat and sun safety.
- A light rain jacket from May to October, the rainy season. See weather by month.
- A plug adapter if your plugs aren't flat two-pin or round two-pin. Thailand runs on 220V at 50Hz, so check your chargers say 100 to 240V.

Pro tip: My first visit was two weeks, and it was too short. My number one advice: come on a tourist stay, extend it, and use that time to talk to as many locals as you can. Things in Pattaya are a bit different than online.

Save these numbers

Tourist Police **1155** (24 hours, English spoken), ambulance **1669**, police **191**. Lost money to an online scam? Call **1441** straight away so the account can be frozen. See emergency numbers and common scams.

Common questions

How long can I stay in Thailand without a visa? Since 15 September 2026, 30 days for most visa-exempt nationalities, extendable once by up to 30 days for ฿1,900. Check your own nationality on visa options.

Do I have to pay for the TDAC? No. The official site is free; sites that charge are agents.

Can I extend my 30 days in Pattaya? Yes, once, by up to 30 days, at Jomtien immigration for ฿1,900. See visa extension.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Thailand Digital Arrival Card, official site; TAT News, entry reminder on proof of funds (6 July 2026); Pattaya Mail on the proposed ฿300 tourist fee (January 2026); other details are from our linked guides, checked in November 2026. Entry rules change often and the officer decides at the counter, so check your embassy's page before you fly.

First 24 hours

- Walk the beach road and get your bearings. See Pattaya in one day.
- Avoid the most common traps. See first-timer mistakes.
- Staying a month or more? See the first week checklist.

GETTING AROUND

Walking in Pattaya: Pavements, Crossings and Safety

Walking is a great way to see Pattaya, but pavements are uneven and traffic doesn't always stop. Crossing roads, scooters on footpaths, the best places to walk, night walking and the heat.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/getting-around/walking-in-pattaya/

Pavements	**Often narrow, broken or blocked by stalls and parked scooters**
Crossings	**Many drivers don't stop at zebra crossings, despite fines up to ฿4,000**
Traffic	**Drives on the left; look right first, and both ways on one-way roads**
Best walks	**Beach Road promenade, Jomtien Beach Road, Pratumnak Hill**
Heat	**Walk early morning or after sunset, and carry water**

Quick answer: Central Pattaya is compact and flat, so walking is often the quickest way to cover short distances, and the beach promenades are lovely in the early morning and at sunset. Away from the seafront, pavements can be narrow, broken or blocked by stalls and parked scooters, so you'll sometimes end up walking in the road. Many drivers don't stop at zebra crossings, so wait for a real gap or use traffic lights. Traffic drives on the left: look right first, and on one-way roads look both ways for scooters going the wrong way.

At a glance

WALK	DISTANCE	TIME	GOOD TO KNOW
Beach Road promenade, end to end	About 3 km	About 40 minutes	Flat, wide and the easiest walk in town; best at sunset
Jomtien Beach Road	Up to about 6 km	An hour covers a good stretch	Start at shady Dongtan; baht bus back, up to ฿20
Pratumnak Hill	Viewpoint and Big Buddha	About 1 to 2 hours with stops	Steep in places; cover shoulders and knees for the temple
Walking Street	Under 1 km	15 minutes, or all night	Closed to traffic in the evening; very crowded late
Second Road and the sois	Varies	Varies	Narrow pavements, scooters, poles and stalls; single file

Pavements

- Pavements away from the seafront can be uneven, broken, or missing altogether. Watch for raised kerbs, loose tiles, open drains and low signs, especially at night.
- Stalls, restaurant tables, parked cars and scooters often take up part of the footpath. Pattaya Mail has reported that in some areas half the pavement is unusable, which pushes people into the road.
- Scooters ride on pavements too, mostly to dodge traffic. Pattaya City started a crackdown on footpath parking and riding on South Pattaya Road in January 2026 and said it would continue, but you'll still meet them.
- When you have to walk in the road, keep to the edge and face oncoming traffic where you can.
- Wear shoes with grip. Shiny tiles outside shops and malls get very slippery in the rain.

Crossing roads

- **Look right first.** Thailand drives on the left, so the nearest traffic comes from your right.
- **One-way roads still need two looks.** Beach Road runs one way south and Second Road one way north, but scooters ride the wrong way along the inside edge.
- **Don't trust zebra crossings.** Drivers must stop for people on a marked crossing, and the maximum fine for not stopping is ฿4,000, but many still don't. Wait for a real gap, or for traffic to stop, before you step out.
- **Use traffic lights where there are any.** Even on a green man, check that turning traffic has actually stopped.
- **Cross with locals,** on their far side from the traffic.
- **Make yourself seen.** Raise a hand as you cross, and make eye contact with drivers. Don't step out from between parked cars or behind a stopped baht bus.
- **Watch for left turns.** At some junctions traffic can turn left even on a red light, so scooters may sweep round the corner as you cross.
- Full rules for drivers are on road rules and fines.

Best places to walk

The seafront promenades on Beach Road and Jomtien, Pratumnak Hill and Walking Street in the evening are the easy, pleasant walks: see the table above. Early mornings are good anywhere, when the streets are quiet and cool. See Pattaya at dawn.

Pro tip: I almost stayed at a condo set back from the main road. But a five or six minute walk from the road, two or three times a day, starts to add up.

So before you book, check how far your hotel or condo is from the nearest main road. A short walk on a map can feel long in the heat or the rain. See where to stay.

Walking at night

- Main roads, the beach promenades and Walking Street are busy and well lit until late. Some side sois are dark, with broken pavement and parked scooters.
- Use your phone's torch on dark sois: drains, steps and potholes are hard to see.
- Street dogs can be territorial at night. Walk calmly, don't run, and cross the street or turn back if a group starts barking. See stray dogs and rabies.
- After drinks, a short Bolt or Grab ride is safer than a long walk along dark sois. See getting home late at night.

Heat and rain

- Walk early or late. The sun is strongest from about 11am to 3pm, even on cloudy days, and March to May is the hottest stretch of the year.
- Carry water, wear a hat and sunscreen, and use shade and air-conditioned malls as stops on longer walks.
- Heat exhaustion is real: dizziness, headache and heavy sweating mean stop, cool down and drink. See heat and sun safety.
- In heavy rain, some streets flood quickly. Don't wade through deep water: it can hide open drains and holes. See flood season.

When to take a ride

- For anything over about 20 minutes in the midday heat, a ฿15 baht bus on the main loop is usually the better choice. See baht bus routes and fares.
- A motorbike taxi is the quickest short hop through traffic. Riders wear numbered vests, now blue, though some still wear orange. See motorbike taxis.
- With bags, children or limited mobility, book a car on Bolt or Grab. For step-free tips, see accessible Pattaya.

Common questions

Is Pattaya a walkable city? The centre is: Beach Road, Second Road and the sois between them are close together and flat. The catch is the pavements, which are often narrow or blocked, and the heat in the middle of the day.

Do cars stop at zebra crossings in Pattaya? Often not. The law says they must, with fines of up to ฿4,000, but don't step out until the traffic has actually stopped.

Is it safe to walk at night in Pattaya? The main roads and the beach are busy and lit until late. On quiet sois, watch your footing, keep valuables out of sight and be calm around street dogs.

How long does it take to walk Beach Road? About 40 minutes end to end, from the Dolphin roundabout to Walking Street, without stops.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya Mail, 9 January 2026 (footpath enforcement on South Pattaya Road); Pattaya Mail, 11 January 2026 (vendor tables still blocking footpaths); Nation Thailand, January 2023 (฿4,000 fine for not stopping at pedestrian crossings); Paultan, 2 September 2026 (the crossing fine is still among the offences police target). Jonny's words are from his ride video of 18 October 2026. Walk distances and times are from our own guide pages.

GETTING AROUND

Thai Road Rules and Traffic Fines

The road rules that matter in Pattaya, the 2026 maximum fines for helmets, red lights, phones and drink-driving, the 12-point licence system, and what happens if you're stopped.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/getting-around/thai-road-rules-fines/

Drive on	**The left**
Helmet	**Rider and passenger, fine up to ฿2,000**
Licence	**Motorcycle licence valid in Thailand**
Red light, speeding, phone	**Up to ฿4,000 each**
Drink-drive limit	**0.05%; 0.02% for under-20s, provisional and unlicensed drivers**
Points	**12 per Thai licence, 90-day suspension at zero**

Quick answer: Thailand drives on the left, helmets are compulsory for rider and passenger, and you need a motorcycle licence valid in Thailand to ride a scooter. Since strict enforcement began on 1 April 2026, maximum fines are ฿4,000 for speeding, red lights, ignoring zebra crossings or a phone in hand; ฿2,000 for no helmet, no seatbelt or riding against the traffic; and ฿1,000 for not carrying a licence. Drink-driving means ฿5,000 to ฿20,000 and up to a year in prison. Thai licences carry 12 points; lose them all and it's a 90-day suspension.

Riding a scooter is the easiest way to get around Pattaya, and the police know it. Checkpoints for helmets and licences are common, especially on Second Road, Beach Road, Sukhumvit and the routes into Jomtien. See police checkpoints for where and when.

The rules that matter

- Thailand drives on the **left**.
- **Helmets** are required for the rider and the passenger.
- You need a **motorcycle licence** valid in Thailand: a Thai licence, or an International Driving Permit with a motorcycle category plus your home licence. See International Driving Permit and Thai driving licence.
- Carry your licence, your passport or a copy, and the bike's registration papers.
- Beach Road and Second Road are **one-way**, in opposite directions. Riding the wrong way is a common fine.
- Red lights and pedestrian crossings apply to scooters too.
- In a car, everyone wears a **seatbelt**, front and back.
- No phone in your hand while riding or driving; hands-free only.
- The bike must be road legal: current tax sticker, number plate, working lights and mirrors. Police can fine you for missing mirrors or a loud modified exhaust.

Maximum fines in 2026

Legal maximums for the ten offences enforced strictly from 1 April 2026. What you're charged can be lower; always get an official ticket or receipt.

OFFENCE	MAXIMUM FINE	POINTS (THAI LICENCE)
Speeding	฿4,000	1
Running a red light	฿4,000	2
Not stopping for people at a zebra crossing	฿4,000	1
Phone in hand while driving	฿4,000	1
Riding or driving against the traffic	฿2,000	2
No helmet, rider or passenger	฿2,000	1
No seatbelt, driver or passenger	฿2,000	1
Not carrying a driving licence	฿1,000, possibly up to 1 month in jail	
Drink-driving	฿5,000 to ฿20,000 and up to 1 year in jail	4
Driving without due regard for safety	฿5,000 to ฿20,000 and up to 1 year in jail	

Fines you're most likely to see

OFFENCE	WHAT USUALLY HAPPENS
No helmet	An on-the-spot ticket, often a few hundred baht, up to ฿2,000
No valid licence	A fine, and the bike can be impounded until it's paid

OFFENCE	WHAT USUALLY HAPPENS
Wrong way on a one-way road	A ticket, up to ฿2,000
Missing mirrors or loud exhaust	A ticket for each (฿500 each at Jonny's 2026 stop)
Drink driving	Arrest, court, heavy fines and possible jail

Pro tip: I was pulled over in Jomtien in 2026 with an expired licence, no mirrors and a modified exhaust. The fines were ฿1,000 for the licence and ฿500 each for the mirrors and exhaust, and the bike was impounded, which cost another ฿500 to get back. Paying at the police station took under 5 minutes. Mirrors and a legal exhaust are cheap to fix, while fines and impound fees add up quickly. "Everyone does it" won't help you once you're the one who gets stopped. The full story is in my first Thai traffic stop.

The 12-point system

Every Thai driving licence starts with 12 points. Points come off for offences: 1 for speeding, no helmet or seatbelt, a phone in hand or not stopping at a crossing; 2 for a red light, riding against the traffic or driving while suspended; 3 for reckless driving or a hit-and-run; 4 for drink- or drug-driving or street racing. At zero, the licence is suspended for 90 days, and driving while suspended can mean up to 3 months in jail or a fine of up to ฿10,000. You can check your points in the Royal Thai Police "Khub Dee" app. We couldn't find clear guidance on how points apply to visitors riding on a foreign licence; the fines apply either way.

Drink driving

The legal limit is 50 mg per 100 ml of blood (0.05%) for most drivers. It's 20 mg (0.02%) for drivers under 20, holders of a provisional (first two-year) licence, and anyone driving without a valid licence, which includes a visitor riding without the right licence. A first offence can mean ฿5,000 to ฿20,000 and up to a year in prison; a repeat within two years, ฿50,000 to ฿100,000 and up to two years (Thairath, 2026). Police run breath-test checkpoints at night, roughly 10pm to 3am in Pattaya. If you've been drinking, take a Bolt or Grab instead.

If you're stopped

- Stay calm and polite, and pull over where they point.
- Show your licence and passport copy.
- Pay at the checkpoint or police station as directed, and ask for a receipt.
- If something seems wrong, ask for the Tourist Police on 1155.

Insurance

Riding without a valid licence or helmet often voids travel insurance. See travel insurance and renting a scooter.

This is general information, not legal advice. Rules and fines change; check the latest before you ride.

Paying a fine

- Official fines come with a ticket. Keep it until it is paid.
- Some tickets can be paid at a police station, a bank or online. In Pattaya the fine counters are inside Pattaya Police Station on Beach Road.
- Camera fines for red lights and speeding are increasingly common, and tickets are sent to the registered owner.
- Unpaid tickets can block your yearly vehicle tax renewal, so clear them before the tax is due. See vehicle tax and plates.

Common questions

How much is the fine for no helmet in Thailand? Up to ฿2,000, for the rider and for a passenger without one.

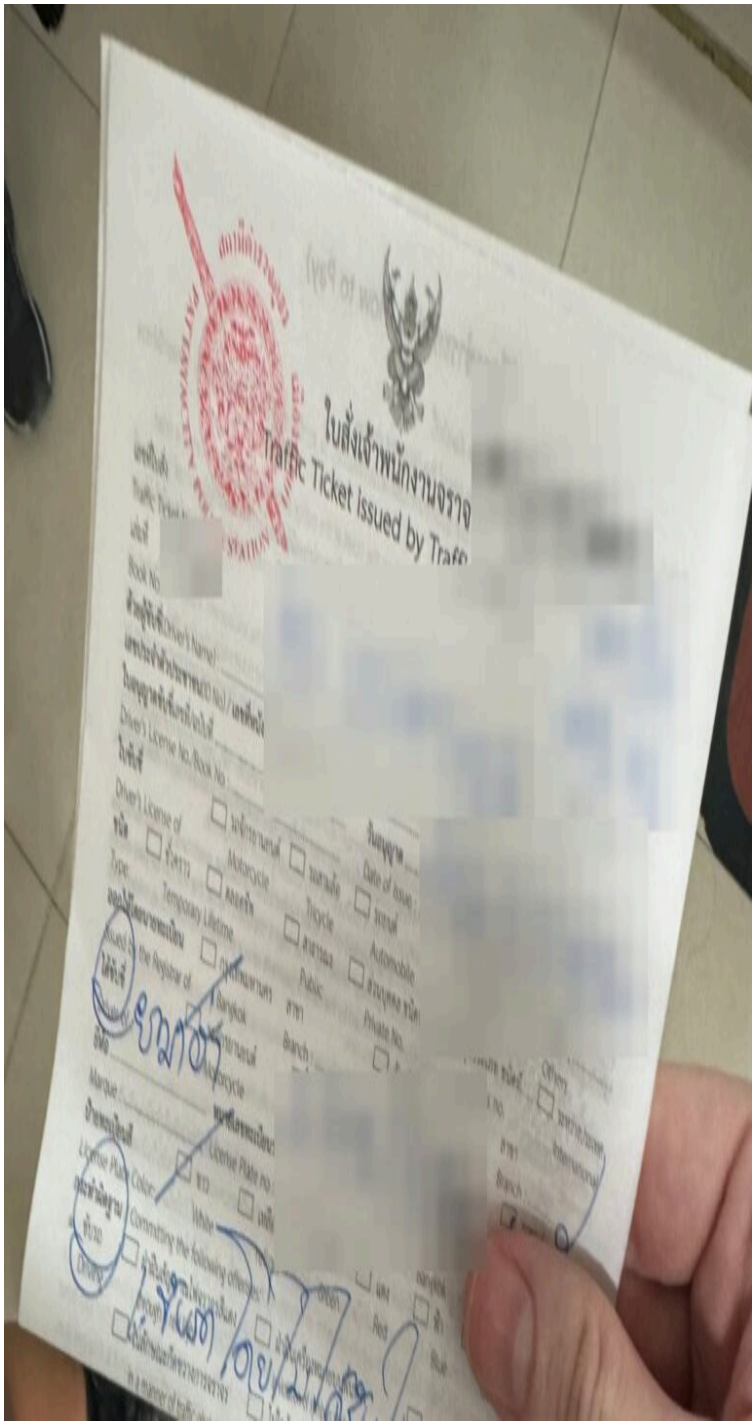
Can I ride a scooter in Pattaya on a car licence? No. You need a motorcycle category on your home licence and your IDP, or a Thai motorcycle licence. Riding without one can mean a fine, an impounded bike and no insurance cover.

What is the drink-drive limit in Thailand? 0.05% blood alcohol for most drivers, and 0.02% for under-20s, provisional licence holders and unlicensed drivers.

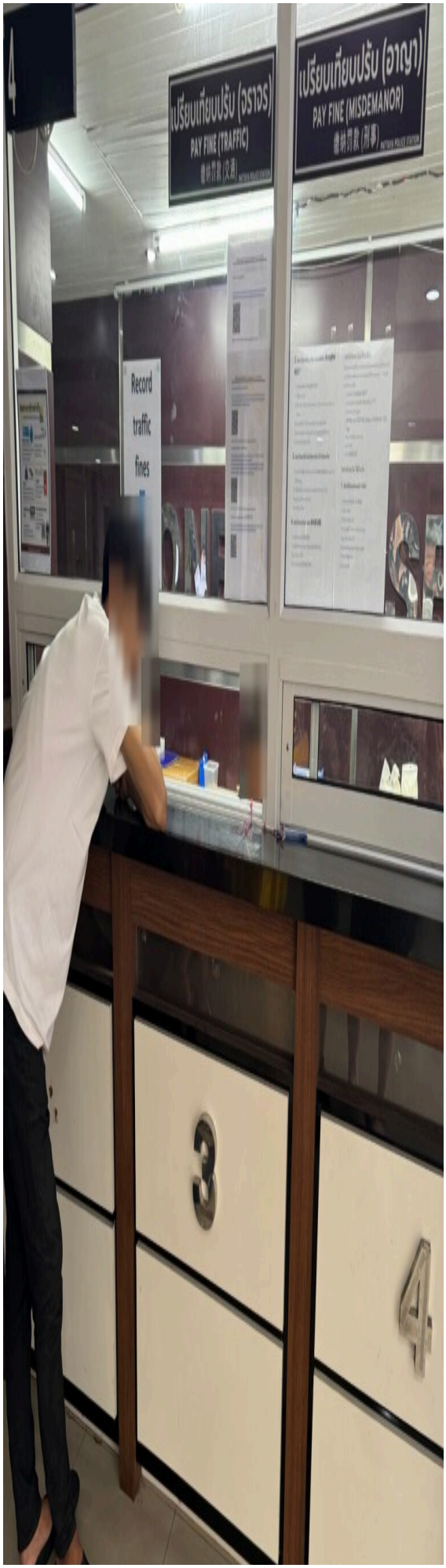
Can my bike be impounded? Yes, typically for riding without a valid licence. You pay the fine, then an impound fee to collect it.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: The Nation, Thailand to strictly enforce 10 key traffic offences from 1 April (2026); Thairath, traffic fines and the 12-point licence system (March 2026); Paul Tan, Thai police focus on 10 major offences (September 2026); Government Public Relations Department, stricter blood alcohol limits (September 2024). Some older guides say the 0.02% limit applies to anyone licensed under five years; the government notice names under-20s, provisional and unlicensed drivers.



A real Pattaya traffic ticket (mine, personal details blurred). Keep yours until the fine is paid.


เปรียบเทียบปรับ (จราจร)
PAY FINE (TRAFFIC)
เปรียบเทียบปรับ (อาญา)
PAY FINE (MISDEMANOR)
Record
traffic
fines



The fine payment counters inside Pattaya Police Station on Beach Road: traffic fines on the left, misdemeanour fines on the right.

Related guides

- Police Checkpoints: What Riders Need to Know
- Walking in Pattaya: Pavements, Crossings and Safety
- Thai Road Signs and Markings
- What to Do After a Road Accident in Pattaya

From the blog

- My first Thai traffic stop: 2,000 baht and an impounded scooter.

GETTING AROUND

Buying a Car in Thailand as a Foreigner

Can foreigners buy a car in Thailand? Yes, in their own name: the proof of address you need, new versus used, checking the blue book, the transfer at the DLT, insurance classes, yearly tax and the licence you need.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/getting-around/buying-a-car/

Can foreigners own a car?	**Yes, in their own name**
Proof of address	**Residence certificate from immigration or an embassy, or a work permit**
Visitors on a tourist stay	**Registering is hard; renting is usually better**
Transfer	**At the DLT, notify within 15 days; typically ฿1,000 to ฿3,000 in fees**
Every year	**Por Ror Bor (about ฿645), road tax by engine size**
Licence	**Thai car licence for long stays**

Quick answer: Yes, foreigners can buy a car in Thailand and register it in their own name. The extra step is proving your address, usually with a certificate of residence from immigration or your embassy, or a work permit. That is much easier on a long-stay visa; on a tourist stay or visa exemption, many offices won't register a car to you, so renting is usually the better choice for stays of up to about six months. A new-car dealer handles the paperwork. A used car is transferred at the Department of Land Transport (DLT), with fees typically about ฿1,000 to ฿3,000. Each year you renew the compulsory insurance (about ฿645) and the road tax, and most owners add voluntary insurance. You also need a licence valid in Thailand; residents should get a Thai one.

At a glance

STEP	WHAT TO KNOW
Who can register	Foreigners in their own name, with proof of a Thai address
Proof of address	Residence certificate (immigration or embassy) or a work permit
New car	The dealer registers it; you drive on a red plate for up to 30 days
Used car	Transfer at the DLT; both sides usually attend
Transfer fees	About ฿1,000 to ฿3,000 in total, mostly stamp duty
Finance	Usually needs a work permit and Thai income
Yearly	Por Ror Bor about ฿645, road tax by engine size, inspection if over 7 years

What you need to register a car

- Your passport, with copies of the photo page and current visa.
- Proof of address. A **certificate of residence** from immigration is free and reported to take from one to 15 working days; bring your passport, your TM30 receipt, rental contract and a recent utility bill. See TM30 explained. Some embassies issue an address letter the same day for a fee. A work permit showing your address also works.
- For a used car: the seller's ID, the registration book and signed transfer forms. For a new car: the dealer's invoice.
- A valid Por Ror Bor certificate.
- Requirements vary, so ask at the Banglamung DLT before you pay a deposit.

New or used

- **New:** the dealer registers the car and orders the plates. Meanwhile you drive on the dealer's red plate, meant for no more than 30 days and limited to 6am to 8pm within the province unless trips are logged. Cash buyers can often negotiate off the first price.
- **Used:** cheaper, from dealers, private sellers and online. You check the car and papers yourself, and transfer ownership at the DLT.

Checking a used car

- **The registration book** (usually called the blue book for cars) must be in the seller's name, and the engine and chassis numbers on the car must match it. Every past owner is listed; many owners in a short time is a warning sign.
- **Finance:** many cars are still owned by a finance company. The loan must be settled before the transfer. If the seller says the book comes after payment, pay the finance company directly against its release letter.
- **Tax and fines:** check when the road tax was last paid, and ask about unpaid tickets. Since August 2026, unpaid fines can hold up the tax sticker. See vehicle tax and plates.
- **Condition:** service stamps, tyres, air conditioning and a test drive. Odometer rollbacks are reported, so compare the mileage with the service history. Look for damp carpets, rust under the seats or a musty smell, which can mean flood damage. Paying a mechanic to look is money well spent.
- Facebook Marketplace and similar sites have good cars and scams. Never pay in full before the papers are right. See second-hand buy and sell.

The transfer at the DLT

- Buyer and seller usually go together. The officer checks the engine and chassis numbers, you pay, and the book is updated with your name, often in one to three hours.
- Fees reported for 2026: about ฿100 for the transfer plus small form and inspection fees, and stamp duty that a legal guide puts at 0.5% of the DLT's value for the car. A typical total is about ฿1,000 to ฿3,000. Cars over seven years old need an inspection first.
- By law, buyer and seller should notify the registrar within 15 days. A late notice can mean an administrative fine of up to ฿2,000.
- Avoid a "floating transfer", where the seller signs the forms and leaves you to file later. Until the book shows your name, the seller is still the presumed owner, and insurers can push back on claims.

Insurance

- **Por Ror Bor** (compulsory): about ฿645 a year for a private car. It covers injuries to people, not damage to cars, and you need it to renew the road tax.
- **Voluntary insurance:** Class 1 covers your own car even when no other vehicle is involved, and costs roughly ฿4,300 to ฿20,000 a year depending on the car and the source. Class 2+ and 3+ pay for your car only after a crash with another vehicle; Class 3 covers only the other side.
- Insurers expect a licence valid in Thailand, and an invalid licence is a common reason claims are refused.

Road tax and running costs

- Road tax for a car up to seven seats is by engine size: about ฿1,200 a year for a 1,200cc car and ฿1,650 for 1,500cc, with discounts from the sixth year. See vehicle tax and plates.
- Budget for servicing, tyres, fuel, parking and tolls. Condo parking can be limited, so ask before you buy.

Finance

Loans for foreigners are possible but hard: lenders commonly want a non-immigrant visa with 12 months or more left, a work permit, Thai tax returns and payslips, and often a Thai guarantor. Many foreigners buy outright.

Licence

Long-stay residents should get a Thai driving licence: it is what police and insurers expect, and it makes buying and insuring a car simpler. Visitors drive on an International Driving Permit with their home licence. See Thai driving licence and International Driving Permit.

Common questions

Can a tourist buy a car in Thailand? It is hard. Many DLT offices want an address linked to a non-tourist stay. For short stays, renting is simpler.

What documents does a foreigner need to buy a car? A passport, proof of address (a certificate of residence or a work permit), the registration book and seller's ID for a used car, and Por Ror Bor.

How much does it cost to transfer a used car? Usually about ฿1,000 to ฿3,000, mostly stamp duty, plus an inspection for cars over seven years old.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: ThaiLawOnline, buying a car in Thailand (updated November 2026) (documents, certificate of residence, finance, fees, the 15-day notice and ฿2,000 fine, floating transfers; it notes it could not verify the 0.5% stamp duty rate itself); Motorist, used car ownership transfer (February 2026); The Thaiger, car insurance classes (updated September 2026); Chiang Rai Times, insurance costs (August 2026) (Por Ror Bor ฿645.21, Class 1 ฿12,000 to ฿20,000); Thairath, red plate rules (May 2026). Requirements differ between DLT offices. This is general information, not legal advice.

Related guides

- Buying a Scooter in Pattaya
- Buying a Condo in Pattaya as a Foreigner
- Buying and Selling Second-Hand in Pattaya
- Renting a Car in Pattaya

GETTING AROUND

Learning to Ride a Scooter Safely

Never ridden a scooter? How to learn safely before riding in Pattaya traffic: the licence you need, training for a Thai licence, the skills to practise, gear, local traffic habits and 2026 fines.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/getting-around/learn-to-ride/

Licence	**Motorcycle licence valid in Thailand; home licence plus IDP for visitors**
Fines since 1 Apr 2026	**No helmet ฿2,000; no licence on you ฿1,000**
Risk	**About 14,000 of 17,447 road deaths in 2024 involved motorcycles**
Learn	**Off the road first, then quiet streets early in the morning**
Gear	**Fastened helmet, closed shoes, long trousers**
Not ready	**Baht bus ฿15, motorbike taxi or Bolt and Grab**

Quick answer: If you have never ridden, don't learn in Pattaya traffic on your first day. Thailand's roads are among the most dangerous in the world for motorcyclists: of 17,447 road deaths in 2024, 14,144 were linked to motorcycles, according to the Department of Disease Control. To ride legally you need a motorcycle licence valid in Thailand: for visitors, a home licence that covers motorcycles plus an International Driving Permit; for residents, a Thai licence. Learn the basics off the road, then practise on quiet streets early in the morning before you join Beach Road or Sukhumvit. Wear a fastened helmet every time: since 1 April 2026, riding without one can cost up to ฿2,000.

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Visitors	Home motorcycle licence plus an IDP that covers motorcycles
Residents	Thai motorcycle licence from the Banglamung land transport office
New riders getting a Thai licence	Training class or certified driving school, written test, practical test
Helmet	Compulsory for rider and passenger; up to ฿2,000 fine
Licence not carried	Up to ฿1,000 fine
Drink-riding limit	0.05%; 0.02% for under-20s, provisional and unlicensed riders
Insurance	Usually void if you ride without a valid licence

Get the licence first

Riding without a valid motorcycle licence is illegal, and travel insurance usually won't pay for a crash if you weren't licensed for the bike. A car licence alone doesn't count.

- **Visitors:** bring your home licence with a motorcycle category and an International Driving Permit that also shows motorcycles. See International Driving Permit and motorbike insurance.
- **Residents:** get a Thai licence at the Banglamung land transport office. See Thai driving licence.
- **Never ridden before?** New applicants for a Thai licence go through training before the tests. The Thaiger describes a 5-hour class at the land transport office, often taught only in Thai, and says certified private driving schools offer the course in English with a certificate that exempts you from the office class. Some guides and forum posts describe longer school courses, up to 15 hours, so ask the school or office what applies to you. Then come the written test and a practical riding test.

Pro tip: for his Thai car and motorbike licences he still did two full days of driving school. His advice before you buy a scooter: rent or try a few first, because everyone wants different things.

Learn off the road first

A riding school or an experienced friend can teach you the basics in a few sessions. Practise in an empty car park or a quiet, flat space before you go near traffic:

- **Throttle control:** automatic scooters jump forward if you twist the throttle while braking or getting on. Keep your right wrist flat when you start.
- **Braking:** practise smooth, firm stops using both brakes together. Grabbing the front brake hard, especially on a wet or sandy surface, is a common way to fall.
- **Slow turns and U-turns:** look where you want to go, not at the kerb. Most beginner falls happen at walking pace.
- **Looking over your shoulder** before you move off, change lanes or turn. Mirrors miss the motorbikes that pass on both sides here.
- Don't carry a passenger until you are confident alone. A passenger changes the balance and the braking distance.

Choosing a first scooter

Most rental scooters in Pattaya are automatic, which is easiest to learn on: no gears and no clutch. A small, light scooter is easier to handle at slow speed and to park than a big one. Check the brakes, tyres, lights and horn before you ride off, and photograph the bike all round. See renting a scooter and, later, buying a

scooter.

Gear

- **A proper helmet, fastened every time**, for you and any passenger. The Department of Disease Control says 84% of motorcyclists hospitalised between 2020 and 2024 weren't wearing helmets. Check that a rental helmet fits and the strap closes; a good helmet of your own is worth buying if you ride every day.
- Closed shoes and long trousers protect you in a fall. Flip-flops slip off and leave your feet exposed.
- Sunglasses or a visor against wind, dust, insects and rain.
- A rain poncho or jacket in the wet season, May to October.

Pattaya traffic habits to expect

- **Beach Road and Second Road are one-way**, in opposite directions. Riding the wrong way is a common fine and a common crash.
- Baht buses stop suddenly to pick up passengers. Leave space and don't ride close behind them.
- Motorbikes filter on both sides and some ride against the traffic near the kerb. Expect people where they shouldn't be.
- U-turns across big roads like Sukhumvit put you in front of fast traffic. Avoid them until you are confident.
- Roads get slippery in the first rain, with sand and oil on the surface, and potholes and roadworks appear all year. See rainy season survival.

First rides

- Start on quiet roads early in the morning, not Sukhumvit, Beach Road or Second Road at rush hour. See road rules and fines and Thai road signs.
- Keep left, ride slowly and keep a gap you can stop in.
- Avoid riding in heavy rain, at night or after any alcohol until riding feels natural.
- Police checkpoints check licences, helmets and drink-riding. See police checkpoints.
- Songkran in April is the riskiest time of year to learn. See Songkran riding safety.

If you crash

Move to safety, call 1669 for an ambulance if anyone is hurt, photograph the scene and the bikes, and call your insurer. See road accidents and emergency numbers.

Not ready?

You don't need to ride to get around Pattaya. Baht buses cost ฿15 on the normal loop since 10 April 2026. Motorbike taxis, with riders in blue vests since 16 October 2026, are quick for one person; passengers wear a helmet too. Bolt and Grab give a fixed price in the app.

Common questions

Can I ride a scooter in Pattaya on my car licence? No. You need a licence with a motorcycle category, plus an International Driving Permit that covers motorcycles if you are a visitor.

What is the fine for no helmet? Up to ฿2,000 since strict enforcement began on 1 April 2026. Passengers must wear a helmet too.

Do I need driving school for a Thai motorbike licence? If you have no licence, you go through training before the tests: a class at the land transport office or a course at a certified school, which can be in English. Ask the school or the Banglamung office what applies to you.

Is a scooter or a motorbike taxi safer? For a beginner, a registered motorbike taxi with a helmet is usually safer than riding yourself in traffic you don't know yet.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: The Nation, over 14,000 killed in motorcycle accidents in 2024 (Department of Disease Control, June 2025); The Thaiger, a foreigner's guide to a Thai driver's licence (November 2025). Fines, the drink-riding limit and licence rules follow our road rules and Thai driving licence pages, each checked separately. Training rules for new licences are reported differently by different sources; check with the school or the land transport office.

GETTING AROUND

The Best Scooter Rides Around Pattaya

Easy and scenic scooter rides from Pattaya: Pratumnak Hill, the Jomtien coast, Naklua, Mabprachan Lake, Khao Chi Chan and Wat Yan, and Bang Saray, with timing, licence and helmet tips.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/getting-around/scooter-rides/

Best time	**Early morning or the hour before sunset**
Must have	**Motorcycle licence valid in Thailand, helmet, insurance**
Short ride	**Pratumnak Hill, a few minutes from South Pattaya**
Half day	**Khao Chi Chan and Wat Yan, about 15 to 20 km south**
Avoid	**Sukhumvit Road at rush hour; Motorway 7 is closed to motorbikes**

Quick answer: The easiest scenic rides from Pattaya are the loop over Pratumnak Hill to the Big Buddha and the city viewpoint, the coast road through Jomtien towards Na Jomtien, and the quiet streets of Naklua in the north. For a half day, ride about 15 to 20 km south to the gold cliff Buddha at Khao Chi Chan and the gardens of Wat Yan, or east to Mabprachan Lake for sunset. Go early in the morning or in the hour before sunset, when it is cooler. Whatever the route, you need a motorcycle licence valid in Thailand and a helmet, for you and any passenger.

At a glance

RIDE	FROM CENTRAL PATTAYA	BEST TIME	GOOD FOR
Pratumnak Hill loop	A few minutes	Sunrise or sunset	Views, the Big Buddha
Jomtien and Na Jomtien coast	10 to 30 minutes	Morning or late afternoon	Sea views, beach cafés
Naklua and Wong Amat	10 to 15 minutes	Morning	Seafood, quiet beach, the Sanctuary of Truth
Mabprachan Lake	About 15 minutes	Late afternoon	Sunset over the water
Khao Chi Chan and Wat Yan	About 15 to 20 km south	Morning	Half-day sightseeing
Bang Saray	About 20 km south, 30 to 40 minutes	Morning	Seafood and a fishing village

Pratumnak Hill loop

A short ride over the green headland between South Pattaya and Jomtien. Wat Phra Yai, the Big Buddha temple, and the Pattaya City viewpoint above Bali Hai pier are about 1.2 km apart, and both are free. The viewpoint is listed as open 7am to 10pm. The roads are steep, so take the hills slowly, and cover shoulders and knees for the temple. See Pratumnak and Big Buddha and viewpoint.

Jomtien and Na Jomtien coast

Come down off Pratumnak into Jomtien, whose beach runs for about 6 km, and keep heading south towards Na Jomtien, where the beaches get quieter. It is a gentle, mostly flat ride; watch for baht buses stopping suddenly. To park up and explore on foot, see the Jomtien beach walk.

Naklua and Wong Amat

Head north past the Dolphin roundabout at the top of Beach Road into Naklua, the old fishing community. Ride past the Lan Pho seafood market and park, down to the calm Wong Amat Beach, and on to the carved wooden Sanctuary of Truth. Going inside is a separate ticketed visit of two to four hours.

Mabprachan Lake

About 15 minutes east of the city, past Sukhumvit Road, the reservoir is a popular sunset spot. In July 2026 Pattaya Mail reported a bright blue running and cycling lane of about 2 km on the dam, open daily until 9pm. That lane is for runners and cyclists, so park the scooter and walk it. Cross Sukhumvit at traffic lights or U-turn points, never through a gap in fast traffic. See Mabprachan Lake.

Khao Chi Chan and Wat Yan

The longest of these rides, and the best half day out. Head south about 15 to 20 km to Khao Chi Chan, the giant Buddha outlined in gold on a limestone cliff: free, open in daylight hours (about 8am to 6pm), and a 20 to 45 minute stop. Wat Yansangwararam (Wat Yan) is on the same road: free, with lawns, lakes and halls, generally open about 8am to 5pm. The Silverlake vineyard area is next door. Much of the way is on Sukhumvit, which is wide and fast, so keep left. See Huay Yai.

Bang Saray

Further south, about 20 km from the city in Sattahip district, Bang Saray is a fishing village with seafood cooked near the piers and a beach with none of central Pattaya's noise. Go early in the morning to see the boats come in. It is 30 to 40 minutes each way, mostly on Sukhumvit, so it suits confident riders.

Night rides

Jonny films 360° night rides through Pattaya's streets for his YouTube channel, so you can watch a route before you ride it. If you go out yourself:

- Beach Road and Second Road are one-way, in opposite directions. Riding the wrong way is a common fine.
- For the bay lit up, ride up to the Pratumnak viewpoint; see night viewpoints.
- Police run breath-test checkpoints at night, roughly 10pm to 3am. If you have had a drink, leave the scooter and take Bolt or Grab.

Timing and weather

- Early morning is the coolest and quietest time to ride. Sunrise is about 5:50am in May and June and about 6:45am in late January. See Pattaya at dawn.
- Sunset is earliest in November, about 5:48pm, and latest in early July, about 6:47pm. See sunset spots.
- Avoid the midday heat on long rides. See heat and sun safety.
- Rain makes roads slippery, especially painted lines and metal covers. Slow down or wait it out under cover. See rainy season survival kit.

Ride safely

Thailand's roads are among the most dangerous in the world, and scooters are the biggest risk. In 2024, 14,144 of the 17,447 road deaths in Thailand were linked to motorcycles, and the Department of Disease Control said 84% of motorcyclists hospitalised from 2020 to 2024 were not wearing a helmet.

- **Helmet:** required for rider and passenger, fine up to ฿2,000. Fasten the strap.
- **Licence:** a Thai motorcycle licence, or an International Driving Permit and home licence that both include motorcycles. Without one, the bike can be impounded and insurance may not pay. See International Driving Permit and Thai driving licence.
- **Motorway 7**, the Bangkok to Pattaya motorway, is closed to motorbikes.
- Never ridden before? Learn on quiet roads first. See learning to ride.
- Keep the tax sticker current and both mirrors fitted. See police checkpoints.

Before you set off

- Check what your insurance covers. See motorbike insurance.
- Fill up before rural rides; petrol stations are fewer outside town.
- Carry water, a rain poncho and your phone with offline maps.
- Renting? Film the bike all the way round before you leave. See renting a scooter.
- Save the emergency numbers: 1669 for an ambulance, 1155 for the Tourist Police. See what to do after a road accident.

Common questions

What is the best easy scooter ride in Pattaya? The Pratumnak Hill loop: a few minutes from South Pattaya, with the Big Buddha and the city viewpoint, both free.

Can I ride a scooter to Khao Chi Chan? Yes, it is about 15 to 20 km south, mostly along or beside Sukhumvit Road. Go in the morning, and only if you are comfortable in fast traffic.

Do I need a licence to rent a scooter for a day ride? Yes. Rental shops may not ask, but police do. You need a Thai motorcycle licence, or an IDP and home licence that both cover motorcycles.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya Mail, the new lane at Mabprachan Reservoir (July 2026); The Nation, over 14,000 killed in motorcycle accidents in 2024 (June 2025) (Department of Disease Control figures). Distances, hours and prices for each stop come from our own guide pages linked above, which list their sources. This is general information; rules and opening times change.

GETTING AROUND

Motorbike Insurance Explained

What motorbike insurance covers in Thailand: compulsory CTP (Por Ror Bor), voluntary insurance, travel insurance rules for scooters, and what happens after an accident.

Verified October 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/getting-around/motorbike-insurance/

Compulsory	**CTP (Por Ror Bor), covers injuries only, low limits**
Voluntary	**Extra cover for damage and third parties**
Travel insurance	**Often needs a valid motorbike licence and a helmet**
After a crash	**Photos, police report, call your insurer**

Riding a scooter is the riskiest thing most visitors do in Thailand. Understanding insurance before you ride can save you a lot of money.

Compulsory insurance (CTP)

- Every road vehicle must have compulsory third-party insurance, called Por Ror Bor. It is renewed with the road tax.
- It covers injuries, with low limits. It does not cover damage to bikes or property.

Voluntary insurance

- Owners can buy extra cover for damage, theft and third parties.
- Rental bikes may or may not have it. Ask what is covered and what you would pay after damage. See renting a scooter.

Travel and health insurance

- Many travel policies only cover scooter accidents if you hold a valid motorbike licence (Thai or home licence with IDP) and wore a helmet.
- Check the engine size limit too. See travel insurance and Thai driving licence.

After an accident

- Make sure everyone is safe and call for help if needed. See emergency numbers.
- Take photos, swap details, and get a police report.
- Call your insurer and the rental shop before agreeing to pay anything.

Buying a bike?

Ask the seller about CTP and road tax. See buying a scooter.

Choosing a policy

- Ask what is covered for your own injuries, the other person and the bike itself.
- Keep the policy number and the insurer phone number in your phone.
- After a crash see what to do after a road accident.

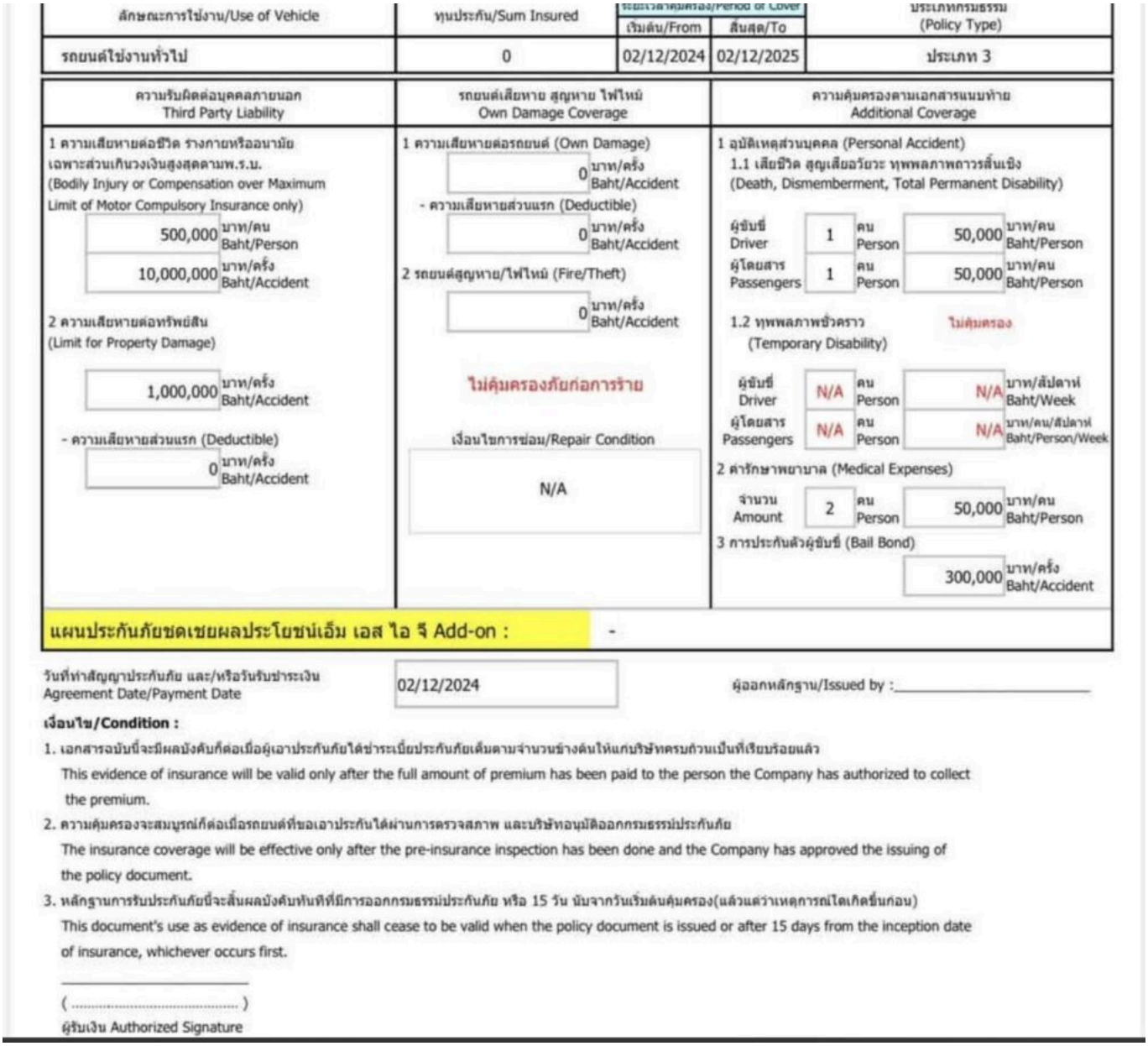
What riders in Pattaya actually pay

- **Compulsory CTP (Por Ror Bor) only:** around ฿500 a year for a scooter. It is the legal minimum and covers injuries only.
- **Type 3 (third party):** around ฿3,450 a year, bought through an agent.
- **Class 1 on a Honda ADV160:** around ฿4,000 a year through an online insurer.
- **Type 3+ on a Yamaha NMAX:** around ฿6,000 a year, covering damage to your own bike as well as to others.
- These figures come from riders in a Pattaya expat group in October 2026. Prices depend on the bike, its age, your age and the insurer, so get your own quote.

Insurance classes in plain English

- **Class 1:** the widest cover. Your own bike, theft, fire and other people, even if the crash is your fault.
- **Type 2+ and 3+:** cover your own bike only in a crash with another vehicle, plus third parties. 2+ adds theft and fire.
- **Type 3:** third parties only. It pays for the other person and their property, not your own bike.
- Third-party cover matters most. Hitting an expensive car can cost far more than your scooter is worth, and CTP alone will not pay for it.

What a Type 3 policy looks like



ลักษณะการใช้งาน/Use of Vehicle	ทุนประกัน/Sum Insured	ระยะเวลาคุ้มครอง/Period of Cover		ประเภทกรมธรรม์ (Policy Type)
		เริ่มต้น/From	สิ้นสุด/To	
รถยนต์ใช้งานทั่วไป	0	02/12/2024	02/12/2025	ประเภท 3

ความรับผิดต่อบุคคลภายนอก Third Party Liability

1 ความเสียหายต่อชีวิต ร่างกายหรืออนามัย เฉพาะส่วนเกินวงเงินสูงสุดตามพ.ร.บ. (Bodily Injury or Compensation over Maximum Limit of Motor Compulsory Insurance only)
- 500,000 บาท/คน Baht/Person
- 10,000,000 บาท/ครั้ง Baht/Accident

2 ความเสียหายต่อทรัพย์สิน (Limit for Property Damage)
- 1,000,000 บาท/ครั้ง Baht/Accident

- ความเสียหายส่วนแรก (Deductible) 0 บาท/ครั้ง Baht/Accident

รถยนต์เสียหาย สูญหาย ไฟไหม้ Own Damage Coverage

1 ความเสียหายต่อรถยนต์ (Own Damage) 0 บาท/ครั้ง Baht/Accident
- ความเสียหายส่วนแรก (Deductible) 0 บาท/ครั้ง Baht/Accident

2 รถยนต์สูญหาย/ไฟไหม้ (Fire/Theft) 0 บาท/ครั้ง Baht/Accident

ไม่คุ้มครองภัยก่อการร้าย

เงื่อนไขการซ่อม/Repair Condition: N/A

ความคุ้มครองตามเอกสารแนบท้าย Additional Coverage

1 อุบัติเหตุส่วนบุคคล (Personal Accident)
1.1 เสียชีวิต สูญเสียอวัยวะ ทุพพลภาพถาวรสิ้นเชิง (Death, Dismemberment, Total Permanent Disability)

ผู้ขับขี่ Driver	1	คน Person	50,000	บาท/คน Baht/Person
ผู้โดยสาร Passengers	1	คน Person	50,000	บาท/คน Baht/Person

1.2 ทุพพลภาพชั่วคราว (Temporary Disability) ไม่คุ้มครอง

ผู้ขับขี่ Driver	N/A	คน Person	N/A	บาท/สัปดาห์ Baht/Week
ผู้โดยสาร Passengers	N/A	คน Person	N/A	บาท/คน/สัปดาห์ Baht/Person/Week

2 ค่ารักษาพยาบาล (Medical Expenses)

จำนวน Amount	2	คน Person	50,000	บาท/คน Baht/Person

3 การประกันตัวผู้ขับขี่ (Bail Bond) 300,000 บาท/ครั้ง Baht/Accident

แผนประกันภัยชดเชยผลประโยชน์เอ็ม เอส ไอ จี Add-on : -

วันที่ทำสัญญาประกันภัย และ/หรือวันรับชำระเงิน Agreement Date/Payment Date: 02/12/2024

ผู้ออกหลักฐาน/Issued by :_____

เงื่อนไข/Condition :

1. เอกสารฉบับนี้จะมีผลบังคับก็ต่อเมื่อผู้เอาประกันภัยได้ชำระเบี้ยประกันภัยเต็มตามจำนวนข้างต้นให้แก่บริษัทครบถ้วนเป็นที่เรียบร้อยแล้ว
   This evidence of insurance will be valid only after the full amount of premium has been paid to the person the Company has authorized to collect the premium.
2. ความคุ้มครองจะสมบูรณ์ก็ต่อเมื่อรถยนต์ที่ขอเอาประกันได้ผ่านการตรวจสภาพ และบริษัทอนุมัติออกกรมธรรม์ประกันภัย
   The insurance coverage will be effective only after the pre-insurance inspection has been done and the Company has approved the issuing of the policy document.
3. หลักฐานการรับประกันภัยนี้จะสิ้นผลบังคับทันทีที่มีการออกกรมธรรม์ประกันภัย หรือ 15 วัน นับจากวันเริ่มต้นคุ้มครอง(แล้วแต่ว่าเหตุการณ์ใดเกิดขึ้นก่อน)
   This document's use as evidence of insurance shall cease to be valid when the policy document is issued or after 15 days from the inception date of insurance, whichever occurs first.

_____
(.....)
ผู้รับเงิน Authorized Signature

A real Type 3 schedule shared by a rider. Read yours for these lines:

- **Third-party liability:** here ฿500,000 per person and ฿10,000,000 per accident for injuries above CTP, and ฿1,000,000 for property damage.
- **Own damage:** ฿0, so your own bike is not covered on a Type 3.
- **Personal accident and medical:** ฿50,000 each for the rider and one passenger.
- **Bail bond:** ฿300,000, which helps if police hold you after a serious crash. Worth checking for on any policy.

GETTING AROUND

Police Checkpoints: What Riders Need to Know

Police checkpoints are common in Pattaya. What police check, the documents to carry, typical fines, and how to handle a stop calmly.

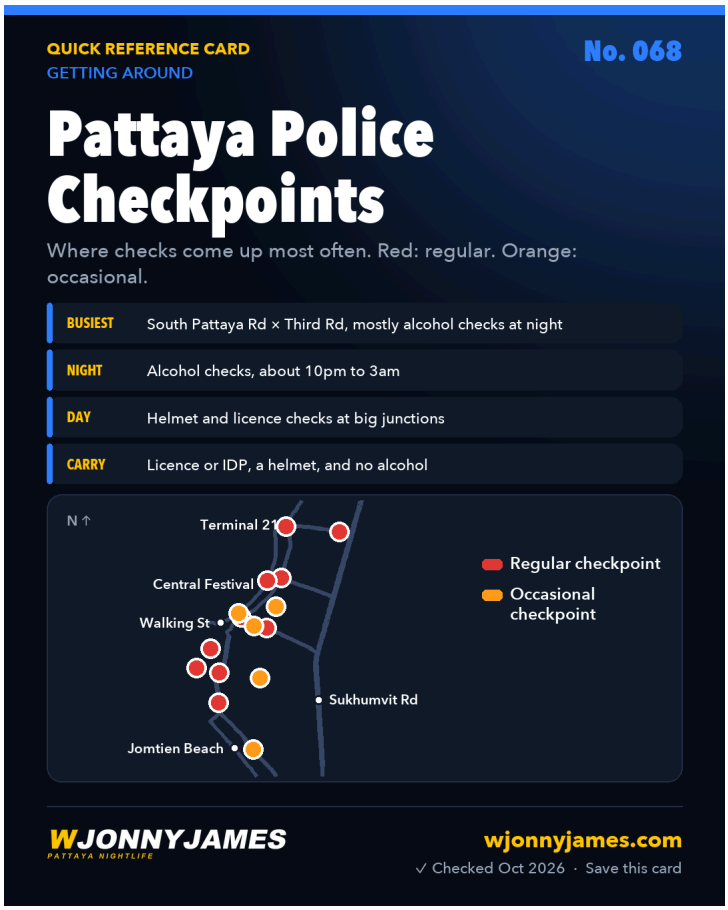
Verified October 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/getting-around/police-checkpoints/

They check	**Licence, helmet, tax sticker, plates, sometimes alcohol**
Carry	**Licence (Thai or IDP with home licence), passport copy**
Fines	**Ask for an official receipt**
Attitude	**Calm and polite works best**

Police checkpoints are a normal part of riding in Pattaya, especially on main roads and around tourist areas. If your papers are in order, a stop takes a minute.

Map: where checkpoints usually are

These are the spots where checkpoints come up again and again, from my own riding and seven months of reports in a local LINE checkpoint group, plus the police stations in Pattaya, Pratumnak and Jomtien. Red pins are regular checkpoints, orange are occasional. Use the key to show police boxes and the vehicle impound.



Put the checkpoints on your phone: 🗺️ Open in Google Maps (no download) 📍 Download for Google My Maps / Google Earth (KML) 📍 Download for Organic Maps, OsmAnd, Maps.me (GPX)

- **Google Maps:** on a computer, open Google My Maps, create a new map, click Import and choose the KML file. The map then shows in the Google Maps app on your phone under Saved, then Maps.
- **iPhone or Android:** open the GPX file with the free Organic Maps app and the pins appear on your map. Apple Maps can't import pin files.
- These are typical spots, not live alerts. Checkpoints move.

This isn't a way to dodge checks. Checkpoints move and new ones appear every week. The only sure way through is a valid licence, a helmet and no alcohol.

When they happen

- Daytime: helmet and licence checks, often from sunrise to sunset at the busy junctions on Second Road, Central Pattaya Road and South Pattaya Road.
- Late at night, roughly 10pm to 3am: alcohol checkpoints, especially at Third Road, Pratumnak Hill and Thappraya Road.
- Some nights police also run drug checks: searching pockets and bikes, and sometimes urine tests.
- Bikes parked on red-and-white kerbs can be clamped or towed, especially around Pratumnak Soi 5.

What they check

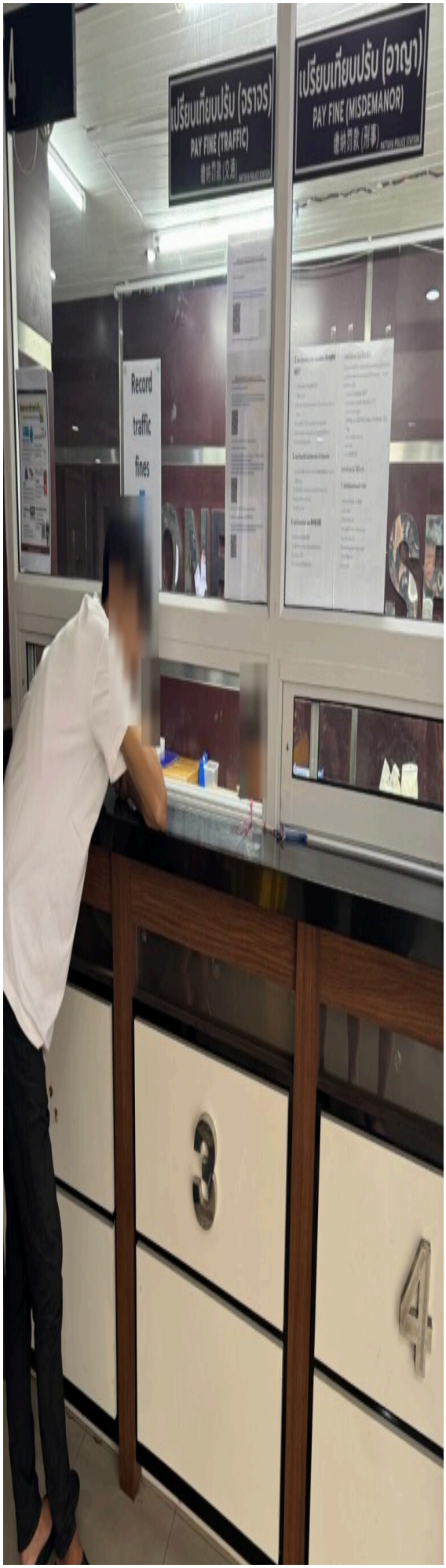
- A valid driving licence for the vehicle. Car licences do not cover motorbikes.
- Helmets for rider and passenger.
- The vehicle’s tax sticker and number plate.
- Sometimes alcohol, especially at night and during holidays.

What to carry

- Your licence: a Thai licence, or an International Driving Permit with your home licence. See Thai driving licence.
- A copy of your passport. Rental bikes should have a copy of the registration.

Fines

- Fines are set by law and usually paid at a police box or station, sometimes on the spot. Ask for an official receipt.
- Riding without a valid licence can also mean your insurance will not pay after an accident.
- See road rules and fines.


เปรียบเทียบปรับ (จราจร)
PAY FINE (TRAFFIC)
เปรียบเทียบปรับ (อาญา)
PAY FINE (MISDEMANOR)
Record
traffic
fines



The fine payment counters inside Pattaya Police Station on Beach Road: traffic fines on the left, misdemeanour fines on the right.

How to handle a stop

- Pull over, take off your sunglasses, smile and stay calm.
- Hand over your documents when asked. Do not argue at the roadside.
- If you are a victim of a problem, the Tourist Police can help. See Tourist Police.

Avoid it altogether

Get the right licence before you ride. See renting a scooter.

Where and when

- Checkpoints often appear on main roads and near nightlife areas, especially at night and on holidays.
- There are more over Songkran and New Year. See Songkran riding safety.
- Know your rights and stay polite. See laws visitors break.

From the blog

- My first Thai traffic stop: 2,000 baht and an impounded scooter.

GETTING AROUND

Thai Road Signs and Markings

What Thai road signs, kerb colours and road markings mean, the Thai words worth knowing, speed limits and the U-turn system, so you can drive or ride in Pattaya with confidence.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/getting-around/thai-road-signs/

Red and white kerb	**No stopping or parking, even briefly**
Yellow and white kerb	**Quick drop-offs and pickups only, no parking**
Black and white kerb	**Usually parking allowed, but sources differ; check signs**
Speed	**80 km/h for cars in Pattaya unless signed otherwise**
U-turns	**Main roads use U-turn points instead of right turns**
Motorway 7	**No motorbikes or scooters**

Quick answer: Thai road signs follow familiar international shapes: round signs give orders (a red ring means “don’t”, a blue disc means “must”), yellow diamonds warn of hazards, and rectangles give directions. Main-road signs in Pattaya are usually in Thai and English, but many small signs are Thai only. The local systems that catch newcomers are the painted kerbs (red and white means no stopping at all), the U-turn points that replace right turns on big roads like Sukhumvit, and the one-way loop of Beach Road and Second Road. Read this with road rules and fines.

At a glance

SIGN OR MARKING	WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE	WHAT IT MEANS
Prohibition	Round, white with a red ring, often a red diagonal bar	You must not: no entry, no U-turn, no parking, speed limits
Mandatory	Round, blue with a white symbol	You must: keep left, turn this way, minimum speed
Stop	Red octagon, หยุด (and often STOP)	Stop completely, then go when clear
Warning	Yellow diamond with a black symbol	Hazard ahead: bend, junction, school, roadworks
Direction	Blue rectangles on ordinary roads, green on motorways	Route and place names in Thai and English
Attractions	Brown signs	Tourist sights, temples and historic places
Painted kerbs	Red, yellow or black stripes with white	Stopping and parking rules: see below

Kerb colours

Nation Thailand’s 2025 guide to kerb colours gives these meanings:

- **Red and white:** no parking and no stopping, not even to drop someone off. You can be fined, clamped or towed.
- **Yellow and white:** no parking, but a short stop to drop off or pick up passengers is allowed. These are common near bus stops, schools and offices.
- **Black and white (or white and black):** parking is usually allowed. Park close to the kerb, in the direction of traffic, and don’t block anyone. Some other sources say black and white is simply a visibility marking, not a parking permission, so look for a sign before you leave a car or scooter for long.
- Signs beat paint. A “no parking” sign (ห้ามจอด) applies whatever colour the kerb is.
- Pattaya City has been fining and towing vehicles on footpaths since January 2026, so don’t park on the pavement.

Road markings

- **Yellow centre lines** separate traffic going in opposite directions. Don’t cross a solid one to overtake.
- **White lines** separate lanes going the same way. A solid white line means stay in your lane.
- **Zebra crossings** are white stripes across the road. Drivers must stop for people on them, and fines go up to ฿4,000, though many drivers don’t stop. If you’re walking, see walking in Pattaya.

Thai words on signs

Main roads usually have signs in Thai and English, but small sois and temporary signs are often Thai only. These words are worth knowing:

THAI	MEANING
หยุด	Stop
ห้ามเข้า	No entry
ห้ามจอด	No parking
ห้ามหยุด	No stopping

THAI	MEANING
เดินรถทางเดียว	One-way traffic
กลับรถ	U-turn
ห้ามกลับรถ	No U-turn
ซ้ายผ่านตลอด	Left turn allowed at any time, even on red
ช้าๆ or ลดความเร็ว	Slow down
ทางโค้ง	Bend ahead

Romanised names on signs may not match your map app's spelling. In Pattaya, soi numbers and landmarks are your best guide. See the Pattaya glossary.

U-turns

On main roads such as Sukhumvit Road you often can't turn right. Instead, you drive past your turning, get into the right-hand lane, and use a marked U-turn point to come back, then turn left.

- Signal early and slow down gradually: traffic behind you may not expect it.
- Wait for a real gap. Oncoming traffic on Sukhumvit is fast, and scooters fill the gaps on the inside.
- Don't U-turn where a ห้ามกลับรถ (no U-turn) sign is posted.

One-way streets

- Beach Road runs one way, south. Second Road runs one way, north. Together they make Pattaya's main loop.
- Riding or driving the wrong way is a common fine, up to ฿2,000, and police do stop people for it.
- Even on a one-way road, expect a few scooters coming the other way along the edge.

Speed limits

- Speed limits are in km/h, shown as a number inside a red ring.
- The default limit for cars in Pattaya, Bangkok and other built-up areas is 80 km/h, unless a sign says otherwise. Outside towns it's 90 km/h, and up to 120 km/h on motorway sections signed for it.
- Sources differ on the default for motorcycles, so follow the posted signs.
- Speeding and running a red light can each cost up to ฿4,000, and camera fines are increasingly common.

Motorways

Motorway 7, the main road between Bangkok and Pattaya, is a toll motorway with green signs. Motorbikes and scooters aren't allowed on motorways. If you're riding to Bangkok or further along the coast, use Sukhumvit Road (Highway 3) instead. See scooter rides around Pattaya.

Traffic lights

- Red means stop, as everywhere. Turning left on red is only allowed where a sign says ซ้ายผ่านตลอด.
- Scooters from the side road often start before the light turns green, so look before you go.
- If a police officer is directing traffic at a junction, follow the officer, not the light.

Unwritten rules

- Bigger vehicles often take priority, whatever the signs say.
- Flashing headlights often mean "I'm coming through", not "go ahead".
- Expect scooters on both sides of you, and some going the wrong way near the kerb.
- Baht buses stop suddenly to pick people up. Leave a gap behind them.

Riding a scooter?

See renting a scooter, police checkpoints and international driving permits.

Common questions

What does a red and white kerb mean in Thailand? No stopping or parking at all, not even to drop someone off. Yellow and white allows a quick stop; black and white usually allows parking.

Can you turn left on red in Thailand? Only where a sign says ซ้ายผ่านตลอด (left turn at any time). Otherwise, wait for the green.

What is the speed limit in Pattaya? 80 km/h for cars unless a sign shows a lower or higher limit. Many roads in town are too busy to get anywhere near it.

Can I ride a scooter on the motorway to Bangkok? No. Motorbikes aren't allowed on motorways such as Motorway 7. Use Sukhumvit Road instead.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Nation Thailand, May 2025 (kerb colours); Real Life Phuket, February 2026 (black and white kerbs as a visibility marking); Wikipedia, road signs in Thailand (sign shapes, yellow diamond warnings, Thai and English text); Wikipedia, speed limits in Thailand (80 km/h for cars in built-up areas including Pattaya, no motorcycles on motorways); Nation Thailand (urban and rural limits); Paultan, 2 September 2026 (fines for speeding, red lights, crossings and driving against traffic); Pattaya Mail, 9 January 2026 (footpath parking fines and towing). We couldn't find a Department of Land Transport page in English that sets out kerb colours, and sources disagree on black and white kerbs and on default motorcycle speed limits.

GETTING AROUND

Vehicle Tax, Number Plates and Inspections

Owning a scooter or car in Thailand: the yearly road tax (฿100 for a bike, by engine size for a car), compulsory insurance, the tax sticker, inspections for older vehicles, unpaid fines and what plate colours mean.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/getting-around/vehicle-tax-plates/

Scooter road tax	**฿100 a year for a private motorbike**
Car road tax	**By engine size, about ฿1,200 a year for a 1,200cc car**
Insurance first	**Por Ror Bor must be valid before you renew the tax**
Inspection	**Bikes 5 years or older, cars over 7 years**
Late	**1% a month; 3 years unpaid cancels the registration**
Unpaid tickets	**Since 1 Aug 2026, can mean a 30-day temporary document instead of the sticker**

Quick answer: Every scooter and car in Thailand needs two things renewed each year: the compulsory insurance (Por Ror Bor) and the road tax. Road tax is ฿100 a year for a private motorbike of any size; for a car it depends on the engine size, about ฿1,200 for a 1,200cc car. Por Ror Bor is about ฿323 for a 76 to 125cc scooter and about ฿645 for a private car. Bikes five years or older and cars over seven years need an inspection first. You get a round tax sticker to display, and police checkpoints look for it. Pay late and it costs 1% a month; leave it three years and the registration is cancelled.

At a glance

WHAT	SCOOTER	CAR (UP TO 7 SEATS)
Road tax	฿100 a year	By engine size, discounted for older cars
Por Ror Bor	About ฿323 (76 to 125cc), about ฿430 (126 to 150cc)	About ฿645
Inspection before renewal	5 years or older	Over 7 years
Renew from	90 days before expiry	90 days before expiry
Late fee	1% of the tax per month	1% of the tax per month
Registration book	The “green book”, sometimes called the blue book	Usually called the blue book

How much is the road tax?

- **Motorbikes:** ฿100 a year for a private bike, whatever the size.
- **Cars up to seven seats:** ฿0.50 per cc for the first 600cc, ฿1.50 per cc from 601 to 1,800cc, and ฿4 per cc above that. A 1,200cc car pays about ฿1,200; a 1,500cc car about ฿1,650.
- **Older cars** get a discount: 10% in the sixth year, rising 10% a year to 50% from the tenth year.
- Vans with more than seven seats, pickups and electric cars are taxed by weight instead, so ask the DLT or your agent.

Renew in this order

- **First, inspection, if needed.** Bikes five years or older (counted from first registration) and cars over seven years must pass a roadworthiness check at a private inspection centre, called a “tor ror or”, before the tax can be renewed. Any vehicle more than a year behind on tax also needs one, whatever its age.
- **Then Por Ror Bor.** Buy or renew the compulsory insurance. It covers injuries to people, not damage to vehicles. See motorbike insurance.
- **Then the road tax.** Pay it and get the sticker. Put it on the bike or inside the windscreen.

Where to renew in Pattaya

- **The Department of Land Transport (DLT)** office in Banglamung: the sticker is usually issued the same day, but queues can be long.
- **Inspection centres** with the tor ror or sign: many will renew the tax for you, and the sticker follows a few days later.
- **Shop Thru for Tax** counters at some department stores on weekends, and **Drive Thru for Tax** at selected DLT offices.
- **Online:** the DLT e-service and app are reported to need a Thai ID card, so most foreigners renew in person or through an agent.
- **Agents and insurance shops:** the easy route, for a small fee. Through an agent, Jonny paid about ฿600 for his scooter’s tax and Por Ror Bor together in 2026 (see buying a scooter).

Unpaid traffic tickets

Police tickets issued from 1 August 2026 can be linked to your tax renewal. After a formal warning, an unpaid ticket is passed to the DLT about 60 to 90 days after it was issued. You can still pay the tax, but you get a 30-day temporary document instead of the sticker until the fines are paid, and driving on after it expires may be a separate offence. Clear tickets early. See road rules and fines.

Late renewal

- The late fee is 1% of the tax for each month it is unpaid.
- More than a year late means an inspection, whatever the vehicle's age.
- After three years unpaid, the registration is cancelled. You hand the plates back to the DLT and register the vehicle again.
- An expired tax sticker is one of the things police checkpoints look for. Set a reminder a month before the date on your sticker.

The registration book

The registration book (the "green book", sometimes called the blue book) shows the legal owner, the engine and frame numbers, and the tax history. When you buy a used vehicle, check when the tax was last paid. When ownership changes, the buyer and seller are expected to tell the registrar within 15 days; until the book shows the new owner, fines and camera tickets go to the old one. See buying a scooter and buying a car.

What the number plates tell you

PLATE	MEANS
White with black letters	Private car up to seven seats, and private motorbikes
White with blue letters	Private van with more than seven seats
White with green letters	Private pickup
Yellow	Taxis and public transport
Green	Some hire vehicles, such as tour and airport limousine cars
Red	Temporary plate on a brand-new vehicle
Picture background	Auctioned "lucky" number plates

- Plates show the province, so most local plates read ชลบุรี, Chonburi.
- **Red plates** belong to the dealer and are meant for no more than 30 days while the vehicle is registered. They may be used from 6am to 8pm within the province on the plate; night or out-of-province trips must be entered in the red-plate logbook kept in the vehicle.

Common questions

How much is road tax for a scooter in Thailand? ฿100 a year for a private motorbike, plus Por Ror Bor, about ฿323 for a 76 to 125cc bike.

When does my bike need an inspection? From five years after first registration, every year, before the tax is renewed. Cars need one when they are over seven years old.

Can I renew if I have unpaid traffic fines? You can pay the tax, but since August 2026 you may get a 30-day temporary document instead of the sticker until the fines are paid.

What happens if I don't pay for three years? The registration is cancelled, the plates go back to the DLT and the vehicle has to be registered again.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Thailand Starter Kit, renewing vehicle tax (September 2026) (car rates and age discount, inspection ages, renewal methods, 90 days early, three-year cancellation); Chiang Rai Times, insurance costs (updated August 2026) (Por Ror Bor ฿323.14, ฿430.14 and ฿645.21); Autospinn, motorcycle tax (฿100, 1% a month late); The Nation, unpaid fines linked to tax renewals (July 2026); Thairath, red plate rules (May 2026); Real Life Phuket, plate colours (February 2026); ThaiLawOnline, buying a car (November 2026) (15-day transfer notice). Sources differ on some plate colours and on where the top car tax band starts. Check with the Banglamung DLT.

Related guides

- Thai Road Rules and Traffic Fines
- Walking in Pattaya: Pavements, Crossings and Safety
- Thai Road Signs and Markings
- Pattaya City Hall and Local Services

GETTING AROUND

Renting a Car in Pattaya

How car rental works in Pattaya: the licence and IDP you need, 2026 daily and monthly prices, deposits, insurance and excess, tolls on Motorway 7, and the checks to do before you drive off.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/getting-around/car-rental/

You need	**Passport, home licence plus International Driving Permit (or a Thai licence)**
Small car	**Roughly ฿500 to ฿1,400 a day, by season and company**
By the month	**Small car about ฿15,000 to ฿18,000**
Deposit	**Card hold or cash, about ฿5,000 to ฿30,000 by company**
Insurance	**Ask about the excess; a Super CDW can remove it**
Minimum age	**Usually 21, some companies 23 or 25**

Quick answer: A car makes sense in Pattaya for day trips, families and long stays outside the centre; in town, traffic and parking make a scooter, a baht bus or Bolt and Grab easier. To rent, you need your passport and your home licence with an International Driving Permit, or a Thai licence. In November 2026 online listings for a small car such as a Toyota Yaris ran from about ฿1,100 a day for next-week bookings, with low-season deals around ฿500, and local shops rent small cars for about ฿15,000 to ฿18,000 a month. Expect a deposit of about ฿5,000 to ฿30,000, usually held on a credit card, and ask what you would pay after a crash: the standard cover usually leaves an excess of about ฿8,000 to ฿15,000.

At a glance

WHAT	TYPICAL IN 2026
Documents	Passport, home licence and IDP, or a Thai licence
Small car per day	About ฿500 to ฿1,400, by season and company
Small car per month	About ฿15,000 to ฿18,000
Deposit	About ฿5,000 to ฿30,000; card hold or cash
Standard excess	About ฿8,000 to ฿15,000
Super CDW (removes excess)	About ฿200 to ฿400 a day
Minimum age	Usually 21; some 23 or 25
Drive on	The left

What you need

- Your passport and a valid home driving licence. Visitors need an **International Driving Permit** with it; the rental desk may not ask, but police at checkpoints do, and insurers can refuse claims without one. Thailand accepts both the 1949 and 1968 IDPs. See International Driving Permit.
- Residents can use a Thai driving licence.
- A credit card in the driver's name helps. International brands usually hold the deposit on the card; local shops often take cash.
- Don't leave your passport as a deposit. You need it for hotels and immigration; offer a copy and a cash or card deposit instead.

Prices

Prices move a lot with the season, the company and how far ahead you book, so treat these as rough guides.

CAR	PER DAY	PER MONTH
Small (Yaris, Vios, Almera)	About ฿500 to ฿1,400	About ฿15,000 to ฿18,000
Mid-size or compact SUV (Corolla, Yaris Cross)	About ฿1,400 to ฿1,800	About ฿23,000 to ฿29,000
7-seater or large SUV (Xpander, Veloz, Fortuner)	About ฿1,700 to ฿2,500	About ฿23,000 to ฿42,000 and up

- A comparison site listed small cars in Pattaya from about ฿1,130 a day for a mid-November 2026 week, and an average across the year from about ฿511 a day in September to about ฿1,013 in February. December to February is the busy season.
- Monthly rates from local companies are far cheaper per day than short hires.
- International brands at the airport and in town cost more, but contracts and insurance terms are clearer. Local Pattaya shops are cheaper, especially by the month.

Insurance, excess and deposit

- Every rental car carries the compulsory Por Ror Bor, which covers injuries, not damage to the car.

- Most rentals include a collision damage waiver (CDW), but you still pay the **excess** after a crash, often about ฿8,000 to ฿15,000. A Super CDW, about ฿200 to ฿400 a day, can remove it, though it usually covers the bodywork only. Ask what happens with tyres, glass, the underside and theft.
- Deposits reported in 2026 range from about ฿5,000 at some local firms to ฿20,000 to ฿30,000 at some international brands.
- Insurance may not pay if the driver isn't licensed for Thailand, or isn't named on the contract.

Before you drive off

- Photograph or film the car all the way round, including the wheels, the windscreen, the fuel gauge and the mileage, with the staff member watching.
- Check the tyres, the air conditioning, the lights and that the tax sticker is current.
- Agree the fuel rule (full to full is usual) and the return time.
- Keep the contract and the company's phone number in the car, and ask what to do after an accident.

Tolls and driving tips

- Thailand drives on the left. Watch for scooters on both sides and at every junction, and give way to them when turning.
- Big roads like Sukhumvit use U-turn points instead of right turns. Beach Road and Second Road are one-way, in opposite directions. See Thai road signs.
- Motorway 7 to Bangkok and Suvarnabhumi has toll plazas. A 2025 guide put the Bangkok to Pattaya toll at about ฿105 to ฿130 for a car, using older official rates. Rental cars often have no electronic toll tag, so use the cash lanes and keep small notes.
- Don't park on red-and-white kerbs. Parking is easiest at malls such as Central and Terminal 21.
- Maximum fines since April 2026 include ฿4,000 for speeding, red lights or a phone in hand, and ฿2,000 for no seatbelt, front or back. Never drink and drive. See road rules and fines.

Day trips by car

- A car makes it easy to visit places outside the city. See day trips.
- Popular drives include Rayong, Chanthaburi and Bang Saen. See Rayong and Chanthaburi and Bang Saen.
- Closer to home: Khao Chi Chan, Wat Yan and Bang Saray in the south. See scenic rides around Pattaya, which work by car too.

Alternatives

For short trips, Bolt and Grab, a baht bus (฿15 on the normal loop) or renting a scooter are often cheaper. For the airport, see airport transfers.

Common questions

Do I need an International Driving Permit to rent a car in Pattaya? Yes, with your home licence, unless you have a Thai licence. Rental desks may not check, but police and insurers do.

How much is car rental in Pattaya per day? For a small car, roughly ฿500 to ฿1,400 a day in 2026, depending on the season and the company. Monthly rentals are much cheaper per day.

How much is the deposit? About ฿5,000 to ฿30,000 depending on the company and car, usually as a hold on a credit card.

Can I rent a car with a debit card? Some local companies accept cash or debit deposits; international brands usually want a credit card. Ask before you book.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Thailand Starter Kit, car rental in Thailand (September 2026) (monthly prices, deposits by company, CDW excess and Super CDW, minimum ages, IDP); Discover Cars, Pattaya listings (prices updated 11 November 2026); The Thaiger, Thailand's toll roads (November 2025). Daily prices vary widely between sources and dates; some guides quote ฿1,200 to ฿1,500 a day for a small car, while booking sites show lower deals out of season.

GETTING AROUND

What's Changing in Pattaya: Big Projects to Watch

What changed in Pattaya in 2026, by date: the 30-day visa exemption, ฿15 baht buses, alcohol hours, SIM and traffic rules, blue motorbike taxi vests, plus U-Tapao, the stalled high-speed rail and city roadworks.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/getting-around/whats-changing/

Visa exemption	**30 days since 15 Sep 2026**
Baht bus	**฿15 on the normal loop since 10 Apr 2026**
Alcohol	**11am to midnight since 29 May 2026**
U-Tapao	**Second runway over 30% built, due late 2028**
High-speed rail	**Stalled in a contract dispute in 2026**
Reality check	**Big project dates often slip**

Quick answer: 2026 brought a run of rule changes that affect anyone visiting or living in Pattaya. The visa exemption fell to 30 days on 15 September, the baht bus went to ฿15 on 10 April, alcohol can be sold from 11am to midnight without the afternoon break since 29 May, new SIMs need a face check since 16 May, traffic fines have been strictly enforced since 1 April, the DTV visa added requirements on 31 August, and motorbike taxi riders switched to blue vests on 16 October. On the bigger projects, U-Tapao airport's second runway is under construction for late 2028, while the high-speed rail link to Bangkok's airports was stuck in a contract dispute.

2026 changes at a glance

DATE (2026)	WHAT CHANGED	FULL GUIDE
1 April	Strict enforcement of 10 traffic offences: up to ฿4,000 for speeding or red lights, ฿2,000 for no helmet	Road rules and fines
10 April	Baht bus ฿15 on the normal loop, longer runs up to about ฿20	Baht bus routes and fares
10 April	Koh Larn ferry reported at ฿40, up from ฿30 (reports differ)	Bali Hai Pier
16 May	SIMs registered in person with a face check; at most 3 SIMs per network for foreigners	SIM cards and eSIMs
29 May	Alcohol sale hours 11am to midnight; the 2pm to 5pm break is gone	Buddhist holidays and alcohol
31 August	DTV applicants need a criminal record check and proof of residence where they apply	DTV visa
15 September	Visa exemption cut to 30 days, extendable once by up to 30 days for ฿1,900	Visa extension
16 October	Motorbike taxi vests changed from orange to blue	Motorbike taxis
7 November	Holy-day alcohol exemptions for hotels, licensed venues and airports re-issued	Buddhist holidays and alcohol
9 November	Red flag at Bali Hai after a speedboat collision; small boats held ashore	Island hopping

What the rule changes mean in practice

- **Visas:** citizens of about 60 countries and territories now get up to 30 days without a visa, down from 60. Overstaying costs ฿500 a day, up to ฿20,000. If you want longer than 30 days, plan one extension or get a tourist visa before you fly. See visa options.
- **Arrival:** the free online arrival card (TDAC) is still needed for every entry. In August 2026 the Immigration Bureau approved in principle opening Suvarnabhumi's automated arrival gates to 31 more countries, in phases; first-time visitors still use a staffed desk. See arriving at Bangkok airport.
- **Riding:** not carrying your licence can cost ฿1,000 and a phone in hand ฿4,000.
- **Bangkok buses:** the Department of Land Transport raised interprovincial fares from 6 April after a diesel price shock, then cut them from 29 April as diesel fell. Bangkok to Pattaya buses cost from about ฿135 to ฿155 in November 2026. See buses to Pattaya.
- **Koh Larn:** Pattaya Mail's August 2026 guide still gives the ferry at about ฿30, so have ฿40 ready. After the 9 November collision, ferries kept running while small boats stayed ashore.
- **Alcohol on holy days:** on the five Buddhist holy days most shops, 7-Eleven, supermarkets and ordinary bars may not sell, while hotels, licensed entertainment venues, international airports and some designated venues may.
- **Scams:** the hotline is 1441. See common scams.

U-Tapao airport

U-Tapao, Pattaya's closest airport, is being expanded under a 50-year concession that started when the operator received its notice to proceed on 3 April 2026. Pattaya Mail reported in October 2026 that the second runway, 3,505 metres long, had passed 30% completion and is due in late 2028. A new passenger terminal is being built alongside it, and February 2026 reports gave 2031 as the target for operations to begin. The first phase has shrunk: in September 2026 the operator proposed 3 million passengers a year, down from earlier plans. For now U-Tapao handles mostly domestic and some seasonal international flights. See U-Tapao airport.

High-speed rail

A high-speed line linking Don Mueang, Suvarnabhumi and U-Tapao airports, with a station for Pattaya, has been planned for years. In February 2026 the State Railway of Thailand set out a plan to amend the contract in mid-2026 and open the line in 2032. Instead, in July 2026 the private consortium led by CP Group asked to terminate the contract, and the prime minister said in late August that a government contract couldn't simply be cancelled. The same company runs Bangkok's Airport Rail Link, and in September the railway was negotiating a short extension to keep it running until 31 January 2027. We found no settlement as of November 2026, so don't plan around a rail link to Pattaya. Until then, see Bangkok to Pattaya.

Roads and the city

- **Second Road** was being resurfaced in two phases in mid-2026, with the contract due to finish on 17 September 2026. See Second Road.
- **Sukhumvit Road:** in September 2026 the city paused resurfacing between the North Pattaya (Naklua) intersection and the Banglamung District Office intersection to fill voids under the road, a job of about three months, before laying new asphalt. See Sukhumvit Road.
- **Bali Hai Pier:** new public toilets were expected to open in mid-November 2026, and the city council has asked for a study to redesign the pier area.

What it means

- Property prices near future transport links may rise, but rail dates have slipped for years. See buying a condo.
- Check the latest news before making decisions based on future projects.

Stay updated

Our weekly roundup on the blog covers local news, including rule changes and big project updates.

For residents

- Big projects can mean road works and detours for months. Allow extra travel time.
- Property and rent prices may change near new transport links. See buy or rent.

Common questions

How long can I stay in Thailand without a visa in 2026? Up to 30 days per entry since 15 September 2026 for exempt countries, extendable once by up to 30 days for ฿1,900.

What time can you buy alcohol in Pattaya now? From 11am to midnight since 29 May 2026, with no afternoon break. Most shops can't sell on the five Buddhist holy days; hotels and licensed venues can.

How much is the baht bus in 2026? ฿15 on the normal loop since 10 April 2026, up to about ฿20 for longer runs.

When will the high-speed rail to Pattaya open? Nobody can say. The 2026 plan targeted 2032, but the contract was in dispute through the second half of 2026.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya Mail, U-Tapao second runway passes 30% (24 October 2026); The Nation, U-Tapao project to start 3 April (26 February 2026); The Nation, U-Tapao and high-speed rail (7 September 2026); The Nation, SRT timeline for the three-airport rail (18 February 2026); The Thaiger, PM blocks CP's exit from rail deal (30 August 2026); The Nation, four-month Airport Rail Link deal to 31 January 2027 (19 September 2026); Pattaya Mail, Second Road upgrade (23 July 2026); Pattaya Mail, Sukhumvit voids (18 September 2026); TAT News, 30-day visa exemption from 15 September 2026; The Nation, Suvarnabhumi auto gates (17 August 2026). The other dated rules follow our linked guides, each checked separately on 13 November 2026.

SECTION

💸 Money & Banking

Cash still matters in Pattaya. These pages cover ATM fees and how to avoid them, where to exchange money, opening and using a Thai bank account, and the easy ways to pay and send money once you're here.

Quick answer: Bring a card with low foreign fees and some cash to exchange. Thai ATMs charge foreign cards about ฿220 to ฿250 per withdrawal (up to about ฿350 at some machines), so take out larger amounts less often, and always decline the ATM's own currency conversion. Exchange booths in town usually beat the airport. Cash pays for street food, baht buses, markets and small bars; cards work in malls, hotels and chains. If you stay long term, a Thai bank account gives you QR payments and fee-free withdrawals.

Money at a glance (2026)

QUESTION	SHORT ANSWER	READ MORE
—	—	—
What do ATMs charge?	About ฿220 to ฿250 per withdrawal with a foreign card	ATM fees
How much per withdrawal?	Usually about ฿20,000 to ฿30,000	ATM fees
Where to change cash?	Exchange booths and banks; bring your passport	Exchanging money
Cash, card or QR?	Cash for small places; cards in malls; QR with a Thai bank app	Cash vs card
Can I open a Thai bank account?	Usually with a long-stay non-immigrant visa	Thai bank account
Should I tip?	Not expected, but appreciated	Tipping
What does a day cost?	About ฿1,000 a day on a tight budget, room not included	฿1,000 a day

Figures come from the linked pages, each checked in 2026 with its own sources. Bank fees and limits change, so check your own bank's charges too.

Start here

- ATM fees: what you'll pay and how to pay less.
- Opening a Thai bank account: who can, which banks, what to bring.
- QR payments: how Thailand pays for almost everything.
- Exchanging money: where to get the best rate.
- Pattaya on 1,000 baht a day: a realistic budget.

How the money pages fit together

- **Getting baht:** ATM fees, exchanging money and sending money to Thailand.
- **Paying:** cash, cards or QR, QR payments and PromptPay and tipping.
- **Banking here:** opening an account, mobile banking apps and depositing cash at 7-Eleven.
- **Budgets:** ฿1,000 a day, a budget for a week and, for long stays, cost of living.
- **The bigger picture:** Thai tax basics and gold and pawn shops.

Five money tips for first-timers

- **Always choose baht.** When an ATM or card machine offers to charge you in your home currency, decline; the conversion rate is worse.
- **Withdraw less often.** The fixed ATM fee hurts most on small withdrawals.
- **Carry small notes.** Baht buses, stalls and small bars struggle to change ฿1,000, and the ฿100 and ฿1,000 notes look alike at night.
- **Bring clean notes to exchange.** Large, undamaged notes get the best rates.
- **Split your cash and cards.** Keep a backup card and some cash at the hotel.

What things cost (2026)

ITEM	TYPICAL PRICE
—	—
Baht bus ride, main loop	฿15
Street food dish	About ฿40 to ฿80

ITEM	TYPICAL PRICE
Thai or foot massage, one hour	About ฿200 to ฿350
Beer at a featured bar	About ฿60 to ฿120, typically ฿85
Chain coffee	About ฿50 to ฿80
ATM withdrawal fee, foreign card	About ฿220 to ฿250

From our own guides, checked in 2026. Prices are higher on the beachfront and lower inland.

For long stays

With a Thai bank account you get a debit card, a mobile app and PromptPay, so you can scan QR codes at stalls, pay rent and withdraw without the foreign card fee at your own bank. Big banks include Bangkok Bank, Kasikorn (KBank), SCB and Krungsri. With a KBank account you can even deposit cash at 7-Eleven, up to ฿10,000 per deposit for a ฿15 fee. Tax rules on foreign income changed recently, so get current advice. See Thai tax basics.

Common questions

How much is the ATM fee in Thailand? About ฿220 to ฿250 per withdrawal with a foreign card in 2026, sometimes more.

Is it better to exchange money or use an ATM in Pattaya? Exchanging clean cash at a booth in town is often cheaper than several ATM withdrawals.

Can foreigners open a bank account in Pattaya? Usually with a long-stay non-immigrant visa, your passport and proof of address.

How much money do I need per day in Pattaya? About ฿1,000 a day on a tight budget, plus your room.

Do I need cash in Pattaya? Yes. Street food, baht buses, markets and small bars are mostly cash, unless you have a Thai bank app for QR payments.

Can I use my foreign card for QR payments? Some foreign apps and cards can pay Thai QR codes, but most tourists use cash. See QR payments.

Sources

- Our ATM fees, exchange, Thai bank account, 7-Eleven deposit and budget pages, each checked in 2026 with bank and press sources.

MONEY & BANKING

ATM Fees in Thailand

What Thai ATMs charge foreign cards (usually ฿220 to ฿250 a withdrawal), why you should always decline the conversion, withdrawal limits, and the cheapest ways to get baht in Pattaya.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/money-banking/atm-fees/

Typical fee	**฿220 to ฿250 per withdrawal, foreign cards**
Some cards and machines	**Up to about ฿350**
Usual limit per withdrawal	**About ฿20,000 to ฿30,000**
Always	**Decline the ATM's currency conversion and choose baht**
No fee	**Withdrawing with a Thai bank card at your own bank**

Almost every Thai ATM charges a flat fee when you use a foreign card, on top of whatever your own bank charges. The fee is per withdrawal, not per amount, so how often you withdraw matters more than how much. Here is what you'll pay in 2026 and how to pay less.


A row of Thai bank ATMs in a shopping mall
Photo: Chainwit., CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

What Thai ATMs charge

SITUATION	FEE PER WITHDRAWAL (APPROX.)
Most Thai banks, foreign card	฿220 to ฿250
Some card types and machines	Up to about ฿350
Thai bank card at your own bank, same province	Free
Thai bank card at another bank	Small fee, usually ฿10 to ฿30 after a few free uses

Fees have crept up: ฿250 is now the figure most often reported at the big banks, while some machines still show ฿220 and travellers occasionally report less. The fee is always shown on the screen before you confirm, so read it and cancel if you don't like it. AEON used to be the cheap option at around ฿150, but it closed most of its ATMs in 2024; if you find one still working, it can still be cheaper.

Withdrawal limits

Most machines let you take about ฿20,000 to ฿30,000 per withdrawal with a foreign card. Your own bank may also set a daily limit. Since the fee is the same whatever the amount, take the most you're comfortable carrying.

The currency-conversion trap

Many ATMs offer to charge you in your home currency "with a guaranteed rate". Always decline and choose to be charged in **baht** (often the button says "without conversion"). The ATM's rate is usually much worse than your bank's, and on a big withdrawal the difference can be bigger than the ATM fee itself. The same applies when paying by card in shops.

How to pay less

- Withdraw larger amounts less often.
- Use a card that refunds foreign ATM fees, or a travel card with no foreign transaction fee.
- Bring some cash and change it at a money changer; Pattaya's changers often beat the ATM rate. See exchanging money.
- Pay by card where it's accepted, and with a Thai QR app if you have one. See QR payments and PromptPay.
- Living here? A Thai bank account removes the fee, and you can top it up by sending money to Thailand or depositing cash at 7-Eleven.

Safety at the ATM

- Use machines attached to a bank branch or inside a mall or 7-Eleven, ideally in daylight.
- Cover the keypad, and check the card slot for anything loose or stuck on.
- Thai ATMs give the cash first and the card after. Wait for your card; forgotten cards are one of the most common problems.
- If the machine keeps your card, contact that bank's branch with your passport. Report a lost card to your home bank straight away.
- More on staying safe: common scams.

How much cash do you need?

Pattaya still runs on cash for baht buses (฿15), street food, markets and many bars. See what things cost and drink prices to plan a daily budget.

What it adds up to

TRIP	WITHDRAWALS OF ฿20,000	ATM FEES AT ฿250
One week, ฿30,000 cash	2	about ฿500
Two weeks, ฿60,000 cash	3	about ฿750
One month, ฿100,000 cash	5	about ฿1,250
Withdrawing ฿5,000 at a time for a month	20	about ฿5,000

The last row is why small, frequent withdrawals hurt. Your home bank may add its own fee and a foreign transaction charge on top.

Common questions

How much do Thai ATMs charge foreign cards? Usually ฿220 to ฿250 per withdrawal, sometimes more. The fee is shown on the screen before you confirm.

Which ATM has no fee in Thailand? With a foreign card, almost none. The way round it is a card that refunds ATM fees, cash exchanged at a money changer, or a Thai bank account.

Should I accept the ATM's conversion to my home currency? No. Always choose baht, "without conversion". The ATM's rate is usually much worse.

How much can I take out at once? Usually about ฿20,000 to ฿30,000 per withdrawal with a foreign card, depending on the machine and your bank.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: YouTrip, Thailand ATM withdrawal guide and recent traveller reports. Sources give ฿200 to ฿250; banks don't publish one clear figure for foreign cards. The fee on the ATM screen is the one that counts.

If the ATM keeps your card

- Use ATMs attached to a bank branch in opening hours, so you can ask staff for help.
- Call your bank to block the card, then visit the branch with your passport.
- Carry a second card in a different place. See cash vs card.

MONEY & BANKING

Depositing Cash at 7-Eleven

How to deposit cash into a Kasikorn (KBank) account at any 7-Eleven or Mini Big C using the K PLUS app: the limit, the fee, the steps, and tips.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/money-banking/deposit-cash-7-eleven/

Bank	**Kasikorn (KBank), K PLUS app**
Limit	**฿10,000 per deposit, ฿99,999 a day**
Fee	**฿15, paid in cash on top**
Where	**Any 7-Eleven or Mini Big C**
Hours	**About 00:01 to 23:30**

Quick answer: If you bank with Kasikorn (KBank), you can deposit cash at any 7-Eleven or Mini Big C with the K PLUS app, without finding a branch. You make a deposit QR code in the app, show it at the counter, and hand over the cash plus a small fee. Each deposit can be ฿1 to ฿10,000, up to ฿99,999 a day, and the money usually shows in your account within moments. It is one of the reasons I recommend Kasikorn.

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Bank and app	Kasikorn (KBank), K PLUS
Where	Any 7-Eleven or Mini Big C counter
Per deposit	฿1 to ฿10,000
Per day	Up to ฿99,999
Fee	About ฿15 per deposit, paid in cash on top (check the app)
Hours	About 00:01 to 23:30; short maintenance breaks are announced in advance
ID needed?	No, just the QR code from the app

Before your first deposit

- You need a Kasikorn savings account in your name and the K PLUS app set up on your phone. K PLUS is linked to the mobile number you registered at the branch, so keep that Thai number active. See SIM cards and eSIMs.
- Update the app before you go. The deposit option sits in a different menu after some updates, and an old version can fail at the counter.
- Bring clean ฿100, ฿500 and ฿1,000 notes, plus coins or small notes for the fee.
- Know your amount before you queue, so you can make the QR code in a few seconds when it's your turn.

Step by step

- Open K PLUS and log in.
- Choose the cash deposit option for convenience stores (deposit with QR).
- Pick the account to deposit into and enter the amount, up to ฿10,000.
- The app makes a QR code. Show it at the 7-Eleven counter; staff scan it.
- Hand over the cash plus the fee. Staff count it and give you a receipt.
- Check K PLUS: the money normally appears within moments. Keep the receipt until it does.
- The full walkthrough with photos is in our post How to Deposit Cash into Your Thai Bank Account at 7-Eleven.

Fees and limits

- The fee is per deposit, so ฿30,000 means three deposits and three fees.
- The daily cap is ฿99,999 per depositor or receiving account.
- Kasikorn publishes its fees and can change them, so check the amount shown in K PLUS before you go.
- For larger sums, a Kasikorn branch, or a bank ATM that takes cash deposits, is usually cheaper and quicker. See ATM fees.

Which way to deposit, by amount

AMOUNT	EASIEST OPTION	WHY
—	—	—
Up to ฿10,000	One 7-Eleven deposit	One fee, done in a minute
฿10,001 to ฿30,000	Two or three 7-Eleven deposits, or a deposit machine	The fee is per deposit, so it adds up

AMOUNT	EASIEST OPTION	WHY
Over ฿30,000	A Kasikorn branch or cash deposit machine	Usually no fee for your own account, no ฿10,000 cap
Over ฿99,999 in a day	A branch	Above the 7-Eleven daily cap

Worked example: ฿25,000 at 7-Eleven is three deposits (฿10,000 + ฿10,000 + ฿5,000), so about ฿45 in fees at around ฿15 each. The same amount at a branch or a deposit machine into your own account usually costs nothing.

Depositing for other people, and mule accounts

- Thai banks and the Bank of Thailand now watch closely for “mule accounts”: accounts used to receive or pass on money from scams. Accounts flagged this way can be frozen, and the holder can be investigated.
- Only deposit into accounts of people you know, for a reason you can explain, and keep the receipt.
- Never let anyone else use your account, deposit cash into it for you, or “borrow” it to receive money, however friendly the request. This is a common way visitors get caught up in someone else’s fraud. See love scams and common scams.

Other banks at 7-Eleven

Kasikorn is not the only bank with a convenience-store option: some other Thai banks take deposits through Counter Service at 7-Eleven, each with its own fee and limits. Check your bank’s app or website for the current terms before you queue, and don’t assume the K PLUS limits apply.

If something goes wrong

- **The QR code expired:** codes time out. Make a new one at the counter.
- **The money hasn’t arrived:** keep the receipt, wait a few minutes, then check your statement. If it still isn’t there, call the KBank contact centre with the receipt details.
- **The service is unavailable:** Kasikorn sometimes pauses 7-Eleven deposits overnight for maintenance and announces it in the app and on its website. Try another time or use a branch.
- **Staff refuse a note:** damaged, torn or very old notes can be refused. Bring clean notes.

Other ways to deposit cash

- **A Kasikorn branch:** no per-deposit fee for your own account in most cases, and no ฿10,000 cap per deposit. Branches in malls open at weekends.
- **Cash deposit machines:** many bank ATMs marked for deposits take notes straight into your account, which suits larger amounts.
- **Other banks:** most Thai banks have their own cash deposit options at branches, deposit machines or partner shops. Check your bank’s app.
- **Paying rent in cash:** many landlords prefer a transfer. Depositing at 7-Eleven, then paying by QR or transfer from K PLUS, gives you a clear record. See renting a condo.

Tips

- Mornings are quicker; busy stores can be slow in the evening.
- Don’t make the QR code until you’re at the counter, so it doesn’t expire in the queue.
- Never show your deposit QR or your banking app to anyone offering to “help” you deposit. See common scams.

Why it is useful

- No branch queues, and stores are open almost all day and night.
- Handy for paying rent, topping up for bills, or depositing cash from a sale.
- Pay bills from the same app. See utilities and bills.
- If you don’t have a Thai account yet, see opening a Thai bank account. Other Thai banks have their own cash deposit options; check your bank’s app.

Common questions

How much can I deposit at 7-Eleven with K PLUS? ฿1 to ฿10,000 per deposit, and up to ฿99,999 a day.

How much is the fee? About ฿15 per deposit, paid in cash at the counter. Check the current fee in the app.

Do I need my bank card or ID? No. The QR code from K PLUS is enough.

Can I deposit for someone else? The app lets you choose a receiving account. Only deposit to people you know and trust.

Can I deposit foreign currency at 7-Eleven? No, only Thai baht. Exchange first. See exchanging money.

Is it cheaper to use a branch? For larger amounts, usually yes: depositing into your own account at a Kasikorn branch or deposit machine normally has no fee.

Can a friend deposit into my account for me? They can, if they make the QR from their own K PLUS for your account. Never give anyone your phone, app or login to do it for you.

Sources

Checked 14 November 2026: Kasikorn Bank, deposit with K PLUS QR (limits); Kasikorn Bank, services at 7-Eleven (hours). Both in Thai. Bank of Thailand, measures against mule accounts and fraud.

Related guides

- ATM Fees in Thailand
- Cash, Cards or QR? Paying in Pattaya
- Exchanging Money
- Sending Money to Thailand

MONEY & BANKING

Exchanging Money

Exchanging money in Pattaya: licensed changers vs banks vs the airport, reading the rate board, which notes get the best rate, your passport, and the cash limits for bringing money in and taking baht out.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/money-banking/exchanging-money/

Where	**Licensed money changers and bank exchange booths in town**
Bring	**Your passport**
Best rates	**Large, clean, undamaged notes in a major currency**
Airport	**Change only enough for the trip to Pattaya**
Declare	**Foreign cash over US$20,000 (some sources say US$15,000)**
Leaving	**Over ฿50,000 in baht must be declared**

Quick answer: Bring large, clean notes in a major currency, change them at a licensed money changer or bank exchange booth in town, and take your passport. Change only a little at the airport. For big sums, compare the “we buy” rate at two or three booths and count the baht at the window. If you brought cash, a changer usually works out cheaper than a foreign-card ATM, which charges about ฿220 to ฿250 per withdrawal. And if you carry more than US$20,000 in foreign cash, declare it when you arrive.

At a glance

OPTION	RATE	GOOD TO KNOW
Licensed money changer in town	Usually the best for cash	Passport needed; compare a few
Bank exchange booth	Fair, often a little lower	On main roads and in malls
Airport booth	Usually lower	Change just enough for the trip
Foreign card at a Thai ATM	Your bank’s rate	About ฿220 to ฿250 per withdrawal, plus your bank’s fees
Hotel front desk	Usually poor	Emergencies only

Where to change in Pattaya

Exchange booths line Beach Road, Second Road and the main sois, and every big mall has a few. There are two kinds:

- **Bank booths** run by the big Thai banks. Reliable, with fair rates.
- **Licensed money changers**: non-bank companies authorised to buy and sell foreign banknotes under Thailand’s foreign exchange rules. They are often reported to beat bank booths by a little. T.T. Currency Exchange is a Pattaya chain that visitors often mention for good rates.
- SuperRich, famous in Bangkok, is often recommended too, but reports conflict on whether it has counters in Pattaya, so don’t plan around it. If you pass through Bangkok anyway, its Bangkok branches are an option.

Rates differ only a little between booths, so for a few hundred dollars the nearest licensed booth is fine. For larger amounts, compare two or three.

Reading the rate board

- Look at the **“we buy”** rate: that is what you get for your currency. The “we sell” rate is for people buying foreign money.
- Many boards list different rates for different note sizes. Large notes such as US$100 usually get a better rate than US$20 or smaller.
- Rates change during the day. What counts is the baht you receive, so check the receipt.
- Ask before you hand anything over if you’re unsure what rate applies to your notes.

Notes that get the best rate

- Large, clean, undamaged notes. Tears, writing, stamps, stains or heavy creases can mean a lower rate or a refusal.
- Older-series US dollars may get a slightly lower rate at some booths, while traveller reports say others pay the same. Ask first.
- Coins can’t be exchanged, so spend foreign coins before you fly.
- Major currencies such as US dollars, euros, pounds and Australian dollars get the best rates. Less common currencies may get a poor rate or only be taken at a few booths.

What to bring

- Your passport. Booths ask for it; some accept a copy, but don’t count on it.
- Count your baht at the window before you walk away, and keep the receipt.
- Keep the notes in a wallet or envelope until you’re at the counter, not on show in the queue.

The airport

Change only enough at the airport for a taxi or bus to Pattaya and a meal. Rates are usually better in town. See arriving at Bangkok airport and airport transfers.

Changer or ATM?

- A foreign-card ATM withdrawal costs about ฿220 to ฿250 each time, plus whatever your home bank charges. On ฿10,000, ฿250 is 2.5%. See ATM fees.
- If an ATM or card machine offers to charge you in your home currency, decline and choose baht.
- For a short holiday, many people bring some cash to exchange and use a card for bigger bills. See cash vs card.
- Visitors from countries linked to Thai QR can pay many shops directly from their home app. See QR payments and PromptPay.

Bringing cash in and taking it out

- **Foreign currency:** Thai embassy guidance says to declare more than US$20,000 or the equivalent to customs when you arrive or leave. A February 2026 Thaiger guide advises declaring from US$15,000 because some official sources give that figure. Not declaring is a criminal offence, so if you are anywhere near those amounts, declare.
- **Thai baht out:** up to ฿50,000 to most countries, or ฿500,000 to neighbouring countries. Above that, declare it or exchange it before you leave. See leaving Thailand.
- **Proof of funds:** immigration can ask tourists to show ฿20,000 per person, or ฿40,000 per family, and the Thaiger guide says it should be cash, not a bank statement.
- **Leftover baht:** booths in town will sell you foreign currency, but you lose on the rate twice. Spend down to a small amount, or keep it for your next trip.

Safety

- Never change money with people on the street, however good the rate sounds.
- Keep large amounts of cash out of sight, and leave most of it in the hotel safe.
- Watch the counting, and recount yourself.
- For scams, call 1441. See common scams.

Living here

For regular money from home, a transfer into a Thai bank account is usually cheaper than exchanging cash. See sending money to Thailand, opening a Thai bank account and depositing cash at 7-Eleven.

Common questions

Where is the best place to exchange money in Pattaya? A licensed money changer or bank booth in town, not the airport or your hotel. Compare the “we buy” rate at two or three booths for large sums.

Do I need my passport to exchange money in Thailand? Yes. Bring the original; a copy isn’t always accepted.

Is it better to exchange cash or use an ATM? If you brought cash, exchanging it usually costs less than foreign-card ATM fees of about ฿220 to ฿250 per withdrawal.

How much cash can I bring into Thailand? You can bring more, but foreign cash over US$20,000 must be declared. Some sources say US$15,000, so declare if you are close.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Royal Thai Embassy London, bringing currency in and out of Thailand (updated 2 November 2026); The Thaiger, arriving with too much cash (20 February 2026); Bank of Thailand, types of foreign exchange licences; T.T. Currency Exchange. Sources conflict on the declaration threshold (US$20,000 or US$15,000). Rates change daily.

Related guides

- ATM Fees in Thailand
- Cash, Cards or QR? Paying in Pattaya
- Sending Money to Thailand
- Leaving Thailand: Departure Checklist

MONEY & BANKING

Cash, Cards or QR? Paying in Pattaya

When to use cash, cards or QR payments in Pattaya: where Visa and Mastercard work, card surcharges, paying in baht not your home currency, small notes, and keeping money safe.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/money-banking/cash-vs-card/

Cash	**Street food, baht buses (฿15), markets, massage shops, small bars**
Cards	**Visa and Mastercard in malls, hotels, hospitals, chains; Amex is patchier**
Surcharge	**Some small shops and hotels add a few percent; ask first**
QR	**A Thai bank app, or your home app if your country is linked**
Always	**Pay in baht, never your home currency**

Quick answer: Use cash for the small stuff and a card for the big stuff. Street food, baht buses (฿15 a ride on the normal loop), markets, motorbike taxis, massage shops and many small bars still want cash or a Thai QR scan. Visa and Mastercard work in malls, supermarkets, hotels, hospitals, chains and most bigger restaurants. Some smaller places add a card surcharge of a few percent, so ask before you pay. Whenever a card machine or ATM offers to charge you in your home currency, say no and pay in baht. Carry small notes, keep a backup card somewhere else, and you're set.

At a glance

PAYING FOR	CASH	CARD	THAI QR
Street food, markets, fruit stalls	Yes	Rarely	Usually
Baht buses and motorbike taxis	Yes	No	Not usually
Massage shops, small bars, local restaurants	Yes	Sometimes, maybe with a surcharge	Often
7-Eleven, supermarkets, malls	Yes	Yes	Yes
Hotels, hospitals, bigger restaurants	Yes	Yes	Often
Bolt and Grab	Yes, to the driver	Yes, in the app	Not usually

Why cash still matters

Thailand pays by phone more every year, but many visitors without a Thai bank account can't join in, and plenty of Pattaya still runs on notes. A Thaiger guide updated in September 2026 lists street food, wet markets, small family restaurants, songthaews (baht buses), motorbike taxis, beach vendors and small guesthouses as "cash or QR only". If you don't have a Thai banking app, that means cash.

Thai notes come in ฿20, ฿50, ฿100, ฿500 and ฿1,000, with coins of ฿1, ฿2, ฿5 and ฿10. ATMs mostly pay out ฿1,000 notes, which stalls, baht bus drivers and motorbike taxis often can't change. Break big notes where there's a till: 7-Eleven, supermarkets, mall food courts. Asking the ATM for an amount like ฿19,900 instead of ฿20,000 can get you some smaller notes, if the machine stocks them.

Pro tip: a cashier claiming your ฿1,000 note was a ฿100 is rare, but it happens, and the two notes look similar.

Look at each note as you hand it over, and count your change before you walk away.

When cards work

- **Where:** malls, chains, supermarkets, hotels, hospitals and most city restaurants take Visa and Mastercard. American Express is accepted less often, so carry a backup card on another network.
- **Surcharges:** some small hotels and independent shops add a few percent for cards. Thaiger says it is often negotiable. Ask first, and pay cash if the extra isn't worth it.
- **Your bank's fee:** many home banks add a foreign transaction fee of about 2 to 3% on every card payment abroad. A card without that fee saves money on a long stay.
- **Tap to pay:** contactless cards and phone wallets work at many bigger shops. Smaller places may ask you to insert the card and type your PIN.
- **Hotels:** expect a deposit hold on your card at check-in. It is released after check-out, but can take days to drop off your statement.
- **Hospitals:** private hospitals take cards, and may want a deposit before treatment. See hospital costs.

Always pay in baht

If a card machine or ATM asks whether you want to pay in dollars, pounds or euros "at a guaranteed rate", choose **baht** (THB). That offer is called dynamic currency conversion, and the rate is set by the machine's provider, not your bank. It is almost always worse. If a shop runs your card in your home currency without asking, ask them to cancel and run it again in baht before you sign. At ATMs, press "without conversion" or the equivalent. See ATM fees, where the withdrawal fee itself is usually ฿220 to ฿250 per foreign-card withdrawal.

QR payments

Almost every shop and stall has a Thai QR code by the till. With a Thai bank app you can pay nearly anywhere, instantly. Visitors from linked countries, including China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and South Korea, can scan with their home apps. Cross-border Thai QR payments are growing fast: Time Out Bangkok reported, from National ITMX figures, that the value of cross-border Thai QR payments in December 2025 was up 143% on a year earlier. See QR payments and PromptPay and mobile banking apps.

How much cash to carry

- For a normal day out, carry enough for food, transport and a massage in small notes. See Pattaya on 1,000 baht a day for what a day costs.
- Leave the rest, your passport and a backup card in the room safe.
- Bringing cash from home? Large, clean notes get the best rate. See exchanging money.
- Using ATMs? Fewer, larger withdrawals keep fees down. Living here? A Thai bank account removes the foreign-card fee, and you can top it up by depositing cash at 7-Eleven.

Keeping money safe

- Split cash between your wallet, a pocket and the room safe.
- Keep your card in sight when you pay, and check the amount on the screen before you enter your PIN.
- Check bills before paying, especially in tourist areas. See common scams; for scams you can call 1441.
- Save your bank's international phone number somewhere other than your phone, so you can block a lost card quickly.

Common questions

Is Pattaya cash or card? Both. Cards work in malls, hotels, chains and bigger restaurants, but street food, baht buses, markets and many small shops want cash or a Thai QR scan.

Should I pay in my home currency or baht? Always baht. The conversion offered by card machines and ATMs is almost always more expensive than your own bank's rate.

Can I pay a baht bus by card? No. Pay the driver in cash when you get off: ฿15 on the normal loop, up to about ฿20 on longer runs.

Do Thai shops charge extra for cards? Some smaller shops and hotels add a few percent. Ask first; it is often negotiable, or you can pay cash.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: The Thaiger, using cards in Thailand (updated 10 September 2026); Time Out Bangkok, Thai QR cross-border payments up 143% (3 February 2026). Card surcharges and bank fees vary by shop and card issuer; check before you pay.

Related guides

- ATM Fees in Thailand
- QR Payments & PromptPay
- Exchanging Money
- Tipping in Thailand

MONEY & BANKING

Opening a Thai Bank Account

Who can open a Thai bank account in 2026, why tourist and DTV holders are turned away, which documents banks ask for, the face and SIM checks, and what you get: a debit card, a banking app and PromptPay.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/money-banking/thai-bank-account/

Visa	**A non-immigrant visa (retirement, marriage, work, education)**
Not accepted	**Tourist visas, visa exemption and, at Kasikorn, the DTV**
Bring	**Passport, visa, proof of address, Thai SIM in your name**
Opening deposit	**About ฿500 at the big banks**
Big banks	**Bangkok Bank, Kasikorn (KBank), SCB, Krungsri**
You get	**Debit card, mobile app, PromptPay**

Quick answer: In 2026 you usually need a non-immigrant visa, such as a retirement, marriage, work or education visa, to open a Thai bank account. Tourist visas and visa-exempt stays are turned away at almost every bank, and Kasikorn's own account page lists the DTV among the visas it won't accept. You apply in person at a branch with your passport, visa and proof of address, and a Thai phone number registered in your own name. Banks match your face to your passport and check where your money comes from. Requirements vary by bank and even by branch, so call ahead.

A Thai account means no more ATM fees on a foreign card, instant transfers, QR payments everywhere, and rent and bills paid from your phone.

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Who can open	Usually holders of a non-immigrant visa: retirement, marriage, work, education
Usually refused	Tourist visas, visa on arrival, visa exemption; the DTV at Kasikorn and, reports say, at most banks
Where	In person at a branch; foreigners can't open online
Bring	Passport, visa, proof of address, Thai SIM in your name, sometimes a work permit or school letter
Checks	Face matched to your passport, phone number name check, source of funds
Opening deposit	About ฿500 at Bangkok Bank and Kasikorn (one Kasikorn page says no minimum)
You get	Passbook, debit card, banking app, PromptPay

Who can open one

Thai banks tightened account opening in 2025 and 2026 as part of the crackdown on "mule" accounts that scammers use to move stolen money. Pattaya Mail described April 2026 as a "maximum security" era: account opening for tourist visa holders was almost completely suspended across the commercial banks, and DTV holders, whom some branches had accepted at first, were now being refused.

Kasikorn's savings account page is the clearest official statement we found. It asks foreigners for a passport and a non-immigrant visa of any type, plus a government ID from your home country, and says accounts can't be opened on tourist visas or other visas meant for travel, naming the visa on arrival, visa exemption and the DTV. It may also ask for documents showing why you need the account, such as a work permit or a school certificate. Bangkok Bank's account pages tell foreigners to ask a branch which documents apply to them.

If you are visiting on the 30-day visa exemption, plan to manage without a Thai account. See cash vs card and sending money to Thailand.

What to bring

- Your passport and non-immigrant visa or extension stamp.
- Proof of address: your TM.30 receipt, rental contract or a utility bill. Pattaya Mail reported banks looking for a properly registered long-term lease or a work permit as proof that you live here.
- A residence certificate from immigration or your embassy, which some branches ask for.
- Depending on your visa: a work permit, school letter or proof of income.
- A government ID from your home country, at Kasikorn.
- A Thai phone number registered in your own name. Since 16 May 2026 SIM registration is in person with a face check. See SIM cards.
- Bank statements showing where your money comes from, especially if you plan to move in a large sum.
- A small opening deposit.

The checks at the branch

- **Face match:** Pattaya Mail reported biometric scanners comparing your face with the chip in your passport. A poor match can stop the application.

- **Phone in your name:** the number linked to your banking app must be registered under the exact name in your passport, and banks check with the networks. See mobile banking apps.
- **Source of funds:** banks look at where your money came from, and a large unexplained transfer just before you apply can lead to a refusal.
- **Insurance offers:** Pattaya Mail also mentioned unverified social media reports of branches suggesting a life or health insurance policy. If one is offered, ask whether it is actually required to open the account.

What you get

- A passbook and a debit card. There's usually a small yearly card fee.
- The bank's mobile app, for transfers, bill payments and QR payments. Staff usually help you set it up at the branch. Each app works on one phone only, and transfers over ฿50,000 at a time need a face scan. See mobile banking apps.
- Cash deposits at 7-Eleven with some banks. See depositing cash at 7-Eleven.

Tips

- Go on a quiet weekday morning and be patient; account opening can take an hour.
- Call or visit the branch first and ask exactly what they need for your visa type. Staff at different branches of the same bank can ask for different things.
- Keep your Thai SIM active. Banks send security codes to it, and losing the number can lock you out.
- For a retirement extension, the bank account is where the required money is held, so ask the bank for the letter immigration needs. See retirement visa.
- Keep transfer receipts. For a condo purchase, the money must arrive from abroad in foreign currency, and the bank issues an FET form or a letter for the land office. See buying a condo.
- Never let anyone else use your account, whatever they offer. It can make you part of a mule account investigation. For scams, call 1441. See common scams.

Pro tip: when I bought my condo, the only confusing part of the whole process was moving the money into my Thai account and getting the FET form. It was a couple of hours of hassle. I got the FET form and a letter from the bank.

Using it day to day

- Pay by QR almost everywhere. See QR payments.
- Withdraw from your own bank's ATMs to avoid foreign card fees. See ATM fees.
- Keep your phone number up to date with the bank, it is needed for app codes.
- If you live here 180 days or more a year, money you bring in can have tax consequences. See Thai tax basics.

Which bank?

- I use Kasikorn and recommend it over Bangkok Bank. I had trouble linking Bangkok Bank to many apps, while Kasikorn works smoothly with apps like the PEA electricity app.
- Experiences differ, and branch rules for foreigners vary, so ask at a couple of branches.
- Pay bills from the app. See utilities and bills.

Common questions

Can a tourist open a bank account in Thailand? Almost never in 2026. Banks have all but stopped opening accounts on tourist visas and visa-exempt stays, and Kasikorn says so on its account page.

Can I open a Thai bank account on a DTV? Kasikorn lists the DTV among the visas it won't accept, and Pattaya Mail reported in April 2026 that DTV holders were being refused more widely. Ask a branch before you count on it.

What is the minimum deposit? About ฿500 at Bangkok Bank and Kasikorn, though one Kasikorn page says no minimum. Retirement extensions need much more held in the account.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Kasikornbank, open a savings account (documents for foreigners, visas not accepted including the DTV, opening deposit); Bangkok Bank, statement savings account (฿500 minimum, foreigners to ask a branch); Pattaya Mail, the "maximum security" era for expat account opening (27 April 2026). Kasikorn's pages differ on the minimum deposit, and branch practice varies. Checked against our mobile banking apps guide for the SIM, one-device and face-scan rules.

MONEY & BANKING

QR Payments & PromptPay

How Thailand pays by scanning QR codes, how to use them with a Thai account, and the options for visitors without one.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/money-banking/qr-payments-promptpay/

PromptPay	**Thailand's instant payment system**
Used for	**Street stalls, markets, shops, bars, rent**
With a Thai account	**Scan in your bank app, pay instantly**
Without one	**Cash, cards, a travel wallet app, or your home app if your country is linked**
Linked countries	**China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, South Korea (inbound)**

Quick answer: Almost every shop, stall, market and bar in Pattaya has a QR code by the till. Thais scan it with their banking app and the money arrives instantly; the system behind it is PromptPay. With a Thai bank account you can do the same. Without one, you have three options: visitors from about nine linked countries can scan with their own home banking or wallet app, travel wallet apps let you top up from a foreign card and scan Thai QR codes, or you just pay cash, which still works almost everywhere.

At a glance

YOU HAVE	HOW YOU PAY A THAI QR CODE	NOTES
A Thai bank account	Scan in your bank app (K PLUS, SCB Easy, Bangkok Bank and others)	Instant and free for normal payments
A bank or wallet from a linked country	Scan with your home app	China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, South Korea
A foreign card only	A travel wallet app topped up from your card	Check exchange rate and fees before loading
Nothing digital	Cash	Small notes are easiest

How Thai QR payments work

PromptPay is Thailand's national instant payment system, run with the Bank of Thailand. Each shop has a static QR code linked to its bank account or PromptPay ID. You scan it, type the amount (or it is already filled in on a printed receipt or card-machine screen), check the name, and confirm. The money moves in seconds, any time of day. It costs the customer nothing for normal domestic payments, which is why even the smallest street stall uses it.

With a Thai bank account

Open your bank app, tap scan, point it at the QR code, check the amount and the shop name, and confirm. The seller will usually ask to see the confirmation on your screen. You can also link your phone number or ID to PromptPay so friends can pay you without your account number. See opening a Thai bank account and mobile banking apps.

If your country is linked to Thai QR

The Bank of Thailand lists QR payment links with these places, so visitors can scan Thai QR codes with their own app:

- China: UnionPay, Alipay and WeChat Pay (paying in Thailand only).
- Hong Kong (FPS), Singapore (NETS), Malaysia (DuitNow), Indonesia (QRIS), Vietnam (VietQR), Cambodia (KHQR) and Laos (LAO QR), in both directions.
- South Korea, through the Paybooc app (paying in Thailand only).

Your bank converts the baht at its own rate, so check what it charges. The list is growing: the Bank of Thailand's cross-border payments page has the current one.

Without a Thai bank account

- **Cash** still works almost everywhere. Keep small notes: ฿20, ฿50 and ฿100 are easiest at stalls and in baht buses.
- **Cards** work in malls, hotels, bigger restaurants and 7-Eleven, sometimes with a fee of around 2 to 3% at smaller shops. See cash vs card.
- **Travel wallet apps** and prepaid travel cards let foreigners pay Thai QR codes after topping up from a foreign card. Fees, exchange rates and limits vary a lot, and some need identity checks first, so compare before you load money and load only what you need.
- Some international money apps have added Thai QR payments; check in your app whether yours supports it yet.
- Grab and Bolt can be paid by card in the app. See Bolt and Grab in Pattaya.

Where you'll meet QR codes in Pattaya

- Street food stalls, night markets and fresh markets.
- Small restaurants, coffee shops and massage shops.
- Bars, where the bill often comes with a QR code at the bottom.

- Rent, utility bills and condo fees, which landlords often prefer by transfer.
- 7-Eleven and supermarkets show a QR on the card machine screen.

Staying safe

- Always check the name that appears before you confirm. If it doesn't match the shop, ask.
- Show the payment slip to the seller; they want to see it, and they check the real notification on their phone. Screenshots can be faked, so don't be offended if they look.
- Never scan a QR code sent by a stranger online, especially one that claims you will receive money. Scanning a QR code is for paying, never for receiving. See common scams and online safety.
- Watch for QR stickers placed over a shop's real code; check with staff if something looks stuck on.
- Set a daily transfer limit in your bank app, and turn on notifications so you see every payment.

Common questions

Can tourists use PromptPay? PromptPay itself needs a Thai bank account. But tourists from linked countries can scan Thai QR codes with their own app, and anyone can use a travel wallet app topped up from a foreign card.

Is it free to pay by QR? For a Thai account, normal payments are free. Foreign apps and travel wallets may add exchange-rate margins or fees, so check yours.

Do I need cash in Pattaya? Yes, still. Most places take QR, but some taxis, small stalls and baht buses are easier with cash, and it is a good back-up if your phone dies.

What if the payment doesn't go through? Don't pay twice. Check your app's history first and show the seller; failed transfers normally bounce back within minutes.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Bank of Thailand, cross-border payment linkages; Nation Thailand, PromptPay and cross-border QR growth in 2026.

Related guides

- Mobile Banking Apps for Expats
- ATM Fees in Thailand
- Depositing Cash at 7-Eleven
- Cash, Cards or QR? Paying in Pattaya

MONEY & BANKING

Mobile Banking Apps for Expats

How Thai mobile banking apps work for foreigners in 2026: getting set up, the SIM-in-your-name rule, one device per app, face scans and daily transfer limits, and what to do if you lose your phone.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/money-banking/mobile-banking-apps/

Need	**A Thai bank account and a Thai SIM in your own name**
Apps	**K PLUS, SCB Easy, Bangkok Bank and others**
One device	**Each banking app works on one phone at a time**
Face scan	**For transfers over ฿50,000 at a time**
Daily limit	**Set by your bank from your risk profile since August 2025**
Lost phone	**Call your bank's 24-hour line and block access**

Quick answer: In Thailand almost everyone pays by scanning a QR code in a banking app, and once you have a Thai bank account you can too. The branch helps you install the app when you open the account. You need a Thai phone number registered in your own name: since 2025, banks have suspended app access where the SIM owner's name doesn't match the account holder. The security rules are strict. Each app works on one phone only, transfers over ฿50,000 at a time need a face scan, and since August 2025 each bank sets your daily transfer limit from your risk profile. Lose your phone and you call the bank straight away.

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
You need	A Thai bank account and a Thai SIM registered in your name
Main apps	K PLUS (Kasikorn), SCB Easy (SCB), Bangkok Bank, and the other big banks' apps
Language	The main apps have an English setting
Devices	One phone per banking app
Face scan	Transfers over ฿50,000 a time, or raising your limit above that
Daily limit	Set by the bank from your risk profile; reported as ฿50,000 a day as the standard level
Everyday uses	QR payments, transfers, PromptPay, bills, phone top-ups

Getting started

- Open a Thai bank account first. Most banks now want a long-stay visa. See opening a Thai bank account.
- Get a Thai SIM in your own name. Since 16 May 2026 SIM registration is done in person with a face check, and you can hold up to three SIMs per network. See SIM cards and eSIMs.
- Give the bank that number. Staff usually help you download, register and activate the app at the branch, so bring your phone, charged.
- Switch the app to English in its settings, and turn on notifications so you see every payment.
- Link your phone number to PromptPay if you want friends to pay you without an account number. See QR payments and PromptPay.

The SIM-in-your-name rule

In 2025, Thai banks began checking that the registered owner of your SIM matches the name on your bank account, as part of the fight against "mule" accounts used by scammers. Banks including Kasikorn, SCB, ttb and Bangkok Bank told customers to fix mismatches, and from mid-July 2025 apps were suspended where names didn't match. It mainly affects people whose SIM was registered by someone else, such as a friend, partner, agent or landlord.

If it happens to you, SCB's published fix is typical: go to a branch with your passport and proof that the number is yours, such as a letter or receipt from the phone network. While the app is suspended you can still use ATMs, cash deposit machines and branches. The simplest prevention is to register the SIM in your own name at the network's shop with your passport.

What you can do in the app

- Scan QR codes to pay in shops, restaurants, markets and bars.
- Transfer to any Thai account or PromptPay number in seconds.
- Pay electricity, water, internet and phone bills. See utilities and bills.
- Top up a prepaid phone or buy a data pack.
- With K PLUS, make a QR code to deposit cash at 7-Eleven. See depositing cash at 7-Eleven.
- Receive money sent from home. See sending money to Thailand.

Pro tip: I prepay my dtac plan every month, a 50GB pack at 10Mbps, through my Kasikorn account.

Security rules you'll meet

The Bank of Thailand has pushed banks to make apps harder to abuse. What it means for you:

- **One device:** each bank limits your mobile banking to one phone. Setting the app up on a new phone means verifying again, and the old one stops working.
- **Face scans:** needed for transfers over ฿50,000 per transaction, and when raising your limit above that.
- **Daily limits:** since 8 August 2025, banks set each customer's daily transfer limit by risk profile. Pattaya Mail reported ฿50,000 a day as the standard level, adjusted for your history; ask your branch if you regularly need more, for example to pay rent or buy a scooter.
- **No links in bank messages:** banks must not send messages with embedded links. A text message "from your bank" with a link in it is a scam.
- **Mule account warnings:** banks check transfers against fraud lists and must warn you before a payment completes. If your app warns you about a recipient, stop and check.
- **Rooted or jailbroken phones:** banking apps may refuse to run on them.
- Never share a one-time code or your PIN. Banks never ask for them by phone. For scams, call 1441. See common scams and online safety.

Lost or new phone

- Call your bank's 24-hour contact centre straight away and ask them to suspend mobile banking and your card. The number is on the bank's website and the back of your card, so save it somewhere other than your phone.
- Get your Thai number back on a new SIM at the network's shop with your passport, so you can receive codes again.
- Then set the app up on the new phone. Expect to verify again, possibly at a branch with your passport.

Travelling abroad

- Some apps limit use outside Thailand or with a foreign SIM. Check with your bank before you go.
- Keep your Thai SIM active, with roaming or a cheap top-up, so you still get codes.
- If you'll be away a long time, make sure your registered address and phone details are current, SCB, for example, asks customers to renew their details every two years.

Common questions

Can foreigners use Thai banking apps? Yes, once you have a Thai bank account. You need a Thai phone number registered in your own name.

Why was my banking app suspended? Often because your SIM is registered in someone else's name. Take your passport and proof of the number to a branch, or move the SIM into your name.

Can I use my banking app on two phones? No. Each bank allows mobile banking on one device. Moving to a new phone means verifying again.

What is the daily transfer limit? Your bank sets it from your risk profile. ฿50,000 a day is reported as the standard level; ask your branch to raise it if you need more.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Bank of Thailand, anti-fraud measures; Pattaya Mail, daily transfer limits from 8 August 2025 (20 August 2025); Mobile ID World, SCB's SIM name matching rule (July 2025). Reports differ on how the daily limits are tiered, and each bank applies the rules in its own way, so ask your bank.

Related guides

- Opening a Thai Bank Account
- QR Payments & PromptPay
- Depositing Cash at 7-Eleven
- LINE App and Thai Phone Etiquette

MONEY & BANKING

Sending Money to Thailand

Getting money from home to Pattaya cheaply: money transfer apps, bank wires, the exchange rate trap, and what retirees should know.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/money-banking/sending-money-to-thailand/

Usually cheapest	**Online money transfer services**
Watch	**The exchange rate, not just the fee**
Bank wires	**Slower, often dearer**
Retirees	**Keep records of money brought in**
Tax	**Residents (180+ days a year) may owe tax on foreign income brought in since 2024**

Quick answer: For most people the cheapest way to get money to Pattaya is an online money transfer service paying into a Thai bank account in baht. Bank wires from home are slower and usually lose more to fees and a poor exchange rate, and some Thai banks charge a small fee to receive a wire. Always compare the number of baht that arrive, not the advertised fee. If you live here 180 days or more in a year, foreign income you bring in may be taxable in Thailand since 2024, so keep records and get advice.

The options compared

METHOD	SPEED	COST	BEST FOR
Online money transfer service	Minutes to 1-2 days	Low fee, near mid-market rate	Regular transfers to a Thai account
Bank wire (SWIFT) from home	1-5 working days	Sending fee, exchange margin, sometimes a receiving fee	Large one-off sums, condo purchases
Cash pick-up services	Same day	Usually higher	No Thai bank account
Foreign card at a Thai ATM	Instant	About ฿220 to ฿250 per withdrawal, plus your bank's fees	Short trips
Carrying cash	Instant	Exchange rate only	Arriving with a buffer

Online money transfer services

- They convert your money and pay it into a Thai account in baht, usually from a local Thai account, which avoids receiving fees.
- Fees and rates are shown before you pay. Compare two or three for your currency and amount: the best one changes by route and size.
- Transfer limits per payment depend on the receiving Thai bank; large sums may need splitting or a bank wire.
- Some services have changed how their Thai-registered accounts work in 2026 under Bank of Thailand rules; this matters if you opened an account registered in Thailand.

Bank wires

- Useful for big amounts, and needed for a condo purchase, where the money must arrive from abroad in foreign currency with the right paperwork (the FET form or bank letter).
- Your home bank's exchange rate is often several percent worse than the mid-market rate. Ask whether you can send in your own currency and let the Thai bank convert, then compare.
- Some Thai banks deduct a small fee on incoming wires. Ask your branch.

Your first transfer, step by step

- Open a Thai bank account and note the exact account name, number, bank name and the bank's SWIFT code.
- Compare two or three transfer services or your bank for the amount you plan to send: look at the baht received.
- Add your Thai account as a recipient. Spell the name exactly as the bank has it.
- Send a small test amount and check it arrives in your Thai banking app.
- Then send the real amount. Save the receipt or confirmation as a PDF.
- For regular transfers, set a reminder rather than a standing order, so you can pick a good day for the exchange rate.

The exchange rate trap

Many services advertise "no fee" but give you a worse exchange rate. Check the rate against the mid-market rate on a currency site, and look at how many baht arrive. On ฿100,000 a month, a 3% difference is ฿3,000 every month.

For retirees and long-stayers

- Keep records of money you transfer in. Immigration may want to see transfers for income-based retirement extensions, and banks can issue a letter confirming foreign transfers.

- Since 1 January 2024, Thai tax residents (in Thailand 180 days or more in a calendar year) can owe Thai tax on foreign income brought into Thailand in that year, whenever it was earned. Income earned before 2024 is reported to be treated differently. Double tax treaties may also apply. See Thai tax basics and get advice for your situation.
- Keep transfer receipts and statements for at least a few years.

Tips

- You'll need a Thai bank account to receive transfers in baht.
- Test with a small amount first, and check the account name exactly matches.
- Set up the payee in advance, so you're not stuck if a code or app needs updating while you're here.
- Never send money to someone you've only met online, however urgent the story. See common scams.

Common questions

What is the cheapest way to send money to Thailand? Usually an online money transfer service paying into a Thai bank account. Compare the baht received for your amount.

Do Thai banks charge to receive money? Some deduct a small fee on incoming international wires. Transfers paid out locally by money transfer services usually arrive without one.

Is money sent to Thailand taxed? For Thai tax residents, foreign income brought in since 2024 can be taxable. Savings and money that isn't income are treated differently. Get advice.

How long does a transfer take? From minutes with some online services to a few working days for a bank wire.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Lex Bangkok, Thai personal income tax for foreigners; Expatica, sending money to Thailand. This is general information, not tax or financial advice.

Records to keep

- Keep transfer receipts. Some visas need proof of money sent from abroad. See retirement visa.
- For a condo purchase, keep the FET form or bank letter for each transfer.

MONEY & BANKING

Tipping in Thailand

Who to tip in Pattaya and how much: restaurants and service charges, massages, bars, drivers, hotels, guides and barbers. Appreciated, rarely expected, always in cash.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/money-banking/tipping-in-thailand/

Expected?	**No, but appreciated**
Service charge	**Often 10% at hotels and bigger restaurants, plus 7% VAT**
Restaurants	**Round up, or 5 to 10% if there's no service charge**
Massage	**฿50 to ฿100 an hour, to the therapist**
Bars	**Leave the change or ฿20 to ฿100**
How	**Cash, in baht, to the person**

Quick answer: Tipping isn't compulsory in Thailand and there's no fixed percentage like in the US. Leaving the coins from your change is common. Visitors usually round up at cheap places, leave 5 to 10% at sit-down restaurants that don't add a service charge, and give ฿50 to ฿100 an hour for a massage. Check the bill first: many hotels and bigger restaurants already add a 10% service charge plus 7% VAT. Always tip in cash, in baht, and hand it to the person who looked after you.

Typical amounts

WHERE	TYPICAL TIP
Street food, food courts, fast food chains	Not expected; leave the coins if you like
Small local restaurants and cafes	Round up, or ฿20 to ฿50
Restaurants without a service charge	5 to 10%
Restaurants with a 10% service charge	Not needed; ฿50 to ฿100 to someone who was great
Bars	Leave the change, or ฿20 to ฿100 for staff who looked after you
Massage	฿50 to ฿100 per hour, more at hotel spas
Barbers	Round up, or about ฿20 at cheaper shops
Taxis, Bolt and Grab	Round up, or ฿20 to ฿50 for a long ride
Baht buses and motorbike taxis	Not expected; pay the fare
Hotel porters	฿20 to ฿50 per bag
Private tour guide	About 10% of the fee
Guide on a group tour	฿50 to ฿100 if they were exceptional

Service charge and VAT

Many hotels, hotel restaurants and mid-range to upscale restaurants add a **10% service charge**, then **7% VAT** on top. Menus that show prices with "++" mean both will be added, so a ฿500 dish costs about ฿589. Thailand's VAT stays at 7% until at least 30 September 2027: Royal Decree No. 807, issued in August 2026, extended the reduced rate for another year.

The service charge goes to the business. How much reaches the staff depends on the employer, so if someone gave you great service, a small cash tip in their hand is the way to make sure they get it. If service was poor, you don't need to add anything on top of the service charge.

Restaurants and cafes

- At street stalls, food courts and chains like McDonald's or Starbucks, nobody expects a tip.
- At small Thai restaurants, rounding up the bill or leaving the coins is normal and welcome.
- At sit-down restaurants without a service charge, 5 to 10% is generous by local standards.
- Leave the tip in the bill folder or hand it over. Don't add it on a card machine: it may never reach the person.
- Delivery riders appreciate a small cash tip, especially in the rain. See food delivery apps.

Massage

Massage is where a tip matters most. Therapists in ordinary shops are often paid largely by commission, so the tip in their hand is a real part of their income. ฿50 to ฿100 for an hour is the usual range, and hotel spas are higher. Give it directly to the therapist, not at the counter. At a typical street shop where a one-hour Thai or foot massage costs about ฿200 to ฿350, a ฿50 to ฿100 tip is a big gesture. See massage in Pattaya and massage etiquette.

Pro tip: I get a massage about once a week. It comes to about ฿500 after the tip.

Bars

- Leaving the small change on the tray, or ฿20 to ฿100 for someone who looked after you, is plenty.
- Tips in a bar are often pooled and split between staff.
- You never have to tip because someone asks, and a tip is never owed on top of a service charge. See bar etiquette and drink prices.

Getting around

- Baht buses cost ฿15 on the normal loop. Just pay the fare.
- Motorbike taxis (riders wear blue vests since October 2026): agree the fare first; no tip expected.
- With Bolt and Grab, rounding up is appreciated but not necessary. A driver who helps with heavy bags or waits for you deserves a bit more.
- A private driver for a day trip or an airport transfer: a tip for good service is appreciated, not required.

Hotels, guides and others

- Porters: ฿20 to ฿50 per bag. Housekeeping: optional; leave a note with a small tip at the end of your stay.
- Tour guides: on a private tour, about 10% of the fee; on a crowded fixed-price tour, no tip is expected, but ฿50 to ฿100 for an exceptional guide is kind.
- Barbers and hairdressers: about ฿20 at cheaper barbers, more at salons. See barbers and hair salons.
- Tattoo artists: around 10% if you're happy. See tattoos.

Why small tips go a long way

Chonburi province, which includes Pattaya, has a minimum wage of ฿400 a day. A ฿50 tip is an eighth of that. A small tip, given with a smile and a thank you ("khop khun krap" or "khop khun ka"), is noticed.

How to tip

- In baht, in cash. Foreign coins can't be exchanged, and a card tip may not reach the person.
- Keep ฿20 and ฿50 notes for tips. See cash vs card.
- Hand it over directly and quietly; no need for a show.

Common questions

Is tipping expected in Thailand? No. It is appreciated, especially for massages and good table service, but nobody should make you feel you owe it.

How much do you tip for a massage in Thailand? Usually ฿50 to ฿100 for an hour, given directly to the therapist. Hotel spas are higher.

Is the service charge a tip? Not exactly. It goes to the business, and how much staff receive varies. A small cash tip on top is optional.

Should I tip Grab and Bolt drivers? Rounding up is appreciated but not necessary.

Can I tip in dollars or euros? Use baht. Foreign coins can't be exchanged, and small foreign notes are a hassle for staff.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: The Thaiger, top ten tips to tipping in Thailand (2019, still the usual ranges); HLB Thailand, 7% VAT extended to 30 September 2027 (Royal Decree No. 807); Forvis Mazars, minimum wage tiers including Chonburi at ฿400 a day. Tipping is custom, not law, and guides differ on percentages.

Related guides

- Barbers and Hair Salons in Pattaya
- Massage in Pattaya
- Ordering Food in Thai: Phrases and Tips
- Gold Shops and Pawn Shops in Thailand

MONEY & BANKING

Gold Shops and Pawn Shops in Thailand

How buying gold works in Thailand: 96.5% Thai gold sold by the baht weight, daily Gold Traders Association prices, making fees and selling back, plus how pawn shops work and the legal interest limits.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/money-banking/gold-pawn-shops/

Thai gold	**96.5% purity**
1 baht weight	**15.244 g (bars), 15.16 g (jewellery)**
Prices	**Set by the Gold Traders Association, often several times a day**
Jewellery	**Making fee on top, lost when you sell back**
Pawn shops	**Legal cap 2% a month up to ฿2,000, 1.25% above**

Quick answer: Thai gold shops sell 96.5% gold by the **baht weight**: 15.244 grams for bars and 15.16 grams for jewellery. Prices follow a board set by the Gold Traders Association, which can change several times a day. On 10 November 2026 one baht of bar gold sold for about ฿65,000 and one baht of jewellery for about ฿66,000. Jewellery adds a making fee you don't get back when you sell, so bars keep their value better. Pawn shops lend against gold and other valuables; the Pawnshop Act caps interest at 2% a month on loans up to ฿2,000 and 1.25% above that, and public pawnshops charge less.

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Purity	96.5% (stamped 965), often called 23K
Unit	1 baht weight = 4 salueng; bars 15.244 g, jewellery 15.16 g
Who sets prices	Gold Traders Association, announced again when world prices move
Example board (10 Nov 2026, first announcement)	Bars: shop buys ฿65,050, sells ฿65,250. Jewellery: shop buys about ฿63,750, sells ฿66,050
Jewellery extra	Making fee per piece, not included in the board price
Pawn interest cap	2% a month up to ฿2,000; 1.25% a month above ฿2,000
Pawn ID	Shops must record your ID; bring your passport

How Thai gold works

- Standard Thai gold is **96.5% pure**, a little under 24K. The familiar red-and-gold gold shops are called "raan thong" (ร้านทอง).
- It is sold by the **baht weight**, which has nothing to do with the baht coin. A one-baht bar weighs 15.244 g; one baht of jewellery is counted as 15.16 g. Smaller pieces come in quarter baht (1 salueng), half baht (2 salueng) and so on.
- Every board shows two kinds: **gold bars** (thong kham thaeng, ทองคำแท่ง) and **jewellery** (thong rup phan, ทองรูปพรรณ).

How prices are set

- The Gold Traders Association publishes the price for 96.5% gold each day, converting the world gold price at the dollar-baht rate. When the world price moves it announces again, so there can be several updates in one day. Changes usually come in steps of ฿50.
- Every shop shows two prices for each kind: what it **sells** at (you buy) and what it **buys** at (you sell).
- For bars the gap is small: ฿200 a baht on the 10 November 2026 board. For jewellery the gap is much wider, and that is before the making fee.
- The price tracks the world market and the baht, so it can move a lot in weeks. One baht of jewellery sold for ฿69,500 on 10 September 2026 and ฿66,050 on 10 November.

Making fees and buy-back

- Jewellery carries a **making fee** (kha kamnet, ค่ากำเหน็จ) on top of the board price. It depends on the design and the shop, so ask for the total before you agree. Bars carry a much smaller premium.
- When you sell jewellery back you get the jewellery buying price, about 2% below the bar buying price, and the making fee is gone. On the 10 November board a baht of jewellery sold for ฿66,050 and was bought back for about ฿63,750, before counting any making fee you paid.
- Selling back to the shop you bought from is usually easiest. Keep the receipt; it shows the weight, the price and the shop's stamp.
- A shop that didn't sell you the piece may test it and offer less.

Buying gold safely

- Buy from established shops in malls or on busy streets, watch the piece being weighed, check the 965 stamp, and get a receipt with the weight, price and date.
- Compare the shop's board with the day's association price, which Thai news sites publish after each announcement.
- Gold is not a quick way to make money. With a spread on bars and a making fee on jewellery, the price has to rise before you break even. This is general information, not investment advice.

Pro tip: A friend of mine let a partner hold 10 baht of gold for him. He left the country, and a day later the partner kept it, saying he'd been talking to other people.

At November 2026 prices, 10 baht of jewellery gold costs about ฿660,000 to buy. Gold is small, easy to carry and easy to sell, so keep your own gold in your own hands. See love scams for the warning signs.

How pawn shops work

- A pawn shop lends money against something valuable, most often gold, but also phones, watches, cameras and electrical goods. You get a **pawn ticket** and pay monthly interest until you redeem the item.
- The **Pawnshop Act B.E. 2505** caps interest at 2% a month on loans up to ฿2,000 and 1.25% a month above ฿2,000. Under 15 days counts as half a month, over 15 days as a full month. Shops must display their rates in Thai.
- The shop records your ID details on the ticket. Thai citizens use their ID card; foreigners should bring a passport.
- If you don't pay interest for more than four months, the shop can list the item and sell it. Tickets commonly run four months and 30 days, so pay the interest or redeem before the date on the ticket.

Public and private pawn shops

- Public pawnshops, called **sathan thanaanubaan** (สถานธนานุบาล), are run by a government department and by many municipalities. They charge less, in tiers: one published schedule starts at 0.25% a month on loans up to ฿5,000 and rises to 1.25% for ฿20,001 to ฿100,000.
- Private pawn shops can charge up to the legal cap. Check the loan amount, monthly rate and redemption date on the ticket before you sign.

Thai words that help

ENGLISH	THAI
Gold shop	Raan thong (ร้านทอง)
Gold bar	Thong kham thaeng (ทองคำแท่ง)
Gold jewellery	Thong rup phan (ทองรูปพรรณ)
Making fee	Kha kamnet (ค่ากำเหน็จ)
Quarter baht	Neung salueng (หนึ่งสลึง)
Pawn shop	Rong rap jamnam (โรงรับจำนำ)

More phrases: useful Thai phrases.

Common questions

Can foreigners buy gold in Thailand? Yes. Gold shops sell to anyone at the board price plus any making fee. Ask how the shop takes payment before you choose.

Is Thai gold 24K? No. Standard Thai gold is 96.5%, often called 23K. Some dealers also sell 99.99% gold, which the association prices separately.

How much is one baht of gold? It changes daily. On 10 November 2026 a one-baht bar sold for about ฿65,000, and one baht of jewellery for about ฿66,000 before the making fee.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Thairath, Gold Traders Association prices for 10 November 2026; Thairath English, gold prices for 10 September 2026 (bars 15.244 g, jewellery 15.16 g); BullionStar, the Thai gold market (how the association sets prices); Department of Provincial Administration, Pawnshop Act B.E. 2505, unofficial English translation; KTC, pawnshop interest rates (public pawnshop tiers, 2024). Gold prices change several times a day; check the board in the shop.

Related guides

- Pattaya on 1,000 Baht a Day
- Budget for a Week in Pattaya
- Common Scams to Avoid
- Souvenir Shopping in Pattaya
- Getting a Tattoo in Pattaya

MONEY & BANKING

Pattaya on 1,000 Baht a Day

Can you do Pattaya on 1,000 baht a day, not counting your room? A realistic sample day with real 2026 prices: ฿15 baht buses, street food, a ฿50 beach chair, a massage and a couple of drinks.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/money-banking/pattaya-1000-baht-a-day/

Budget	**About ฿1,000 a day, room not included**
Baht bus	**฿15 a ride on the normal loop**
Street food	**About ฿40 to ฿80 a dish**
Beach chair	**฿50 at the official rate**
Massage	**About ฿200 to ฿350 an hour, plus tip**
Not included	**Your room, tours, big nights out**

Quick answer: Yes. About ฿1,000 a day, not counting your room, is realistic in Pattaya if you eat Thai food from stalls, food courts and 7-Eleven, get around by baht bus at ฿15 a ride, and spend your free time on beaches and viewpoints. That covers three meals, a few rides, a beach chair, an hour's massage and a couple of happy-hour drinks, with a little to spare. It won't stretch to taxis everywhere, Western food every meal, a tour or a big night out. The prices below are typical as of November 2026, labelled by source; they vary by area and season.

A sample day

WHEN	WHAT	TYPICAL COST
Breakfast	Rice and stir fry at a street stall, or coffee and a snack from 7-Eleven	About ฿50 to ฿100
Late morning	Baht bus to the beach on the normal loop	฿15
Afternoon	Canvas beach chair at the official rate, and a fruit shake	฿50, plus about ฿40 to ฿60
Lunch	A dish at a mall food court	About ฿50 to ฿100
Late afternoon	One-hour Thai or foot massage, plus a tip	About ฿250 to ฿400
Evening	Baht bus back	฿15
Dinner	Two dishes at a night market or street stall	About ฿80 to ฿150
Night	Two happy-hour beers, or a smoothie and a dessert	About ฿120 to ฿200
Getting home	Baht bus, or Bolt late at night	฿15 to about ฿100
Total		About ฿700 to ฿1,200

Pick the cheaper option at two or three of those steps and you land under ฿1,000.

Getting around

Baht buses (songthaews) are the backbone of a cheap day: ฿15 on the normal loop around Beach Road and Second Road since 10 April 2026, and up to about ฿20 on longer runs. Press the buzzer to stop and pay the driver in cash, with small notes. For short hops, motorbike taxis (blue vests since October 2026) are quick, but agree the price first. See motorbike taxis and Bolt and Grab.

Eating well for less

- **Street stalls:** a dish is usually about ฿40 to ฿80. Pad kra pao with an egg is a classic cheap meal. See street food.
- **Food courts:** mall food courts price dishes on boards, so there are no surprises, often ฿50 to ฿100. See food courts.
- **Western food** costs more: beachfront foreign-themed places are often a few hundred baht a meal. See Western food.

Some of Jonny's own recent prices, for scale:

WHERE	WHAT	PRICE
A local food stall	Pad kra pao, plus an egg	฿35, egg ฿10 (November 2026)
Central Marina food court	Duck noodles	About ฿60 (October 2026)
Sophon Market	Yakisoba, coconut shake	฿65, ฿40 (November 2026)
Basic street massage shops	Foot massage, body massage	About ฿200, ฿300 (September 2026)

Pro tip: I try to keep food and entertainment to ฿500 a day, but ฿1,000 is more realistic, with the occasional big night of ฿2,000 to ฿3,000, which is rare. I generally don't drink, and I don't smoke, vape or use cannabis: those add up. On a tight budget I eat a lot from 7-Eleven, Tops and Mini Big C, snacks through the day, then

one high-protein meal with a few eggs and chicken.

Free and cheap things to do

- **The beach:** you can sit on your own mat or towel for free; Pattaya City confirmed in May 2026 that bringing your own gear is allowed. A rented canvas chair is ฿50 and a lounger ฿100 at the official rates reported by Pattaya Mail, though visitors report paying more at festival times. See beach clubs vs beach chairs.
- **Walks and views:** the Pratumnak walk, the Big Buddha viewpoint, the Jomtien beach walk and the sunset spots cost nothing.
- **Temples:** free to visit; dress modestly. See temples and viewpoints.
- **Koh Larn on a budget:** the public ferry from Bali Hai Pier is the cheap way over. A March 2026 Pattaya Mail report said the fare would rise from ฿30 to ฿40 each way on 10 April 2026, but an August 2026 Pattaya Mail guide still gave about ฿30, so expect ฿30 to ฿40. A beach chair on the island is about ฿100 to ฿200. See Koh Larn beaches.

What breaks a ฿1,000 day

- **ATM fees:** a foreign-card withdrawal costs about ฿220 to ฿250, a quarter of the day's budget. Withdraw large amounts less often. See ATM fees.
- **Taxis instead of baht buses.** Use the app only when the baht bus doesn't go your way, or late at night.
- **Beach clubs** with minimum spends, **tours**, jet skis and island speedboats.
- **Imported drinks and cocktails**, and buying rounds. Happy hours help. See happy hours and nightlife on a budget.
- **One big night out** can cost more than ten budget days. Decide your limit before you go out, and carry only that in cash.

Ways to stretch it

- Eat where Thais eat: stalls, food courts and markets. See cheap eats.
- Carry a bottle of water and refill it. See drinking water.
- Pay in baht, never your home currency, on cards and at ATMs. See cash vs card.

What the ฿1,000 doesn't include

Your room, flights or the bus from Bangkok, a SIM card, travel insurance and visa costs are all extra. For where to sleep cheaply, see where to stay. For a longer view, see budget for a week, monthly budget examples and what things cost.

Common questions

Is 1,000 baht a day enough in Pattaya? Yes, without your room, if you eat Thai food, use baht buses and enjoy the free things. Add more for drinks, tours and Western food.

How much is a baht bus in Pattaya? ฿15 on the normal loop since 10 April 2026, and up to about ฿20 on longer runs. Pay the driver in cash.

How much cash should I carry for a day? About ฿1,000 in small notes covers a budget day. Leave the rest in the room safe.

Can I go out at night on ฿1,000 a day? A quiet night with a couple of happy-hour drinks, yes. A night of clubs or rounds of drinks, no.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya Mail, official beach chair prices (7 August 2025); Pattaya Mail, free beach use with your own gear (1 May 2026); Pattaya Mail, Koh Larn ferry fare to rise to ฿40 (28 March 2026); Pattaya Mail, Koh Larn guide for 2026 (16 August 2026). Food and massage figures are Jonny's own prices from his videos and notes, dated in the table, and the typical ranges on our food and massage pages. Prices change; sources differ on the Koh Larn ferry fare.

MONEY & BANKING

Thai Tax Basics for Expats

A plain introduction to Thai tax for expats in Pattaya in 2026: the 180-day residency rule, the foreign income remittance rule since 2024, tax rates, tax ID numbers, VAT, property taxes, and when to talk to a professional.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/money-banking/thai-tax-basics/

Tax resident	**180 days or more in Thailand in a calendar year**
Foreign income	**Taxable when a resident brings it in, if earned from 2024**
Draft exemption	**Not law as of November 2026**
Rates	**0% to 35%; first ฿150,000 of net income at 0%**
File	**1 January to 31 March for the year before**
VAT	**7 percent until 30 September 2027**

Quick answer: You become a Thai tax resident if you spend 180 days or more in Thailand in a calendar year. Since 1 January 2024, a tax resident can owe Thai tax on foreign income earned from 2024 onward when it is brought into Thailand, whatever year it arrives. Money earned before 2024 is protected, and tax treaties can reduce Thai tax on some income. A proposal to exempt foreign income brought in during the year it is earned or the following year was still a draft, not published in the Royal Gazette, as of November 2026. This page is general information, not tax advice; check with a qualified adviser.

At a glance

TOPIC	WHAT APPLIES IN 2026
Who is resident	180 days or more in Thailand in a calendar year, counted in total
Foreign income	Taxable for residents when brought into Thailand, if earned from 1 January 2024
Money earned before 2024	Not taxed when brought in; keep proof
Draft exemption	Income brought in the same year or the next would be exempt; not law yet
Rates	0% on the first ฿150,000 of net income, rising in steps to 35% over ฿5 million
Filing	1 January to 31 March on paper, a little later online
VAT	7%, extended to 30 September 2027

Who is a Thai tax resident

The test is days, not visa or nationality. Spend 180 days or more in Thailand in a calendar year (1 January to 31 December) and you are a tax resident for that year. The days are counted in total across the year, so several shorter stays can add up. Someone on a retirement visa, the DTV or the Thailand Privilege visa who lives here most of the year usually is.

Non-residents are normally taxed only on income from Thai sources, such as a Thai job or rent from a Thai property.

The foreign income rule since 2024

Revenue Department instruction Por. 161/2566 took effect on 1 January 2024. For a Thai tax resident, foreign income, such as wages, business profits, investment income, rent or a private pension, is assessable in the year it is brought into Thailand, no matter which year it was earned, as long as it was earned from 2024 onward. A second instruction, Por. 162/2566, keeps income earned before 1 January 2024 outside Thai tax when it is brought in.

What this means in practice:

- Savings built up before 2024 can be brought in without Thai tax, but you need to show they are pre-2024 money. Lawyers suggest keeping bank statements dated 31 December 2023, and some suggest holding pre-2024 savings in a separate account.
- Keep records of when money was earned and when it was sent. See sending money to Thailand.

The proposed exemption

In 2025 the Revenue Department proposed exempting foreign income brought into Thailand in the same calendar year it was earned, or the following year. As of November 2026 it was still a draft. Thai Law Online, a Thai law firm's site, reported on 4 November 2026 that it had not been published in the Royal Gazette and was not in force. Don't plan around it until it becomes law.

Tax treaties and pensions

Thailand has double tax agreements with more than 60 countries. Many treaties give the paying country the only right to tax government and public service pensions, while private pensions and investment income are often taxable in both, with a credit in Thailand for tax already paid abroad. Relief is not automatic: you usually claim it on your Thai return with proof of the foreign tax.

Holders of some categories of the Long-Term Resident (LTR) visa have a separate exemption for foreign income brought in, set by royal decree. We found no special tax rule for the DTV.

Rates and filing

NET INCOME FOR THE YEAR	RATE
฿0 to ฿150,000	0%
฿150,001 to ฿300,000	5%
฿300,001 to ฿500,000	10%
฿500,001 to ฿750,000	15%
฿750,001 to ฿1,000,000	20%
฿1,000,001 to ฿2,000,000	25%
฿2,000,001 to ฿5,000,000	30%
Over ฿5,000,000	35%

The rates apply to net income after expenses and allowances, which include a ฿60,000 personal allowance. Returns for a tax year are due between 1 January and 31 March of the next year, so 2026 income is filed in early 2027. Online filing through the Revenue Department's e-filing system usually runs into early April.

Getting a tax ID number

You need a tax ID to file. Apply at the Revenue Department office covering your address, with your passport and proof of address. The Pattaya City Expats Club lists two offices for the Pattaya area, in Naklua (inside the Banglamung District Office) and in Jomtien. Its members' reports differ on what was asked for, from just a passport and TM30 receipt to questions about days in Thailand and money brought in. Bring a Thai speaker if you can. See TM30 explained.

Taxes you pay every day

- **VAT** is 7% and is normally already in the price. The legal rate is 10%, but the 7% rate has been extended year by year; the latest extension runs to 30 September 2027.
- **"++" on a menu** means a service charge, usually 10%, and VAT are added to the listed prices. See tipping in Thailand.

Property

- **Buying:** at the land office, the transfer fee is usually 2% of the official appraised value, often split between buyer and seller by agreement. The seller usually pays withholding tax and either specific business tax (3.3%, if selling within five years) or stamp duty (0.5%). See buying a condo.
- **Owning:** owners pay a yearly land and building tax to the local authority. Residential rates start at 0.02% of the appraised value, so the bill on a typical condo is small, and homes used as the owner's main residence can be exempt up to a value limit. Sources give different bands, so check your bill.

Getting help

Use a qualified Thai tax adviser or accountant, bring records of your days in Thailand, when income was earned and when it was sent, and check your home country's rules too. If you work legally here, your employer deducts tax each month. See working legally.

Common questions

Do I pay tax in Thailand if I stay less than 180 days? Usually not on foreign income. Below 180 days in a calendar year you are not a tax resident, and non-residents are normally taxed only on Thai-source income.

Is my pension taxed in Thailand? It can be, if you are a tax resident and bring it in. It depends on the type of pension and your country's tax treaty: many treaties leave government pensions to the paying country. Get advice for your treaty.

Has the foreign income exemption passed? Not as of November 2026. It was still a draft and had not been published in the Royal Gazette.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Thai Law Online, remittance tax exemption status (updated 4 November 2026: draft, not in the Royal Gazette; Por. 161/2566 and 162/2566; filing); Thai Law Online, foreign-sourced income and remittance tax (pensions and treaties, LTR, pre-2024 records); Lex Bangkok, personal income tax for foreigners (rates, allowance, residency, treaties; reviewed September 2026); Pattaya City Expats Club, Pattaya revenue offices (members' reports, including August 2026); Nation Thailand, 7% VAT extended to September 2027; Keller Henson, property taxes for foreigners (transfer costs and land and building tax; updated February 2026). Sources differ on land and building tax bands and on what Pattaya's revenue offices ask for. This is general information, not tax or legal advice.

Related guides

- Mobile Banking Apps for Expats
- Destination Thailand Visa (DTV)
- Budget for a Week in Pattaya
- Exchanging Money

MONEY & BANKING

Budget for a Week in Pattaya

How much a week in Pattaya costs in 2026: sample weekly budgets for backpacker, budget, mid-range and comfortable trips, room prices by season, one-off costs like transfers and shows, and easy ways to spend less.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/money-banking/budget-for-a-week/

Backpacker week	**About ฿7,000 to ฿10,500, flights not included**
Budget hotel week	**About ฿9,000 to ฿15,500**
Mid-range week	**About ฿19,000 to ฿30,000, plus activities**
Budget room in the centre	**About ฿1,000 a night in high season, ฿600 to ฿700 low season**
Baht bus	**฿15 on the normal loop**
Tip	**Prices change; treat totals as rough**

Quick answer: Not counting flights, a week in Pattaya costs about ฿7,000 to ฿10,500 as a backpacker in a hostel, about ฿9,000 to ฿15,500 in a budget hotel, and about ฿19,000 to ฿30,000 in a mid-range hotel before tours and shows. Where you sleep is the biggest single cost, and rooms cost more in high season (November to March). Day to day, about ฿1,000 a day covers Thai food, baht buses at ฿15, a beach chair, a massage and a couple of drinks. Add one-offs like the airport transfer, a Koh Larn day trip or a cabaret show on top. These are rough totals built from the prices on our pages, as of November 2026, not a promise.

A week at a glance

STYLE	ROOM PER NIGHT	DAY-TO-DAY SPEND	WEEK, ABOUT
Backpacker	Hostel, about ฿300 to ฿500	About ฿700 to ฿1,000	฿7,000 to ฿10,500
Budget	Budget hotel, about ฿600 to ฿1,000	About ฿700 to ฿1,200	฿9,000 to ฿15,500
Mid-range	Hotel, about US$50 to US$70 (roughly ฿1,650 to ฿2,300)	About ฿1,000 to ฿2,000	฿19,000 to ฿30,000
Comfortable	High-end hotel, over US$200 (over about ฿6,600)	Your choice	Rooms alone from about ฿46,000

The totals are seven nights plus seven days of spending, rounded. Flights, insurance and big one-offs are extra. Baht figures for US dollar prices use about ฿33 to the dollar, roughly the November 2026 rate.

Where you sleep

- **Budget hotels in the centre:** about ฿1,000 a night in high season, dropping to about ฿600 to ฿700 in the low and rainy season, for a basic room in Central Pattaya or Soi Buakhao.
- **Hostels:** roughly half the budget hotel price, and right in the middle of things.
- **Mid-range hotels:** a March 2026 Trip.com guide puts an average room at about US$50 to US$70 a night, though its own FAQ gives US$30 to US$50, so shop around.
- **High-end hotels:** over US$200 a night in the same guide.
- **Condos and Airbnbs** suit stays of three weeks or more better than a single week. See where to stay for areas.

Pro tip: I've stayed in the budget hotels in the centre and they're fine, and the location can't be beaten. For day-to-day food and entertainment, I try to keep to ฿500 a day, but ฿1,000 is more realistic.

Backpacker and budget weeks

- Eat at street stalls, food courts and markets: a dish is about ฿40 to ฿80 at a stall and often ฿50 to ฿100 in a mall food court. See street food and food courts.
- Get around by baht bus: ฿15 on the normal loop since 10 April 2026, up to about ฿20 on longer runs. See baht buses.
- A beach chair is ฿50 at the official rate, and sitting on your own towel is free.
- A basic street massage is about ฿200 for feet and ฿300 for a body massage.
- Free days: beaches, the Big Buddha and viewpoint, the Pratumnak walk and the markets.

A full sample day is on Pattaya on 1,000 baht a day.

A mid-range day

A rough mid-range day, using the typical prices on our guide pages:

WHAT	ABOUT
Western breakfast deal	฿99 to ฿250
Thai restaurant lunch	฿100 to ฿250
Western dinner main	฿200 to ฿450

WHAT	ABOUT
Two motorbike taxi rides	฿80 to ฿160
One-hour massage, plus tip	฿300 to ฿500
Three beers at a beer bar	฿180 to ฿360
Total	About ฿1,000 to ฿2,000

Cocktails, hotel bars and car rides in the apps push that up. See Western food, drink prices and motorbike taxis.

One-off costs to add

WHAT	ABOUT
Suvarnabhumi to Pattaya, airport bus	฿140 to ฿170 each way
Suvarnabhumi to Pattaya, private car	฿1,100 to ฿1,800 each way
Koh Larn day trip	Ferry ฿30 to ฿40 each way, beach chair about ฿100 to ฿200, plus food
Cabaret show	฿550 to ฿2,800, by show and seat
Sanctuary of Truth	฿500 adult day ticket
Nong Nooch Garden	From about ฿500, about ฿800 with the show
ATM withdrawal with a foreign card	฿220 to ฿250 each time

See Bangkok to Pattaya, Koh Larn beaches, cabaret shows, Sanctuary of Truth and Nong Nooch Garden.

Comfortable week

- A beachfront or upscale hotel, which is most of the cost.
- Restaurants, rooftop bars and spa treatments. See rooftop bars.
- Private transfers and day tours. See day trips.

What blows a weekly budget

- **Big nights out.** One night of clubs and rounds can cost more than several budget days. Decide your limit and carry only that in cash. See nightlife on a budget.
- **Many small ATM withdrawals.** Each one costs ฿220 to ฿250.
- **Taxis everywhere** instead of baht buses and motorbike taxis.
- **Tours, jet skis and speedboats** booked on impulse.
- **Tourist mark-ups** at beachfront restaurants. See common scams.

Ways to spend less

- Stay a short walk from the beach rather than on it, and travel in the low season if you can. See best time to visit.
- Eat where Thai people eat, and drink water rather than imported drinks.
- Use happy hours. See happy hours.
- Withdraw cash in fewer, larger amounts to cut ATM fees. See ATM fees.
- Pay in baht, never your home currency, on cards and at ATMs. See cash vs card.

Common questions

How much money do I need for a week in Pattaya? About ฿7,000 to ฿10,500 as a backpacker, ฿9,000 to ฿15,500 in a budget hotel, and ฿19,000 to ฿30,000 mid-range, not counting flights, tours or big nights out.

How much is a hotel in Pattaya for a week? A budget room in the centre is about ฿1,000 a night in high season and ฿600 to ฿700 in the low season, so about ฿4,200 to ฿7,000 for seven nights. Mid-range hotels cost roughly twice that or more.

Is ฿10,000 enough for a week in Pattaya? For a backpacker in a hostel, yes. In a budget hotel it only works in the low season, with rooms around ฿600 a night and spending kept to about ฿700 a day.

Do I need a visa for a week in Pattaya? Many nationalities get a 30-day visa exemption on arrival. Check your nationality, and fill in the free TDAC arrival card before you fly.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Trip.com, trip to Pattaya cost (March 2026) for mid-range and high-end room rates; Federal Reserve data via ALFRED, baht to US dollar rate (about ฿33.5 in early November 2026). Budget room prices are Jonny's own, from where to stay. Food, transport, massage, beach chair, ticket and ATM prices come from our own guide pages linked above, each with its own sources. Totals are our rough sums; prices change by season and area.

Before you go

Check current prices on what things cost, and travel insurance on travel insurance.

SECTION

Visas & Legal

Staying legal in Thailand is simpler than it looks. These pages cover the main visa options, extensions and 90-day reports at the Jomtien immigration office, and the everyday laws visitors break without realising.

Quick answer: Most visitors from visa-exempt countries now get 30 days on arrival for tourism (since 15 September 2026), which can be extended once by up to 30 days at Jomtien immigration for ฿1,900. Everyone must fill in the free online TDAC arrival card within three days before arriving. For longer stays, the main options are the five-year DTV, the retirement visa for over-50s, and marriage or education visas. Long-stayers also deal with 90-day reports, TM30 address reports and re-entry permits. Rules change often, so check our pages and the official sources before you plan.

Visas and paperwork at a glance (2026)

WHAT	THE SHORT VERSION	READ MORE
—	—	—
Visa exemption	30 days, tourism only, since 15 Sep 2026	Visa options
Extension	Once, up to 30 days, ฿1,900 cash, form TM.7	Visa extension
Arrival card	TDAC, online, free, within 3 days before arrival	TDAC
DTV	Five years, multiple entries, stays up to 180 days; ฿500,000 savings; fee around ฿10,000	DTV visa
Retirement	Age 50+, ฿800,000 in a Thai bank or ฿65,000 a month income	Retirement visa
90-day report	For stays of 90+ days in a row; in person, agent or online	90-day reports
TM30	Your landlord or hotel reports where you stay	TM30
Re-entry permit	฿1,000 single or ฿3,800 multiple, before you leave on an extension	Re-entry permit

Figures come from the linked pages, each checked in 2026 against the Immigration Bureau, Thai embassies and dated guides. Visa rules in Thailand change, sometimes with little notice; the official source always wins.

Start here

- Visa options: which visa fits your trip.
- 90-day reports: who needs them and how to file.
- Jomtien immigration office: hours, fees, what to bring.
- Thailand Privilege visa: the paid long-stay membership.
- Laws visitors break: vaping, passports, beaches and more.

How the visa and legal pages fit together

- **Coming in:** visa options, the TDAC arrival card and border runs.
- **Staying longer:** extensions, the DTV, the retirement visa, the marriage visa and the Thailand Privilege visa.
- **Keeping legal while you're here:** 90-day reports, TM30, re-entry permits, working legally and paperwork tips.
- **The office:** Jomtien immigration, Soi 5, Jomtien Beach Road.
- **The law:** laws visitors break and what's legal here but not elsewhere.

Which visa fits your stay?

YOUR PLAN	USUALLY	READ MORE
—	—	—
A holiday of up to a month	Visa exemption (30 days), if your passport qualifies	Visa options
Up to two months	Exemption plus one 30-day extension	Extension
Several long stays a year, remote work, Muay Thai or study	DTV, five years, up to 180 days per entry	DTV
Retiring, aged 50+	Retirement visa and yearly extensions	Retirement visa
Married to a Thai	Marriage visa and extensions	Marriage visa
Long stays with no paperwork hassle, at a price	Thailand Privilege membership	Thailand Privilege

This is a starting point, not legal advice. Your nationality, money and plans decide what's possible, so check the official requirements before you apply.

Jomtien immigration in brief

The office for Pattaya is on Soi 5, Jomtien Beach Road. It opens Monday to Friday, 08:30 to 12:00 and 13:00 to 16:30, and is closed at weekends and on public holidays. Go early, bring copies of your passport pages and a photo, and avoid the first day after a long holiday. Fees: extension ฿1,900, re-entry ฿1,000 single or ฿3,800 multiple. See Jomtien immigration office.

Laws that catch visitors out

- Vapes and e-cigarettes are illegal to import, sell or use, with heavy fines.
- Smoking is banned on many beaches, including Pattaya's.
- Carry your passport or a copy; police can ask for ID.
- Never criticise the monarchy; the law is strict.
- Drug penalties are severe. Cannabis rules have changed several times, so don't assume anything.

Common questions

How long can I stay in Thailand without a visa in 2026? Visitors from visa-exempt countries get 30 days for tourism since 15 September 2026, extendable once by up to 30 days.

How much is a visa extension in Pattaya? ฿1,900, paid in cash at Jomtien immigration.

Do I need to fill in the TDAC? Yes, every foreign visitor, including children, within three days before arrival. It's free.

Where is the immigration office in Pattaya? On Soi 5, Jomtien Beach Road, open Monday to Friday.

Can I work in Pattaya on a tourist visa? No. Working needs the right visa and a work permit. See working legally.

What happens if I overstay my visa in Thailand? Overstaying brings fines and can lead to a ban on returning. Extend or leave before your permission ends. See visa options.

Sources

- Our visa, extension, TDAC, DTV, retirement, 90-day, TM30, re-entry and Jomtien immigration pages, each checked in 2026 against the Immigration Bureau, Thai embassy pages and dated guides.

VISAS & LEGAL

Visa Options for Pattaya (2026)

Thailand's visa options in 2026: the new 30-day exemption, extensions, tourist visas, the DTV, retirement, marriage and Privilege visas, and how to choose.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/visas-legal/visa-options/

Visa exemption	**30 days, tourism only (since 15 Sep 2026)**
Extension	**Once, up to 30 days, ฿1,900**
Land border entries	**Max 2 per year on exemption**
Arrival card	**TDAC required for everyone**

Thailand's rules changed in 2026. From 15 September 2026, the 60-day visa exemption ended, and visitors from eligible countries, including the US, UK, Canada and Australia, now get 30 days, for tourism only. Always check the official Thai immigration and embassy websites before you travel, rules can change at short notice.

Quick answer: For a holiday of up to about two months, the 30-day visa exemption plus one ฿1,900 extension at Jomtien immigration is usually enough. If you already know you want two months or more, apply online for a tourist visa (60 days, extendable by 30) before you fly. For longer stays, the main routes are the DTV (five years, for remote workers and people doing courses), the retirement visa (age 50+), the marriage visa, an education visa, or a paid Thailand Privilege membership.

What changed on 15 September 2026

- Thailand's Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced the change on 3 September 2026, after it was published in the Royal Gazette on 31 August.
- The 60-day exemption was revoked. The 30-day tourism exemption now covers 60 countries and territories, a new 15-day exemption covers two, and visa on arrival was cut to three.
- The exemption is for tourism only. Other purposes need the right visa.
- If you entered before 15 September 2026, you keep the stay you were given.
- The ministry said other visa types were not affected "at this point".
- Many websites and videos still say 60 days. They were written before the change.

The 30-day visa exemption

- 30 days on arrival for tourism, for passport holders from eligible countries.
- Can be extended once, for up to 30 more days, at an immigration office for ฿1,900, at the officer's discretion. In Pattaya that is the Jomtien Immigration Office. See visa extensions.
- On the exemption you can enter by land border no more than twice a calendar year. See border runs.
- Back-to-back exemption entries by air can be questioned or refused. If you want to stay for months, get a proper visa.

Your options compared

OPTION	HOW LONG	COST (NOV 2026)	BEST FOR
Visa exemption	30 days, extend once by 30	Free, ฿1,900 to extend	Holidays up to about two months
Tourist visa (TR)	60 days, extend once by 30	Visa fee varies by country, ฿1,900 to extend	Longer holidays, planned in advance
Destination Thailand Visa (DTV)	5 years, up to 180 days per entry, extend once per entry by 180	Around ฿10,000, plus ฿500,000 savings shown	Remote workers, courses like Muay Thai or cooking
Education visa (ED)	Usually 90 days at a time, renewed while you study	School fees plus visa and extension fees	Learning Thai at a licensed school
Retirement (Non-O, then yearly extension)	1 year at a time	฿1,900 a year, plus ฿800,000 in a Thai bank or ฿65,000 a month income	Age 50 and over
Marriage (Non-O)	1 year at a time	฿1,900 a year, plus ฿400,000 in a Thai bank or ฿40,000 a month income	Spouses of Thai citizens
Thailand Privilege	5 to 20 years	฿900,000 to ฿5,000,000 by tier (cheaper tiers offered at times)	People who want ease and can pay upfront
Work visa (Non-B) and permit	Tied to your job	Employer or company costs	Working for a Thai employer or your own Thai company

Money rules and fees are summaries. Each visa page has the detail, and the official sites have the final word.

Longer stays: the main visas

- Tourist visa: applied for online through the Thai e-Visa site before you travel, for a longer single holiday.
- Destination Thailand Visa (DTV): for remote workers and longer visits. See DTV visa.
- Retirement visa: for people aged 50 and over who meet the money rules. See retirement visa.
- Marriage visa: for people married to a Thai national. See marriage visa.
- Education visa: for students at a licensed school, including Thai language schools. Schools usually require real attendance. See learning Thai.
- Thailand Privilege (Elite): a paid membership visa for 5 to 20 years. It is the visa Jonny uses. See Thailand Privilege visa.
- Work visa and permit: needed to work legally for a Thai employer. See working legally.

Which one fits?

- A holiday of a few weeks: the exemption, maybe with one extension.
- A long winter or a few months: a tourist visa or the DTV. See snowbirds and winter stays.
- Working online for clients or an employer outside Thailand: the DTV was made for this.
- Living here and over 50: the retirement visa or Thailand Privilege. See retiring in Pattaya.
- Married to a Thai: the marriage visa.
- Want to learn Thai and stay a while: the education visa.
- A good visa agent or the Thai embassy can tell you which fits your situation.

Pro tip: my #1 advice is to start on a tourist stay, extend it, and use those roughly 60 days to talk to as many locals as you can for direct advice on the ground. Things in Pattaya are a bit different than online. There are many options less expensive than mine, a 20 year Elite visa (now Thailand Privilege). As an entrepreneur, I wish I'd waited for the DTV or opened a business with a work visa. If you aren't an entrepreneur and want to learn some Thai, the education visa is fantastic.

Once you are here

- Long stays need 90-day reports. See 90-day reports.
- Your accommodation files TM30. See TM30 explained.
- Leaving and coming back on some visas needs a re-entry permit, or your permission to stay ends when you leave. See re-entry permits.
- No visa lets you work for a Thai employer without a work permit. See working legally.

Before you fly

- Fill in the Thailand Digital Arrival Card online before arrival. It is free. See TDAC arrival card.
- Your passport should be valid for at least six months.
- Carry proof of onward travel, as airlines and immigration may ask.
- Apply for visas only on the official Thai e-Visa site. Lookalike sites charge extra fees.
- Some officers ask to see funds for your stay. Have a bank app or statement ready.

Overstaying

Overstaying costs ฿500 a day, up to ฿20,000, paid when you leave. Longer overstays bring bans: if you hand yourself in, more than 90 days can mean a 1-year ban, more than a year 3 years, more than 3 years 5 years, and more than 5 years 10 years. If you are caught rather than leaving on your own, bans can be longer, with detention first. Track your dates and extend or leave in time.

Common questions

Can I still get 60 days in Thailand? Yes, but not on the visa exemption any more. Apply for a tourist visa before you travel, or enter on the 30-day exemption and extend once for ฿1,900.

Can I extend the 30-day visa exemption in Pattaya? Usually once, by up to 30 days, at Jomtien immigration, for ฿1,900, at the officer's discretion.

Which countries get the 30-day exemption? The ministry says 60 countries and territories, including the US, UK, Canada and Australia. Check the official list on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs site for your passport.

Can I work remotely on a tourist visa or exemption? The exemption is for tourism only. If you work online while you are here, the DTV is the visa designed for it. Working for Thai clients or a Thai employer needs a work permit.

Do I need a return ticket? Proof of onward travel is often asked for by airlines, and immigration may ask too. A booked flight out within your permitted stay is the safest option.

Is a visa agent worth it? For yearly extensions and paperwork, many long-stayers use one. Pick one recommended by people you know, get a receipt for everything, and avoid anyone offering to skip the rules.

This is general information, not immigration advice. Check official sources before you act.

VISAS & LEGAL

Jomtien Immigration Office

Pattaya's immigration office in Jomtien: address, hours, what it handles, what to bring, the best time to go, and tips for a smooth visit.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/visas-legal/jomtien-immigration-office/

Address	**Soi 5, Jomtien Beach Road**
Open	**Mon to Fri, 08:30 to 12:00 and 13:00 to 16:30**
Closed	**Weekends and public holidays**
Phone	**038-252751 (some listings give 038-252750)**
Fees	**extension ฿1,900, re-entry ฿1,000 single or ฿3,800 multiple**
Go	**early; avoid the first day after a long holiday**

Pattaya's immigration office is in Jomtien, on Soi 5, Jomtien Beach Road. It is part of Chonburi Immigration, and it handles visa extensions, 90-day reports, re-entry permits, residence certificates and other paperwork for foreigners living in or visiting the Pattaya area.

Quick answer: Go on a weekday, as early as you can, with your passport, signed copies of the photo page, visa and latest entry stamp, the filled-in form, a passport photo, your TM.30 address receipt and the fee in cash (฿1,900 for a 30-day extension). Dress neatly. Many routine jobs, like the 90-day report, can be done online instead.

Opening hours

- Monday to Friday. The office is usually listed as open 08:30 to 12:00 and 13:00 to 16:30. Some guides give 08:30 to 16:30 with no lunch break, so expect some desks to slow down or close over lunch.
- Closed on weekends and Thai public holidays. See Thai public holidays.
- For extensions, plan to be in the queue well before mid-afternoon. Late arrivals may be asked to come back another day.
- Phone: 038-252751 (some listings give 038-252750). Hours can change, so check before you go.

What it handles

TASK	TYPICAL FEE	WHERE TO READ MORE
30-day extension of a visa exemption or tourist visa	฿1,900	Visa extensions
1-year extension (retirement, marriage and others)	฿1,900	Retirement visa, marriage visa
90-day report (TM.47)	Free	90-day reports
Re-entry permit	฿1,000 single, ฿3,800 multiple	Re-entry permits
Residence certificate	Small fee, ask at the desk	Needed for things like a Thai driving licence
TM.30 address report	Free	TM30 explained

Fees are the Immigration Bureau's published rates as of November 2026 and are paid in cash. Rules for who can extend, and for how long, change often, so check visa options before you go.

What to bring

- Your passport, plus copies of the photo page, visa and latest entry stamp. Sign every copy.
- The right form for what you are doing, filled in: TM.7 for an extension, TM.47 for a 90-day report, TM.8 for a re-entry permit.
- A recent passport photo (4 x 6 cm is the usual size for a TM.7).
- The fee in cash.
- Proof of address, such as a TM.30 receipt from your hotel or landlord.
- For a 1-year extension: the financial proof your visa type needs, such as bank letters and statements, plus copies of any lease or condo papers.
- See Thai paperwork tips.

What locals report

The Pattaya City Expats Club keeps a running page of members' recent experiences at this office. A few points from it, as reported by members rather than official rules:

- Retirement extensions on the monthly income method: in June 2026 the office accepted bank verification and certified statements covering 12 months, without a separate deposit listing letter.
- Residence certificates: in a December 2024 report, an online TM.30 was not accepted, and a TM.30 issued at the office was needed.
- Condo owners have been asked for a copy of the title deed, and some report a home visit.
- In-person 90-day reports: bring the TM.47 and copies of your passport photo page, visa or extension, last entry stamp and TM.30.

Requirements at this office sometimes go beyond what the national rules say, so bring more paperwork than you think you need.

Tips for a smooth visit

- Arrive early. Queues build quickly, especially in high season and on the first working day after a long holiday, when Pattaya Mail has reported lines out into the street.
- Dress neatly: no vests, beachwear or flip flops. Long trousers or a knee-length skirt and a shirt with sleeves is safest.
- Bring a pen, spare copies, and something to read while you wait.
- The office uses queue numbers for many services. Ask at the information desk if you are unsure which line you need.
- Check every page before you leave. A wrong date on a stamp is much easier to fix at the desk than later.
- Agents can handle many tasks for you if you would rather not go in person. Use one that is recommended by people you know, and never hand over your passport without a receipt.

Do it online instead

- 90-day reports can be filed online through the Immigration Bureau's TM.47 site. See 90-day reports for the steps and time windows.
- Hotels file the TM.30 for you. Landlords can file it online.
- Extensions and re-entry permits still need a visit in person.

Pro tip: I hold a long-stay Privilege visa, so I still do 90-day reports. After I came back into Thailand, my first one went through an agent. Since then I have done them online. My number one advice if you are new: stay on a tourist visa, extend it, and use that time to talk to as many locals as you can. Things in Pattaya are a bit different than online.

Getting there

- Baht buses run from Pattaya along Thappraya Road and Jomtien Beach Road, about ฿15 to ฿20. Get off near Soi 5 and walk inland. See baht bus routes.
- Bolt or Grab drops you at the door and is the easiest option with paperwork in hand. See Bolt and Grab.
- Parking nearby can be tight, especially for cars. A scooter is easier.
- Bring your copies and photo with you, already done, so a missing page doesn't cost you your place in the queue.
- See Jomtien.

Common questions

Is there an immigration office in Pattaya itself? The Pattaya area's office is this one, on Jomtien Soi 5. Chonburi Immigration also has an office in Si Racha.

Can I extend my visa exemption in Jomtien? Usually yes, once, by 30 days for ฿1,900, if your entry allows it. See visa extensions.

Is the office open on Saturday? No. It is closed on weekends and Thai public holidays.

How long will it take? Anything from under an hour to most of the day, depending on the season, the service and how early you arrive.

Do I need an appointment? Most services work on queue numbers on the day. Some people report using an appointment system, but we have not found official details. Ask at the office or call ahead.

Related

See visa options, the retirement visa, the DTV visa and TM30 explained.

VISAS & LEGAL

Thailand Digital Arrival Card (TDAC)

The free online arrival card every non-Thai traveller needs: who is exempt, the 3-day window, what details to have ready, step by step, fixing mistakes, and fake paid sites.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/visas-legal/tdac-arrival-card/

Who	**All non-Thai arrivals, children included**
When	**Within 3 days before you arrive**
Cost	**Free (sites that charge are agents)**
Official site	**tdac.immigration.go.th**
Exempt	**Airside transit passengers, Border Pass holders**
Each entry	**A new card every time you enter**

Quick answer: The Thailand Digital Arrival Card (TDAC) is a free online form that every non-Thai traveller must complete before entering Thailand by air, land or sea. It replaced the paper arrival card on 1 May 2025. You fill it in at the official site, **tdac.immigration.go.th**, within the three days before you arrive, and you need a new one for every entry. Children need their own card too. Transit passengers who never pass through immigration are exempt. The TDAC is not a visa: it only tells immigration who is arriving and where they will stay.

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Official site	tdac.immigration.go.th (it ends in .go.th)
Cost	Free
Who	Every non-Thai national, including children, long-stay visa holders and residents
Exempt	Thai nationals; transit passengers who stay airside; Border Pass holders
When	Within 3 days before arrival, up to the moment you reach immigration
How often	A new card for every entry into Thailand
By land or sea	Needed too, for example coming back from a border run
Is it a visa?	No. Check your entry rules on visa options

What you need before you start

- Your passport. You can type the details in English or upload a clear photo of the photo page.
- Your full name, date of birth and nationality exactly as in the passport.
- Your flight number (or vehicle or boat details) and arrival date.
- The address where you will spend your first night in Thailand, such as your hotel name or condo address in Pattaya.
- An email address for the confirmation.
- Answers to the health declaration, which only appears for some nationalities or for people who have been in certain high-risk areas in the last 14 days.

Step by step

- Go to tdac.immigration.go.th and choose **Arrival Card**.
- Enter your passport details, then your travel details and where you are staying, and continue.
- Complete the health declaration if you are asked to.
- Travelling as a family or group? Use **Add** to add each traveller. Everyone, babies included, gets their own TDAC, and parents or guardians fill it in for children.
- Review everything. Use **Edit** to fix anything before you submit.
- Enter your email, accept the terms and submit.
- Save the confirmation and QR code on your phone, and keep a screenshot in case you have no signal when you land.

Fake and paid sites

The TDAC is free, and Royal Thai Embassies warn travellers to be wary of any website asking for a fee. Search results and ads often show agent sites that look official and charge for the same form. The real address ends in **.go.th**. If a site asks for card details, it is not the government site. See online safety.

Changing your card or fixing a mistake

- Plans changed? Use the update option on the official site with your passport number and the reference from your confirmation email. Flight, arrival date, accommodation, contact details and health answers can be changed.

- Travel guides report that your name, passport number, nationality and date of birth are locked once submitted. If one of those is wrong, file a new card.
- Moving hotels after you arrive is fine. The card asks where you stay on your first night.

If something goes wrong at the airport

- Forgot to do it? You can still complete it on your phone before you reach the immigration desk. Airports have free Wi-Fi.
- No phone or no signal? The embassies say kiosks are available at Suvarnabhumi, Don Mueang, Phuket, Chiang Mai and Hat Yai airports. If you are flying into U-Tapao, the closest airport to Pattaya, do it before you fly.
- No confirmation email or QR code? Tell the immigration officer at the checkpoint.
- Airside transit passengers don't need a TDAC. If you have to collect bags, change airports between Suvarnabhumi and Don Mueang, or check in again landside, you pass immigration and you do need one.

Long-stayers and residents

The TDAC isn't only for tourists. DTV, retirement, marriage, Privilege and work visa holders also file one every time they come back to Thailand, so add it to your routine with your re-entry permit. It is separate from the paperwork that follows once you are here: your hotel or landlord still files the TM.30 address report, and long-stayers still do 90-day reports.

Visa rules changed in September 2026

The arrival card itself hasn't changed, but the visa exemption has. Since 15 September 2026, visitors from visa-exempt countries get 30 days for tourism instead of 60, and visitors from Mauritius and Seychelles get 15 days. Filling in the TDAC doesn't change how long you can stay. See visa options and visa extensions.

Common questions

How early can I fill in the TDAC? Within the three days before you arrive. The form won't accept an arrival date further ahead, so don't do it a week early.

Does my child need a TDAC? Yes. Every non-Thai traveller needs one, including babies. A parent or guardian can add them to the same application with the Add button.

I'm only changing planes in Bangkok. Do I need one? Not if you stay airside and don't pass immigration. If you leave the transit area, you need one.

Do I need a new TDAC for a border run? Yes. Each entry needs its own card, by land as well as by air.

I paid a website for my TDAC. What now? Check that you received a confirmation and QR code. If you're not sure the card reached the real system, file a new one free at tdac.immigration.go.th before you fly.

After you land

See arriving at Bangkok airport, Bangkok to Pattaya and the first trip checklist.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Royal Thai Embassy Buenos Aires, how to submit the TDAC (updated 26 February 2026); Royal Thai Embassy Colombo, TDAC notice (updated 23 March 2026); Visit Thailand Today, TDAC guide (September 2026, for editing and transit details); TAT News, 30-day and 15-day visa exemption from 15 September 2026. Official site: tdac.immigration.go.th. Rules change; check the official site before you travel.

Related guides

- Thailand Privilege Visa (Elite Visa)
- Destination Thailand Visa (DTV)
- Border Runs and Visa Runs from Pattaya
- Bangkok to Pattaya

VISAS & LEGAL

90-Day Reports

Who needs to do a 90-day report in Thailand, the TM.47 form, reporting in person, by agent, by post or online, the 15 days before and 7 days after window, the ฿2,000 late fine, and my own routine.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/visas-legal/90-day-reports/

Who	**Foreigners staying 90+ days in a row**
Form	**TM.47, free**
Window	**15 days before to 7 days after the due date**
First report after each entry	**In person or by agent, not online**
Online	**tm47.immigration.go.th, from the second report**
Late	**฿2,000 fine; up to ฿5,000 if caught never reporting**

Quick answer: If you stay in Thailand for 90 days or more in a row, you must report your address to immigration every 90 days on form TM.47. It is free, it is not a visa extension, just a check-in, and in Pattaya it is done at the Jomtien immigration office. The first report after each entry into Thailand has to be made in person or through an agent; after that you can usually report online at tm47.immigration.go.th. You can report from 15 days before the due date to 7 days after it. Miss it and the fine is ฿2,000, paid in person; if you are caught having never reported, it can be up to ฿5,000. Leaving Thailand resets the count.

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Who	Anyone staying 90 days or more without leaving Thailand
Form	TM.47 (notification of staying longer than 90 days)
Cost	Free
Window	15 days before the due date to 7 days after it
First report after each entry	In person or by agent, not online
Online	tm47.immigration.go.th, from the second report of a stay
By post	Send at least 15 days before the due date
Late	฿2,000 fine, paid in person
Never reported and caught	Up to ฿5,000, plus up to ฿200 a day until you report

Who needs to report

- Anyone on a long-stay visa or extension, such as retirement, marriage, work, education, the DTV or Thailand Privilege, who stays 90 days or more without leaving.
- Short-stay tourists on a visa exemption usually don't need to. With the 30-day exemption plus a 30-day extension, a typical stay is about 60 days. See visa extension.
- Leaving the country resets the count. The day you enter is day 1, and your next report is due on day 90 after you come back. Nothing is due while you are abroad.
- LTR visa holders report once a year instead of every 90 days.
- Thailand Privilege members can have the programme's member service file reports for them. See Thailand Privilege visa.

Working out your date

Count the day you arrive as day 1; the report is due on day 90. An example from a 2026 guide: arrive on 1 March, due on 29 May, and you can report from 14 May to 5 June. After each report, the receipt shows your next due date. Set a reminder on your phone as soon as you get it.

The first report after you return

- The first report after each entry into Thailand has to be done in person or through an agent. It cannot be done online.
- After that first one, later reports can usually be done online.
- After you get a new passport, the first report must also be made in person.

My routine

- I use a visa agent on Soi 6 for my first report after I come back to Thailand.
- Then I do every report after that online, which is quick and convenient.
- It works well alongside my Thailand Privilege visa. See Thailand Privilege visa.

How to report

- **In person** at the Jomtien Immigration Office on Soi 5, Monday to Friday, with your passport, copies and the TM.47 form. See Jomtien immigration office for hours.
- **Through a visa agent,** who needs your passport, the signed form and a written authorisation, and charges a fee.
- **Online** at tm47.immigration.go.th, once a previous report from the same stay is on file. The result comes by email, usually within about three working days.
- **By registered post,** sent at least 15 days before the due date, with the signed TM.47, copies of your passport pages, the previous report slip and a stamped envelope addressed to yourself.

Online reports: what goes wrong

- The online system only accepts reports up to the due date, not in the 7-day grace period. If you are late, you have to go in person.
- Common reasons for rejection are a missing TM.30 for your address or a changed passport.
- Submit early in the window and check your email. If it is refused, go in person or use an agent before the deadline.

What to have ready

- Your passport, with copies of the photo page, visa or extension and latest entry stamp.
- Your address, matching your TM30. See TM30 explained.
- The previous report receipt.
- For an agent: a signed authorisation letter.

If you are late

Reporting up to 7 days after the due date is fine. After that, a late report brings a ฿2,000 fine, paid at the office. If you never report and are caught, a 2026 guide gives a fine of up to ฿5,000 plus up to ฿200 a day until you report. Keep your receipts, and immigration may ask about missed reports at your next extension.

Common questions

Can I do my first 90-day report online? No. The first report after each entry into Thailand must be made in person or through an agent. Later reports in the same stay can usually be done online.

How early can I file a 90-day report? Up to 15 days before the due date, and up to 7 days after it without a fine.

What is the fine for a late 90-day report? ฿2,000 if you report late yourself. If you are caught having never reported, it can be up to ฿5,000.

Do I need a 90-day report on a tourist visa? Rarely, because most tourist stays end before 90 days in a row. If yours reaches 90 days without leaving, a report is due like anyone else's.

Does leaving Thailand reset the 90-day count? Yes. The count starts again from the day you re-enter, and the first report after that is in person or by agent.

Related

See visa extensions, re-entry permits, retirement visa, DTV visa and Thai paperwork tips.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Immigration Bureau, online 90-day notification (TM.47); The Thaiger, 90-day reporting and the TM.47 (updated 26 August 2026). Jonny's routine is his own. Rules change; check the official immigration information before you act. This is general information, not legal advice.

VISAS & LEGAL

Extending Your Stay

How to extend a 30-day visa exemption or a tourist visa at Jomtien immigration: the TM.7 form, documents, the ฿1,900 fee, timing and what changed on 15 September 2026.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/visas-legal/visa-extension/

Form	**TM.7**
Fee	**฿1,900, cash**
Visa exemption (since 15 Sep 2026)	**30 days, extend once by up to 30**
Tourist visa (TR)	**60 days, extend once by 30**
Overstay	**฿500 a day, up to ฿20,000**
When	**Close to the end of your current permission**

Quick answer: Most visitors can extend their permission to stay once, at an immigration office, at the officer's discretion. In Pattaya that's the Jomtien immigration office. Since 15 September 2026, the visa exemption for about 60 countries is 30 days on arrival, and it can be extended once by up to 30 more days. A 60-day tourist visa (TR) can be extended once by 30 days. You fill in a TM.7 form, bring a photo, signed passport copies and your TM.30 receipt, and pay ฿1,900 in cash. Most extensions are stamped the same day.

At a glance

YOU ENTERED ON	STAY ON ARRIVAL	EXTENSION	FEE
Visa exemption, from 15 Sep 2026	30 days (15 for a few nationalities)	Once, up to 30 days	฿1,900
Tourist visa (TR)	60 days	Once, 30 days	฿1,900
DTV	Up to 180 days	Once per entry, up to 180 days	฿1,900
Retirement, marriage, other long-stay	Varies	Yearly extension, different rules	฿1,900

What changed on 15 September 2026

- The 60-day visa exemption ended. Passport holders from 60 countries and territories now get 30 days for tourism; Seychelles and Mauritius get 15.
- Entries over land borders on an exemption are generally limited to two per calendar year, with exceptions for some neighbouring countries.
- The rule changes were published in the Royal Gazette on 31 August 2026. People who entered before 15 September keep the stay already stamped in their passport.
- In practice: a typical visitor can now stay about 60 days in total on an exemption (30 + 30), or about 90 days on a tourist visa (60 + 30). For longer, see visa options.

What to bring

- Your passport, plus copies of the photo page, the visa (if any), the latest entry stamp and your arrival record, each signed.
- A completed TM.7 form (application for extension of temporary stay). Forms are available at the office, but filling one in beforehand saves time.
- One recent passport photo, 4 x 6 cm.
- Proof of address: your TM.30 receipt from your hotel or landlord, and a copy of your rental contract if you're in a condo.
- ฿1,900 in cash. Bring the exact amount if you can.
- Some officers ask for an onward or return ticket, or a hotel booking. Have them on your phone.

On the day

- Go early. Take a queue ticket, have your documents checked, then wait to be called.
- Most tourist extensions are approved the same day, with a new stamp in your passport. Check the new date before you leave the counter.
- Dress neatly: no vests, shorts or flip-flops.
- Copy shops near the office do photos and copies, but they can be busy. See Thai paperwork tips.

When to apply

- Apply in the last week or so of your current permission. The extension is added to your current end date, so you don't lose days by going a little early.
- Don't leave it to the final day in case of a long queue, a public holiday or a missing document.
- Immigration is closed at weekends and on public holidays. Check the Thai public holidays before you plan.

How the dates add up

The extension is added to the end of the stay you already have, not to the day you apply. Two examples:

YOU ARRIVE	PERMISSION ON ARRIVAL ENDS	YOU EXTEND ON	NEW END DATE
—	—	—	—
1 December on a 30-day exemption	30 December	24 December	29 January
1 December on a 60-day tourist visa	29 January	22 January	28 February

Your arrival day counts as day one, so a 30-day stay that starts on 1 December ends on 30 December. Always go by the date the officer writes or stamps in your passport, not your own count, and check the new date before you leave the counter.

Can I extend online?

Thailand's Immigration Bureau runs an online extension system called e-Extension, at thaiextension.vfsevisa.com, operated by VFS Global. You fill in the TM.7 details, upload documents, pay ฿1,900 plus a service charge, and book an appointment, then still go in person for identity checks and the stamp. The office list we found (checked November 2026) covers Bangkok (Chaeng Watthana) and a handful of northern provinces, not Chonburi, which covers Pattaya. One visa-agency guide says Chonburi has been added, so sources conflict. Until the portal shows Chonburi when you apply, plan to go to the Jomtien office in person. A newer Immigration Bureau app, THIM, was announced in May 2026 with extension requests planned, but that part was not live when we checked.

If the officer says no

- Extensions are at the officer's discretion. The usual reasons for a refusal are a missing TM.30, unsigned or missing copies, an address that doesn't match, or a history of many back-to-back entries.
- If it's a paperwork problem, ask exactly what is missing, fix it (the copy shops nearby can help) and come back while you still have days left.
- If you're refused outright, you need to leave Thailand by your current end date. Book the flight or border crossing straight away rather than hoping for a different officer.
- Keep calm and polite. Arguing at the counter never helps, and the officer's note stays on your record.

Where to apply if you're not in Pattaya

You apply at the immigration office that covers the address on your TM.30. Staying in Pattaya, Jomtien, Naklua or elsewhere in Bang Lamung means the Jomtien office. If you're moving around Thailand, apply in the province where you're staying at the time, and make sure that address has been reported first.

Agents, overstays and border runs

- Visa agents can do the paperwork for a fee, but you still need to be legal and present when required.
- Overstaying costs ฿500 a day, up to ฿20,000, paid when you leave. Long overstays can mean a ban from returning, and being caught overstaying inside Thailand is far worse than paying at the airport. If you can't extend, leave on time.
- Leaving and re-entering for a fresh stamp is possible, but land-border exemption entries are limited, and officers can ask questions about frequent entries. See border runs.

Common mistakes

- Leaving it to the last day. Queues can be long, so go a few days early.
- Missing signed copies of passport pages.
- No TM.30 receipt from your landlord.
- Assuming the old 60-day exemption still applies. It ended on 15 September 2026.

Common questions

How long can I extend a visa exemption in Thailand? Once, by up to 30 days, at the officer's discretion. With the 30-day exemption that is about 60 days in total.

How much does a Thai visa extension cost? ฿1,900, in cash, at the immigration office.

Can I extend twice? Not on a tourist exemption or tourist visa. For a longer stay you need a different visa, such as the DTV, education or retirement visa.

Can an agent extend my visa without me? Agents help with forms, but you normally need to attend in person for the photo and stamp.

Does the extension start from the day I apply? No. The extra days are added to the end of your current permission, so going a few days early costs you nothing.

Can I extend online from Pattaya? Probably not yet. The e-Extension office list we found doesn't include Chonburi, though one agency guide says it does. Check the portal; otherwise apply in person at Jomtien.

I'm in a hotel. Do I need a TM.30? Yes, but the hotel files it. Ask reception for a copy or a screenshot of the receipt before you go to immigration.

What if my extension is refused? Leave Thailand by the end date already in your passport. Overstaying turns a refusal into a fine and possibly a ban.

Sources

Checked 14 November 2026: TAT Newsroom, new 30-day and 15-day visa exemption rules from 15 September 2026; VisasNews, 30-day exemption can be extended by 30 days; Thailand.go.th, e-Extension online visa service; Freaking Nomads, e-Extension offices and the THIM app (2026). Rules and officer practice change; check with immigration before you go. General information, not legal advice.

Related guides

- Border Runs and Visa Runs from Pattaya
- Laws Visitors Break Without Knowing
- Retirement Visa
- 90-Day Reports

VISAS & LEGAL

TM.30 Explained

The address report every foreigner's host must file: who files it, when, why you need the receipt, and what happens if it's missing.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/visas-legal/tm30-explained/

What	**Report of where a foreigner is staying**
Who files	**The hotel, landlord or house owner**
When	**Within 24 hours of you arriving**
Why you care	**Immigration asks for it for extensions and other paperwork**
Fine	**Up to ฿2,000 for the owner if late (more for hotels)**
File	**Online, by the Section 38 app, or at immigration**

Quick answer: The TM.30 is a notification to immigration of where a foreigner is staying. The duty is the host's: the hotel, landlord, condo owner or house owner must file it within 24 hours of you arriving, online or at the local immigration office. You are the one who runs into trouble when it hasn't been done, though, because immigration in Pattaya can ask for proof of it before extensions, 90-day reports and residence certificates. Ask your landlord for the receipt and keep a photo of it.

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Form	TM.30, notification of residence for foreigners (Section 38 of the Immigration Act)
Who files	The house owner, landlord, condo owner, or hotel manager
Deadline	Within 24 hours of the foreigner arriving
How	Online (immigration website or Section 38 app), by post, or in person at immigration
In Pattaya	Jomtien immigration office
Fine	Up to ฿2,000 for owners; ฿2,000 to ฿10,000 reported for hotels
What you need	The receipt, for extensions and other paperwork

Who files it

- **Hotels and guesthouses** file it automatically when they scan your passport. Many now report straight into the immigration system.
- **Condo owners and landlords** must file it when you move in. Many do it online; some condo buildings' juristic offices do it for owners and tenants.
- **If you own your condo**, you are the owner, so you file for yourself.
- If you stay in a private home, the owner or head of household files.
- Visa agents will file for a fee, usually a few hundred to ฿1,500.

How landlords file it

- **Online**: the owner registers on the immigration TM.30 system and usually has to verify their identity in person the first time. After that, each new tenant can be added online.
- **App**: the Section 38 app (Android and iOS) is the official mobile route, where the local office accepts it.
- **In person**: the TM.30 form at immigration, with the owner's ID and house registration (or condo title deed), the lease, and copies of the tenant's passport pages.

The receipt

Ask your landlord for the TM.30 receipt: the slip or printout showing your name, your address and the date. Online filings produce a confirmation the owner can screenshot or print. Keep a photo of it on your phone and a printout with your visa paperwork. Without it, an extension can be delayed or refused until it is sorted.

What to ask your landlord, in one message

Copy this into LINE or WhatsApp when you move in, so the job is done in the first week rather than the week of your extension:

- Please file my TM.30 for this address within 24 hours of my move-in date.
- Please send me a photo or PDF of the receipt showing my name, the address and the date.
- If you have a juristic office or agent who files it, please tell me who, so I can ask them directly next time.
- When I come back from trips abroad, can you check whether my record needs updating?

If the owner lives abroad or never answers, ask the condo's juristic office or the rental agent. Many buildings in Pattaya handle it for owners.

When it needs doing again

- **A new address**: yes, the new owner files a new one.
- **Coming back from a trip abroad to the same place**: a Royal Thai Police notification in force since 30 June 2020 says a new TM.30 isn't needed each time a foreigner returns to the same premises within the stay period already reported. In practice some immigration offices still ask for a fresh one after each re-entry, so the safe habit is to ask your landlord to check, or re-file, when you come back.
- **Travelling within Thailand**: your hotel files for its stay. When you return to your condo, it is worth checking your record is still current before your next extension or report.

If it was never filed

Ask the owner to file it now, or go to immigration together. Late filing means a fine for the owner, up to ฿2,000, which is cheaper than a refused extension. Some offices have also fined foreigners who turned up with no TM.30 on record, so it is better sorted early. When you sign a lease, put "landlord files TM.30 and sends the receipt" in writing. See renting a condo.

Hotels, condos and Airbnb

- Hotels file it for you automatically.
- For condos and short rentals, ask the owner or agent before you book whether they file TM.30 and will send the receipt. Short-term rentals of condos are a grey area under Thai hotel law, and owners who rent illegally often avoid filing.
- If you plan to extend a visa, stay somewhere that files TM.30 properly in the weeks before you go to immigration.

Who files in each situation

SITUATION	WHO FILES	NEW TM.30 NEEDED?
Hotel, hostel or guesthouse	The hotel, automatically	Yes, every check-in
Long-term condo or house rental	The owner or landlord	Yes, when you move in
Your own condo	You, as the owner	Yes, when you start living there
Staying with a Thai partner or friend	The owner or head of household	Yes, when you arrive
Back from abroad to the same rental	The landlord	Not under the 2020 rules, but some offices still ask
Short-term condo rental (Airbnb-style)	The owner, if they file at all	Yes, but often skipped: ask first
Moving to a new address	The new owner	Yes

Fines, as sources report them

WHO	REPORTED FINE
House owner, landlord or condo owner, late or missing	Up to ฿2,000
Hotel or guesthouse	฿2,000 to ฿10,000
The foreigner	No fine for the TM.30 itself, but the extension or report can be held until it is filed

Sources disagree on the exact amounts, and office practice varies. The cheapest route is always to file on time.

Your own duty: TM.28

The TM.30 is the host's job. A separate rule, Section 37 of the Immigration Act, puts a duty on the foreigner: tell immigration when you change address, or when you stay in another province for more than 24 hours (form TM.28). In practice, when you stay in a hotel elsewhere, the hotel's TM.30 covers this. If you stay at a friend's house in another province, ask your host to file a TM.30 there.

A change that may be coming

News reports in mid-2026 describe a cabinet-approved draft amendment that would drop some of the foreigner's own reporting duties under Section 37, while keeping the host's TM.30 duty under Section 38 and the 90-day report. It is not in force until it is published in the Royal Gazette. Until then, nothing changes: keep asking for your TM.30 receipt.

Common questions

Do tourists need a TM.30? The duty is your host's, not yours. For a short holiday in a hotel it is done for you and you rarely need the receipt. It matters when you extend a visa or stay long term.

Is it my fault if my landlord didn't file? Legally the fine is the owner's, but immigration may hold your extension or 90-day report until it is done, so chase it early.

Do I need a new TM.30 after every trip abroad? The 2020 rules say not if you return to the same place within the reported stay, but some offices still ask. Check with your landlord when you come back.

How do I check whether a TM.30 was filed? Ask your landlord for the receipt. Immigration can also check when you visit for a report or extension.

Can I file the TM.30 myself as a tenant? Usually not online, because the account belongs to the owner. Some tenants go to immigration with the owner's ID copy, house registration or title deed copy, and the lease, but Jomtien may ask for the owner to come too. Ask the office before you go.

My 90-day report online was rejected because of my old address. What now? The online system checks your TM.30 record. Ask your new landlord to file a TM.30 for the new address, wait a day or two, then try again or report in person at Jomtien.

Does the TDAC arrival card replace the TM.30? No. The TDAC replaced the paper arrival card. Your host still files the TM.30 where you stay.

Sources

Checked 14 November 2026: Stamped Nomad, draft Immigration Act amendment (updated 23 August 2026); Tilleke & Gibbins, Royal Thai Police TM.30 notification (Government Gazette, 16 June 2020); TM.30 reporting guide, updated September 2026. Sources disagree on fines and on re-filing after travel; ask Jomtien immigration if in doubt. General information, not legal advice.

Related guides

- Thailand Privilege Visa (Elite Visa)
- Thai Paperwork Tips: Copies, Photos and Signatures
- Visa Options for Pattaya (2026)
- Jomtien Immigration Office

VISAS & LEGAL

Laws Visitors Break Without Knowing

Thai laws that catch visitors out in Pattaya: vapes, smoking on the beach, alcohol hours and holy-day bans, cannabis, scooters, passports, drones, overstays and the monarchy. Checked 13 Nov 2026.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/visas-legal/laws-visitors-break/

Vapes	**Illegal to bring in, own or use; no tourist exception**
Beach smoking	**Banned on Pattaya beaches, fine up to ฿5,000**
Alcohol	**Sales 11am to midnight; most sales banned on 5 holy days**
Cannabis	**Medical use only, Thai prescription needed**
Passport	**Carry it or a copy of the photo page**
Not legal advice	**Laws differ by home country and change**

Quick answer: the laws visitors break in Pattaya are usually about things that are normal at home. **Vapes are illegal**, even for personal use. **Smoking on the beach** can cost up to ฿5,000. Alcohol is sold from 11am to midnight, and most sales stop on five Buddhist holy days. Cannabis needs a Thai medical prescription, scooters need a motorcycle licence, and criticising the monarchy can mean prison.

Laws differ by home country and change, so this isn't legal advice. For anything serious, ask a Thai lawyer or your embassy.

At a glance

LAW	WHAT TO KNOW	PENALTY, AS REPORTED
Vapes and e-cigarettes	Illegal to bring in, own or use	Typically ฿5,000 to ฿30,000, confiscation, possible detention and court
Smoking on the beach	Banned on Pattaya's beaches and beach footpaths	Up to ฿5,000
Alcohol	Sold 11am to midnight; most sales banned on 5 holy days and around elections	Fines for sellers, and up to ฿10,000 for drinking at a venue in banned times
Cannabis	Medical use only, with a Thai prescription	Depends on the case
Passport	Police can ask to see it	You may have to show it at a police station within 24 hours
Scooter licence and helmet	Valid motorcycle licence, helmet for rider and passenger	Up to ฿1,000 for no licence, up to ฿2,000 for no helmet
Drones	Register with the NBTC within 30 days	Up to ฿100,000, 5 years in prison, or both
Overstay	Leave or extend before your permission ends	฿500 a day, up to ฿20,000; long overstays mean a ban
The monarchy	Criticism, insults and threats are crimes	Up to 15 years in prison per offence

Vapes and e-cigarettes

Possessing or using any vape, e-cigarette, pod, e-liquid or heat-not-burn device is illegal, with no exception for tourists or personal use. The UK Foreign Office puts typical fines at ฿5,000 to ฿30,000 plus confiscation, and says offences can lead to detention and court, with you kept in Thailand until the case ends. The Tourism Authority of Thailand has warned since 2017 that bringing them in can mean arrest, jail or a fine several times the item's value. Leave vapes at home, and don't buy one here.

Pro tip: "I don't smoke, vape or use cannabis."

Smoking on the beach

Pattaya City bans smoking everywhere on its beaches and the footpaths beside them, with fines of up to ฿5,000. Pattaya Mail reported regular patrols in 2025, and the city takes reports on 1337. Step well away from the sand to smoke, and bin your butts.

Alcohol

- **Hours:** since 29 May 2026, shops and most bars and restaurants sell from 11am to midnight. The old 2pm to 5pm break is gone.
- **Holy days:** most sales stop on Makha Bucha, Visakha Bucha, Asalha Bucha, Khao Phansa and Ok Phansa. Under a notification in force from 7 November 2026, international airport passenger buildings, licensed entertainment venues, hotels under Thai hotel law, designated tourist-area venues and listed major-event venues can still sell, if they screen ages and keep order. 7-Eleven, supermarkets and ordinary bars and restaurants can't. Dates: Buddhist holidays and alcohol ban days.
- **Elections:** sales stop from 6pm the day before to 6pm on voting day.
- **Customers:** since November 2025, drinking at a venue during banned times can cost up to ฿10,000, The Thaiger reported. The legal drinking age is 20.

Cannabis and drugs

The UK Foreign Office says cannabis is now for medical use only, with a Thai-issued prescription for up to 30 days; recreational use is illegal, and so is taking it out of Thailand without permission. A draft Cannabis and Hemp Act approved by the cabinet on 22 September 2026 would lock that in, and in November 2026 the government said it was tightening checks on licensed shops. An open shop doesn't mean a legal sale to you. Other drugs bring heavy fines or prison, and Class A drugs can carry the death penalty. More: what's legal in Thailand but not elsewhere.

Scooters

Riding without a valid motorcycle licence is one of the most common fines for visitors. A 2026 report in The Thaiger gave up to ฿1,000 or a month in prison for no licence, and up to ฿2,000 for no helmet. A car licence doesn't cover a motorbike, and riding unlicensed can void your travel insurance. See renting a scooter and international driving permit.

Passport and overstays

- Police may ask for your passport. Without it, you may have to bring it to a police station within 24 hours; a copy of the photo page is usually enough.
- Overstaying costs ฿500 a day, up to ฿20,000, paid when you leave. Royal Thai Embassy guidance says longer overstays can mean deportation and a ban. See extending your stay.

Drones and gambling

- Drones must be registered with the NBTC within 30 days of arriving or buying one, even if you never fly it.
- Gambling laws are strict. Even carrying more than 120 playing cards is an offence.

The monarchy, the flag and money

- The lèse-majesté law makes it a crime to defame, insult or threaten the royal family, including online, with up to 15 years in prison per offence. Don't criticise or joke about the royal family.
- Stand when the royal anthem plays before films in cinemas.
- Insulting the national flag carries up to two years in prison, a ฿40,000 fine or both under the Criminal Code.
- Banknotes carry the King's image, so never step on money.
- Since 28 August 2026, foreigners can be deported without a conviction if their conduct is judged against public order or morals, the UK Foreign Office says.

If you are stopped by police

- Stay calm and polite, show ID, and ask for an official receipt for any fine.
- For help in English call the Tourist Police on 1155. See Tourist Police.
- If you're arrested, ask for your embassy and a lawyer before you sign anything.
- See police checkpoints and road rules and fines.

Common questions

Can I bring a vape to Thailand? No. Vapes, pods and e-liquid are illegal to bring in, own or use, with no exception for tourists.

Can you smoke on the beach in Pattaya? No. It's banned on the beaches and the footpaths beside them, with fines of up to ฿5,000.

Is weed legal in Thailand for tourists? Not for recreation. You need a Thai medical prescription to buy, possess or use it.

Do I have to carry my passport in Thailand? Police can ask for it. A copy of the photo page is usually enough.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: UK Foreign Office, Thailand safety and security (vapes, smoking, passport, alcohol hours, drugs, cannabis, drones, gambling, monarchy, social media, deportation); TAT News, electronic cigarettes are illegal, 2017; Pattaya Mail, ฿5,000 beach smoking fine, July 2025; Nation Thailand, holy-day alcohol exemptions, November 2026; Nation Thailand, 11am to midnight sale hours, May 2026; The Thaiger, customer fines, November 2025; Nation Thailand, election alcohol ban, February 2026; The Star, cannabis crackdown and draft act, 7 November 2026; The Thaiger, traffic offences and fines, 2026; Royal Thai Embassy Canberra, overstay regulations; Council on Foreign Relations, Thailand's lèse-majesté law; Thai Law Online, Criminal Code section 118 (unofficial translation). Fines are reported inconsistently: some 2025 sources quote ฿1,000 to ฿2,000 for riding without a licence, and press reports quote much higher maximums for bringing vapes in.

VISAS & LEGAL

What's Legal in Thailand but Not Elsewhere (and the Reverse)

What Thailand allows that many countries don't, and the everyday things from home that can get you fined, detained or deported here. Checked 6 Nov 2026.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/visas-legal/legal-in-thailand-not-elsewhere/

Checked	**6 November 2026**
Cannabis	**Medical only, Thai prescription needed**
Kratom	**Legal in Thailand, banned in some countries**
Vapes	**Illegal to possess or use, no tourist exception**
Not legal advice	**Laws differ by home country and change**

Quick answer: the list of things Thailand allows and other countries ban is shorter than the internet suggests. Kratom and same-sex marriage are the clear examples. Recreational cannabis is not on it: since 2025 it needs a Thai medical prescription. The longer and more useful list runs the other way: vapes, a friendly poker game, an unregistered drone and a joke about the monarchy can all cause serious trouble here.

Laws differ by home country and they change, so this isn't legal advice. We checked each item on 6 November 2026 and name the source. For anything that matters to you, confirm it with a Thai lawyer or the agency named, and check your own country's rules too.

Legal here, restricted or banned in some other countries

ITEM	THAILAND, AS CHECKED	ELSEWHERE
Kratom	Legal to possess and consume since 2021, regulated by the Kratom Plant Act 2022	An Australian law firm reports it as Schedule 9, the prohibited class. The US FDA says it is not lawfully marketed as a drug
Same-sex marriage	Legal since January 2025	Not recognised in many countries
Cannabis with a Thai prescription	Allowed for medical use only, 30-day supply limit	Illegal in many countries, even with a Thai prescription

Kratom: legal, with limits

Kratom left Thailand's narcotics list in 2021. The Kratom Plant Act of 2022 then set the rules, as summarised by the law firm Tilleke & Gibbins:

- It can't be sold to anyone under 18 or to anyone pregnant or breastfeeding.
- Mixing it with narcotics, psychotropic or other listed substances is an offence, even just consuming the mix.
- Importing or exporting leaves needs a licence, with limited personal-use exemptions.

The bigger risk is the flight home. Don't assume it's allowed where you live or anywhere you connect through. We couldn't confirm the UK position on an official page, so UK readers should check before travelling.

Cannabis: no longer the free-for-all you may have heard about

Thailand decriminalised cannabis in 2022, and a lot of older articles and videos still describe that period. The UK Foreign Office's current advice says use is restricted to medical purposes, you must not buy, possess or use it without a Thai-issued medical prescription, and that prescription covers at most 30 days. "Recreational use remains illegal."

- **Taking it out of the country:** illegal without export permission. The Foreign Office lists fines starting at ฿30,000 per kilogram, with detention or prison if unpaid.
- **Licensing:** flower licence rules tightened on 30 April 2026, according to Cannabis Law Report, so many shops may not last. An open shop doesn't mean a legal sale to you.
- **Low-THC products:** the same report says CBD products under 0.2% THC don't need a prescription. Taking them home is a separate question.
- **What's next:** a Cannabis and Hemp Act went to public consultation in April and May 2026, so these rules may change again.

Legal at home, illegal here

THING	THAI POSITION	POSSIBLE RESULT
Vapes, pods, e-liquid, heat-not-burn	Illegal to possess or use, no exceptions for tourists or personal use	Confiscation, fines typically ฿5,000-30,000, detention, court
Criticising the monarchy	Illegal, read broadly, covers past and present royals and online posts	Long prison sentence
Gambling	Strict laws. Carrying over 120 playing cards is itself an offence	Prosecution, fine or prison
Unregistered drone	Must be registered with the NBTC within 30 days, even if you never fly it	฿100,000 fine, 5 years in prison, or both
Recreational cannabis	Illegal without a Thai prescription	Depends on the case

THING	THAI POSITION	POSSIBLE RESULT
Other illegal drugs	Strict laws on use, possession and trafficking	Heavy fines or prison. Class A can carry the death penalty
Buying alcohol under 20	The legal age is 20, higher than in many countries	Sellers risk up to 1 year in prison, ฿100,000 fine, or both
Certain social media photos	Posting images of people drinking, or in clothing considered inappropriate, can be illegal	Fines or prison for uploader and people pictured
Smoking in public	Illegal, according to the Foreign Office	Fine up to ฿5,000

Sources for the table are at the end of this page. Vape penalties are reported inconsistently: the Foreign Office figure above is the typical range, while press and customs guides quote much higher maximums for bringing them into the country. We haven't confirmed those higher figures against the law itself, so treat them as a warning, not a tariff.

Rules people don't expect

- **Your passport:** police may ask for it. Without it, you could be told to produce it at a police station within 24 hours. A copy of the photo page is usually enough.
- **Alcohol hours:** sales are restricted from midnight to 11am, except licensed hotels, international airport terminals and authorised entertainment venues. The old 2pm-5pm afternoon break ended in 2026.
- **Deportation without a conviction:** rules introduced on 28 August 2026 allow it if authorities decide your conduct goes against public order, public morals or the wellbeing of Thai people. You may also be restricted from coming back.
- **Buddha images and antiques:** taking them out of Thailand can need a licence. Airports of Thailand lists the Fine Arts Department as the agency. Ask before you buy one to take home.
- **Nominee companies:** authorities are enforcing against foreigners using Thai nominee shareholders for a business or property. See buying a condo and get independent legal advice.
- **Working:** a tourist stay doesn't give you the right to work. See working legally.

Your own medicines can be the problem

Ordinary prescription medicine is allowed for personal use, up to 30 days of prescribed use, in the original labelled containers with a doctor's letter or prescription. So says the Royal Thai Embassy in London.

Controlled medicines are different. Some narcotic medicines in Category 2 need a Thai FDA permit: apply online at least 2 weeks ahead through the FDA's traveller permit portal, then print the permit for customs. Check your medicine on the FDA's lists before you fly, including ADHD, strong pain and anxiety medicines. Also check your home country's rules before bringing anything back from Thailand.

If you're in trouble

Ask for your embassy and a lawyer before signing anything. Our page on emergency numbers lists who to call, and laws visitors break covers the everyday basics.

Common questions

Is weed legal in Thailand for tourists? Not for recreation. The UK Foreign Office says you need a Thai-issued medical prescription to buy, possess or use it.

Can I bring my vape to Thailand? No. Possession and use are illegal, with no exception for tourists or personal use.

Is kratom legal in Thailand? Yes, with sales limits and a ban on certain mixtures. It may be illegal where you live or transit.

Can I play poker with friends in Thailand? Thailand has strict gambling laws and an offence for carrying over 120 playing cards. Don't assume a private game is treated as harmless, and ask a Thai lawyer if you're planning one.

Sources

Checked 6 November 2026. Rules change, so check the original.

- UK Foreign Office, Thailand safety and security (updated 12 October 2026): cannabis, vapes, drugs, gambling, monarchy, drones, passport, alcohol hours, social media, deportation, nominee rules, smoking
- UK Foreign Office, Thailand travel advice: same-sex marriage
- Tilleke & Gibbins, Thailand's new legal framework for kratom (2022)
- Cannabis Law Report, two new regulations (May 2026, a secondary source)
- The Star, Songkran 2026 alcohol rules: legal age and seller penalties
- Royal Thai Embassy London, bringing medications to Thailand
- Thai FDA, traveller permit portal
- Airports of Thailand, restricted and prohibited items
- Lyons Law, kratom in Australia
- Bloomberg Law, FDA on kratom (July 2025)

VISAS & LEGAL

Retirement Visa

Staying long term in Pattaya if you're 50 or over: the Non-O and O-A routes, the money requirements and yearly extensions.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/visas-legal/retirement-visa/

Age	**50 or over**
Money	**฿800,000 in a Thai bank, or ฿65,000 a month income, or a mix**
Length	**One year, renewable yearly**
Reports	**Every 90 days**
Bank money	**Held 2 months before, kept 3 months after, never under ฿400,000**
Fee	**฿1,900 per yearly extension**

Quick answer: If you are 50 or over, you can live in Pattaya on a retirement-based stay, renewed one year at a time at the Jomtien immigration office. You show either ฿800,000 in a Thai bank account, a monthly income of at least ฿65,000, or a mix adding up to ฿800,000 a year. The bank route has timing rules: the money is usually held for two months before you apply, kept there for three months after, and never allowed below ฿400,000. Each extension costs ฿1,900, and you still do 90-day reports and need a re-entry permit to travel.

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Age	50 or over
Money	฿800,000 in a Thai bank, or ฿65,000 a month income, or a mix totalling ฿800,000 a year
Bank timing	Usually 2 months before applying, 3 months after, never below ฿400,000
Length	One year at a time, renewable
Fee	฿1,900 per extension (form TM.7)
Reports	Every 90 days; re-entry permit before trips abroad
Health insurance	Required for O-A; not usually for Non-O extensions in Thailand
Work	Not allowed

The two main routes

- **Non-Immigrant O (retirement)**: get a Non-O visa from a Thai embassy, or convert from another entry inside Thailand where the office allows it, then extend for a year at a time at immigration. Health insurance usually isn't required for extensions on this route.
- **Non-Immigrant O-A**: applied for from your home country, gives a year from the start, and requires health insurance. Sources describe a coverage guideline of around US$100,000. Some sources say the insurance rule also applies when O-A holders extend inside Thailand; ask immigration.
- Many people in Pattaya use the Non-O route because it avoids the insurance requirement. That doesn't mean going without insurance is wise. See health insurance.

Non-O, O-A and O-X side by side

	NON-O (RETIREMENT)	O-A (LONG STAY)	O-X (LONG STAY)
Where you apply	Thai embassy abroad, or convert inside Thailand	Thai embassy in your home country	Thai embassy, listed nationalities only
First stay	90 days, then a one-year extension	One year	Five years, renewable once (ten in total)
Money	฿800,000, or ฿65,000 a month, or a mix	Same as Non-O	฿3,000,000 in a Thai bank, or ฿1,800,000 plus ฿1,200,000 a year income
Health insurance	Not listed at the embassy; not usually asked at extension	฿3,000,000 (US$100,000) cover per policy year	฿3,000,000 cover, from a Thai insurer
Police and medical certificates	Not usually	Yes, issued within 3 months	Yes, issued within 3 months
Who it suits	Most Pattaya retirees	People who want everything sorted before they fly	Wealthier retirees from the 18 listed countries who want fewer renewals

The O-X list on the Los Angeles consulate's page: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, South Korea, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States.

O-A health insurance, in plain terms

- Since 1 October 2021 the O-A rule is one figure: at least ฿3,000,000 (or US$100,000) of cover per policy year. The older ฿40,000 outpatient and ฿400,000 inpatient split no longer applies to the O-A; you will still see it quoted on older pages.
- For a new application, a Thai policy from an insurer on the official long-stay list (longstay.tgia.org) works, and a foreign policy can work if the insurer completes the official Foreign Insurance Certificate.
- At extension time inside Thailand, offices generally expect a Thai policy. Whether a foreign certificate is accepted varies by office, so ask Jomtien before you renew.
- The policy has to cover the whole permitted stay. Pre-existing conditions are often excluded or loaded, and premiums rise sharply with age, which is a big reason people switch to the Non-O route. See health insurance.

The money in detail

- **Bank deposit:** ฿800,000 in a Thai savings account in your name. Most offices want it seasoned for two months before you apply (some ask for three), kept at ฿800,000 for three months after approval, and never below ฿400,000 for the rest of the year. The bank gives you a letter and an updated passbook on or near the day you apply.
- **Income:** at least ฿65,000 a month, shown with an embassy income letter or, more often now, with evidence of the money being transferred into your Thai account from abroad every month.
- **Combination:** income times twelve plus the bank balance adding up to ฿800,000.
- Parking money just before the application and taking it out straight after is one of the most common reasons extensions are refused. See sending money to Thailand and opening a Thai bank account.

The yearly extension, step by step

- Apply in the last 30 days or so of your current permission. Jomtien gives queue numbers early in the day.
- Bring: passport and signed copies, TM.7 form, a photo, the bank letter and passbook (or income evidence), your TM.30 receipt, proof of address such as a lease, and a map to your home if asked.
- Pay ฿1,900. Many offices stamp an “under consideration” note first and finish the full year stamp on a second visit about a month later.
- Keep every copy: next year the same officers may ask what you showed this year.

Your first year, as a timeline

WHEN	WHAT HAPPENS
Before you fly	Decide Non-O or O-A. For O-A, gather the police certificate, medical certificate and insurance first.
Arrival	Enter on the Non-O (90 days) or O-A (one year). Your landlord or hotel files the TM.30.
Weeks 1 to 2	Open a Thai bank account and move the money in. Banks have tightened the rules for short-stay visas, so take your visa page and a lease. See Thai bank account.
Day 90	First 90-day report, in person.
About 2 months before expiry	Make sure the ฿800,000 has sat untouched long enough for your office’s seasoning rule.
Last 30 days	Apply for the one-year extension at Jomtien. Expect a second visit about a month later.
After approval	Keep ฿800,000 for three more months, then never below ฿400,000. Buy a re-entry permit before any trip.

What it costs each year

ITEM	TYPICAL COST
Extension of stay (TM.7)	฿1,900
Re-entry permit	฿1,000 single, ฿3,800 multiple. See re-entry permit
90-day reports	Free
Bank letter	A small fee at most banks; ask your branch
Photos and copies	Usually under ฿200
Agent (optional)	Varies widely; get the full price in writing

If something goes wrong

- **The officer says your paperwork is short:** ask exactly what is missing, write it down, and come back. Most problems are a missing copy or a bank letter dated on the wrong day.
- **The extension is refused:** you are usually given a short stay to leave Thailand. You can come back on another visa and try again later, but fix the cause first.

- **The balance dipped below the rule:** next year's application can be refused even if the money is back. Don't use the retirement account for daily spending; keep a second account for that.
- **You overstayed:** fines are ฿500 a day up to ฿20,000, and long overstays can lead to a ban. Sort it out at immigration before you try to leave. See leaving Thailand.

Living on it

- Report your address every 90 days. After the first in-person report, many people do the rest online. See 90-day reports.
- Get a re-entry permit before travelling abroad, or the extension is lost and you start again.
- You can't work on a retirement visa, paid or unpaid. See working legally.
- Staying 180 days or more a year makes you a Thai tax resident. See Thai tax basics.
- Where to live: many retirees choose Jomtien for the quieter pace. See retiring in Pattaya.

Agents

Many people use a local visa agent the first time, to get the paperwork and bank letters right. A good agent explains what you need and still sends you to immigration in person. Be wary of anyone offering to "handle" the money requirement for you: arrangements that fake the deposit can cost you the visa if they come to light.

Other ways to stay if the retirement visa doesn't fit

- **Married to a Thai citizen:** the marriage visa asks for ฿400,000 instead of ฿800,000, at any age.
- **Under 50, or working remotely:** the DTV.
- **Prefer to pay than prove funds:** Thailand Privilege.
- **High income or assets:** the government's LTR visa has a "wealthy pensioner" category. Its rules changed in 2025 and sources disagree on the current figures, so check the Board of Investment's LTR site directly.

Common questions

How much money do I need for a Thai retirement visa? ฿800,000 in a Thai bank, or ฿65,000 a month income, or a combination adding up to ฿800,000 a year.

How long must the ฿800,000 be in the bank? Usually two months before you apply, three months after approval, and never below ฿400,000 for the rest of the year. Some offices ask for three months before.

Do I need health insurance for a retirement visa? For the O-A visa, yes. For Non-O retirement extensions inside Thailand, it is usually not required, though it is strongly recommended.

Can I get a retirement visa under 50? No. Look at the DTV or Thailand Privilege. See visa options.

Can I work on a retirement visa? No, not even unpaid volunteering. You would need a different visa and a work permit. See working legally.

Can I leave Thailand during the year? Yes, but buy a re-entry permit first. Without one, the extension ends the moment you leave.

Is the O-X worth it? Only if you are from one of the listed countries and can tie up ฿3,000,000 (or ฿1,800,000 plus income). It saves yearly renewals, but you still do 90-day reports.

Can I use money held abroad? Not for the bank route: it has to be in a Thai bank account in your own name. Joint accounts are often refused.

Sources

Checked 14 November 2026: Royal Thai Consulate-General Los Angeles, Non-O, O-A and O-X retirement visas; The Thaiger, health insurance for the O-A visa (updated 26 August 2026); Lex Bangkok, Thailand retirement visa 2026; Thai Visa Services, retirement extension 2026; The Thaiger, retirement visa 2026. Office practice varies and rules change; check with Jomtien immigration. General information, not legal advice.

VISAS & LEGAL

Destination Thailand Visa (DTV)

The five-year visa for remote workers and people doing activities like Muay Thai: who qualifies, the ฿500,000 rule, the new rules from 31 August 2026, and how stays work.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/visas-legal/dtv-visa/

Valid	**Five years, multiple entries**
Each stay	**Up to 180 days, extendable once by 180**
Savings	**฿500,000 or equivalent**
Fee	**฿10,000 (charged in local currency by the embassy)**
New since 31 Aug 2026	**Criminal record check and proof of residence where you apply**

Quick answer: The Destination Thailand Visa (DTV) is a five-year, multiple-entry visa for remote workers who earn from outside Thailand and for people taking part in Thai “soft power” activities such as Muay Thai training, cooking courses or medical treatment. Each entry lets you stay up to 180 days, and each stay can be extended once by up to 180 more. You need at least ฿500,000 (or the equivalent) in savings, usually held for three months, and the fee is ฿10,000. Since 31 August 2026, applicants also need a criminal record certificate and proof of permanent residence in the country where they apply, and you apply through the Thai e-visa system from outside Thailand.

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Validity	5 years, multiple entries
Each stay	Up to 180 days per entry
Extension	Once per entry, up to 180 days, at an immigration office
Money	At least ฿500,000 or equivalent, bank statements usually covering 3 months
Fee	฿10,000 (paid in local currency at the embassy rate)
Apply	Thai e-visa system, from outside Thailand
New from 31 Aug 2026	Criminal record certificate; proof of permanent residence where you apply
Family	Spouse and children under 20 can apply as dependants
Work	Not for Thai employers or Thai clients

Who qualifies

- **Remote workers** (“workcation”): people employed by, or freelancing for, companies and clients outside Thailand, including digital nomads and freelancers. You show an employment contract, an employer letter or a portfolio showing foreign clients.
- **Soft power activities**: people enrolled with a Thai provider for activities like Muay Thai, Thai cooking courses or medical treatment, with an invitation or enrolment letter from the provider.
- Thai language courses are reported to be no longer accepted as a qualifying DTV activity; if you want to study Thai, an education visa is usually the route. Ask the embassy before you rely on any course.
- **Dependants**: a spouse and children under 20, with documents proving the relationship.

What you need to apply

- A passport with at least six months left.
- Proof of at least ฿500,000 or the equivalent: bank statements, usually covering three months or more, or a sponsor letter. Some embassies ask for a longer history.
- Proof of your remote work or your activity enrolment.
- Since 31 August 2026: a criminal record clearance certificate.
- Since 31 August 2026: proof of permanent residence in the country where you apply, such as a national ID or permanent residence card. Embassies differ on what they accept from people living abroad on temporary permits.
- The ฿10,000 fee, charged in the embassy’s local currency.

The 31 August 2026 changes

Thailand’s Department of Consular Affairs added two requirements for applications submitted on or after 31 August 2026 (Thailand time). The date that matters is when you submit and pay, not when the visa is issued. The practical effect is that you can no longer pick an easy embassy in a neighbouring country: you apply where you hold nationality or permanent residence. Embassies apply this differently. Some accept temporary residence cards, some don’t, so read the page of the exact embassy you will use before you pay.

How the stays work

- Each entry gives you up to 180 days.
- Each stay can be extended once, by up to 180 days, at an immigration office for the usual extension fee. In Pattaya that is Jomtien immigration office.
- After that you leave Thailand and come back to start a new 180 days. Many DTV holders time this with a holiday or a short trip. See border runs.
- You report your address every 90 days of continuous stay, and your landlord still files TM30. See 90-day reports and TM30 explained.

DTV or another visa?

VISA	BEST FOR	MAIN CATCH
DTV	Remote workers and long-stayers under 50	Leave Thailand at least once a year; can't work for Thai clients
Retirement	Age 50 and over	฿800,000 in a Thai bank or a monthly income
Education	People who want to learn Thai	Real class attendance is checked
Thailand Privilege	People who want no paperwork rules on income	฿650,000 to ฿5 million up front
Work visa	Working for a Thai company	Needs an employer and a work permit

See all the options on visa options.

Living on a DTV

- Remote work for clients outside Thailand is the idea. Working for Thai companies or Thai clients needs a work permit. See working legally.
- Coworking spaces and good internet help. See coworking spaces, home internet and digital nomads.
- Staying 180 days or more in a tax year can make you a Thai tax resident, and foreign income brought into Thailand may then be taxable. See Thai tax basics and get advice for your situation.
- Health insurance isn't a DTV requirement, but hospital bills here are real. See health insurance.

Pro tip: he lives on a Thailand Privilege visa and, as an entrepreneur, wishes he'd waited for the DTV instead. His number one advice before choosing any long visa: come on a tourist stay, extend it, and use that time to ask locals on the ground. Things in Pattaya are a bit different than online.

Common questions

Can I apply for the DTV inside Thailand? No. You apply through the Thai e-visa system to an embassy or consulate outside Thailand, and since 31 August 2026 it must be the one for your nationality or permanent residence.

How long can I stay on a DTV? Up to 180 days per entry, plus one extension of up to 180 days, so about a year before you need to leave and re-enter. The visa itself lasts five years.

Do I need ฿500,000 in a Thai bank? No, it can be in a bank abroad. Embassies usually want statements covering three months or more.

Is Thai language school still accepted for the DTV? Reports from 2026 say language courses no longer qualify as a DTV activity. An education visa is the usual route for studying Thai.

Can I work in Pattaya on a DTV? Only remotely for employers and clients outside Thailand. Working for Thai businesses needs a work permit.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Lex Bangkok, DTV rules from 31 August 2026 (citing the Royal Thai Embassy notices and the Department of Consular Affairs announcement of 28 August 2026); Thailand e-Visa official site. Rules differ by embassy and change often. This is general information, not legal advice; check the embassy that will receive your application.

VISAS & LEGAL

Re-Entry Permits

Leaving Thailand during a visa extension? Without a re-entry permit, your permission to stay is cancelled. Costs, documents, where to get one in Pattaya, and what happens if you forget.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/visas-legal/re-entry-permit/

Single	**฿1,000**
Multiple	**฿3,800**
Form	**TM.8**
Where	**Jomtien immigration or at the airport before departure**

If you're in Thailand on an extension of stay, like a retirement or marriage extension, leaving the country without a re-entry permit cancels it. You would have to start the whole visa process again. A re-entry permit keeps your permission alive while you travel.

Quick answer: If your passport shows a "permitted to stay until" date that came from an extension, get a re-entry permit (form TM.8) before you leave Thailand. A single permit costs ฿1,000 and covers one trip; a multiple permit costs ฿3,800 and covers any number of trips until your current permission ends. Pattaya residents apply at Jomtien immigration, or at the airport on the day they fly. There is no way to get one after you have left.

Re-entry permit at a glance

ITEM	SINGLE RE-ENTRY	MULTIPLE RE-ENTRY
—	—	—
Government fee	฿1,000	฿3,800
Trips covered	One exit and return	Unlimited until your permission ends
Valid until	The end of your current permission to stay	The end of your current permission to stay
Form	TM.8	TM.8
Best for	One trip home a year	Four or more trips in the year

Fees are the national ones published by the Immigration Bureau and repeated by a Pattaya visa guide checked in October 2026 (see Sources). Agents charge their own service fee on top, and some list totals of several thousand baht. That is their fee, not the government's.

Do I need a re-entry permit?

You need one if you are staying on a permission that would be lost when you leave. In practice that means anyone on a one-year extension of stay: retirement, marriage, education, business or family extensions.

You usually don't need one if:

- You are a tourist on a visa exemption or a single-entry tourist visa. Your permission simply ends when you leave, and you get a new one on arrival.
- You hold a multiple-entry visa that is still valid on the day you come back. Each entry gives a new permission. Check the visa's own expiry date, not just your stay date.
- You are a permanent resident. Residents use a different endorsement, not the TM.8.

A work permit on its own does not protect an extension. If you have one, you still need the re-entry permit. See visa options if you're not sure which visa you are on.

Single or multiple?

Do the maths on your travel plans. Four single permits cost ฿4,000, so if you expect four or more trips before your permission ends, the multiple permit (฿3,800) is cheaper and saves you queues. If you only leave once a year to see family, the single permit is enough.

One trap: a multiple permit ends when your current extension ends. When you renew the extension, you need a new re-entry permit for the new year.

Documents to bring (TM.8)

- Your passport, plus copies of the photo page, your visa or extension stamp and your latest entry stamp. Sign every copy.
- A completed TM.8 form. Offices have blank forms, and the Immigration Bureau publishes it to download.
- One 4 x 6 cm photo, taken in the last six months.
- The fee in cash.
- Your flight details, if the officer asks.

Bring a pen and spare copies. Jomtien can ask for local extras, such as a copy of your TM30 receipt, so check the office's current list before you go. See Jomtien immigration office.

Where to get one

- **Jomtien immigration office.** This is the office for Pattaya residents. Applying a few days before your trip means you leave with the permit already in your passport. Go early in the morning; queues build quickly.
- **At the airport on departure.** Suvarnabhumi has a re-entry counter before passport control. A Pattaya guide dated August 2026 lists it on the second floor with daytime hours, while an older government page says the airport office is open 24 hours. Sources conflict, so don't count on it for a night flight. Some guides also report a higher fee or service charge at airport counters, which we could not confirm. Leave at least an extra hour.

What happens if you forget

If you leave without a re-entry permit, your extension is cancelled the moment you pass passport control. You cannot apply late from abroad, and coming back on a new entry does not restore it. You then start again: a new visa or entry and, for a retirement extension, the bank deposit and the full application. For many people that means months of paperwork and money tied up again.

After you come back

- **TM30:** your landlord or hotel has to report your address again after a trip abroad. See TM30 explained.
- **90-day report:** leaving Thailand resets the count. Your next report is due 90 days after your return. See 90-day reports.
- **Arrival card:** foreigners arriving in Thailand fill in the online Thailand Digital Arrival Card before landing. Do it a few days ahead.

Common questions

How much is a re-entry permit in Thailand? ฿1,000 for a single and ฿3,800 for a multiple, the national fees in 2026. Airport counters and agents may charge more.

How long is a re-entry permit valid? Until your current permission to stay ends. It never extends your stay. If your extension ends while you're abroad, you return as a new arrival.

Can I get a re-entry permit at the airport? Yes, at the immigration counter before passport control, but allow extra time and bring cash, a photo and copies.

Can I apply for a re-entry permit online? Some guides mention an online form, but reports say it is not always accepted. Plan to apply in person.

Do I need a re-entry permit with a multiple-entry visa? Usually not, as long as the visa is still valid when you return. You need one if you are on an extension.

Sources

- Thailand Board of Investment, One Start One Stop Investment Center: FAQ "About Re-entry Permit" (single ฿1,000, multiple ฿3,800, TM.8, 4 x 6 cm photo, Suvarnabhumi office). osos.boi.go.th. The page is dated December 2014; its fees still match 2026 guides.
- Pattaya Visa Help: "Re-entry permits" (national fees as of 1 August 2026, fee check 29 October 2026; Suvarnabhumi counter, documents, late permits not possible). pattayavisahelp.pages.dev.
- Immigration Bureau: TM.8 form download, and the Thailand Digital Arrival Card at tdac.immigration.go.th. Checked November 2026.

Related guides

- Visa Options for Pattaya (2026)
- 90-Day Reports
- Thai Marriage Visa
- Retiring in Pattaya

VISAS & LEGAL

Working Legally in Thailand

Working legally in Thailand in 2026: work permits and the Non-B visa, what counts as work, the 10 jobs foreigners can't do, remote work and the DTV, starting a business, and the fines for working without a permit.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/visas-legal/working-legally/

Work permit	**Needed for almost any work in Thailand, paid or unpaid**
Usual route	**Thai employer, Non-B visa, then the permit**
Reserved jobs	**10 occupations closed to foreigners (June 2026 list)**
Working without a permit	**฿5,000 to ฿50,000 fine, deportation, 2-year ban**
Remote work for foreign clients	**The DTV visa was made for this**
Get advice	**Use a licensed lawyer or accountant**

Quick answer: Almost any work in Thailand needs a work permit, and the permit is tied to a specific employer and job. The usual route is a Thai company that hires you, a Non-Immigrant B visa, then the permit, filed online through the e-WorkPermit system. Some jobs are closed to foreigners even with a permit, including street vending, Thai massage, hairdressing, driving and tour guiding. Working without a permit, or outside what it allows, can mean a fine of ฿5,000 to ฿50,000, deportation and a two-year ban on getting a permit. If you work online for employers or clients outside Thailand, the DTV visa was designed for you. Rules change, so treat this as an overview and get professional advice before you start.

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL (NOVEMBER 2026)
Who needs a permit	Almost anyone working in Thailand, paid or unpaid
Usual visa	Non-Immigrant B, linked to a Thai employer
Employer rules	Usually ฿2 million paid-up capital and 4 Thai staff per foreign worker
Exceptions	BOI-promoted companies and some offices can have different rules
Reserved jobs	10 occupations, including Thai massage, driving and tour guiding
Penalty, worker	฿5,000 to ฿50,000, deportation, 2-year ban on a work permit
Penalty, employer	฿10,000 to ฿100,000 per worker; more for repeat offences
Remote work for foreign clients	DTV visa

What counts as work

Thai law looks at what you actually do, not where you are paid or whether you have a contract. A July 2026 ASEAN Briefing guide puts it simply: whether you need a permit depends on the activities you perform. That catches people out in Pattaya:

- Helping out in a friend's bar, restaurant or guesthouse, even unpaid, can count as work.
- Selling things, teaching, guiding or driving for money all need a permit, and some can't be done by foreigners at all.
- Volunteering can count too. Check with the organisation that it handles permits before you sign up.

Getting a work permit

- An employer in Thailand sponsors you. You normally get a Non-Immigrant B visa first, then the employer applies for the permit.
- Applications, renewals and cancellations go through the Department of Employment's e-WorkPermit platform.
- Under the standard rules, the employer needs about ฿2 million in paid-up capital and four Thai employees for each foreign work permit. Companies promoted by the Board of Investment (BOI) and some regional or representative offices can have these rules changed or waived.
- The permit covers one employer and one job description. Changing jobs means changing the permit.
- Spouses of Thai citizens on a marriage visa can apply for a permit with an employer too.

Jobs foreigners can't do

In June 2026 the Ministry of Labour publicised a list of 10 occupations that foreigners may not do, even with a work permit and even as a side job:

- Street vending: hawker stalls, pavement stalls, pushcarts and lottery tickets.
- Brokerage and agency work, except brokerage in international trade.
- Hairdressing, beauty and nail work.
- Thai massage, traditional and spa.
- Driving vehicles such as taxis, vans, three-wheelers and buses (forklifts in factories are an exception).
- Tour guiding and organising tours.

- Legal services, apart from some arbitration work.
- Hand-woven cloth work.
- Traditional crafts such as wood carving, silverware, goldware and Thai doll-making.
- Security guard work.

For anyone in Pattaya, that rules out giving rides for money, running a massage shop yourself or guiding tourists.

Remote work and the DTV

- Working online for an employer or clients outside Thailand was a grey area for years. The Destination Thailand Visa (DTV) was created for remote workers and digital nomads, with stays of up to 180 days per entry.
- The DTV doesn't cover work for Thai companies or Thai clients. That needs a work permit.
- Staying 180 days or more in a year can make you a Thai tax resident, and foreign income brought into Thailand may then be taxed. See Thai tax basics.
- For places to work, see coworking spaces and digital nomads.

Starting a business

- In many sectors, foreigners can't own the majority of a Thai company. Common routes are a Thai company with Thai shareholders, BOI promotion, or treaty options for some nationalities.
- Using Thai nominee shareholders to hide foreign control is illegal. Arrangements that look fine on paper can fall apart, and you can lose the business.
- Owning a company doesn't let you work in it. You still need a visa and a work permit, and the company has to meet the capital and Thai staff rules.
- Use a licensed lawyer and accountant. Be wary of anyone offering shortcuts.

Pro tip: he lives on a Thailand Privilege visa and, as an entrepreneur, wishes he'd waited for the DTV or opened a business with a work visa. For people who aren't entrepreneurs and want to learn some Thai, he thinks the education visa is fantastic. See visa options.

Enforcement in 2026

In May 2026 the Labour Minister ordered nationwide checks of foreign workers and work permits after a raid on a childcare business on Koh Phangan led to nine arrests. The Department of Employment is coordinating inspections through provincial offices, and the public can report suspected illegal work. Expect checks in tourist areas, Pattaya included.

Risks of working illegally

- Workers: a fine of ฿5,000 to ฿50,000, deportation, and a two-year ban on applying for a work permit.
- Employers: ฿10,000 to ฿100,000 per foreign worker. Repeat offences can bring up to a year in prison or fines of ฿50,000 to ฿200,000 per worker, and a three-year ban on hiring foreigners.
- Deportation can also mean a ban on returning to Thailand.
- Get advice from a qualified lawyer before you start any work. See laws visitors break.

Common questions

Can I work in Thailand on a tourist visa or visa exemption? No. Tourist stays don't allow work. You need the right visa and a work permit.

Can I work remotely from Pattaya? For employers or clients outside Thailand, the DTV visa was made for this. Work for Thai companies or clients needs a work permit.

What jobs can't foreigners do in Thailand? Ten occupations, including street vending, Thai massage, hairdressing, driving, tour guiding, legal services and security work, even with a permit.

What is the fine for working without a permit in Thailand? ฿5,000 to ฿50,000 for the worker, plus deportation and a two-year ban on getting a permit. Employers face ฿10,000 to ฿100,000 per worker.

Does volunteering need a work permit? It can. Unpaid work can still count, so check before you start.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: The Nation, Labour Minister orders foreign worker permit checks (3 May 2026); Asia News Network (from The Nation), 10 jobs foreigners cannot do (15 June 2026); ASEAN Briefing, work permit rules (15 July 2026). Rules and penalties change; check with the Department of Employment or a licensed lawyer. General information, not legal advice.

Related guides

- Thailand Privilege Visa (Elite Visa)
- Re-Entry Permits
- Coworking & Working Remotely
- Maids and Cleaning Services in Pattaya

VISAS & LEGAL

Thai Paperwork Tips: Copies, Photos and Signatures

How to get through Thai offices smoothly: which passport pages to copy, how to sign copies safely, 4 x 6 cm photos, proof of address, translations and Foreign Ministry certification, the 2027 apostille change, and what to do on the day.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/visas-legal/thai-paperwork-tips/

Copies	**Photo page, visa or extension, latest entry stamp; sign every copy**
Photos	**4 x 6 cm for immigration forms like the TM.7**
Address	**TM.30 receipt, lease, or a residence certificate**
Translations	**Thai translation, certified by the Foreign Ministry, ฿200 per document by mail**
Apostille	**Thailand joins the convention on 28 February 2027**
On the day	**Dress neatly, arrive early, bring cash and spare copies**

Quick answer: Thai offices still run on paper. For almost anything official, from a visa extension to a bank account or driving licence, bring your original passport plus photocopies of the photo page, your current visa or extension and your latest entry stamp, and sign every copy. Keep a few 4 x 6 cm photos for immigration forms, and proof of where you live, such as your TM.30 receipt. Foreign documents like marriage or birth certificates usually need a Thai translation certified by the Foreign Ministry (฿200 per document by mail). From 28 February 2027, Thailand joins the Apostille Convention. Dress neatly, arrive early, and expect rules to differ between offices.

At a glance

ITEM	WHAT TO BRING OR DO
Passport copies	Photo page, current visa or extension, latest entry stamp, arrival record if asked
Signing	Sign each copy; Thais write “certified true copy” and the date
Photos	4 x 6 cm for immigration forms; ask other offices for their size
Proof of address	TM.30 receipt, lease, or a residence certificate from immigration
Foreign documents	Legalised by your embassy, translated into Thai, certified by the Foreign Ministry
On the day	Neat clothes, early arrival, cash, spare copies

Copies

- The standard set for immigration is copies of your passport photo page, your current visa or extension stamp, and your latest entry stamp. Some forms also want your departure or arrival record. See Jomtien immigration office and 90-day reports.
- Bring spare copies: officers sometimes ask for an extra set.
- Copy shops near government offices make copies and photos, but they get busy. Doing it the day before saves your place in the queue.
- Keep phone scans of your passport pages, stamps and receipts. They help with the next application, or a lost passport.

Signing copies

- Sign every copy you hand over. Unsigned copies are a common reason to be sent back.
- Thais usually write “สำเนาถูกต้อง” (“certified true copy”), sign, and add the date. Writing “Certified true copy” in English is understood too.
- For copies you give to private businesses, like phone shops, landlords or agents, many Thais add the purpose between two lines across the copy, such as “for SIM registration only”, plus the date. Thai consumer advice, credited to the Office of Justice Affairs, recommends this so a copy can’t be reused for something else. Don’t cross out the photo or the details they need.
- For immigration, a plain signature is the usual request. Ask before writing extra notes on immigration copies.
- If a Thai partner gives copies of their ID card, copy the front only: the back carries a laser code that can be used to verify identity.

Photos

- Immigration forms such as the TM.7 extension form take a recent 4 x 6 cm photo, glued or stapled to the form.
- Other offices set their own sizes, so ask first. At the land transport office, for example, the licence photo is usually taken there.
- Photo shops near immigration and in malls print them quickly. Keep the digital file for reprints.

Proof of address

- Your TM.30 receipt, filed by your hotel or landlord, is the base of most address proof.
- A lease, or condo ownership papers, backs it up. See buying a condo.
- A **residence certificate** from Jomtien immigration or your embassy is often needed for driving licences, vehicle registration and some bank accounts. Immigration can’t issue one unless your TM.30 is on file. The land transport office reportedly treats it as valid for 30 days, so get it shortly before you need it.

Translations and Foreign Ministry certification

Thai offices work in Thai. A foreign document, such as a birth, marriage or divorce certificate, usually goes through three steps:

- **Legalise it** in the country that issued it, or through your embassy in Thailand. Ask your embassy what it can certify.
- **Translate it into Thai.** The translator signs a certification of a correct translation. Translation agencies in Pattaya and Bangkok do this, and many will submit to the Ministry for a fee.
- **Certify the translation** at the Legalization Division of the Department of Consular Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on Chaeng Watthana Road in Bangkok. The fee is ฿200 per document for the mail service, and you can track progress online. Since 10 February 2026, translators must attach a copy of their government ID for Thai-English translations.

Thai documents for use abroad go the other way: English translation, Foreign Ministry certification, then whatever your home country asks.

The apostille change in 2027

Thailand deposited its accession to the 1961 Apostille Convention on 30 June 2026, and the convention takes effect for Thailand on 28 February 2027. After that, public documents from other member countries carrying an apostille shouldn't need embassy legalisation as well, and Thai documents can get an apostille for use abroad. Translations will still be needed, and offices may take time to adjust. Until then, the old legalisation route applies.

On the day

- Dress neatly: long trousers or a knee-length skirt, a shirt with sleeves, closed shoes. No vests, beachwear or flip-flops.
- Go early. Many offices hand out queue numbers in the morning and some desks slow down over lunch.
- Bring a pen, cash for the fee, all originals, spare copies and something to read.
- Keep everything in one folder, in the order the form asks for.
- Stay calm and polite, even if you are sent away for one missing paper. See Thai etiquette.
- Keep every receipt and stamped copy. Next year the same office may ask what you showed this year.

Agents

Agents can fill in forms, book translations and tell you what an office wants this month, but most immigration jobs still need you there in person. Be wary of anyone offering to fix a requirement you can't meet.

Common questions

Do I have to sign passport copies in Thailand? Yes, in practice. Sign each copy you hand over; officers often return unsigned ones.

What photo size does Thai immigration want? 4 x 6 cm for forms like the TM.7 extension. Other offices may want a different size, so ask.

Where do I get a Thai translation certified? At the Foreign Ministry's Department of Consular Affairs in Bangkok, after a translator has translated and signed it. The mail service costs ฿200 per document.

Does Thailand accept apostilles? From 28 February 2027, when the Apostille Convention takes effect for Thailand. Until then, documents need embassy legalisation.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Department of Consular Affairs, legalisation by mail (updated 10 February 2026, in Thai); HCCH, Thailand accedes to the Apostille Convention (30 June 2026); Wongnai, how to sign ID copies safely (in Thai); ETDA, digital ID standard (on the ID card laser code). Immigration document lists from our visa extension and Jomtien immigration pages; residence certificate details from Thai driving licence. Offices differ and rules change; check before you go. General information, not legal advice.

Related

See visa extension, Thai bank account and Thai driving licence.

VISAS & LEGAL

Thailand Privilege Visa (Elite Visa)

Thailand Privilege, formerly Thailand Elite: the paid long-stay membership visa, its tiers, the airport perks, what you still have to do, and my own experience with the 20 year visa.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/visas-legal/thailand-privilege-visa/

Type	**Paid membership with a long-stay visa**
Length	**5 to 20 years, depending on tier**
Best perk	**Airport fast track, lounge and VIP lanes**
Still needed	**90-day reports and yearly stamps**

Thailand Privilege, the scheme formerly called Thailand Elite, is a paid membership that comes with a long-stay visa. You pay a one-time fee and can live in Thailand for five to twenty years with no income, age or job requirements. It is also the visa I live on myself.

My experience: the 20 year visa

- I hold the old 20 year Elite Superiority Extension membership. I joined before that tier was closed to new members, and it cost 1 million baht at the time.
- The whole application was relatively smooth. The agent and the Elite team handled most of the paperwork, and approval came without any drama.
- The airport service is the best part, by far. I will cover it below.
- My one disappointment: you still have to do 90-day reports, renew the visa sticker every year, and get a new visa every five years. I expected a 20 year visa to mean less paperwork than that.
- At times it feels worth it, but overall there might have been less expensive options that made more sense for me, both functionally and financially.

Pro tip: looking back, the process wasn't too bad, but I somewhat regret the money. As an entrepreneur, I wish I'd waited for the DTV or opened a business with a work visa. There are many less expensive options, so before paying, start on a tourist stay, extend it, and ask locals on the ground. Things in Pattaya are a bit different than online.

The airport perks

- On arrival, staff meet you at the gate and take you by golf cart to immigration.
- They walk you through a fast track immigration lane, so you skip the long arrival queues.
- On departure, members use a special lane to skip the normal departure line. It is fast and makes leaving the country easy.
- Members can use the lounge before flights, and it is a genuinely nice place to wait.
- Depending on tier, limousine transfers to or from the airport are included. These usually come from a yearly allowance or points.
- Book the airport service in advance through the member app or contact centre, usually at least a day before the flight. See arriving at Bangkok airport and leaving Thailand.

Other benefits

- No income, age or job requirements, and no bank deposit to keep in Thailand.
- Multiple entry: come and go as you like, with no re-entry permits.
- You can have an agent handle 90-day reports for you, and the member team can help with other paperwork.
- Higher tiers include points for extras such as spa treatments, health check-ups or golf, and options for family members.
- A member contact centre helps with bookings and questions.

What you still have to do

- 90-day reports, as with most long-stay visas. The first report after each return to Thailand must be done in person or by an agent, it cannot be done online. I use a visa agent on Soi 6 for that one, then do every report after it online, which is quick and easy. See 90-day reports.
- A yearly extension stamp, done at immigration or with help from the member team. See Jomtien immigration office.
- A new visa every five years for the longer memberships.
- Your landlord still files TM30. See TM30 explained.
- You still cannot work on this visa. See working legally.

Tiers

TIER	LENGTH	ONE-TIME FEE
Gold	5 years	฿900,000
Platinum	10 years	฿1,500,000
Diamond	15 years	฿2,500,000

TIER	LENGTH	ONE-TIME FEE
Reserve (invitation only)	20 years	฿5,000,000

A cheaper Bronze tier (฿650,000 for 5 years, VAT included) has been offered for a limited time. Sources in late 2026 say applications close on 31 December 2026, after an earlier closing date was extended, so check whether it is still open. Older tiers like my 20 year Superiority Extension are closed to new members. Tiers, prices and benefits change, so check the official site before you apply.

What it works out to per year

TIER	ONE-TIME FEE	PER YEAR OF MEMBERSHIP
Bronze	฿650,000	about ฿130,000
Gold	฿900,000	about ฿180,000
Platinum	฿1,500,000	about ฿150,000
Diamond	฿2,500,000	about ฿167,000

Compare that with a DTV at ฿10,000 for five years plus extension fees, or a retirement visa, where the ฿800,000 stays your money in a Thai bank. What the Privilege fee buys is simplicity: no income, savings or age rules, and the airport service.

Who it suits

- People who want to live in Thailand long term without income or age rules.
- Retirees under 50, who cannot get a retirement visa. Compare the retirement visa.
- Frequent travellers, who will use the airport service a lot.
- It is less good value for short stays, or if you need to work. See the DTV visa and visa options.

Applying

- Apply through the official Thailand Privilege website or an authorised agent.
- There is a background check, and approval usually takes a few weeks.
- Once approved, you pay the fee and the visa is placed in your passport at an immigration office or a Thai embassy abroad.
- Keep copies of your membership documents. See Thai paperwork tips.

Common questions

Is the Thailand Privilege visa worth it? It depends on what you value. If you are under 50, have no remote income for a DTV, and fly a lot, the simplicity and airport service can be worth it. If money matters most, the DTV, retirement or education visas cost far less. I hold one, and at times it feels worth it, but there might have been less expensive options that made more sense for me.

Do you still do 90-day reports on a Privilege visa? Yes. Reports, a yearly extension stamp and a new visa every five years are still needed. The member team or an agent can help.

Can you work on a Thailand Privilege visa? No. You need a work permit and the right visa to work for anyone in Thailand.

Is Thailand Elite the same as Thailand Privilege? Yes. Thailand Elite was renamed Thailand Privilege in 2023, and older Elite memberships carry on under their original terms.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: The Thaiger, Thailand Privilege tiers and costs; IMI Daily, the Bronze tier. Sources disagree on the Reserve price and the Bronze closing date.

Prices and rules change. Confirm on the official Thailand Privilege website before you apply. This is general information and my personal experience, not immigration or financial advice.

VISAS & LEGAL

Thai Marriage Visa

Living in Thailand married to a Thai citizen: the Non-Immigrant O visa and one-year extension, the ฿400,000 or ฿40,000 a month money test, seasoning rules, documents, home visits and reporting.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/visas-legal/marriage-visa/

Visa	**Non-Immigrant O (spouse of a Thai citizen)**
Money	**฿400,000 in a Thai bank, or ฿40,000 monthly income**
Bank seasoning	**2 months before the first extension, 3 months before renewals**
Extension	**One year at a time, ฿1,900, at Jomtien immigration**
Reporting	**90-day reports and a re-entry permit to travel**

Quick answer: If you are legally married to a Thai citizen, you can live in Thailand on a marriage-based Non-Immigrant O visa and extend it one year at a time at the Jomtien immigration office. The marriage must be registered under Thai law. The money test is either ฿400,000 in a Thai bank account in your own name or an income of at least ฿40,000 a month. 2026 guides say the money should be in the account for two months before your first extension and three months before each renewal. The extension fee is ฿1,900, the file usually sits "under consideration" for about 30 days, and officers may visit your home. Same-sex spouses qualify too. Offices differ in the details, so check with Jomtien first.

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Who	Foreigners legally married to a Thai citizen, same-sex couples included
Visa	Non-Immigrant O, 90 days, then a one-year extension inside Thailand
Money	฿400,000 in a Thai bank in your name, or ฿40,000 a month income
Seasoning	2 months before the first extension; 3 months before renewals
Fee	฿1,900 per yearly extension (form TM.7)
Processing	About 30 days "under consideration", then a second visit for the stamp
Home visit	Possible, before or after the extension is granted
Ongoing	90-day reports, TM.30, a re-entry permit for trips abroad
Work	Not included; a work permit is a separate application

Who it is for

- You need a legal marriage, not a ceremony alone. A marriage in Thailand is registered at a district office (amphoe), and you receive the marriage certificate and its registration record (Kor Ror 2 and Kor Ror 3). A marriage registered abroad is recorded in Thailand as a family status registration (Kor Ror 22).
- Since the Marriage Equality Act took effect on 23 January 2025, a same-sex spouse of a Thai citizen can apply on the same basis, both for the 90-day visa abroad and the one-year stay inside Thailand.
- A partner, fiancé or fiancée doesn't qualify. A Thai wedding party without registration doesn't either. See Thai wedding customs and dating in Thailand.

Getting the first Non-O

There are two usual ways in.

- **From abroad:** apply for a 90-day Non-Immigrant O through the Thai e-visa system to the embassy for the country where you live. Embassies generally only accept residents of their area, and they set their own document lists and fees.
- **Inside Thailand:** some offices let you change from a visa exemption or tourist visa to a 90-day Non-O. A 2026 agency guide says you need at least 21 days left on your stay and the ฿400,000 already in a Thai bank, and that it usually takes three visits. Ask Jomtien first, because practice varies by office.
- Then, near the end of the 90 days, apply for the one-year extension.

The money requirement

- **Bank route:** ฿400,000 in a Thai savings account in your own name. The Thaiger's August 2026 guide says the money is held for two full months before the first application and three months before each renewal. Some guides say the full amount should stay in the account all year, so don't plan to spend it. See Thai bank account.
- **Income route:** at least ฿40,000 a month. Income from abroad is usually shown with an income letter from your embassy, but not every embassy issues one (an October 2026 guide names the US). Income from a Thai job is shown with a work permit and tax filings.
- **Your spouse's money doesn't count.** Immigration tests the foreign applicant's funds.
- **Combining the two:** sources disagree on whether a smaller deposit plus some income is accepted. Plan to meet one test in full.

- Some guides say offices may not apply the money test when the foreign spouse is the wife of a Thai man. Confirm with the office rather than relying on it.

The retirement route has different numbers (฿800,000 or ฿65,000 a month) and its own timing rules. See retirement visa.

Typical documents

- Passport, the TM.7 form and a 4 x 6 cm photo, with signed copies of the passport pages.
- Marriage certificate and Kor Ror 2 (or Kor Ror 22), with recent copies of the registration record; one guide says issued within the last six months.
- Your spouse's Thai ID card and house registration (tabien baan).
- Bank letter dated the day you apply, plus the bank book or statements, or your income evidence.
- Photos of you both at home, inside and outside with the house number visible, and a map to the house.
- Your TM.30 receipt and proof of address, such as a lease.

Offices outside Bangkok often want two signed copies of everything. See Thai paperwork tips.

The yearly extension

- File at Jomtien before your current permission ends, ideally in the last 30 days. Go early; see Jomtien immigration office for hours.
- Pay ฿1,900. You usually get an "under consideration" stamp of about 30 days, sometimes up to 45, then return for the one-year stamp.
- An officer may visit your home, before or after approval. Keep the photos and address details consistent with what you filed.
- The extension depends on the marriage. If the marriage ends, you need another basis to stay, so speak to immigration straight away.

Living on a marriage extension

- Report your address every 90 days. See 90-day reports.
- Get a re-entry permit before every trip abroad, or the extension is cancelled when you leave.
- The visa doesn't let you work, but spouses of Thai citizens can apply for a work permit with an employer. See working legally.
- Staying 180 days or more in a year can make you a Thai tax resident. See Thai tax basics.

Marriage or another visa?

VISA	MONEY	GOOD TO KNOW
Marriage (Non-O)	฿400,000 or ฿40,000 a month	Needs a registered marriage; home visits possible
Retirement	฿800,000 or ฿65,000 a month	Age 50 and over; no marriage needed
DTV	฿500,000 in savings	Five years; leave Thailand about once a year
Thailand Privilege	Membership fee up front	No yearly money test

See all the options on visa options.

Common questions

How much money do I need for a Thai marriage visa? ฿400,000 in a Thai bank in your name, or ฿40,000 a month income. Sources disagree on mixing the two.

How long must the ฿400,000 be in the bank? Usually two months before your first extension and three months before each renewal. Some guides say it should stay there all year.

Can same-sex couples get a Thai marriage visa? Yes, since the Marriage Equality Act took effect on 23 January 2025, if the marriage is legally registered.

Can I work on a marriage visa? Not without a work permit. With an employer, a spouse of a Thai citizen can apply for one.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: The Thaiger, marriage visa expiry and extensions (August 2026); Issa Compass, Thai marriage visa requirements 2026 (October 2026), a visa agency, cited for facts only; Expatica, Non-O visa Thailand (September 2026); Fragomen, visa pathways for same-sex spouses (March 2025). These are not official immigration pages, and they differ on combining income and savings and on how long the money stays. Rules change and offices differ: confirm with Jomtien immigration or a reputable agent before you apply. General information, not legal advice.

VISAS & LEGAL

Border Runs and Visa Runs from Pattaya

What a border run is, why the Cambodia van run from Pattaya stopped in 2025, the two-a-year land-border limit since 15 September 2026, flying out and back, proof of funds, and better long-stay options.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/visas-legal/border-runs/

What	**Leaving Thailand and coming back to get a new stay**
Cambodia land border	**Closed to tourists since June 2025, no reopening date (Nov 2026)**
Land borders	**Visa-exempt entries limited to two a calendar year (since 15 Sep 2026)**
New exemption stay	**30 days, extendable once by up to 30**
Risk	**Officers can refuse entry and ask for proof of funds**
Better	**An extension or a proper long-stay visa**

Quick answer: A border run, or visa run, means leaving Thailand and coming straight back for a new period of stay. The classic Pattaya run, a van to the Cambodian border and back in a day, isn't possible right now: Thailand closed its land crossings with Cambodia to tourists in June 2025, and in November 2026 the government said there is still no date to reopen them. On top of that, since 15 September 2026 most nationalities can enter on a visa exemption over a land border only twice per calendar year, and each new exemption gives 30 days, not the old 60. Flying out and back still works, but officers can refuse people who look like they live here on back-to-back exemptions. If you want to stay longer, an extension or a proper long-stay visa is safer and often cheaper.

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL (NOVEMBER 2026)
Cambodia land crossings	Closed to tourists and traders since June 2025; humanitarian exceptions only
Land-border exemption entries	Two per calendar year for most nationalities
Not limited	Nationals of Malaysia, Brunei, Indonesia and Singapore
Stay per exemption entry	30 days, extend once by up to 30 days (฿1,900)
Proof of funds	Can be asked at entry: ฿10,000 to ฿20,000 per person, by entry type
Arrival card	A new TDAC for every entry, free
Overstay	฿500 a day, up to ฿20,000

How border runs used to work

For years, agencies in Pattaya sold day trips by van to the Cambodian border, usually the crossings at Aranyaprathet (Poipet on the Cambodian side) or Hat Lek in Trat province. You stepped out of Thailand, into Cambodia, and back again with a fresh stamp. Many long-stayers lived like this for years, and you will still read old forum posts and see old adverts describing it.

That world has gone, for two reasons.

The Cambodian border in 2026

- Thailand shut its land crossings with Cambodia to most travellers, tourists and traders included, in June 2025 during the border dispute.
- In June 2026 the government denied social media claims that the Aranyaprathet checkpoint had reopened, and the Sa Kaeo governor said no checkpoint in the province was open. Crossings are allowed only case by case for humanitarian reasons.
- In early November 2026, Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul said the crossings would stay closed until border disputes, cross-border crime and security concerns are resolved, and that there is no date for reopening.
- Treat any agency still selling a Cambodia land run with great care. Check the news on the day you plan to travel.

The rules since 15 September 2026

- The visa exemption for about 60 countries is now 30 days on arrival, extendable once by up to 30 days at immigration. See visa extension.
- Entries on the exemption over land borders are generally limited to two per calendar year. The limit doesn't apply to nationals of Malaysia, Brunei, Indonesia and Singapore, or to others the minister designates.
- TAT's announcement doesn't set a number for entries by air. That doesn't mean unlimited: every entry is at the officer's discretion.

Flying out and back

With the Cambodian land border closed, a "visa run" today usually means a short flight to a nearby country and back. The closest land crossings that normally take tourists, to Laos and Malaysia, are a long way from Pattaya.

- Each new exemption entry gives 30 days. It doesn't add to the time you had.

- Fill in a new TDAC arrival card within three days before each arrival.
- Book the return flight with enough time to spare. Never stay past your permitted date waiting for a flight.
- Compare the cost of flights, a night away and airport transfers with the ฿1,900 extension at Jomtien. See U-Tapao airport and airport transfers.

What officers can ask for

Immigration can refuse entry to anyone, and people whose passports show months of back-to-back exemption stays get the most questions. Be ready to show:

- **Money:** TAT's July 2026 reminder lists ฿10,000 per person (฿20,000 per family) for transit and certain visa-exempt entries, and ฿20,000 per person (฿40,000 per family) for tourist and non-immigrant visas. The amount depends on how you enter, so carry ฿20,000 or recent bank evidence to be safe. Children under 12 are exempt.
- **An onward or return ticket** and where you are staying.
- **A reason for the visit** that matches your stamps. Someone who has spent most of the past year in Thailand on exemptions can look like they live here without the right visa.

Overstays

Overstaying costs ฿500 a day, up to ฿20,000, and long overstays can lead to a ban. Being caught inside Thailand on an overstay is far worse than paying at the airport. If a run falls through, go to immigration before your date runs out.

Better options

- **Extend first:** 30 days plus a 30-day extension is about 60 days on an exemption, or about 90 on a 60-day tourist visa plus 30. See visa extension.
- **Remote workers and long-stayers:** the DTV gives up to 180 days per entry, extendable once.
- **Over 50:** the retirement visa.
- **Married to a Thai citizen:** the marriage visa.
- **No yearly money test:** Thailand Privilege.

All of them are compared on visa options.

Pro tip: my number one advice: stay on a tourist visa, extend it, and in those 60 days talk to as many locals as possible for direct advice on the ground. Things in Pattaya are a bit different than online.

Common questions

Can I do a border run from Pattaya to Cambodia? Not at the moment. Thailand's land crossings with Cambodia have been closed to tourists since June 2025, with no reopening date as of November 2026.

How many times can I enter Thailand visa-free by land? Twice per calendar year for most nationalities since 15 September 2026. Malaysian, Bruneian, Indonesian and Singaporean nationals are not limited.

Is there a limit on visa-exempt entries by air? No number is published, but every entry is at the officer's discretion, and frequent back-to-back stays get questioned.

How long do I get after a visa run? 30 days on a new visa exemption, extendable once by up to 30 days.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: TAT Newsroom, new 30-day and 15-day visa exemption rules from 15 September 2026; TAT Newsroom, proof of funds reminder (6 July 2026); The Nation, government denies Aranyaprathet border reopening (1 June 2026); ASEAN NOW, Thailand to keep Cambodia border closed (November 2026). Border status can change quickly; check the news and the Thai embassy before you travel. General information, not legal advice.

Before you go

- Check the current entry rules for your nationality, they change.
- Carry proof of onward travel and enough money in case you are asked.
- Repeated runs can lead to questions or refusal at the border. Consider a longer visa. See visa options.

SECTION

🏠 Living in Pattaya

Practical help for living in Pattaya day to day: finding a condo, paying the bills, shipping and moving things around Thailand, getting a SIM, and dealing with the small problems nobody warns you about.

Quick answer: A single person can live in Pattaya on roughly ฿30,000 to ฿40,000 a month on a tight budget, or ฿50,000 to ฿70,000 comfortably, according to our 2026 cost pages. Rent is the biggest cost: a one-bed condo is about ฿10,000 to ฿20,000 a month on a one-year lease, usually with two months' deposit plus one month in advance. Air-con drives the electricity bill. In your first week, get a Thai SIM, make sure your TM30 address report is done, sort transport and register at a hospital.

Living costs at a glance (2026)

ITEM	TYPICAL COST	READ MORE
—	—	—
Monthly budget, tight single	About ฿30,000 to ฿40,000	Cost of living
Monthly budget, comfortable single	About ฿50,000 to ฿70,000	Budget examples
Comfortable couple	About ฿70,000 to ฿100,000	Budget examples
One-bed condo	About ฿10,000 to ฿20,000 a month	Renting a condo
Electricity, state rate	About ฿3.86 a unit (Sept to Dec 2026); condos often charge ฿5 to ฿8	Utilities and bills
Typical one-bed electricity bill	About ฿1,000 to ฿3,000 a month	Saving electricity
Water	A few hundred baht a month or less	Utilities and bills

From the linked pages, each checked in 2026 with its own sources. Jonny's own monthly spending and real utility bills are on the cost and bills pages.

Start here

- First week checklist: SIM, cash, TM30, bank, hospital.
- Renting a condo: rents, deposits and what to check.
- Cost of living: real monthly numbers.
- Utilities and bills: electricity, water and how to pay.
- SIM cards and eSIMs: AIS, True and registration.

How the living pages fit together

- **Your home:** renting a condo, renting a house, buy vs rent, buying a condo, condo rules, home internet, maids, repairs, bugs and noise.
- **Money and bills:** cost of living, budget examples, utilities, saving electricity and outages.
- **Everyday life:** SIMs, the LINE app, supermarkets, malls, laundry, drinking water, shipping parcels and rubbish.
- **Culture and language:** Thai etiquette, temple customs, useful phrases, learning Thai and the Pattaya glossary.
- **Health and fitness:** gyms, running and cycling and yoga.
- **Family, pets and community:** living with a dog, kids' activities, international schools, expat clubs and books and libraries.
- **Life stages:** moving abroad, digital nomads, coworking, snowbirds, retiring and elderly care.

Your first month, in order

- **Day 1:** a Thai SIM, cash, and check in with your landlord.
- **First days:** make sure your landlord has filed your TM30 address report; immigration asks for it later. See TM30.
- **Week 1:** sort transport, register at a hospital, and look at bank accounts if your visa allows one. See Thai bank account.
- **Weeks 2 to 4:** join groups and clubs, find your supermarket, gym and favourite cheap eats, and learn ten Thai phrases.

Paperwork you'll meet as a long-stayer

- **TM30:** your landlord reports where you live; immigration asks for it for extensions. See TM30.
- **90-day reports:** if you stay 90 days or more in a row, in person, by agent or online. See 90-day reports.
- **Re-entry permits:** before you leave Thailand on an extension, or you lose it. See re-entry permits.
- **Residence certificate:** often needed for a bank account or a driving licence. See paperwork tips.

Problems nobody warns you about

Power and water cuts, noisy neighbours and construction, ants and mosquitoes, slow internet in some buildings, and condo electricity charged above the state rate. None are serious, but they're easier when you know them in advance: ask about the electricity rate and the internet before you sign a lease, keep a torch and some bottled water, and pick a room away from bars and building sites. See outages, noise and sleep and bugs and pests.

Common questions

How much does it cost to live in Pattaya per month? Roughly ฿30,000 to ฿40,000 on a tight budget, ฿50,000 to ฿70,000 comfortably, for a single person in 2026.

How much is rent in Pattaya? A one-bed condo is about ฿10,000 to ฿20,000 a month on a one-year lease, depending on the area and building.

Which SIM card is best in Pattaya? AIS and True are the main networks; both sell tourist SIMs and eSIMs. Bring your passport to register.

Where do expats live in Pattaya? Jomtien, Pratumnak and East Pattaya for long stays; Central Pattaya for convenience. See where to stay.

Sources

- Our cost of living, budget examples, renting, utilities and SIM pages (checked 2026; state electricity rate for September to December 2026).
- Jonny James: his own spending and utility bills, published on those pages.

Shipping Parcels in Thailand

Sending parcels within Thailand from Pattaya: how we paid ฿63 for 4.1 kg with Flash Express, 7-Eleven and post office counters, what ID to bring, packing, addresses in Thai, and parcels from abroad.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/shipping-parcels/

We paid	**฿63 for 4.1 kg, Pattaya to Bangkok (Flash Express)**
Time to send	**Under five minutes**
7-Eleven SPEED-D	**Asked for a passport, not a Thai licence**
Thailand Post	**Asks senders for ID (passport for foreigners)**
From abroad	**VAT on every imported parcel since 1 Jan 2026**
Tip	**Have the address in Thai**

Quick answer: Sending a parcel within Thailand is cheap and quick. We sent a 4.1 kg box from Pattaya to Bangkok with Flash Express for ฿63 (฿60 freight plus a ฿3 fuel surcharge), and it took under five minutes at the counter. Courier branches such as Flash Express are on most main roads, some 7-Eleven stores have parcel counters, and Thailand Post handles both domestic and international mail. Bring your passport: 7-Eleven's SPEED-D service asked for it and would not take a Thai driving licence, and Thailand Post asks senders for ID. Have the recipient's address in Thai and their phone number ready. For anything too big to post, see moving things between cities.

At a glance

OPTION	GOOD FOR	WHAT WE KNOW
Flash Express	Everyday domestic parcels	฿63 for 4.1 kg to Bangkok; staff helped write the Thai address; name and phone were enough
7-Eleven (SPEED-D)	Convenience, long hours	Asked for a passport; a Thai driving licence was refused
Thailand Post	Domestic and international, EMS	Asks senders for ID; EMS fuel surcharge up ฿3 from 16 April 2026
Other couriers	Comparing prices	J&T Express and Kerry (KEX) are other big national networks
Lalamove	Furniture, motorbikes, same-day	Book a car, pickup or truck in the app

What happened when we shipped

The story is in I Shipped 4.1 kg Across Thailand for 63 Baht. In short:

- A box sold on Facebook Marketplace to a buyer in Bangkok, paid by QR bank transfer. See second-hand buy and sell.
- First stop, 7-Eleven's SPEED-D counter. Its system needed a passport as ID and would not accept a Thai driving licence, and there was no passport to hand.
- Second stop, the nearest Flash Express branch on foot. The assistant met us at the door, helped write the recipient's address in Thai, weighed the box and took payment. Only a name and phone number were needed.
- The receipt carries the tracking number, so it can be sent straight to the buyer.

Where to send from

- **Courier branches:** Flash Express branches are all over Pattaya. J&T Express and Kerry (KEX) are other big national networks. Prices are by weight and size, so it pays to compare for heavy boxes.
- **7-Eleven:** some stores have parcel counters. Bring your passport.
- **Thailand Post:** the national post office, for domestic EMS and registered parcels and for sending abroad. See post office shipping.
- Couriers raise fuel surcharges when fuel prices rise. Thailand Post added ฿3 an item to domestic EMS and eCo Post from 16 April 2026, while standard parcels and registered mail stayed the same.

ID: bring your passport

Thailand Post has asked parcel senders to show ID since 2015, with foreigners showing a passport, and the counter records your details. 7-Eleven's SPEED-D wanted a passport and refused a Thai driving licence. Flash Express only asked for a name and phone number. Rules can change by counter, so carrying your passport, or a clear photo plus your Thai phone number, saves a second trip. A Thai SIM helps here: see SIM cards and eSIMs.

Addresses in Thai

- Ask the recipient to send their address written in Thai, plus a phone number. Copying it is much faster than having staff translate.
- Staff at courier counters will usually help write a Thai address on the form, but it takes longer.
- The phone number matters most: riders call before delivery, and a parcel with no working number can bounce back.
- Add your own name and Thai phone number as sender.

Packing

- Use a sturdy box and fill the gaps so nothing moves.
- Many counters sell boxes and tape, so you can pack on the spot.
- Mark fragile items clearly and ask about insurance for anything valuable. Ask before you pay what the courier pays out if a parcel is lost.
- Don't send cash, anything flammable, or anything illegal in Thailand, such as vapes. Couriers can refuse or confiscate prohibited items.

Tracking and delivery

- Keep the receipt or the app record until the parcel arrives. It has the tracking number.
- Domestic delivery is usually one to three days, longer for remote areas and around holidays.
- If a parcel you didn't order turns up cash on delivery, refuse it rather than pay. If you think it's a scam, call 1441. See common scams.

Parcels from abroad

Since 1 January 2026, Thailand charges VAT and any import duty on every imported parcel. The old exemption for items worth under ฿1,500 has gone, so cheap online orders from overseas now cost a little more on arrival. For sending things home or moving your belongings, see post office shipping and moving to or from Thailand.

Common questions

What is the cheapest way to send a parcel in Thailand? Private couriers such as Flash Express are often cheapest for everyday boxes. We paid ฿63 for 4.1 kg from Pattaya to Bangkok. Compare a couple of counters for heavy parcels.

Can I send a parcel from 7-Eleven as a foreigner? Some stores have parcel counters. Their SPEED-D service asked us for a passport and refused a Thai driving licence, so bring your passport.

Do I need to write the address in Thai? It helps a lot. Staff can help, but having the address in Thai from the recipient is faster and avoids mistakes.

How long does domestic delivery take? Usually one to three days between big cities like Pattaya and Bangkok.

Do I pay tax on parcels from abroad? Yes. Since 1 January 2026 VAT applies to all imported parcels, with no ฿1,500 exemption.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: our own shipment, in I Shipped 4.1 kg Across Thailand for 63 Baht (26 September 2026); The Nation, Thailand Post fuel surcharge on EMS and eCo Post from 16 April 2026; Post and Parcel, Thailand Post requires sender ID (2015); Tilleke & Gibbins, end of the ฿1,500 import exemption on 1 January 2026. Courier prices and counter rules change; check at the counter.

Related guides

- Moving to or from Thailand: Shipping Your Things
- Dog-Friendly Pattaya: Cafés, Beaches and Walks
- Your First Week Living in Pattaya: Checklist
- Rubbish, Recycling and Plastic in Pattaya

LIVING IN PATTAYA

Moving Things Between Cities

Moving furniture, motorbikes and big items between Bangkok and Pattaya with Lalamove: what we paid for a round trip, vehicle sizes and weight limits, add-ons, and tips to avoid problems.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/moving-things-between-cities/

Service	**Lalamove app (Pattaya covered)**
We paid	**฿1,698, Bangkok to Pattaya and back, two deliveries**
Round trip	**Added in the app; Lalamove lists it at +70%**
Waiting	**First 25 minutes free, then charged**
Motorbikes	**Fence truck, up to 1,100 kg**
Good for	**Furniture, motorbikes, Marketplace buys**

Quick answer: For anything too big or awkward to post, Lalamove lets you book a car, pickup or truck in an app to collect something and deliver it, even between cities. We paid ฿1,698 (about $53) for a Bangkok to Pattaya to Bangkok round trip in a car, carrying one item each way; the app estimated about two hours each way. You see the price before you book, you can add stops or make it a round trip, and trucks can carry furniture and motorbikes. Waiting time is free for the first 25 minutes, and help with carrying is a paid add-on, so choose it when you book. For boxes and small parcels, shipping parcels is far cheaper.

At a glance: Lalamove vehicles in Pattaya

VEHICLE	WEIGHT LIMIT	LOAD SPACE (ABOUT)	GOOD FOR
Motorcycle	20 kg	50 x 40 x 50 cm	Documents, small items
Sedan	100 kg	90 x 100 x 70 cm	Boxes, luggage, long thin items
Hatchback	200 kg	110 x 110 x 80 cm	Several boxes or suitcases
SUV	300 kg	130 x 160 x 80 cm	Bigger loads that still need a roof
Pickup truck	1,100 kg	Open bed	Furniture, appliances
Box truck	1,100 kg	170 x 180 x 170 cm	Furniture that needs cover
Fence truck	1,100 kg	170 x 180 x 170 cm	Motorbikes, plants, equipment
Box truck jumbo	2,400 kg	180 x 300 x 200 cm	A room's worth of things

Limits are from Lalamove's Pattaya pricing page. Prices aren't published there: the app quotes each trip.

What we did

A pool cue needed collecting in Bangkok and bringing to Pattaya, and another cue in Pattaya needed to go back to Bangkok. Instead of two courier jobs or a 4+ hour round trip by road, one Lalamove car did a Bangkok to Pattaya to Bangkok round trip, more than 300 km, for ฿1,698. That made driving there ourselves pointless.

Good for

- Furniture and household items.
- Motorbikes, in a fence truck or pickup. See buying a scooter.
- Facebook Marketplace buys in another city, so you don't lose half a day collecting them. See second-hand buy and sell.
- Luggage, business stock and anything that won't fit in a parcel.

How booking works

- Sign up in the app with your phone number. A Thai number helps, as drivers call. See SIM cards and eSIMs.
- Set the pickup and drop-off. For a round trip or several deliveries, add the stops in order.
- Choose the vehicle by size, not price. A bigger vehicle can sometimes be sent for a smaller order.
- Add a note describing the item and anything fragile, with a contact name and phone number at each stop.
- Check the price before you confirm. Lalamove says fares depend on distance, traffic, tolls, demand and surcharges, and can change if you change the order.
- Track the driver live and share the link with whoever hands over or receives the item.
- Pay in the app (Lalamove wallet or an online payment method) or in cash to the driver.

Extra charges to know

- **Round trip:** Lalamove lists a round trip at an extra 70% of the one-way fare.

- **Extra stops:** a small fee for each added stop.
- **Waiting time:** the first 25 minutes are free. After that, a car or truck is charged for the first hour and then by the hour, so have the item ready.
- **Carrying:** drivers only load and unload if you add the door-to-door service. Bigger trucks offer an extra helper for a higher fee. Choose this if things go up or down stairs.
- **Tolls:** are one of the things that set the fare on intercity trips.
- **Cancelling:** free soon after a driver is matched (about 5 minutes for immediate orders, up to 45 minutes before pickup for scheduled ones). After that, fees apply.

Lalamove's add-on prices vary by vehicle and change, so check them in the app on the vehicle screen.

Tips

- Measure big items, and check them against the load space before choosing a vehicle.
- Wrap furniture, protect corners and take a photo of each item at pickup.
- Keep the receipt in the app in case anything goes wrong; damage claims go through Lalamove's complaint form.
- Don't send people, pets, chemicals or anything flammable. Lalamove doesn't carry them.
- Check your condo's rules on moving in and out, and book the service lift if needed. See condo living rules.

The full story

The full story is in Thailand Life Hack: Moving Stuff Between Cities. W Member Pros get the step-by-step booking guide there.

Common questions

Does Lalamove work in Pattaya? Yes. Lalamove has a Pattaya service with its own vehicle and pricing page, and we booked a Bangkok to Pattaya round trip in the app.

How much does Lalamove cost from Bangkok to Pattaya? It depends on the vehicle, stops, tolls and time. We paid ฿1,698 for a car round trip, Bangkok to Pattaya and back, with two deliveries. The app quotes before you book.

Can Lalamove move a motorbike? Yes. Lalamove lists the fence truck for motorcycles, and pickups can carry them too. Ask the driver how the bike will be strapped down.

Will the driver help carry things? Only if you add the door-to-door service. For heavy furniture, add an extra helper on the bigger trucks.

Smaller items

For boxes and small parcels, see shipping parcels. Moving overseas is a different job: see moving to or from Thailand.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: our own trip, in Thailand Life Hack: Moving Stuff Between Cities (19 September 2026); Lalamove Pattaya vehicle and pricing page (vehicle limits, round trip, waiting time, add-ons); Lalamove Thailand FAQ (fares, loading help, cancellations, payment, items it won't carry). Prices change with distance, vehicle, tolls and time of day.

Related guides

- Moving to or from Thailand: Shipping Your Things
- Drinking Water in Pattaya
- Your First Week Living in Pattaya: Checklist
- Dating in Thailand

LIVING IN PATTAYA

SIM Cards & eSIMs

SIM cards and eSIMs in Thailand: the main networks, tourist SIMs vs monthly plans, eSIMs before you fly, registration, top-ups, and why a Thai number matters for banking.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/sim-cards-esims/

Main networks	**AIS and True (TrueMove H)**
Tourist SIMs	**At the airport and in town**
Registration	**Passport in person, with a face check (since 16 May 2026)**
Limit	**3 SIMs per network for foreigners**
eSIM	**Available for newer phones**

Quick answer: Mobile data in Thailand is fast and cheap. The two main networks are AIS and True (TrueMove H, which merged with dtac; the dtac brand still runs on the same network), and both cover Pattaya well. For a holiday, a travel eSIM bought before you fly or a tourist SIM at the airport is easiest. If you live here, get a normal prepaid or monthly plan in your name, because Thai banks and apps send codes to your Thai number. Since 16 May 2026, new SIMs are registered in person with your passport and a face check, and foreigners can hold at most three SIMs per network.

At a glance

OPTION	BEST FOR	GOOD TO KNOW
Travel eSIM (bought online)	Short trips	Usually data only, no Thai number; check your phone is unlocked
Tourist SIM (airport or shop)	Trips up to a few weeks	Passport and face check in person; fixed days of data
Prepaid SIM with a Thai number	Long stays	Top up monthly; keep it active for banking codes
Monthly plan (postpaid)	Living here	Usually needs a longer visa or a Thai bank account

The 2026 registration rules

- The NBTC (Thailand's telecom regulator) brought in new rules from 16 May 2026.
- New SIMs are registered in person with your passport, and operators now use a live face check at the counter.
- Foreigners can hold up to three SIMs per network. Old, unused numbers in your name count, so cancel ones you don't use.
- A newly registered SIM must be activated within 60 days, or you go back in person to verify again.
- The rules were aimed at scam call centres. Your existing number keeps working; keep it registered in your own name.

Tourist SIMs

- Sold at airport counters, in network shops and in malls. Airport counters are convenient but often cost more than shops in town.
- Bring your passport; staff register the SIM and take a photo or face scan.
- Packages give a set number of days of data, sometimes with some call credit.
- For longer trips, a normal prepaid SIM topped up monthly is usually better value.

eSIMs

- If your phone supports eSIM, you can buy one from the networks or from travel eSIM apps before you fly, and be online the moment you land.
- Check your phone is unlocked before you buy.
- Many travel eSIMs are data only, with no Thai phone number. That is fine for a holiday, but not for Thai banking, ride apps that verify by SMS, or LINE accounts tied to a Thai number.
- The networks also sell eSIMs with a Thai number in their shops and apps, registered with your passport.

Living here

- A regular prepaid or monthly plan is much cheaper than tourist packages for longer stays.
- Keep your SIM registered in your name. Thai banks and apps send codes to it. See mobile banking apps.
- Don't let your number expire. Losing it can lock you out of your bank app, and getting a number back is slow.
- If your passport changes, update the registration at a network shop.

Pro tip: I've had the same dtac number for nine years, bought at the dtac store in Central Festival. I use the app and prepay each month for a 50GB pack at 10Mbps, paid from my Kasikorn account. It's more than enough for daily life here.

Topping up

- Top up at 7-Eleven, in the network's app, or through your banking app.

- Prepaid numbers can expire if you don't top up for a while, so check the validity date in the app.
- Data packs are often cheaper bought in the app than at the counter.

Using your phone here

- Ride apps, food delivery and LINE all work best with a Thai number. See Bolt and Grab and the LINE app guide.
- Keeping a home number too? You can run two numbers on one phone with dual SIM or eSIM.
- Home internet is cheap if you stay longer. See home internet.

Repairs and new phones

See phone repair and electronics.

Safety

- Never share one-time codes sent to your phone. Banks and networks never ask for them.
- Scam calls often claim to be from a network, the police or a parcel company. Hang up and call the official number. See online safety and common scams.

Common questions

Which is better in Pattaya, AIS or True? Both cover the city well. If you travel a lot outside Pattaya, check each network's coverage map for the places you'll go.

Do I need a passport to buy a SIM in Thailand? Yes, in person, and since May 2026 with a face check.

Can I keep my Thai number when I leave? Yes, if you keep it topped up and active. Check how long your network keeps a prepaid number without top-ups.

Is a travel eSIM enough? For a holiday, usually. For banking and living here, get a Thai number.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Lex Bangkok, Thailand SIM card rules 2026 (NBTC notification in force 16 May 2026). Prices and packages change often; check the network's app.

LIVING IN PATTAYA

Your First Week Living in Pattaya: Checklist

Just moved to Pattaya? A practical checklist for your first week: SIM registration with a face check, cash, the condo walk-round, TM.30 and visa dates, getting around, a bank account, hospital registration and meeting people.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/first-week-checklist/

Before you land	**TDAC arrival card, within 3 days of arriving**
Day 1	**Thai SIM in person with passport and face check**
Home	**Photograph the room, note the meters, ask the power rate**
Paperwork	**Get your TM.30 receipt; note your stay-until date**
Week 1	**Register at a hospital; save 1669, 191 and 1155**
Money	**ATM fees about ฿220 to ฿250 on foreign cards**

Quick answer: Your first week in Pattaya is about getting connected, getting your paperwork straight and learning your neighbourhood. On day one, get a Thai SIM (in person, with your passport and a face check since 16 May 2026), some cash, and walk round your condo with the landlord, photographing everything. In the first few days, make sure your landlord has filed the TM.30 address report and note the date your permission to stay ends. Then sort transport, groceries and drinking water, register at a hospital near home, save the emergency numbers, and join your building's LINE group. A bank account comes later for most people, once you have a long-stay visa. If you are still planning the move, see moving to Thailand.

At a glance

WHEN	JOB	WHY
Before you land	TDAC arrival card	Required for every entry, free, within 3 days of arriving
Day 1	Thai SIM, cash, condo walk-round	Banks, apps and landlords use your Thai number
Days 2 to 3	TM.30 receipt, visa dates	Immigration asks for the TM.30 for extensions and reports
Days 2 to 4	Transport, groceries, water	Baht buses, Bolt and Grab; refill water for about ฿1 a litre
Days 4 to 7	Hospital card, emergency numbers	Much easier before you are ill
End of week	Bank account (if your visa allows), LINE groups, clubs	Bills, PromptPay and friends

Before you land

- Fill in the free TDAC arrival card at the official site within the three days before you arrive. Sites that charge are agents.
- If you will ride a scooter, bring an International Driving Permit that covers motorcycles, plus your home licence.
- Bring regular medicines in their original packs, with prescriptions. See pharmacies and medicines.

Day one

- **SIM card:** since 16 May 2026, new SIMs are registered in person with your passport and a face check, and foreigners can hold at most three SIMs per network. Get one in your own name; Thai banks and apps send codes to it. See SIM cards and eSIMs.
- **Cash:** foreign cards usually pay about ฿220 to ฿250 per ATM withdrawal, so take out larger amounts less often and always choose to be charged in baht. See ATM fees.
- **The walk-round:** go through the condo or house with the landlord. Photograph marks and damage, test the air-con, hot water and appliances, note the electricity and water meter readings, and keep a copy of the contract.
- **Ask:** the electricity rate per unit, how and when to pay bills, who to call for repairs, and who pays for them. See utilities and bills and home repairs.
- **Water:** most people don't drink tap water. Find the nearest refill machine or 7-Eleven. See drinking water.

Paperwork in the first few days

- Your landlord should file the TM.30 address report within 24 hours of you arriving. Ask for the receipt and keep a photo of it.
- Find the "permitted to stay until" date in your passport and put it in your calendar. A visa exemption is now 30 days, extendable once by up to 30 for ฿1,900; overstay costs ฿500 a day. See visa extension.
- If you will stay 90 days in a row, note your first 90-day report date.
- Find the Jomtien immigration office on Soi 5: open Monday to Friday, 08:30 to 12:00 and 13:00 to 16:30.

Getting around

- Baht buses cost ฿15 on the normal loop since 10 April 2026, and up to about ฿20 on longer runs. See baht buses.
- Bolt and Grab both work for cars and motorbike taxis; compare the two apps. See Bolt and Grab.
- Registered motorbike taxi riders now wear blue vests. Agree the price first. See motorbike taxis.

- Renting a scooter? Helmet always, and the right licence. See renting a scooter.

Shopping and the home

- Big C, Lotus's and Makro for big shops, Tops and Foodland for a weekly shop, and Villa Market for imported food. See supermarkets.
- Shops can sell alcohol from 11am to midnight, but on the five Buddhist holy days most shops, including 7-Eleven and supermarkets, may not sell it. See Buddhist holidays and alcohol.
- Sort out home internet if it isn't included. See home internet.
- Learn your building's rules on guests, key cards, pools and rubbish. See condo living rules.

Money and banking

- Most banks want a long-stay non-immigrant visa before they open an account, so many new arrivals wait. See Thai bank account.
- Once you have one, the banking app and PromptPay QR payments make daily life easier. See mobile banking apps and PromptPay.
- Never share one-time codes. If you lose money to an online scam, call 1441 at once. See common scams.

Health and safety

- Register at a hospital near home with your passport. You get a patient card with a hospital number (HN). See registering at a hospital.
- Save the numbers: 1669 ambulance, 191 police, 199 fire and 1155 Tourist Police. See emergency numbers.
- Save your address in Thai on your phone for taxis and emergencies.
- Take the heat seriously for the first weeks: water, shade and sunscreen. See heat and sun safety.

Meeting people

- Install LINE and join your building's group. Add an email and password in LINE's settings so you keep the account if you change SIM. See LINE app.
- Find clubs and groups. See expat clubs.
- Join our forum and Telegram community to ask anything.

Common questions

What should I do first after moving to Pattaya? Get a Thai SIM in your name, some cash, and walk round your home with the landlord, photographing everything.

Can I open a Thai bank account in my first week? Usually only if you already hold a long-stay non-immigrant visa. Many people on short stays can't, so plan on cards and cash at first.

Do I need to report my address? Your landlord files the TM.30 within 24 hours. Ask for the receipt, because immigration may want it for extensions and 90-day reports.

Can I register a SIM online? New SIMs are now registered in person with your passport and a face check, so go to a network shop or authorised dealer.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Lex Bangkok, Thailand SIM card rules 2026 (in-person registration, three SIMs per operator for foreigners). Visa, TM.30, transport, alcohol, banking and emergency details match our linked guide pages. Rules and fares change; check the linked page before you rely on a number.

Useful next steps

- See opening a Thai bank account.
- See TM30.

LIVING IN PATTAYA

Retiring in Pattaya

A starting point for retiring in Pattaya: which retirement visa route fits, the money rules, pensions and tax, health insurance and care as you age, where retirees live, and staying active, with links to every detailed page.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/retiring-in-pattaya/

Visa	**Retirement route from age 50, renewed yearly**
Money	**฿800,000 in a Thai bank, or ฿65,000 a month, or a mix**
O-A visa	**Needs ฿3,000,000 or US$100,000 health cover**
Insurance	**Many Thai plans stop new members at about 65 to 75**
Tax	**180+ days a year can make you a Thai tax resident**
Care homes	**Must hold a Department of Health Service Support licence**

Quick answer: Pattaya is one of Thailand's most popular places to retire: warm all year, with private hospitals, a large expat community and day-to-day costs below most Western countries. The legal side is a retirement-based stay for people aged 50 or over, renewed a year at a time at Jomtien immigration, with ฿800,000 in a Thai bank, ฿65,000 a month of income, or a mix. The things that catch retirees out are usually money and health, not the visa: health insurance gets harder to buy with age, Medicare and some state pensions don't follow you here in full, and foreign income brought in can be taxed. Each section below points to the detailed guide.

At a glance

TOPIC	WHAT TO KNOW	DETAILED GUIDE
Visa	Age 50+, yearly extension, ฿1,900 a time, 90-day reports	Retirement visa
Money rule	฿800,000 in a Thai bank, ฿65,000 a month, or a mix	Thai bank account
Health cover	Buy early; required for the O-A visa	Health insurance
Care later on	Caregivers, nurses and licensed care homes	Elderly care
Budget	About ฿30,000 to ฿40,000 a month frugal, single	Monthly budgets
Tax	Remitted foreign income can be taxable	Thai tax basics

Choosing a visa route

There are two main ways in, and the difference is mostly insurance:

- **Non-Immigrant O, then yearly extensions.** A Non-O retirement visa from a Thai embassy gives 90 days; you then extend for a year at a time at Jomtien immigration. Health insurance usually isn't required for these extensions, which is why many Pattaya retirees use this route.
- **Non-Immigrant O-A, applied for at home.** A year from the start, but it needs health cover of at least ฿3,000,000 or US$100,000, plus a police check and medical certificate.
- The bank route has timing rules: the money is usually in place two months before you apply, kept three months after, and never below ฿400,000. The full detail is on the retirement visa page.
- You still do 90-day reports and need a re-entry permit before trips abroad, or the extension is lost.
- Alternatives: the paid Thailand Privilege membership, the marriage visa if you marry a Thai citizen, and the government's LTR visa, which has a "wealthy pensioner" category for people 50 and over. Its income rules changed in 2025 and sources disagree on the current figures, so check the Board of Investment's LTR site directly.

Money, pensions and tax

- Open a Thai bank account early: you need one for the bank-balance route and for paying bills. See sending money to Thailand.
- See monthly budget examples and cost of living, and allow for exchange rate swings.
- **UK State Pension:** Thailand is one of the countries where it is "frozen": British pensioners living here don't get the yearly increase paid in the UK, as The Thaiger reported in October 2024. Check your own case with the UK International Pension Centre.
- **US Medicare** says it usually doesn't cover health care outside the US, so it is not a substitute for cover here.
- **Tax:** if you spend 180 days or more in Thailand in a calendar year, you are usually a tax resident, and foreign income you bring into Thailand can be taxable under the rule in force since 1 January 2024. A proposed relief for money remitted soon after it is earned was still a draft, not law, according to a Thai law firm's tracker updated in November 2026. Whether a pension is taxed here depends on the tax treaty with the paying country. See Thai tax basics and get advice for your situation.

Health, insurance and care

- Private hospitals are good and fast, and they charge accordingly. Register at one near home before you need it. See hospitals and clinics, hospital costs and registering at a hospital.

- Insurance is easiest to buy while you are younger and healthy. Many Thai policies stop taking new members at about 65 to 75, and conditions you already have are often excluded. International policies are often more flexible on age. The whole comparison is on health insurance.
- If you or a partner may need help later, read elderly care: caregivers, visiting nurses and care homes, which must hold a Department of Health Service Support licence. Thai state elderly benefits are for Thai nationals.
- Yearly checkups are sold as packages by private hospitals. See health checkups and pharmacies and medicines.

Where to live

- Most retirees rent first. See renting a condo and renting a house.
- Foreigners can own a condo unit within a building's 49% foreign quota, but can't own land directly. Think hard before buying. See buy or rent and buying a condo.
- Quieter areas popular with long-stayers: Jomtien, Pratumnak, Mabprachan and Huay Yai. Check the walk or ride to a hospital, a pharmacy and a supermarket, not only the view.

Pro tip: for a retiree, I'd pick Jomtien. It can save money and it's a lighter experience than the middle of the city.

Staying active and connected

- The Pattaya City Expats Club meets on Wednesday mornings with talks and an open forum, and the Pattaya Sports Club runs golf, darts, bowling and more. See expat clubs.
- See golf courses and running and cycling.
- A little Thai goes a long way with neighbours, doctors and officials. See learning Thai.
- If you want to drive, swap to a Thai licence once you are settled. See Thai driving licence.

Planning ahead

- Keep a one-page sheet of your medicines, allergies, hospital number, insurer and emergency contacts, and copies of your visa papers.
- Watch out for money pressure from new friends or partners. See love scams and common scams; if you lose money to an online scam, call 1441.

Common questions

What is the minimum age to retire in Thailand? 50. Under 50, look at the DTV or Thailand Privilege.

Do I need health insurance to retire in Pattaya? For the O-A visa, yes: at least ฿3,000,000 or US$100,000. For Non-O extensions inside Thailand it usually isn't required, but going without cover is a real risk as you age.

Is my pension taxed in Thailand? It can be, if you are tax resident and bring it into Thailand. Tax treaties decide some cases, and the rules were under review in 2026, so ask a tax adviser.

Where do retirees live in Pattaya? Many choose Jomtien, Pratumnak or quieter areas such as Mabprachan in East Pattaya and Huay Yai to the south-east.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Royal Thai Consulate-General Los Angeles, Non-O, O-A and O-X retirement visas (updated 29 October 2026); Thai Law Online, remittance tax exemption status (updated November 2026); The Thaiger, UK pensions frozen in Thailand (October 2024); Medicare.gov, travel outside the U.S.. Visa, insurance and care figures match our retirement visa, health insurance and elderly care pages, checked the same day. Sources disagree on the LTR wealthy pensioner income rules. General information, not legal, tax or financial advice.

Useful next steps

- See the retirement visa.
- See the Thailand Privilege visa.
- See health insurance.

LIVING IN PATTAYA

Wintering in Pattaya: A Snowbird Guide

Escaping the northern winter? How to spend three to six months in Pattaya: the right visa for a long stay, monthly rentals and fake listings, budgets, health cover, the haze season and staying busy.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/snowbirds-winter-stay/

Season	**November to March is the cool, dry high season**
Visa exemption	**30 days, extend once by up to 30 (since 15 Sep 2026)**
Up to 90 days	**Tourist visa (60 days, extend by 30)**
Age 50+	**Non-O visa (90 days), applied for before you fly**
Rent	**Contracts of a month or more; book early for December to February**
Health	**Home insurance and Medicare usually don't cover you here**

Quick answer: Pattaya's cool, dry season runs roughly November to March, and December to February average only one or two rainy days a month. It is also high season, so the best monthly rentals go early. Plan the visa first: since 15 September 2026 the visa exemption is 30 days, extendable once by up to 30, which covers about two months at most. For up to about three months, apply for a tourist visa (60 days plus a 30-day extension) before you fly. If you are 50 or over, a Non-Immigrant O visa gives 90 days and can lead to a one-year extension if you meet the money rules. Rent for a month or more and buy health cover that works in Thailand.

At a glance

HOW LONG YOU STAY	USUAL ROUTE	MAIN POINT
Up to about 60 days	Visa exemption plus one extension	30 days on arrival, then ฿1,900 for up to 30 more
Up to about 90 days	Tourist visa (TR)	60 days, then one 30-day extension; apply online before you fly
90 days to a full winter, age 50+	Non-Immigrant O (retirement)	90 days; a one-year extension needs ฿800,000 or ฿65,000 a month
Up to 180 days per entry	DTV	Only for remote workers or people on a qualifying course or activity

When to come

- The cool, dry season is roughly November to March. December to February are the driest months; April is the hottest. See weather by month.
- Christmas and New Year are the peak of the high season, when flights and short rentals cost the most. See Christmas in Pattaya.
- The dry months are also the worst for air quality. Check daily PM2.5 readings if you have asthma or a heart condition. See air quality.

Visas for a winter stay

The old 60-day exemption ended on 15 September 2026, so last winter's plan may not work. Your options, shortest first:

- **Visa exemption:** 30 days on arrival for about 60 nationalities, extendable once by up to 30 days at Jomtien immigration for ฿1,900. Overstay costs ฿500 a day, up to ฿20,000. See visa extension.
- **Tourist visa (TR):** 60 days per entry, extendable once by 30 days, so about 90 days in all. Apply on the official Thai e-visa site before you travel.
- **Non-Immigrant O (retirement), age 50+:** the Royal Thai Consulate-General in Los Angeles lists 90 days, a single-entry fee of US$80, and proof of ฿800,000 in the bank or a pension of ฿65,000 a month. Fees differ by embassy. If you want to stay past 90 days, you can apply inside Thailand for a one-year extension, which has its own bank-balance timing rules. See retirement visa.
- Leaving and coming back on a new exemption is limited and can be refused. See border runs.
- Fill in the free TDAC arrival card within the three days before each arrival, and keep your landlord's TM.30 receipt for any extension.

Renting for a season

- Monthly rentals cost more per month than a one-year lease, and many owners only offer yearly contracts. See renting a condo.
- Under the 2004 Hotel Act, stays of under 30 days count as hotel business and need a licence, and most condo buildings ban daily lets. A contract of at least a month is the normal, legal choice; for shorter stays, use a hotel or serviced apartment.
- Book December to February months ahead. A November 2025 warning from a Pattaya agency said short contracts are scarce in popular buildings and that very cheap central listings are often fake.
- Before you send a deposit: video-call the agent or owner, ask for a live video viewing, and pay only an account in the name of the person you are dealing with.
- Ask the electricity rate per unit before you sign. Condo and landlord rates are often well above the state rate. See utilities and bills.
- Quieter Jomtien and Pratumnak suit long stays. See where to stay.

Money

- Our monthly budget examples start at about ฿30,000 to ฿40,000 a month for a frugal single person, before high-season rent premiums.

- Foreign cards usually pay about ฿220 to ฿250 per ATM withdrawal, so take out larger amounts less often and always choose baht. See ATM fees and exchanging money.
- Thailand usually treats you as a tax resident once you spend 180 days or more in one calendar year. A November to March stay is split over two years, but check your own dates. See Thai tax basics.

Health and insurance

- Medicare says it usually doesn't cover health care outside the US, and in most cases you pay all the costs. Many national and home policies are similar, so buy cover that works here for the whole stay. See health insurance.
- Bring regular medicines in their original packs with the prescription. Thailand allows up to 30 days' supply, and controlled medicines need a Thai FDA permit. See pharmacies and medicines.
- Register at a hospital near your rental in your first week. See registering at a hospital and health checkups.

Staying busy

- The Pattaya City Expats Club meets on Wednesday mornings with a talk and an open forum, and the Pattaya Sports Club runs golf, darts and other groups. See expat clubs.
- Golf is a big winter draw; weekday green fees published by courses ran from about ฿1,500 to ฿6,500 in November 2026. See golf on a budget.
- See also running and cycling and learning Thai.

Before you fly

- Visa chosen, and applied for online if you need one.
- Insurance for the whole stay, including motorbike riding if you will ride, plus an International Driving Permit with motorcycles.
- Rental contract signed, with the deposit, power rate and end date in writing.

Common questions

Can I spend the whole winter on the visa exemption? Not any more. Since 15 September 2026 it is 30 days, plus one extension of up to 30. For a longer winter, get a tourist visa (about 90 days with its extension) or, if you are 50 or over, a Non-O visa.

Can I rent a condo for two weeks? Legally, stays under 30 days need a hotel licence, and most condos ban them. Book a hotel or serviced apartment for short stays and a monthly contract for longer ones.

Is the air bad in Pattaya in winter? It can be: PM2.5 haze is worst in the cool, dry season. Check daily readings, and ask a doctor if you have a lung or heart condition.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Royal Thai Consulate-General Los Angeles, Non-Immigrant O retirement (updated 29 October 2026); The Thaiger, Thailand visa requirements 2026 (tourist visa); Medicare.gov, travel outside the U.S.; Thailand Business News, short-term rentals and the Hotel Act (updated December 2025); Cornerstone Real Estate, high season rental warning (November 2025, an agency). The 30-day exemption, extension fee and overstay figures match our visa extension page, checked the same day. Visa rules and embassy fees change; check the embassy you apply to.

Useful next steps

- Book condos early for December to February, the busiest months.
- See visa options.

LIVING IN PATTAYA

Elderly Care and Home Nursing in Pattaya

Care options for older residents and visiting parents in Pattaya: home caregivers and visiting nurses, licensed care homes and what to check after the October 2026 inspections, typical costs, insurance, visas and planning ahead.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/elderly-care/

Options	**Home caregivers, visiting nurses, care homes**
Licence	**Care homes need a Department of Health Service Support licence**
2026	**Nationwide inspections of about 1,200 licensed care facilities ordered in October**
State benefits	**Old age allowance is for Thai nationals**
Not advice	**General information; see a doctor about care needs**

Quick answer: Older people in Pattaya can get help at home from a caregiver or a visiting nurse, or move into a care home or assisted-living residence. Care homes in Thailand must hold a licence from the Department of Health Service Support (DHSS), and in October 2026 the government ordered inspections of all 1,203 registered care facilities after an abuse case, so always ask to see the licence. Costs vary widely, from the low tens of thousands of baht a month for shared or part-time care to well over ฿100,000 for 24-hour one-to-one care. Thai state elderly benefits are for Thai nationals, so plan for private costs, insurance and a visa that fits. This page is general information: talk to a doctor about the level of care someone needs.

At a glance

OPTION	SUITS	THINGS TO CHECK
Part-time caregiver at home	Help with meals, bathing, errands, company	Training, references, hours, cover for days off
Live-in caregiver	Someone who needs help day and night	Room and food, rest day, legal status to work
Visiting nurse	Wound care, injections, care after a hospital stay	Nursing licence, which hospital or agency they work through
Care home or nursing home	Daily care with staff on site	DHSS licence, licensed bed count, night staffing, hospital transfer plan
Assisted living or retirement residence	Independent people who want support nearby	What care is included, what costs extra, contract and deposit

Care at home

Many families start with care at home. A caregiver helps with meals, bathing, mobility and company, part-time or live-in; visiting nurses handle medical tasks after a hospital stay. Ask the hospital where the person is treated whether it can arrange home nursing, physiotherapy or equipment such as a hospital bed. See hospitals and clinics and registering at a hospital.

When you interview a caregiver or agency:

- Ask about training, past jobs and references you can call.
- Agree hours, tasks, a weekly rest day and what happens when they are sick.
- If you hire a non-Thai worker directly, they need a valid work permit. See working legally.
- Thailand's 2024 rules for domestic workers set a minimum wage, at least one rest day a week, paid public holidays and paid sick leave. Our maids and cleaning page has the details.

Care homes and assisted living

A licensed care home must stay within the beds and services on its licence. A day care centre provides care without overnight stays; a nursing home provides care with overnight stays. In October 2026, after complaints that residents of care facilities had been confined and assaulted, the government ordered on-site inspections of all 1,203 care facilities registered with the DHSS within two months, checking premises, safety systems, qualified staff and services. The same month a home in Kanchanaburi had its licence revoked for taking more residents than its licence allowed and admitting psychiatric patients without authorisation.

What to check before you choose:

- Ask to see the DHSS licence, and compare the number of beds with what the licence allows.
- Visit more than once, at different times of day, including evening. Meet the staff, talk to residents and families, and try the food.
- Ask how many caregivers are on duty per resident, especially at night. A guide published in October 2026 notes that Thai law sets no minimum staff ratio.
- Ask which hospital they use and how fast they can transfer someone.
- Get an itemised quote (room, care hours, medicines, supplies, laundry, doctor visits) and read the deposit and notice terms. Ask about a trial stay.
- If a home looks unlicensed, unsafe or overcrowded, you can report it to the provincial public health office.

What it costs

We couldn't find reliable published prices for Pattaya care homes, so get quotes. As a guide, a review of Thai retirement homes published in October 2026 gives:

- Full-time private nurse: about ฿37,500 a month. Part-time nursing about ฿12,500 a month for 8 hours a day, or ฿25,000 for 16 hours.

- Home-care agencies in Bangkok: about ฿1,200 for a 4-hour visit and ฿3,500 a day for 24-hour live-in care.
- Full-service retirement homes in Chiang Mai: from about ฿52,000 a month before nursing care, with 24-hour one-to-one care adding over ฿100,000.
- Shared, budget arrangements: from the low tens of thousands of baht a month.

Agencies cost more than hiring directly, but check staff and send replacements. Many homes ask for a deposit of about one month's fee plus the first month in advance. See hospital costs.

Health insurance and money

Health insurance gets harder to buy and more expensive with age. Many Thai policies stop taking new members at about 65 to 75, and conditions you already have are often excluded. The O-A retirement visa needs cover of at least ฿3,000,000 or US$100,000. Keep an emergency fund you can reach quickly, because private hospitals may ask for a deposit before treatment. See health insurance.

Visas for older residents and visiting parents

- People aged 50 and over who meet the money rules can live here on a retirement visa, extended yearly.
- A parent coming to visit can usually enter visa-free for 30 days (since 15 September 2026) and extend once by up to 30 days for ฿1,900. See visa extension.

Planning ahead

- Keep a one-page sheet with medicines, allergies, conditions, doctor and hospital, insurance details and emergency contacts. Give copies to the care home or caregiver.
- Register at your chosen hospital before you need it.
- Discuss wishes for treatment, and who can make decisions, while everyone is well. Ask a lawyer about a Thai will and power of attorney.
- Loneliness is a real risk for older people living far from family. Clubs and regular routines help. See expat clubs and mental health support.
- Ambulance: **1669**. See emergency numbers.

Common questions

Are care homes in Thailand regulated? Yes. Care homes and day care centres for older people need a licence from the Department of Health Service Support under the Health Establishment Act 2016. All registered facilities were ordered to be inspected from October 2026.

Can foreigners use Thai state elderly care? Generally not. State benefits such as the old age allowance require Thai nationality, so foreign residents should plan to pay privately or through insurance.

Can my parent visit and stay for a few months? On a visa-free entry they get 30 days, extendable once by up to 30 days. Longer stays need a visa. People aged 50 and over may qualify for a retirement visa.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: The Nation, government orders checks on 1,203 elderly care facilities (11 October 2026); The Nation, Kanchanaburi nursing home licence revoked (October 2026); Thailand.go.th, registering a care business for older or dependent people; Thailand Starter Kit, choosing a retirement home (October 2026) (cost figures and checklist); Thailand.go.th, Senior Living Allowance registration (Thai nationality required); ILO, Thai domestic work rules (revised June 2025); Pattaya Mail, Pattaya as a long-stay retirement city (April 2026). Insurance and visa figures match our health insurance and visa extension pages, checked the same day. Cost figures are mostly from Bangkok and Chiang Mai, not Pattaya. General information, not medical, legal or financial advice.

More for retirees

See retiring in Pattaya and accessible Pattaya.

Useful next steps

- See hospitals and clinics.
- See accessible Pattaya.

LIVING IN PATTAYA

Renting a Condo in Pattaya

What a condo costs to rent in Pattaya, deposits and contracts, electricity rates, TM.30, and how to avoid the common problems.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/renting-a-condo/

One-bed rent	**Roughly ฿10,000 to ฿20,000 a month**
Typical deposit	**2 months, plus 1 month in advance**
Electricity	**State rate about ฿4 to ฿5 a unit; some buildings charge more**
Paperwork	**Your landlord files a TM.30 when you move in**

Most foreigners who stay in Pattaya for more than a few weeks rent a condo. There are thousands to choose from, and with a little care it's straightforward. These are the things to know before you sign.

What it costs

- **Studios** start around ฿7,000 to ฿8,000 a month in older buildings away from the beach.
- **One-bedroom condos** typically rent for about ฿10,000 to ฿20,000 a month on a one-year lease.
- New buildings, sea views and beachfront locations cost more. Soi Buakhao and Jomtien's back streets are usually cheaper than Pratumnak or Wong Amat.
- Monthly and short lets cost more per month than a one-year contract.

These are rough 2026 ranges from rental listings, not quotes. Prices move with the season.

Deposits and contracts

- For a one-year lease, two months' deposit plus one month's rent in advance is common. Short lets often ask for less.
- Get a written contract that says the rent, the deposit, what's included and what happens if you leave early. Leaving before the end usually costs you the deposit.
- Walk round with the owner or agent before moving in and photograph everything, including marks and damage, so there's no argument at the end.
- In most cases the owner pays the agent's commission, not you.

Bills

- **Electricity** is the big one, because of air-con. The state rate is around ฿4 to ฿5 a unit, but some buildings and owners charge more. Ask the rate per unit before you sign.
- **Water** is usually cheap, often charged per unit or as a flat fee.
- **Internet** is either included or a monthly contract of a few hundred baht.
- The building's common-area fee is normally paid by the owner. Check the contract.

Small repairs can turn into big ones. Our ฿699 water heater swap is a good example of why it's worth agreeing who fixes what.

TM.30 and immigration

When a foreigner moves in, the owner has to report it to immigration on a form called the TM.30, usually within 24 hours. Ask for a copy of the receipt. You'll need proof of address for visa extensions and 90-day reports at the Jomtien immigration office.

Finding one

- Walk around the area you like and ask at the building's office (the "juristic office"). They often know which units are free.
- Facebook rental groups and property websites have thousands of listings.
- Agents are useful if you want someone to do the searching, and you usually don't pay them.

Before you sign

- Run the shower and taps, try every air-con unit and check the internet speed.
- Visit in the evening to hear what the noise is like.
- Check the parking if you have a scooter.
- Get the deposit-return terms in writing.

Pro tip (as of Nov 2026): I rented a 15th-floor studio at The Markland, on Soi 1 overlooking Soi 2. In my opinion it has the best view in Pattaya, over the city and the bay. I paid ฿15,000 for one unit, then ฿19,000 for the one next door when I went back. The downside of a studio is that a wall between the bedroom and living area is good to have, especially in a relationship. It isn't pet-friendly, so I can't go back with my dog. Personally, I like Central, North and South Pattaya, and the Darkside, Jomtien and Naklua feel too far from the excitement. But if you want to save money or only go out once a week, you can get more space, such as a house on the Darkside. Jomtien can save money too, and it's a lighter experience. Learn some Thai and you may save more and get a more authentic experience outside the city.

Choosing an area

- Central Pattaya and Soi Buakhao for value and nightlife, Jomtien and Pratumnak for calm and beaches, Naklua for local life. See where to stay.
- Check the noise: which side faces the road or a bar. See noise and sleep.

Moving in

- Photograph the room and meters on day one, and list any damage with the owner.
- Ask how to pay rent and bills. See utilities and bills.
- Read the building rules. See condo living rules.
- Set up internet early. See home internet.

Thinking long term

- Compare renting with buying. See buy or rent.
- See monthly budget examples and first week checklist.

Related guides

- Buy or Rent in Pattaya?
- Retiring in Pattaya
- Wintering in Pattaya: A Snowbird Guide
- Home Repairs and Handymen in Pattaya
- Buying a Condo in Pattaya as a Foreigner
- Renting a House in Pattaya
- Saving Money on Electricity

Thai Etiquette: Simple Dos and Don’ts

The everyday manners that help you get along in Thailand: the wai, keeping calm and face, feet and heads, temples and monks, Buddha images, dress, the national anthem and respect for the royal family.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/thai-etiquette/

Greeting	**The wai, hands together, a small bow; a smile works too**
Keep calm	**Shouting causes loss of face for everyone**
Feet and heads	**Don’t point feet at people or Buddha images; don’t touch heads**
Temples	**Cover shoulders and knees, shoes off**
Monarchy	**Section 112 carries 3 to 15 years in prison per offence**
Anthem	**Stand for it at 8am, 6pm and before films**

Quick answer: Thai people are relaxed and forgiving with visitors, and nobody expects you to know every custom. A few basics go a long way: smile, stay calm and polite even when things go wrong, return a wai from adults, don’t touch people’s heads or point your feet at people or Buddha images, and take your shoes off where others do. At temples, cover your shoulders and knees. Two things are more than manners. Insulting the royal family is a crime under Section 112, with three to 15 years in prison per offence, including for social media posts. And when the national anthem plays at 8am and 6pm in public places, or the royal anthem before a film, stand still until it ends.

At a glance

DO	DON’T
Smile, and return a wai from adults	Wai children or shop staff first (a smile or nod is fine)
Stay calm and polite in a disagreement	Shout, lose your temper or embarrass someone in public
Take your shoes off at homes, temples and where you see a pile of shoes	Point your feet at people or Buddha images, or step over people
Cover shoulders and knees at temples	Touch a monk if you’re a woman, or anyone’s head
Stand for the anthems	Criticise or joke about the royal family, online or off
Treat Buddha images with respect	Climb on statues, or use Buddha images as decoration

Greetings and the wai

- The wai is a slight bow with palms together. Return a wai from adults, a little lower if they’re older than you. You don’t need to wai shop staff or children; a smile or a nod is fine.
- People are often addressed by first name, with “Khun” in front as a polite title. See Thai names and titles.
- A simple “sawasdee” (hello) and “khop khun” (thank you), with “khrap” for men or “kha” for women at the end, are always welcome. See useful Thai phrases.

Keeping calm and face

Thai culture values a cool heart (jai yen) and avoiding public conflict. Raising your voice or losing your temper causes loss of face, for the person you shout at and for you, and it rarely gets results. In a disagreement over a bill or a fare, stay polite, smile and ask again. If it’s a real scam, step away and get help rather than argue. See common scams, where the tourist police number is 1155 and the scams line is 1441.

- “Mai pen rai” (never mind, it’s fine) is a common phrase and attitude. Small problems are often let go.
- Public displays of affection beyond holding hands make many Thais uncomfortable.

Head and feet

- The head is seen as the highest part of the body. Don’t touch people’s heads, even a child’s, and avoid reaching over someone’s head.
- The feet are the lowest. Don’t point your feet at people or Buddha images, don’t put them on tables or chairs, and don’t step over people sitting on the floor.
- Take your shoes off when entering homes, and in some shops, clinics, massage shops and offices. A row of shoes at the door is your cue. See massage etiquette.

Temples, monks and Buddha images

- Cover your shoulders and knees, take your shoes off before entering buildings, speak quietly and don’t climb on statues. See temple customs and temples and viewpoints.
- Women should not touch monks or hand things to them directly. Place the item down or pass it through a man.
- Sit with your feet pointing away from Buddha images and monks.
- Buddha images are sacred, not decoration. Don’t pose disrespectfully with them, and think twice about a Buddha tattoo: in 2011 Thailand’s Culture Ministry asked tattoo shops to stop putting Buddha images on tourists.

- Taking Buddha images out of Thailand needs a permit from the Fine Arts Department, which Suvarnabhumi Airport lists among restricted goods to show at customs. Ask the shop about paperwork before you buy. See souvenir shopping.
- On the five Buddhist holy days, most shops, 7-Eleven, supermarkets and ordinary bars may not sell alcohol. See Buddhist holidays and alcohol.

The royal family and the anthems

- Show respect for the King and the royal family at all times. Section 112 of the Criminal Code, the lèse-majesté law, carries three to 15 years in prison for each offence, as Human Rights Watch noted in February 2026, and the UK government warns it covers any accusations about members of the royal family. Sharing or commenting on posts online can count. The safest rule is not to discuss the monarchy at all.
- The national anthem plays at 8am and 6pm on loudspeakers in public places, stations and some parks. People stop and stand still until it ends, about a minute. Join them.
- Cinemas play the royal anthem before the film. Stand up with everyone else. See cinemas and bowling.
- Banknotes and coins carry the King's image, so don't step on money, even to stop a rolling coin, and don't tear or deface notes.

Dress

- Beachwear is for the beach and the pool. Walking around town shirtless or in swimwear is seen as disrespectful, even in Pattaya.
- Cover up more for temples, government offices and immigration. See Jomtien immigration office.

Eating and paying

- Thais share dishes from the middle of the table. Eat with a spoon in your right hand and use the fork to push food onto it.
- Tipping is appreciated, not expected. See tipping in Thailand.
- Visiting someone's home or family? Bring a small gift such as fruit. See visiting a Thai family.

Laws that catch visitors out

Some things that feel like manners are law. Vapes and e-cigarettes are illegal to own or use, with fines the UK government puts at typically ฿5,000 to ฿30,000, and smoking is banned in many public places. Carry your passport or a copy of its photo page. See laws visitors break. In bars, see bar etiquette.

Pro tip: the best things about living here, for me, are a general sense of freedom, the friendships, and how open and friendly people are.

Common questions

Should I wai back? Yes, return a wai from adults. You don't need to wai shop staff, waiters or children; a smile or a nod is enough.

Do I have to stand for the anthem? It's expected. Stand still with everyone else; it takes about a minute.

Is it really illegal to criticise the royal family? Yes. Section 112 carries three to 15 years in prison per offence, and posts and shares on social media have led to prosecutions.

Can I wear shorts in Pattaya? Yes, in most places. Cover your shoulders and knees for temples and government offices, and put a shirt on when you leave the beach.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: UK Foreign Office, Thailand safety and security: laws and cultural differences (still current at 12 November 2026); Human Rights Watch, Section 112 sentences (February 2026); Suvarnabhumi Airport, restricted and prohibited items (Buddha images need a Fine Arts Department permit); NBC News, Culture Ministry asks tattoo shops to stop Buddha tattoos on tourists (June 2011). Customs such as the wai and the anthem are described widely in travel guides; practice varies, and Thais are forgiving with visitors who try.

Useful next steps

- See temple customs.
- See Thai names and titles.

Cost of Living in Pattaya

What it really costs to live in Pattaya each month, from a tight budget to comfortable: rent by area, bills, food, transport, visas, insurance and nights out, from our own receipts.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/cost-of-living/

Tight budget	**Roughly ฿30,000 to ฿40,000 a month**
Comfortable	**Roughly ฿50,000 to ฿70,000 a month**
One-bed condo	**About ฿10,000 to ฿20,000 a month on a one-year lease**
Electricity	**State rate averages about ฿3.86 a unit (late 2026); condos often charge more**
Biggest costs	**Rent, air-con and nights out**

Pattaya can be very cheap or surprisingly expensive, mostly depending on two things: where you live and how often you go out. These are rough monthly budgets for one person, based on our own receipts and the prices on What Things Cost. Couples can usually add about half again rather than doubling, since rent and bills are shared.

Rough monthly budgets

	TIGHT	COMFORTABLE
Rent (studio or one-bed)	฿8,000 to ฿12,000	฿15,000 to ฿25,000
Electricity, water, internet	฿1,500 to ฿2,500	฿3,000 to ฿5,000
Food	฿6,000 to ฿9,000	฿12,000 to ฿20,000
Transport	฿1,000 to ฿3,000	฿3,000 to ฿6,000
Phone	฿300 to ฿600	฿600 to ฿1,000
Nights out and extras	฿5,000 to ฿10,000	฿15,000 and up
Total	฿30,000 to ฿40,000	฿50,000 to ฿70,000

These are estimates, not promises. Plenty of people spend less, and plenty spend much more.

What I actually spend

As of November 2026, I spend roughly ฿26,000 to ฿27,000 a month if I keep food and entertainment to ฿500 a day, and ฿41,000 to ฿42,000 at ฿1,000 a day, which is more realistic. That's converted at about ฿33 to the dollar, and it's lower than the tables above because I own a small condo and pay no rent. I also generally don't drink or smoke, and those add up.

If I rented, I'd likely take a ฿10,000 condo, which adds that straight on top. My list leaves out work tools, toiletries, scooter running costs and health insurance. The line-by-line version is on monthly budget examples.

Jonny's real electricity bills

My small condo runs air-con at 25C all day and night. Here are my last six bills, as of November 2026.

BILL MONTH	UNITS (KWH)	BAHT
May 2026	645	฿2,948
June 2026	454	฿2,011
July 2026	567	฿2,566
August 2026	537	฿2,418
September 2026	588	฿2,537
October 2026	551	฿2,358

That's an average of about 557 units and ฿2,473 a month, or about ฿4.44 a unit once the service charge, Ft and 7% VAT are included. My October bill charged ฿3.00 a unit for the first 200 units, ฿4.16 for the next 200 and ฿4.36 above that. I don't have my April bill, but I remember it being a little higher than May. Your bill will be different.

Water, from my two condo receipts: my condo charges ฿40 a unit, plus ฿50 a month for the meter and ฿20 a month for trash. In May 2026 I paid ฿540 for two months, with 10 units of water. In November 2026 I paid ฿1,580 for six months, with 29 units. That's roughly ฿265 a month, less than the ฿400 I'd guessed.

Rent by area

AREA	ONE-BED CONDO, ONE-YEAR LEASE (APPROX.)
Soi Buakhao and back streets of Central Pattaya	฿8,000 to ฿15,000
Jomtien back streets	฿8,000 to ฿15,000
East Pattaya	฿7,000 to ฿12,000, houses from about ฿15,000
Pratumnak	฿12,000 to ฿25,000
Beachfront, Wong Amat and Naklua	฿15,000 to ฿35,000 and up

Monthly and short lets cost more per month than a one-year contract, and prices rise in high season (November to March). Deposits are usually two months plus a month in advance. Full details: renting a condo. Comparing areas: where to stay in Pattaya.

Bills

- **Electricity** is the big one, because of air-con. The state rate averages just under ฿4 a unit (about ฿3.86 from September 2026), but many condos and landlords charge ฿5 to ฿8, so ask the rate before you sign. More: electricity, water and bills. Running air-con most nights can mean ฿2,000 a month or more.
- **Water**: usually a few hundred baht a month or less.
- **Internet**: home fibre is a few hundred baht a month, or included in the rent.
- **Phone**: Thai prepaid and monthly plans are cheap. See SIM cards and eSIMs.

Food

- Street food and market meals: about ฿50 to ฿80 a plate. See cheap eats and night markets.
- Thai restaurant meals: about ฿100 to ฿250.
- Western meals: often ฿200 to ฿450, close to home prices.
- Cooking at home with imported food from the big supermarkets can cost more than eating Thai food out.

Getting around

- Baht buses: ฿15 a ride on the main routes.
- Scooter rental: roughly ฿2,500 to ฿4,000 a month; see renting a scooter. You need a valid licence; see Thai driving licence.
- Bolt and Grab for longer or late trips.

Visas, insurance and the costs people forget

- **Visas**: extensions (฿1,900 each at immigration), agents if you use one, and re-entry permits. Which visa fits a long stay: visa options, retirement visa and DTV.
- **Health**: insurance or a medical fund. Private hospitals are good but not cheap. See hospitals and clinics.
- **Money**: ATM fees with a foreign card add up; see ATM fees and opening a Thai bank account.
- Flights home, laundry, a gym, and the occasional repair (our ฿699 water heater is a good example).

Nights out

This is where budgets vary most. A few beers in beer bars costs a few hundred baht; Walking Street and clubs cost much more. See drink prices and happy hours.

Ways to spend less

- Sign a one-year lease instead of paying monthly rates.
- Live in Soi Buakhao, Jomtien's back streets or East Pattaya.
- Eat Thai food, and use baht buses.
- Set the air-con to 26°C and use a fan.
- Ask in the W Forum: residents share current prices.

Useful next steps

- Track your spending for the first month to see your real costs.
- See monthly budget examples.
- See utilities and bills.

Temple Customs, Merit Making and Fortune Telling

How to behave at a Thai temple, what to wear, how merit making and alms giving work, rules around monks, fortune sticks, and the Buddha image export rule.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/temple-customs/

Dress	**Shoulders and knees covered, no beachwear**
Shoes	**Off before temple buildings; step over the threshold**
Monks	**Women should not touch a monk or his robes**
Alms	**Early morning; food and drinks, never money or alcohol**
Fortune sticks	**Shake the cup, read the numbered slip**
Buddha images	**Export needs a Fine Arts Department permit**

Quick answer: Visitors are welcome at Thai temples, including Pattaya's working temples. Cover your shoulders and knees, take your shoes off before going into temple buildings, keep your voice down, and never point your feet at a Buddha image or a monk. Women should not touch a monk or his robes, so hand offerings to a man to pass on, or set them down for the monk to pick up. Making merit can be as simple as an offering set or a donation. Taking a Buddha image home needs an export permit. For places to visit, see temples and viewpoints.

At a glance

SITUATION	DO	AVOID
Arriving	Shirt with sleeves, long trousers or a skirt below the knee	Beachwear, very short shorts, vests
Entering a building	Leave shoes at the rack, step over the raised threshold	Standing on the threshold
Sitting	Kneel or sit with your feet tucked behind you	Feet pointing at a Buddha image or monk
Buddha images	Walk round them clockwise	Touching, climbing, posing above them
Monks	Stand when a monk enters; keep your head lower than a seated monk	Women touching a monk or his robes
Photos	Usually fine, quietly	Getting in the way of people praying
Offerings	Flowers, incense, candles, food, a donation	Money or alcohol in an alms bowl

What to wear

The Tourism Authority of Thailand's guidance is plain: no beachwear. Men should wear a shirt with sleeves and long trousers or shorts that cover the knees. Women should wear a top with sleeves and a skirt or trousers below the knee. Sandals are fine, ideally with a back strap. A light scarf or sarong in your bag solves most problems; don't count on the temple lending one. Take off hats and sunglasses when you go inside.

Inside the temple

- Take your shoes off before entering the main hall and wherever you see others doing it. Leave them at the rack or by the steps.
- Step over the raised wooden threshold at the door rather than standing on it.
- Sit on the floor with your legs folded to one side or tucked behind you. Pointing the soles of your feet at a Buddha image or a person is rude in Thailand.
- Walk round Buddha images clockwise. Don't turn your back on a Buddha image up close; step back a little before you turn.
- Don't touch, climb or lean on statues, and don't pose in a way that puts you above the image.
- Phones on silent, voices low, no smoking or snacking.
- Most temples allow photos. Keep out of the way of people praying or making donations, and ask before photographing anyone up close. Drones are out of place.

More everyday manners are in Thai etiquette.

Monks

- Stand when a monk enters the room, and if you sit near one, keep your head lower than his where you can.
- Women should not touch a monk or his robes. To give something, a woman can hand it to a man to pass on, or set it down on a cloth or tray for the monk to pick up.
- On public transport, some seats are set aside for monks. Leave them free, and women shouldn't sit right next to a monk.
- Greet a monk with a wai: palms together, head slightly bowed.

Merit making (tham bun)

Making merit is at the heart of Thai Buddhism: you do something good, and the good comes back to you.

- **Offering set:** most temples sell a small set of lotus flowers, incense sticks and a candle. Light the candle and incense, place the flowers, and wai.
- **Gold leaf:** small squares of gold leaf are pressed onto a Buddha image as an offering.
- **Donations:** donation boxes help with the temple's running costs. Any amount is fine; nobody watches what you give.
- **Kathin season:** for about a month after Ok Phansa, the end of Buddhist Lent, communities present new robes to monks at robe-offering ceremonies, sometimes with parades. In 2026 that ran from late October to around Loy Krathong on 24 November.

Giving alms at dawn (tak bat)

Monks walk out early each morning with their bowls, usually around 6am to 7am. Anyone, of any faith, can take part.

- Offer cooked rice and food, fruit, drinking water or other soft drinks, or everyday items like soap. Don't give money, alcohol or tobacco. Vendors near some temples sell ready-made alms sets.
- Take your shoes off, wait at the roadside, and place the food in the bowl without touching the monk. Many people kneel or stand lower than the monk.
- The monk may chant a short blessing. Stay quiet and still until he finishes.
- If you only want to watch, keep a respectful distance and don't use flash.
- The morning after Ok Phansa, temples hold Tak Bat Devo, a big dawn alms giving that remembers the Buddha's return to earth.

Fortune telling

- **Fortune sticks (siam si):** kneel in front of the main Buddha image, think of your question, and gently shake the cup of numbered sticks until one falls out. Find the slip with the same number, usually in a rack or cabinet nearby. Some temples have English slips; at others, ask a Thai friend to read it. A small donation is customary.
- **Fortune tellers:** near some temples, people read palms, faces or birth dates. Treat it as entertainment and agree the price before you sit down.

Holy days

Big temple days follow the lunar calendar. On the five main Buddhist holy days, temples are busy and most shops may not sell alcohol (hotels and licensed venues may). See Buddhist holidays and alcohol, Thai public holidays and the Thai calendar.

Taking a Buddha image home

Thai Customs lists Buddha images, artefacts and antiques as restricted goods that need a permit from the Fine Arts Department, shown at customs when you leave. Sources disagree on whether small, newly made souvenirs are exempt, and a shop receipt is not a permit. Ask the shop and check with the Fine Arts Department before you buy anything sizeable, and allow several days for a permit. Don't buy parts of Buddha images, such as heads or hands. See souvenir shopping.

Common questions

Can tourists go into Thai temples? Yes. Working temples welcome visitors as long as you dress modestly and behave quietly. Paid sights such as the Sanctuary of Truth have tickets; ordinary temples are free.

Can women go into temples? Yes. The rule is about touching monks and handing things directly to them, not about entering.

Do I have to take my shoes off everywhere? No, only before temple buildings and some platforms. Look for a shoe rack or a pile of shoes by the steps.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Tourism Authority of Thailand, temple and sacred site etiquette (dress, shoes, threshold, feet, monks and women, photos, Buddha images); Thai Customs, restricted goods (Buddha images need a Fine Arts Department permit); Bangkok Post, Exporting Buddha (an older report on permits and the ban on Buddha image parts); Pattaya Mail, Tak Bat Devo (27 October 2026). Customs differ a little from temple to temple: when in doubt, copy what Thai visitors do.

Useful next steps

- See temples and viewpoints.
- See Buddhist holidays.

Related guides

- Thai Wedding Customs Explained
- Yoga, Pilates and Wellness in Pattaya
- Getting a Tattoo in Pattaya
- Ayutthaya Day Trip from Pattaya

LIVING IN PATTAYA

Electricity, Water & Paying Bills

How electricity and water bills work in a Pattaya condo or house, what a unit really costs, why your landlord's rate matters, and the easy ways to pay: apps, 7-Eleven and the counter.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/utilities-bills/

State electricity rate	**Averages about ฿3.86 a unit (Sept to Dec 2026)**
Landlord or condo rate	**Often ฿5 to ฿8 a unit; ask before you sign**
Typical one-bed bill	**About ฿1,000 to ฿3,000 a month, mostly air-con**
Water	**Usually a few hundred baht a month or less**
Pay	**Banking app, 7-Eleven counter, or the PEA office**

Electricity is the bill that surprises people in Pattaya, almost always because of air-con. Water is cheap. How much you pay depends less on the state price than on who you pay: the electricity authority directly, or your condo or landlord.

Electricity: who you pay matters

SET-UP	RATE PER UNIT (APPROX.)	NOTES
Your own meter with the PEA (Provincial Electricity Authority)	Averages about ฿3.86 from September 2026	Cheaper per unit for low use; houses and many long-term condos
Condo building that bills you	Often ฿5 to ฿8	The building adds a margin; ask the rate before you sign
Short let or serviced apartment	Often ฿6 to ฿8, or included	Read the contract

The PEA charges in steps, so the first units each month are cheaper than the later ones, and a small fuel adjustment (Ft) is added. The rates change a few times a year.

What a month costs

- One-bed condo, air-con only at night: roughly ฿1,000 to ฿2,000.
- Air-con day and night, or a bigger place: ฿3,000 and up.
- Ways to cut it: set the air-con to 26°C, clean the filters, use a fan, and close the curtains in the afternoon.

Jonny's real electricity bills

My small condo runs air-con at 25C all day and night. Here are my last six bills, as of November 2026.

BILL MONTH	UNITS (KWH)	BAHT
May 2026	645	฿2,948
June 2026	454	฿2,011
July 2026	567	฿2,566
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That's an average of about 557 units and ฿2,473 a month, or about ฿4.44 a unit once the service charge, Ft and 7% VAT are included. My October bill charged ฿3.00 a unit for the first 200 units, ฿4.16 for the next 200 and ฿4.36 above that. I don't have my April bill, but I remember it being a little higher than May. Your bill will be different.

Water

Water is billed per unit by the condo or the local waterworks, and for most people it's a few hundred baht a month or less. Tap water isn't usually drunk; see drinking water.

Water, from my two condo receipts: my condo charges ฿40 a unit, plus ฿50 a month for the meter and ฿20 a month for trash. In May 2026 I paid ฿540 for two months, with 10 units of water. In November 2026 I paid ฿1,580 for six months, with 29 units. That's roughly ฿265 a month, less than the ฿400 I'd guessed.



Photo: Jonny James

Pro tip: I use a Sensibo smart controller to control my air-con's temperature, and I recommend it. See the Sensibo Air PRO on Amazon, but check it ships to Thailand first. I think I bought mine from Sensibo's own website, which shipped here, though check that at checkout. (As an Amazon Associate I earn from qualifying purchases.)

How to pay

- **Banking app**: scan the barcode or QR code on the bill with a Thai banking app. See QR payments and PromptPay.
- **7-Eleven and other convenience stores**: hand over the bill and pay cash at the counter for a small fee.
- **PEA office or the condo office**: in person, for older bills or problems.
- Condo bills usually come with the rent; pay the office or the owner as your contract says.

If the bill looks wrong

- Photograph the meter when you move in and when you move out.
- Compare the units on the bill with your own meter readings.
- Ask the condo office (the "juristic office") to explain any extra charges.

Moving in

Check the electricity and water rates, who pays the common-area fee, and whether internet is included, before signing. More: renting a condo, home internet and cost of living.

My experience

- My own bill: a small condo running air-con 24/7 costs me about 2,500 to 3,000 baht a month, depending on the time of year.
- I pay through the PEA app linked to my Kasikorn bank account. It takes a minute each month.
- I recommend Kasikorn over Bangkok Bank, because I have had trouble with many apps using Bangkok Bank. See opening a Thai bank account.

Thai Names, Nicknames and Titles

Why everyone in Thailand has a nickname, why surnames are so long, how to use Khun, Phi and Nong, and the names that matter on leases, bank transfers and visa forms.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/thai-names-titles/

Nicknames	**Almost every Thai has a short nickname**
Khun	**Polite title for anyone, used with the first name**
Phi and Nong	**Older and younger, used like family**
Surnames	**Unique to one family since the 1913 Surname Act**
Paperwork	**Only the official name counts, never the nickname**

Quick answer: Thai people go by their first name, not their surname, and almost everyone also has a short nickname that friends, colleagues and even bosses use every day. To be polite, put **Khun** in front of someone's first name or nickname: Khun Nok, Khun Lek. Use **Phi** for people older than you and **Nong** for younger people. Surnames are long because each one belongs to a single family by law, and they are rarely used in conversation. For anything official, such as a lease, a bank transfer or a visa form, the long official name is the only one that counts.

At a glance

TERM	MEANING	HOW TO USE IT
Chue len	Nickname	What most people introduce themselves with: Nok, Lek, Ploy, Bank
Khun	Polite title for anyone	Before the first name or nickname, never the surname, never for yourself
Phi	Older brother or sister	For anyone a bit older than you, with or without a name
Nong	Younger brother or sister	For younger people; often used to call younger staff
Nai	Mr	On ID cards, forms and contracts
Nang / Nangsao	Mrs / Miss	On forms; married women can choose either
Khrap / kha	Polite endings	Men say khrap, women say kha

Official names and nicknames

Official Thai first names are often long and carry a good meaning, and parents sometimes ask a monk or fortune teller to choose one. Day to day, almost nobody uses them. Nearly everyone has a nickname (chue len), usually given at birth, and it often has nothing to do with the official name. Nicknames can be Thai words, such as Nok (bird) or Ploy (gem), or English words and even brand names, such as Bank, Beer, Gift and Mint. Some families once gave babies deliberately unflattering nicknames to keep jealous spirits away.

Friends, colleagues, landlords and shop staff will usually introduce themselves by nickname. Many people you deal with for years may never tell you their official name, and that is normal, not rude.

Name changes are also common. Thai law allows people to change their first name for any reason, and some do it after a run of bad luck or on advice from an astrologer. A friend may announce a new name one day.

Why Thai surnames are so long

Surnames only became compulsory under the Surname Act of 1913, during the reign of King Vajiravudh (Rama VI). The rule was that each surname must belong to one family only, and the law still says a new surname cannot repeat one already registered. With millions of families needing different names, many became long and complicated. Today a new surname can be up to 10 Thai letters, but spelled in English it often looks much longer.

Because surnames are unique, two people with the same surname are usually related.

Khun

Khun is the safe, polite choice with anyone: strangers, officials, older people, your landlord. It works for men and women and goes before the first name or nickname. Saying Khun plus a surname, the Western "Mr Smith" way, sounds wrong in Thai. Never use Khun about yourself.

That is why Thai bank staff, receptionists and hospital clerks will call you "Khun John" or "Mr John", using your first name even in formal settings.

Phi and Nong

- **Phi** means older brother or sister and is used for anyone older than you, even only by a year or two.
- **Nong** means younger brother or sister and is used for anyone younger.
- Both work for men and women, on their own or before a name: Phi Ton, Nong Fern.

- In restaurants, many people call a younger server “nong” to get their attention. Sources differ on whether visitors should do this with strangers. If you’re unsure, Khun is never wrong.

Thais also call older strangers by family words: **Lung** (uncle) for an older man, **Pa** (aunt) for an older woman. You will hear these at markets and from motorbike taxi riders.

Job titles work too: **Khru** or **Ajarn** for a teacher, and **Mo** for a doctor.

Titles on paperwork: Nai, Nang and Nangsao

Official documents use **Nai** (Mr) for men, **Nang** (Mrs) for married women and **Nangsao** (Miss) for unmarried women. Since the Form of Address for Women Act 2008, married or divorced women can choose Nang or Nangsao. A married woman can also choose whether to keep her own surname or take her spouse’s. If you’re marrying in Thailand, see marriage visa and Thai wedding customs.

Why the official name matters to you

- **Leases and receipts:** your landlord’s nickname means nothing on a contract. Check that the name on the lease matches their ID or the owner’s title deed. See renting a condo.
- **Bank transfers:** when you pay by PromptPay or bank app, the screen shows the receiver’s official name before you confirm. If it doesn’t match the person or business you expected, stop. See QR payments.
- **English spellings vary:** the same Thai name can be spelled several ways in English, and registry offices haven’t always been consistent. Copy names exactly from the passport or ID card for visa and immigration forms.

Polite words

Men end sentences with “khrap” and women with “kha” to sound polite: “khop khun khrap” (thank you). A smile and a polite ending go a long way. See useful Thai phrases and Thai etiquette.

Common questions

Is it rude to ask someone’s nickname? No. It’s normal, and people often offer it straight away. Asking “chue len arai?” means “what’s your nickname?”

Should I call my Thai friend by surname? No. Surnames are for paperwork. Use their nickname, or Khun plus their first name if you don’t know them well.

Can I call a waiter Nong? Many Thais do with younger staff, and it’s friendly. Use Phi for someone older. If in doubt, a polite “khaw thot khrap/kha” (excuse me) works with anyone.

Why do Thais call me Mr plus my first name? Thai titles go with the first name, so “Mr John” is the Thai way of saying “Mr Smith”. It is polite, not over-familiar.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Library of Congress, Understanding Thai names: law and culture (July 2025, on the Surname Act, the Person’s Name Act and name changes); Cultural Atlas, Thai naming; Wikipedia, Thai name (titles and the Form of Address for Women Act 2008); Thai Holiday Guide, forms of address. Sources differ on whether visitors should use Phi and Nong with strangers.

Related guides

- Meeting Your Thai Partner’s Family
- Learning Thai in Pattaya
- Expat Clubs and Social Groups in Pattaya
- International Schools in Pattaya

LIVING IN PATTAYA

Home Internet in Pattaya

Fast fibre is cheap and everywhere in Pattaya. The main providers, what plans cost, what you need to sign up, contract lengths, and when a mobile data plan is enough.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/home-internet/

Main providers	**AIS Fibre (now including 3BB), True Online, NT**
Typical price	**About ฿500 to ฿900 a month for 500 Mbps to 1 Gbps**
Contract	**Usually 12 to 24 months for the best price**
Need	**Passport and your address; some ask for a Thai bank account**
Alternative	**Unlimited mobile data plans for short stays**

Quick answer: Thailand has some of the cheapest fast home internet in the world, and almost every condo building in Pattaya already has fibre in the walls. The main providers are AIS Fibre (which now includes 3BB), True Online and NT. Expect roughly ฿500 to ฿900 a month for 500 Mbps to 1 Gbps on a 12 to 24 month contract, often with free installation. Bring your passport and full address; some providers ask foreigners for a Thai bank account or a deposit. For short stays, mobile data is often enough.

Thailand has some of the cheapest fast home internet in the world, and almost every condo building in Pattaya already has fibre in the walls. For a stay of a few months or more, a home connection is cheap and reliable; for shorter stays, mobile data is often enough.

The main providers

- **AIS Fibre**: AIS bought 3BB, so many buildings that had 3BB are now AIS.
- **True Online**: fibre, often sold with True mobile and TV packages.
- **NT (National Telecom)**: the state provider, sometimes cheaper.

Check which providers already serve your building; the condo office usually knows, and installation is faster where the cable is already there.

What it costs

PLAN	TYPICAL PRICE (APPROX.)
500 Mbps fibre	฿500 to ฿700 a month
1 Gbps fibre	฿600 to ฿900 a month
Installation	Often free with a contract

Prices include promotions that change often, and VAT may be added. Bundles with mobile plans can be cheaper.

Signing up

- Bring your passport and the full address (in Thai helps).
- Some providers ask for a Thai bank account or a deposit from foreigners.
- Contracts of 12 or 24 months get the best price; ending early can cost a fee.
- Installation is usually within a few days.
- Sign up in a provider shop at a mall or online.

Is mobile data enough?

For a holiday, an unlimited or large data SIM is simpler, and you can tether a laptop. See SIM cards and eSIMs. Working remotely? See coworking spaces, and the DTV visa for remote workers.

Pro tip: my True home internet is ฿533.93 a month, about $16.

Outages and support

- Most outages are local: check the router lights, restart it, then call the provider's hotline or use its app to report a fault.
- Technicians usually come within a day or two. Someone needs to be home to let them in.
- Storms and power cuts can drop the line; keep mobile data as a backup. See power cuts and water outages.

Moving or cancelling

- Moving within Pattaya? Ask the provider to move the line rather than cancel: it can keep your contract and price.
- Leaving before the contract ends usually means an early-termination fee. Ask how much before you sign.
- Return the router if the contract says so, and keep the receipt.

Tips

- Test the speed in a condo before signing a lease.
- Ask whether internet is already included in the rent; many condos include it.
- Keep the router in the open, not in a cupboard, for better Wi-Fi.
- Power cuts in storms can drop the connection; a small UPS keeps the router on.

Useful next steps

- Ask your condo which providers already have cables in the building, installation is faster.
- Keep mobile data as a backup during outages.

Related guides

- TV and Streaming in Pattaya
- Power Cuts and Water Outages in Pattaya
- Pattaya for Digital Nomads
- Electricity, Water & Paying Bills

Common questions

How much is home internet in Pattaya? Roughly ฿500 to ฿900 a month for 500 Mbps to 1 Gbps fibre, with promotions changing often.

Can foreigners get home internet in Thailand? Yes, with a passport and address. Some providers ask for a Thai bank account or a deposit.

Which provider is best in Pattaya? It depends on your building. Ask the condo office which providers already have cables there; installation is faster.

Is internet included in condo rent? Sometimes. Ask before you sign the lease.

Sources

Prices are typical 2026 promotions and change often; check the provider's current offer. The ฿533.93 figure is Jonny's own True bill.

The Thai Calendar and Buddhist Year

Why Thai documents say 2569 in 2026: the Buddhist Era year, converting dates, Thai month names and abbreviations, reading expiry dates and forms, lunar festival dates and the holidays that close offices.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/thai-calendar/

2026	**2569 BE (2027 = 2570)**
Convert	**Add 543 to the Western year, subtract 543 to go back**
Date order	**Day, month, year (13/11/2569)**
Look for	**พ.ศ. means Buddhist Era, ค.ศ. means Western year**
New Year	**1 January officially, Songkran in April as the traditional one**
Festivals	**Buddhist holy days follow the lunar calendar**

Quick answer: Thailand counts years in the Buddhist Era (BE), which is 543 years ahead of the Western calendar. 2026 is 2569 BE, and 2027 will be 2570. Add 543 to a Western year to get the Thai year, or subtract 543 to go back. The months and days are the same as at home, and the year still starts on 1 January, but dates are written day, month, year, so 13/11/2569 is 13 November 2026. Contracts, bank books, receipts, expiry labels and many official forms use the BE year. Buddhist holidays follow the lunar calendar, so their dates move each year; see Thai public holidays.

At a glance

WESTERN YEAR	THAI YEAR (BE)
2025	2568
2026	2569
2027	2570
2028	2571

The Buddhist Era year

- The Thai year is 543 years ahead: Western year + 543 = Thai year.
- The abbreviation **พ.ศ.** (por sor) before a year means Buddhist Era. **ค.ศ.** (kor sor) means the Western year.
- Both systems are in daily use. Your passport and many English-language documents show 2026; Thai contracts, bank books and government letters usually show 2569.
- If a Thai document shows a two-digit year such as 69, it most likely means 2569 (2026), not 1969. Check the context if it matters.
- Thailand moved the start of its year to 1 January in 1941. Before that the year began on 1 April, so the year 1940 (2483 BE) lasted only nine months, as The Nation recounts. That old change only matters if you convert historical dates; for anything from 1941 on, 543 always works.

Writing and reading dates

Thai dates go day, month, year, the same order as in Britain and most of Europe, but the opposite of the American style. 05/06/2569 is 5 June 2026, not May 6.

The Thai month names are worth recognising, because forms and receipts often use their short forms:

MONTH	THAI	SHORT FORM
January	มกราคม	ม.ค.
February	กุมภาพันธ์	ก.พ.
March	มีนาคม	มี.ค.
April	เมษายน	เม.ย.
May	พฤษภาคม	พ.ค.
June	มิถุนายน	มิ.ย.
July	กรกฎาคม	ก.ค.
August	สิงหาคม	ส.ค.
September	กันยายน	ก.ย.
October	ตุลาคม	ต.ค.
November	พฤศจิกายน	พ.ย.

MONTH	THAI	SHORT FORM
December	ธันวาคม	ธ.ค.

A useful trick: month names ending in -คม (-khom) have 31 days, those ending in -ยน (-yon) have 30, and February ends in -พันธ์ (-phan). Some official papers also use Thai numerals: ๒๕๖๙ is 2569.

Where the Thai year catches people out

- **Expiry dates on food and medicine.** A label showing 2569 means 2026. Look for EXP or หมดอายุ (expires) and MFG or ผลิต (made). “Best before” is ควรบริโภคก่อน.
- **Leases and contracts.** Check the start and end dates carefully in both systems, especially the year. See condo living rules.
- **Bank books, bills and receipts.** Often in the BE year. See Thai bank account and paying bills.
- **Licences and official letters.** A Thai driving licence or a letter from an office may show the BE year. See Thai driving licence.
- **Filling in forms yourself.** Ask which system the office wants, write the date clearly, and keep copies. See Thai paperwork tips.
- **Apps and spreadsheets.** Phones set to the Thai region can switch to the Buddhist calendar, and software that expects Western years can treat 2569 as a far-future date.

The lunar calendar and festival dates

Alongside the official calendar, Thailand keeps a lunar calendar for religious days. That is why many festivals move each year:

- **Buddhist holidays** such as Makha Bucha, Visakha Bucha, Asanha Bucha and the start and end of Buddhist Lent fall on full moons, on different dates each year.
- **Loy Krathong** is on the full moon of the twelfth lunar month: in 2026, Tuesday 24 November. See Loy Krathong in Pattaya.
- **Chinese New Year** and the Vegetarian Festival follow the Chinese lunar calendar. See Chinese New Year.
- **Songkran**, the traditional Thai new year, is fixed at 13 to 15 April. See Songkran and Wan Lai.

On the five main Buddhist holy days, alcohol sales are restricted. Since 7 November 2026, hotels, licensed entertainment venues, international airports and some designated venues may sell, but shops and ordinary bars may not. See Ok Phansa and Buddhist holidays and alcohol.

Holidays that close offices

Banks, government offices and the immigration office close on public holidays. When a holiday falls on a weekend, a weekday off is usually added. The rest of 2026 and the start of 2027, from the Bank of Thailand’s lists:

DATE	HOLIDAY
Monday 7 December 2026	Substitute day for 5 December (King Bhumibol’s birthday, Father’s Day)
Thursday 10 December 2026	Constitution Day
Thursday 31 December 2026	New Year’s Eve
Friday 1 January 2027	New Year’s Day
Monday 22 February 2027	Substitute day for Makha Bucha
13 to 15 April 2027	Songkran

Full list and what closes: Thai public holidays. Plan visa extensions and 90-day reports around them; see 90-day reports.

Two more calendars you may meet

- **The government year** runs from 1 October to 30 September, so fiscal year 2027 (2570 in Thai) began on 1 October 2026. Personal income tax still uses the calendar year. See Thai tax basics.
- **Colours of the day.** Each weekday has a traditional colour: Sunday red, Monday yellow, Tuesday pink, Wednesday green, Thursday orange, Friday light blue and Saturday purple. Some people wear the colour of the day, or of the day they were born. Yellow is closely linked with the monarchy, because King Bhumibol and King Vajiralongkorn were both born on a Monday. See Thai etiquette.

Common questions

What year is it in Thailand? 2569 in the Buddhist Era, which is 2026 in the Western calendar. 2570 starts on 1 January 2027.

How do I convert a Thai year? Subtract 543 from the Thai year to get the Western one (2569 − 543 = 2026), or add 543 to go the other way.

Does the Thai year start in April? Not any more. The official year has started on 1 January since 1941. Songkran in April is the traditional new year and a public holiday.

Is 13/11/69 a date in 1969? Almost certainly not. On a recent Thai receipt or form it most likely means 13 November 2569, which is 2026.

Why do Buddhist holidays change date every year? They follow the lunar calendar and fall on full moons, so check each year’s list. See Thai public holidays.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: The Nation, Bank of Thailand's 2027 bank holidays (August 2026); Human Resources Online, Thailand's 2026 public holidays (Bank of Thailand list); The Nation, when 1940 lasted only nine months (May 2025); Wikipedia, date and time notation in Thailand (date order, พ.ศ. and month abbreviations); Chiang Rai Times, the 2027 budget taking effect on 1 October 2026. Sources differ slightly on the date of the 1940 calendar law. The Loy Krathong date and alcohol rules are from our own Loy Krathong and Ok Phansa pages, checked this month.

Useful next steps

- See events calendar.
- See Thai public holidays.
- See Buddhist holidays.

LIVING IN PATTAYA

Gyms & Fitness in Pattaya

Staying fit in Pattaya: gym day passes and memberships, condo gyms, Muay Thai prices at a big camp, running in the heat, yoga and swimming, plus what to check before you sign up.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/gyms-fitness/

Day pass	**About ฿150 to ฿400**
Monthly membership	**About ฿1,000 to ฿3,000**
Muay Thai	**฿800 a session at Fairtex (2026); smaller camps set their own rates**
Train outdoors	**Before 7am or after 5pm**
Free	**Beach Road and Jomtien beach paths, outdoor exercise stations**

Quick answer: Pattaya is an easy place to keep fit on any budget. A day pass at a gym costs about ฿150 to ฿400 and a monthly membership about ฿1,000 to ฿3,000, depending on whether you pick a no-frills local gym or a big air-conditioned club. Many condos and hotels have their own small gyms. For Muay Thai, one big-name camp, Fairtex in North Pattaya, lists ฿800 a group session in 2026, and smaller gyms set their own prices. Running on the beach paths is free. The heat is the main thing to plan around: train early or late, drink more than you think, and build up slowly.

At a glance

OPTION	TYPICAL COST (APPROX.)	GOOD FOR
Local gym	฿150 to ฿250 a day, ฿1,000 to ฿1,500 a month	Weights, no frills
Big fitness club	฿300 to ฿400 a day, ฿2,000 to ฿3,000 a month	Classes, air-con, sometimes a pool
Condo or hotel gym	Often free for residents or guests	Convenience, short stays
Muay Thai, big camp	฿800 a session, ฿16,500 a month unlimited (Fairtex, 2026)	Beginners to fighters
Yoga drop-in	About ฿300 to ฿600	Flexibility, recovery
Running and outdoor stations	Free	Cardio, sea views

Gym prices change often and differ a lot between gyms, so treat the ranges as a starting point and ask for the current price list.

Choosing a gym

- **Try before you commit.** Buy a day pass or a week first. Visit at the time you would normally train: some gyms are quiet at 7am and packed at 6pm.
- **Read the membership terms.** Ask whether the price needs a long contract, whether you can freeze it while you are away, and how cancelling works. Long-stayers and people who pay for three months or more usually get the best rates.
- **Check the air-con and the equipment.** Some budget gyms are open-air or only partly cooled, which is hard going from March to May.
- **Location matters more than features.** A gym you can walk to in the heat will get used. Traffic in high season can turn a short ride into a long one.
- **Personal trainers** are widely available. Agree the price per session and what is included before you start.

Condo and hotel gyms

Many condo buildings have a small gym, often with a pool, included in what you pay. Equipment is usually basic: a few machines, dumbbells and a treadmill. If a gym matters to you, look at it before you sign a lease. See renting a condo. Some hotels sell gym or pool day passes to non-guests, but many don't, so ask at reception first.

Muay Thai

Pattaya has camps for every level, and most welcome total beginners to group classes. A typical session mixes skipping or running, shadow boxing, pad work with a trainer, bag work and conditioning, and at the bigger camps it runs two hours or more.

As one example with published 2026 prices, Fairtex Training Center on North Pattaya Road lists a single Muay Thai session at ฿800, ten sessions at ฿7,000, a month of unlimited training at ฿16,500 and a private lesson at ฿1,500. Its classes run Monday to Saturday, 7:30am to 10am and 2:30pm to 5pm, with new students invited in the morning. Smaller gyms around the city charge their own rates. Compare a few, ask for a trial session, and tell the trainer if it's your first time.

Training is hard in the heat. Start slowly, drink plenty, and check your insurance covers combat sports. See travel insurance. To watch a fight instead, or to train for months on a visa, see Muay Thai in Pattaya.

Running and outdoor exercise

- The beach paths along Pattaya Beach and Jomtien are flat and easy.
- Pratumnak hill gives you climbs and sea views.
- Some parks and beaches have free outdoor exercise stations.

- Run before 7am or after 5pm; the midday heat is dangerous. See running and cycling for routes.

Training in the heat

- Drink before you feel thirsty, and add electrolytes on long or sweaty sessions.
- Ease in during your first week or two while your body gets used to the heat and humidity.
- Stop if you feel dizzy, sick or confused, or stop sweating; get into shade or air-con and cool down. These can be signs of heat illness. See heat and sun safety, and get medical help if you don't recover quickly.
- Outdoor sessions at dusk bring mosquitoes. See dengue and mosquitoes.

Yoga, swimming and more

- Yoga and pilates studios in Central Pattaya, Jomtien and Pratumnak run drop-in classes, roughly ฿300 to ฿600. See yoga and wellness.
- Many condos have pools, and some hotels sell pool day passes.
- Cycling, padel and tennis groups are growing; ask at gyms and in expat clubs.

Supplements and steroids

Protein powder and everyday supplements are sold in pharmacies, supermarkets and online. Anabolic steroids are a different matter: they are controlled and need a prescription. Read anabolic steroids in Thailand, and talk to a doctor before taking anything.

Tips

- Bring a towel and a padlock; not every gym provides them.
- Wear proper training shoes. Many gyms don't allow sandals on the floor.
- After a workout: a Thai massage and cheap eats.

Common questions

How much is a gym day pass in Pattaya? About ฿150 to ฿400. Local gyms sit at the lower end; big air-conditioned clubs at the top.

Is it worth paying for a monthly membership? If you will train more than two or three times a week, usually yes. A month costs about ฿1,000 to ฿3,000, and longer deals bring the price down further.

Can a total beginner try Muay Thai? Yes. Most camps welcome beginners to group classes. At Fairtex a single session is ฿800 in 2026; smaller gyms set their own prices.

When is it safe to run outside? Before 7am or after 5pm. Midday runs in Pattaya's heat and humidity can be dangerous, especially from March to May.

Do condos have gyms? Many do, usually small and free for residents. Look at it before you sign a lease if a gym matters to you.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Fairtex Training Center prices and class times (2026 site). Gym day pass, membership and yoga ranges are approximate figures from our own guides; we could not find a reputable published 2026 survey of Pattaya gym prices, so check the gym's own price list. Heat advice is general information, not medical advice: see a doctor if you have a health condition.

Useful next steps

- Many gyms sell day passes, try a few before a monthly plan.
- See running and cycling.
- See Muay Thai training.

Thai Wedding Customs Explained

What happens at a Thai wedding: the monks' blessing, the khan maak procession and door gates, sin sod, the water-pouring ceremony, legal registration, and what guests wear and give.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/thai-wedding-customs/

Morning	**Monks' blessing and merit making**
Procession	**Khan maak trays and playful door gates**
Ceremony	**Water pouring (rod nam sang) by elders and guests**
Sin sod	**Agreed between families; often returned to the couple**
Legal	**Registration at the district office (amphoe) is separate**
Guests	**Cash in the invitation envelope; amount depends on closeness**

Quick answer: A traditional Thai wedding usually takes place in the morning, on a date often chosen with an astrologer. Monks chant blessings and receive food, the groom's side arrives in a **khan maak** procession carrying trays of gifts, including the **sin sod**, and has to pass playful "gates" set up by the bride's relatives. The couple then pays respect to their elders, and guests pour blessed water from a conch shell over their hands in the **rod nam sang** ceremony. None of this is the legal marriage: that is a separate registration at a district office (amphoe). Guests usually give cash in the invitation envelope.

At a glance

PART	WHAT HAPPENS
Date	Often chosen with an astrologer for an auspicious day and time
Monks' blessing	Usually nine monks chant and receive food from the couple
Khan maak procession	The groom's side carries trays of gifts to the bride's home
Door gates	Relatives block the way until paid with small envelopes
Sin sod and rings	Sin sod shown and blessed, rings exchanged
Rod nam sang	Elders and guests pour blessed water over the couple's hands
Reception	Dinner, toasts and photos, often in the evening
Registration	Signing at the district office makes it legal

The morning ceremonies

Customs differ by region and family; this is the common central Thai pattern.

- **Merit making.** Monks, traditionally nine because the number is considered lucky, chant blessings and bless water, and the couple offers them food. Guests sit lower than the monks. See temple customs.
- **Khan maak procession.** The groom's family and friends walk to the bride's home carrying trays of auspicious items, such as the sin sod, the engagement ring, betel nuts, grains, flowers, incense and candles.
- **The gates.** The bride's relatives hold a chain or belt across the path as a "silver gate" and then a "gold gate". The groom's side pays small cash envelopes to pass. It is a game, and the toll goes up at each gate.
- **Sin sod and engagement.** Elders on the groom's side formally ask for the marriage. The sin sod is shown to the bride's family and blessed with grains and flowers, and the couple exchanges rings.
- **Respect to elders.** The couple bows to parents and older relatives, who give blessings and sometimes money.
- **Rod nam sang.** The couple kneels with hands together, wearing joined white head garlands. Elders go first, then guests, pouring a little blessed water from a conch shell over their hands and saying a short wish for their future.

In the north and northeast, a **baisri su khwan** blessing led by a respected elder or Brahmin often takes the place of the monks, and white cotton threads are tied around the couple's wrists for luck. Muslim weddings in the south follow a nikah ceremony led by an imam.

Sin sod

Sin sod is a traditional gift from the groom's side to the bride's parents, agreed between the families before the wedding. It is shown at the ceremony as a sign of respect.

- The amount varies a lot by family and region. There is no standard figure.
- Many families return some or all of it to the couple after the wedding to help them start out; others keep it. Today it is often largely symbolic.
- Thai law (the engagement sections of the Civil and Commercial Code) treats sin sod as a gift to the parents for agreeing to the marriage. If the marriage doesn't go ahead because of the side that received it, it can be claimed back.

- If you are marrying into a Thai family, talk about sin sod with your partner early, calmly and with respect. It is about family and face, not a price. See visiting Thai family.

Legal marriage

The ceremony and the legal marriage are separate.

- Couples register at a district office (amphoe, or khet in Bangkok). It is usually quick once the paperwork is ready.
- A foreign partner usually needs a document from their own embassy confirming they are free to marry, translated into Thai and legalised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, plus a passport. Each embassy has its own process, so check yours first.
- Since 23 January 2025, Thailand's marriage equality law lets couples of any gender register.
- For staying in Thailand as the spouse of a Thai citizen, see the marriage visa. For translations and official papers, see Thai paperwork tips.

As a guest

- **Clothes:** smart and modest, shoulders and knees covered, in bright or soft colours. Many guests avoid all black, which is linked with funerals, and all white. If the invitation gives a colour theme, follow it.
- **Gift:** cash in the invitation envelope, dropped in a box at the reception, is normal. Write your name on it. The amount depends on how close you are to the couple, the kind of event and what you can afford; a Thai university economist interviewed by Daily News in 2026 said there is no fixed formula. If unsure, ask a Thai friend in the same circle.
- **Timing:** morning ceremonies start on time because the hour is auspicious.
- **Manners:** greet elders with a wai, follow the family's lead, and ask before photographing monks. See Thai etiquette and Thai names and titles.
- **At the water pouring:** pour a small amount, say a brief wish (congratulations in English is fine), and move along.

More culture

See Thai etiquette, the Thai calendar and dating in Thailand.

Common questions

Is sin sod required by law? No. It is a custom that families agree between themselves. The law only covers what happens to it if a marriage doesn't go ahead.

Is a Thai wedding ceremony legally binding? No. Only registration at a district office creates a legal marriage.

How much should a guest put in the envelope? There is no fixed amount. It depends on your relationship with the couple, the venue and your budget, so ask a Thai friend who knows the family.

Can foreigners marry in Pattaya? Yes, at a district office, with documents from their embassy.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Thailand Foundation, Thai wedding customs and regional differences; The Thaiger, sin sod and the Civil and Commercial Code (archive article by two lawyers); Daily News, how much to give at a wedding (April 2026, in Thai); Al Jazeera, marriage equality law in force (January 2025). Customs vary by family and region, and embassy paperwork changes; check with the families involved and your embassy. General information, not legal advice.

Useful next steps

- See the marriage visa.
- See visiting Thai family.
- See Thai etiquette.

LIVING IN PATTAYA

Coworking & Working Remotely

Working remotely from Pattaya: the kinds of coworking space and what they cost, laptop-friendly cafés, a home office in a condo, backup internet, the DTV visa and tax.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/coworking-spaces/

Local coworking day pass	**About ฿200 to ฿400**
Local monthly desk	**About ฿2,500 to ฿4,000**
Business-centre brands	**More, often about ฿650 to ฿1,100 a day**
Home fibre	**About ฿500 to ฿900 a month**
Visa for remote work	**DTV (Destination Thailand Visa)**
Time zone	**UTC+7, no daylight saving**

Quick answer: Pattaya works well as a remote-work base: home fibre is cheap and fast, condos are good value, and there are three ways to work outside your room. Small local coworking spaces charge about ฿200 to ฿400 for a day pass and about ฿2,500 to ฿4,000 a month, going by their own listings. International business-centre brands cost more, often about ฿650 to ฿1,100 a day in the region, but give you meeting rooms and a business address. Cafés are free if you keep ordering. Many people end up working from their condo most days and using a space or café to get out. If your clients or employer are outside Thailand, the DTV visa was made for you.

At a glance

OPTION	TYPICAL COST (ABOUT)	GOOD FOR
Local coworking space, day pass	฿200 to ฿400	Testing a space, a change of scene
Local coworking space, month	฿2,500 to ฿4,000	Routine, community, reliable Wi-Fi
Business-centre brand	฿650 to ฿1,100 a day for a desk; meeting rooms extra	Client meetings, a business address
Café	The price of your drinks	A few hours, light work
Condo with fibre	฿500 to ฿900 a month for internet	Daily work, calls at any hour

Prices come from operators' own listings and booking sites, and they change. Ask what is included before you pay: VAT, printing, meeting-room hours and after-hours access are often extra.

Kinds of coworking space

- **Small local spaces.** Usually a room or floor with desks, air-con, fast Wi-Fi and coffee, run by a local owner. Cheapest, often friendly, with a mix of regulars. Hours vary; some close in the evening or on Sundays.
- **Business centres from international brands.** Serviced offices with hot desks, private offices and bookable meeting rooms, usually inside a hotel or office building. The operator's booking site listed a Regus centre at Brighton Grand in Naklua in November 2026, with meeting rooms from about ฿1,434 a day. Desk day rates at the brand's centres in Sri Racha and Bangkok were about ฿650 to ฿1,100.
- **Hotel and condo work rooms.** Some hotels and newer condo buildings have a quiet co-working room for guests or residents. Ask before you book or sign a lease.
- **Café-style spaces.** Cafés with big tables and plenty of plugs, where a day costs what you eat and drink.

Spaces open and close often, so we don't list them all. Check recent reviews and the operator's own page, or message them on LINE, before you go. See LINE app guide.

How to choose a space

- Buy a day pass first. Run a speed test, try the chair for a full morning, and check the air-con isn't blasting straight at you.
- Ask whether there are phone booths or a quiet room for calls.
- Check the opening hours against your clients' time zone. Thailand is UTC+7 all year, so calls with Europe land in the afternoon or evening, and with the Americas late at night or early morning.
- Pick one close to home. In high season, traffic makes even short trips slow at busy times. See motorbike taxis.
- Ask about parking if you ride a scooter.

Working from cafés

Many cafés welcome laptops on weekday mornings. Buy a drink every couple of hours, avoid the lunch rush, and don't take a big table at busy times. Bring a power bank, because plugs aren't everywhere. Malls are a good back-up on very hot or rainy days. See cafés and coffee and shopping malls.

Working from your condo

- Get fibre installed. Expect about ฿500 to ฿900 a month for 500 Mbps to 1 Gbps; Jonny's own True bill is ฿533.93 a month. See home internet.
- Keep mobile data as a backup, and test tethering before you need it. See SIM cards and eSIMs.
- A small UPS keeps the router running through short power cuts in storms. See power and water outages.
- Before you sign a lease, ask for a speed test, and visit at night to check for noise. See renting a condo and noise and sleep.
- A one-bedroom with a door between desk and bed makes long workdays easier than a studio.

The legal side

- Working for clients or an employer outside Thailand is what the Destination Thailand Visa (DTV) is for. Each DTV stay is up to 180 days, extendable once.
- Working for Thai companies or Thai customers needs a work permit. See working legally.
- Staying 180 days or more in a calendar year usually makes you a Thai tax resident, and some foreign income brought into Thailand may then be taxable. See Thai tax basics and get advice for your situation.
- Health insurance isn't a DTV requirement, but think about it. See health insurance.

Staying productive

- Rainy-season storms can knock out power briefly. Have a plan B for important calls. See flood season.
- Coworking spaces and expat groups are the easiest way to meet people if you live alone. See expat clubs and the W Forum.
- Budget for it: see cost of living and digital nomads.

Common questions

How much is a coworking day pass in Pattaya? About ฿200 to ฿400 at small local spaces, by their own listings. International business-centre brands cost more, often about ฿650 to ฿1,100 a day.

Is Pattaya good for digital nomads? For many people, yes: cheap fast internet, good-value condos, the beach and the DTV visa. The remote-work community is smaller than in Bangkok, so expect to make more effort to meet people.

Can I work remotely in Pattaya on a tourist visa? The DTV is the visa designed for remote work. Working for Thai clients or companies needs a work permit whatever your visa.

Is café Wi-Fi good enough for video calls? Often, but not reliably. For important calls, use a coworking space or your own fibre, with mobile data as a backup.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Workin.space booking listings for Pattaya and the region (Regus and Spaces centres and day rates); UnionSPACE coworking prices (a local operator's day pass and monthly rates, as an example). We found no recent independent press list of Pattaya coworking spaces, so names and prices come from operators' own pages, and some smaller spaces' listings may be out of date. Internet prices are from our home internet page; visa details from our DTV page.

Useful next steps

- Day passes are a good way to test the Wi-Fi and chairs before committing.
- See digital nomads.
- See the DTV visa.

LIVING IN PATTAYA

Laundry in Pattaya

Getting your washing done in Pattaya: coin-operated machines, wash-and-fold shops priced by the kilo, ironing, hotel laundry, condo rules and drying clothes in the humidity.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/laundry/

Coin washer	**About ฿30 to ฿60 a load**
Coin dryer	**About ฿40 to ฿60 for a full dry**
Wash and fold	**About ฿30 to ฿60 a kilo**
Express	**Often about double, back in a few hours**
Hotel laundry	**Per item, often about ฿100 a T-shirt**
Time	**Usually back within 24 hours**

Quick answer: Laundry is cheap and easy in Pattaya. Self-service coin laundries are on most sois, many open 24 hours, and a wash costs about ฿30 to ฿60 a load depending on the machine size and water temperature, with a dryer about ฿40 to ฿60 for a full dry. If you would rather not do it yourself, a wash-and-fold shop charges about ฿30 to ฿60 a kilo and usually has it back within a day. Hotel laundry is charged per item and costs far more, so most long-stay visitors use a local shop or the machines.


Coin-operated dryers in a Pattaya self-service laundry
Photo: PattayaPatrol, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

At a glance

OPTION	TYPICAL COST (ABOUT)	GOOD FOR
Coin washer	฿30 to ฿60 a load	Quick loads, any time of day
Coin dryer	฿40 to ฿60 for a full dry	Rainy season, towels and bedding
Wash-and-fold shop	฿30 to ฿60 a kilo	Weekly washing with no effort
Express service	Often about double the normal rate	Same day, back in a few hours
Ironing	Often about ฿20 a piece where offered	Shirts and work clothes
Hotel laundry	Per item, often about ฿100 a T-shirt	Convenience only

Coin laundries

Self-service laundries with rows of washers and dryers are everywhere in Pattaya: in shophouses, next to convenience stores and at petrol stations. Many are open around the clock. Some are national chains such as Otteri Wash & Dry.

- **Washers** are priced per load, not per kilo. A standard machine costs about ฿30 to ฿40, and bigger machines or warm and hot washes cost more, up to about ฿60.
- **Dryers** usually cost about ฿40 to ฿60 for a full dry. Some sell time in shorter blocks, so a heavy load of towels can need a top-up.
- **Paying**: most machines take coins, and many shops have a change machine for notes. Newer shops often take Thai QR payments or an app. See QR payments.
- **Detergent** is sold in single sachets from a vending machine in the shop, or at the nearest 7-Eleven. Some machines add detergent automatically, so read the panel first.

Don’t leave washing sitting in a machine for long. Most coin shops have no staff, and nobody is responsible if something goes missing.

Wash-and-fold shops

Small laundry shops all over town weigh your bag and give it back washed, dried and folded. Many residents use one every week.

- **Price**: about ฿30 to ฿60 a kilo. A week of light holiday clothes for one person is often only a few kilos.
- **Time**: usually back within 24 hours. Many shops offer an express service for about double the normal price, ready in a few hours.
- **Ironing**: not every shop irons. Where they do it is extra, often about ฿20 a piece, and some shops price it by the kilo instead.

Shops usually wash everything together unless you ask, so separate anything that might run. New clothes from the markets can shrink or lose colour in their first wash.

Hotel laundry

Hotels charge per item, often about ฿100 for a T-shirt, so a full bag can cost more than a good dinner. Unless your package includes free laundry, use the nearest wash-and-fold shop instead.

Condo machines and condo rules

Many condo buildings have coin washers and dryers on each floor, in the car park or by the pool. Some rooms come with a washing machine but no dryer, so you rely on a drying rack.

Check your building's rules before you hang washing over the balcony rail. Some condos don't allow laundry to be hung where it can be seen from outside, and the juristic office may ask you to take it down. A rack kept below the balcony wall is usually the safe choice. See condo living rules.

Drying in the humidity

- In the rainy season clothes can take a day or two to air dry and can start to smell musty. Use a dryer, or dry indoors with a fan or the air conditioning running. See rainy season survival.
- Don't leave wet clothes in a machine or a bag. In the heat they start to smell within hours.
- Hang dark clothes out of strong sun to stop fading, and bring them in before the afternoon storms.

Tips

- Check every pocket for cash, cards and earbuds. Shops are not responsible for what goes into the machine.
- Count your items when you drop off and when you collect. Socks and small items are the ones that go astray, and things can get mixed up with another customer's bag.
- Delicates, silk and wool: ask whether the shop hand washes, or do them yourself in cold water and air dry them flat.
- Suits and dresses need a dry cleaner, and dry cleaning is harder to find than laundry. Ask your condo office or an expat group for a current recommendation.
- Duvets and heavy bedding are often priced per piece, so ask first.
- Some cleaners will do washing and ironing as part of the job. See maids and cleaning. For other everyday prices see cost of living.

Common questions

How much does laundry cost in Pattaya? About ฿30 to ฿60 a load in a coin washer plus about ฿40 to ฿60 to dry, or about ฿30 to ฿60 a kilo at a wash-and-fold shop. Hotel laundry is charged per item and costs much more.

Do I need to bring detergent? No. Most coin laundries sell single sachets from a machine, and some machines add detergent for you.

How long does wash and fold take? Usually within 24 hours. Express service, often about double the price, can have it back in a few hours.

Can I dry clothes on my condo balcony? It depends on the building. Some condos don't allow laundry that can be seen from outside, so check the rules or ask the juristic office.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Backpack Bob, laundry in Thailand (per-load, per-kilo, express, ironing and hotel prices); The Thaiger, ways to do laundry in Thailand (per-kilo shop prices, hotel per-item pricing, balcony rules, drying times, fabric care); Atly listing for an Otteri Wash & Dry branch (a Koh Samui branch, not Pattaya: about ฿50 to ฿60 for a 9 kg wash by temperature, drying from about ฿50). None of these is a dated Pattaya price list, they give slightly different ranges, and some older articles quote lower coin machine prices than shops charge today. Check the price board before you pay.

Related guides

- Bookshops and Libraries in Pattaya
- Elderly Care and Home Nursing in Pattaya
- The Thai Calendar and Buddhist Year
- Phone Repair and Electronics in Pattaya

LIVING IN PATTAYA

Shopping Malls & Markets

Where to shop in Pattaya in 2026: Central Pattaya, Terminal 21, Central Marina Outlet, Royal Garden Plaza, Mike Shopping Mall, Runway The Market, night markets and supermarkets, with hours, bargaining and what's closed.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/shopping-malls/

Biggest	**Central Pattaya (Central Festival), between Beach Road and Second Road**
Cheap food court	**Terminal 21's Pier 21, at the Dolphin roundabout**
Outlet brands	**Central Marina Outlet, open until midnight**
Bargains	**Mike Shopping Mall and the night markets**
Closed	**Harbor Pattaya, for renovation since November 2025**
Getting there	**Baht bus ฿15 on the normal loop**

Quick answer: Pattaya's two big malls are Central Pattaya (still widely called Central Festival), between Beach Road and Second Road, and Terminal 21 at the Dolphin roundabout. Both are covered in detail on Central Pattaya and Terminal 21. For discounted sportswear, Central Marina in North Pattaya has been relaunched as the Central Marina Outlet, open until midnight. Royal Garden Plaza has the Ripley's attractions, and Mike Shopping Mall is for bargains. In the evenings the markets take over: Runway The Market on Second Road, with its giant Ferris wheel, and Thepprasit Night Market. Harbor Pattaya, the family mall on Pattaya Klang, has been closed for renovation since November 2025. Bargain at markets, not in malls.


Shopping Malls & Markets, Pattaya
Photo: 西安兵马俑, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

At a glance

PLACE	WHERE	GOOD FOR
Central Pattaya	Between Beach Road and Second Road	Brands, cinema, supermarket, errands
Terminal 21	North Pattaya Road, Dolphin roundabout	Pier 21 food court, themed floors
Central Marina Outlet	North Pattaya	Nike, Adidas, Puma and other outlets; night market until midnight
Royal Garden Plaza	Beach Road	Ripley's and other ticketed attractions
Mike Shopping Mall	Between Beach Road and Second Road	Cheap clothes and souvenirs, bargaining
Runway The Market	Second Road	Evening food and stalls, The View Pattaya Ferris wheel
Thepprasit Night Market	Thepprasit Road	Street food and cheap clothes
Harbor Pattaya	Pattaya Klang Road	Closed for renovation since November 2025

The big malls

- **Central Festival** (now Central Pattaya): the biggest, with over 350 stores by its own count, a cinema, a basement food court and the beach across the road. Our Central Pattaya and Terminal 21 page has the hours, VAT refunds and the errands you can do there.
- **Terminal 21**: each floor is themed on a world city, and the Pier 21 food court is one of the cheapest air-conditioned meals in town. You pay with a prepaid card and get the balance back on the way out.
- **Central Marina**: Central Pattana relaunched it as the Central Marina Outlet in late 2024 and calls it Thailand's first "day-to-night lifestyle outlet". Its announcement lists a Nike Factory Store and Adidas, Puma, Skechers and Supersports outlets, with New Balance from 2025 and discounts of up to 70%. A night market with over 100 food stalls and shops runs alongside, and the outlet says it is open until midnight every day. It's a different mall from Central Pattaya on Beach Road.

Older and bargain malls

- **Royal Garden Plaza** on Beach Road: older and quieter for shopping, but home to Ripley's Believe It or Not! Pattaya. Ripley's own site lists 11 attractions, including the Odditorium, Louis Tussaud's Waxworks and a 9DX moving theatre, open daily from 11am to 10pm.
- **Mike Shopping Mall**: more indoor bazaar than mall, with cheap clothes, shoes, bags and souvenirs, and a food court. Guides list it as open about 11am to 11pm, with a street food market at the back in the evening. Many stalls sell copies of famous brands. They're cheap, but customs at home can seize counterfeit goods, so think before you fill a suitcase.
- **Harbor Pattaya**: the mall with the big indoor play area closed its play zones on 3 November 2025 and its shops by 30 November 2025 for a major renovation, The Pattaya News reported. We found no reopening date, so check its social media before you go.

Night markets

- **Runway The Market** on Second Road: an evening market with food and shopping stalls. The View Pattaya, a Ferris wheel over 100 metres tall, opened there at the end of November 2025. At its launch The Pattaya News reported ฿280 for Thais and ฿480 for foreigners in a standard six-person gondola, VIP glass-floor

gondolas at ฿600 a person, and opening hours of 4pm to 1am.

- **Thepprasit Night Market** on Thepprasit Road: mostly food, plus clothes and souvenirs. Sources disagree on the days. Pattaya.guide, checked in August 2026, lists it daily from 5pm to 10:30pm, while several other guides say Friday to Sunday only. Weekends are the busiest either way.
- The Central Marina Outlet's night market, above, and the Jomtien night market. See night markets and cheap eats.

Pro tip: in my October 2026 video I called Runway Market a place with lots of cheap eats and shopping stalls, plus the Ferris wheel. I guessed ฿200 to ฿300 a person for the wheel. The price reported at its opening was higher for foreigners, so check at the ticket desk.

Supermarkets and everyday shopping

Big C, Lotus's and Tops are all over town for everyday shopping, Makro is the wholesale store popular with restaurants and expats stocking up, and 7-Eleven and FamilyMart are on almost every corner. For imported food, fresh markets and which store is cheapest, see supermarkets and groceries. For used furniture and appliances, see buying and selling second-hand.

Shopping tips

- **Bargaining** is normal at markets and in bazaar-style malls like Mike, not in department stores, chain shops or supermarkets. Stay friendly and walk away if the price doesn't work.
- **Two prices:** some attractions charge foreigners more than Thais, as the Ferris wheel does. It's common at tourist sights.
- **VAT refunds:** tourists can claim VAT back on goods from shops showing the "VAT Refund for Tourists" sign, with a minimum spend per shop per day. See Central Pattaya and Terminal 21.
- **Hours:** most malls open at about 10am or 11am and close at 10pm or 11pm; markets start in the late afternoon. Listings often disagree, so check before a late trip.
- **Getting there:** baht buses run along Beach Road and Second Road for ฿15 on the normal loop since 10 April 2026. See baht bus routes and fares.
- Malls are the best escape on a rainy day. For gifts to take home, see souvenir shopping.

Common questions

What is the biggest mall in Pattaya? Central Pattaya, running from Beach Road through to Second Road, with over 350 stores by its own count. Many people still call it Central Festival.

Is Central Marina still open? Yes, as the Central Marina Outlet, relaunched by Central Pattana in late 2024 with sportswear outlets, discounts of up to 70% and a night market. It says it is open until midnight daily.

Is Harbor Pattaya open? It closed for a major renovation in November 2025, and we found no reopening date as of November 2026.

Where can I bargain in Pattaya? At night markets, Mike Shopping Mall and market stalls. Prices in department stores, chain shops and supermarkets are fixed.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Central Pattana, Central Marina Outlet launch (November 2024); The Pattaya News, Harbor Pattaya closes for renovation (1 November 2025); The Pattaya News, The View Pattaya opens at Runway The Market (1 December 2025); Ripley's Thailand official site (attractions and hours); Pattaya.guide, Thepprasit Night Market (verified August 2026); Thailand Magazine, Mike Shopping Mall. Market days and mall hours differ between sources, so check before you go. Jonny's Runway Market comments are from his video of 20 October 2026.

Useful next steps

- Malls are a cool escape on hot afternoons and rainy days.
- See food courts.
- See cinemas and bowling.

Meeting Your Thai Partner's Family

Meeting a Thai partner's family for the first time: greeting parents with a wai, what to bring and wear, home etiquette, respect for elders, visiting the village, family occasions and talking openly about expectations.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/visiting-thai-family/

Greeting	**Wai the parents and elders; let your partner guide you**
Bring	**A small gift such as fruit, sweets or something from home**
At home	**Shoes off; keep your feet down and your head lower than seated elders**
Manner	**Calm, polite and patient; no arguments in front of family**
Expectations	**Talk openly with your partner, early and in private**

Quick answer: Family is central to Thai life, and meeting a partner's parents is a real step, so a little preparation shows respect. Let your partner lead: they know their family. Greet the parents and other elders with a wai, dress neatly, and bring a small gift such as fruit or something from your home country. Take your shoes off at the door, keep your feet down and pointed away from people, and don't loom over elders who are sitting. Stay calm and polite, eat what you are offered, and don't worry about small mistakes: a visitor who is trying is usually welcomed warmly. Talk with your partner beforehand about what the family expects.

At a glance

DO	AVOID
Wai parents and elders, and smile	Touching anyone's head, even a child's
Take your shoes off before going in	Pointing your feet at people or at Buddha images
Bring a small gift, and give it with a smile	Raising your voice or arguing in front of the family
Let elders be served and start first	Big displays of affection with your partner
Ask your partner what to call each person	Making promises you are not sure you can keep

Before you go

- Ask your partner who will be there, what they do, and what to call each person. Thais use nicknames and family terms like Phi (older) and Nong (younger) every day. See Thai names and titles.
- Learn a greeting and a thank you: sawatdee khrap or kha, and khop khun khrap or kha. See useful Thai phrases.
- Many families, especially in the northeast (Isaan), speak a regional language at home as well as Thai, so even your partner's Thai lessons may not cover everything you hear. Your partner may need to translate.
- Dress neatly and modestly: long trousers or a knee-length skirt and a shirt with sleeves are a safe choice, especially if a temple visit is likely.

The first meeting

- **The wai:** palms together near the chest, head bowed slightly. Thailand Foundation notes that the deepest wai is kept for ceremonies, parents and revered elders. Your partner may show you how they greet their own parents. See Thai etiquette.
- **Gifts:** a fruit basket, good snacks, or a small present from your home country are all easy choices. Ask your partner about anything the family can't eat, and whether to give it on arrival.
- **Conversation:** expect friendly questions about your work, your family and your plans. Answer simply and kindly. It is fine not to have every answer yet.
- **Food:** there will likely be a lot of it. Try a little of everything, wait for elders to start, and say it is delicious. If something is too spicy, a smile and a glass of water is enough. See Isaan food and Thai dishes to try.

In the family home

Thailand Foundation's guide to etiquette lists the basics:

- Take your shoes off before entering a Thai home, modest or grand.
- Don't touch anyone's head, and don't pass things over someone's head.
- Keep your feet off tables and don't point the soles at people. Sit cross-legged or with your feet tucked to the side.
- Don't stand or walk with your body higher than a seated elder's head. Lower your head a little as you pass.
- Don't step on raised door thresholds.
- Join in where you can: carrying dishes, clearing up and playing with the kids all help.

Visiting the village

- Many families live in other provinces, often a long way from Pattaya. Getting there usually means a long-distance bus, a train or a domestic flight, often via Bangkok, so check current timetables and book ahead around holidays. See Bangkok to Pattaya and U-Tapao airport.

- Village life is simple and sociable. Expect neighbours to drop by, early mornings, roosters, and mosquitoes. Pack repellent, light long clothes and any medicines you need. See dengue and mosquitoes.
- Bathrooms may be basic. Bring tissues and hand gel.
- A visit to the local temple is common. Cover shoulders and knees and follow the family's lead. See temple customs.

Family occasions

- **Songkran (mid-April):** many Thais travel home, and families visit temples and gently pour scented water over the hands of elders to show respect. See Songkran.
- **Mother's Day (12 August) and Father's Day (5 December)** are public holidays, and Thailand Foundation notes that Thai people deeply value respect and gratitude toward their parents. A card or small gift for your partner's parents is a kind touch. See Thai public holidays.
- If you are invited to a merit-making ceremony, ordination or wedding, ask your partner what to wear and what is expected of guests. See Thai wedding customs.

Expectations and money

Gratitude to parents (katanyu) is a core Thai value, and in many families grown children help look after their parents. How a couple handles this is their own decision. Talk with your partner early, privately and calmly, about what both of you expect, and agree on what you are comfortable with before you visit. Any gift or help is your own choice. If requests for money keep coming up with pressure or urgency, from anyone, slow down and read love scams; they can happen to anyone. See also dating in Thailand.

Common questions

What should I bring when meeting my Thai partner's parents? A small gift such as a fruit basket, good snacks or something from your home country. Ask your partner what the family likes.

Should I wai my partner's parents? Yes. Greet them with a wai and a smile, and let your partner show you how they greet their own parents.

Can I hold hands with my partner in front of the family? Keep affection low-key, especially with older relatives and in the countryside. Follow your partner's lead.

What if I make a mistake? Apologise with a smile and a wai. Most families are forgiving with a visitor who is clearly trying.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Thailand Foundation, Feet Low, Head High: a guide to Thai etiquette (February 2024); Thailand Foundation, Thai Mother's Day (August 2025). Holiday dates match our Thai public holidays page. Customs vary between regions and families; your partner is the best guide.

Useful next steps

- Bring a small gift such as fruit or snacks.
- See Thai names and titles.
- See Isaan food.

Supermarkets & Groceries

Where to buy food in Pattaya: fresh markets, Big C and Lotus's, Makro, Tops and Foodland, imported food at Villa Market and Friendship, 7-Eleven, delivery, alcohol rules and keeping the bill down.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/supermarkets-groceries/

Cheapest	**Fresh markets and Thai brands**
Big stores	**Big C, Lotus's, Makro**
Weekly shop	**Tops, Foodland**
Imported food	**Villa Market, Friendship**
Everywhere	**7-Eleven and FamilyMart, open 24 hours**
Delivery	**Grab, LINE MAN and store apps**

Quick answer: Pattaya has every kind of food shop, from very cheap fresh markets to supermarkets full of imported cheese and wine at Western prices or more. The big hypermarkets, **Big C** and **Lotus's**, are the cheapest for everyday groceries; **Makro** is for bulk buying; **Tops** and **Foodland** are good mid-range choices; and **Villa Market** and **Friendship** carry the widest range of imported food. 7-Eleven and FamilyMart are on almost every corner, and Grab and LINE MAN deliver. Buying Thai brands and fresh market produce, and keeping imported treats for treats, is the way to eat well for less.


Inside a Big C supermarket in Thailand
Photo: Supanut Arunoprayote, CC BY 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

At a glance

TYPE	WHERE	BEST FOR
Fresh markets	Local morning markets, such as Naklua market	Cheapest fruit, vegetables, meat and fish
Hypermarkets	Big C, Lotus's	Everyday groceries and household goods at low prices
Wholesale	Makro	Bulk buys, drinks, freezer stocking, kitchen supplies
Mid-range	Tops, Foodland	A weekly shop with some imported lines
Imported and premium	Villa Market, Friendship	Cheese, wine, deli meats, Western brands
Convenience	7-Eleven, FamilyMart, small Big C and Lotus's stores	Snacks, ready meals, drinks, bill payments
Delivery	Grab, LINE MAN, supermarket apps	No car, hot days and rainy days

Fresh markets

Thai fresh markets sell vegetables, herbs, fruit, meat, fish and ready-made dishes at the lowest prices in town. They are busiest early in the morning, when the produce is freshest. Many stalls are cash only, so bring small notes. See Thai fresh markets, the Naklua fish market and night markets.

Big C, Lotus's and Makro

- **Big C** and **Lotus's** (formerly Tesco Lotus) are big hypermarkets with groceries, household goods, clothes and small electronics. They have the lowest everyday prices of the supermarkets but the smallest imported range. Both have large stores in Pattaya, including Big C Extra Central Pattaya, Big C South Pattaya and Lotus's North and South Pattaya, plus smaller neighbourhood branches.
- **Makro** is a cash-and-carry wholesaler, good for bulk buys, drinks, frozen food and kitchen supplies. Many items come in restaurant sizes, so it suits people stocking a freezer or feeding a family more than a solo weekly shop.
- Watch the weekly promotions and multi-buy offers, and sign up for the chains' member apps and points cards.

Tops and Foodland

- **Tops**, part of Central Group, has supermarkets inside Central Festival and Central Marina. It is a good middle ground for a weekly shop, with a decent imported range, and offers online ordering with delivery slots. See shopping malls.
- **Foodland** is a mid-priced supermarket open 24 hours, with a well-known branch on Central Pattaya Road, a butcher's counter and roast chicken. It is popular with long-term residents.

Imported and Western food

- **Villa Market** has the widest range of imported food in Pattaya, at the highest prices: cheese, cereals, European pasta, deli meats and wine. Branches have been listed at The Avenue on Second Road and Little Walk on Sukhumvit Road, among others. It also runs an online shop with delivery.
- **Friendship**, on South Pattaya Road, is a long-running local supermarket with a wide imported range at more moderate prices, and is known for its coffee beans.
- Imported products often cost more than at home. Cheese, wine and spirits carry heavy taxes, so expect a big jump over Thai alternatives.

Pro tip: the worst thing about living here, for him, is missing Western food. Milk, pasta sauce, breads and soft drinks never taste quite the same, and what comes close costs a lot. On a tight budget he lives on meals and snacks from 7-Eleven, Tops and Mini Big C, plus one high-protein meal with a few eggs and chicken.

Convenience stores

7-Eleven and FamilyMart are on almost every corner, most open 24 hours. They sell snacks, drinks, toiletries and ready meals they heat for you, and you can pay bills, top up your phone and even deposit cash at the counter. See depositing cash at 7-Eleven. Smaller Big C and Lotus's stores in the neighbourhoods fill the gap between a 7-Eleven and a hypermarket. For toiletries, see deodorant and toiletries.

Buying alcohol

Shops can only sell alcohol during set hours, and the tills refuse it outside them. Since 29 May 2026 the normal hours are 11am to midnight; the old 2pm to 5pm afternoon ban is gone. On the five Buddhist holy days (Makha Bucha, Visakha Bucha, Asahna Bucha, Khao Phansa and Ok Phansa) supermarkets and convenience stores can't sell alcohol at all. The exemptions that took effect on 7 November 2026 cover hotels, airports, licensed entertainment venues and some tourist-zone and event venues, not ordinary shops and supermarkets. Sales also stop around elections. See Buddhist holidays and alcohol and laws visitors break.

Delivery

Grab and LINE MAN deliver groceries as well as meals, and Big C, Tops and Villa Market have their own online ordering. Paying by card or Thai QR in the app is easiest. See food delivery apps and QR payments.

Spending less

- Buy Thai brands and seasonal fruit. See Thai fruit.
- Do your fresh shopping at the market and your packaged shopping at a hypermarket.
- Eat out at street stalls and food courts. For one person it is often cheaper than cooking. See cheap eats and cooking at home.
- Bring a reusable bag. Most big chains, including 7-Eleven and FamilyMart, stopped giving free single-use plastic bags in 2020.
- Check your receipt and your change. Big stores take cards and QR, but markets and small shops are mostly cash.
- For budget figures, see cost of living.

Common questions

What is the cheapest supermarket in Pattaya? Big C and Lotus's are usually the cheapest for everyday groceries, and Makro for bulk. Fresh markets are cheaper still for fruit, vegetables and meat.

Where can I buy Western food in Pattaya? Villa Market has the widest imported range, at the highest prices. Friendship, Foodland and Tops also stock imported brands.

Are supermarkets in Pattaya open 24 hours? 7-Eleven and FamilyMart mostly are, and so is Foodland on Central Pattaya Road. The hypermarkets and mall supermarkets keep shorter hours.

Can I buy alcohol at 7-Eleven on Buddhist holidays? No. The holy-day exemptions cover hotels, licensed entertainment venues and a few others, not shops.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya.guide, expat groceries in Pattaya (August 2026) (Villa Market, Foodland, Tops, Friendship and Makro details); EMIS, Friendship Supermarket company profile (South Pattaya Road address); The Thaiger, Pattaya parking points (names the Big C and Lotus's branches); Pattaya Mail, holy-day alcohol exemptions from 7 November 2026; The Thaiger, retailers' plastic bag ban, January 2020. Branches open, move and close, so check a map app before you make a special trip.

LIVING IN PATTAYA

Deodorant and Toiletries in Thailand: What to Buy and What to Bring

The deodorant that worked for Jonny, what's reported as hard to find, whitening labels to watch for, and where to look for the Western food you'll miss.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/deodorant-toiletries/

Jonny's deodorant	**A Nivea roll-on**
Watch labels for	**Whitening, often in deodorant and body wash**
Reported hard to find	**Stick deodorant, tampons, trusted sunscreen brands**
Imported food	**Tops, Villa Market, Foodland, Friendship**

Quick answer: you can buy deodorant in Thailand, but it may not be what you're used to. Roll-ons are the norm, travellers report that sticks are harder to find, and many products contain whitening ingredients. Check the label, or bring your favourite from home if you're fussy.

Pro tip: I used Mitchum for years. It isn't sold here as a normal shelf item, and imported it runs about ฿500. After 3 years I found a Nivea roll-on. I'm not sure if it's the Dry Impact one. It works fantastically, lasts forever and is ridiculously cheap. I buy it on Shopee, but it's also sold at most retailers and may be cheaper there.

Finding a deodorant that works

Nivea sells several roll-ons, so read the exact name. Jonny isn't sure which one his is, and it may be Dry Impact, which is sold with different hour claims in different listings. As a rough idea of price, Watsons Thailand has listed a different Nivea roll-on at ฿79. We didn't confirm a current shelf price for Dry Impact, so check in store.

- **Whitening:** one teaching agency's Thailand guide warns that deodorant, sunscreen and many body washes can contain it. Names such as "Extra Bright" are a clue. If you don't want it, read the label.
- **Sticks:** one Bangkok expat on a teaching forum couldn't find any, only roll-ons. It's an older post, and other expats say you can order nearly any brand on Lazada, so don't treat it as a hard rule.
- **Imported brands:** expect to pay more. Jonny's Mitchum figure above is one example.

What people say to bring or check

These come from travel guides and expat forums, not official sources. Availability changes, and a big mall in Pattaya has more than a small town.

ITEM	WHAT'S REPORTED	WHAT TO DO
Stick deodorant	Harder to find	Bring a spare or order online
Sunscreen	Sold here, but familiar brands can be hard to find or expensive	Bring your preferred brand, and see heat and sun safety
Body wash and lotion	Whitening is common	Read the label
Tampons	Often harder to find and expensive	Bring some if you have a preference
Everyday toothpaste and Western brands	Generally easy in major stores	No need to pack much

For medicines, use our pharmacies page. Ask a pharmacist if you're not sure what's in a product.

The Western food you'll miss

Pro tip: this is the worst part of living here for me. Soft drinks aren't the same. I can't quite get the same milk, pasta sauce, breads or flavours. There's no Chick-fil-A, no unlimited soda and breadsticks, pizza is different, and what comes close costs a lot.

MISS THIS?	WHERE TO LOOK
Milk, pasta sauce, soft drinks, bread	The imported shelves at Tops, Villa Market, Foodland and Friendship. See supermarkets and groceries
Pizza	Jonny orders Domino's and Slice Pizza. See cheap eats for prices
The flavours of home	Cooking it yourself. See cooking at home
Chick-fil-A, unlimited soda and breadsticks	No real swap. Adjust your expectations

Imported products cost about what they do at home, and sometimes more. That's the trade-off, so budget for it. Our cost of living page has the bigger picture.

Clothes wear out faster, too

Pro tip (prices as of Nov 2026): cheap clothes here are fragile. I spend an extra ฿300 to ฿500 a month replacing them. I like the clothes and they're super cheap, so I don't mind.

See laundry and shopping malls for where to wash and buy them.

Common questions

Can you buy deodorant in Thailand? Yes. Roll-ons are widely reported as the norm, and Jonny's pick is a Nivea roll-on. Check labels for whitening.

Should I bring deodorant to Thailand? If you're attached to a brand or to sticks, bring it. Otherwise, you can try a local roll-on when you arrive.

Why does Thai deodorant have whitening in it? Many products sold here are made for buyers who want lighter skin, so whitening shows up across deodorants, sunscreen and body wash. It's on the label, and not every product has it.

Where can I buy Western food in Pattaya? Tops, Villa Market, Foodland and Friendship all stock imported brands. Delivery apps can also help: see food delivery apps.

Useful next steps

- First trip checklist
- Moving abroad
- Jonny's real monthly spending

Sources

Checked 6 November 2026. Most of these are personal reports, not official sources. Jonny's boxes are his own experience.

- Travelfish, what to bring with you to Bangkok
- Listen & Learn, teaching agency guide to Thailand
- Dave's ESL Cafe forum post (older)
- ask.in.th, items hard to find in Thailand
- Watsons Thailand, Nivea Extra Bright roll-on listing

Drinking Water in Pattaya

Is Pattaya tap water safe to drink? How locals get drinking water: refill machines for about ฿1 a litre, big bottles, delivery and home filters, plus ice and brushing your teeth.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/drinking-water/

Tap water	**Not usually drunk; fine for showering and washing**
Refill machines	**About ฿1 a litre**
Bottled	**About ฿10 to ฿15 for 1.5 litres**
Delivery	**Large 18.9-litre bottles to your door**
Ice	**Factory ice in restaurants is generally fine**

Quick answer: Most people in Pattaya, Thais included, don't drink water straight from the tap. The water is treated, but old pipes and building tanks can affect it on the way to your glass. Drinking water is cheap and easy to get: coin refill machines sell filtered water for about ฿1 a litre, 7-Eleven sells 1.5-litre bottles for about ฿10 to ฿15, and long-stayers often have 18.9-litre bottles delivered. Tap water is fine for showering, washing and, for most people, brushing teeth, and factory ice in restaurants is generally fine.


A row of drinking water refill machines in Pattaya
Photo: Vmenkov, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

Ways to get drinking water

OPTION	TYPICAL PRICE (APPROX.)	GOOD FOR
Refill machine (coin, on the street or in condos)	About ฿1 a litre	Cheapest; bring your own bottles
Bottled water from 7-Eleven	฿10 to ฿15 for 1.5 litres	Short stays, on the go
Large bottles (6 litres)	฿40 to ฿60	Stocking up at home
18.9-litre delivery	Cheap per litre, plus a bottle deposit	Long stays, with a dispenser
Home filter	Upfront cost plus cartridges	Long stays, less plastic

Refill machines

- Blue or white coin machines on the street and in condo buildings sell filtered water by the litre. Put coins in, hold your bottle under the tap, and press the button.
- Check the service date sticker; clean, regularly serviced machines are the ones to use. Skip any with a dirty nozzle or a faded sticker.
- Rinse your bottles regularly and replace them when they get scratched or cloudy.
- Most machines take ฿1, ฿5 and ฿10 coins. Keep a coin jar.

Delivery and dispensers

- Water shops and brands deliver 18.9-litre bottles to your condo, usually by phone or LINE. You pay a deposit for the first bottle and swap empties after that.
- A simple dispenser stand or a hand pump works fine; hot-and-cold dispensers cost more and use electricity.
- Ask your condo office or neighbours who delivers to the building.

Home filters

- Under-sink filters and countertop filter jugs are sold in malls, home stores and online.
- Reverse-osmosis systems give the cleanest water but waste some and need servicing.
- Whatever you buy, change the cartridges on time: an old filter can be worse than none. See home repairs and handymen.

Ice, cooking and teeth

- Restaurants and bars use factory ice (the cylinders with a hole); it's generally considered safe. Crushed ice from a block at a street stall is a little less certain; skip it if your stomach is sensitive.
- Brushing your teeth with tap water is fine for most people.
- Boil tap water or use filtered water for cooking if you prefer.
- Babies: use bottled or boiled water for formula, as at home.

When the water goes off

- Water cuts happen in Pattaya, especially in dry months and during pipe work. Keep a few large bottles at home for drinking and cooking.
- After a cut, tap water can run cloudy or brown for a while. Let it run clear before using it, and don't drink it.
- See power cuts and water outages.

Tips

- Drink more than you think in the heat. See heat and sun safety.
- Carry a refillable bottle to cut plastic.
- Stomach upset? A pharmacist can help. See pharmacies and medicines and food poisoning.
- More household costs: electricity, water and bills.

Common questions

Is Pattaya tap water safe to drink? It is treated, but most people don't drink it because pipes and building tanks can affect it. Use refill machines, bottled or filtered water.

Is the ice safe in Pattaya? Factory-made ice, the cylinders with a hole, is generally considered safe.

Can I brush my teeth with tap water? Yes, most people do without problems.

How much does drinking water cost? About ฿1 a litre from refill machines, or ฿10 to ฿15 for a 1.5-litre bottle.

Sources

Prices are typical for Pattaya in 2026 and vary by shop and machine. The advice on tap water and ice follows common travel-health guidance for Thailand; if you have a health condition, ask a doctor or pharmacist.

LIVING IN PATTAYA

Living in Pattaya with a Dog

What it's like to live in Pattaya with a dog, from riding with Mooyoong: our 24/7 vet, grooming, pet hotels and daycare, condos, heat, street dogs, getting around, and bringing a dog to Thailand.

Verified October 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/living-with-a-dog/

Vaccinations	**Rabies every year, plus the usual core vaccines**
Biggest risk	**Soi dogs, then heat and ticks**
Emergency vet	**Muang Ake Pet Hospital, open 24/7**
Condos	**Many don't allow pets; check before you sign**
Getting around	**Baht buses usually take small and calm medium dogs**
Daycare	**Pawsome Space, ฿200 for the whole day**
Our dog	**Mooyoong, the star of the ride videos**

Our rides have a co-star: Mooyoong, the dog who rides along on most of the videos. Living in Pattaya with a dog can be done, but I'll be honest: **I don't really recommend having a dog in Pattaya, or bringing one here.** The soi dogs, the heat and the ticks mean a lot more care than at home. If you're set on it, this is what we've learned.


A Thai street dog
Photo: Slyronit, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

The biggest warning: soi dogs

Pattaya has a lot of street and community dogs ("soi dogs"). Most ignore you, but many defend their soi, and they don't like a strange dog walking through it, especially at night.

- Keep your dog on a lead and walk away calmly from a stand-off. Don't run.
- Avoid the same soi at night if a pack is there.
- Soi dogs prowl many of the Pattaya beaches. Keep a close eye on your dog and keep it on a lead, or only off it if it has a quick recall.
- If you have a big dog, think twice about the beaches: they're a common place for soi dog confrontations.
- If you're bitten, wash the wound and get to a hospital the same day for rabies shots. See hospitals and clinics and stray dogs and rabies.

Vets and vaccinations

- **Our vet: Muang Ake Pet Hospital** (โรงพยาบาลสัตว์เมืองเอก), on Sukhumvit Road. It's open 24/7 for emergencies, the prices are very affordable and the care is fantastic. We've taken Mooyoong there several times, once for an eye infection and once for wheezing and sneezing from allergies.
- Rabies is present in Thailand. Keep your dog's rabies vaccination up to date every year, and the core vaccines too.
- Ask your vet about monthly tick, flea and heartworm prevention; ticks are common all year.

Grooming: Fur Pet

Mooyoong gets groomed, bathed and cut at **Fur Pet** about once a month. It's one of the 7 secret Pattaya spots from our rides (see it at 11:20 in the video). After his very first visit he had an eye problem and an ฿1,800 emergency vet bill. I told them, they paid it, and he's been back six or seven times since with no problems. Mistakes happen; how a business fixes them is what matters.

Pet hotels and daycare

There are lots of pet hotels in Pattaya. These are our favourites:

- **Pawsome Space** (Central Pattaya): my overall favourite for location and price. All-day daycare is **฿200**. It's on the ground floor of a nice hotel just off Pattaya Klang Road. Map
- **Elite Dog Resort** (Pratumnak): a very Western-style experience and quality, at a Western price.
- **A Thai-run pet hotel in East Pattaya**, on the Darkside off Sukhumvit Road: much cheaper. Map · Facebook

Heat

- Walk early in the morning and after sunset. Midday pavements can burn paws.
- Always carry water. Flat-faced breeds and thick coats struggle most.
- Never leave a dog in a parked car or on a hot balcony.
- See heat and sun safety for the human side.

Where to live

Many condos don't allow pets, so ask the building office as well as the owner, and get it in the contract. Houses in East Pattaya are often easier with a dog. See renting a condo.

Getting around

- **Baht buses** usually take small dogs. We've never had a problem, and I've seen plenty of medium-sized dogs on them too, as long as they're calm.
- **Scooters:** small dogs ride in a carrier or basket; we keep Mooyoong secure on every ride. The police are fine with it.
- **Ride apps:** most drivers accept pets. Message the driver first if you want to be sure, or to avoid a wait or an awkward moment. Size matters a lot: the bigger the dog, the fewer drivers will say yes.
- **Beaches:** most allow dogs early and late; respect the signs and clean up after your dog. Watch out for soi dogs (see above).
- **Bars:** hit or miss. As a rule, if the bar is open on three sides, it's usually fine. The more outdoor and no-air-con a bar is, the better your chances.

Bringing a dog to Thailand

Importing a dog needs an import permit from the Department of Livestock Development, a microchip, rabies vaccination and a health certificate, arranged before you fly. Rules change; start early and check the latest requirements with the department or a pet relocation company.

Follow Mooyoong

See Mooyoong in action on the ride videos and on Instagram.

Useful next steps

- See dog-friendly places.
- See house and pet sitting.
- See stray dogs and rabies.

LIVING IN PATTAYA

LINE App and Thai Phone Etiquette

Why everyone in Thailand uses LINE, how to set it up so you don't lose it when you change SIM, condo groups and OpenChat, official accounts, scams to spot, and simple etiquette.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/line-app-guide/

Main app	**LINE is Thailand's main messaging app, about 56 million users**
Used for	**Friends, condo groups, shops and official accounts**
Before you change SIM	**Register an email and password in LINE**
Etiquette	**Polite replies, stickers welcome, no late-night calls**
Scams	**Real officials never send warrants or demand money on LINE**
Lost money	**Call 1441 at once**

Quick answer: LINE is how Thailand messages. LINE Thailand says it has about 56 million users here, and landlords, condo offices, shops, clinics and many official services use it. Install it, register it with a Thai number if you have one, and straight away add an email address and password in the app's settings, because that is what lets you keep your account when you change phone or SIM. Never send money or codes because of a LINE message, especially one claiming to be from the police.

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Who uses it	About 56 million users in Thailand (LINE Thailand, 2026)
Sign up	A phone number that can receive a text or call; virtual numbers don't work
Best number	A Thai SIM. See SIM cards and eSIMs
Do this first	Register an email and password so you can move or recover the account
Groups	Condo and village groups, plus public OpenChat communities
Businesses	Official accounts with a verification badge
Gone	LINE VOOM, the timeline feed, closed in Thailand on 28 September 2026
Scam help	Call 1441 straight away if you have sent money

Setting up

- Download LINE from the App Store or Google Play and sign up with a phone number that can receive a text or a call. LINE's help centre says landlines and virtual numbers can't be used.
- A Thai number works best. Thailand is one of the few countries (with Japan, Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong) where LINE lets you log in and move your account with your phone number.
- Straight away, go to Settings and register an **email address and password**. Write them down. If you use LINE from a country outside that list, email is the only way to log back in.
- Add people by scanning their QR code or searching their LINE ID.
- Turn on chat backup to iCloud or Google Drive so a lost phone doesn't mean lost conversations.

Changing phone or SIM without losing LINE

This catches out many newcomers. If you arrive with a home number and later get a Thai SIM, or swap phones:

- Before you change anything, check that your email and password are registered and that your chats are backed up.
- To switch to a Thai number, change the phone number in LINE on your main phone, or log in with the new number and choose to transfer your existing account.
- LINE won't let you change your number again for 24 hours after a transfer.
- Keep your registered number up to date. LINE warns that if an old number is given to someone else, you could lose access.

How LINE is used in Pattaya

- **Condo and village groups:** the juristic office posts notices about water cuts, power outages, lift repairs and fees. Notices are often only in Thai, so copy the text into a translation app. See condo living rules and power and water outages.
- **Landlords and agents:** rent reminders, photos of meter readings and repair requests usually arrive on LINE. Keep important agreements in writing there; it's your record.
- **Shops and services:** clinics, salons, repair shops and restaurants take bookings and send updates through official accounts.

- **OpenChat:** public group chats by topic or area. LINE says OpenChat reached 24 million monthly users in Thailand in November 2026. You join with a separate profile name, which is useful if you'd rather not show your main profile to strangers.
- **Related apps:** LINE MAN (food delivery) and LINE Pay (wallet) are separate services that link to your account. See food delivery apps.
- Our own Pattaya 360 community chat lives on Telegram, but many local groups use LINE.

Official accounts and badges

Businesses and government services use LINE Official Accounts. A verified account shows a badge next to its name after LINE has reviewed it; unverified accounts don't have one. Badge styles have changed over the years, so the safest check is to add an account only from the QR code or LINE ID printed on the business's own website, shop counter or receipt, not from a link someone sends you.

Etiquette

- Stickers are a normal, friendly reply, and sending one to end a chat is polite, not lazy.
- LINE shows "Read" when you have opened a message. Thai contacts may not reply at once, and that's fine.
- Message first before calling, and avoid calls late at night unless it is urgent.
- In big condo groups, keep posts to building matters and don't argue in public. Message the office or the person directly.
- A quick thank-you sticker or "khop khun khrap/kha" is always welcome. See useful Thai phrases and Thai names and titles.

Avoiding scams

Online fraud is the biggest scam problem in Thailand, and LINE is one of the channels used. Thailand's anti-online-fraud officials say real government agencies:

- do not send arrest warrants or summonses through LINE,
- do not question people by video call,
- never ask you to transfer money to "verify" your assets.

Also:

- Never share a verification code, even with a friend whose account may have been taken over.
- Be careful with links, investment offers and money requests from accounts you don't know, or from friends who suddenly need cash. Call them on the phone to check.
- If you have already sent money, call the Anti Online Scam Operation Center on **1441** immediately, then report it on the Thai Police Online system. See common scams and online safety.

Common questions

Can I use LINE with my home-country number? Yes, if the number can receive a text or call. But register an email and password at once, because phone-number login and transfers only work for numbers from Thailand, Japan, Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong.

Do I need LINE if I'm only visiting? Not essential, but useful. Hotels, tour operators and many shops answer faster on LINE than by email.

What happened to LINE VOOM? The timeline and stories feature closed in Thailand on 28 September 2026. Chats, calls, groups and OpenChat still work as before.

Someone claiming to be police contacted me on LINE. What should I do? Don't pay or share anything. Real officials don't do this. If you are worried, call the Tourist Police on 1155.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: LINE Help Center, changing to or registering a phone number from a different country; LINE Help Center, transferring accounts; Relevant Audience, LINE Thailand's 56 million users (August 2026); Nation Thailand, LINE VOOM shutdown on 28 September; Nation Thailand, online scam reports and official warnings (6 July 2026); LINE Thailand press release on OpenChat, 5 November 2026.

Dating in Thailand: The Best Dating Apps and Tips

Dating in Pattaya and Thailand: the dating apps that actually work (ThaiFriendly, Tinder, ThaiCupid and more), with ratings, first-date tips, culture, money and avoiding romance scams.

Verified October 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/dating-in-thailand/

My pick	**ThaiFriendly for meeting Thais; Tinder for everyone**
Most used	**Tinder (500M+ downloads worldwide)**
First date	**Meet in a public place**
Red flag	**Any request for money**
Age	**Everyone must be over 18**

Plenty of visitors and expats meet partners in Thailand, and many long, happy relationships start in Pattaya. These days most of them start on a dating app. Here are the apps that actually work here, what I've found using them, and the cultural and safety basics.

The dating apps that work in Pattaya

Ratings and download numbers are from the Thai App Store and Google Play, checked in October 2026. They change all the time.

ThaiFriendly MY PICK

Made for meeting Thai people. Around since 2015; free to join, with a paid upgrade.

App Store: ★ 4.6 (48,156 ratings) Google Play: ★ 4.6 (44.9K reviews) Downloads: 1M+ on Google Play

App Store · Google Play · Website

Tinder WORKS FOR ME TOO

The world's biggest dating app. A mix of tourists, expats and Thais in Pattaya.

App Store: ★ 4.6 (321,217 ratings) Google Play: ★ 4.8 (9.27M reviews) Downloads: 500M+ on Google Play

App Store · Google Play · Website

ThaiCupid

A long-running Thai dating site from Cupid Media; full messaging needs a paid membership.

App Store: ★ 4.7 (30,253 ratings) Google Play: ★ 4.6 (66.6K reviews) Downloads: 1M+ on Google Play

App Store · Google Play · Website

Honourable mentions

Bumble: Women send the first message. Smaller in Pattaya; more expats than locals.
App Store: ★ 4.7 (22,327 ratings) Google Play: ★ 4.5 (1.63M reviews) Downloads: 100M+ on Google Play

Badoo: Big worldwide with lots of casual profiles. I haven't had luck with it here.
App Store: ★ 4.6 (24,095 ratings) Google Play: ★ 4.4 (6.65M reviews) Downloads: 100M+ on Google Play

My experience

I've used both Tinder and ThaiFriendly with real success, but never had any luck with the others.

- **ThaiFriendly is my personal recommendation.** It has been around for at least nine years; I used it on my very first trip to Thailand. It's made for meeting Thai people, and most profiles are locals rather than other tourists.
- **Tinder** is the biggest dating app in the world and works well in Pattaya, but you'll see a big mix of tourists, expats and Thais.
- Whatever app you use, most Thai matches will soon suggest moving the chat to LINE, Thailand's main messaging app. See the LINE app guide.

A word on Seeking.com

Seeking (formerly Seeking Arrangement) markets "arrangement" dating between wealthy members and younger partners, with money or gifts openly part of the deal. I don't recommend it in Thailand. Anything that looks like paying for company can be a legal grey area or worse, it attracts scammers and fake profiles, and it's not what relationships here are built on. If you want something real, stick to the mainstream apps above.

Tips for using the apps

- **Verify before you meet.** A short video call is the easiest way to check someone is who their photos say.

- **Be honest in your profile.** Clear, recent photos and a few lines about why you're in Pattaya get far better matches.
- **Use simple English** and be patient; many matches use a translation app. A few Thai words go a long way. See useful Thai phrases.
- **Watch for fake or business profiles:** anyone who pushes a link, an investment, a "ticket" or money in the first chats is not there to date.

First dates

- Meet in a public place, such as a cafe, restaurant or mall.
- Tell a friend where you're going.
- Thai dating can be more reserved than in the West; public displays of affection are uncommon.

Culture and money

- Family is central in Thai life, and many Thais support their parents financially. In serious relationships, contributing to family is common, and it's worth talking openly about expectations.
- Sin sod (a dowry paid to the bride's family) is still part of many Thai weddings. Amounts and customs vary widely.

Read this first: Thailand Fever

★



Thailand Fever

by Chris Pirazzi and Vitida Vasant

If you're serious about a relationship with a Thai partner, read *Thailand Fever* by Chris Pirazzi and Vitida Vasant. I've read it myself, and its insights into the differences between Western and Thai culture are huge. Without that understanding, you might be in for a rough ride.

(As an Amazon Associate I earn from qualifying purchases.)

- It's written in both English and Thai, side by side, so you and your partner can read it together.
- It covers the things couples clash over most: money and family, communication, saving face and expectations.

> *"For anyone who has not lived in Thailand but is considering a long term relationship… this is a MUST READ." Stickman's Guide to Bangkok, book review page*

> *"Very thoughtfully designed… light and frankly, fun… very highly recommended… even for people who have lived in Thailand." Stickman's Guide to Bangkok, 1 January 2005*

Get it on Amazon

Avoiding romance scams

- Be wary of anyone you've only met online who asks for money, gift cards, crypto or help with an "emergency".
- Fake profiles, sudden declarations of love and investment "opportunities" are classic warning signs.
- Never send money to someone you haven't met. See common scams.

The law

Everyone you date must be over 18; Thai law is strict and ignorance is no defence. Thailand recognises same-sex marriage. Marrying in Thailand involves registering at a district office with documents from your embassy.

Talk to others

Ask regulars and locals for their experience in our Telegram community.

Useful next steps

- Verify matches with a video call, and meet in public places at first.
- Never send money to someone you have only met online.
- See online safety.

Related guides

- Thai Wedding Customs Explained
- Meeting Your Thai Partner's Family
- Thai Marriage Visa
- LGBTQ+ nightlife

Running and Cycling in Pattaya

Where to run and cycle in and around Pattaya, from the beach roads at dawn to Mabprachan Lake and the Huay Yai countryside, plus clubs, races, bike hire, heat and safety tips.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/running-cycling/

Best time	**Before 7am or after 5pm**
Run	**Beach Road and Jomtien at dawn, Pratumnak Hill**
Cycle	**Mabprachan Lake, Huay Yai countryside**
Carry	**Water, lights after dark**

Pattaya is hot, but early mornings are lovely for a run or a ride, and the countryside just outside the city is great for cycling.

Quick answer: Run before 7:00 or after 17:00. The flattest, safest routes are the promenades along Pattaya Beach Road and Jomtien Beach Road; Pratumnak Hill adds climbs and a view. For cycling, head east to the roads around Mabprachan Lake or south-east into the Huay Yai countryside, where traffic is lighter. Carry more water than you think, use lights after dark, and watch for dogs on country roads. Races and fun runs cluster in the cool season, roughly November to February.

Routes at a glance

ROUTE	TYPE	DISTANCE, ROUGHLY	GOOD TO KNOW
—	—	—	—
Pattaya Beach Road promenade	Run	About 3 km one way	Flat, lit, busy after 8:00
Jomtien Beach Road promenade	Run	Up to about 6 km one way	Flat, long, sea views
Pratumnak Hill	Run	Short, hilly loops	Climbs, viewpoint, monkeys near the temple
Mabprachan Lake area	Cycle or run	Loops of several kilometres	Quieter roads, lake views, few baht buses
Huay Yai countryside	Cycle	Long rides	Farms, hills, little shade; plan water stops

Distances are approximate. Jomtien's beach is about 6 km long, per our Jomtien guide.

Running

- Pattaya Beach Road and Jomtien Beach Road at dawn, before traffic builds. See the Jomtien beach walk.
- The hills of Pratumnak for a tougher run. See the Pratumnak walk.
- Running groups meet regularly, from casual social runs to training groups. Social running clubs such as the Hash House Harriers have a long history in Pattaya. Ask at gyms and in expat groups. See gyms and fitness and expat clubs.
- Treadmills: gym day passes cost about ฿150 to ฿400 when it's too hot or wet outside.

Cycling

- The roads around Mabprachan Lake are a favourite with local cyclists.
- Quiet country roads in Huay Yai for longer rides, with Khao Chi Chan and the Silverlake vineyard as natural stops.
- Bike shops in town sell and rent road and mountain bikes; some also service bikes and know the local group rides.
- Weekend group rides leave early; joining one is the easiest way to learn safe routes.

Four routes to start with

- **Beach Road out and back:** start at the Dolphin roundabout and run south along the promenade towards Walking Street, then turn back. Flat, about 6 km round trip, with toilets and drinks at the malls once they open. Best before 7:00, when the pavement is empty.
- **Jomtien long run:** start at Dongtan below Pratumnak and run south along the Jomtien promenade. Go as far as you like; the beach is about 6 km long, and you can catch the baht bus back along Jomtien Beach Road.
- **Pratumnak hills:** loop between the Bali Hai end of Walking Street, the viewpoint and the Big Buddha. Short but steep, good for hill repeats. Watch for monkeys near the temple.
- **Mabprachan ride:** drive or ride out past East Pattaya to the lake, then loop the quieter roads around it. Combine with Huay Yai for a longer weekend ride, and plan water stops at village shops.

Races and events

Pattaya has an annual marathon and many fun runs and charity runs, often along the beach roads, mostly in the cool season. Races start very early to beat the heat, so expect a 4:00 or 5:00 alarm. Cycling events and triathlons are held in the area at times. See sports events.

Heat and safety

- Go early or late, and carry more water than you think. Add electrolytes on long runs or rides. See heat and sun safety.
- Use lights after dark. Drivers do not expect cyclists, and scooters often ride against the traffic.
- Watch for dogs on country roads and quiet sois. Slow down, don't sprint past, and get off the bike if a dog won't back off.
- Wear a helmet on the bike; Sukhumvit Road is fast and busy, so avoid it where you can.
- In the rainy season, watch for flooded roads and potholes hidden under water. See flood season.
- Carry ID, some cash and your phone with an emergency number. Thailand's medical emergency number is 1669.

Common questions

Where can I run in Pattaya? The Beach Road and Jomtien promenades are the easiest. Pratumnak Hill adds climbs.

What's the best time to run in Pattaya? Before 7:00 or after 17:00, when it's cooler and the roads are quieter.

Is cycling in Pattaya safe? In town, traffic makes it stressful. Outside the city, around Mabprachan and Huay Yai, quieter roads are much better. Use lights and a helmet.

Are there running clubs in Pattaya? Yes, from social runs to training groups. Ask at gyms and in expat groups.

Useful next steps

- Run or ride before 7 am to avoid heat and traffic.
- See sports events.
- See Mabprachan Lake.

Sources

- Our Jomtien, Mabprachan Lake, Khao Chi Chan, gyms and sports events pages (checked 2026).

LIVING IN PATTAYA

Yoga, Pilates and Wellness in Pattaya

Where to do yoga, pilates and wellness in Pattaya: studios and drop-in prices, beach classes, meditation, retreats, massage and healthy routines for long stays.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/yoga-wellness/

Drop-in class	**About ฿300 to ฿600**
Monthly unlimited	**About ฿3,000 to ฿8,000**
Outdoors	**Beach and rooftop sessions, best early morning**
Pair with	**Massage, healthy cafés and early walks**

Pattaya has a growing wellness scene alongside its beaches. Whether you want a morning class or a full retreat, there are options.

Quick answer: Studios in Central Pattaya, Jomtien and Pratumnak run drop-in yoga and pilates classes; a 2026 Pattaya guide put drop-ins at roughly ฿300 to ฿600, class packs of ten at ฿2,000 to ฿5,000, and unlimited monthly plans at ฿3,000 to ฿8,000. Gyms add cheaper group classes, with day passes around ฿150 to ฿400. Go early in the morning for outdoor sessions, and round off the day with a Thai massage for ฿200 to ฿350 an hour.

What it costs (2026)

OPTION	ROUGH PRICE	NOTES
—	—	—
Drop-in yoga or pilates class	About ฿300 to ฿600	Reformer pilates sits at the top of the range
10-class pack	About ฿2,000 to ฿5,000	Usually valid for a few months
Monthly unlimited	About ฿3,000 to ฿8,000	Best value if you go three or more times a week
Gym day pass	About ฿150 to ฿400	Many gyms include group classes
Gym monthly membership	About ฿1,000 to ฿3,000	Classes vary by gym
Thai massage	About ฿200 to ฿350 an hour	Plus a tip of ฿50 to ฿100
Wellness retreat	Varies widely	Multi-day packages with food and spa

Studio prices come from a Pattaya yoga guide (see Sources); gym and massage prices from our own guides. Studios change prices and timetables often, so check their LINE, Instagram or Facebook before you go.

Choosing a studio

- **Location:** pick one you can reach in ten minutes; you'll go more often. Traffic and heat make a cross-town class hard work.
- **Timetable:** look for early-morning and evening classes, when the heat is bearable and most people are free.
- **Level:** ask whether there are beginner or gentle classes, and tell the teacher about injuries before class.
- **Language:** most studios teach in English or Thai and English; check if it matters to you.
- **Air con:** some studios are fan-cooled or open-air. If you don't like heat, ask before you buy a pack.
- **Trial:** many studios offer a first-class discount or a cheap intro week. Use it to compare two or three.

Studios

- Yoga and pilates studios across Pattaya, Jomtien and Pratumnak offer drop-in classes and monthly passes.
- Styles include hatha, vinyasa, yin and Ashtanga yoga, plus mat and reformer pilates. Ask whether classes are taught in English.
- Many gyms also run classes. See gyms and fitness.
- Book ahead for small reformer classes; mat classes usually take walk-ins.

Outdoors

Some teachers run beach or rooftop sessions, usually early in the morning before the heat. Bring your own mat or towel, water and sun cream. The Jomtien promenade and the quiet beaches below Pratumnak are popular spots at sunrise. See heat and sun safety and Pattaya at dawn.

Meditation

Some temples welcome visitors to meditate; ask respectfully, dress modestly and follow the monks' lead. Studios also run meditation and breathwork sessions in English. See temple customs.

Retreats and spa

- Wellness retreats in and around Pattaya combine yoga, healthy food and spa treatments, from weekend resets to longer stays. Retreat booking sites list several each season.
- A traditional Thai massage is a great add-on, and many massage shops near the studios open late. See massage.
- Saunas and steam rooms are common in gyms and condo buildings.

For long stays

- Buy a class pack in your first week and try a few studios before committing to a monthly plan.
- Look for a condo with a gym or pool to keep a daily routine on rest days. See renting a condo.
- Teacher trainings and workshops run in the cool season, roughly November to February.
- If wellness is part of managing stress or low mood, local help is available in English. See mental health support.

Healthy routines

Pair classes with early walks and runs, fresh fruit and healthy cafés. See running and cycling, Thai fruit and cafés. Drink more water than you think you need: Pattaya's heat makes hot yoga out of any class.

Common questions

How much is a yoga class in Pattaya? About ฿300 to ฿600 for a drop-in in 2026, less per class with a pack or monthly pass.

Is there beach yoga in Pattaya? Yes, some teachers run early-morning sessions on Jomtien and the beaches below Pratumnak.

Are there yoga retreats near Pattaya? Yes, from weekend packages to longer stays. Compare what's included: classes, meals and accommodation.

Where can I meditate in Pattaya? Some temples welcome visitors, and studios run guided sessions in English.

Useful next steps

- See mental health support.

Sources

- Cities Insider: Pattaya yoga and meditation guide (drop-ins ฿300 to ฿600, 10-class packs ฿2,000 to ฿5,000, monthly ฿3,000 to ฿8,000; studios in Central Pattaya, Jomtien and the north). Checked November 2026.
- BookRetreats: Pattaya yoga retreat listings, 2026.
- Our gyms and fitness and massage pages (prices checked 2026).

LIVING IN PATTAYA

Condo Living: Rules and the Juristic Office

What daily life in a Pattaya condo is like: the juristic office and the Condominium Act, common fees, house rules, key cards, guests, parcels, pets, daily rentals and how to avoid problems with neighbours.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/condo-living-rules/

Juristic office	**The building's management office, run for the co-owners**
Common fees	**Paid by owners per square metre; check who pays if you rent**
Daily rentals	**Illegal without a hotel licence; fines up to ฿20,000 plus ฿10,000 a day**
Common rules	**Guest registration, pool hours, quiet hours, renovation times**
Pets	**Often not allowed; get permission in writing**
TM30	**Your landlord reports where you live**

Quick answer: Most people in Pattaya live in condos, and every registered condo building is run by a juristic person, the co-owners' legal body, through a manager and the juristic office in the lobby. The office collects common fees from owners, runs security, cleaning and maintenance, holds parcels and enforces the house rules, which bind tenants as well as owners. Expect rules on guests, pool hours, noise, smoking, moving and renovation work, and pets, which many buildings don't allow. Renting a unit out by the day is illegal without a hotel licence, and many buildings ban it in their own rules too. Read the house rules before you sign a lease or buy. For finding a place, see renting a condo.

At a glance

TOPIC	WHAT USUALLY APPLIES
Who runs it	The juristic person (all co-owners), through a manager and office
Common fees	Paid by owners in proportion to unit size; tenants usually don't pay them
Annual meeting	Owners approve the budget and fees
Guests	Register at reception, sometimes with ID
Pool and gym	Opening hours, dress and shower rules
Renovation and moving	Weekday working hours, notice to the office, sometimes a deposit
Pets	Often banned; get any permission in writing
Daily rentals	Illegal without a hotel licence; often banned by building rules

The juristic office

Under Thailand's Condominium Act B.E. 2522, a juristic person is created when a condo building is registered. It manages the common property, such as the lobby, lifts, pool, gym and car park, on behalf of all the owners. In practice you deal with the juristic office.

- It collects common fees, pays for security, cleaning and repairs, and enforces the building's regulations.
- It often holds parcels and posts notices about water and power cuts. See power and water outages.
- Many buildings have a LINE group or official account for residents. Ask to join: it's where notices appear. See the LINE app.
- Owners meet at an annual general meeting, which approves the budget and so the fees. Tenants don't vote; owners do.

Common fees and the sinking fund

- **Common fees** are charged to owners in proportion to their ownership share under Section 18 of the Act, so in practice per square metre. They follow from the budget the annual meeting approves, and a building with a big pool, gym and 24-hour security costs more to run.
- **Sinking fund:** a reserve for big repairs, paid once when a unit is first transferred from the developer. If it runs low, a general meeting can vote an extra levy.
- **If you rent**, the owner normally pays the common fees. Check the lease says so. Some leases also pass on water and electricity charges at the building's rates. See utilities and bills.
- **Owners who fall behind** pay a surcharge, up to 12% a year and up to 20% once arrears reach six months, according to Thai Law Online, and can be sued for the fees. A Tilleke & Gibbins column in the Bangkok Post noted that Thai courts have treated cutting off water or electricity, or blocking key cards, to force payment as wrongful.

Common house rules

- Guests may need to register at reception, sometimes leaving ID. Overnight guests may need to be added to your record.
- Pools and gyms have opening hours and dress rules, and many ban glass, food and outside alcohol around the pool.
- No smoking in common areas and, in many buildings, on balconies too.
- Quiet hours at night, and set hours for drilling, renovation and moving furniture, often weekdays only. Tell the office before you move in or out; some buildings take a deposit against lift damage.

- Rubbish goes to the bin room or chute at set times. See rubbish and recycling.

Key cards and access

Each resident gets key cards or fobs for the lifts, doors, pool and car park. Losing one usually means a replacement fee, and some buildings limit how many cards a unit can have.

Daily rentals

Renting a condo out by the night through Airbnb-style sites without a hotel licence breaks the Hotel Act 2004. In March 2025 the government warned foreign owners that penalties reach ฿20,000, plus ฿10,000 for each day the rental continues. Many buildings also ban daily rentals in their own rules. For short stays, a licensed serviced apartment or hotel is the legal option.

Pets

Many condos don't allow pets. Check the building rules as well as the owner's word, and get any permission written into the lease. Bangkok has limited pets by unit size since 10 January 2026, one pet in a unit of 20 to 80 square metres, but that ordinance doesn't cover Pattaya, where it's down to each building. See living with a dog and dog-friendly places.

Pro tip: I rented a studio at The Markland in the past, and in my opinion it has the best view in Pattaya. The downsides: only two slow lifts for 20-odd floors, and it isn't pet-friendly, so I can't go back now with my dog. Otherwise I'd consider it again.

Paperwork

- Your landlord, or the owner, must report where you live to immigration with a TM30. See TM30 explained.
- The office may ask for a copy of your passport and lease when you move in.
- Thinking of buying? Foreigners can together own up to 49% of a building's sellable area. See buying a condo and buy or rent.

Problems and complaints

- Start with the juristic office, politely and in writing if it matters. A LINE message with a photo is often quickest.
- Repairs inside your unit are usually the owner's job, not the office's. See home repairs and handymen.
- For noise, talk to the office rather than knocking on doors. See noise and sleep.

Good neighbour tips

Keep noise down, follow the pool rules, and be friendly with security staff. They help with parcels, taxis and problems.

Common questions

Do tenants pay common fees in Pattaya? Usually not. Under the Condominium Act the co-owners pay them, and owners normally build them into the rent. Check the lease.

Can I rent my Pattaya condo on Airbnb? Not by the night without a hotel licence. Daily rentals breach the Hotel Act, with fines up to ฿20,000 plus ฿10,000 a day, and many buildings ban them in their rules.

Can I have a pet in a Pattaya condo? Only if the building rules allow it. Many don't, so check with the juristic office and get the owner's permission in writing.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Thai Law Online, common fees, the sinking fund and late surcharges under the Condominium Act; Tilleke & Gibbins, condominium disputes (Bangkok Post, July 2017); The Thaiger, government warning on illegal daily condo rentals (March 2025); The Nation, Bangkok's pet ordinance. Each building's regulations differ, so read yours. General information, not legal advice. Jonny's Markland comments are from his interview and his video of 20 October 2026.

Useful next steps

- Read the building rules on pets, guests, pool hours and renovations before you sign.
- See TM30.
- See noise and sleep.

LIVING IN PATTAYA

Buy or Rent in Pattaya?

Should you buy a condo in Pattaya or keep renting? A price-to-rent check, the 49% foreign quota, transfer fees and exit taxes, resale times in 2026, and how Jonny's own numbers worked out.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/buy-vs-rent/

Renting	**Flexible, low commitment, easy to move**
Buying	**Condos only, within the 49% foreign quota**
Upfront costs	**Transfer fee 2% (often split), plus taxes**
Sell within 5 years	**3.3% specific business tax**
Market in 2026	**Oversupplied, slow resale in some areas**
Rule of thumb	**Rent first for at least six months**

Quick answer: For most people, renting in Pattaya makes more sense, at least at first. There are a lot of empty condos, resale can take months, and buying costs money going in and coming out: a 2% transfer fee (often split with the seller) and a 3.3% tax if you sell within five years. A Thaiger review in August 2026 found renting usually wins for stays under about five years. Buying can work if you plan to stay for years, find a unit cheap compared with what it would cost to rent, and pay cash. Foreigners can own condos within a building's 49% foreign quota, but not land. For the details, see renting a condo and buying a condo.

At a glance

	RENTING	BUYING A CONDO
Upfront	A deposit, often two months, plus the first month	The full price, transferred from abroad, plus fees
Flexibility	Move area, building or city easily	Selling can take months
Running costs	Rent and bills	Common fees, sinking fund, repairs, bills
Leaving costs	Get your deposit back	Taxes on sale, agent fees, a possible discount
Who can do it	Anyone with a lease	Foreigners: condos only, within the 49% foreign quota
Best for	First years, changing plans	Long stays, a cheap unit, cash buyers

Renting: pros and cons

- Flexible: move area, building or city easily. See where to stay.
- No big upfront cost and no repairs to worry about.
- Plenty of choice, especially outside high season.
- Rents can rise, you build no equity, and some buildings don't allow pets.

Buying: pros and cons

- Your own place to furnish as you like, and no rent.
- Foreigners can own a condo unit outright, as long as foreign ownership in the building stays within 49% of the sellable area. Proposals to raise that limit have been discussed, but it still applied in the 2026 sources we checked.
- The money must come into Thailand from abroad in foreign currency, and your bank gives you a document to prove it for the Land Office.
- Resale can be slow. The Thaiger found resale units in oversupplied areas took about 180 days on average to sell in 2026, against 30 to 60 days for good beachfront buildings.
- Buying a condo does not give you a visa. You still need one. See visa options.

A simple price-to-rent check

Divide the asking price by a year of rent for a similar unit nearby. That tells you how many years of rent the purchase replaces.

PRICE	SIMILAR RENT	YEARS OF RENT
฿1,500,000	฿10,000 a month	About 12.5
฿2,500,000	฿12,000 a month	About 17
฿4,000,000	฿20,000 a month	About 17

These are examples to show the maths. The Thaiger reported gross rental yields of about 5% to 8% across Pattaya in 2026, which means prices of roughly 12 to 20 years of rent. If a unit costs 15 years of rent or more, and you might leave within five years, renting is very likely cheaper once fees, common charges and a resale discount are counted. The fewer years of rent a unit costs, the stronger the case for buying.

Hidden costs of buying

- **Transfer fee:** 2% of the registered value at the Land Office. Who pays is agreed in the contract, often split 50/50. A cut to 0.01% runs until 30 June 2027 for homes up to ฿7 million, but law firms say it covers Thai nationals only; one property report doesn't mention that limit, so check before you count on it.
- **Taxes on sale:** specific business tax of 3.3% if the seller has owned the unit for less than five years, otherwise 0.5% stamp duty, plus withholding tax. Sources differ on the exact base for each, so ask for a breakdown.
- **Common fees and sinking fund:** a monthly fee per square metre for the building, and a one-off sinking fund payment. One large Pratumnak building cited by the Thaiger charged about ฿50 per sqm a month and a ฿350 per sqm sinking fund; others differ a lot.
- Furniture, appliances, repairs, and a lawyer to check the title and contract.

Jonny's numbers

Jonny was renting at about ฿20,000 a month when he found a resale condo on Facebook Marketplace. It was listed at ฿450,000 and he paid ฿440,000, then spent about ฿100,000 more on work and appliances. That is about ฿540,000 in total, or roughly 27 months of the rent he had been paying, with a very low yearly building fee. Units that cheap compared with rent are rare, which is why his own advice below is still to rent. The full story is on buying a condo.

Pro tip (as of Nov 2026): I was renting at about ฿20,000 a month, in a nice condo with a beautiful view. Then I saw a good deal and worked out that within a couple of years my rent would have bought a permanent home, cutting my expenses so I could work less. That's why it made sense for me. I still wouldn't recommend buying for most people, because the price-to-rent numbers don't work for many places.

The 2026 market

The Thaiger describes 2026 in Pattaya as a year of adjustment, with oversupply concentrated in Jomtien and the southern beachfront. Nationally, Pattaya Mail reported more than 200,000 unsold condo units in July 2026, and developers offering discounts, free transfers, years of free common fees and "try before you buy" schemes where you rent first and can buy later. For renters, that means room to negotiate; for buyers, there is no rush.

How to decide

- Rent for at least six months first to learn the areas, the noise and the buildings. See noise and sleep.
- Do the price-to-rent check on any unit you like.
- Use an independent lawyer, not one recommended by the seller.
- Check the building's management, finances, occupancy and whether the foreign quota is full. See condo living rules.
- Only buy with money you won't need back in a hurry.

Houses and land

Buying land as a foreigner is restricted. Many people rent houses instead. See renting a house and working legally for company rules.

Common questions

Can foreigners buy property in Pattaya? Yes, condo units, freehold, within each building's 49% foreign quota. Foreigners can't own land directly; houses are usually rented or held through long leases, which need proper legal advice.

Is it cheaper to rent or buy in Pattaya? For stays under about five years, renting is usually cheaper once fees, taxes and a slow resale are counted. Buying can win for long stays in a unit that is cheap compared with its rent.

What fees do you pay when buying a condo? A 2% transfer fee at the Land Office, often split with the seller, plus taxes that depend on how long the seller has owned it. Ask for a full breakdown before you sign.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: The Thaiger, Is buying a condo in Pattaya still worth it in 2026? (21 August 2026) (yields, resale times, fees, rent vs buy); Forvis Mazars, reduced transfer fees extended to 30 June 2027 (Thai nationals only); Pattaya Mail, condo market and unsold inventory (13 July 2026); Siam Legal, property transfer taxes. Jonny's figures are his own, as of November 2026. This is general information, not financial or legal advice; use a qualified lawyer.

Useful next steps

- See renting a condo.
- See buying a condo.
- See what is changing in Pattaya.

LIVING IN PATTAYA

Renting a House in Pattaya

What renting a house in Pattaya is like compared with a condo: areas, rough prices, contracts and deposits, the 2025 tenant rules, flood and water checks, and pets.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/renting-a-house/

Popular areas	**East Pattaya, Mabprachan, Huay Yai**
Rough rent	**About ฿20,000-40,000 a month for a 3-bedroom village house; pool villas more**
Usual terms	**1-year lease, 2 months' deposit, first month in advance**
Leases over 3 years	**Must be registered at the Land Office**
Need	**Your own transport**

Quick answer: Most rental houses in Pattaya are in gated or open villages (moobaan) in East Pattaya, around Mabprachan Lake and further out in Huay Yai. A 3-bedroom village house typically costs about ฿20,000 to ฿40,000 a month on a one-year lease, with private pool villas costing more. Expect two months' deposit plus the first month in advance. You get more space, a garden and an easier life with pets than in a condo, but you need your own transport and you deal with more upkeep yourself. Before you sign, check flooding, the water tank and pump, the air conditioners and internet, and record the condition with photos.

At a glance

WHAT	HOUSE	CONDO
Space	More rooms, garden, parking	Smaller, often one or two bedrooms
Pets	Usually easier, but ask	Many buildings ban them
Location	Mostly East Pattaya and further out	Central, beach and Jomtien areas
Transport	You need a scooter or car	Walkable, baht buses nearby
Facilities	Village pool or gym in some moobaan	Pool, gym, security, lifts
Upkeep	Garden, pool, pump, pests often on you	Building handles common areas
Typical rent	About ฿20,000-40,000 for 3 bedrooms	See renting a condo

House or condo?

A house suits families, people with dogs, anyone working from home who wants space, and people who go out less and value quiet. A condo suits people who want to walk to the beach, restaurants and nightlife, and who don't want to look after a garden or a pump. Many long-stayers start in a condo, learn the city, then move to a house. See buy vs rent.

Pro tip: if you want to save money, or you only go out once a week, you can get a lot more space, like a house on the Darkside. For a family, East Pattaya is my pick. Villas and two-bedroom condos run about ฿20,000-40,000 a month (as of Nov 2026).

Areas

- East Pattaya (the "Darkside", east of Sukhumvit Road): the biggest choice of village houses, with international schools in the area. The drive to the beach depends on traffic.
- Mabprachan Lake: quieter, greener and further out, with larger plots and pool villas.
- Huay Yai: rural, more land for the money, and a longer drive to everything.
- Closer in, a few houses come up around Jomtien and Naklua.

Visit at rush hour and at night, check the drive to the shops and schools you will use, and look at the road in after heavy rain.

Prices and terms

- Agency listings we checked in November 2026 showed 3-bedroom East Pattaya village houses at about ฿20,000 (partly furnished) to ฿37,000 (fully furnished, shared village pool) a month on one-year contracts. Private pool villas cost more.
- The usual terms are a one-year lease, a two-month deposit and the first month in advance. Shorter leases usually cost more.
- Ask who pays for the garden, pool cleaning and pest control, and whether village fees are included. See bugs and pests.
- Ask whether electricity and water are on the owner's own PEA and PWA meters, which are billed at official rates. See utilities and bills.
- Rent can sometimes be negotiated, especially for a longer lease. See cost of living.

Contracts and your rights

- Get a written contract, in Thai and English, that lists the rent, deposit, what is included, who repairs what, and the notice period. Attach a signed condition report with photos.

- Since 4 September 2025, a consumer protection notification covers landlords who rent out **three or more** homes. It caps deposits and advance rent at three months' rent for monthly-paid leases, requires the deposit back immediately at the end (or within 7 days, or 14 days if repair costs are deducted), bans charging more than official electricity and water rates, and stops the landlord entering without notice except in emergencies. A private owner with one or two houses may not be covered, so put these points in your contract anyway.
- A lease longer than three years must be in writing and registered at the Land Office to be enforceable beyond three years.
- Your landlord must report you to immigration on a TM30 form. See TM30 explained.

Check before you sign

- **Flooding.** Ask neighbours and visit after heavy rain. In May 2026 The Thaiger listed Soi Khao Talo, Soi Khao Noi, Third Road and Sukhumvit Road in South Pattaya among the city's recurring flood spots. See flood season.
- **Water.** Run the taps and shower upstairs, find the tank, pump and main valve, and ask how old the pump is. See power cuts and water outages.
- **Air conditioners.** Test each one and ask when they were last cleaned.
- **Internet.** Check which providers reach the village. See home internet.
- **Security.** Gated villages have guards; open ones vary. Check doors, window grilles and lighting.
- **Noise.** Temples, dogs, karaoke and building sites carry far. See noise and sleep.
- Record the condition with dated photos and keep a copy of the contract.

Pets

Houses are usually the easiest way to live with dogs, but not every owner allows them: some agency listings say no pets, so ask before viewing. Check the fence and gate, and whether the village has rules about dogs. See living with a dog and stray dogs and rabies.

Common questions

How much does it cost to rent a house in Pattaya? About ฿20,000 to ฿40,000 a month for a 3-bedroom village house in East Pattaya on a one-year lease, based on listings we checked in November 2026. Pool villas cost more.

How much deposit do landlords ask for? Usually two months' rent plus the first month in advance. For landlords with three or more homes, the 2025 rules cap deposits and advance rent at three months' rent.

Can foreigners rent a house in Thailand? Yes. You sign a lease with your passport, and the landlord files a TM30 report with immigration.

Do I need a car to live in a house in Pattaya? In most villages, yes, or at least a scooter. See buying a scooter.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Tilleke & Gibbins, the 2025 residential lease notification (August 2025); Civil and Commercial Code section 538, unofficial English translation; The Thaiger, Pattaya flooding (May 2026); agency listings for 3-bedroom East Pattaya houses (Mukda Tarin, Patta Village), cited for prices only, not a recommendation. Rents change with season and demand. General information, not legal advice.

Useful next steps

- Check water pressure, drainage and how the area looks after heavy rain.
- See bugs and pests.
- See East Pattaya.

Kids' Activities and Classes in Pattaya

For families living in Pattaya: swimming lessons, football and sports clubs, Muay Thai for kids, music and art classes, languages, holiday camps and rainy-day options, with 2026 price guides.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/kids-activities-classes/

Sport	**Swimming, football, tennis, Muay Thai**
Creative	**Music, art and dance classes**
Learning	**Thai and Chinese language lessons**
Holidays	**Camps during school breaks**

Families living in Pattaya have plenty of options to keep children busy and active after school and in the holidays.

Quick answer: Start with swimming, the most useful skill for a beach town: swim schools for babies and young children, club lessons and, some years, a free city youth programme. Add a sport (football, tennis or kids' Muay Thai) and something creative, such as music, art or dance, which many studios and malls run after school and at weekends. Expect to pay per term or per class; as a guide, a Muay Thai class at a gym is about ฿400 to ฿800 and Bangkok swim schools charged about ฿3,000 to ฿8,550 a term in 2026. Holiday camps fill the school breaks.

Activities at a glance

ACTIVITY	AGES	ROUGH COST (2026)	WHERE
—	—	—	—
Swimming lessons	Babies to teens	Per term or per lesson; ask each school	Swim schools, clubs, hotel and condo pools
Football and team sports	About 4 and up	Per term, often with a kit fee	Clubs and academies, many run by expat coaches
Kids' Muay Thai	About 6 and up	About ฿400 to ฿800 a class at gyms	Muay Thai gyms
Music, art, dance	All ages	Per class or per course	Studios and malls
Languages	All ages	Per hour with tutors, or courses	Language schools and tutors
Holiday camps	School age	Per week	International schools and clubs

The Muay Thai price is from our gyms guide; swimming term prices are from a Bangkok swim school chain, as Pattaya schools rarely publish prices. Ask each provider for the full cost, including registration, uniforms and equipment.

Swimming

- Swim schools in Pattaya teach babies and young children, including water-survival courses for toddlers, and regular lessons for older children.
- Clubs such as the Pattaya Sports Club have run weekly lessons for local children.
- Pattaya City ran a free youth swimming programme from November 2025 to February 2026 to teach life-saving skills. Watch for it to return.
- Private lessons at hotel or condo pools are common; agree the price per lesson and check the teacher's experience.
- Learning to swim matters here: rip currents, jellyfish and pool safety are real risks. See beach safety.

Sport

- Football, tennis and other sports clubs, many run by expat coaches. Ask about age groups, training days and match fixtures.
- Kids' Muay Thai classes teach fitness and discipline. Visit first, watch a class and make sure sparring is light and supervised. See Muay Thai.
- Golf lessons and horse riding are also options for older children. See horse riding and outdoors.
- Train early morning or late afternoon, and send plenty of water. See heat and sun safety.

Creative classes

Music, art, dance and drama classes run after school and at weekends, often in malls and studios. Many offer a trial class. See shopping malls.

Languages

Thai and Chinese lessons help children settle in and make friends. Young children pick up Thai quickly at school and in play; tutors can add reading and writing. See learn Thai.

Holiday camps

Schools and clubs run camps during school breaks. International schools often follow a British or American calendar, with a long summer break, while Thai schools have their long break in the hot season, roughly March to May. Book early for popular camps. See international schools.

Rainy days

When it pours, malls are the easy option, with play areas, bowling, arcades and cinemas. Art in Paradise and Underwater World suit children too. See rainy day attractions and cinemas and bowling.

Choosing a class or coach

- Ask about qualifications, child safeguarding and first aid.
- Check class sizes and how parents can watch or join.
- Ask what happens when classes are cancelled for rain or holidays.
- Talk to other parents in expat and school groups for recommendations. See expat clubs.

Days out

For weekend ideas, see Pattaya with kids and water parks (tickets roughly ฿800 to ฿1,700, cheaper online).

Common questions

Where can my child learn to swim in Pattaya? At swim schools, sports clubs, and hotel or condo pools with private teachers.

Can kids learn Muay Thai in Pattaya? Yes, many gyms run kids' classes. Watch one first and check sparring is supervised.

Are there holiday camps in Pattaya? Yes, international schools and clubs run camps in school breaks.

What can kids do in Pattaya when it rains? Malls with play areas, bowling and cinemas, plus indoor attractions.

Useful next steps

- See Pattaya with kids.
- See water parks.

Sources

- The Pattaya News: Pattaya City youth swimming programme (20 November 2025 to 27 February 2026, free).
- Pattaya Mail: Pattaya Sports Club swimming lessons for local children; Manta Kids Swim Academy.
- Aqua-Tots Thailand: Bangkok group lesson prices per term (about ฿3,000 to ฿8,550), used as a benchmark. Checked November 2026.
- Our gyms and fitness and water parks pages.

Useful Thai Phrases

The Thai phrases that actually get used in Pattaya, in Thai script with simple pronunciation: greetings, khrap and kha, prices, food, directions, getting help, numbers and polite ways to say no.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/useful-thai-phrases/

Hello	**Sawatdee khrap / kha (สวัสดีครับ / ค่ะ)**
Thank you	**Khop khun khrap / kha (ขอบคุณครับ / ค่ะ)**
How much?	**Tao rai? (เท่าไหร่)**
No thanks	**Mai ao khrap / kha (ไม่เอาครับ / ค่ะ)**
Never mind	**Mai pen rai (ไม่เป็นไร)**

Quick answer: You can get by in Pattaya in English, but a handful of Thai phrases make daily life smoother and earn real smiles. Start with **sawatdee** (hello), **khop khun** (thank you), **tao rai?** (how much?) and **mai ao** (I don't want it), and end them with **khrap** if you're a man or **kha** if you're a woman to sound polite. Thai has five tones, so you won't be perfect at first; people understand effort and context.

At a glance

IF YOU ONLY LEARN...	THAI	SAY IT LIKE THIS
Hello / goodbye	สวัสดีครับ / ค่ะ	sawatdee khrap / kha
Thank you	ขอบคุณครับ / ค่ะ	khop khun khrap / kha
How much?	เท่าไหร่	tao rai?
No thanks	ไม่เอาครับ / ค่ะ	mai ao khrap / kha
Never mind, no problem	ไม่เป็นไร	mai pen rai
Not spicy	ไม่เผ็ด	mai phet

The romanisation here is simple English sounds, not an official system, so you'll see other spellings (sawasdee, khob khun, thao rai). They are the same words.

Khrap and kha

- Men end sentences with **khrap** (ครับ); in fast speech it often sounds like "khap". Women end with **kha** (ค่ะ), said with a falling tone.
- In a question, women usually say **kha** with a high tone (คะ), like "tao rai kha?".
- Choose by your own gender, not the person you're talking to.
- On its own, khrap or kha also means a polite "yes" or "I see".
- Add a smile. A **wai** (palms together) is the Thai greeting, but you don't need to wai shop staff first. See Thai etiquette.

The essentials

ENGLISH	THAI	SAY IT LIKE THIS
Hello / goodbye	สวัสดีครับ / ค่ะ	sawatdee khrap / kha
Thank you	ขอบคุณครับ / ค่ะ	khop khun khrap / kha
Yes (that's right) / no (that's not right)	ใช่ / ไม่ใช่	chai / mai chai
No thanks, I don't want it	ไม่เอาครับ / ค่ะ	mai ao khrap / kha
No problem, never mind	ไม่เป็นไร	mai pen rai
Sorry / excuse me	ขอโทษครับ / ค่ะ	kho thot khrap / kha
I don't understand	ไม่เข้าใจ	mai khao jai
Do you speak English?	พูดภาษาอังกฤษได้ไหม	phut phasa angkrit dai mai?
Please speak slowly	พูดช้าๆ หน่อย	phut cha cha noi

Thai has no single word for "yes" or "no". **Chai / mai chai** answers "is it?"; for "do you want it?" the answer is **ao / mai ao**.

Shopping and prices

ENGLISH	THAI	SAY IT LIKE THIS
How much?	เท่าไหร่	tao rai?
Too expensive	แพงไป	paeng pai
Can you give a discount?	ลดหน่อยได้ไหม	lot noi dai mai?
I'll take this one	เอาอันนี้	ao an nee
Do you have…?	มี…ไหม	mee … mai?
Can I pay by QR scan?	สแกนได้ไหม	scan dai mai?
The bill, please	เช็คบิล	check bin khrap / kha

Bargaining is normal at markets and street stalls, not in malls, 7-Eleven or restaurants with printed prices. Smile, ask once or twice, and let it go if the answer is no. See QR payments.

Food and drink

ENGLISH	THAI	SAY IT LIKE THIS
Delicious / very delicious	อร่อย / อร่อยมาก	aroi / aroi mak
Spicy / not spicy	เผ็ด / ไม่เผ็ด	phet / mai phet
A little spicy	เผ็ดนิดหน่อย	phet nit noi
Drinking water	น้ำเปล่า	nam plao
Ice	น้ำแข็ง	nam khaeng
No sugar	ไม่ใส่น้ำตาล	mai sai nam tan
Takeaway	ใส่ถุง	sai thung

Nam on its own means water or any liquid. More food phrases, allergies included: ordering food in Thai.

Getting around

ENGLISH	THAI	SAY IT LIKE THIS
Where is the toilet?	ห้องน้ำอยู่ที่ไหน	hong nam yoo tee nai?
Turn left / turn right	เลี้ยวซ้าย / เลี้ยวขวา	lieo sai / lieo khwa
Go straight	ตรงไป	trong pai
Stop here	จอดที่นี่	jot tee nee
Slowly, please	ช้าๆ หน่อย	cha cha noi
Is it far?	ไกลไหม	klai mai?

Ride apps show the destination to the driver, so you rarely need directions there. On a motorbike taxi, "trong pai", "lieo sai" and "jot tee nee" cover most trips. See motorbike taxis.

When you need help

ENGLISH	THAI	SAY IT LIKE THIS
Help!	ช่วยด้วย	chuay duay!
I don't feel well	ไม่สบาย	mai sabai
Hospital	โรงพยาบาล	rong phayaban
Pharmacy	ร้านขายยา	raan khai ya
Police	ตำรวจ	tamruat

In an emergency, use the numbers on emergency numbers. The tourist police line has English-speaking staff. For the chemist, see pharmacy phrases.

Numbers

NUMBER	THAI	SAY IT LIKE THIS
1 to 5	หนึ่ง สอง สาม สี่ ห้า	neung, song, saam, see, haa
6 to 10	หก เจ็ด แปด เก้า สิบ	hok, jet, paet, gao, sip
11 / 20	สิบเอ็ด / ยี่สิบ	sip et / yee sip
100 / 1,000	ร้อย / พัน	roi / phan
10,000	หมื่น	muen

So 50 is **haa sip**, 300 is **saam roi**, and 1,500 is **phan haa roi**. Prices are usually just the number, with “baht” added if needed.

Tips

- Speak slowly and smile. Getting the tone close matters more than your accent.
- Pointing and a phrase works well: “ao an nee” at a food stall gets you fed.
- Google Translate’s conversation mode helps with anything longer, and many shops will type a price on a calculator or phone.
- Thai script is worth learning if you stay a while. Menus, signs and bills start to make sense.

Pro tip: Learn some Thai and you may save money and get a more authentic experience outside the city.

Common questions

Is Thai hard to learn? Speaking basic phrases isn’t. The tones and script take time, but a few dozen phrases cover most daily situations in Pattaya.

Do I say khrap or kha? Use the one for your own gender: men say khrap, women say kha. It doesn’t change with who you’re talking to.

Will people understand my pronunciation? Usually, in context. A food stall expects “tao rai” and a driver expects “jot tee nee”. If you’re stuck, show the Thai script on your phone.

Is English widely spoken in Pattaya? In hotels, malls and tourist areas, yes. At street stalls, markets and outside the centre, Thai helps a lot.

Learn more

Ready for more than phrases? See learning Thai.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Tourism Authority of Thailand, essential Thai phrases for visitors. The romanisation on this page is our own simple guide, not an official system.

Related guides

- Pattaya Glossary
- LINE App and Thai Phone Etiquette
- Thai Names, Nicknames and Titles
- Thai Etiquette: Simple Dos and Don’ts

LIVING IN PATTAYA

Maids and Cleaning Services in Pattaya

How to find a cleaner or maid in Pattaya: condo cleaners, agencies and apps, what people pay, what to agree up front, keys and trust, and the 2024 rules for domestic workers, minimum wage and work permits.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/maids-cleaning/

Easiest	**Ask your condo office for a recommended cleaner**
Agencies	**About ฿250 to ฿350 an hour (Bangkok app prices, 2026)**
Full-time maid	**About ฿12,000 to ฿20,000 a month (one agency)**
Minimum wage	**฿400 a day in Chonburi**
Foreign workers	**Need a work permit; employer fines up to ฿100,000 per worker**

Quick answer: Most people in Pattaya find a cleaner through their condo or juristic office, a neighbour's recommendation or an agency. Part-time cleaners usually come once or twice a week, and prices depend on hours, the size of the room and what you ask for. Agree the hours, tasks, price and key arrangements before the first visit. If you employ someone directly as a regular maid, Thailand's 2024 domestic worker rules apply: minimum wage, a weekly rest day, paid holidays and sick leave. A worker from another country must have a valid work permit, and employers of workers without one face fines of ฿10,000 to ฿100,000 per worker.

At a glance

OPTION	TYPICAL SETUP	GOOD FOR	WATCH OUT FOR
Cleaner through your condo office	Weekly or fortnightly, paid per visit or per month	Condo studios and one-bedrooms	Agree tasks and keys in writing
Agency or app booking	By the hour, often with a minimum	One-off deep cleans, move-in or move-out	Minimum hours, VAT and service fees
Part-time helper you hire yourself	A few days a week	Houses and families	Check references and legal status
Full-time or live-in maid	Five or six days a week	Large houses, families with young children	Employer duties under the 2024 rules

Finding a cleaner

- **Your condo or juristic office.** Many buildings have cleaners who already work for several residents and know the building's rules. See condo living rules.
- **Neighbours and friends.** A cleaner who has worked for someone you trust for years is the safest start.
- **Agencies.** Agencies screen staff and can send a replacement if your usual cleaner is sick. Ayasan, for example, lists Pattaya among its service areas. Agencies usually cost more than hiring directly.
- **Community groups.** Local Facebook and LINE groups often have recommendations. Ask in our Telegram community too.
- For house-sitting or pet care while you travel, see house-sitting and pet-sitting.

What it costs

We couldn't find a reliable published hourly rate for Pattaya, and quotes vary a lot. Published figures from elsewhere in Thailand give a guide:

- Kiidu, a Bangkok cleaning platform, lists on-demand cleaning at ฿250 to ฿350 an hour, with a 4-hour minimum, plus 7% VAT and a 10% service fee.
- Ayasan's FAQ gives ฿12,000 to ฿20,000 a month for a full-time maid, with overtime at about ฿100 an hour.
- Independent cleaners found through a condo or neighbour are often cheaper than apps, and many charge per visit or per month.

Prices go up for deep cleans, ovens, windows, balconies and move-out cleans. Aircon cleaning is a separate job for a technician; see home repairs and handymen.

Pro tip: I pay my cleaner ฿1,000 a month. I could probably pay half that, but she's great, and I like being fair to people who work hard.

What to agree before the first visit

- **Hours and days**, and what happens on public holidays.
- **Tasks**: floors, bathroom, kitchen, bed linen, laundry, ironing, windows, balcony. Write a short list, in Thai if you can.
- **Price** and when you pay: per visit, weekly or monthly, cash or bank transfer. See QR payments and PromptPay.
- **Cleaning products**: who buys them. Many cleaners prefer you to supply them.
- **Notice**: how much warning either side gives to cancel or stop.

Keys, access and trust

- Give a key only once you are comfortable. Some condos keep a key at reception for registered cleaners; ask how they log it.
- Tell the juristic office who your cleaner is, so security lets them in.

- Keep passports, cash, jewellery and spare cards locked away. That protects your cleaner from suspicion too.
- For laundry only, local laundry shops are cheap and quick. See laundry.

Employing a maid directly: the 2024 rules

If someone works regularly for your household, they are a domestic worker under Thai labour law. A 2024 ministerial regulation, summarised by the International Labour Organization (ILO), gives domestic workers:

- At least the minimum wage. In Chonburi, which includes Pattaya, the daily minimum wage has been ฿400 since 1 July 2025.
- A maximum of 8 hours a day with a 1-hour break, up to 48 hours a week.
- At least one full rest day a week.
- At least 13 paid public holidays a year, and 6 paid days of annual leave after a year's work.
- Up to 30 days of paid sick leave a year. You can ask for a medical certificate for longer absences.
- Maternity leave of 98 days, 45 of them paid by the employer, and no dismissal for pregnancy.
- A minimum working age of 15, with extra limits for under-18s.
- Notice of one pay period to end the job, final pay within 3 days and a certificate of work.

Foreign workers and work permits

Many domestic workers in Thailand come from Myanmar, Cambodia and Laos. They need a valid work permit for the job they do. The Nation reported in January 2026 that employers who hire foreign workers without a permit face fines of ฿10,000 to ฿100,000 per worker, rising to ฿50,000 to ฿200,000 per worker, up to a year in prison and a three-year hiring ban for repeat offenders. The worker can be fined and deported. If you want to employ a non-Thai maid, get advice on the permit process first. See working legally in Thailand.

Common questions

How much is a cleaner in Pattaya? It varies with hours and the size of your place. Bangkok app prices run about ฿250 to ฿350 an hour in 2026, and independent cleaners found locally are often cheaper. Ask two or three people for a quote.

Do I have to pay minimum wage to a maid? Yes, if you employ them directly. Since 2024 domestic workers are covered by the minimum wage, which is ฿400 a day in Chonburi.

Can I hire a cleaner from Myanmar or Cambodia? Only if they have a valid work permit. Employers of workers without one can be fined up to ฿100,000 per worker.

Should I tip my cleaner? It isn't required. A fair wage and paying on time matter most. See tipping in Thailand.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: ILO, 2024 Thai regulations on domestic work (revised June 2025); DLA Piper, minimum wage from 1 July 2025 (Chonburi ฿400); The Nation, foreign worker inspections and penalties (January 2026); Kiidu, cleaning prices (Bangkok); Ayasan, FAQ (maid salaries, service areas). Agency names are examples, not recommendations. We found no 2026 change to the domestic worker rules, and no official Pattaya cleaning rates. Jonny's figure is his own, as of November 2026.

Useful next steps

- Agree the hours, tasks and price clearly at the start.
- Keep valuables locked away.

Related guides

- House-Sitting and Pet-Sitting in Pattaya
- Pattaya City Hall and Local Services
- Home Repairs and Handymen in Pattaya
- Dating in Thailand

Barbers and Hair Salons in Pattaya

Getting a haircut in Pattaya: basic soi barbers from about ฿150, barbershops and salons, the Wednesday closing tradition, Thai words for the cut you want, and hygiene tips.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/barbers-hair-salons/

Basic barber	**Haircut about ฿150, shave about ฿100 (Sep 2026)**
Local barbershops	**About ฿100 to ฿300**
Barbershops and salons	**More; check the board first**
Wednesday	**Some traditional barbers close**
Tip	**Small tips appreciated, not expected**

Quick answer: A haircut in Pattaya can be very cheap. At basic, unbranded barbers, Jonny saw haircuts at about ฿150 and a shave at about ฿100 in September 2026, and Pattaya Mail puts local barbershops at about ฿100 to ฿300. Styled barbershops and salons cost more. Prices aren't always posted, so ask before you sit down, show a photo of the cut you want, and ask for a fresh blade for any razor work. Some traditional barbers close on Wednesdays.

At a glance

WHERE	WHAT TO EXPECT	PRICE
Basic barber in a soi, no branding	Quick clipper and scissor cuts, shaves	Haircut about ฿150, shave about ฿100 (Sep 2026)
Local barbershops in general	Mostly Thai-speaking, walk-in	About ฿100 to ฿300
Styled barbershops	Fades, beard work, sometimes by appointment	More; check the board
Hair salons and mall salons	Cuts, washing, colour and treatments for all hair types	Depends on length and service; ask first
Wednesdays	Some traditional shops close or won't cut hair	Check before you go

Pro tip: At the real basic places with no branding, I've seen about ฿150 for a haircut and ฿100 for a shave. You can't really beat that. I prefer a barbershop on Soi Buakhao that costs a bit more, and they do a really good fade or crew cut.

Where to look

- Basic barbers are on almost every soi, especially around Soi Buakhao and Second Road. Many are walk-in only.
- Shopping malls such as Central and Terminal 21 have salons with fixed price lists.
- Barbershops used to foreign customers are spread across central Pattaya and Jomtien. Some take bookings on LINE. See the LINE app guide.
- Ask other expats for a recommendation, and look at recent reviews and photos before trying somewhere new. Finding a barber who gets your hair right can take a couple of tries.

Prices and posted boards

Online prices can be old. Jonny found that with massage shops on Soi Buakhao: one listed online at far higher prices was much cheaper on the board outside. Barbers are the same: look at the board, and if there isn't one, ask "**tao rai?**" (how much?) before you sit down. Pattaya Mail notes that some shops don't post prices and that some visitors in tourist areas report paying more, so a quick question avoids an awkward moment at the end.

Getting the cut you want

Many local barbers speak mainly Thai, and haircut words don't always survive a translation app. A photo on your phone is the best tool you have.

- Show a photo of the cut from the front and the side.
- Clipper numbers are widely understood: hold up fingers and say "number two on the sides".
- Say how much to take off by showing it with your fingers.

THAI	MEANING
tat phom	cut hair
san	short
yao	long
nit noi	a little
khang	the sides
kon nuat	shave the beard or moustache

THAI	MEANING
sa phom	wash hair
tao rai?	how much?

See useful Thai phrases for more.

Things that surprise visitors

- **Different techniques:** Pattaya Mail notes that Thai barbers often thin hair with a razor or use clippers more heavily than you may be used to. If you don't want thinning, say so before they start.
- **Curly, thick or very fine hair:** not every local barber has much practice with every hair type. Barbershops and salons used to foreign customers are a safer bet.
- **Wednesdays:** an old Thai belief holds that Wednesday is a bad day for a haircut. Thairath explains two traditions, one linked to royal haircutting ceremonies and one to Wednesday being a day of growth. Many shops now open as normal, but some traditional barbers still close or offer only other services.
- **Extras:** a shave or hair wash may be offered on top. Ask the price of anything extra before you say yes.

Hygiene

Pattaya Mail notes that how well razors and clippers are cleaned varies between shops. For shaves and neck lines, ask for a new blade ("**bai mit mai**") and watch it go in. If hygiene matters most to you, Pattaya Mail suggests higher-end barbershops or salons. If you have a cut or skin condition on your scalp or face, skip the razor work that day.

Salons for longer hair and colour

Hair salons (**ran tham phom**) do cuts, blow-dries, colour and treatments for everyone. Prices depend on hair length, the product used and the stylist, so ask for the full price before you start, especially for colour. Bring photos of the colour you want in daylight, and ask which brand they use if you have sensitive skin.

Tipping

Tipping isn't expected. Rounding up, or a small cash tip of about ฿20 to ฿50 for a good cut, is appreciated. See tipping in Thailand.

Common questions

How much is a haircut in Pattaya? At basic local barbers, roughly ฿100 to ฿300. Jonny saw ฿150 at unbranded shops in September 2026. Barbershops and salons charge more.

Do Pattaya barbers speak English? Some do, especially in barbershops used to foreign customers. Many local barbers speak mainly Thai, so bring a photo.

Are barbers closed on Wednesdays? Some traditional shops are, because of an old belief about haircuts on Wednesday. Most others open as normal.

Do I need to book? Basic barbers are walk-in. Some popular barbershops and salons take bookings, often on LINE.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Jonny's own video (September 2026) for basic haircut and shave prices; Pattaya Mail, difficulties foreigners face at barbers in Pattaya (February 2025); Thairath, why haircuts are avoided on Wednesdays (July 2026). Prices vary by shop; check the board.

Useful next steps

- Show a photo of the style you want, it avoids misunderstandings.
- Ask the price first in tourist areas.
- See massage in Pattaya and tattoos.

Buying a Condo in Pattaya as a Foreigner

How foreigners buy condos in Thailand: the 49% foreign quota, bringing money from abroad and the FET form, Land Office fees and taxes in 2026, the checks to do first, and Jonny's own purchase.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/buying-a-condo/

Foreign ownership	**Freehold within the 49% foreign quota**
Money	**Must come from abroad in foreign currency**
Proof	**FET form for US$50,000 or more, bank letter below that**
Transfer fee	**2% of appraised value for foreigners (0.01% cut is for Thai buyers only)**
Transfer	**At the Land Office**
Land	**Foreigners can't own land directly**

Quick answer: Foreigners can own a condo unit in Thailand outright (freehold), in their own name, as long as foreign ownership in the building stays within 49% of the total sellable area. The money has to come into Thailand from abroad in foreign currency, and the Land Office needs proof: an FET form from your Thai bank for transfers of US$50,000 or more, or a bank letter for smaller amounts. The Land Office charges a 2% transfer fee on its appraised value, usually split with the seller; the 0.01% cut running to 30 June 2027 is for Thai buyers only. Renting first is often wise, use your own lawyer, and check the building before you pay a deposit. See renting a condo.

At a glance

STEP	WHAT HAPPENS
1. Check the quota	Get written confirmation from the building's juristic office that foreign quota is free
2. Reserve	A deposit, often 1% to 2% for resale; Jonny paid 10%
3. Contract	Sale and purchase agreement, checked by your own lawyer
4. Send money	From abroad, in foreign currency, into your own Thai account, with the purpose stated
5. Get proof	FET form (US$50,000 or more) or a bank letter
6. Transfer day	At the Land Office: pay fees, sign, leave as the owner

The foreign quota

- Foreigners can own condo units freehold as long as foreign ownership in the building stays within **49%** of the total sellable area.
- The quota is per building. Before you pay anything, ask the juristic office (the building's management body) for a letter confirming there is room. Deals do fall through because the quota turned out to be full.
- If the foreign quota is full, units are only available on a Thai-quota basis, typically as long leases, which give you fewer rights.
- Proposals to raise the quota or allow 99-year leases are not law as of November 2026.

Bringing in the money

- The purchase money must be transferred into Thailand from abroad in foreign currency, and converted to baht here.
- Send it into an account in your own name and state the purpose, such as "purchase of a condominium unit". See opening a Thai bank account and sending money to Thailand.
- For a transfer of US$50,000 or more, the bank issues a Foreign Exchange Transaction form, the FET. Below that, banks usually give a confirmation letter instead. Jonny came away with both an FET form and a letter from his bank.
- Keep these papers safe. You will need them again if you sell and want to send the money back out of Thailand.

Fees and taxes

Transfer fees and taxes are paid at the Land Office. There's a transfer fee and several taxes, and who pays what is agreed in the contract, often split between buyer and seller. Ask for a full breakdown before you sign.

CHARGE	RATE	USUALLY PAID BY
Transfer fee	2% of the official appraised value	Negotiable, often split 50/50
Specific business tax	3.3%, if the seller has owned it under five years	Seller
Stamp duty	0.5%, only when specific business tax doesn't apply	Seller
Withholding tax	1% for company sellers; a sliding scale for individuals	Seller
Mortgage fee	1% of the loan, if there is one	Buyer

The Land Office works these out on its own appraised value, not your agreed price. The government has cut transfer and mortgage fees to 0.01% for homes up to ฿7 million until 30 June 2027, but the measure covers Thai nationals only, so foreign buyers pay the normal 2%.

Pro tip (as of Nov 2026): I bought my condo for ฿440,000, listed at ฿450,000. It was a 10% deposit, then 90%, and the whole process was smooth. The office visit with my agent took about 30 minutes, and I left with a little book in my name. The only confusing part was moving the money to my Thai account and getting the bank paperwork, a couple-hour hassle. I then put in about ฿100,000 more: clearing out the previous owner's stuff, removing part of a brick wall, a top water pump at about ฿25,000 installed, a washer-dryer, curtains and a sink. Even so, I wouldn't recommend buying for most people. The price-to-rent numbers don't work for many places, and the cheaper end makes more sense.

Checks before you buy

- Use an independent lawyer, not one recommended by the seller.
- Confirm the condo title deed for the unit and that there are no debts on it. The unit's title deed is often called the Or Chor 2, and it is written in Thai.
- Check the building's common area fees and the juristic office's finances.
- On transfer day you need a debt-free letter from the juristic office showing the seller's fees are paid.
- Ask about the sinking fund (a one-off payment some buildings charge new owners) and the building rules, including pets and short-term letting.
- For off-plan, check the developer's track record and payment schedule.

Running costs after you buy

- **Common area fees**, usually charged yearly by size. They pay for security, cleaning, lifts and the pool.
- **Land and building tax**: a small yearly local tax. One 2026 guide put it at about 0.02% of appraised value for a second home.
- **Utilities, repairs and furnishing.** Older resale units often need work, as Jonny found. See home repairs and handymen and saving on electricity.

Avoid nominee setups

Holding Thai property through a Thai company with nominee shareholders, so a foreigner can control land, is illegal. Reports say enforcement has tightened since January 2026. If someone suggests it, walk away and talk to your own lawyer.

Land and houses

Foreigners can't own land directly. Options such as long leases exist, but get proper legal advice.

Common questions

Can a foreigner own a condo in Pattaya? Yes, freehold in your own name, as long as the building's foreign quota (49% of sellable area) isn't full.

Do I need an FET form? You need proof the money came from abroad. Banks issue an FET form for transfers of US$50,000 or more, and usually a confirmation letter for less.

Do foreigners get the 0.01% transfer fee? No. The cut, extended to 30 June 2027, is for Thai nationals buying homes up to ฿7 million. Foreign buyers pay the normal 2%, usually shared with the seller.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Forvis Mazars, 27 August 2026 (0.01% fees to 30 June 2027, Thai nationals only, ฿7 million cap); Lex Bangkok, property transfer fees (2%, specific business tax, stamp duty, withholding tax, foreigners pay the normal rate); The Thaiger, buying property as a foreigner, updated 26 August 2026 (49% quota, FET at US$50,000, juristic letters, land and building tax, nominee enforcement); Siam Legal, condo title deeds (Or Chor 2). This is general information, not legal advice. Rules change; use a qualified lawyer.

Useful next steps

- See buy or rent.
- See Thai tax basics.

Related guides

- Buying a Car in Thailand as a Foreigner
- Condo Living: Rules and the Juristic Office
- Buying and Selling Second-Hand in Pattaya
- What's Changing in Pattaya: Big Projects to Watch

LIVING IN PATTAYA

Central Pattaya and Terminal 21

Pattaya's two big central malls compared: Central Pattaya between Beach Road and Second Road, and Terminal 21 at the Dolphin roundabout, with opening hours, food courts and how the Pier 21 card works, cinemas, errands and getting there.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/central-terminal-21/

Central Pattaya	**Between Beach Road and Second Road, Hilton above**
Terminal 21	**North Pattaya Road at the Dolphin roundabout**
Hours	**About 11am to 10pm or 11pm; check before you go**
Cheap eats	**Pier 21 food court, prepaid card, refund on the way out**
Both	**SFX cinema, supermarket, phone and bank branches**
Getting there	**Baht bus ฿15 on the normal loop**

Quick answer: Central Pattaya is the big beachfront mall in the middle of town, between Beach Road and Second Road, with the Hilton Pattaya on top and over 350 stores. Terminal 21 is in North Pattaya at the Dolphin roundabout, opened in 2018, with each floor themed on a city such as Paris, London, Tokyo or San Francisco. Both have an SFX cinema, a supermarket, phone shops and banks, and both have food courts where a Thai meal costs about two or three dollars. Terminal 21's food court is **Pier 21**: you load a prepaid card at the entrance and get the unused balance back when you leave. Main shops open around 11am and close at about 10pm or 11pm; listings differ, so check before a late trip.

At a glance

	CENTRAL PATTAYA	TERMINAL 21
Where	Central Pattaya, between Beach Road and Second Road	North Pattaya Road, Dolphin roundabout
Hours (listed, about)	11am to 11pm, from 10:30am at weekends	11am to 10pm, until 11pm Friday to Sunday
Food court	Basement, near the supermarket	Pier 21, upper floor, prepaid card
Cinema	SFX	SFX
Best for	Brands, the beach, errands in the centre	Cheap eating, photos, North Pattaya errands
Attached hotel	Hilton Pattaya	Grande Centre Point

Hours above are from Pattaya.guide's listings, last verified in August 2026. Terminal 21's own website gives both 10pm and 11pm closing times on the same page. The supermarkets and food courts often open earlier than the shops.

Central Pattaya

Still widely called by its old name, Central Festival, the mall runs from Beach Road through to Second Road, so you can enter from either side. The Hilton Pattaya sits above it, with direct access from the hotel. Its own website lists over 350 stores, a call centre on 033 003 999 and a VAT refund page for tourists.

- A department store, international fashion and sports brands, gadget shops and many chain restaurants.
- A supermarket and food court in the basement, which open before the main mall, according to guide listings.
- An SFX cinema; see cinemas and bowling.
- Phone network shops and bank branches, handy for errands in the centre.
- The beach is across the road, so it's an easy cool-down stop on a hot afternoon.

Terminal 21

Terminal 21 Pattaya opened on 19 October 2018 on North Pattaya Road, by the Dolphin roundabout, as reported by Pattaya Mail. It copies the airport theme of its Bangkok sister: the mall's directory lists Paris on the ground floor, London on the mezzanine, Italy on the first floor, Tokyo on the second, San Francisco on the third and Hollywood on the fourth. There is a large plane at the front and a model Eiffel Tower inside, both popular for photos.

- **Pier 21 food court**, in the upper floors. Pay at the counter for a prepaid card, tap it at each stall, and return it on the way out for a refund of what you didn't spend. A listing updated in October 2026 gave som tam at about ฿40 and pork soup at about ฿55.
- An SFX cinema, with the box office on the third floor and screens a level above, according to Pattaya Mail's opening report.
- A supermarket on the ground floor, mid-priced fashion, gadget shops and restaurants.
- A night market runs outside in the evenings, per Pattaya.guide.

Pro tip: in my October 2026 video I said mall food courts are some of the best value around. At Central Marina it was about ฿60 for duck noodles, and most meals were $2 to $3. It's the same with Terminal 21 upstairs and Central Festival downstairs.

Which to choose

- **Central Pattaya** for brands, a central location, the beach on the doorstep and quick errands between Beach Road and Second Road.

- **Terminal 21** for the cheapest air-conditioned meal, the themed floors and anything in North Pattaya or Naklua. See Naklua.
- Both make a good escape on hot or rainy days. See rainy day attractions.
- Central Marina, in North Pattaya, is a different Central mall. See shopping malls.

Errands you can do at the malls

- **SIM cards:** network shops sell SIMs and plans. Since 16 May 2026 new SIMs are registered in person with a face check, so bring your passport. See SIM cards and eSIMs.
- **Phone repairs and gadgets:** see phone repair and electronics.
- **Money:** banks, ATMs and exchange booths. See exchanging money and ATM fees.
- **Groceries:** both supermarkets stock imported food. See supermarkets and groceries.

VAT refunds for tourists

Shops showing the “VAT Refund for Tourists” sign can give you a P.P.10 form when you spend at least ฿2,000 in that shop in a day. The Revenue Department says you must take the goods out of Thailand within 60 days and show them, with the forms, to Customs at the airport before check-in. Some guides also mention a ฿5,000 total minimum, which the official page we checked doesn’t state. People living in Thailand don’t qualify. See souvenir shopping.

Getting there

- Baht buses run along Beach Road and Second Road, passing Central Pattaya and the Dolphin roundabout. The normal loop is ฿15 since 10 April 2026. See baht bus routes and fares.
- Motorbike taxis, in blue vests since 16 October 2026, are quickest in traffic. See motorbike taxis.
- Grab and Bolt drop off at the main entrances. See Bolt and Grab.

Tips

- Malls are cold inside. Bring a light layer if you plan to sit through a film.
- Weekend evenings and holidays are busy, especially around Christmas and New Year. See Christmas in Pattaya.
- For the cheapest food court meal, eat at stalls rather than the sit-down restaurants on the same floor. See food courts.

Common questions

What time does Terminal 21 Pattaya open? Shops open at about 11am and close around 10pm on weekdays and 11pm on Friday to Sunday, by recent listings. The mall’s own site gives both times, so check before a late visit.

How does the Pier 21 food court work? Buy a prepaid card at the counter, tap it at the stalls, and hand it back on the way out to get any unused money refunded.

Is Central Pattaya the same as Central Festival? Yes. Central Pattaya is the newer name of the Beach Road mall long known as Central Festival Pattaya Beach. Central Marina is a separate mall.

Which mall is cheapest for food? Both food courts are cheap. Pier 21 at Terminal 21 is the best known, and the basement food court at Central Pattaya is similar.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Central Pattaya official website (store count, address, call centre); Terminal 21 Pattaya official website (floor themes; it lists both 10pm and 11pm closing); Pattaya Mail, Terminal 21 opening (October 2018); Pattaya.guide, Terminal 21 and Central Pattaya listings (verified August 2026); Visit Thailand Today, Pier 21 (updated October 2026); Revenue Department, VAT refund for tourists. Sources disagree on opening hours and on the name of Central Pattaya’s supermarket, so we leave it unnamed. Jonny’s food court prices are from his video of 20 October 2026.

Useful next steps

- See food courts.
- See Christmas in Pattaya.

LIVING IN PATTAYA

Phone Repair and Electronics in Pattaya

Where to fix a cracked screen or tired battery in Pattaya: independent repair counters and the Tukcom IT mall, official Apple and Samsung service, 2026 Apple battery prices, and how to avoid copy parts.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/phone-repair-electronics/

Quick fixes	**Independent counters in malls and IT malls**
IT mall	**Tukcom, South Pattaya Road**
Apple battery service	**About ฿2,590 to ฿4,590 by model (2026)**
Check a provider	**Apple's online repair provider checker**
Samsung	**Call centre 1282**
Tip	**Ask whether parts are original or copies**

Quick answer: For a cracked screen, a tired battery or a broken charging port, Pattaya has two kinds of repair. Independent counters in malls, on main roads and in the Tukcom IT mall on South Pattaya Road are quick and usually cheaper, but part quality varies. Official Apple and Samsung service uses genuine parts and protects your warranty, but costs more and may mean a trip outside Pattaya. Apple's own battery service in Thailand costs about ฿2,590 to ฿4,590 in 2026, depending on the model. Whichever you choose, back up first, ask in writing whether the part is genuine or a copy, and get a warranty on the repair.

At a glance

OPTION	GOOD FOR	WATCH OUT FOR
Independent counters (malls, main roads)	Fast screen, battery and port fixes, often the same day	Copy parts; ask and get it in writing
Tukcom IT mall, South Pattaya Road	Several floors of phone, computer and camera shops, plus repair counters	Check the device and the part before you pay
Apple Authorised Service Provider	Genuine parts, warranty and AppleCare repairs	Higher prices; confirm the shop with Apple's checker
Samsung service	Genuine parts and warranty work	Call 1282 first to find the nearest centre
Brand stores in big malls	Buying new phones, laptops and accessories at fixed prices	Not always repair centres themselves

Independent repair counters

Small repair counters in shopping malls, on main roads such as Soi Buakhao, and in IT malls fix screens, batteries, charging ports, cameras and water damage. Many will also look at older phones that official service no longer handles.

- Get the price in writing first, and ask whether it is for a genuine part or a copy. Ask for both prices if they have both.
- Ask how long the repair warranty lasts, and keep the receipt.
- Some shops ask for your passcode so they can test the phone. If you'd rather not, ask them to test it in front of you when you collect it.
- Test everything before you leave: touch, Face ID or fingerprint, cameras, speakers, charging and signal.

A Thai tech site warns that some independent shops modify battery connections so the battery health reading works, which can damage other parts, and that a third-party repair may stop Apple service from taking the phone later. Cheap is fine for an old phone; think twice with a new one.

Tukcom IT mall

Tukcom on South Pattaya Road is Pattaya's best-known electronics mall: several floors of small vendors selling phones, cameras, laptops, chargers and cables, with repair counters and food on the ground floor. Prices at the small stalls can be negotiable, so check the price elsewhere first. Ask directly whether an item is genuine, and check the exact device you are paying for before you hand over money. Online reviews describe swapped or faulty units, so open the box at the counter. Tukcom's own website lists its Pattaya branch and floor plan.

Official Apple and Samsung service

- **Apple:** Apple lists its Authorised Service Providers and Independent Repair Providers on its repair provider checker at support.apple.com. Use it to confirm a shop's status before you trust a sticker in the window.
- **Samsung:** Samsung Thailand's call centre is **1282**, open 08:00 to 22:00. Call first to find the nearest service centre and check that it can repair your model.

Apple battery prices in Thailand (2026)

IPHONE MODEL	APPLE BATTERY SERVICE, ABOUT
iPhone SE (2nd and 3rd generation)	฿2,590
iPhone XR, 11, 12 and 13 series	฿3,290

IPHONE MODEL	APPLE BATTERY SERVICE, ABOUT
iPhone 14 and 14 Plus	฿3,650 to ฿3,690
iPhone 14 Pro to 17, including 16e and 17e	฿3,690
iPhone 16 Pro, 17 Pro and Air	฿4,590

These are Apple's estimated prices as reported by Sanook in July 2026. Authorised providers may add their own service fee, and Apple has run occasional discounts. Independent shops usually charge less, but the price depends on the part.

Check what went in your iPhone

On an iPhone, open **Settings, General, About**. After a repair, a **Parts and Service History** section shows whether the screen, battery or camera is a genuine Apple part. Apple says "Unknown Part" can mean a non-genuine, modified or used part, or one that wasn't set up properly, and it can affect trade-in value. Check this before you leave the shop.

Water damage and the rainy season

If your phone gets soaked, for example on a scooter in a downpour, switch it off, don't charge it, and take it to a repair counter quickly. See rainy season survival.

Buying electronics

- Malls and brand stores sell phones, laptops and accessories at fixed prices with Thai warranties. Keep the receipt.
- Cheap chargers and cables from street stalls can be poor quality. Buy from brand stores or big chains.
- Shops with a "VAT Refund for Tourists" sign can give visitors a P.P.10 form for purchases of at least ฿2,000 in one store on one day, to claim when you fly home. Check the Revenue Department's current rules first.
- Selling or buying used? See second-hand buy and sell.

Power and plugs

Thailand uses 220V, 50Hz. Most phone and laptop chargers say "100-240V" on the label and work fine. Check anything else, such as hair tools, before you plug it in.

Common questions

How long does a screen repair take? At independent counters, often the same day if they have the part. Official service can take longer if parts must be ordered.

Is a cheap battery swap worth it? For an older phone, often yes. For a newer iPhone, an official battery keeps the battery health reading and your options with Apple open.

How do I know if a shop is really Apple authorised? Look it up on Apple's repair provider checker on support.apple.com, not on the shop's signs.

Will a repair shop see my data? They may need to unlock the phone to test it. Back up first, log out of banking apps if you can, and remove your SIM card.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Sanook via LINE Today, Apple iPhone battery prices in Thailand, 2026 (July 2026); Notebookspec, iPhone battery replacement and third-party risks (May 2025); Apple, iPhone Parts and Service History; Apple, verify a repair provider; Tukcom, branches; Visit Thailand Today, Tukcom South Pattaya (October 2026); Samsung Thailand support pages for the 1282 call centre. Prices change; ask for a written quote.

Useful next steps

- For SIM and eSIM help, see SIM cards and eSIMs.

Related guides

- Central Pattaya and Terminal 21
- LINE App and Thai Phone Etiquette
- Getting a Tattoo in Pattaya
- Bookshops and Libraries in Pattaya

LIVING IN PATTAYA

Expat Clubs and Social Groups in Pattaya

How to meet people in Pattaya: the Pattaya City Expats Club, Pattaya Sports Club and its golf and darts groups, the International Ladies Club, charity runs and volunteering, Thai classes and online communities.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/expat-clubs/

PCEC	**Wednesdays, doors 9:00, talks 10:30, Holiday Inn Pattaya**
Sport	**Pattaya Sports Club (since 1979): golf, darts, bowling, softball and more**
Charity	**Ray Run, Sunday 22 November 2026, Pattaya Klang Beach**
Learn	**Thai classes and language exchanges**
Online	**Our forum and Telegram community**

Quick answer: Pattaya has one of Thailand's biggest expat communities, and the easiest way to make friends is to join something that meets regularly. The **Pattaya City Expats Club** (PCEC) meets every Wednesday morning at the Holiday Inn Pattaya with a guest speaker and an open forum. The **Pattaya Sports Club**, running since 1979, is the umbrella for many golf societies plus darts, bowling, softball and other sports. The **Pattaya International Ladies Club** runs social events and a charity fair. Add Thai classes, charity runs and online groups, and you can fill a week. Check times before you go: venues and days change.

At a glance

GROUP	WHAT IT IS	WHEN AND WHERE	MORE INFO
Pattaya City Expats Club (PCEC)	Talks, open forum, trips and dinners	Wednesdays, doors 9:00, programme 10:30, Holiday Inn Pattaya, Beach Road	pcec.club
Pattaya Sports Club (PSC)	Non-profit sports and charity club	Golf, darts, bowling, lawn bowls, softball, fishing	Club events and member discounts
Pattaya International Ladies Club (PILC)	Non-profit social and charity club	Annual Christmas Charity Fair, Holiday Inn ballroom in 2025	Check the club's pages for 2026
Father Ray Foundation	Children's and disability charity	Volunteers in several roles; Ray Run on 22 Nov 2026	info@fr-ray.org
Thai classes	Language schools and private tutors	Daytime and evening courses	Learn Thai
Online	Forums, LINE and Telegram groups	Any time	Our forum

Pattaya City Expats Club (PCEC)

PCEC is the best-known general club for newcomers. According to its website, meetings are on **Wednesdays** at the **Holiday Inn Pattaya** on Beach Road: doors open at 9:00 and the programme starts at 10:30. Each meeting has a guest speaker, then an update on club events and an open forum where members and guests can ask questions or make announcements. Recent 2026 talks covered visa, banking and driving licence changes, healthcare and nutrition, and whether Pattaya is "finished or evolving", with over 70 members at a meeting in October 2026. Members also run trips, discussion groups and a club dinner, and talks are posted on the club's YouTube channel. Check the meeting page on pcec.club for the room and the entry fee before your first visit. It is a good place to ask practical questions about visas, banking and daily life.

Pattaya Sports Club (PSC)

Founded in 1979 by sports-minded residents and expats, the Pattaya Sports Club is a non-profit club that organises golf, darts, bowling, lawn bowls, softball and fishing, and gives to local children's and disability charities. Pattaya Mail reported more than 200 members and guests at its Christmas party in December 2025, and the club says membership brings discounts around Pattaya and the Eastern Seaboard. Golf is one of its main sports, which suits newcomers who want a ready-made group. See golf courses and golf on a budget.

Pattaya International Ladies Club (PILC)

A non-profit club whose members come from many countries, PILC combines social events with charity work. The Pattaya News reported its annual Christmas Charity Fair at the Holiday Inn Pattaya ballroom on 16 November 2025. We couldn't find a 2026 date yet, so check the club's own pages.

Sports and hobbies

- **Golf**: golf societies are one of the easiest ways in. See golf courses.
- **Running and cycling**: group runs, rides and races. See running and cycling and sports events.
- **Darts and pool leagues** in local bars. See pool and karaoke.
- **Gyms, yoga and Muay Thai**: regular classes are an easy way to see the same faces. See gyms and fitness, yoga and wellness and Muay Thai.

Charity runs and volunteering

The **Ray Run Pattaya 2026** is on **Sunday 22 November 2026** at Pattaya Klang Beach in Central Pattaya, with 1 km, 3 km and 5 km walk or run options and a 2.5 km wheelchair event. Money raised supports the Father Ray Foundation's work with disadvantaged children and people with disabilities.

The Father Ray Foundation also takes volunteers in roles such as fundraising, IT teaching, photography, music and special needs support; Thai is a plus. Contact them at info@fr-ray.org. Other charities and animal shelters also need help. Volunteering can need a work permit in Thailand, so ask the organisation how they handle it and see working legally.

Learning Thai and language exchange

Thai classes are one of the best ways to meet people and settle in, and some schools also offer a study visa. See learn Thai and useful Thai phrases. Language swaps with Thais who want to practise English are another option; ask in local groups.

Pro tip: one of the best things about life here is the friendships. People are very open and friendly.

Online groups

- Ask anything about Pattaya on our forum or in our Telegram community.
- Many local groups, condo buildings and clubs organise on LINE and Facebook. See the LINE app guide.
- Working remotely? Coworking spaces are another place to meet people. See coworking spaces and digital nomads.

Meeting people safely

Most people you meet will be just what they seem, but newcomers are a target for scams. Be wary of anyone who quickly asks for money, investments or help with a "problem", online or in person. See love scams, online safety and common scams; for scams, call 1441.

Common questions

When does the Pattaya City Expats Club meet? On Wednesdays at the Holiday Inn Pattaya, with doors at 9:00 and the programme at 10:30, according to its website. Check pcec.club for the room and fee first.

Do I need to live in Pattaya to join a club? No. PCEC welcomes guests at its meetings, and charity runs and many events are open to anyone. See snowbirds and winter stays.

How do I meet people if I don't drink? Morning clubs, golf, running, gyms, Thai classes and volunteering all work without a bar. See a night out without drinking.

Is there an English-speaking community for retirees? Yes. PCEC and the Pattaya Sports Club both have many retired members. See retiring in Pattaya.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya City Expats Club website (meeting day, times, venue, activities); Pattaya Mail, PCEC meeting (October 2026); Pattaya Mail, PCEC talk on visa, banking and licence rules; Pattaya Mail, Pattaya Sports Club (December 2025); The Pattaya News, PILC Christmas Fair (November 2025); Pattaya Mail, Ray Run Pattaya 2026 (November 2026); Father Ray Foundation, volunteering. Club fees weren't published; ask the club.

Useful next steps

- Many clubs and groups organise themselves on Facebook and LINE.
- See the LINE app guide.
- See golf societies.

LIVING IN PATTAYA

International Schools in Pattaya

Schooling for expat families in and around Pattaya: international schools, curricula, rough fees, bilingual Thai schools and what to ask on a visit.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/international-schools/

Curricula	**British, American and IB**
Fees	**Roughly ฿350,000 to over ฿1,000,000 a year, by school and age**
Bilingual Thai schools	**A cheaper option**
Visit	**Book a tour and trial day**

Quick answer: Pattaya and the Eastern Seaboard have a good choice of international schools, many with boarding and big sports facilities, plus much cheaper bilingual Thai schools. The best-known are Regents International School Pattaya (British and IB), Rugby School Thailand (British, boarding) and the International School Eastern Seaboard (American and IB). Tuition runs from roughly ฿350,000 to well over ฿1,000,000 a year depending on the school and your child's age, before application, capital, bus and uniform fees.

Schools families often look at

SCHOOL	CURRICULUM	REPORTED YEARLY TUITION (2026/27)
Regents International School Pattaya	British, IGCSE, A-Level, IB Diploma; day and boarding	About ฿436,000 to ฿830,000
Rugby School Thailand	British; day and boarding	About ฿550,000 to over ฿1,000,000
International School Eastern Seaboard (ISE)	American and IB, between Pattaya and Si Racha	About ฿360,000 to ฿650,000

Figures come from school fee pages and fee databases, which don't always agree. Ask each school for its current schedule. There are smaller international and bilingual schools closer to central Pattaya too.

What fees really include

- **Tuition** rises with year group; the top years cost most.
- **One-off fees:** application, assessment, and often a capital or development fee in the first year, which can be large.
- **Deposits:** a refundable or non-refundable place deposit.
- **Extras:** school bus, uniform, lunches, trips, exam fees and after-school activities.
- **Boarding** is charged on top, sometimes several hundred thousand baht a year.
- Ask about sibling discounts, termly payment plans and the refund policy if you leave mid-year.

Bilingual Thai schools

Bilingual and English-programme Thai schools teach part of the day in English and cost much less. They suit families who are staying long term and want children to learn Thai and make Thai friends. Expect bigger classes and a Thai school calendar.

Choosing where to live

School runs matter in Pattaya traffic. Many international school families live in East Pattaya or along the routes towards the schools rather than in the centre. See East Pattaya and where to stay.

Visas for children

Children of parents on long-stay visas can usually get dependent visas. Older children can also study on an education visa. Ask the school's admissions office: international schools are used to the paperwork. See visa options.

What to ask on a visit

- Class sizes, teacher qualifications and turnover.
- Transport from your area and journey times.
- Accreditation, exam results and university destinations.
- Support for children who are new to English or Thai, and for special educational needs.
- What a trial day involves, and how soon a place can start mid-year.

Common questions

How much are international schools in Pattaya? Roughly ฿350,000 to over ฿1,000,000 a year in tuition, depending on the school and year group, plus one-off and extra fees.

Which international schools are near Pattaya? Regents International School Pattaya, Rugby School Thailand and the International School Eastern Seaboard are the best known, with smaller schools nearer the centre.

Are there cheaper options? Bilingual and English-programme Thai schools cost much less.

Do international schools take children mid-year? Often yes, if there's space. Ask for an assessment and trial day.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Regents International School Pattaya, tuition fees; International Schools Database, Pattaya. Fees are as reported for 2026/27 and change yearly.

More on family life: Pattaya with kids and kids activities and classes.

Related guides

- Expat Clubs and Social Groups in Pattaya
- Moving to or from Thailand: Shipping Your Things
- Laundry in Pattaya
- Noise and Sleeping Well in Pattaya

LIVING IN PATTAYA

Pattaya Glossary

The words and phrases you'll hear in Pattaya, explained: soi, baht bus, motorsai, farang, check bin, mai pen rai, jai yen yen, TM30, yellow book and more.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/pattaya-glossary/

Soi	**A side street**
Farang	**A Westerner**
Baht bus	**Shared pickup taxi, ฿15 on the normal loop**
Motorsai	**Motorbike taxi, riders in blue vests**
Mai pen rai	**Never mind, no problem**
Jai yen yen	**Keep calm**

Quick answer: Pattaya has its own vocabulary, a mix of Thai words and local English. The ones you'll hear on day one: **soi** (a side street), **baht bus** (the shared pickup taxi, ฿15 on the normal loop), **motorsai** (a motorbike taxi), **farang** (a Westerner), **check bin** (asking for the bill) and **mai pen rai** (never mind). Learn **jai yen yen** (keep calm) too: staying cool when things go wrong gets you much further here than raising your voice. For phrases to say, see useful Thai phrases.

At a glance

WORD	MEANING	YOU'LL HEAR IT
Soi	Side street	Every address and direction
Baht bus	Shared pickup taxi	Beach Road, Second Road
Motorsai	Motorbike taxi	Street corners
Farang	Westerner	Everywhere, not an insult
Check bin	The bill, please	Bars and restaurants
Mai pen rai	Never mind	When something goes wrong
Jai yen yen	Keep calm	When someone is getting angry

Getting around

- **Soi:** a side street, numbered off a main road, such as Soi 6 off Beach Road.
- **Thanon:** road. Thanon Sukhumvit is Sukhumvit Road.
- **Pattaya Nua, Klang, Tai:** North, Central and South Pattaya Roads, the three big roads running inland from the beach.
- **Second Road / Third Road:** the main roads running parallel to Beach Road. See Second Road.
- **Baht bus / songthaew:** a shared pickup truck taxi on a fixed loop. Flag one down, press the buzzer to stop, pay ฿15 on the normal loop (since 10 April 2026), up to about ฿20 on longer runs. See baht bus routes.
- **Motorsai:** a motorbike taxi. Registered riders wear numbered vests, blue since 16 October 2026; some still wear the old orange. See motorbike taxis.
- **Win:** a motorbike taxi stand, where riders wait in line.
- **Darkside:** the area east of Sukhumvit Road. See East Pattaya.
- **Bolt / Grab:** the ride-hailing apps most people use. See Bolt and Grab.

People

- **Farang:** a Westerner. It's descriptive, not an insult.
- **Khun:** a polite title before a first name, like Mr or Ms. See Thai names and titles.
- **Phi / nong:** older and younger sibling. Thais use them for friends and staff too: calling a young server "nong" is normal and friendly.
- **Kathoey / ladyboy:** a transgender woman. Be respectful. See cabaret shows.

Bars and nightlife

- **Check bin:** the bill, please. In bars, it is also the cup of slips on your table that becomes your bill. See how Pattaya bars work.
- **Ring the bell:** ringing a bar's bell means you buy a drink for everyone in the bar. Don't touch it unless you mean it. See bar etiquette.
- **Beer bar:** a small open-air bar, the most common kind in Pattaya.
- **Happy hour:** cheaper drinks at set times. See happy hours.

Everyday Thai

- **Sawasdee krap / ka:** hello and goodbye.
- **Khop khun krap / ka:** thank you.
- **Krap / ka:** polite endings, krap for men and ka for women. See useful Thai phrases.
- **Tao rai:** how much?
- **Mai pen rai:** never mind, no problem.
- **Jai yen yen:** keep calm, literally “cool heart”. Losing your temper in public loses respect.
- **Kreng jai:** not wanting to impose or cause trouble. It is why people may say yes when they mean maybe.
- **Sanuk:** fun. Thais like things to be sanuk, work included.
- **Sabai sabai:** relaxed, easy-going.
- **Same same (but different):** local English for “similar”.
- **Wai:** the greeting with palms pressed together. See Thai etiquette.
- **Farang price:** a higher price charged to foreigners. Asking the price first helps. See common scams.

Food

- **Mai phet:** not spicy. Phet nit noi means a little spicy.
- **Pad kra pao:** stir-fried meat with holy basil and rice, often with a fried egg (kai dao) on top.
- **Moo kata:** Thai barbecue on a dome with soup round the edge, usually a buffet. See moo kata.
- **Seven:** 7-Eleven, on almost every corner.
- More dishes: Thai dishes to try and ordering food in Thai.

Money and paperwork

- **PromptPay:** Thailand’s QR payment system. See QR payments.
- **TDAC:** the free online arrival card all foreigners fill in within three days before arriving. See TDAC arrival card.
- **TM30:** the address registration for foreigners, filed by the landlord or hotel. See TM30 explained.
- **90-day report:** the address check-in for long stays. See 90-day reports.
- **Border run (visa run):** leaving Thailand and coming back to start a new stay. See border runs.
- **Tabien baan / yellow book:** house registration. The yellow version is for foreigners and gives you a 13-digit Thai ID number.
- **Pink ID card:** a Thai ID card for foreigners, issued at the district office against the yellow book number. It costs ฿60, lasts 10 years, and is not a visa.
- **Juristic office:** a condo building’s management office. See condo living rules.
- **Chanote:** the strongest kind of land title deed. Foreigners can’t own land directly. See buy or rent.

Common questions

What does farang mean? A Westerner, usually a white foreigner. It’s descriptive, not an insult, though tone matters as it does with any word.

What does soi mean in Pattaya? A side street. Sois are numbered off a main road, so Soi 6 is one of the numbered side streets running between Beach Road and Second Road.

What does mai pen rai mean? Never mind, no problem, it’s fine. You’ll hear it after small mistakes and as a polite way to end an awkward moment.

What does check bin mean? It’s how you ask for the bill. Say it or make a writing gesture in the air.

What colour vest do motorbike taxi riders wear? Blue since 16 October 2026, though some riders still wear the old orange vests.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: our own guides on baht bus fares and motorbike taxis (fares and vest colour, verified the same day); The Thaiger, Thai pink ID card procedures (updated 10 September 2026) (yellow book, pink card fee and validity).

Useful next steps

- See where to stay.

Learning Thai in Pattaya

Ways to learn Thai in Pattaya: language schools and the education (ED) visa, private tutors, apps, how the tones and alphabet work, and how to practise every day.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/learn-thai/

Options	**Schools, private tutors, online lessons, apps**
Education visa	**Through a school approved by the Ministry of Education; attendance is checked**
DTV	**Language courses are reported no longer to qualify**
Tones	**Five (mid, low, falling, high, rising)**
Alphabet	**44 consonant letters, 2 no longer used**
Tip	**Learn to read early; English spellings of Thai vary**

Quick answer: You can learn Thai in Pattaya at a language school, with a private tutor in person or online, or on your own with apps, and the fastest progress comes from pairing lessons with daily conversation. Thai has five tones, so the same syllable can mean different things, and its own alphabet; learning to read early pays off because English spellings of Thai words vary. If you want to study long term, a school approved by the Ministry of Education can support a Non-Immigrant **education (ED) visa**, but since 2025 schools have had to report attendance and immigration checks that students really study. Language courses are reported no longer to count for the DTV. Start with useful Thai phrases.

At a glance

WAY TO LEARN	GOOD FOR	WATCH OUT FOR
Language school, group class	A fixed schedule, structure, meeting other learners	Pace set by the group
Language school with ED visa	Long stays focused on study	Real attendance is required and checked
Private tutor, in person	Your pace, your topics, speaking practice	Quality varies; ask for a trial lesson
Online tutor	Flexible times, wide choice of teachers	Less real-world practice
Apps and videos	Vocabulary, the alphabet, listening	Little speaking practice on their own
Daily conversation	Confidence, listening, real Pattaya Thai	Mistakes are normal and fine

Why learn some Thai

English goes a long way in central Pattaya, but less so in East Pattaya, at local markets, in government offices and with tradespeople. A little Thai makes daily life smoother, shows respect, and helps when something goes wrong.

Pro tip: learn some Thai, and you may save money and get a more authentic experience outside the city.

How Thai works

- **Tones.** Thai has five tones: mid, low, falling, high and rising. The tone is part of the word, so “mai” can mean new, wood, not or a question marker depending on how you say it. Listen and copy from day one.
- **The alphabet.** Thai has 44 consonant letters, two of them no longer used, plus vowel symbols written above, below, before or after the consonant. Many letters share a sound, so it looks harder than it is.
- **No spaces between words.** Thai writes spaces between phrases, not words, which takes some getting used to when reading.
- **Simple grammar.** Verbs don’t change for tense or person, and there are no plurals to learn.
- **Polite endings.** Male speakers end sentences with “khrap”, female speakers with “kha”. Using them is the easiest way to sound polite.
- **Spelling in English varies.** The same place or dish can be written several ways on signs and menus. Reading Thai script removes the guesswork.

Language schools

Several schools in Pattaya run group and private Thai classes for foreigners, from beginner to advanced. Before you pay:

- Ask whether the school is licensed by the Ministry of Education, and whether it can support an ED visa if you need one.
- Ask for a trial lesson, the class size, and whether the course teaches reading and writing or speaking only.
- Get the full cost in writing: tuition, books, any visa paperwork fee, and what happens if you stop early.

The education (ED) visa

A Non-Immigrant ED visa lets you stay in Thailand to study at an approved school.

- The school provides the enrolment documents for the visa application, and you extend your stay in Thailand while you keep studying. In Pattaya that is Jomtien immigration office.

- Under rules announced in April 2025, institutions must report enrolment, attendance and progress to a system shared with the Immigration Bureau, and officials make unannounced checks. In August 2025 the government said nearly 10,000 foreigners had their student permission to stay revoked for not complying.
- If you won't attend, choose a different visa.
- The DTV page explains why Thai language courses are reported no longer to qualify for the DTV; an ED visa is the usual route for studying Thai. Compare everything on visa options.
- Rules change often. Confirm the current requirements with the school and the embassy or immigration before you commit.

Pro tip: for non-entrepreneurs who want to learn some Thai, the education visa is fantastic.

Private and online tutors

One-to-one lessons in person or online let you set the pace and focus on what you need, such as speaking with your partner's family, dealing with your landlord or ordering food. Ask for a trial lesson, agree on homework, and keep a regular slot each week. Ask for recommendations in the forum.

Apps and self-study

Apps, flashcards and video lessons are good for vocabulary, the alphabet and listening. On their own they won't teach you to hold a conversation, so pair them with real practice. Thai TV with Thai subtitles helps your ear once you can read a little.

Practise every day

- Start with what you use: numbers and prices, food, directions, greetings and thank you. See ordering food in Thai and pharmacy phrases.
- Use it at the market, with your motorbike taxi rider or at the 7-Eleven counter. Most people are patient and happy to help.
- Learn people's titles and nicknames. See Thai names and titles.
- Ten minutes every day beats two hours once a week.
- Local words you will hear in Pattaya are in the Pattaya glossary.

Common questions

How long does it take to learn Thai? Basic survival Thai (numbers, food, directions, polite phrases) can take a few months of regular practice. Comfortable conversation takes much longer, and tones and listening are usually the hardest part.

Can I get a visa to learn Thai in Pattaya? Yes, a Non-Immigrant ED visa through a school approved by the Ministry of Education. You must really attend: schools report attendance, and immigration checks.

Does a Thai language course qualify for the DTV? Reports from 2026 say language courses no longer qualify as a DTV activity. Check the embassy you will apply to.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Wikipedia, Thai script (letters, tones and spacing); The Pattaya News, stricter education visa rules (May 2025); The Thaiger, nearly 10,000 student permits revoked (August 2025, citing the Bangkok Post); our DTV guide, checked the same day. Visa rules change and differ by embassy; this is general information, not legal advice.

Useful next steps

- Practise with market sellers and taxi drivers, most are happy to help.
- See useful Thai phrases.
- See Thai names and titles.

Related guides

- Kids' Activities and Classes in Pattaya
- Retiring in Pattaya
- Expat Clubs and Social Groups in Pattaya
- TV and Streaming in Pattaya

Saving Money on Electricity

Air conditioning is the biggest part of most Pattaya electricity bills. How the 2026 tariff works, what landlords may charge, simple ways to cut the bill, and Jonny's real bills.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/saving-electricity/

Biggest cost	**Air conditioning**
Easy win	**Set AC around 25–26°C and use a fan too**
Maintenance	**Clean filters often, service every few months**
Check	**Your landlord's rate per unit versus the official rate**
Tariff from Sept 2026	**First 200 units capped at ฿3 a unit**

Quick answer: In Pattaya most of the electricity bill is air conditioning, so the biggest savings come from the AC: set it around 25 to 26°C, add a fan, keep the filters clean and switch it off when you go out. Homes here are billed by the Provincial Electricity Authority (PEA) on a rising scale. Since the September 2026 bills, the first 200 units a month are capped at ฿3 a unit, the next 200 cost about ฿4.16 and anything above 400 about ฿4.36, before the service charge, Ft and 7% VAT. If you rent, check the rate per unit your landlord charges. Jonny's own small condo, with the AC on 24/7, averages about ฿2,473 a month.

Electricity is one of the biggest monthly costs for many residents, and most of it goes on air conditioning. A few habits can make a real difference. See utilities and bills.

At a glance

TIP	WHY IT HELPS
AC at 25 to 26°C plus a fan	Each degree cooler makes the AC work harder
Clean filters every few weeks	Dusty filters cut cooling and raise the bill
Service units every few months	A clean unit cools faster
Inverter AC with a good energy label	Uses less power than older fixed-speed units
Stay under 200 units if you can	The cheapest tier, capped at ฿3 a unit since Sept 2026
Check your rate per unit	Some landlords and condos charge more than PEA

Air conditioning

- Set the AC to around 25–26°C and add a fan. Each degree cooler costs more.
- Use the timer or sleep mode at night, and turn it off when you go out.
- Close curtains in the afternoon sun and keep doors and windows shut while it runs.



Photo: Jonny James

Pro tip: I use a Sensibo smart controller to control my air-con's temperature, and I recommend it. See the Sensibo Air PRO on Amazon, but check it ships to Thailand first. I think I bought mine from Sensibo's own website, which shipped here, though check that at checkout. (As an Amazon Associate I earn from qualifying purchases.)

Maintenance

- Clean the filters every few weeks; dusty filters make the unit work harder.

- Have units serviced every few months. A cleaner unit cools faster.
- Inverter air conditioners use less power than older models.

How your bill is worked out

Pattaya is served by the Provincial Electricity Authority (PEA). A home bill has four parts: the energy charge on a rising scale, a small monthly service charge, the Ft (a fuel adjustment reviewed every four months) and 7% VAT.

UNITS USED IN THE MONTH	ENERGY CHARGE PER UNIT (FROM SEPT 2026 BILLS)
First 200	Capped at ฿3.00
201 to 400	About ฿4.16
Over 400	About ฿4.36

For September to December 2026 the regulator set the Ft at 16.23 satang a unit. Reports give the average rate for the period as about ฿3.86 to ฿3.89 a unit before VAT; the sources differ slightly. Rates change every few months, so check the latest notice.

PEA's official app, PEA Smart Plus, shows your bills and lets you pay. You can also pay at 7-Eleven or through your banking app. See QR payments.

Your rate per unit

- Some condos and landlords charge more per unit than the official rate. Check your contract and compare before you rent. See renting a condo.
- Thailand's consumer protection rules for residential rental businesses say landlords may only charge the actual electricity and water rates billed by the utility, with no surcharge or profit, and the contract must say how utilities are calculated. A Pattaya Mail report in July 2026 said breaking this can mean up to a year in prison or a ฿200,000 fine.
- It isn't always clear how far these rules reach a private owner renting out a single condo. If you think you are overcharged, ask for the calculation in writing, and contact the Office of the Consumer Protection Board on 1166.
- Houses usually pay the electricity authority directly.

Other tips

- Switch off the water heater when not needed.
- Unplug chargers and devices during storms. See power and water outages.
- When you buy an air-con or fridge, look for Thailand's No. 5 energy-saving label, which marks the more efficient models.
- Use LED bulbs, and dry laundry outside or on the balcony instead of in a tumble dryer.
- Check the meter on move-in day and photograph it, so your first bill starts from the right number.

Jonny's real electricity bills

My small condo runs air-con at 25C all day and night. Here are my last six bills, as of November 2026.

BILL MONTH	UNITS (KWH)	BAHT
May 2026	645	฿2,948
June 2026	454	฿2,011
July 2026	567	฿2,566
August 2026	537	฿2,418
September 2026	588	฿2,537
October 2026	551	฿2,358

That's an average of about 557 units and ฿2,473 a month, or about ฿4.44 a unit once the service charge, Ft and 7% VAT are included. My October bill charged ฿3.00 a unit for the first 200 units, ฿4.16 for the next 200 and ฿4.36 above that. I don't have my April bill, but I remember it being a little higher than May. Your bill will be different.

A real example

- My own bill: a small condo running air-con 24/7 costs me about 2,500 to 3,000 baht a month, depending on the time of year.
- Your own bill will depend on your air-con unit, the room size, your rate per unit and your habits.

Common questions

How much is electricity per unit in Pattaya? On PEA's home tariff from September 2026 bills, the first 200 units are capped at ฿3, the next 200 about ฿4.16 and above 400 about ฿4.36, plus service charge, Ft and VAT. Jonny's bills work out at about ฿4.44 a unit all in.

Can my landlord charge ฿7 or ฿8 a unit? Consumer protection rules for rental businesses say landlords may only pass on the actual rate billed by the utility. Ask how your rate is worked out, and call 1166 if you think it's unfair.

Does running the AC all day cost a lot? It's the biggest part of most bills. Jonny runs his at 25°C day and night in a small condo and averaged ฿2,473 a month from May to October 2026.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: The Nation, 12 August 2026 (first 200 units capped at ฿3 from September bills, average about ฿3.89); The Nation (tariff held at ฿3.95 with Ft 16.23 satang for September to December 2026, before the revision); Pattaya Mail, 18 July 2026 (landlords may charge only actual utility rates, penalties, OCPB hotline 1166); PEA mobile apps. The tier rates match Jonny's own October 2026 bill. Rates change; check the latest PEA notice.

Related guides

- Home Repairs and Handymen in Pattaya
- Noise and Sleeping Well in Pattaya
- Cost of Living in Pattaya
- Supermarkets & Groceries

LIVING IN PATTAYA

Monthly Budget Examples for Pattaya

What it really costs to live in Pattaya each month: three example budgets for a single person and a couple, from frugal to comfortable.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/monthly-budget-examples/

Frugal single	**About ฿30,000 to ฿40,000 a month**
Comfortable single	**About ฿50,000 to ฿70,000**
Comfortable couple	**About ฿70,000 to ฿100,000**
Biggest variable	**Rent and nights out**

Your budget in Pattaya depends mostly on where you live and how often you go out. These examples are rough monthly totals for 2026. For the details behind them, see cost of living and what things cost.

Example budgets

ITEM	FRUGAL SINGLE	COMFORTABLE SINGLE	COMFORTABLE COUPLE
Rent (studio to 1–2 bed condo)	฿8,000 to ฿12,000	฿15,000 to ฿25,000	฿20,000 to ฿35,000
Food (mostly Thai, some Western)	฿8,000	฿15,000	฿25,000
Bills, phone and internet	฿2,500	฿4,000	฿5,000
Transport	฿2,000	฿4,000	฿5,000
Nights out and fun	฿5,000	฿10,000	฿12,000
Health insurance and extras	฿4,000	฿8,000	฿14,000
Rough total	฿30,000 to ฿40,000	฿55,000 to ฿65,000	฿80,000 to ฿95,000

What I actually spend: Jonny's real month

The examples above are general. These are my own numbers as of November 2026, converted at about ฿33 to the dollar, so treat the totals as approximate.

ITEM	PER MONTH, APPROX.
Rent	฿0, I own a small condo
Condo maintenance	฿250 (฿3,000 a year, which is very low)
Electric, AC at 25C all day and night	About ฿2,000 to ฿3,000 (my May to October 2026 bills ran ฿2,011 to ฿2,948)
Water and trash	About ฿265, from my bills
Home internet (True)	฿534 (about $16)
Phone: dtac, plus my US number on Google Voice (free)	About $11
iCloud and YouTube Premium	About $16
Food and entertainment	฿15,000 at ฿500 a day, ฿30,000 at ฿1,000 a day
Cleaner	฿1,000
My dog: grooming, weekly daycare, food	About ฿2,000 to ฿2,700
Weekly massage, with tip	About ฿2,000
Pest control	About ฿900
Replacing cheap clothes	฿300 to ฿500
Rough total, no rent	**About ฿26,000 to ฿27,000, or ฿41,000 to ฿42,000**

- **What's missing:** this list leaves out my work software and tools, toiletries and random extras. It also has no line for scooter running costs or health insurance, so budget for those yourself.
- **Food is the honest bit:** I try for ฿500 a day, but ฿1,000 is more realistic, with an occasional big night of ฿2,000 to ฿3,000. Those are rare now.
- **Drinking and smoking:** I generally don't drink or smoke, and those add up. If you do, your number will be higher.
- **If I rented:** I'd likely take a ฿10,000 condo, which puts me at about ฿36,000 to ฿37,000, or ฿51,000 to ฿52,000. Rents run from ฿8,000 to ฿25,000 depending on area, and villas and two-bedroom condos from ฿20,000 to ฿40,000.

- **Where I could spend less:** I could pay a cleaner half as much, but mine is great and I like being fair to hard-working people. Grooming is ฿900 where I've heard ฿300 to ฿500 elsewhere, because it's hassle free and English friendly.

My first year and a half looked nothing like this. Heavy nights out, ฿10,000 a night back to back wasn't unusual, I was overly generous and I didn't track my money. "A great time, but very irresponsible and I'm paying the price for that now." Friends on holiday spend the same way.

More detail: pest control, living with a dog and utilities and bills.

What changes the numbers

- Living near the beach or in a new condo costs more than Soi Buakhao or East Pattaya. See renting a condo.
- Air conditioning makes a big difference to electricity bills. See utilities and bills.
- Western food and imported drinks cost far more than Thai.
- Nights out are the biggest variable. See nightlife on a budget.

What residents say they spend

In October 2026 over 200 Pattaya residents answered a Facebook question about whether you really need ฿100,000 a month. Roughly what they said:

- Single, owns condo and motorbike: ฿17,000 to ฿20,000
- Single, renting, careful: ฿28,000 to ฿40,000
- Single, comfortable (the most common answer): ฿40,000 to ฿60,000
- Couple: about ฿80,000
- Couple with a baby: ฿100,000 to ฿140,000
- Family with international school fees: ฿125,000 to ฿250,000

The big jumps come from school fees (around ฿400,000 a year per child at a mid-level international school), health insurance as you get older (up to about ฿120,000 a year), golf, top-end rent and going out every night. Full write-up: Do you really need ฿100,000 a month in Pattaya?

On a shoestring

At the very bottom, basic rooms without air conditioning go for ฿2,000 to ฿3,000 a month, two sausage breads cost ฿12.50 at 7-Eleven, and street stalls outside the centre sell pad kra pao for ฿35. Without alcohol, smoking or other vices, the real cost of living can be very low.

Don't forget

Visa costs, health insurance and trips home. See health insurance and visa options.

Useful next steps

- A small condo with air-con on all day can add roughly 2,500 to 3,000 baht a month for electricity.
- See cost of living.
- See Pattaya on 1,000 baht a day.

LIVING IN PATTAYA

Power Cuts and Water Outages in Pattaya

Why the power and water sometimes go off in Pattaya, who to call (PEA 1129, PWA 1662), how planned cuts are announced, and simple ways to be ready at home.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/power-water-outages/

Power	**Provincial Electricity Authority (PEA), call 1129**
Water	**Provincial Waterworks Authority (PWA), call 1662**
Official apps	**PEA Smart Plus and PWA Plus Life**
Storm cuts	**Common in the rainy season, usually short**
Be ready	**Power bank, torch, a few days of drinking water**

Quick answer: Power and water are reliable in Pattaya most of the time, but short outages happen, mostly during rainy-season storms, planned maintenance and pipe repairs. Electricity comes from the Provincial Electricity Authority (PEA): report a cut on **1129** (24 hours) or in the PEA Smart Plus app. Tap water comes from the Provincial Waterworks Authority (PWA): call **1662** or use the PWA Plus Life app. In a condo or village, ask the building office first: the problem is often the building's own pump, tank or breaker. Keep a charged power bank, a torch and a few large bottles of drinking water at home.

At a glance

PROBLEM	WHO TO CONTACT	FIRST STEPS
Power off in your room only	Building office or a handyman	Check your breaker box and any tripped safety switch
Power off in the whole building or street	PEA, 1129 or PEA Smart Plus	Ask neighbours or the LINE group; unplug sensitive electronics
Fallen pole or sparking line	PEA 1129, and 191 if anyone is in danger	Keep well away; don't touch anything near it
No water in your unit only	Building office	Check the pump, tank and your own valves
No water in the area, low pressure or brown water	PWA, 1662 or PWA Plus Life	Use stored water; let the tap run clear before using it
Flooding at home	Switch off at the main breaker if safe	See flood season

Why the power goes off

- **Storms.** Most unplanned cuts come with heavy rain and wind, when trees and branches hit overhead lines. Most are fixed within hours.
- **Planned maintenance.** PEA switches areas off in advance for line and transformer work, usually for a few hours in the daytime. Notices go out through PEA, local news and condo offices.
- **Cable work.** Pattaya City and PEA are moving power lines underground along main roads. Pattaya Mail reported in October 2026 that the overhead cables and poles on Second Road are due to come down by about March 2027, with Third Road, South Pattaya Road and Jomtien Second Road also in the programme. Expect occasional work-related interruptions nearby.
- **Your building.** A tripped breaker or a fault in a condo's own equipment is for the building office, not PEA.

Reporting a power cut

- Call **1129**, PEA's 24-hour contact centre, or report it in the **PEA Smart Plus** app, which also shows repair status and your bills.
- Download utility apps only from the App Store or Google Play. Ignore any message with a link asking you to install a "PEA" or bill app: fake utility apps are a common scam. See online safety.
- Give a landmark or meter number. If the language is a problem, ask the building office or a neighbour to call.

Staying safe in storms

PEA's rainy-season advice, May 2026, in short:

- Fit a residual current device (RCD) safety switch and check plugs and cables for damage.
- If water comes inside, switch off at the main breaker, if you can reach it safely.
- Don't touch switches or appliances with wet hands, and keep away from poles, trees and billboards in strong wind.
- Never go near a fallen line or a damaged pole. Report it to 1129.
- A surge protector or a small UPS protects a router, computer or TV when the power flickers back on.

Why the water goes off

- **Pipe repairs.** Bursts and planned work on old mains are the usual cause. PWA said in 2025 that repairs could briefly lower pressure or discolour water in some areas.
- **Dry years.** Pattaya's main raw water source is the Mabprachan Reservoir, topped up with water brought in from elsewhere. In April 2020, with the reservoir down to about 5%, PWA rationed supply so many homes had water only every other day. In May 2025 the reservoir was over 80% full and PWA said supply

was sufficient.

- **Your building.** Most condos and many houses pump water from their own tank. That covers a short mains cut, but a broken pump or a power cut can stop the water even when the mains are fine.

Getting water back

- Ask the building office or LINE group whether it is the building or the mains.
- For mains problems, call **1662** or use the **PWA Plus Life** app, which also posts planned supply stoppages for your area.
- When water comes back it can run cloudy or brown for a while. Let it run clear, and don't drink it. For drinking water, use refill machines, bottles or delivery: see drinking water in Pattaya.
- Renting a house? Ask the owner where the tank, pump and valve are. See renting a house and handymen.

Be ready

- A charged power bank and a torch or headlamp.
- A few days of drinking water, plus a bucket or two of water for flushing.
- Keep the fridge closed during a cut.
- Join your building's LINE group, where outages are usually announced. See the LINE app guide.
- Don't use the lift during storms or flickering power. Many condos keep a generator for lifts, pumps and corridor lights, but not all.
- Know where your breaker box and main water valve are. Bills: utilities and bills; saving electricity.

Working online?

A mobile data plan you can hotspot from is the simplest backup, since the router goes down with the power. See home internet, coworking spaces and digital nomads.

Common questions

Who do I call for a power cut in Pattaya? PEA on 1129, 24 hours, or report it in the PEA Smart Plus app. Check with your building office first if only your building is affected.

Who do I call when the water is off? PWA on 1662, or the PWA Plus Life app. In a condo, ask the building office first, as the cause is often the building's pump or tank.

Is the water safe after an outage? Let it run until it is clear, and don't drink tap water either way. Use refill, bottled or filtered water for drinking.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya Mail, PEA rainy-season safety advice and the 1129 contact centre (May 2026); Pattaya Mail, underground cable programme (October 2026); Thairath, reporting outages in the PEA Smart Plus app (November 2025, in Thai); PWA Plus Life, App Store listing with the 1662 contact number; Pattaya Mail, Pattaya water supply and pipe repairs (May 2025); Pattaya Mail, water rationing (April 2020). Numbers and apps can change.

Useful next steps

- Keep a torch, power bank and some bottled water at home.
- See flood season.
- See utilities and bills.

From the blog

- The 699 baht quick swap that left me with no water.

Noise and Sleeping Well in Pattaya

Bars, traffic, construction, festivals and roosters: which parts of Pattaya are loud, how to pick a quiet room or condo, what to do about a noisy neighbour or venue (the 1337 hotline), and simple ways to sleep better.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/noise-sleep/

Loudest	**Near bar streets, clubs and main roads**
Late	**Most bars close about 1 or 2am, nightlife zones about 4am**
Quieter	**Pratumnak, Wongamat, side sois away from bars**
Check	**Visit at night and ask about building work nearby**
Complaints	**Pattaya City hotline 1337, 24 hours, Thai and English**
Pack	**Earplugs and an eye mask**

Quick answer: Pattaya is loud where the nightlife is: bar streets, clubs and the main roads, where most bars close around 1 or 2am and the designated nightlife zones can stay open until about 4am. For quiet, stay on a side soi away from bars, in areas like Pratumnak or Wongamat, ask for a room facing away from the road, and visit any condo at night before you rent. Bring earplugs and an eye mask either way, because construction, scooters, dogs, roosters and festivals reach most parts of town. If a venue or neighbour keeps you awake, talk to them or the building office first, then call Pattaya City's 24-hour hotline, **1337**, which takes complaints in Thai and English.

At a glance

NOISE	WHERE AND WHEN	WHAT HELPS
Bars and clubs	Bar streets, late evening to 1 or 2am; nightlife zones to about 4am	Stay a few sois away; room at the back
Traffic and loud exhausts	Main roads, all day and late night	Side soi; room away from the road
Construction	Near building sites, often from early morning	Check maps and ask before you book or sign
Dogs, roosters, temples	Residential sois, often at dawn	Earplugs, white noise
Festivals and fireworks	Songkran, New Year, Loy Krathong, fireworks festival	Plan around the dates
Building noise	Pool pumps, lifts, rubbish rooms, aircon units	Ask for a unit away from them

Common noise in Pattaya

- **Nightlife.** Live music and bass travel a long way, especially on weekends and holidays. Areas like Walking Street, Soi 6, Soi Buakhao and LK Metro are busy late.
- **Traffic.** Scooters, trucks and modified exhausts on main roads such as Second Road and Sukhumvit Road.
- **Construction.** New condos and hotels go up all over town, and work can start early in the morning.
- **Residential sounds.** Dogs, roosters, temple bells and early-morning activity in local neighbourhoods.
- **Events.** Concerts, temple fairs, outdoor music stages and private parties, some outside the city centre.

It's not only the bar streets

Quiet-looking areas can have noise too. In February 2026, Pattaya Mail reported that condominium residents in Jomtien complained about loud music from nearby nightlife venues, and the mayor chaired a mediation meeting at City Hall where operators agreed to adjust their sound systems. So check the street itself, not just the area's reputation. See Jomtien.

Choosing a quiet place

- Quieter areas include Pratumnak and Wongamat, and the side sois of most areas. See where to stay.
- Ask for a room away from the street and not above a bar, a pool, the lifts or a rubbish room.
- Higher floors cut street noise, but heavy bass carries far, so a high room near a club can still be loud.
- Read recent reviews and search them for "noise", "music" and "construction".
- Look at the street on a map for building sites and bars before you book.

In a condo

- Visit at night, ideally on a Friday or Saturday, before you sign. A quiet viewing at 2pm tells you little.
- Ask the building office about planned works nearby and in the building, and read the house rules on quiet hours and renovation times.
- Check which way the unit faces: road, bar, pool or a quiet side.
- Look at neighbours' balconies for aircon units that hum all night.

See condo living rules and renting a condo.

Festival nights

Some nights are loud almost everywhere: Songkran in April, the New Year countdown, the fireworks festival and Loy Krathong, on 24 November in 2026. Check the events calendar before booking a light sleeper into a beachfront room.

When the noise won't stop

- Talk to the source politely, or ask your hotel or condo office to. Many problems end here.
- Keep a simple record: dates, times and short videos.
- Report it to Pattaya City's hotline **1337**, which Pattaya Mail describes as running 24 hours a day in Thai and English.
- For anything threatening or dangerous, call the police on 191, or the tourist police on 1155. See tourist police and emergency numbers.

Stay calm and polite: shouting at a neighbour or a bar rarely helps and can turn a noise problem into a bigger one. See Thai etiquette.

Sleeping better

- Earplugs, an eye mask and a fan or white-noise app.
- Blackout curtains, or ask for a room that has them.
- Keep the room cool. See saving on electricity for AC costs.
- Go easy on late caffeine and heavy drinking. See heat, hangovers and dehydration.
- Jet lag: get daylight in the morning and keep the first few nights early.
- If you sleep badly for weeks, see a doctor or pharmacist rather than self-medicating. See pharmacies and medicines.

Pro tip: I keep my AC at 25C around the clock. It costs about ฿3,500 a month in peak heat and ฿2,000 in the cooler months.

Common questions

What is the quietest area of Pattaya? Pratumnak and Wongamat are usually quieter than central Pattaya, but noise depends on the street and the building. Visit at night before you commit.

What time do bars close in Pattaya? Most bars close around 1 or 2am. Designated nightlife zones such as Walking Street can stay open until about 4am.

How do I complain about noise in Pattaya? Talk to the source or your building office first. Then call Pattaya City's 24-hour hotline, 1337, which handles complaints in Thai and English.

Is a high floor quieter? Usually from traffic, but bass from bars and clubs carries a long way. Check the view down: which bars and roads are below.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya Mail, the 1337 hotline (February 2025); Pattaya Mail, Jomtien nightlife noise mediation (February 2026); Pattaya Mail, concert noise complaints sent through the 1337 line (May 2025). Bar closing times match our nightclubs and Walking Street pages; the Loy Krathong date is from our Loy Krathong page. The AC figures are Jonny's own bills. This page is general information, not medical advice.

Useful next steps

- Ask which side of the building faces the road or a bar before you rent.
- See condo living rules.

LIVING IN PATTAYA

Pattaya for Digital Nomads

Is Pattaya a good base for remote work? The honest pros and cons, a first-month plan, which visa, time zones for client calls, phones and banking, budgets and staying productive, with links to our DTV, coworking and internet guides.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/digital-nomads/

Visa	**DTV for remote workers; visa exemption 30 days since 15 Sep 2026**
Internet	**Home fibre about ฿500 to ฿900 a month**
Workspace	**Coworking day passes about ฿200 to ฿400**
Time zone	**UTC+7 all year, no daylight saving**
Budget	**About ฿30,000 to ฿65,000 a month for a single person**
Bangkok	**Suvarnabhumi airport about 1.5 to 2 hours by road**

Quick answer: Pattaya is a good, affordable base for remote work if your clients or employer are outside Thailand. Home fibre costs about ฿500 to ฿900 a month, coworking day passes about ฿200 to ฿400, condos are good value, and Bangkok's main airport is about 1.5 to 2 hours by road. The usual visa is the Destination Thailand Visa (DTV), which you apply for from abroad. Since 15 September 2026, the visa exemption gives most visitors 30 days, so a trial month before committing works well. The trade-offs: the remote-work community is smaller than in Bangkok, the nightlife can eat your time and money, and Thailand's UTC+7 time zone means late calls for clients in the Americas.

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL (ABOUT, NOVEMBER 2026)
Visa for remote work	DTV: up to 180 days per entry, extendable once
Trial stay	Visa exemption: 30 days, extend once by up to 30 for ฿1,900
Home internet	Fibre, about ฿500 to ฿900 a month
Coworking	Day pass about ฿200 to ฿400; month about ฿2,500 to ฿4,000
Living costs, single	About ฿30,000 to ฿65,000 a month including rent
Time zone	UTC+7, no daylight saving
Thai SIM	Registered in person with a face check

Pros and cons

GOOD FOR REMOTE WORK	WATCH OUT FOR
Cheap, fast fibre in most condos	Smaller remote-work community than Bangkok
Good-value condos, short and long leases	Nightlife that makes late starts easy
Beach, gyms and sport for after work	High-season traffic and crowds
Suvarnabhumi airport 1.5 to 2 hours by road	Rainy-season storms and short power cuts
Long-stay visa built for remote workers	Late calls if your clients are in the Americas

Your first month

- **Before you fly:** fill in the TDAC arrival card and book a hotel or short let for the first week or two. See Bangkok to Pattaya.
- **Week one:** get a Thai SIM in person with your passport; since 16 May 2026 shops register new SIMs with a face check. Keep your home number for bank codes. See SIM cards and eSIMs.
- **Weeks one and two:** try a few areas, a coworking day pass and some cafés. Run a speed test anywhere you might work.
- **Weeks two to four:** view condos at night, ask for a speed test, and check what internet is included. See renting a condo and noise and sleep.
- **Before day 30:** extend your stay at Jomtien immigration if you need more time (once, up to 30 days, ฿1,900), or leave. Overstaying costs ฿500 a day. See visa extension.
- **Staying longer:** apply for the DTV from your home country. Since 31 August 2026 that means the embassy where you hold nationality or permanent residence.

Visa in brief

The DTV is the visa made for remote workers: five years, multiple entries, up to 180 days a stay, extendable once, with ฿500,000 in savings. Working for Thai companies or Thai clients needs a work permit whatever your visa. The full rules are on DTV visa, working legally and visa options.

Where to work

Most remote workers end up working from their condo on fibre and using a coworking space or café to get out. Day passes, monthly desks, business centres and café etiquette are covered on coworking spaces; providers, prices and sign-up on home internet. Keep mobile data as a backup, and a small UPS for the router helps through short power cuts. See power and water outages.

Time zones for client calls

Thailand is UTC+7 all year. The gap to clients changes when they switch to summer time:

CLIENT IN	PATTAYA TIME, IN THEIR WINTER	PATTAYA TIME, IN THEIR SUMMER
London	7 hours ahead	6 hours ahead
Berlin or Paris	6 hours ahead	5 hours ahead
New York	12 hours ahead	11 hours ahead
Los Angeles	15 hours ahead	14 hours ahead
Sydney	3 hours behind	4 hours behind

A 9am New York meeting is 9pm in Pattaya in the northern winter. Europe fits the Thai afternoon and evening; Asia and Australia fit the Thai working day.

Phones, money and tax

- **Two numbers:** a Thai number for local life and apps, plus a way to keep your home number for bank and verification codes.
- **Banking:** banks tightened account opening in 2026, and Kasikorn now lists the DTV among visas it doesn't accept for new savings accounts. Many DTV holders rely on a home bank card and a travel or multi-currency card instead. See Thai bank account, ATM fees and sending money to Thailand.
- **Tax:** the DTV gives no tax exemption. Staying 180 days or more in a calendar year usually makes you a Thai tax resident, and foreign income you bring into Thailand may then be taxable. A proposed relief for remitted income was still not in force when we checked. Get advice for your situation; see Thai tax basics.
- **Health:** insurance isn't a DTV requirement, but hospital bills are real. See health insurance.

Pro tip: I run two numbers on one iPhone: a dtac Thai number I've had for nine years, and my US number, which I'm moving back to Google Voice. On an earlier visit I couldn't set Google Voice up from Thailand; once it was set up at home in the US, it worked here.

Budget

A single person typically spends about ฿30,000 to ฿65,000 a month including rent, depending on the condo and how often you go out. Add coworking, software and a trip out of Thailand at least once a year on a DTV. See monthly budget examples and cost of living.

Staying productive

- Set work hours and protect them. Late nights out are the classic Pattaya productivity killer; see nightlife on a budget.
- A one-bedroom with a door between desk and bed helps on long days.
- Meet people through coworking spaces, gyms and expat groups. See expat clubs and gyms and fitness.
- Plan around rainy-season storms for important calls. See flood season.

Common questions

Is Pattaya good for digital nomads? For many people, yes: cheap fast internet, good-value condos, the beach and the DTV. The community is smaller than in Bangkok, so you'll make more effort to meet people.

Can I work remotely on a visa exemption? The DTV is the visa designed for remote work, so use the exemption to try Pattaya and apply for the DTV before you settle. Working for Thai clients or companies always needs a work permit.

What time zone is Pattaya? UTC+7 all year, with no daylight saving, so the gap to Europe and the Americas changes by an hour when they change clocks.

Do I pay Thai tax as a digital nomad? Possibly. Staying 180 days or more in a calendar year usually makes you tax resident, and foreign income you bring in may be taxable. Get professional advice.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: visa, internet and coworking figures come from our DTV, visa extension, home internet and coworking pages, each checked against official and press sources this month. Tax: Thai Law Online, foreign income remittance tax in 2026, updated 10 November 2026, which says the post-2024 remittance rule still applies and a proposed exemption has not been published in the Royal Gazette; we found no Revenue Department announcement saying otherwise. Budget ranges are from our monthly budget examples. Jonny's phone setup is in his own words. General information, not legal or tax advice.

Useful next steps

- See coworking spaces.
- See the DTV visa.

LIVING IN PATTAYA

Getting a Tattoo in Pattaya

Thinking about a tattoo in Pattaya? Hygiene checks, choosing an artist, aftercare in the heat and sea, and the etiquette of Buddhist designs.

Verified October 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/tattoos/

Check	**New needles opened in front of you, gloves, clean studio**
Price	**About ฿1,000–2,000 a piece; sak yant from ฿2,000**
Aftercare	**No sea, pools or strong sun for about two weeks**
Plan	**Get it near the end of your trip**
Respect	**Avoid Buddha images on lower body parts**

Pattaya has many tattoo studios, from walk-in shops to skilled custom artists. A little care keeps you safe and happy with the result.

Choosing a studio

- Look at the artist's portfolio and recent reviews, not just the price.
- The studio should be clean, with new needles opened in front of you, gloves and single-use ink caps.
- Agree the design, size and price before you start.

Prices

- Around **฿1,000** for a regular piece, or about **฿2,000** for something detailed, is a fair price.
- If a shop asks ฿4,000 to ฿6,000 for a couple of hours' work, shop around. For context, the average daily wage in Thailand is around ฿500.
- A traditional hand-poke **sak yant** is usually about ฿2,000 to ฿3,000 for a small piece and ฿5,000 to ฿12,000 for a large one.
- Prices vary with the artist, size and detail, so agree the price before you start. More in our Soi 1–6 ride notes.

Timing and aftercare

- A new tattoo needs about two weeks away from the sea, pools and strong sun. Plan it for the end of your trip.
- Keep it clean and use the cream your artist recommends. See heat and sun safety.
- Signs of infection, like spreading redness or fever, need a doctor. See hospitals and clinics.

Respect and designs

- Many Thais find Buddha images on legs, feet or lower body disrespectful.
- Sak yant are sacred Thai tattoos, traditionally done by monks or masters with rules attached. Learn about them first.
- See Thai etiquette.

Drinking

Do not get tattooed after drinking alcohol. It increases bleeding and many good artists will refuse.

Useful next steps

- Check the studio is clean and uses new needles.
- Avoid swimming and strong sun until it heals.
- See temple customs.

Related guides

- Moving Things Between Cities
- Gyms & Fitness in Pattaya
- Supermarkets & Groceries
- Phone Repair and Electronics in Pattaya

TV and Streaming in Pattaya

How to watch TV in Pattaya in 2026: condo TV, Netflix and other streaming prices in Thailand, where the Premier League is shown (Monomax and AIS Play), pirate boxes, and the internet you need.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/tv-streaming/

Netflix Thailand	**฿99 to ฿419 a month, by plan**
Premier League	**Monomax and AIS Play, seasons 2025-26 to 2030-31**
Free football	**Selected matches on Mono29**
TrueVisions	**No longer shows the Premier League**
Pirate boxes	**Illegal; operators are being arrested**
Internet	**Home fibre about ฿500 to ฿900 a month**

Quick answer: Most people in Pattaya watch TV on a smart TV or streaming stick over home fibre. Netflix works in Thailand at Thai prices, from ฿99 a month for the mobile plan to ฿419 for Premium. For football, the Premier League in Thailand belongs to JAS, which shows it through Monomax and AIS Play from 2025-26 to 2030-31; TrueVisions no longer has it. The Thaiger listed about ฿199 a month for AIS customers and ฿299 for others, mostly with Thai commentary, and some matches are free on Mono29. Condo TV is usually a handful of Thai channels. Skip the cheap “IPTV” boxes: they are pirate services, and Thai police keep shutting them down.

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL (ABOUT, NOVEMBER 2026)
Netflix Thailand	฿99 Mobile, ฿169 Basic, ฿349 Standard, ฿419 Premium a month
Premier League	Monomax and AIS Play: about ฿199 a month for AIS customers, ฿299 for others
Free football	Selected matches on the Mono29 channel
Disney+ through AIS	฿199 Standard or ฿289 Premium a month
Thai TV channels	Free digital TV with an aerial, or the condo’s cable
Home fibre	About ฿500 to ฿900 a month
Sports bars	Free to watch if you buy a drink or food

Prices change with promotions, bundles and VAT. Check the app or website before you pay.

TV in your condo or hotel

Hotels and many condos come with a TV wired to a building aerial or a basic cable package. Expect mostly Thai channels, plus maybe a few international news or film channels; live football and new films are usually not included. Thai free-to-air TV is digital (the DVB-T2 standard), so a modern TV, or a set-top box and an aerial, picks it up.

Before you rent, ask:

- Is there a smart TV, or only a basic set? A streaming stick works on any TV with a spare HDMI port and moves with you. Malls sell both; see shopping malls and phone repair and electronics.
- Is any TV package or internet included in the rent?
- Which internet providers already have cables in the building? See home internet and renting a condo.

Streaming services in Thailand

Netflix’s own help page lists four Thai plans: Mobile ฿99, Basic ฿169, Standard ฿349 and Premium ฿419 a month, with taxes possibly on top. The Thai catalogue is not the same as the one at home: some shows are missing, others are added, and many titles have Thai audio or subtitles.

Other services available here, with the prices a Chiang Rai Times guide listed in October 2026:

SERVICE	PRICE IT LISTED (ABOUT)
Disney+ through AIS	฿199 a month Standard, ฿289 Premium
Monomax (films, series, sport)	฿129 a month before VAT; sports tiers ฿199 to ฿599
Viu Premium (Asian dramas)	฿149 for 30 days through TrueID
Prime Video	In an AIS package at ฿999 a year
AIS Fibre with Netflix	฿899 to ฿999 a month before VAT, internet included

Mobile networks and fibre providers sell many of these in bundles, so a package can be cheaper than paying for each app separately. Read what is included before you sign a 12 or 24 month contract.

Your accounts from home

- Subscriptions you already pay for at home often open in Thailand, but you may see the Thai catalogue, and some services don't work outside your home country at all.
- Some people use a VPN to reach their home catalogue. Many services block VPNs and their terms often restrict it, so it can stop working at any time. A VPN never makes pirated content legal.
- Live TV apps from home broadcasters are often geo-blocked, and renewals need a working card. See cash vs card.

Watching live football and sport

- **Premier League:** JAS won the Thai rights for six seasons, 2025-26 to 2030-31, ending TrueVisions' run. Matches stream on Monomax and AIS Play, on phones, browsers, smart TVs and AIS's own box. The Thaiger's guide listed ฿199 a month or ฿1,999 a year for AIS customers and ฿299 a month or ฿2,999 a year for others, with mainly Thai commentary.
- **Free matches:** Mono29, a free-to-air channel, shows selected games.
- **English commentary and atmosphere:** pubs and sports bars show football, rugby, F1 and fights on big screens. See sports bars.
- **Late kick-offs:** Thailand is UTC+7 all year, so a 3pm UK kick-off is 10pm in Pattaya during the UK winter and 9pm in the UK summer.

Pirate boxes and "IPTV" deals

Cheap Android boxes and IPTV subscriptions promising every channel for a few hundred baht are pirate services, and Thailand is going after them. Pattaya Mail reported a raid on a large football and film streaming hub near Bangkok in October 2025, and Chiang Mai CityLife reported a May 2026 arrest in an international operation against another illegal streaming network. Pattaya Mail notes that the copyright law allows fines even for non-commercial infringement, although it found no record of individual viewers being prosecuted. The practical risks are bigger: the service can vanish overnight with your money, and some push users towards online gambling. Stick to legal apps.

The internet you need

Fibre home broadband is cheap and fast: about ฿500 to ฿900 a month for 500 Mbps to 1 Gbps, which is far more than an HD or 4K stream needs. Wi-Fi is often the weak link, so keep the router in the open or run a cable to the TV. Storms can cause short power cuts; see power and water outages. If you rely on mobile data, check the plan's speed cap, because a slow capped plan struggles with HD. See SIM cards and eSIMs.

Pro tip: my True home internet is ฿533.93 a month, and YouTube Premium is one of my regular monthly bills, about $6.

Learn Thai with TV

Thai dramas and game shows with subtitles are a fun way to pick up everyday phrases, and streaming apps make it easy to switch audio and subtitles. See learn Thai.

Common questions

Does Netflix work in Thailand? Yes. You get Thai prices and the Thai catalogue, which differs from home. Netflix's help page lists ฿99 to ฿419 a month depending on the plan.

Where can I watch the Premier League in Pattaya? On Monomax or AIS Play, which carry JAS's rights from 2025-26 to 2030-31, or free on Mono29 for selected matches. For English commentary, go to a sports bar.

Does TrueVisions still show the Premier League? No. TrueVisions held the rights from 2020 to 2025; JAS took over from the 2025-26 season.

Are IPTV boxes legal in Thailand? Unlicensed streams of football and films break Thai copyright law, and operators keep being raided and arrested. Use licensed apps.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Netflix Help Centre, plans and pricing in Thailand; The Thaiger, how to watch the Premier League in Thailand (July 2026); Khaosod English, JAS wins Premier League rights (November 2024); Chiang Rai Times, streaming in Thailand (updated October 2026); Pattaya Mail, streaming hub raided (October 2025); Chiang Mai CityLife, arrest in the MYIPTV4K case (May 2026). Bundle prices vary with VAT, promotions and your mobile network, and sources don't always say whether VAT is included. Internet prices are from our home internet page; the ฿533.93 and YouTube Premium figures are Jonny's own bills.

Useful next steps

- A VPN may be needed for some home services. Check each service's rules.

Related guides

- Living in Pattaya with a Dog
- Monthly Budget Examples for Pattaya

- Running and Cycling in Pattaya
- Temple Customs, Merit Making and Fortune Telling

LIVING IN PATTAYA

Buying and Selling Second-Hand in Pattaya

How to buy and sell used furniture, electronics, scooters and more in Pattaya: Facebook Marketplace and local groups, Kaidee, second-hand dealers and markets, selling up when you leave, and how to avoid deposit scams.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/second-hand-buy-sell/

Online	**Facebook Marketplace, local buy-and-sell groups, Kaidee**
Offline	**Second-hand dealers, condo boards, Buffalo Market on Thepprasit Road**
Safety	**See it, test it, then pay; never send deposits to strangers**
Scammed online	**Call 1441 to freeze the account**

Quick answer: Expats come and go, so Pattaya has a busy second-hand market. Most buying and selling happens on **Facebook Marketplace** and local Facebook buy-and-sell groups, with Kaidee as a Thai classifieds alternative, condo notice boards and resident LINE groups for things close by, and second-hand dealers who will buy a whole room at once for less. Always see and test the item before you pay, never send a deposit to someone you haven't met, and if you are scammed online, call **1441** straight away so the account can be frozen.

At a glance

WHERE	BEST FOR	GOOD TO KNOW
Facebook Marketplace	Furniture, appliances, scooters, almost anything	Biggest choice; most online scams in Thailand start on Facebook
Local buy-and-sell groups	Expat sellers, English listings	Search Pattaya and Jomtien groups on Facebook
Kaidee	Thai classifieds, cars, phones, amulets	Website and app, mostly in Thai
Condo boards and LINE groups	Things in your own building	Easy collection, sellers you can find again
Second-hand dealers	Selling a whole room fast	Quick and simple, but lower prices
Buffalo Market, Thepprasit Road	Small items, clothes, cameras, collectibles	Browse rather than furnish

Where to buy

- **Facebook Marketplace** is the main place in Pattaya for used furniture, fridges, washing machines, air-conditioners, bikes and electronics. Set your location to Pattaya and filter by distance.
- **Local Facebook groups** for Pattaya and Jomtien buy-and-sell are busy with expats selling up. Check how long a seller's profile has existed.
- **Kaidee** (kaidee.com) is a Thai classifieds site and app running since 2011, with categories from cars and property to phones and amulets. Listings are mostly in Thai, so a translation app helps.
- **Condo notice boards and resident LINE groups** are good for furniture you can carry down the corridor. See condo living rules and the LINE app guide.
- **Second-hand furniture and appliance dealers** are spread around the city, often along the bigger roads in East Pattaya. In September 2026 Pattaya Mail reported dealers so full of restaurant and bar equipment from closing businesses that one had slowed its buying, so commercial kitchen gear and furniture are plentiful.
- **Buffalo Market** on Thepprasit Road sells second-hand clothes, electronics, cameras and collectibles from about ฿10. Pattaya Mail gave its hours in 2023 as daily 4pm to 10pm; other guides say from 2pm, so check before you go.

Pro tip: I found the condo I bought through a deal on Facebook Marketplace. I wanted to think about it, other buyers came in, and it went pending at full price. A month later they backed out, and I took it right away.

For property, use a proper agent and lawyer and follow the steps in buying a condo; a Marketplace listing is only where the search starts.

Checking before you pay

- **Electronics and appliances:** see it switched on. For a fridge or air-conditioner, check it gets cold; for a washing machine, run a short cycle if you can.
- **Phones and laptops:** make sure the device is signed out of the seller's accounts and reset in front of you, and ask for the box or receipt.
- **Furniture:** check for damp, mould and bugs, especially in mattresses and sofas. See bugs and pests.
- **Big items:** agree who moves it. Many sellers expect you to collect. Small removal trucks and pick-ups can be hired; see moving things.

Scooters and cars

A used vehicle needs more than a handshake. The name in the registration book must match the seller, the engine and frame numbers must match the book, and the ownership transfer is done at the Department of Land Transport. Foreigners usually need a residence certificate to register in their own name. See buying a scooter, buying a car and vehicle tax and plates.

Selling

- Post clear photos in daylight, honest descriptions with any faults, the size, and a fair price. Say where the item is and whether you can deliver.

- Accept payment by bank transfer or PromptPay QR when the buyer is with you, and check the money has arrived in your own banking app before the item leaves. Don't trust a screenshot of a slip. See QR payments.
- If someone wants to send a courier or pay "extra for shipping" before seeing the item, be careful.

Selling up when you leave

- Start a month or more before you go. Buyers know when you're in a hurry, and prices fall in the last week.
- Sell big items first, but agree to hand them over on your last days so you can still use them.
- A dealer will often buy a whole room of furniture in one visit. It is fast and simple, but expect much less than selling item by item.
- What's left can go to charity or be given away in your building. See rubbish and recycling and the departure checklist.

Avoiding scams

- Online scams are a big problem in Thailand: over 170,000 online fraud cases were reported in the first half of 2026, and Facebook was involved in over 61% of them, according to the Thailand Consumers Council.
- The common trick is a too-cheap item and a request for a deposit, a "processing fee" or a delivery charge by transfer before you see anything. The Consumers Council lists scams tied to buying and selling products among the main Facebook scam types.
- Meet in public or at your condo lobby, inspect before paying, and pay only when you have the item.
- Be wary of sellers who move the chat off Marketplace, push you to pay now, or won't video call to show the item.
- Never share one-time codes or click payment links from a buyer or seller.
- If you have sent money to a scammer, call the Anti Online Scam Operation Center on **1441** at once to have the receiving account frozen. Have the bank names, account numbers and transfer times ready. You get a police case number by SMS and must see an investigator at a police station within 7 days. Keep screenshots of the listing, chat and payment slip. See common scams and online safety.

Common questions

What is the best way to buy second-hand furniture in Pattaya? Facebook Marketplace and local Facebook groups have the most choice. For a whole flat at once, a second-hand dealer is faster.

Should I use Kaidee or Facebook? Facebook Marketplace and local groups are easier in English and busier in Pattaya. Kaidee is a Thai site where most buyers search in Thai, so a Thai title helps.

Is it safe to pay a deposit to hold an item? Only if you have met the seller and seen the item. Deposits to strangers online are the most common second-hand scam.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: The Nation, online scam losses in the first half of 2026 (Thailand Consumers Council figures); Ministry of Digital Economy and Society, AOC 1441; Pattaya Mail, second-hand dealers and closing businesses (10 September 2026); Pattaya Mail, Buffalo Market (September 2023); Kaidee, about Kaidee.

Related guides

- Your First Week Living in Pattaya: Checklist
- Moving to or from Thailand: Shipping Your Things
- Cost of Living in Pattaya

LIVING IN PATTAYA

Dog-Friendly Pattaya: Cafés, Beaches and Walks

Where you can take your dog in Pattaya: the places Mooyoong and I go, dog-friendly cafés and bars, walks, beaches and soi dogs, hotels and malls, rabies rules and keeping dogs safe in the heat.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/dog-friendly-places/

Best bets	**Open-air cafés, bars and restaurants; ask first**
Walks	**Early morning or after sunset, away from hot pavements**
Beaches	**No city-wide ban found; soi dogs are the main risk**
Stray dog problems	**Pattaya City hotline 1337**
Rabies	**Vaccination is required by Thai law; boost yearly**
Our pick	**Area 39, Third Road**

Quick answer: Pattaya has a big dog-loving community, and plenty of places will let your dog in, but there's no reliable official list: open-air cafés, bars and restaurants are your best bet, and it's always worth asking first. Below are the places Mooyoong and I go ourselves. Walk early in the morning or after sunset, because pavements and sand get hot enough to burn paws. We found no Pattaya City rule banning dogs from the beaches, but street dogs (soi dogs) on the beaches are the real risk, and you can report dangerous strays on the city's 1337 hotline. Thai law requires dogs to be vaccinated against rabies, and a yearly booster is the usual advice. For vets, grooming and daycare, see living with a dog.

At a glance

WHAT	WHAT TO EXPECT
Cafés and restaurants	Outdoor terraces and garden seating are the most likely to say yes
Bars	The more open-air, the better your chances
Malls	We found no published dog policy; ask at the information desk
Hotels	Some accept small dogs, often with weight limits; confirm directly
Beaches	Early or late, on a lead; watch for soi dogs
Walks	Quiet residential streets, Mabprachan Lake, early or late
Problems with strays	Pattaya City hotline 1337

Places Mooyoong and I go

These are dog-friendly spots I've been to with Mooyoong myself. I'll keep adding to this list.

- **Area 39** (New Area 39 Bar & Bistro): a popular open-air live music bar and restaurant at X-Zyte Square on Third Road. Dogs are welcome on a leash. Open daily 6 pm to 3 am as of November 2026; check before you go. Map

Cafés, bars and restaurants

Many cafés and restaurants welcome dogs, especially on outdoor terraces, in gardens and in open-fronted places without air-conditioning. Indoor, air-conditioned cafés are more likely to say no. Policies change, so a place that said yes last year may not now. See cafés.

- Ask before you walk in, or message the place on LINE or Facebook first.
- Keep your dog on a lead and off chairs and tables, and sit at the edge of the terrace if your dog is nervous.
- Bring water and a bowl. Many places will happily fill it, but don't count on it.
- Clean up straight away, inside or out.

Hotels and malls

- **Hotels:** booking sites let you filter for pet-friendly hotels in Pattaya, but rules differ a lot. Some take only small dogs, often with a weight limit, a cap of one or two pets and an extra fee. Confirm in writing with the hotel before you book.
- **Malls:** we couldn't find a published dog policy for Pattaya's big malls. Ask at the information counter before you go in, and expect a small dog in a bag or pet stroller to be the easiest case.
- **Condos:** many don't allow pets at all. See condo living rules.

Walks

- Walk early or late to avoid hot pavements. Test the ground with the back of your hand: if it's too hot to hold for a few seconds, it's too hot for paws.
- Quiet streets in residential areas and around the lake are popular. See Mabprachan Lake and East Pattaya.
- Carry a stick or change route if soi dogs approach, and don't run. See stray dogs and rabies.

Beaches

We found no Pattaya City rule banning dogs from Pattaya or Jomtien beaches. That doesn't mean every stretch is easy. Soi dogs live on many beaches and often defend their patch, especially at night.

- Go early or late, keep your dog on a lead, and clean up.
- In October 2026, Pattaya Mail reported that a city vet sedated and removed a stray in Jomtien after it chased and tried to bite tourists. Report risky strays to the Pattaya City hotline **1337**.
- In April 2026, Pattaya Mail reported the city patrolling beachfront promenades and residential areas to manage strays, and offering free vaccinations for owned dogs. It also urged people not to feed strays in public places.
- Check local signs, which can change. See beach safety for the human side.

Getting around with a dog

- Baht buses usually take small, calm dogs. Ride-app drivers vary, so message the driver first, especially with a bigger dog. See living with a dog and Bolt and Grab.
- Small dogs on scooters should be secured in a carrier, basket or harness.

Pro tip: Mooyoong rides along on our videos, trained for balance and secured in a harness and leash. Just say "motorbike" and watch him get excited.

Rules and paperwork

- **Rabies:** Section 5 of Thailand's Rabies Act B.E. 2535 requires owners to have their dogs vaccinated against rabies, and the tag issued after vaccination is meant to be worn on the collar. Rabies is still found in Thailand, so vets and health officials advise a booster every year. Carry your dog's vaccination book when you travel.
- **Bangkok is different:** since 10 January 2026, Bangkok requires dogs and cats to be registered and microchipped, kept on a lead or in a carrier in public, and limits pets by unit size. We found no similar Pattaya ordinance, but if you take your dog to Bangkok, those rules apply.
- **Bringing a dog into Thailand** needs an import permit and health paperwork arranged before you fly. See living with a dog.

Health and heat

- Use tick and flea prevention all year; ask your vet which product suits your dog.
- Flat-faced breeds and thick coats struggle most in the heat. Heavy panting, drooling or wobbling are warning signs: get into shade, offer water and call a vet.
- Never leave a dog in a parked car or on a hot balcony.
- Find a vet before you need one. See living with a dog for the 24/7 vet we use, and heat and sun safety.

Going away

See house-sitting and pet-sitting.

Common questions

Are dogs allowed on Pattaya beaches? We found no city-wide ban as of November 2026. Go early or late, keep your dog on a lead, clean up, and watch for soi dogs, which are common on the beaches.

Can I take my dog into cafés in Pattaya? Often, especially those with outdoor or garden seating. Ask first, because policies vary and change.

Do dogs need a rabies vaccination in Thailand? Yes. Thai law requires owners to have their dogs vaccinated against rabies, and a yearly booster is the usual advice from vets.

Who do I call about a dangerous stray dog in Pattaya? The Pattaya City hotline, 1337. If you are bitten, wash the wound and get to a hospital the same day. See stray dogs and rabies.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya Mail, stray dog removed in Jomtien and the 1337 hotline (October 2026); Pattaya Mail, stray dog control and free vaccinations (April 2026); The Nation, Bangkok's pet ordinance in force from 10 January 2026; iLaw, owners' duties under the Rabies Act B.E. 2535 (in Thai). We couldn't find official dog policies for Pattaya's beaches or malls; check signs and ask. This is general information, not veterinary advice.

Useful next steps

- Carry water and a bowl, dogs overheat quickly.
- See living with a dog.

LIVING IN PATTAYA

Bugs, Pests and Geckos at Home

Living with tropical creatures in a Pattaya condo or house: ants, cockroaches, mosquitoes, flying termites, geckos, centipedes and the odd snake, with prevention habits, what's harmless and who to call.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/bugs-pests/

Most common	**Ants, cockroaches, mosquitoes**
Geckos	**Harmless and eat insects**
Prevent	**Sealed food, rubbish out daily, drain covers, no standing water**
Snakes	**Stay back, call 199 or the city hotline 1337**
Bad problem	**See our pest control page for prices and contracts**

Quick answer: Tropical living means sharing your home with a few creatures. Most are harmless, and a few habits keep the rest down: seal food, take rubbish out daily, cover drains at night and never leave standing water. Geckos on the walls are welcome guests that eat insects. Mosquitoes matter most for your health because they spread dengue. If ants or cockroaches keep coming back, a pest control contract is cheap; prices and what's included are on our pest control in Pattaya page. If you find a snake, keep back, keep pets away and call the fire service on **199** or the city hotline **1337**.

At a glance

CREATURE	HARMFUL?	WHAT TO DO
Ants	A nuisance, some bite	Seal food, wipe surfaces, use bait so they carry it to the nest
Cockroaches	Carry germs	Rubbish out daily, drain covers, gel bait, pest control if they persist
Mosquitoes	Yes: dengue	Screens, repellent, empty standing water
Flying termites	Harmless swarm, but a sign of termites nearby	Lights off, windows shut after evening rain
House geckos	Harmless	Leave them be
Tokay gecko (tukkae)	Loud, can bite if handled	Leave it alone
Centipedes and scorpions	Painful bite or sting	Shake shoes and towels, see a doctor if stung
Snakes	Some are venomous	Stay back, call 199 or 1337

Prevention that works

- Keep food in sealed boxes, including pet food, sugar and rice. Ants find an open packet within hours.
- Wipe kitchen surfaces after cooking and don't leave dishes overnight.
- Take rubbish out every day, and keep bins closed. See rubbish and recycling.
- Put covers or plugs on floor drains and sink drains at night. Cockroaches often come up through drains.
- Empty anything that holds water: plant saucers, buckets, balcony corners, the aircon drip tray. See flood season.
- Seal gaps around pipes, doors and windows, and fix torn screens.
- Ground-floor rooms and houses near fields or empty land get more visitors, especially in the rainy season. See renting a house.

Ants and cockroaches

Supermarket baits, gels and sprays help, and bait is better than spray for ants because they carry it back to the nest. Which products work, and when it's worth paying for treatments, is covered on pest control in Pattaya. Many condo buildings also spray common areas on a schedule; ask the juristic office when, and whether they will treat your unit. See condo living rules.

Pro tip: I pay about ฿900 a month for pest control. Read how it went in my pest control experience.

Mosquitoes and dengue

Mosquitoes are the pest that matters most for health. Dengue mosquitoes bite mostly in the daytime, so don't rely on a net at night alone. Use window screens, plug-in or spray repellent, and fans, and empty standing water every few days. A fever with aches after bites is a reason to see a doctor. See dengue and mosquitoes.

Flying termites and termites

After evening rain in the wet season, swarms of winged termites fly to lights. They are harmless and lose their wings within hours. Turn off lights near open windows, or close the windows for an hour. A swarm inside, or crumbly wood and mud tunnels on walls, can mean termites in the building: tell your landlord or juristic office. Termite treatment is often outside normal pest control contracts.

Geckos

Small house geckos on walls and ceilings are harmless and eat mosquitoes and other insects. Their droppings are the only downside. The bigger tokay gecko, named for its loud “to-kay” call, is noisy at night and can bite if you grab it, so leave it alone. If one is in your room, open a door or window and give it time.

Centipedes, scorpions and spiders

Centipedes and scorpions sometimes come in from gardens, especially in the rainy season and on ground floors. Their bites and stings are painful. Shake out shoes, towels and clothes left on the floor. If someone is bitten or stung and has strong pain, swelling, breathing trouble or feels unwell, see a doctor or call **1669**. Most house spiders are harmless and eat other insects.

Snakes

Snakes turn up in houses, gardens, car parks and sometimes condos, more often in the rainy season. In July 2026 Pattaya firefighters caught a python at a house in a village and another snake at a beachfront condo in Jomtien on the same night, and advised residents not to try catching snakes themselves. What to do:

- Keep back, keep children and pets away, and watch where it goes from a safe distance.
- Call the fire service on **199** or the city hotline **1337**. In a gated village, also call security.
- Don’t try to catch or kill it.
- If someone is bitten, keep them still and calm, remove rings and watches, and get to hospital fast. Call **1669** for an ambulance. A photo of the snake from a safe distance helps doctors. See emergency numbers.

Pets and pests

Dogs pick up ticks and fleas from grass and other dogs, and these can then spread into your home. Treat the pet and the room together. See living with a dog and pest control in Pattaya for tick treatments.

Common questions

Are geckos in my room dangerous? No. House geckos are harmless and eat insects. The loud tokay can bite if handled, so just leave it alone.

Why are there suddenly flying insects everywhere after rain? Those are usually winged termites swarming to lights. Turn lights off, shut the windows for an hour and sweep up the wings in the morning.

Who removes a snake in Pattaya? Call the fire service on 199 or the city hotline 1337. Pattaya’s firefighters handle snake calls.

When should I pay for pest control? If ants, cockroaches or ticks keep coming back after you have fixed food, rubbish and drains. Prices and contract tips are on our pest control page.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya Mail, snakes in homes and beachfront condos (8 July 2026) (firefighters, 1337, advice not to catch snakes). Emergency numbers match our emergency numbers page. Jonny’s pest control figure is his own, as of November 2026. General information only; for bites, stings or fever, see a doctor or pharmacist.

Useful next steps

- Keep food sealed and take rubbish out daily.
- See rubbish and recycling.
- See pest control in Pattaya.

LIVING IN PATTAYA

Pest Control in Pattaya

How professional pest control works in Pattaya: what contracts cost, what's included, ticks and pets, the fine print to check, and the cheap gadgets that help between visits.

Verified October 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/pest-control-pattaya/

Single treatment	**About 1,400 baht (condo)**
6 month contract	**About 5,350 baht incl. VAT (condo up to 50 sqm)**
Ticks	**Need repeat treatments for 1 to 2 months**
Ant bait	**ARS Ant Killer, from 7-Eleven and Big C**

Ants, cockroaches, mosquitoes and the odd tick come with tropical living. Good habits handle most of it, but if you have a pet, a ground floor room or a problem that keeps coming back, a pest control contract is cheap and worth it.

What it costs

Prices below are a real 2026 quote for a condo up to 50 square metres. Houses and bigger rooms cost more.

OPTION	VISITS	PRICE
Single treatment	1	1,391 baht
2 month contract	5 (weekly, then monthly)	4,280 baht
6 month contract	9 treatments + 6 bait checks	5,350 baht

Prices include 7% VAT. The longer contract is much better value, because you pay only about 1,000 baht more for 4 extra months.

What a contract usually includes

- Spraying along baseboards, the kitchen, bathroom, drains and the balcony.
- Gel bait for ants and cockroaches where spraying isn't safe, such as under the sink.
- Cockroach bait stations to monitor activity.
- Weekly visits in the first month to break the breeding cycle, then monthly visits.
- Free extra call outs if pests come back between visits. Ask before you sign.

Ticks, fleas and pets

- One spray isn't enough for ticks or fleas. Their eggs hatch over weeks, so you need repeat treatments for at least 1 to 2 months.
- Tell the company you have a pet. Ask what they use, and keep the animal out of the room until the spray is dry.
- Treat the pet too. Room spraying works best alongside vet tick prevention. See living with a dog.
- Lyme disease is extremely rare in Thailand. It's mainly spread by deer ticks in North America and Europe. Most home ticks here are brown dog ticks.
- Dogs are the ones at risk: "tick fever" (ehrlichiosis and babesiosis) is common in Thailand. See a vet if your dog is tired, stops eating or bruises easily.
- If a tick bites you, pull it out with fine tweezers close to the skin, clean the area, and see a doctor if you get a fever or rash in the next 2 weeks.

Fine print to check

- Termites are often excluded, or charged extra for bait stations (around 2,500 baht per station).
- A missed appointment can count as a used visit. Reschedule 1 to 2 days ahead.
- Contracts are usually paid upfront with no refund for cancelling.
- Ask whether the contract moves with you if you change condo.
- Service hours are usually Monday to Saturday, daytime only.

How to book

- Most companies quote over LINE. Send your condo name, room size, pests you're seeing and whether you have pets.
- Expect them to ask for your name, phone number and unit number to prepare the quote.
- Earliest slots are usually a few days to a week out.
- Jonny used Pest Control Pattaya (pestcontrolpattaya.com, 099-272-8323, LINE: Pest Control Pattaya). Read his full experience.

Between visits

- Ants: ARS Ant Killer bait (green box, Earth brand) from 7-Eleven, Big C, Mini Big C, Lotus's or Shopee. Ants carry it home, so it clears the whole nest.
- Mosquitoes: UV trap fans work, but buy one around 500 baht. The ones under 200 baht on Shopee often break within hours.

- A small USB bug zapper running 24/7 catches a surprising number of mosquitoes.
- Leave the odd spider and gecko alone. They eat mosquitoes.
- Empty standing water, use drain covers at night and keep food sealed. See bugs and pests at home and dengue and mosquitoes.

Useful next steps

- Get 2 quotes over LINE, and compare visits included, not just price.
- Book the 6 month option if you have a pet or ticks.

LIVING IN PATTAYA

House-Sitting and Pet-Sitting in Pattaya

Going away? How to find a house-sitter or pet-sitter in Pattaya, dog and cat boarding and daycare, what it costs, and what to agree before you leave.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/house-pet-sitting/

Options	**Live-in sitters, daily visits, daycare or boarding**
Daycare	**From about ฿200 a day (Jonny's pick)**
Find	**Expat groups, condo contacts, sitting websites**
Agree	**Dates, duties, costs, vet contact**

Long-stay residents often travel, and pets and homes need care while they are away. Pattaya has several options.

Quick answer: For a short trip, a trusted friend or neighbour doing daily visits is usually enough for cats; dogs do better with a live-in sitter or a good pet hotel. Daycare starts from about ฿200 a day at the place Jonny uses, while pet-friendly hotels in Pattaya listed fees of roughly ฿300 to ฿1,200 a night per pet in 2026. For longer trips, house-sitting websites match owners with sitters who stay for free in return for the care. Whatever you choose, check references, do a trial, and leave your vet's details and an emergency contact.

Your options at a glance

OPTION	BEST FOR	ROUGH COST (2026)	WATCH OUT FOR
—	—	—	—
Friend or neighbour, daily visits	Cats, short trips	A thank-you or agreed fee	One missed visit matters in the heat
Paid pet-sitter, daily visits	Cats and small pets	Agree per visit	References, keys, condo access
Live-in house-sitter	Dogs, houses, longer trips	Often free through sitting sites, plus their bills	Vetting, written agreement
Pet daycare	Dogs, days out	From about ฿200 a day	Vaccination records needed
Pet hotel or boarding	Dogs and cats, any length	Ask each place; compare per night	Visit first, check space and air con

The daycare price is Jonny's own (see living with a dog). Hotel pet fees are from Pattaya hotel listings in 2026 and are a fee for bringing a pet to your room, not boarding prices; dedicated pet hotels set their own rates.

Pet-sitting and boarding

- Daily visits for cats and small pets, or a live-in sitter for dogs.
- Boarding kennels and catteries look after pets in their own facilities. Visit first and check vaccination rules.
- Most places ask for an up-to-date rabies vaccination, plus the usual core vaccines, so carry the vaccination book.
- Look at where the animals sleep, whether rooms are air-conditioned, how often dogs go out, and who is there at night.

Pro tip: his overall favourite for daycare is Pawsome Space in Central Pattaya, ฿200 for the whole day, just off Pattaya Klang Road. For a Western-style experience at a Western price he points to Elite Dog Resort on Pratumnak, and a Thai-run pet hotel on the Darkside for much cheaper. Details on living with a dog.

House-sitting

- A house-sitter keeps your home lived-in, waters the garden and deals with deliveries and problems.
- In condos, let the office know who will have access, and register them if the building asks. See condo living rules.
- If you have a car or scooter, agree whether the sitter may use it, and check your insurance covers them.

Finding someone

- Ask in expat groups and your condo or village. See expat clubs.
- House-sitting websites connect owners with sitters. Sites such as TrustedHousesitters charge an annual membership (review sites quoted roughly US$130 to $300 a year in 2026, depending on the plan) and no fee per sit.
- Your vet or pet shop often knows reliable local sitters.
- Always check references and do a trial visit.

What to agree

Put it in writing, even a short message, so nothing is left to memory:

- Dates, duties, payment and who pays for food and bills.
- Feeding amounts, walks, medicines and house rules for the pet.

- Your vet's details and an emergency contact, plus permission and a budget for vet treatment if you can't be reached.
- Where the spare key is, the condo office number, and who to call for leaks or power cuts.
- What happens if the sitter falls ill or has to leave early.

See maids and cleaning for ongoing help.

Before you leave

- Stock up on food, litter and medicines for the whole trip, plus a few days extra.
- Leave the vet's number, the 24-hour emergency vet, and your pet's records where the sitter can find them. Jonny's page lists a 24/7 animal hospital he trusts.
- Show the sitter the basics: the breaker box, the water pump, the air con remote and how to lock up.
- Check flood and storm plans in the rainy season. See flood season.
- Keep pets inside or supervised; soi dogs, heat and ticks are the biggest risks in Pattaya.

Common questions

How much does pet-sitting cost in Pattaya? Daycare starts from about ฿200 a day; daily visits and boarding are priced by each sitter or hotel, so compare a few.

Is house-sitting free? Through sitting websites, usually yes: the sitter stays free in return for the care, and both sides pay the site's membership.

Do pet hotels in Pattaya need vaccination records? Most do. Bring the vaccination book with an up-to-date rabies shot.

Can I leave my cat alone while I travel? Only for a very short time with daily visits. Heat, power cuts and empty water bowls are real risks.

Useful next steps

- See snowbirds and winter stays.

Sources

- Our living with a dog page (Jonny's daycare, pet hotels and vet; prices from his own use, 2026).
- Hotel pet-fee listings on Hotels.com and Booking.com for Pattaya (about ฿300 to ฿1,177 a night per pet, plus deposits). Checked November 2026.
- TrustedHousesitters plan pages and 2026 reviews (membership prices vary by plan and currency). Checked November 2026.

LIVING IN PATTAYA

Post Offices and Shipping in Pattaya

How to send letters and parcels from Pattaya with Thailand Post, EMS, Flash, J&T, KEX and 7-Eleven, ship things home, what you can't post, and the import duty on parcels coming in since 1 January 2026.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/post-office-shipping/

National post	**Thailand Post (EMS for faster tracked mail)**
Local couriers	**Flash, J&T and KEX (formerly Kerry) for parcels inside Thailand**
We paid	**฿63 for 4.1 kg, Pattaya to Bangkok, with Flash**
International	**Thailand Post or EMS, or DHL and FedEx for speed**
Bring	**Your passport for Thailand Post and 7-Eleven counters**
Parcels coming in	**Duty and VAT from the first baht since 1 Jan 2026**

Quick answer: For parcels inside Thailand, the private couriers are cheapest and quickest: Flash Express, J&T and KEX (the old Kerry Express) have counters all over Pattaya, and we sent 4.1 kg to Bangkok with Flash for ฿63. Thailand Post handles letters and international mail, with EMS as its fast, tracked service, and DHL and FedEx are fastest for urgent things abroad, at the highest price. Bring your passport: Thailand Post has required ID from parcel senders since 2015, and 7-Eleven's SPEED-D counter asked us for a passport too. Loose lithium batteries are a common reason for refusal. Parcels coming into Thailand now pay import duty and VAT from the first baht, after the old ฿1,500 duty exemption ended on 1 January 2026.

At a glance

SENDING	BEST OPTION	NOTES
A parcel inside Thailand	Flash, J&T or KEX counter	Priced by weight and size; usually 1 to 3 days
Letters and documents	Thailand Post	Registered mail or EMS if it matters
A parcel abroad, not urgent	Thailand Post	Customs form needed; slower but cheaper than couriers
A parcel abroad, fast	EMS, DHL or FedEx	Tracked; couriers cost the most
Lots of boxes home	Sea shipping through a shipping shop or mover	Slow but cheapest per kilo
Furniture or a motorbike	A removals company	See moving things between cities

Thailand Post

- Thailand Post has several branches around Pattaya and Jomtien. Use the branch finder on its website for the nearest one and today's hours, which are shorter at weekends and on public holidays.
- EMS is the fast, tracked option, both inside Thailand and abroad. Registered mail is the cheaper way to get a tracking number on letters.
- Bring your passport. Thailand Post started requiring ID from parcel senders in June 2015, with foreigners showing a passport, and travellers still report being asked for it at the counter.
- For international parcels, you fill in a customs declaration listing the contents and their value. Describe items honestly: calling something a gift doesn't remove duty at the other end.
- Most post offices sell boxes, tape and padded envelopes.
- Prices change, so check the current rate at the counter or on Thailand Post's website.

Private couriers

- **Flash Express**, **J&T Express** and **KEX** have small shops across the city, often open late. They're usually the cheapest way to send parcels inside Thailand.
- KEX is the former Kerry Express. The company changed its name in 2024 and the brand in February 2025, and it has closed some branches, so check one is still open before you carry a heavy box there.
- Some 7-Eleven stores take parcels through SPEED-D. When we tried, it needed a passport and wouldn't accept a Thai driving licence.
- Many shops sell boxes and tape and will pack for a small fee. Have the address in Thai if you can, with a phone number: couriers call before delivery. See shipping parcels in Thailand.

Pro tip: in September 2026 I sent a 4.1 kg box from Pattaya to Bangkok. 7-Eleven's SPEED-D wanted my passport and wouldn't take my Thai driver's licence, so I walked to the nearest Flash Express. The assistant helped me write the address in Thai, I gave my name and phone number, and it cost ฿63 (฿60 freight plus a ฿3 fuel surcharge). Less than five minutes at the counter. Keep the receipt: it has the tracking number.

Sending things home

- For speed, EMS, DHL and FedEx are fastest; DHL and FedEx cost the most. Get quotes for the exact weight and box size, because size can cost more than weight.
- For large amounts, sea shipping through a shipping shop or international mover is slower but cheaper. See moving to or from Thailand.

- Check what your home country allows in. Food, medicines, plants and some souvenirs have limits, and buying Buddha images to take abroad needs a Fine Arts Department permit. See souvenir shopping.

What you can't send

- **Lithium batteries** are the big one. Power banks and loose batteries are usually refused by post and many couriers; devices with a battery fitted have their own rules. Thailand Post asked for lithium batteries to be banned in mail coming into Thailand, and the US Postal Service still lists that ban in 2026.
- Liquids, perfumes, aerosols and anything flammable are restricted or refused, especially by air.
- Cash, gold and jewellery are poor choices for the post. Mail coming into Thailand may not contain banknotes, precious metals, jewellery, precious stones, drugs or ammunition, according to the US Postal Service's country list.
- Ask at the counter before you pack and seal anything you're unsure about.

Receiving parcels

- Most condos accept parcels at reception. See condo living rules.
- Online shopping from Lazada and Shopee delivers to your door, often with cash on delivery.
- **Parcels from abroad:** since 1 January 2026, Thailand charges import duty on all imported goods, however cheap, after scrapping the ฿1,500 duty exemption. Expect to pay duty and VAT on delivery or at the post office before you can collect.
- Keep the sender's invoice or receipt: it helps customs value the parcel correctly.

Common questions

Do I need my passport to send a parcel in Thailand? At Thailand Post, yes for parcels, under a rule in place since 2015. 7-Eleven's SPEED-D also asked us for a passport. Flash Express only needed a name and phone number when we used it.

What's the cheapest way to send a parcel inside Thailand? Usually a private courier counter like Flash, J&T or KEX. We paid ฿63 for 4.1 kg from Pattaya to Bangkok.

Can I post a power bank from Thailand? Usually not. Lithium batteries on their own are refused by post and many couriers. Ask at the counter, or carry it in your hand luggage.

Will I pay tax on a parcel sent to me in Thailand? Probably. Since 1 January 2026 import duty applies to all imported goods, not just those over ฿1,500, and VAT applies too.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Tilleke & Gibbins, end of the ฿1,500 import duty exemption from 1 January 2026 (November 2025); KEX, Kerry Express rebrands as KEX; The Thaiger, KEX cuts branches (November 2024); Post & Parcel, Thailand Post requires ID from parcel senders (June 2015); US Postal Service, mailing conditions for Thailand (July 2026); Jonny's post, I shipped 4.1 kg across Thailand for 63 baht (September 2026). Rates and rules change; check at the counter before you send.

Useful next steps

- Bring the parcel unsealed if you need to show the contents for customs.
- See shipping parcels.

Related guides

- Moving to or from Thailand: Shipping Your Things
- The Thai Calendar and Buddhist Year
- International Schools in Pattaya
- Yoga, Pilates and Wellness in Pattaya
- Pattaya City Hall and Local Services

From the blog

- I shipped 4.1 kg across Thailand for 63 baht.

LIVING IN PATTAYA

Home Repairs and Handymen in Pattaya

Who to call when the air conditioner stops, the pipes leak or the lights go out: the condo maintenance team, air-con cleaning prices, plumbers and electricians, water heater safety, fair quotes, useful Thai words and who pays in a rental.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/home-repairs-handymen/

First call	**Your condo's maintenance team or landlord**
Air-con clean	**From ฿650 a wall unit at HomePro (labour, Nov 2026)**
Deeper clean	**About ฿890 to ฿1,395 a unit for a fuller strip-down**
Quotes	**Agree the price before work starts**
Rentals	**Check your contract; many leave repairs to the tenant**

Quick answer: For most small jobs in a Pattaya condo, the first call is the building's maintenance team or juristic office: they know the pipes, valves and breakers, and they usually have a technician on site or on call. For air-con, a clean every few months keeps the room cool and the bill down; HomePro's published price for a standard wall-unit clean was ฿650 in November 2026, labour only. Plumbers, electricians and air-con shops are everywhere. Agree the price before work starts, ask what is included, and photograph the problem. In a rental, read the contract: in Thailand the tenant often ends up paying for breakdowns, so ask who pays for what before you sign.

At a glance

PROBLEM	CALL FIRST	GOOD TO KNOW
Air-con not cold or dripping	Air-con shop or a store's home service	Often just needs cleaning; gas refill and parts cost extra
Leak or no water	Condo maintenance team	They can shut off water further up the line
Water heater faulty or giving a tingle	Switch off its breaker, then an electrician	Don't use it until it is checked
Power out in your room only	Check your breaker box, then maintenance	Whole-area cuts are the PEA's job
Blocked drain or toilet	Condo maintenance or a plumber	Ask for the price before they start
Ants, cockroaches, termites	Pest control company	See pest control

The condo maintenance team

Most condo buildings have a juristic office and a maintenance team for jobs inside units, sometimes free and often for a small fee. Ask the office first, even for jobs you plan to do yourself: they can tell you where your unit's water valve and breakers are, and whether they can isolate your water from outside. Ask, too, whether the building has rules on work hours or on outside contractors. See condo living rules.

A translation app makes the visit faster: write the problem in a sentence, translate it into Thai and show the technician on your phone.

Air conditioning

- Dirty filters and coils make units work harder. Rinse the filters yourself often and book a proper clean every few months. See saving on electricity.
- HomePro, which has stores in North Pattaya and a Mega Home in Nong Prue, lists home-service prices online. In November 2026: ฿650 for a standard wall-unit clean (about 45 to 60 minutes), ฿890 for a clean with the blower removed, and ฿1,395 for a full strip-down clean. These are labour only: refilling gas and repairs cost extra. Its terms offer a free re-clean if the indoor unit drips within 90 days. Book at a store's Home Service counter or on 1284.
- Independent air-con shops and technicians also clean, repair and refill gas across the city, and prices vary. Ask for the price per unit and what kind of clean it is before they start.
- The government's 2026 "clean your air-con" discount (฿300 off, registration 25 March to 23 May) has ended.

Plumbing and water heaters

- Know where your unit's main water valve is. Valves that haven't been turned in years can break when you finally use them, so don't test one late at night before a weekend.
- Electric water heaters should be properly earthed and protected by an earth-leakage breaker. If a tap, shower head or heater gives you a tingle, switch off its breaker, stop using it and call an electrician.
- Houses often rely on a water pump and tank, which fail in time and stop working in a power cut. See power and water outages and drinking water.

Electrics

- Thailand runs on 220 volts. Leave wiring to an electrician.
- If only your room is dark, check your breaker box first to see whether a switch has tripped. If the whole street is out, it is the Provincial Electricity Authority (PEA), not your building.

Getting a fair price

- Ask for a quote before work starts, in writing or in a LINE message, and photos of broken parts. See LINE app.
- Get two quotes for bigger jobs, such as a new pump, water heater or air-con unit.
- Ask whether parts are included and whether there is a warranty on the work.
- Pay when the job is done and tested, not before. Keep the receipt.
- Ask neighbours and expat groups who they use.
- Be wary of a price that jumps once a technician sees a foreigner. See common scams.

Who pays?

There is no single answer: it depends on your contract and your landlord. Some landlords cover breakdowns of things that came with the room, and many expect the tenant to pay for repairs and replacements. Ask before you sign, get it written into the lease, and keep a small repair fund. See renting a condo.

Pro tip: my water heater died, so I ordered a ฿699 one on Shopee and swapped it myself. Then my unit's main valve broke when I tried to turn the water back on. The building's maintenance team came within about 20 minutes, and I showed the technician the problem translated into Thai on my phone. The repair ended up at ฿1,000 because they had to cut the PVC pipes, so my ฿699 heater cost ฿1,699. In Thailand, almost everything is your responsibility, and that usually applies to renters too. Some landlords, often foreign owners, do cover repairs, but don't count on it.

Useful Thai words

ENGLISH	THAI	SAY IT
Technician	ช่าง	chang
Air-con isn't cold	แอร์ไม่เย็น	ae mai yen
Clean the air-con	ล้างแอร์	lang ae
Water is leaking	น้ำรั่ว	nam rua
Power is out	ไฟดับ	fai dap
How much?	เท่าไหร่	tao rai

Common questions

How much does air-con cleaning cost in Pattaya? HomePro's published labour price for a standard wall-unit clean was ฿650 in November 2026, with deeper cleans at ฿890 and ฿1,395. Independent shops vary, so ask for the price per unit first.

How often should I clean my air conditioner? Rinse the filters often and have the unit professionally cleaned every few months, more often if it runs all day.

Does my landlord have to pay for repairs? It depends on the lease. Many landlords expect tenants to pay for repairs, so agree who pays for what in writing before you sign.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: HomePro, wall-unit air-con cleaning (฿650, terms and warranty); HomePro, clean with blower removed (฿890); HomePro, full strip-down clean (฿1,395); HomePro store list (North Pattaya, Mega Home Pattaya); Pattaya Mail, the 2026 air-con cleaning discount; Jonny James, the ฿699 quick swap (October 2026). HomePro is named as a published price reference, not a recommendation. Prices change; ask for a quote.

Useful next steps

- Get two quotes for bigger jobs and agree the price before work starts.
- Ask your condo office for trusted contacts first.
- See air-con servicing and saving electricity.

From the blog

- The 699 baht quick swap that left me with no water, and who pays for condo repairs.

LIVING IN PATTAYA

Pattaya City Hall and Local Services

What Pattaya City Hall does for residents and visitors: the 1337 hotline, the Pattaya Connect LINE account, rubbish, noise and flooding reports, land and building tax, the yellow house book, and which office handles visas, licences and police matters.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/city-hall-services/

Hotline	**1337, 24 hours, Thai and English**
LINE	**@pattayaconnect (complaints, city services, tax)**
Land and building tax 2026	**Pay by July, or in 3 instalments to September**
Visas	**Immigration office, not City Hall**
Licences	**Land transport office in Banglamung**

Quick answer: Pattaya has its own special city administration with an elected mayor, separate from the surrounding Banglamung district. City Hall looks after roads, drains, rubbish, beaches, city events, local taxes and house registration for Pattaya addresses. To report a problem, call the 24-hour **1337** hotline (Thai and English) or use the city's **Pattaya Connect** LINE account (@pattayaconnect), which links to the national Traffy Fondue complaint system. City Hall does **not** handle visas (immigration), driving licences (land transport office) or crime (police).

At a glance

NEED	WHERE TO GO	NOTES
Report rubbish, flooding, broken lights, road damage	1337 or Pattaya Connect on LINE	Send a photo and exact location
Noise, unsafe construction	1337; police 191 if urgent	Pattaya Mail reports both handled through 1337
Land and building tax (owners)	City Hall, ePay Pattaya app, Pattaya Connect, banking apps	2026 payment deadline moved to July
Yellow house book (Tor Ror 13)	City Hall for Pattaya addresses	District offices for Banglamung, Nongprue, Huay Yai
Visa, 90-day report, TM30	Immigration office, Jomtien	Not City Hall
Driving licence, vehicle tax	Land transport office, Banglamung	Not City Hall
Crime, scams, lost items	Tourist Police 1155, police 191	Scams: 1441
Snake in the house	Fire service 199 or 1337	Don't try to catch it

What City Hall handles

- **Roads, drains and street lights**, including clearing blocked drains before and during the rainy season. See flood season.
- **Rubbish collection**. Pattaya Mail reported in 2023 that the city sends a team out after missed-collection reports to 1337. See rubbish and recycling.
- **Beaches, parks and public spaces**, including keeping pavements clear.
- **City events and festivals**. See the events calendar.
- **Local taxes**: land and building tax, and signboard tax for businesses.
- **House registration** for addresses inside Pattaya City, including the yellow book for foreigners.
- **Pattaya City Hospital**, the city's own public hospital. See hospitals and clinics.

The 1337 hotline

The Pattaya Contact Center on **1337** takes complaints, questions and urgent reports 24 hours a day. Pattaya Mail reported in February 2025 that it answers in Thai and English, and a November 2025 Thairath report says Chinese too. The Thaiger reported about 258,000 calls in the 2024 fiscal year. In April 2026 the city reviewed a plan to add AI sorting of complaints, with rollout targeted for the 2027 fiscal year, so how calls are handled may change.

Give the exact place (soi, landmark or a map pin), one problem per call, and ask for a reference number. For anything dangerous, like live wires down or a fire, call the emergency numbers first: 199 for fire, 1669 for an ambulance.

Pattaya Connect on LINE

Launched in November 2025, **Pattaya Connect** is a LINE Official Account (@pattayaconnect) that puts several city services in one place:

- Complaints linked to **Traffy Fondue**, the national reporting system, so you can send a photo and location and track the status.
- Live views from hundreds of city CCTV cameras, handy for checking traffic or flooding.
- Online queue booking for Pattaya City Hospital.
- Local tax payment and event news.

The Pattaya News reported in March 2026 that the account won a government e-service award at the LINE Thailand Awards. New to LINE? See our LINE app guide.

Land and building tax

Property owners, including foreign condo owners, pay a yearly land and building tax to City Hall for property inside Pattaya. For a home it is usually small. In 2026 the dates moved later: Thairath reported that tax notices went out in May instead of April, the payment deadline moved from June to July, and the bill could be split into three interest-free instalments in July, August and September. Late payment adds a surcharge of 10% to 40% depending on when you pay, plus 1% a month interest. As of April 2026 you can pay through the ePay Pattaya app, Pattaya Connect, the city website, banking apps or some counter services such as 7-Eleven. Dates can change again in 2027, so watch for the notice. See Thai tax basics and buying a condo.

The yellow house book

Foreigners who live here long term can apply to be listed in a **yellow house book** (Tor Ror 13) at their address. It proves where you live, not that you own the property, and it can make things like opening a bank account, registering a vehicle or registering at a hospital easier. A Pattaya Mail legal column (2023) says you apply at City Hall for Pattaya addresses, or at the Banglamung, Nongprue or Huay Yai district office for addresses there. Expect to bring your passport, visa, the owner's blue house book and consent, and possibly witnesses. The same column said the process then took about six weeks. Requirements vary by office, so ask for the current checklist first. See Thai paperwork tips.

Which office for what

- **Visas, extensions, 90-day reports and TM30**: the immigration office. See Jomtien immigration office, visa extension and 90-day reports.
- **Driving licences and vehicle tax**: the Department of Land Transport office in Banglamung. See Thai driving licence and vehicle tax.
- **Crime, theft and lost items**: the police. See Tourist Police. For scams, call 1441 and see common scams.
- **Electricity and water**: the utility providers, not City Hall. See power and water outages.
- **Motorbike taxi complaints**: 1337, or the Department of Land Transport on 1584. See motorbike taxis.

Visiting a government office

- Find City Hall on Google Maps and check opening hours before you go. Offices work weekdays and close on public holidays.
- Bring your passport plus photocopies, signed on each page, and passport photos.
- Dress neatly: no vests or beachwear. Go early in the day.

Common questions

What is the Pattaya City Hall phone number? For complaints and help, call 1337, which runs 24 hours with Thai and English speakers. For emergencies use 191 (police), 199 (fire) or 1669 (ambulance).

Can I report a problem in English? Yes. Reports say 1337 has English-speaking staff, and Pattaya Connect lets you send a photo and location through LINE, which needs little language at all.

Do foreigners pay land and building tax? Yes, if you own property inside Pattaya. For a condo you live in, the bill is usually small. Pay on time to avoid surcharges.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya Mail, 1337 hotline in Thai and English (February 2025); The Thaiger, 1337 call volume; Pattaya Mail, 1337 upgrade plan (April 2026); Thairath, Pattaya Connect launch (November 2025); The Pattaya News, LINE award (March 2026); Pattaya Mail, online tax payments (April 2026); Thairath, 2026 land and building tax dates and penalties (May 2026); Pattaya Mail Legal Corner, the yellow book (2023); Pattaya Mail, rubbish complaints via 1337 (July 2023); Pattaya Mail, snake calls (July 2026). We couldn't reach the city's own website to confirm office hours. Sources differ on whether 1337 also answers in Chinese.

Useful next steps

- Save 1337 in your phone and add @pattayaconnect on LINE.
- See Thai paperwork tips.
- See Thai driving licence.
- See public holiday closures.

LIVING IN PATTAYA

Bookshops and Libraries in Pattaya

Where to find English books in Pattaya: mall bookshops, Canterbury Tales and other second-hand book exchanges, public libraries, reading spots, and e-books and library apps for long stays.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/books-libraries/

New books	**Mall bookshops stock English titles**
Second-hand	**Book exchanges buy and swap used books**
Libraries	**Pattaya City public libraries, mostly Thai**
Long stays	**E-books and library apps save luggage space**

Pattaya has more book options than many expect, thanks to its long-stay community.

Quick answer: For new English books, go to the bookshop chains in the big malls, such as Asia Books, Bookazine and SE-ED at Central Festival on Beach Road. For cheap second-hand reads, Pattaya's best-known exchange is Canterbury Tales, a British-run shop that reports describe as holding tens of thousands of used books; bring your finished books to trade. The city's public libraries are mostly Thai-language. For long stays, an e-reader with your home library's app is the lightest option.

Where to find books at a glance

OPTION	WHAT YOU'LL FIND	GOOD FOR
—	—	—
Mall bookshops (Asia Books, Bookazine, SE-ED)	New English novels, travel guides, magazines, Thai language books	New releases, gifts, phrasebooks
Second-hand exchanges	Used books in many languages, buy, sell or swap	Cheap holiday reading
Pattaya City public libraries	Mostly Thai books, some English	Quiet reading, Thai study
Cafés and coworking spaces	Reading spots, sometimes a swap shelf	A cool place to read
E-books and library apps	Your home library, online	Long stays, saving luggage space

Shop names come from expat directories and Pattaya Mail (see Sources). Shops move and close, so check opening hours and the address on the day.

New books

Bookshops in the big malls stock English novels, travel guides, magazines and Thai language books. Expect to pay close to the cover price, or a little more for imported titles. Asia Books is Thailand's best-known English-language chain; Bookazine and SE-ED also carry English titles. See shopping malls.

Second-hand books

Second-hand book exchanges around central Pattaya and Jomtien buy, sell and swap used books in many languages. Bring your finished books to trade; you'll usually get credit against your next purchase rather than cash.

Canterbury Tales is the long-running British-run exchange. Pattaya Mail has marked its 20th anniversary and later reported that it moved to Soi Bongkot, and directories still list an older address off Soi Chaiyapoon. Check the current location before you go. Other smaller exchanges and expat shops come and go; ask in expat groups for the latest.

Libraries

- Pattaya City runs public libraries, including one on Third Road, with mostly Thai books and some English titles. They're quiet, air-conditioned places to read.
- Some community and international organisations run small libraries with English books. Ask in expat groups. See expat clubs.
- Many hotels and condo buildings have a swap shelf in the lobby: take one, leave one.

E-books and library apps

For long stays, books are heavy and shipping is slow. An e-reader, or your home library's app (many libraries lend e-books and audiobooks to members abroad), saves space. Set it up before you travel, as some libraries need you to register in person first.

Bring, buy or swap?

- **Bring:** a couple of paperbacks for the flight, then swap them at an exchange. Books are heavy in luggage allowances.
- **Buy new:** best for a specific new title, gifts or Thai study books. Imported English titles can cost more than at home.
- **Buy second-hand:** the cheapest way to read a lot on a long stay, and you can sell or trade them back when you leave.
- **Swap:** hotel and condo shelves, and expat groups, where people give away boxes of books when they move on.

Book clubs and children’s books

Book clubs and reading groups come and go with the expat community; ask in expat groups and at the second-hand shops. For children, mall bookshops carry English picture books and Thai-English bilingual books, and international schools sometimes hold book sales. See kids’ activities and classes.

Reading spots

Quiet cafés and coworking spaces are good places to read. A chain coffee costs about ฿50 to ฿80 and specialty coffee ฿80 to ฿150; coworking day passes run about ฿200 to ฿400. See cafés and coworking spaces. The beach at dawn, under a tree at Dongtan or Wongamat, is free.

Learning Thai

Mall bookshops sell Thai phrasebooks, textbooks and children’s books, which are great for practising reading. See learn Thai.

Common questions

Where can I buy English books in Pattaya? Mall bookshops such as Asia Books at Central Festival, and second-hand exchanges like Canterbury Tales.

Is there a second-hand bookshop in Pattaya? Yes. Canterbury Tales is the best known; check its current address, as it has moved.

Does Pattaya have a public library? Yes, Pattaya City runs public libraries, mostly with Thai books.

Can I swap books in Pattaya? Yes, at second-hand exchanges and on many hotel and condo swap shelves.

Useful next steps

- See learning Thai.
- See cafés.

Sources

- Pattaya Mail: “Pattaya’s Canterbury Tales clocks up 20 years” and “Canterbury Tales, a British institution in Pattaya, has moved” (Soi Bongkot).
- Expat Exchange: “Best Bookstores and Libraries in Pattaya” (mall bookshops and public libraries). Checked November 2026.
- Our cafés and coworking pages (prices, 2026).

LIVING IN PATTAYA

Rubbish, Recycling and Plastic in Pattaya

How rubbish collection works in Pattaya condos and houses, the bin colours, selling bottles and cans, e-waste and batteries, cutting plastic, and Koh Larn's rubbish problem.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/rubbish-recycling/

Condos	**Building staff collect from rubbish rooms or a point downstairs**
Houses	**City contractors collect; a small monthly fee**
Bin colours	**Green food, yellow recycling, blue general, orange or red hazardous**
Recycling	**Cans, bottles, glass and cardboard can be sold or given to collectors**
E-waste	**AIS shops have drop-off bins for old phones and gadgets**
City total	**About 500 to 600 tonnes of rubbish a day**

Quick answer: In a condo, you leave rubbish in the rubbish room on your floor or at the collection point downstairs, and the building deals with it. In a house, the city's contractors collect from the bin outside, usually for a small monthly fee. Recycling in Pattaya is mostly informal: aluminium cans, plastic bottles, glass and cardboard have value, so cleaners, collectors and scrap shops take them. Old phones and gadgets can go in the e-waste bins at AIS shops. Pattaya produces about 500 to 600 tonnes of rubbish a day, so every bit of sorting helps.

At a glance

WHAT	WHERE IT GOES
Food scraps	Green bin if your building has one; otherwise drain, tie and put in general waste
Cans, plastic bottles, glass, cardboard	Yellow bin, the building's recycling corner, collectors or a scrap shop
Snack wrappers, dirty plastic, foam, tissues	Blue general waste bin
Batteries, light bulbs, spray cans	Orange or red hazardous bin where there is one; never loose in general waste
Old phones, chargers, cables	E-waste bins at AIS shops
Furniture and appliances that still work	Sell or give away. See second-hand buy and sell

Condos and apartments

- Most condos have a rubbish room on each floor or a collection point downstairs. Building staff empty it, and the cost is part of your common fees or rent. See condo living rules.
- Ask the juristic (building management) office whether they sort recyclables and where batteries and bulbs should go. Rules differ from building to building.
- Tie bags well and don't leave food waste in the corridor: it brings ants, cockroaches and rats. See bugs and pests.

Houses

- City contractors collect household rubbish from the bins outside houses. Schedules vary by area and aren't published online, so ask your neighbours or landlord which days the truck comes.
- Households pay a small monthly fee. We couldn't find a current official Pattaya rate: a 2016 Pattaya Mail report put the cap at ฿24 a month, and an expat guide from 2025 gives a typical ฿20 to ฿80 across Thailand. Ask your landlord how it is paid. See City Hall and local services.
- Street dogs and cats tear open bags left on the ground, so use a lidded bin and put rubbish out close to collection time.
- Don't burn rubbish. Smoke from burning plastic is harmful, and it adds to the haze. See air quality.

The bin colours

Thailand commonly uses four bin colours. They are a widespread convention rather than one law, so you'll see variations.

- **Green:** food and organic waste. Drain liquids first.
- **Yellow:** recyclables, such as plastic bottles, aluminium cans, paper boxes and glass bottles. Empty and flatten them.
- **Blue:** general waste that can't be recycled, such as snack wrappers, food-stained plastic bags, foam boxes and tissues.
- **Orange or red:** hazardous waste, such as batteries, light bulbs, spray cans and printer cartridges. Wrap broken bulbs in paper.

Recycling and selling

- Aluminium cans are the most valuable household recyclable. Plastic bottles, glass bottles, metal and clean cardboard can also be sold.
- Scrap shops (ร้านรับซื้อของเก่า, raan rap sue khong kao) buy recyclables by the kilo, and collectors with carts or trucks pick them up from homes and streets. Prices change, so ask before you load up.
- Many people simply bag recyclables separately and leave them for the cleaner, building staff or collectors, who sell them on. It's a small but real income for them.

- Plastic bags, food-stained plastic and foam are hard to recycle and usually end up as general waste.

E-waste and batteries

- AIS runs e-waste drop-off bins at AIS shops nationwide and at partner locations, with a locator on its website. They take old phones and small devices; check what each bin accepts.
- Batteries and power banks are hazardous waste. Keep them out of general waste and use a hazardous bin or an e-waste point.
- For repairs and second-hand phones, see phone repair and electronics.

Cutting plastic

- Big retailers stopped handing out free single-use plastic bags from 1 January 2020 under a voluntary agreement with the government. It isn't a law, so smaller shops and markets still give them out. Carry a reusable bag.
- Refill a water bottle at a filtered water machine or get large bottles delivered. See drinking water.
- Say "mai ao tung" (no bag) at 7-Eleven if you don't need one, and refuse extra straws and cutlery with food delivery.

Where it all goes

Pattaya City pays private contractors to collect, transport and dispose of its rubbish. Its 2026 to 2027 contract, worth about ฿421 million, is based on about 590 tonnes a day. In November 2026 the mayor led a visit to a Bangkok waste-to-energy plant as the city studies burning rubbish for electricity.

Koh Larn shows what happens when waste piles up. Pattaya Mail reported in April 2026 that the island had more than 150,000 tonnes of accumulated rubbish, with at least 25 tonnes added every day, and a new incinerator able to handle up to 50 tonnes a day had just opened. On an island day trip, take your bottles and wrappers back with you. See Koh Larn.

Beaches

Take your rubbish with you, especially after festivals and the New Year countdown, when the city has to clean up the beach. Join a beach clean-up if you see one advertised. See expat clubs and beach safety.

Common questions

Do I have to sort rubbish in Pattaya? There's no city-wide sorting rule for residents that we could find, but many condos ask you to separate recyclables, and hazardous items should never go in general waste.

Can I sell cans and bottles in Pattaya? Yes. Scrap shops buy aluminium cans, plastic bottles, glass and cardboard by the kilo, and collectors will take them from you.

Where can I throw away old phones and batteries? AIS shops have e-waste bins for old phones and small devices. Batteries and bulbs go in a hazardous bin where your building has one.

Do shops in Thailand still give plastic bags? Big chains stopped giving free single-use bags in 2020, but smaller shops and markets often still do. Bring your own.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya Mail, ฿266 million for 590 tonnes a day (17 August 2026); Pattaya Mail, waste-to-energy study (6 November 2026); Pattaya Mail, Koh Larn waste facility (26 April 2026); Pattaya Mail, garbage fees (2016); Thairath, bin colours (April 2026); Expatica, recycling in Thailand (March 2025); AIS e-waste drop-off points. No current official Pattaya fee schedule found.

Useful next steps

- Sell bottles, cans and cardboard to local scrap shops, or leave them out for collectors.
- See bugs and pests.

LIVING IN PATTAYA

Moving to or from Thailand: Shipping Your Things

How to move belongings to Pattaya or back home: suitcases, air freight or sea freight, the customs rules for used household goods, medicines and pets, and what is easier to buy here.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/living-in-pattaya/moving-abroad/

Cheapest for a lot	**Sea freight, slow**
Fastest	**Air freight or courier, expensive**
Often best	**Bring essentials, buy the rest here**
Duty-free household goods	**Mainly for people moving here to work or returning residents**
Shipping window	**1 month before to 6 months after you arrive**
Medicines	**Up to 30 days' supply with a prescription**

Quick answer: Most people who move to Pattaya bring far less than they expect, because furniture, appliances and household basics are easy and cheap to buy here. Extra suitcases are usually the cheapest way to bring clothes and personal items, air freight suits a few boxes, and sea freight is the cheapest way to move a lot, but slow. Thai Customs lets **used** household goods in duty free mainly for people changing residence to work here on a one-year visa or work permit and for returning residents, and the goods must arrive between one month before and six months after you. Other movers may pay duty, so ask your removal company before you ship. Bring medicines in their original packs with a prescription, up to 30 days' supply.

At a glance

OPTION	BEST FOR	SPEED	WATCH OUT FOR
Extra suitcases	Clothes, small electronics, documents	With you	Airline weight limits and excess fees
Courier or air freight	A few boxes	Days to a couple of weeks	Expensive by weight; duty on new items
Sea freight	Part or all of a household	Several weeks plus customs	Packing quality, insurance
Buy here	Furniture, appliances, kitchen basics	Same week	Quality varies; check before you buy

Your options

- **Extra suitcases.** Often the cheapest way to bring clothes, small electronics and personal items.
- **Air freight or courier.** Fast but priced by weight, so it suits a few boxes. Thailand Post's EMS and international couriers also work for sending things home. See post offices and shipping and shipping parcels.
- **Sea freight.** The cheapest way to move a lot. International removal companies pack, ship, clear customs and deliver. Thailand's main deep-sea port, Laem Chabang, is in Chonburi just north of Pattaya, which helps with delivery here.
- Get two or three quotes, ask what is included at both ends, and insure anything you would hate to lose.

Customs: used household goods

The exemption rules, as Thai Customs sets them out for household effects:

- **Who qualifies:** people changing residence to Thailand who will work here on a one-year non-immigrant visa or hold a work permit of at least one year, their accompanying spouse, and Thai nationals or residents returning after at least a year abroad.
- **Not everyone qualifies.** If you are coming on a retirement, marriage, DTV or tourist stay, ask your removal company before you ship whether the exemption applies to you; if it doesn't, duty and VAT may be due.
- **Used, owned and reasonable.** Goods must have been owned and used abroad, in reasonable quantities. Electrical appliances such as TVs, fridges and air conditioners are limited to one of each, or two for a family; extra units are taxed.
- **Timing:** the shipment must arrive no earlier than one month before and no later than six months after you arrive.
- **Paperwork:** passport, visa or work permit evidence, bill of lading or air waybill, packing list and a duty exemption application. Your mover usually handles it.
- New items, alcohol and anything in large quantities may be taxed. E-cigarettes and vapes are banned in Thailand; don't pack them. See laws visitors break.

Medicines

- You can bring up to 30 days' supply of a prescribed medicine for personal use, in its original labelled packs, with a letter or prescription from your doctor, according to Thai embassy guidance.
- Some medicines, such as certain strong painkillers, sedatives and stimulants, are controlled in Thailand. These may need a Thai FDA permit applied for online at least two weeks before you travel, or may not be allowed at all. Check your medicine on the Thai FDA's traveller permit site first.
- Most common medicines are available here. See pharmacies and medicines and ask a doctor or pharmacist about equivalents.

Pets

Bringing a dog or cat needs an import permit from the Department of Livestock Development, a microchip, rabies vaccination and a health certificate, arranged before you fly. See living with a dog.

What to bring, what to buy

- **Bring:** important documents and certified copies, prescriptions, electronics you rely on, favourite kitchen tools, quality bedding or towels if you are fussy, and clothes in larger sizes, which can be harder to find.
- **Buy here:** furniture, appliances, fans, most kitchen basics and everyday clothes. See shopping malls and second-hand buy and sell.
- Thailand uses 220V. Check that chargers and appliances accept it, and bring adapters for your plugs.

Pro tip: what I miss most is Western food. Soft drinks aren't the same, and I can't quite get the same milk, pasta sauce, breads and flavours; what comes close costs a lot. Toiletries can surprise you too: the deodorant I used for years isn't sold here except imported, at about ฿500 (as of Nov 2026). After three years I found a Nivea roll-on that works fantastically and is ridiculously cheap.

More on that: deodorant and toiletries and Western food in Pattaya.

Moving home from Thailand

- Sell what you can first: furniture and appliances often sell quickly in local groups. See second-hand buy and sell.
- Check your home country's rules for returning residents before you ship; most have their own duty relief for used household goods.
- Buddha images and antiques generally need an export permit from Thailand's Fine Arts Department. Ask your mover before you pack one.
- Give your landlord notice, get your deposit back, and settle utility bills. Keep or close your Thai bank account depending on whether you will return. See Thai bank account and leaving Thailand.

Moving inside Thailand

For moves between Pattaya and other Thai cities, see moving things between cities.

Common questions

Do I pay import duty on my household goods? Used goods are duty free if you qualify, mainly people moving here to work on a one-year visa or work permit and returning residents, and if they arrive within the time window. Otherwise duty and VAT may be due.

How long does sea freight to Pattaya take? Several weeks at sea plus time for customs clearance, depending on the route. Your mover will give an estimate.

Can I bring my medicines to Thailand? Usually yes, up to 30 days' supply with a prescription. Controlled medicines may need a Thai FDA permit or may be banned.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Airports of Thailand (Suvarnabhumi), household items import clearance, setting out the Thai Customs exemption rules; Royal Thai Embassy London, bringing medications to Thailand (updated March 2024); Thai Customs Department (contact centre 1164). Rules change and depend on your visa; confirm with your removal company and Thai Customs before you ship. General information, not legal advice.

Useful next steps

- See first week checklist.
- See visa options.
- See opening a Thai bank account.

SECTION

🍜 Food & Deals

Eating and drinking well in Pattaya doesn't have to cost much. These pages collect the cheap eats, buffets, happy hours and deals we find on the rides.

Quick answer: The best food in Pattaya is often the cheapest. A typical street dish costs about ฿40 to ฿80, a grilled pork skewer about ฿10 and a fresh smoothie ฿40 to ฿60, according to our 2026 price checks. Start with a night market or a mall food court, where prices are clear, then learn a few Thai dishes and phrases so you can order anywhere. For something special, buy seafood by weight at the Naklua fish market and have it cooked nearby.

What food costs (2026)

MEAL	TYPICAL PRICE	WHERE TO READ MORE
—	—	—
Street food dish	About ฿40 to ฿80	Street food
Pad kra pao at a street shop	From about ฿35	Cheap eats
Night market dish	About ฿20 to ฿120	Night markets
Chain coffee	About ฿50 to ฿80	Cafés and coffee
Japanese set meal at a mall chain	About ฿230 to ฿360	Japanese and Korean food
Moo kata for two with drinks	About ฿350 (Jonny's own spend)	Moo kata

Prices come from the pages linked, each with its own dated sources. They change with the season and the location: beach-side places cost more than Soi Buakhao or the markets.

Start here

- Cheap eats: where to eat well for little, and how to spot a good stall.
- Thai dishes to try: what to order on day one.
- Night markets: Thepprasit, Jomtien and Soi Buakhao.
- Street food: prices, hygiene and the best areas.
- Ordering food in Thai: the phrases that get you exactly what you want.

How the food pages fit together

- **Where to eat cheaply:** cheap eats, street food, food courts, night markets, fresh markets and a self-guided street food night tour.
- **Knowing what to order:** Thai dishes, curries, soups, noodles, Isaan food, desserts, fruit and drinks.
- **Sit-down meals:** seafood, the Naklua fish market, moo kata, breakfast and brunch and cafés.
- **Food from home and elsewhere:** Western, Indian, Japanese and Korean, and vegetarian and vegan.
- **Living here:** food delivery apps, cooking at home and cooking classes.

Where to eat, by area

AREA	BEST FOR	READ MORE
—	—	—
Soi Buakhao	Cheap Thai food, the market, late-night stalls	Soi Buakhao
Naklua	Seafood by weight at the fish market, seafront restaurants	Naklua fish market
Jomtien	The night market, beachfront seafood, relaxed cafés	Jomtien
Thepprasit Road	The big Friday to Sunday night market	Thepprasit Road
The malls	Air-conditioned food courts with clear prices, chains	Food courts
Si Racha (day trip)	Japanese food and waterfront seafood	Si Racha

A first day of eating

Start with Thai rice soup or grilled pork and sticky rice from a morning stall, plus an iced Thai coffee. Lunch in a mall food court, where you can point at dishes and see prices. In the late afternoon, grab fruit or a smoothie from a market. For dinner, try a night market and share small dishes, or a moo kata grill if you're in a

group. Expect to spend a few hundred baht for the whole day if you stick to stalls and food courts, and more on the beachfront, where Jonny has seen a ฿40 market smoothie sold for ฿280.

Quick tips

- Eat where Thai people are eating; a busy stall means fresh food.
- Carry small notes. Many stalls take QR payment from Thai bank apps; tourists usually pay cash. See QR payments.
- Ask for “mai phet” (not spicy) if you’re not used to chilli.
- Drink bottled or filtered water, and go easy on ice from unknown sources if your stomach is sensitive. See food poisoning.
- Happy hours usually run until about 20:00 or 21:00. See happy hours.

Common questions

How much does food cost in Pattaya? A street dish is about ฿40 to ฿80; a meal at a mall chain ฿200 to ฿400; Western restaurants more.

Is street food safe in Pattaya? Generally yes at busy stalls with fresh, hot food. Start gently if you have a sensitive stomach.

Where is the cheapest food in Pattaya? Night markets, fresh markets, food courts and the Soi Buakhao area.

What Thai food should I try first? Pad kra pao, pad thai, som tam, khao man gai and a green curry are easy starters.

Can I pay for food by card in Pattaya? In malls, chains and bigger restaurants, yes. Street stalls and markets want cash or a Thai QR payment.

Is there vegetarian food in Pattaya? Yes, from Indian restaurants to Thai jay (vegan) stalls with yellow flags. See vegetarian and vegan.

Sources

- Prices from our own pages linked above (street food, cheap eats, night markets, cafés, Japanese and Korean food), each checked in 2026 with its own sources.
- Jonny James: his Mr. Nova Mookata spend, from his ride video of 15 October 2026.

FOOD & DEALS

Cheap Eats in Pattaya

How to eat well in Pattaya for very little: street food, food courts, markets, local rice shops, typical prices, and tips to avoid tourist prices.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/food-deals/cheap-eats/

Street food	**Often 50 to 80 baht a dish**
Food courts	**Clear prices, air conditioning**
Markets	**Cheapest fruit, snacks and ready meals**
Tip	**Eat where Thai people are eating**

Pattaya is one of the easiest places in Thailand to eat well for very little. You can have a good hot meal for the price of a coffee at home, if you know where to look.

Typical prices

- A plate of rice with stir fry or a bowl of noodle soup is often around 50 to 80 baht at street stalls and local shops.
- Food court dishes are usually similar or a little more.
- Fresh fruit bags, grilled skewers and snacks are often 10 to 40 baht.
- Prices change over time and vary by area. Places near Beach Road and Walking Street usually cost more.

Where to eat cheaply

- Street food stalls and carts. See street food.
- Food courts in malls and supermarkets. See food courts.
- Night markets, especially away from the beach. See night markets.
- Fresh markets for fruit and ready made curries. See fresh markets.
- Small local rice shops with a few tables and a big pot of curries at the front.

Good cheap dishes

- Khao man gai, chicken rice.
- Khao pad, fried rice, and pad kra pao, holy basil stir fry with rice and a fried egg.
- Noodle soup. See noodle dishes.
- Som tam with sticky rice and grilled chicken. See Isaan food.
- More ideas in Thai dishes to try.

Where I actually eat

These are my own regular orders as of November 2026, from me, Jonny. Prices change, so treat them as a guide. The places marked Grab are delivery restaurants I order from on Grab Food, so search the name in the app.

WHERE	WHAT I GET	PRICE
A local food stall	Pad kra pao, plus an egg	฿35, egg ฿10
Sophon Market	Yakisoba, coconut shake, Bavarian cream doughnut	฿65, ฿40, ฿25
Thai restaurants on Grab, like Ti Lek Im Aroi	Pad kra pao, fruit shakes	฿70 to ฿100, ฿40 to ฿60
Chez Mony (Grab)	4 cheese pizza and creamy chicken spaghetti parmesan	฿550
Baantha (Grab)	Ribeye beef steak bowl, miso soup	฿275 to ฿570 by size, ฿35
Hungry Panda (Grab)	American Chinese: fried rice, 3 crab rangoon, sesame chicken	฿313 delivered
Aroi Aroi (Grab)	American-ish pasta, great desserts and bread	Varies
Mr. Nova Mookata, a buffet-style moo kata place	Thai BBQ with water	About ฿175 to ฿250, depends on weight
Domino’s	Cheese bread, garlic parmesan bites	฿99 each, ฿69
Slice Pizza	Pizza by the slice	About ฿100 a slice, I think
McDonald’s	Quarter pounder with cheese or the big breakfast	฿400 to ฿500 to fill up

The reality on a tight budget: lots of meals and snacks from 7-Eleven, Tops and Mini Big C, snacks all day, then a high-protein meal with a few eggs and chicken.

Tips to save more

- Eat where Thai people are eating. Busy stalls are cheaper and fresher.
- Look for prices on the menu or a board. If there are none, ask before you order.
- Drink water or Thai iced tea rather than imported drinks.
- Lunch is often cheaper than dinner at sit down restaurants.
- Cook simple meals at home if you stay longer. See cooking at home.

Ordering

A few Thai words help a lot. See ordering food in Thai.

Eating safely

- Choose food cooked fresh in front of you.
- Avoid food that has been sitting in the sun for hours.
- See food poisoning.

Budget planning

See Pattaya on 1,000 baht a day and what things cost.

FOOD & DEALS

Seafood in Pattaya

Where and how to eat seafood in Pattaya: Naklua's Lan Pho market where they cook what you buy, beach restaurants in Jomtien and Naklua, fishing-village seafood in Bang Saray, prices by the kilo, what to order and how not to overpay.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/food-deals/seafood-restaurants/

Best value	**Lan Pho market in Naklua, buy by weight and have it cooked nearby**
Beach dining	**Jomtien and Naklua seafront restaurants**
Day out	**Bang Saray fishing village**
Pricing	**By the kilo for prawns, crab, fish and squid; check the weight**
Cooking fee	**Charged per dish at market cook shops**
Complaints	**Pattaya City hotline 1337**

Quick answer: The best-value seafood in Pattaya is at the Lan Pho market in Naklua: buy prawns, crab, squid or fish by the kilo, then pay a small fee per dish to have it grilled, steamed or stir-fried at a cook shop nearby. Seafront restaurants in Jomtien and Naklua, and the stilt restaurants of Bang Saray, cost more but come with the view. Wherever you eat, ask the price per kilo and watch the weighing before anything is cooked.


Seafood in Pattaya, Pattaya
Photo: PattayaPatrol, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

At a glance

WHERE	BEST FOR	GOOD TO KNOW
Lan Pho market, Naklua	Fresh seafood at market prices	Buy by weight, pay a cooking fee per dish
Jomtien and Naklua seafronts	A sit-down meal by the sea	Choose from the display; prices by the kilo
Bali Hai and Walking Street	Convenience in the centre	Touristy and pricier
Bang Saray	A half-day out	Fishing village south of Jomtien
Night markets	Cheap tastes	Grilled squid, fish balls, mussels
Koh Larn	Lunch on an island day	Higher prices; check the menu first

Lan Pho market, Naklua

North of the Dolphin roundabout, the Lan Pho seafood market by the sea in Naklua is where many locals buy their seafood. Stalls sell prawns, crab, squid, shellfish and fish by weight. Buy what you want, then take it to one of the cook shops alongside, which charge a small fee per dish to cook it the way you choose and serve it with rice and dipping sauces. It is busy with Thai families, cheap by Pattaya standards and very fresh.

- Pattaya City renovated the market into a modern seafood hall for up to 60 vendors; work was about 90% done in February 2025. Pattaya City has also announced an "Old Town Naklua" plan in 2026 to add a pier and promote the area's fishing heritage, so the layout may keep changing.
- Holidays such as New Year bring long queues at the cook shops and heavy traffic around the market.
- For buying tips, timing and what else the market sells, see the Naklua fish market guide.

Restaurants by the sea

- **Jomtien and Naklua seafronts**: open-air restaurants where you choose from the display and it is cooked to order. Check prices per kilo before ordering. See Jomtien.
- **Bali Hai and Walking Street**: seafood restaurants on the sea side; touristy and pricier. See Walking Street.
- **Koh Larn**: beach restaurants for lunch on an island day. Prices are higher, so check the menu first. See Koh Larn and Koh Larn beaches.

Further out

- Bang Saray: a fishing village south of Jomtien with seafood restaurants on stilts over the water.
- Bang Saen: cheap seafood with the Thai weekend crowd.
- Si Racha: the seaside town north of Pattaya, known for its seafood and waterfront.

What to order

DISH	THAI NAME	WHAT IT IS
Grilled squid or fish	pla muek yang / pla phao	Grilled over charcoal, with spicy seafood sauce
Steamed fish with lime	pla neung manao	Whole fish in a sour, garlicky lime and chilli broth

DISH	THAI NAME	WHAT IT IS
Prawns with garlic	kung phat kratiam	Stir-fried with lots of garlic and pepper
Curried crab	pu phat phong kari	Crab stir-fried with curry powder and egg
Spicy prawn soup	tom yum kung	Hot and sour soup with prawns
Steamed mussels or clams	hoi neung	Steamed with herbs, dipped in seafood sauce

The green, sour, garlicky dipping sauce is **nam jim seafood**; ask for “mai phet” (not spicy) if you want less heat. More dishes: Thai dishes to try and Thai soups.

How not to overpay

- Ask the price per kilo and watch it being weighed.
- Agree how much the cooking fee is and how many dishes it covers.
- Pick your own seafood where you can, rather than letting staff choose.
- Check the bill against what you ordered.
- Big lobsters and imported shellfish are expensive everywhere. Prawns, squid, mussels and local fish are the value choices.
- Prices on the beach roads are higher than at markets for the same food.

Pro tip: Tourist markups are real. I’ve seen a smoothie that costs ฿40 at a market sold for ฿280 at a beach restaurant.

If something goes wrong

In August 2026 Pattaya Mail reported a visitor who paid ฿340 for a kilo of blue crab at Lan Pho, chosen by a staff member, and found it spoiled when they got home. After a complaint, Pattaya City officials inspected the stall and the vendor paid compensation. If you have a problem with a vendor in Pattaya, call the city’s **1337** hotline, and keep your receipt or payment slip. For other help, see tourist police.

Freshness and food safety

- Eat at busy places where the seafood moves fast, and make sure shellfish is cooked through.
- Look for clear eyes and firm flesh on fish, and lively crabs.
- Seafood is freshest early in the day. Some seafood is seasonal, and stormy weather can cut the catch and push prices up.
- If you are taking seafood home, keep it on ice and eat or freeze it the same day.
- Upset stomach? See food poisoning and pharmacies and medicines.

Seafood on a budget

- Grilled squid, fish balls and mussels at night markets are cheap ways to try seafood. See night markets.
- Buying at the market and having it cooked nearby is usually cheaper than a seafront restaurant.
- More ideas: cheap eats.

Allergies

Shellfish and shrimp paste are in many Thai dishes and sauces. If you are allergic, say “mai sai kung” (no shrimp) and carry a card in Thai, because phrases alone can be misunderstood. See ordering food in Thai.

Common questions

Where is the cheapest seafood in Pattaya? Usually at the Lan Pho market in Naklua, where you buy by weight and pay a cooking fee, and at night market stalls.

Is seafood in Pattaya safe to eat? Generally yes at busy places. Choose seafood that looks fresh, make sure shellfish is cooked through, and avoid anything that smells off.

Do restaurants charge by the kilo? Many seafood restaurants do for prawns, crab and fish. Ask the price per kilo and the weight before it is cooked.

Can I bring my own seafood to be cooked? At the cook shops around the Lan Pho market, yes, that is how it works. Elsewhere, ask first.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya Mail, spoiled crab complaint at Lan Pho Market (20 August 2026, 1337 hotline); Pattaya Mail, Old Town Naklua plan (23 April 2026); The Thaiger, Lan Pho market renovation (February 2025); Pattaya Mail, grilled seafood at Lan Pho Market (January 2025, cook-it-for-you stalls). Prices change with the catch and the season; ask before you order.

FOOD & DEALS

Western Food in Pattaya

Where to find pizza, burgers, a full breakfast or a Sunday roast in Pattaya, what Western food really costs next to Thai food, Jonny's own go-to orders, and how to find the good places.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/food-deals/western-food/

Beach-area Western meal	**About ฿200 to ฿500 (Jonny's estimate, Oct 2026)**
Fast food	**฿400 to ฿500 to fill up at McDonald's (Jonny)**
Pizza by the slice	**About ฿90 to ฿100**
Thai meal for comparison	**About ฿50 to ฿80 at a street stall**
Best areas	**Central Pattaya sois, Soi Buakhao, Jomtien**

Quick answer: Pattaya has a huge choice of Western food, thanks to its big expat community: British pubs with full breakfasts and Sunday roasts, German and Scandinavian restaurants, pizza by the slice, burger joints, steakhouses and all the big fast-food chains. It costs more than Thai food because so many ingredients are imported. Jonny's estimate is about ฿200 to ฿500 a meal at foreign-themed places near the beach, against about ฿50 to ฿80 for a Thai street meal, and ฿400 to ฿500 to fill up at McDonald's. Breakfast and lunch specials are the best value, and delivery apps make it easy to compare.

What it costs

Prices as of late 2026. Most are Jonny's own orders and estimates; check menus, because prices change.

MEAL	PRICE	WHERE FROM
Thai street meal, for comparison	About ฿50 to ฿80	Our cheap eats guide
Meal at a foreign-themed place near the beach	About ฿200 to ฿500	Jonny's estimate, October 2026
Filling up at McDonald's (quarter pounder with cheese or the big breakfast)	฿400 to ฿500	Jonny
Pizza by the slice	฿90 at Bronx Pizza (September 2026); about ฿100 at Slice, he thinks	Jonny
Domino's cheese bread / garlic parmesan bites	฿99 each / ฿69	Jonny
4 cheese pizza and creamy chicken spaghetti parmesan, Chez Mony on Grab	฿550	Jonny
American Chinese, Hungry Panda on Grab	฿313 delivered	Jonny
Big Cold Stone ice cream cup on Grab	฿285 delivered	Jonny
Monthly Sunday brunch, Dicey Reilly's	฿990 net	Pattaya Mail, November 2026

Why it costs more

- Cheese, wine, butter, beef and lamb are imported and carry heavy taxes, so a Western plate can cost several times a Thai one.
- Restaurants on the beach roads charge more than the same food a few sois back.
- Menus marked **++** add a service charge and VAT on top of the prices shown.
- Local beer is the value drink; imported wine is expensive everywhere. See drink prices.

Pro tip: the worst thing about living here, for him, is missing Western food. Soft drinks aren't the same, and he can't quite get the same milk, pasta sauce, breads and flavours. There's no Chick-fil-A, no unlimited soda and breadsticks, the pizza is different, and what comes close costs a lot. As he put it on a ride video in October 2026: "When you live out here, you get a little tired of Thai food every night."

Jonny's go-to Western orders

- **Chez Mony** (Grab only): 4 cheese pizza and creamy chicken spaghetti parmesan.
- **Aroi Aroi** (Grab only): American-ish pasta, great desserts and bread.
- **Hungry Panda** (Grab only): American Chinese, with fried rice, crab rangoon and sesame chicken.
- **Pizza by the slice:** Bronx Pizza is "pretty good", but "not as good as Slice on Soi 6".
- **Domino's**: the cheese bread and garlic parmesan bites.
- **McDonald's**: a quarter pounder with cheese or the big breakfast when he wants to fill up.
- **Breakfast:** Time Bar does a great cheap breakfast.

The Grab-only kitchens have no shop he knows of, so search the names in the app. See food delivery apps.

Where to look

- **Central Pattaya sois** and Second Road: pubs and restaurants with breakfast boards outside.
- Soi Buakhao: cheap breakfast deals and expat pubs.
- Jomtien: a big choice of European restaurants along the beach road and sois.
- **Shopping malls**: international chains, and food courts for a cheap Thai meal by comparison. See shopping malls and food courts.

Breakfasts

Pubs, guesthouses and cafés in Central Pattaya, around Soi Buakhao and in Jomtien serve set breakfasts with eggs, bacon, sausage, beans, toast and coffee, often all day, with the price on a board outside. Hotels and a few pubs run bigger weekend brunches: Dicey Reilly's holds a Sunday brunch on the second Sunday of each month, noon to 3pm, at ฿990 net, with seafood, roasts and pasta stations. See breakfast and brunch for more, including hotel brunches.

Sunday roasts

Many British and Irish pubs serve a Sunday roast, and some do a carvery. Prices are rarely online and change often, so read the board outside or ask regulars. Popular pubs fill up in high season; arrive early. Residents in the W Forum always have a favourite.

Pizza, burgers and steak

- Pizza ranges from slices on the street to wood-fired Italian restaurants. Slices are the cheap way in.
- Burger joints and pub burgers are everywhere in the central sois.
- Steak is where imported prices bite hardest, so check the origin and weight on the menu before you order.

Finding the good places

- Busy places are busy for a reason; look for regulars.
- Breakfast and lunch specials and set menus are the best value.
- Delivery apps list most restaurants with prices, which makes comparing easy even if you eat in.
- Read recent reviews, because restaurants change hands and menus.

Cooking it yourself

Large supermarkets sell bread, cheese, cereal and imported brands. Villa Market has the widest range, at the highest prices. See supermarkets and groceries and cooking at home.

Common questions

Is Western food expensive in Pattaya? More than Thai food. Jonny's estimate is about ฿200 to ฿500 a meal at foreign-themed places near the beach, against about ฿50 to ฿80 for a Thai street meal.

Where can I get a Sunday roast in Pattaya? At many British and Irish pubs in Central Pattaya, around Soi Buakhao and in Jomtien. Check the board outside for the day's price.

Can I get Western food delivered? Yes. Grab and LINE MAN list pizza, burgers, pasta and fast-food chains.

Where is the cheapest Western breakfast? Look for set breakfasts on boards outside pubs and cafés around Soi Buakhao and the central sois, and for breakfast specials.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya Mail, Dicey Reilly's Sunday Brunch (11 November 2026, ฿990 net, second Sunday); our own cheap eats, breakfast and brunch and supermarkets pages, each with their own sources. Jonny's prices are from his own orders and his videos (September and October 2026) and are his estimates. Restaurant prices change often; check the menu.

Also try

Indian food, Japanese and Korean food and seafood restaurants.

FOOD & DEALS

Cafés & Coffee in Pattaya

Pattaya's coffee from petrol-station chains to specialty roasters: what a cup costs, the 2026 "normal sweetness" change at Thai chains, the three café zones, laptop etiquette and Thai coffee words to order with.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/food-deals/cafes-coffee/

Thai chains	**Café Amazon, PunThai, Inthanin, All Café; about ฿50 to ฿80**
Specialty coffee	**Roughly ฿80 to ฿180 a cup (varies a lot)**
Since 11 Feb 2026	**"Normal sweetness" at big chains is half the old sugar**
Café zones	**Naklua, Central Pattaya, Jomtien**
Laptop work	**Weekday mornings, about one drink an hour**
Less sweet	**Say "wan noi" (หวานน้อย)**

Quick answer: Coffee in Pattaya comes at three levels. Thai chains such as Café Amazon, PunThai and Inthanin, mostly at petrol stations, and All Café inside 7-Eleven sell sweet iced coffees for about ฿50 to ฿80. Specialty cafés that roast their own beans or use named single-origin coffee cost roughly ฿80 to ฿180 a cup, and are clustered in Naklua, Central Pattaya and Jomtien. On the edges of town there are big garden and sea-view cafés that Thai visitors drive out to at weekends. Since 11 February 2026 the big chains make "normal sweetness" drinks with half the old sugar, and you can still ask for less or more.


A glass of cha yen, Thai iced tea
Photo: Takeaway, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons

At a glance

TYPE	TYPICAL PRICE (ABOUT)	WHERE	GOOD FOR
Thai chain (Café Amazon, PunThai, Inthanin)	฿50 to ฿80	Petrol stations, malls, main roads	A cheap iced coffee on a scooter ride
All Café	Similar to the chains	Inside many 7-Eleven shops	Grab and go
Street coffee and tea stall	Often under ฿50	Markets, soi corners	Cha yen and oliang the old way
Specialty café	Roughly ฿80 to ฿180	Naklua, Central Pattaya, Jomtien	Espresso, pour-over, a good breakfast
Hotel café	Usually more, often plus service and VAT	Beachfront hotels	Air conditioning and a sea view
Big themed café	Similar to specialty	Pratumnak, East Pattaya, towards Bang Saray	A half-day out, photos

Thai chains and petrol-station coffee

Thailand's biggest coffee chains grew up at petrol stations: Café Amazon at PTT stations, PunThai at PT stations and Inthanin at Bangchak. All Café is the counter inside 7-Eleven. Delivery-app menus show Café Amazon's iced latte at about ฿70 in 2026; in-store prices can be a little different, so treat ฿50 to ฿80 as a guide.

The drinks are built for the heat: iced, milky and sweet. A change in 2026 makes that easier to manage. Under an agreement with the Department of Health, large chains including Café Amazon, Inthanin, All Café, Black Canyon and PunThai cap "normal sweetness" at 50% of the original recipe from 11 February 2026. Ask for 100% if you want the old taste, or say **wan noi** for even less.

Specialty coffee

Pattaya's independent coffee scene has grown a lot in the last few years. Local guides updated in 2026 split it into three zones: Naklua in the north, Central Pattaya, and Jomtien in the south. The better shops roast their own beans or buy from a named roaster, often Thai beans from the northern hills, and offer filter coffee as well as espresso.

A few places that 2026 guides list as open, which we have not reviewed:

- La Baguette: a long-running bakery café on Pattaya-Naklua Road.
- Albatross Coffee Roasters: a roaster across from the sea on Beach Road, near Soi 10.
- BRU Coffee & Bar: a daytime café on Siam Country Club Road in East Pattaya.

Opening hours change, so check the map listing before you ride out.

Prices vary more than at the chains. Expect roughly ฿80 to ฿180 for a latte, flat white or pour-over, depending on the shop and the beans. Hotel cafés usually cost more. If a menu shows "++" after the prices, a service charge and VAT are added to the bill at the end.

Big themed cafés

On the outskirts, especially Pratumnak, East Pattaya and the road towards Bang Saray, large cafés with gardens, sea views or lakes have become day-trip spots for Thai visitors. They are busiest on weekend afternoons, so go on a weekday morning if you want space. Most are hard to reach by baht bus; use a scooter, Bolt or Grab. See Bolt and Grab and photo spots.

Thai coffee and tea to try

DRINK	THAI	WHAT IT IS
Thai iced tea	ชาเย็น (cha yen)	Orange tea with condensed and evaporated milk
Thai iced coffee	โอเลี้ยง (oliang)	Strong, sweet black coffee with roasted grains
Iced milk coffee	กาแฟเย็น (kafae yen)	Sweet, milky iced coffee
Old-style coffee	กาแฟโบราณ (kafae boran)	Strong coffee, often with condensed milk
Iced lime tea	ชามะนาว (cha manao)	Sweet black tea with lime

The full list, with fruit shakes and coconuts, is on Thai drinks.

How to order it your way

- **Wan noi** (หวานน้อย): less sweet. **Mai wan** (ไม่หวาน): not sweet.
- **Mai sai nam tan** (ไม่ใส่น้ำตาล): no sugar. Condensed milk may still go in, so ask for black coffee if you want none.
- **Ron** (ร้อน) is hot, **yen** (เย็น) is iced, **pan** (ปั่น) is blended. Hot drinks are less common at street stalls.
- **Nam khaeng noi** (น้ำแข็งน้อย): less ice.

More phrases: ordering food in Thai.

Working from cafés

- Weekday mornings are the easiest time to find a table with a socket.
- The usual etiquette at busy specialty shops is about one drink an hour, and to give up a big table at lunchtime.
- Wi-Fi is common but not always fast; a Thai SIM with data is a good backup. See SIM cards and eSIMs.
- For a full day of calls, a coworking space is better value. See coworking spaces and digital nomads.

Common questions

How much is a coffee in Pattaya? About ฿50 to ฿80 for an iced coffee at a Thai chain, often under ฿50 at a street stall, and roughly ฿80 to ฿180 at a specialty café. Hotel cafés usually cost more.

Why is Thai coffee so sweet? Iced coffee here is traditionally made with sugar and condensed milk. Say “wan noi” for less sweet. Since February 2026 the big chains also use half the old sugar for “normal sweetness”.

Are there international coffee chains? Yes, in the big malls, at prices close to those at home. See shopping malls.

Can I work on a laptop in Pattaya cafés? Yes, most cafés are fine with it on weekday mornings. Buy something every hour or so and avoid the lunch rush.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: The Nation, chains cut “normal sweetness” to 50% from 11 February 2026; Thai Holiday Guide, cafés in Pattaya (updated November 2026); Pattaya.Guide coffee guide (May 2026); Café Amazon prices from Wongnai delivery listings. Specialty prices are a rough range from guide listings, not a survey. Prices change; check the menu.

Related guides

- Breakfast and brunch
- Thai desserts
- Thai dishes to try
- Cheap eats
- Photo spots

FOOD & DEALS

Thai Dishes to Try

The Thai dishes worth ordering in Pattaya, with Thai script to show the cook: rice plates, noodles, Isaan food, curries and soups, seafood and sweets, how hot each one is, and what they cost.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/food-deals/thai-dishes-to-try/

Street and food-court price	**About ฿40 to ฿100 a dish**
Not spicy	**Mai phet (ไม่เผ็ด)**
A little spicy	**Phet nit noi (เผ็ดนิดหน่อย)**
Mildest picks	**Khao man gai, massaman, pad thai**
Seafood	**Best in Naklua and Bang Saray**

Quick answer: Start with the everyday plates Thais eat for lunch: **pad kra pao** (holy basil stir-fry with a fried egg), **khao man gai** (chicken rice) and **pad thai**. Then try one Isaan meal (**som tam**, **gai yang** and sticky rice), one curry, one soup such as **tom yum kung**, and **mango sticky rice** for dessert. At street stalls and food courts most dishes cost about ฿40 to ฿100. If you don't like heat, say **mai phet** (ไม่เผ็ด, not spicy); the mildest safe bets are khao man gai, massaman curry and pad thai.


Thai Dishes to Try, Pattaya
Photo: Takeaway, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons

At a glance

DISH	THAI	WHAT IT IS	HEAT
Pad kra pao	ผัดกะเพรา	Holy basil stir-fry with pork or chicken, rice, fried egg	Medium to hot
Khao pad	ข้าวผัด	Fried rice, often with crab, shrimp or pork	Mild
Khao man gai	ข้าวมันไก่	Poached chicken on rice cooked in chicken stock, ginger sauce	Mild
Pad thai	ผัดไทย	Stir-fried rice noodles, egg, peanuts, lime	Mild
Kuay teow	ก๋วยเตี๋ยว	Noodle soup in endless versions	Mild; add chilli yourself
Som tam	ส้มตำ	Green papaya salad	Medium to very hot
Gai yang	ไก่ย่าง	Grilled chicken, eaten with sticky rice	Mild; spicy dip on the side
Larb	ลาบ	Minced meat salad with lime, mint, toasted rice	Hot
Tom yum kung	ต้มยำกุ้ง	Hot and sour prawn soup	Hot
Tom kha gai	ต้มข่าไก่	Coconut chicken soup with galangal	Mild to medium
Green curry	แกงเขียวหวาน	Coconut curry with green chillies and Thai basil	Hot
Massaman	แกงมัสมั่น	Rich, mild curry with potatoes and peanuts	Mild
Moo ping	หมูปิ้ง	Grilled pork skewers with sticky rice	Mild
Mango sticky rice	ข้าวเหนียวมะม่วง	Mango, sticky rice and coconut cream	Sweet

Rice plates: the everyday lunch

- **Pad kra pao** is the dish Thais order when they can't decide. Minced pork (**moo**) or chicken (**gai**) is stir-fried hard with garlic, chilli and holy basil, served on rice, and topped with a crispy fried egg (**khai dao**, ไข่ดาว) that usually costs a little extra.
- **Khao pad** (fried rice) is the safe choice for children and anyone who doesn't want chilli.
- **Khao man gai** is sold from stalls with whole poached chickens hanging in the window. It comes with a small bowl of broth and a ginger, soy and chilli sauce.

These are one-plate meals, ordered one each. Most other Thai food is shared.

Noodles

Pad thai is the famous one, but most Thais eat noodles as soup, seasoned from the four jars on the table. **Pad see ew** (wide noodles in dark soy) is a good mild alternative to pad thai. The full list, from boat noodles to khao soi, and how to order, is on noodle dishes.

Isaan food from the north-east

Many cooks and workers in Pattaya come from Isaan, so its food is everywhere. The standard meal is **som tam** (papaya salad) pounded to order, **gai yang** or **kho moo yang** (grilled pork neck), and a basket of **khao niao** (sticky rice) eaten with your fingers. Som tam can be very hot, and the **pla ra** (fermented fish) version has

a strong taste; ask for **tam Thai** if you want the milder, sweeter style. More on Isaan food.

Curries and soups

Thai curries range from mild to fierce. Massaman and yellow curry are the gentle ones; green and red are hot; jungle curry is hotter still and has no coconut milk. Curry is eaten with rice, not on its own. Our Thai curries page compares them all.

Tom yum kung is the famous hot and sour prawn soup, made either clear (**nam sai**) or creamy (**nam khon**). In December 2024 UNESCO added it to its list of the intangible cultural heritage of humanity. **Tom kha gai** is its milder coconut cousin. Both are meant to be shared and spooned over rice. See Thai soups.

Seafood and sweets

- **Pla pao** (ปลาเผา): a whole fish stuffed with lemongrass, crusted in salt and grilled, with a sour, spicy seafood dip. Seafood is best by the water in Naklua and Bang Saray; check the price per kilo before it is cooked. See seafood restaurants.
- **Mango sticky rice**: best in the mango season, roughly March to May. See Thai desserts.

How spicy, and how to ask

Thai food balances sour, sweet, salty and spicy, often in one dish, and the table condiments (chilli flakes, fish sauce with chilli, sugar and vinegar) let you adjust it. Say what you want:

- **Mai phet** (ไม่เผ็ด): not spicy.
- **Phet nit noi** (เผ็ดนิดหน่อย): a little spicy.
- **Mai sai phrik** (ไม่ใส่พริก): no chilli at all.

Allergy, vegetarian and “leave this out” phrases are on ordering food in Thai.

Eating the Thai way

- Spoon in the right hand, fork in the left; the fork pushes food onto the spoon. Knives are rarely needed.
- Chopsticks are for noodle soups.
- With friends, order several dishes for the middle plus rice for each person, and take a little at a time.

What it costs

At street stalls, markets and mall food courts most single dishes cost about ฿40 to ฿100. Seafood is priced by weight and costs much more. Beach Road and hotel restaurants charge several times more. In March 2026 Pattaya Mail reported that local food prices had stayed fairly stable, with some places trimming portions or adding set meals rather than raising prices.

Pro tip: Pad kra pao at a food stall I eat at is ฿35, plus ฿10 for the egg. The same dish from the Thai restaurants I order from on Grab is ฿70 to ฿100 (prices as of November 2026).

Where to try them

- Street stalls and markets for the classics. See street food and night markets.
- Mall food courts for clear prices and pointing. See food courts.
- Learn to cook a few. See Thai cooking classes.

Common questions

What is the most popular Thai dish? Among Thais, pad kra pao is the everyday favourite; among visitors, pad thai, tom yum kung and green curry are the best known.

Which Thai dishes are not spicy? Khao man gai, khao pad (fried rice), pad thai, pad see ew, massaman curry, gai yang and moo ping are mild. Still say “mai phet” to be safe.

How much does Thai food cost in Pattaya? About ฿40 to ฿100 a dish at stalls and food courts, more in tourist restaurants, and seafood by the kilo.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya Mail, food prices stay stable (9 March 2026); The Thaiger, UNESCO lists tom yum kung (4 December 2024). Thai script matches our noodle, curry, Isaan and ordering pages. Jonny’s prices are his own, as of November 2026.

Go deeper

Thai curries, Thai soups, noodle dishes, Isaan food, Thai desserts and Thai drinks.

FOOD & DEALS

Night Markets

Pattaya's night markets for street food and bargains: Thepprasit, Jomtien, Runway, Sophon and the Night Bazaar, with days, rough opening times, paying and getting there.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/food-deals/night-markets/

Biggest	**Thepprasit, busiest Friday to Sunday, about 5pm to 11pm**
By the beach	**Jomtien night market, daily from late afternoon**
Latest	**Runway and Sophon, open until about 1am to 2am**
Shopping, not food	**Pattaya Night Bazaar on Second Road**
Paying	**Mostly cash; some stalls take Thai QR**

Quick answer: Pattaya's biggest night market is on Thepprasit Road, busiest from Friday to Sunday from about 5pm to 11pm. For every night of the week, try the Jomtien night market across the road from Jomtien Beach, Runway Market on Second Road (with a giant Ferris wheel), or the Sophon food market off Third Road, which stays open until late. Bring small notes: many stalls are cash only. Opening times below are what recent guides report, and they don't always agree, so check before a special trip.


Food stalls at a Thai night market
Photo: Slyronit, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

At a glance

MARKET	WHERE	WHEN (ABOUT)	BEST FOR
Thepprasit night market	Thepprasit Road, towards Jomtien	Busiest Friday to Sunday, 5pm to 11pm	The biggest choice of food and cheap shopping
Jomtien night market	Across the road from Jomtien Beach	Daily, late afternoon to about 11pm	Food after a beach sunset
Runway Market	Second Road, opposite Alcazar	Daily, about 4pm to 1am	Food, beer, the Ferris wheel
Sophon food market	Soi Durian, off Third Road	Daily, about 3pm to 2am	Late, local-style food court
Pattaya Night Bazaar	Second Road	Daily, roughly 10am to 11pm	Indoor shopping, not food
Wat Chai Mongkhon market	Across from the temple, South Pattaya	Morning to about 10pm	Fresh food and local prices

The main night markets

- **Thepprasit night market** is the big one: hundreds of food stalls plus clothes, gadgets and household goods. Some guides list it as open daily, but it is much smaller on weeknights, so go at the weekend if you only go once. Full details, timings and how to get there are on our Thepprasit Road page.
- **Jomtien night market** is an open-air market across the road from Jomtien Beach, open every evening and busiest at weekends. Expect Thai grilled food and seafood, a few Indian, Mexican and burger stalls, fruit smoothies and a small children's playground. Guides put the opening at 4pm or 5pm, closing around 11pm.
- **Runway Market** is on Second Road, opposite the Alcazar cabaret theatre. It is built around a decommissioned airliner, with food stalls, tables and big screens showing sport, and clothes stalls at the far end. Its 100-metre-plus Ferris wheel, The View Pattaya, opened in late November 2025; a standard gondola costs ฿480 for foreigners and ฿280 for Thai nationals (2025 prices).
- **Sophon food market** is an open-air food court on Soi Durian off Third Road, reported open daily from about 3pm to 2am. It is cash only, few vendors speak English, and parking is limited, so come by Bolt, Grab or motorbike taxi.

Pro tip: Runway Market has lots of cheap eats. At Sophon Market I get yakisoba for ฿65, a coconut shake for ฿40 and a Bavarian cream doughnut for ฿25 (prices as of November 2026).

Shopping and local markets

- **Pattaya Night Bazaar** on Second Road is an indoor, air-conditioned shopping market with over 250 stalls, and food outside rather than inside. Guides disagree on its hours, opening somewhere between 8am and 11am and closing at 11pm or midnight, so it works in the day too. See souvenir shopping.
- **Wat Chai Mongkhon market**, across the road from the temple in South Pattaya, is a local market of fruit, vegetables, meat, fish and clothes aimed at Thai shoppers. One guide lists it open from 9am (7:30am on Saturdays) to 10pm.
- **Soi Buakhao market**, at the south end of Soi Buakhao, is a day market rather than a night market. It used to run only on Tuesdays and Fridays; recent listings say it now opens daily from early morning until about 6pm.
- **Lan Pho in Naklua** is a seafood market, open from early morning to early evening. See Naklua fish market.
- The Pattaya Floating Market on Sukhumvit Road is a daytime tourist attraction with an entry fee, not a night market.

What to eat

Grilled skewers, fried chicken, pad thai, som tam, grilled seafood, roti, fruit shakes and mango sticky rice. Grilled seafood is often priced by weight, so check the price before they cook it. See Thai dishes to try, street food and ordering food in Thai.

When to go

- Most night markets get going from late afternoon and are busiest from about 6 to 9pm. Go early for easier walking and seats.
- Thepprasit is best on Friday to Sunday. Jomtien, Runway and Sophon run every evening.
- Rain can close stalls early or stop them opening in the wet season. See weather by month.
- Hungry after midnight? See late-night food.

Paying

- Bring small notes and coins. Many stalls are cash only; others take Thai QR payments. See QR payments.
- Food prices are usually fixed. Light bargaining is normal for clothes and souvenirs, not for food.

Getting there

- Baht buses run north along Second Road, past Runway Market and the Night Bazaar. See baht bus routes.
- There's no regular baht bus along Thepprasit Road, and parking is tight at busy markets, so ride apps are easier. See Bolt and Grab.

Eating safely

Choose busy stalls where food is cooked in front of you, and keep your phone and wallet in a front pocket in the crowds. See food poisoning and a street food night tour.

Common questions

What is the biggest night market in Pattaya? Thepprasit night market, busiest from Friday to Sunday, roughly 5pm to 11pm.

Which Pattaya night market is open every night? Jomtien night market, Runway Market and the Sophon food market are reported open daily from the late afternoon.

Do Pattaya night markets take cards? Rarely. Bring cash in small notes; some stalls take Thai QR payments.

Is Soi Buakhao market a night market? No. It is a day market, now reported open daily until about 6pm.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya.guide, Jomtien night market (verified August 2026); Visit Thailand Today, Runway Market (October 2026); The Pattaya News, The View Pattaya Ferris wheel opens; Visit Thailand Today, Sophon food market (September 2026); Jonesy in Thailand, Pattaya night markets (Night Bazaar); Thailand Magazine, Wat Chai Mongkhon market; Pattaya Unlimited, Soi Buakhao market (April 2025). Sources disagree on several opening times.

FOOD & DEALS

Self-Guided Street Food Night Tour

A self-guided evening of Pattaya street food: which night market to pick, what to eat in what order from grilled skewers and som tam to noodles, roti and fruit, rough prices, Thai phrases and tips for a sensitive stomach.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/food-deals/street-food-night-tour/

Budget	**About ฿300 to ฿450 per person, less if you share**
Where	**Thepprasit (Fri to Sun), Jomtien, Runway or Sophon**
Go	**From about 6pm; busiest 6pm to 9pm**
Pay	**Cash in small notes; some stalls take Thai QR**
Tip	**Share plates so you can try more**

Quick answer: The best way to eat in Pattaya is to graze. Pick one night market, walk it end to end before you buy, then eat in six small stops: grilled skewers, som tam, a noodle dish, something fried, a sweet, and a fruit shake or coconut to finish. Eating everything yourself costs about ฿300 to ฿450; sharing with a friend brings it down and lets you try more. Thepprasit night market is the biggest (go Friday to Sunday), while Jomtien night market, Runway Market and Sophon food market run every evening. Bring small notes: many stalls are cash only.

At a glance

STOP	WHAT TO TRY	ABOUT
1. Skewers	Moo ping (grilled pork) with sticky rice	฿10 to ฿15 a stick
2. Salad	Som tam, green papaya salad	฿50 to ฿80
3. Noodles	Pad thai, or a small bowl of boat noodles	฿60 to ฿100 for pad thai
4. Fried	Fried chicken, spring rolls, fish cakes	Varies by piece
5. Sweet	Banana roti or mango sticky rice	฿60 to ฿120 for mango sticky rice
6. Drink	Fruit shake or fresh coconut	฿40 to ฿70

Prices are rough ranges from 2026 street food guides and our own street food page. Tourist areas and beachfront spots charge more, so check the board or ask “tao rai?” (how much?) before you order.

Pick your market

MARKET	WHEN (ABOUT)	WHY GO
Thepprasit night market	Busiest Friday to Sunday, 5pm to 11pm	The biggest choice of food
Jomtien night market	Daily, late afternoon to about 11pm	Food after a beach sunset
Runway Market, Second Road	Daily, about 4pm to 1am	Central, open late, the Ferris wheel
Sophon food market, off Third Road	Daily, about 3pm to 2am	Local-style and late

Times are what recent guides report and they don’t always agree, so check before a special trip. Full details: night markets and Thepprasit Road.

1. Start with skewers

Grilled pork (**moo ping**, หมูปิ้ง), chicken or meatballs on sticks, often with a small bag of sticky rice (**khao niao**, ข้าวเหนียว). Cheap and quick. Skewers are typically ฿10 to ฿15 each. Pick from a grill that is busy, so the meat is cooked fresh.

2. Som tam

Green papaya salad (**som tam**, ส้มตำ), pounded to order in a clay mortar. It can be very hot, so ask for “**phet nit noi**” (เผ็ดนิดหน่อย, a little spicy) or “**mai phet**” (ไม่เผ็ด, not spicy) if you are new to Thai chilli. **Tam Thai**, with peanuts and dried shrimp, is the milder style. See Isaan food.

3. Noodles

Pad thai (ผัดไทย) from a wok cart, fried to order with egg, tofu, bean sprouts and peanuts, or a small bowl of **boat noodles** (kuay teow reua) if you see a stall selling them. See noodle dishes and Thai dishes to try.

4. Something fried

Fried chicken (**gai tod**, ไก่ทอด), spring rolls, fish cakes or fried meatballs from the fry stalls. Usually sold by the piece or the bag.

5. Dessert

A **banana roti** cooked on a hot plate and drizzled with condensed milk, or **mango sticky rice** (khao niao mamuang, ข้าวเหนียวมะม่วง), best from about March to May when Thai mangoes are in season and pricier out of season. Coconut ice cream is another easy one. See Thai desserts.

6. Finish with fruit or a drink

A fruit shake, a fresh coconut, or cut fruit in a bag with a chilli-salt dip. Thai iced tea (**cha yen**) is the classic; say "**wan noi**" (หวานน้อย) for less sweet. See Thai drinks and Thai fruit.

Pro tip: My personal favourite is a coconut milk smoothie: my favourite market, Sophon Market, does them for ฿40. I also get yakisoba there for ฿65 and a Bavarian cream doughnut for ฿25 (prices as of November 2026).

Words that help

ENGLISH	THAI	SAY IT LIKE THIS
I'll take this one	เอาอันนี้	ao an nee
How much?	เท่าไหร่	tao rai?
Not spicy	ไม่เผ็ด	mai phet
A little spicy	เผ็ดนิดหน่อย	phet nit noi
Takeaway	ใส่ถุง	sai thung
Delicious!	อร่อย	aroi!

More on our ordering food in Thai page.

Plan your route

- Start around 6pm, when stalls are fresh and the evening is cooler. Most markets are busiest from about 6pm to 9pm.
- Walk the whole market once before buying, and note the stalls with queues of Thai customers.
- Share dishes with friends so you can try more without getting full at stop two.
- In the rainy season, storms can close stalls early or stop them opening. See weather by month.

Paying

- Carry small notes and coins. ฿1,000 notes are hard to change at a stall, so break them at a 7-Eleven first.
- Many stalls also take Thai QR payments. See QR payments.
- Food prices are fixed; bargaining is for clothes and souvenirs, not food. Grilled seafood is often priced by weight, so check the price before it goes on the grill.

Eating safely

- Choose busy stalls with fast turnover, where food is cooked in front of you.
- If you have a sensitive stomach, start with hot, freshly cooked food and sealed drinks.
- Allergic to peanuts or shellfish, or vegetarian? Show it in Thai, because woks and oil are shared. See vegetarian and vegan.
- If your stomach does turn, see food poisoning, and see a doctor or pharmacist if it doesn't settle.

Common questions

How much should I budget for a street food night? About ฿300 to ฿450 per person if you try six things on your own, less if you share. Prices are higher in tourist areas.

What is the best night market for street food in Pattaya? Thepprasit is the biggest, at its best Friday to Sunday. For any night of the week, Jomtien night market, Runway Market and Sophon food market are open daily.

Is Pattaya street food safe? Generally yes if you choose busy stalls and freshly cooked food. Go easy on raw dishes and very spicy food on your first night.

Do I need to speak Thai? No. Pointing works, and a few words like "tao rai?" and "mai phet" help.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya Pointer, street food guide (last checked October 2026) for price ranges; Thai Holiday Guide, Thepprasit night market (updated July 2026), which says the market is full size Friday to Sunday from about 5:30pm, with about a third of stalls closed on weekdays; other listings disagree on weekday hours. Market times and other details are from our night markets guide, checked the same day. Prices are rough and vary by stall; Jonny's Sophon prices are as of November 2026.

After the tour

- Still hungry later? See late night food.
- Getting home: see night transport.

FOOD & DEALS

Breakfast and Brunch in Pattaya

Where and what to eat for breakfast in Pattaya: Thai rice porridge, moo ping and curry on rice from early stalls, Western set breakfasts, cafés, and hotel weekend brunches with 2026 prices.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/food-deals/breakfast-brunch/

Thai breakfast	**Jok, khao tom, moo ping with sticky rice, curry on rice**
Street stalls	**Open early; many sell out by late morning**
Western	**Set and all-day breakfasts in expat areas**
Weekend brunch	**Hotel and pub brunches about ฿750 to ฿2,222 (2026)**
Alcohol	**Normal sale hours start at 11am**

Quick answer: In Pattaya you can eat breakfast like a Thai for very little, or treat yourself to a long hotel brunch. Thai breakfasts are real meals: rice porridge (**jok**), rice soup (**khao tom**), grilled pork skewers with sticky rice (**moo ping**), fried dough sticks with soy milk, or rice with a curry or two. Stalls start early and many sell out by late morning. Western set breakfasts and all-day breakfasts are easy to find in expat areas, cafés do brunch, and in 2026 several hotels and one well-known pub run weekend brunches at about ฿750 to ฿2,222 a head.

At a glance

OPTION	WHAT YOU GET	WHEN TO GO
Street stall	Jok, khao tom, moo ping, pa thong ko, curry on rice	From early morning; many close by late morning
Market	Thai breakfasts plus fruit, coffee and sweets	Mornings; see fresh markets below
Local café or pub	Eggs, bacon, toast and coffee as a set	Many serve breakfast all day
Café brunch	Smoothie bowls, eggs, pastries, good coffee	Mid-morning onwards
Hotel or pub brunch	A buffet with live stations, booked ahead	Weekend lunchtimes, about 12 to 3pm

Thai breakfast

Thais tend to eat savoury, filling food in the morning. These are the dishes you'll see most:

- **Jok** (โจ๊ก): thick rice porridge, often with minced pork, ginger and sometimes an egg. Gentle on the stomach.
- **Khao tom** (ข้าวต้ม): rice in a thinner, clear broth with pork, chicken or seafood. Mild, with no chilli.
- **Pa thong ko** (ปาท่องโก๋): Chinese-style fried dough sticks, eaten on their own, dipped in jok, or with sweet custard or condensed milk.
- **Nam tao hoo** (น้ำเต้าหู้): warm fresh soy milk, often sold next to the dough sticks.
- **Moo ping** (หมูปิ้ง): sweet grilled pork skewers with a small bag of **khao niao** (sticky rice). A breakfast you can eat walking.
- **Khao gaeng** (ข้าวแกง): rice topped with two or three ready-made curries. Some vendors start selling at dawn. See Thai curries.
- **Khao khai jiao** (ข้าวไข่เจียว): a crispy Thai omelette on rice, a simple order almost anywhere.
- **Salapao** (steamed buns), dim sum and **roti** (fried flatbread) are morning favourites too.

Most stalls cook to order, so you can ask for **mai phet** (not spicy) or **mai sai phrik** (no chilli). Pointing works too. See ordering food in Thai.

Where to find a Thai breakfast

- Morning stalls cluster at soi corners, near schools and offices, and outside 7-Eleven. If a stall has a queue of locals, it's a good sign.
- Fresh markets are busiest early and have breakfast vendors around the edges. See Thai fresh markets.
- Mall food courts open later, but serve the same dishes with prices on the boards. See food courts.

Coffee and Thai drinks

- **Kafae boran** (กาแฟโบราณ), old-style Thai coffee, is strong and sweet, often with condensed milk. Thai iced tea is **cha yen** (ชาเย็น).
- Drinks come sweet. Ask for **wan noi** (หวานน้อย, less sweet) or **mai sai nam tan** (ไม่ใส่น้ำตาล, no sugar).
- Chain coffee, specialty cafés and big garden cafés are covered in cafés and coffee. For more Thai drinks, see Thai drinks.

Western breakfast

- Pubs, guesthouses and small cafés in Central Pattaya, around Soi Buakhao and in Jomtien serve set breakfasts with eggs, bacon, sausage, beans, toast and coffee. Boards outside show the price.
- Many places serve breakfast all day, which suits late risers.
- Imported bacon, cheese and butter cost more, so a full Western breakfast costs several times a Thai one. Typical prices are on Western food.

Pro tip: Time Bar does a great cheap breakfast.

Hotel and weekend brunch

Big hotels run brunch as an event, often monthly, and good ones book out. Examples reported in 2026:

- **Dusit Thani Pattaya, Brunch at The Bay:** the first Sunday of each month, 12 to 3pm. The hotel lists ฿2,222 net per adult and ฿1,111 for children aged 5 to 11, food only, paid in full in advance and non-refundable. In November 2026 its page said brunches to the end of 2026 were fully booked and January 2027 was open.
- **Meliá Pattaya, Dim Sum Unlimited:** all-you-can-eat dim sum at its 12th-floor rooftop Chinese restaurant, Saturdays and Sundays from noon to 3pm, reported at ฿750 net per person when it launched in May 2026.
- **Dicey Reilly's Sunday Brunch:** the second Sunday of each month, noon to 3pm, ฿990 net per person, according to Pattaya Mail in November 2026.

Prices and dates change, so check with the venue before you go. Some hotels also sell their daily breakfast buffet to people who aren't staying; ask at the restaurant.

Alcohol at brunch

Thailand's normal alcohol sale hours are 11am to midnight, so a brunch with drinks really starts at 11. On the five Buddhist holy days, most shops and ordinary bars can't sell alcohol, while hotels and some licensed venues may. See Buddhist holidays and alcohol.

Healthy and light

Fresh fruit is cut and bagged at markets and carts all morning, and fruit shakes are everywhere. See Thai fruit and vegetarian and vegan.

Budget tips

- A Thai breakfast from a stall is one of the cheapest meals in town. See cheap eats and Pattaya on 1,000 baht a day.
- Stalls rarely take cards. Carry small notes or use a QR payment app. See QR payments.
- Hotel brunch prices marked "++" add service charge and VAT on top; "net" means the price you pay.

Common questions

What do Thai people eat for breakfast? Usually a savoury meal: rice porridge (jok), rice soup (khao tom), grilled pork with sticky rice, a curry on rice, or fried dough sticks with soy milk.

Where can I get a full English breakfast in Pattaya? Pubs and cafés in Central Pattaya, around Soi Buakhao and in Jomtien serve them, many all day. See Western food.

What time do breakfast stalls open? Early. Many start around dawn and close or sell out by late morning, so go before 10am for the most choice.

Is there a Sunday brunch in Pattaya? Yes. In 2026 Dusit Thani Pattaya runs one on the first Sunday of the month, Dicey Reilly's on the second Sunday, and Meliá Pattaya does a weekend dim sum brunch. Book ahead.

Is street breakfast safe to eat? Busy stalls that cook to order are usually fine. Eat food that is hot and freshly made. See food poisoning.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Dusit Thani Pattaya, Brunch at The Bay; Asian Itinerary, Meliá Pattaya Dim Sum Unlimited (4 May 2026); Pattaya Mail, Dicey Reilly's Sunday Brunch (11 November 2026); The Thaiger, Thai breakfast meals. Brunch dates and prices change; confirm with the venue.

More ideas

- Coffee and pastries: cafés and coffee.
- Street food after breakfast: street food.
- A walk at dawn first: Pattaya at dawn.

FOOD & DEALS

Thai Curries Explained

Green, red, yellow, massaman, panang, jungle and sour curry: what makes each Thai curry different, how spicy they are, which use coconut milk, how to order them in Thai and where to eat them cheaply in Pattaya.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/food-deals/thai-curries/

Usually hottest	**Jungle curry and green curry**
Usually mildest	**Massaman and yellow curry**
No coconut milk	**Jungle curry and sour curry**
Not vegetarian	**Most pastes contain shrimp paste**
Eat with	**Jasmine rice or khanom jeen rice noodles**
Cheapest	**Khao gaeng (curry on rice) shops**

Quick answer: A Thai curry, **gaeng** (แกง), takes its character from its paste. **Green** uses fresh green chillies and is usually the hottest of the coconut curries; **red** uses dried red chillies; **yellow** is mild with turmeric; **massaman** is mild and warmly spiced with potatoes and peanuts; **panang** is thick and nutty; and **jungle curry** has no coconut milk and a lot of heat. Eat them with jasmine rice or soft rice noodles. The cheapest way to try several is a **khao gaeng** shop, where you point at pots and get two curries over rice. Most pastes contain shrimp paste, so ask before assuming a vegetable curry is vegetarian.

At a glance

CURRY	THAI	COCONUT MILK	USUAL HEAT	WHAT STANDS OUT
Green	แกงเขียวหวาน	Yes	Hot	Fresh green chillies, Thai basil, pea aubergines
Red	แกงเผ็ด	Yes	Hot	Dried red chillies, rich and fiery
Yellow	แกงกะหรี่	Yes	Mild	Turmeric and cumin, potatoes, a little sweet
Massaman	แกงมัสมั่น	Yes	Mild	Cardamom, cinnamon and cumin, potatoes, peanuts
Panang	พะแนง	A little	Medium	Thick and nutty, lime leaves, little sauce
Jungle	แกงป่า	No	Very hot	Thin, herby, from the north
Sour	แกงส้ม	No	Medium to hot	Sour, broth-like, often fish and vegetables

Heat depends on the cook more than the name. A stall's massaman can be hotter than a hotel's green curry.

The main curries

- **Green curry** (**gaeng khiao wan**): "sweet green" refers to the colour, from fresh green chillies. Coconut milk, Thai basil and lime leaves, often with chicken or fish balls. The Tourism Authority of Thailand names central Thailand as its home.
- **Red curry** (**gaeng phet**, "spicy curry"): made with soaked dried red chillies and coconut milk. Roast duck red curry with pineapple or grapes is a popular restaurant version.
- **Yellow curry** (**gaeng karee**): turmeric, cumin and other dry spices with coconut milk and cream, usually with chicken and potatoes. Mild and a little sweet, a good first curry.
- **Massaman** (**gaeng massaman**): the name is thought to come from an old word for Muslim, and the dish is widely believed to have come to Thailand with traders from the Islamic world. A poem from the court of King Rama II praises it. Slow-cooked beef or chicken with potatoes, onion and peanuts. Mild, with gentle heat softened by coconut milk.
- **Panang** (**phanaeng**): a thick, almost dry curry with little coconut milk, often beef or pork, with shredded lime leaves. Rich and nutty.
- **Jungle curry** (**gaeng pa**): from northern Thailand, made with stock instead of coconut milk, so it is thin, sharp and very spicy, packed with vegetables, green peppercorns and herbs.
- **Sour curry** (**gaeng som**): a thin, tangy curry soured with tamarind, often with fish or prawns and vegetables. Southern Thai versions are fierce.

Regional curries worth trying

- **Khao soi** (ข้าวซอย), from the north: egg noodles in coconut curry broth with crispy noodles on top. See noodle dishes.
- **Southern curries**: the TAT calls them the most powerful in Thailand. Look for **khua kling**, a dry-fried minced meat curry, and **gaeng tai pla**, made with fermented fish innards.
- **Isaan curries** like **gaeng om** skip coconut milk too. See Isaan food.

How to order

- Pick the curry, then the meat: **gai** (chicken), **moo** (pork), **neua** (beef), **kung** (shrimp), **pla** (fish) or **tao hoo** (tofu).
- Set the heat: **mai phet** (not spicy) or **phet nit noi** (a little spicy). Curry paste already contains chilli, so "mai phet" means milder, not mild.

- Example: “**gaeng khiao wan gai, phet nit noi khrap**” is chicken green curry, a little spicy. Women end with **kha**.
- Over rice: add **rad khao** (ราดข้าว). Plain rice is **khao suay** (ข้าวสวย).

More phrases: ordering food in Thai and useful Thai phrases.

What to eat them with

- **Jasmine rice** is standard. Spoon a little curry onto the rice at a time, and eat with a spoon and fork.
- **Khanom jeen** (ขนมจีน): soft fermented rice noodles, very good with green curry, with fresh vegetables on the side.
- **Roti** with massaman is a common restaurant pairing.
- A fried egg (**khai dao**) on top of curry and rice is a cheap, popular extra.

Khao gaeng: curry on rice

Khao gaeng shops set out a row of pots and trays of ready-made curries and stir-fries. Point at one or two, and they’re ladled over a plate of rice. It’s fast, cheap and the best way to try curries you can’t name. Some vendors start at dawn, and the best dishes go by lunchtime. You’ll find them at markets, along busy roads and in food courts. See cheap eats, street food and food courts.

Vegetarian and allergies

- Most curry pastes, including green, massaman and panang, contain **shrimp paste** (kapi), and curries are seasoned with fish sauce. Ask for jay curry, made without both. See vegetarian and vegan food.
- Massaman and panang contain peanuts. For a serious allergy, show it written in Thai.
- Thai curries get their creaminess from coconut milk, not dairy.

Learn to cook them

Fresh curry paste is sold by weight at market stalls, and supermarkets stock ready-made pastes and coconut milk. A cooking class is the quickest way to learn to make paste from scratch. See Thai cooking classes, fresh markets and cooking at home.

Common questions

Which Thai curry is the least spicy? Massaman and yellow curry are usually the mildest. Panang is in the middle.

Which Thai curry is the hottest? Jungle curry, then green and red curry, though it varies with the cook.

What’s the difference between red and green curry? Green curry paste uses fresh green chillies and herbs; red curry paste uses dried red chillies. Both use coconut milk.

Is massaman curry Thai? Yes. It has been cooked in Thailand for at least two centuries, but it’s widely believed to have Muslim trading roots, which shows in its warm dry spices.

Is Thai curry vegetarian? Usually not, because of shrimp paste and fish sauce. Jay shops make versions without them.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Michelin Guide, what is massaman curry (January 2026); The Thaiger, Thai curries; Tourism Authority of Thailand, Thai cuisine of the four regions; SBS Food, Thai jungle curry; Michelin Guide, Thai noodles (khao soi and khanom jeen).

Spice guide

- Usually milder: massaman, yellow curry and panang.
- Usually hotter: green curry, red curry, jungle curry and southern curries.

FOOD & DEALS

Thai Soups to Try

Tom yum, tom kha, clear soups and rice soup: the Thai soups to know with Thai script and easy pronunciation, how spicy each one is, clear or creamy tom yum, how soups are shared, and what to order when you want something gentle.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/food-deals/thai-soups/

Famous	**Tom yum kung, on UNESCO's heritage list since December 2024**
Clear or creamy	**Tom yum nam sai or nam khon**
Coconut	**Tom kha gai, milder and creamy**
Gentle	**Gaeng jued, khao tom and jok**
Fiery	**Tom saep, the Isaan hot and sour soup**
Don't eat	**Lemongrass, galangal and lime leaves**

Quick answer: The Thai soup everyone knows is **tom yum kung** (ต้มยำกุ้ง), a hot and sour prawn soup with lemongrass, galangal, lime leaves and chilli, added to UNESCO's list of intangible cultural heritage in December 2024. Order it **nam sai** (clear) or **nam khon** (creamy). For something milder, **tom kha gai** is chicken in coconut milk with galangal. When you want something gentle, choose **gaeng jued** (clear soup), **khao tom** (rice soup) or **jok** (rice porridge). Thais usually share a soup with rice and other dishes, and the herbs in the bowl are for flavour, not for eating.

At a glance

SOUP	THAI	SAY IT LIKE THIS	HEAT	WHAT IT IS
Tom yum kung	ต้มยำกุ้ง	tom yum kung	Hot	Hot and sour prawn soup
Tom kha gai	ต้มข่าไก่	tom kha gai	Mild to medium	Chicken in coconut milk with galangal
Gaeng jued	แกงจืด	gaeng jued	Not spicy	Clear soup with vegetables, tofu or minced pork
Khao tom	ข้าวต้ม	khao tom	Not spicy	Rice in a thin, clear broth
Jok	โจ๊ก	jok	Not spicy	Thick rice porridge, often with pork and ginger
Tom saep	ต้มแซ่บ	tom saep	Hot	Isaan hot and sour soup, often with pork ribs
Gaeng som	แกงส้ม	gaeng som	Hot	Thin, tangy curry soured with tamarind
Noodle soup	ก๋วยเตี๋ยวน้ำ	kuay teow nam	Your choice	Noodles in broth; season it yourself

The romanisation is simple English sounds, as on our ordering food in Thai page, so menus may spell the same soups differently (tom yam, goong, gai, kai).

Tom yum

Tom yum is the hot and sour soup of central Thailand. The base is a broth boiled with lemongrass, galangal, lime leaves and shallots, then seasoned with lime juice, fish sauce and fresh chilli; mushrooms are common. UNESCO inscribed tom yum kung on its Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in December 2024, Thailand's fifth entry after Khon, Thai massage, Nora and Songkran.

The main versions:

- **Tom yum kung** (กุ้ง, prawns): the classic, and the one tourists know best.
- **Tom yum gai** (ไก่, chicken): easy to find, and good if you don't eat seafood.
- **Tom yum pla** (ปลา, fish): clear, sour and traditionally eaten with rice.
- **Tom yum talay** (ทะเล) or **po taek**: mixed seafood, such as prawns, squid, clams and fish.
- **Tom yum noodles** (kuay teow tom yum): a noodle shop version. See noodle dishes.

Clear or creamy?

Tom yum comes two ways, and many places will ask which you want:

STYLE	THAI	SAY IT LIKE THIS	WHAT YOU GET
Clear	น้ำใส	nam sai	A clear, sharp, herb-led broth; the older style
Creamy	น้ำข้น	nam khon	Richer and orange, with chilli paste and evaporated milk

The creamy style is a fairly recent variation, dating from about the 1980s. It usually gets its richness from evaporated milk or creamer, not coconut milk, and roasted chilli paste (**nam prik pao**) gives it the red-orange colour. If you want coconut milk, that's tom kha.

Tom kha gai

Tom kha gai (ต้มข่าไก่) uses the same kind of aromatics as tom yum, but galangal (**kha**) leads and coconut milk softens it, so it's creamy, a little sour and usually much milder. It's a good first Thai soup for anyone wary of chilli. Prawn and mushroom versions are common too.

Gentle soups

- **Gaeng jued** (แกงจืด): a clear, mild soup. A common one is **gaeng jued tao hu moo sap** (แกงจืดเต้าหู้หมูสับ), with soft tofu and minced pork, often with glass noodles and vegetables.
- **Khao tom** (ข้าวต้ม): rice in a thinner, clear broth with pork, chicken or seafood. Eaten for breakfast and late at night.
- **Jok** (โจ๊ก): thick rice porridge, often with minced pork, ginger and sometimes an egg.
- These are sold at morning stalls, night stalls and many food courts. See breakfast and brunch and food courts.

Sour and fiery soups

- **Tom saep** (ต้มแซ่บ): a clear, hot and sour Isaan soup with herbs, often with pork ribs or offal. Usually very spicy. See Isaan food.
- **Gaeng som** (แกงส้ม): a thin, tangy curry soured with tamarind, often with fish or prawns and vegetables. Southern versions are fierce. See Thai curries.

How soup is served

- Thais usually share a soup with rice and several other dishes, rather than eat it as a starter. Take a spoonful at a time into your own bowl or onto your rice.
- Tom yum often comes in a hot pot (**mo fai**, หม้อไฟ) with a flame underneath to keep it hot, for the table to share.
- Lemongrass stalks, slices of galangal and lime leaves are there for flavour. Leave them in the bowl.

Ordering tips

ENGLISH	THAI	SAY IT LIKE THIS
Not spicy	ไม่เผ็ด	mai phet
A little spicy	เผ็ดนิดหน่อย	phet nit noi
No chilli at all	ไม่ใส่พริก	mai sai phrik
Clear (soup)	น้ำใส	nam sai
Creamy (soup)	น้ำข้น	nam khon

Tom yum is meant to be spicy, so even "mai phet" can come with some heat; tom kha or a clear soup is the safer choice if you can't take chilli. More phrases on ordering food in Thai.

Allergies and vegetarian

- Fish sauce goes into most Thai soups, and shrimp paste or chilli paste into many. Say so clearly if you are vegetarian or allergic.
- A mushroom tom yum (**tom yum het**) is worth asking for, but say no fish sauce too, and jay restaurants make plant-based versions. See vegetarian and vegan.

When you are unwell

Clear soups, khao tom and jok are what many Thais eat when they feel ill, because they are plain, warm and easy on the stomach. This is general information, not medical advice: if you have a fever, blood or can't keep fluids down, see a doctor, and ask a pharmacist about rehydration salts. See food poisoning.

Common questions

What is the difference between tom yum and tom kha? Tom yum is hot and sour with a clear or milky broth. Tom kha is led by galangal and made with coconut milk, so it is creamier and usually milder.

What does tom yum nam khon mean? The creamy version of tom yum, usually made rich with evaporated milk and chilli paste. Nam sai is the clear version.

Is tom yum always spicy? Usually, yes. You can ask for "phet nit noi" (a little spicy), but if you want no heat, choose tom kha, gaeng jued or khao tom.

What Thai soup is good for breakfast? Khao tom and jok, sold at morning stalls across Pattaya.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: The Thaiger, UNESCO honours tom yum kung (December 2024); Wikipedia, tom yum (clear and creamy styles, regional versions). Thai script and romanisation follow our ordering food in Thai guide. Health notes are general information only; see a doctor or pharmacist.

Related guides

- Thai Desserts to Try
- Isaan Food: Som Tam, Larb and Grilled Chicken

- Moo Kata: Thai BBQ and Hotpot
- Thai Fruit and When It's in Season

FOOD & DEALS

Thai Noodle Dishes to Try

A guide to Thai noodles in Pattaya: pad thai, pad see ew, boat noodles, duck noodles, khao soi and more, the noodle types, how to order in Thai and how to season your bowl.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/food-deals/noodle-dishes/

Fried	**Pad thai, pad see ew, rad na, pad kee mao**
Soup	**Boat noodles, duck noodles, tom yum, yen ta fo**
Curry noodles	**Khao soi, khanom jeen**
Order	**Noodle, then soup (nam) or dry (haeng), then meat**
Season	**Sugar, chilli flakes, fish sauce, chilli vinegar**

Quick answer: Thai noodles split into fried dishes (pad thai, pad see ew, rad na), noodle soups (**kuay teow**, including boat noodles and duck noodles) and curry noodles (khao soi, khanom jeen). At a noodle shop you build your own bowl: pick the noodle, say **nam** (with soup) or **haeng** (dry), pick the meat, then season it yourself from the four jars on the table. Noodles are sold from street carts, shophouses, markets and every mall food court in Pattaya, and they're among the cheapest proper meals in town.

At a glance

DISH	THAI	WHAT IT IS	HEAT
Pad thai	ผัดไทย	Stir-fried thin rice noodles, tamarind sauce, egg, peanuts, lime	Mild
Pad see ew	ผัดซีอิ๊ว	Wide rice noodles fried in dark soy with Chinese kale	Mild
Rad na	ราดหน้า	Wide noodles under a thick gravy	Mild
Pad kee mao	ผัดขี้เมา	"Drunken noodles", wide noodles with chilli and basil	Hot
Boat noodles	ก๋วยเตี๋ยวเรือ	Small bowls of rich, dark beef or pork broth	Medium
Duck noodles	ก๋วยเตี๋ยวเป็ด	Duck in a five-spice broth	Mild
Yen ta fo	เย็นตาโฟ	Pink broth from red fermented tofu, fish balls, morning glory	Mild to medium
Khao soi	ข้าวซอย	Egg noodles in coconut curry with crispy noodles on top	Medium

Fried noodles

- **Pad thai**: thin rice noodles stir-fried with tamarind sauce, egg, tofu, bean sprouts and often prawns, with crushed peanuts and lime. Peanuts often come on the side.
- **Pad see ew**: **sen yai** (wide rice noodles) fried in dark soy sauce with Chinese kale and your choice of meat. Smoky and a little sweet.
- **Rad na**: the same wide noodles, fried, then covered in a thick, glossy gravy with greens. Almost soupy.
- **Pad kee mao**: "drunken noodles", wide noodles fried hard with chilli and basil. Expect heat.

Noodle soups

Kuay teow (ก๋วยเตี๋ยว) is the general word for noodle soup. Shops let you combine noodle, broth and topping, but many are known for one style:

- **Boat noodles** (kuay teow reua): small bowls of a dark, strong beef or pork broth, traditionally thickened with a little blood. They were sold from boats on canals, which is why the bowls are small. People order several.
- **Duck noodles** (kuay teow pet): duck in a five-spice broth. Common at mall food courts.
- **Tom yum noodles** (kuay teow tom yum): hot, sour and sometimes a little sweet, often with crushed peanuts.
- **Yen ta fo**: a pink broth coloured with red fermented tofu, with fish balls and morning glory.
- **Ba mee** (บะหมี่): yellow egg noodles, often with red roast pork and wontons, in soup or dry.

For broths without noodles, see Thai soups.

Pro tip: In the mall food courts, duck noodles at Central Marina were about ฿60 when I filmed in October 2026, and most meals there are about $2 to $3. It's the same with Terminal 21 upstairs and Central Festival downstairs.

Curry noodles

- **Khao soi**: egg noodles in a spicy coconut curry, topped with crispy fried noodles, with shallots and pickled greens on the side. A northern Thai dish with roots in Yunnan, China. See Thai curries.
- **Khanom jeen** (ขนมจีน): soft, thin fermented rice noodles served cold with a curry ladled on top and fresh vegetables to add. Often sold as a quick lunch.

Choosing your noodle

NOODLE	THAI	WHAT IT IS
Sen lek	เส้นเล็ก	Thin flat rice noodles, the all-rounder
Sen yai	เส้นใหญ่	Wide flat rice noodles, best fried
Sen mee	เส้นหมี่	Very thin rice vermicelli
Ba mee	บะหมี่	Yellow wheat and egg noodles
Woon sen	วุ้นเส้น	Glass noodles from mung bean starch

How to order

Choose the noodle, then soup or dry, then the meat:

- Soup or dry: **nam** (น้ำ) or **haeng** (แห้ง). Dry bowls come with the broth on the side or none.
- Meat: **moo** (pork), **gai** (chicken), **neua** (beef), **pla** (fish, often fish balls).
- Example: "**sen lek nam moo khrap**" (เส้นเล็กน้ำหมูครับ) is thin rice noodles in soup with pork. Women end with **kha**.
- Spice: **mai phet** (not spicy) or **phet nit noi** (a little spicy). Many soups arrive mild, and you add heat yourself.
- Bigger bowl: **phiset** (พิเศษ), usually a little extra.

More phrases are on ordering food in Thai.

At the table

- Most noodle shops put out four condiments: sugar, chilli flakes, fish sauce and chilli vinegar. Taste first, then adjust.
- The chilli flakes are strong. Start with a pinch.
- Noodle soups usually come with chopsticks and a spoon; fried noodles often with a fork and spoon.
- Boat noodle bowls are small, so order two or three to start and add more if you're still hungry.

Allergies and diets

- Pad thai and tom yum noodles often contain peanuts, and many broths and sauces use fish sauce, shrimp or oyster sauce. If you have a serious allergy, show it written in Thai. See ordering food in Thai.
- Most broths are made with pork, beef or chicken bones. For meat-free noodles, look for jay stalls with yellow flags. See vegetarian and vegan.

Where to eat noodles in Pattaya

- **Street carts and shophouses**: the cheapest bowls, often cooked in front of you. See street food.
- **Mall food courts**: clean, air conditioned, prices on the boards. See food courts.
- **Night markets**: pad thai and noodle soups next to everything else. See night markets and the street food night tour.

Common questions

What's the difference between pad thai and pad see ew? Pad thai uses thin rice noodles with a sweet-sour tamarind sauce and peanuts. Pad see ew uses wide rice noodles fried in dark soy sauce with Chinese kale.

Why are boat noodle bowls so small? They began as a snack sold from boats on canals, where small bowls were easy to hand over. People still order several at a time.

Are Thai noodle soups spicy? Most arrive fairly mild, and you season them yourself from the table. Tom yum noodles and pad kee mao are the usual exceptions.

How do I order noodles in Thai? Name the noodle, say nam (soup) or haeng (dry), then the meat: "sen lek nam moo khrap" gets you thin rice noodles in pork soup.

Is pad thai vegetarian? Not usually. It often contains fish sauce, dried shrimp or prawns. Ask for no fish sauce and no shrimp, or order at a jay stall.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Michelin Guide, a primer on Thai noodles; SBS Food, the history of Thai boat noodles. Jonny's food court price is from his own video of 20 October 2026.

Related guides

- Thai Soups to Try
- Thai Curries Explained
- Isaan Food: Som Tam, Larb and Grilled Chicken

- Food Courts in Pattaya

FOOD & DEALS

Vegetarian and Vegan Food in Pattaya

How to eat vegetarian or vegan in Pattaya: the Thai words in Thai script, jay food and the yellow flags, hidden fish sauce and shrimp paste, dishes to ask for, and meat-free places reported open in 2026.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/food-deals/vegetarian-vegan/

Plant-based	**Gin jay (กินเจ), no animal products, garlic or onion**
Vegetarian	**Mangsawirat (มังสวิรัติ)**
No meat	**Mai sai neua sat (ไม่ใส่เนื้อสัตว์)**
Look for	**Yellow flags with red เจ, meaning jay food**
Watch for	**Fish sauce, oyster sauce and shrimp paste**
Festival	**Vegetarian Festival, ninth lunar month (Sept or Oct)**

Quick answer: Pattaya is easier for vegetarians and vegans than many visitors expect, as long as you know two words and watch the sauces. **Jay** (เจ) is Thai-Chinese plant-based food with no meat, fish, eggs, dairy, garlic or onion, sold under yellow flags with red lettering. **Mangsawirat** (มังสวิรัติ) means vegetarian. The catch is that fish sauce, oyster sauce and shrimp paste go into many dishes that look meat-free, so say so when you order. Indian restaurants, a few dedicated vegan and jay places, supermarkets and the yearly Vegetarian Festival make it easier still.

At a glance

YOU WANT TO SAY	THAI	SAY IT LIKE THIS
I eat jay (plant-based)	กินเจ	gin jay
I'm vegetarian	กินมังสวิรัติ	gin mangsawirat
No meat	ไม่ใส่เนื้อสัตว์	mai sai neua sat
No fish sauce	ไม่ใส่น้ำปลา	mai sai nam pla
No oyster sauce	ไม่ใส่น้ำมันหอย	mai sai nam man hoi
No shrimp paste	ไม่ใส่กะปิ	mai sai kapi
No egg	ไม่ใส่ไข่	mai sai khai
No milk	ไม่ใส่นม	mai sai nom

Add **khrap** if you're a man or **kha** if you're a woman: "phom gin jay khrap" (ผมกินเจครับ) or "chan gin jay kha" (ฉันกินเจค่ะ). **Mai sai** (ไม่ใส่) means "don't put in", and works with any ingredient. More on ordering food in Thai and useful Thai phrases.

Jay, vegan and vegetarian

- **Jay** comes from Chinese-Thai religious tradition. It leaves out all animal products and also strong-smelling plants: garlic, onion, shallots, chives and leeks. For a vegan, jay food is usually the safest Thai option.
- **Mangsawirat** is vegetarian in the Western sense, so it may include egg or milk.
- Saying "vegan" in English works in cafés and tourist areas. At a Thai stall, "gin jay" is clearer.

A side-by-side table of jay, vegan and vegetarian is on Vegetarian Festival.

Hidden animal ingredients

- **Fish sauce** (nam pla) seasons most Thai savoury food, including stir-fried vegetables and salads.
- **Oyster sauce** (nam man hoi) is standard in stir-fries like mixed vegetables.
- **Shrimp paste** (kapi) is in many curry pastes, including green, massaman and panang. A vegetable curry from a normal stall is rarely vegetarian. See Thai curries.
- **Pla ra**, fermented fish, flavours Isaan-style papaya salad. Ask for som tam jay, or none. See Isaan food.
- **Broths**: noodle soups are usually made with pork, beef or chicken bones.
- **Eggs and dried shrimp** are in pad thai and fried rice, and condensed milk goes into Thai tea, coffee and roti.
- Woks, oil and ladles are shared at street stalls. If that matters to you, eat at a jay shop.

Dishes to ask for

- **Pad pak ruam** (ผัดผักรวม): stir-fried mixed vegetables. Ask for no oyster sauce and no fish sauce, or "jay".
- **Tofu** (**tao hoo**, เต้าหู้) stir-fried with ginger, basil or cashews.
- **Khao pad jay**: jay fried rice, or **pad thai jay** with no egg, no fish sauce and no dried shrimp.

- **Som tam jay**: papaya salad made without fish sauce or pla ra.
- **Jay curries**: green curry or massaman made with a jay paste, sold at jay shops.
- **Sticky rice and fruit**: mango sticky rice is made with coconut milk, and fruit carts are on every street. See Thai fruit and Thai desserts.

Jay shops and the yellow flags

Look for yellow flags or signs with the red character เจ. Jay shops usually set out trays of ready-cooked dishes, so you point at two or three and get them over rice. Expect mock meats made from soy, wheat gluten or mushroom, tofu, and vegetable curries and stir-fries at street-food prices. Signs and menus are often only in Thai, so pointing works best.

Where it's easy in Pattaya

These places were shown operating in 2025 or 2026 by the sources below. Hours change, so check the map listing before you go.

- Tess Vegan Café: a vegan café in Naklua. Its HappyCow listing gives Monday to Saturday, 9am to 9pm, closed Sundays, with reviews up to October 2026. A February 2026 reviewer said it had moved a few metres up the same street.
- Thammachat (ธรรมชาติ อาหารเจ): a Thai jay restaurant in North Pattaya, with signs in Thai, reviewed on HappyCow in August 2026. The listing says it closes on the 1st and 16th of each month; older reviews give different hours.
- **Govindam** on Central Road: a vegetarian Indian restaurant serving North and South Indian food. See Indian food.
- **Indian restaurants generally**: nearly every menu has a long vegetarian section. Vegans should ask about ghee, cream, yoghurt and paneer. See Indian food.
- **Cafés**: many have plant milk, smoothie bowls and vegan options. See cafés and coffee.
- **Food courts**: some have a jay or vegetarian stall, and prices are on display. See food courts.
- **Delivery apps**: searching "vegan", "jay" or "เจ" brings up options near you. See food delivery apps.

Cooking for yourself

Supermarkets sell tofu, soy milk, plant milks, mock meats and fresh vegetables, and fresh markets are cheaper for produce. See supermarkets, fresh markets and cooking at home. A Thai cooking class can usually teach a vegetarian version if you ask when booking.

Vegetarian Festival

Once a year, in the ninth lunar month (late September or October), Thailand's Chinese-Thai community celebrates the nine-day Vegetarian Festival. Yellow flags go up all over Pattaya, markets add jay stalls, and 7-Eleven and supermarkets stock jay products. It's the easiest time of year to eat plant-based. Dates, shrines and what to try: Vegetarian Festival.

Common questions

Is Pattaya good for vegans? Yes, with a little effort. Jay shops, Indian restaurants and a few vegan cafés make it easy, and the phrases above handle ordinary Thai stalls. The main risk is fish sauce, oyster sauce and shrimp paste.

What does jay mean in Thailand? Jay (เจ) is plant-based Thai-Chinese food with no meat, fish, eggs, dairy, garlic or onion. Yellow flags with red เจ mark jay food.

How do I say I'm vegetarian in Thai? "Gin mangsawirat" for vegetarian, or "gin jay" for strict plant-based food. Add khrap (men) or kha (women).

Is Thai green curry vegetarian? Usually not. Most curry pastes contain shrimp paste, and the curry is seasoned with fish sauce. Jay shops make versions without both.

Is pad thai vegan? Not normally: it usually has egg, fish sauce and dried shrimp. Ask for pad thai jay.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: HappyCow, Tess Vegan Café; HappyCow, Thammachat Vegetarian Food; The Thaiger, Thai curries and their pastes. HappyCow listings are written by users; check opening hours before you go. The romanisation is our own simple guide, not an official system.

Related guides

- Vegetarian Festival (Nine Emperor Gods)
- Indian Food in Pattaya
- Ordering Food in Thai: Phrases and Tips
- Thai Fruit and When It's in Season

FOOD & DEALS

Isaan Food: Som Tam, Larb and Grilled Chicken

The food of Thailand's northeast is everywhere in Pattaya: som tam and its main styles, gai yang, larb, nam tok, sticky rice and spicy soups. What to order, how to eat it, how hot it gets and which raw dishes to skip.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/food-deals/isaan-food/

Classic meal	**Som tam, gai yang and sticky rice**
Milder salad	**Tam Thai, with peanuts and dried shrimp**
Funky salad	**Tam pla ra, with fermented fish**
Heat	**Often very spicy; say mai phet or phet nit noi**
Eat with	**Your fingers and balls of sticky rice**
Avoid	**Raw meat and raw freshwater fish dishes**

Quick answer: Isaan is Thailand's northeast, and its food is sold all over Pattaya, from charcoal grills on the pavement to food court counters. It is salty, sour and often very spicy, built around sticky rice, grilled meat and pounded salads. The classic order is **som tam** (green papaya salad), **gai yang** (grilled chicken) and **khao niao** (sticky rice), shared and eaten with your fingers. If you're new to it, ask for **tam Thai**, the milder papaya salad, and say **mai phet** (not spicy) or **phet nit noi** (a little spicy).

At a glance

DISH	THAI	WHAT IT IS	HEAT
Som tam / tam Thai	ส้มตำ / ตำไทย	Green papaya salad with peanuts and dried shrimp	Medium to very hot
Tam pla ra	ตำปลาร้า	Papaya salad with fermented fish	Hot, strong flavour
Gai yang	ไก่ย่าง	Marinated grilled chicken	Mild; spicy dip on the side
Kho moo yang	คอหมูย่าง	Grilled pork neck	Mild; spicy dip on the side
Larb	ลาบ	Minced meat salad with lime, chilli, mint, toasted rice	Hot
Nam tok	น้ำตก	Sliced grilled meat salad, similar dressing	Hot
Tom saep	ต้มแซ่บ	Hot and sour soup	Hot
Sai krok Isan	ไส้กรอกอีสาน	Sour fermented pork and rice sausage	Mild
Khao niao	ข้าวเหนียว	Sticky rice, the staple	None

Som tam and its main styles

Som tam is pounded in a big clay or wooden mortar with chilli, garlic, lime and palm sugar, so each one is made to order. The main styles:

- **Tam Thai** (ตำไทย): with peanuts, dried shrimp, tomatoes and fish sauce. Sweet and sour. The easiest start.
- **Tam pla ra** or **tam Lao** (ตำลาว): seasoned with **pla ra** (ปลาร้า), a fermented fish sauce. Darker, saltier and much stronger.
- **Tam poo** (ตำปู): with salted or pickled crab. **Tam poo pla ra** has both crab and fermented fish.
- **Tam Khorat**: a version from Nakhon Ratchasima that also uses fermented fish sauce.
- **Tam sua** (ตำซั่ว): papaya salad mixed with thin rice noodles.
- Other fruits get pounded too: cucumber (**tam taeng**), corn and green mango are common.

Shops pound some salads hard and toss others quickly to keep the papaya crisp. If you're unsure, say "tam Thai, phet nit noi khrap" (or kha).

Grilled meats

- **Gai yang**: chicken marinated with garlic and lemongrass, sometimes pandan, and grilled slowly over charcoal. Often sold by the half or whole bird.
- **Kho moo yang**: fatty grilled pork neck, sliced and served with a dip.
- **Suea rong hai** (เสือร้องไห้, "crying tiger"): grilled beef with a sharp chilli dip.
- **Jaew** (แจ่ว): the dark, smoky dipping sauce made with dried chilli flakes, toasted rice, lime and fish sauce that comes with grilled meat. It's where the heat is, so dip lightly.

Salads and soups

- **Larb**: minced pork, chicken or duck tossed with lime, fish sauce, chilli, shallots, mint and **khao khua** (toasted ground rice), which gives it a nutty crunch.
- **Nam tok**: the same dressing on slices of grilled pork or beef.
- **Tom saep**: a clear, hot and sour soup with herbs, often with pork ribs or offal.

- **Gaeng om**: an Isaan curry without coconut milk, thin and herby. See Thai curries.
- Snacks at markets include **sai krok Isan** sausages, grilled pork skewers and, at some stalls, fried insects.

How to eat it

- Order several dishes for the table and share. A salad, a grilled meat, a soup and sticky rice is a full meal for two.
- Sticky rice often comes in a small woven basket or a plastic bag. Pinch off a bite, roll it into a ball with your fingers and use it to pick up meat or soak up the dressing.
- Raw vegetables on the side (cabbage, long beans, herbs) cool the heat down.
- Most Isaan places are casual and cheap. Pay at the end or when you order at a food court.

How hot is it?

Isaan food can be very spicy, and som tam heat comes from fresh chillies pounded straight in.

YOU WANT	THAI	SAY IT LIKE THIS
Not spicy	ไม่เผ็ด	mai phet
A little spicy	เผ็ดนิดหน่อย	phet nit noi
No chilli at all	ไม่ใส่พริก	mai sai phrik
No fermented fish	ไม่ใส่ปลาร้า	mai sai pla ra

“Mai phet” at an Isaan stall can still be warm by Western standards. Sticky rice and raw vegetables can help more than water. More phrases: ordering food in Thai and useful Thai phrases.

Raw dishes to skip

Some Isaan dishes are made with raw meat (**larb dib**, ลาบดิบ) or raw freshwater fish (**koi pla**, ก้อยปลา). The World Health Organization says people catch liver fluke, a parasite, by eating raw or undercooked freshwater fish, and long-term infection can lead to a serious bile duct cancer. Ask for your larb cooked: **larb suk** (ลาบสุก). This is general information; for symptoms after eating, see a doctor or pharmacist. See also food poisoning.

Where to find it in Pattaya

- **Street stalls** with a charcoal grill and a big mortar: the classic setup. Busy ones with local customers turn food over fast. See street food.
- **Small Isaan restaurants**: open-fronted, often with plastic tables and a long menu of salads. See cheap eats.
- **Food courts**: nearly every one has an Isaan counter with prices on the board. See food courts.
- **Night markets**: grilled chicken, sausages and som tam stands. See night markets.
- **Delivery**: som tam travels well; ask for the spice level in the order notes. See food delivery apps.

For grill-it-yourself Thai barbecue, see moo kata.

Common questions

What is the most famous Isaan dish? Som tam, green papaya salad, usually eaten with grilled chicken and sticky rice.

What’s the difference between tam Thai and tam pla ra? Tam Thai uses fish sauce, peanuts and dried shrimp and is sweeter. Tam pla ra uses fermented fish and tastes much stronger and saltier.

How do I order Isaan food not spicy? Say “mai phet” (not spicy) or “phet nit noi” (a little spicy), with khrap or kha at the end. For no chilli, say “mai sai phrik”.

Is Isaan food the same as Lao food? They are closely related. Many dishes, like som tam, larb and sticky rice, are shared across the Mekong.

Is it safe to eat raw larb? Raw meat and raw freshwater fish carry a risk of parasites. Order larb cooked (larb suk).

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Michelin Guide, decoding som tam; Tourism Authority of Thailand, Thai cuisine of the four regions; National Geographic, Isaan dishes; World Health Organization, foodborne trematode infections. General information, not medical advice.

Popular dishes to try next

- Thai Dishes to Try
- Thai Noodle Dishes to Try
- Moo Kata: Thai BBQ and Hotpot

FOOD & DEALS

Thai Desserts to Try

The Thai desserts to try in Pattaya, with Thai names: mango sticky rice and when mangoes are in season, coconut ice cream, roti, khanom krok, bua loy, crispy rubies, golden egg sweets and shaved ice, plus where to find them.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/food-deals/thai-desserts/

Must try	**Mango sticky rice, best from about March to May**
Street favourite	**Banana roti with condensed milk**
Cool down	**Coconut ice cream, tub tim krob, shaved ice**
Warm	**Khanom krok, bua loy in ginger syrup**
Where	**Night markets, morning markets and street carts**

Quick answer: Thai desserts (ขนม, **khanom**, or ของหวาน, **khong wan**) are built on coconut milk, palm sugar, sticky rice, pandan and fruit. Start with **mango sticky rice**, best from about March to May when Thai mangoes are in season, then try coconut ice cream, a banana roti from a night cart, warm **khanom krok** coconut cups and **tub tim krob** ("crispy rubies") on ice. Night markets have the widest choice in the evening, and morning markets sell the traditional sweets, often wrapped in banana leaves.

At a glance

DESSERT	THAI	WHAT IT IS
Mango sticky rice	ข้าวเหนียวมะม่วง (khao niao mamuang)	Sweet sticky rice, coconut cream and ripe mango
Coconut ice cream	ไอติมกะทิ (i-tim kathi)	Coconut milk ice cream, often in a coconut shell with peanuts
Roti	โรตี (roti)	Thin fried pancake with banana and egg, topped with condensed milk
Khanom krok	ขนมครก	Small coconut and rice flour cakes cooked in a dimpled pan, eaten hot
Bua loy	บัวลอย	Rice-flour balls in warm coconut milk or ginger syrup
Tub tim krob	ทับทิมกรอบ	"Crispy rubies": water chestnut pieces in sweet, icy coconut milk
Foi thong	ฝอยทอง	"Golden threads" of egg yolk cooked in syrup
Shaved ice	น้ำแข็งใส (nam khaeng sai)	Shaved ice with jellies, syrup and coconut milk

Mango sticky rice

Khao niao mamuang is the dessert most visitors fall for: warm sticky rice soaked in sweetened coconut milk, a slice of ripe yellow mango, a drizzle of coconut cream and sometimes crunchy yellow mung beans on top.

- **Season:** the popular nam dok mai mango is in season from about March to May, Thailand's hot season, according to the Michelin Guide. Mangoes are sold all year, but the peak months are the best time for this dessert.
- **Which mango:** the Michelin Guide notes that many cooks consider the ok rong variety best for mango sticky rice.
- **Where:** night markets, fruit stalls and Thai restaurants. Look for a stall with a pile of ripe mangoes and a pot of sticky rice. See Thai fruit.

Cold sweets for hot days

- **Coconut ice cream (i-tim kathi):** served from carts and market stalls, usually in a coconut shell and topped with roasted peanuts.
- **Tub tim krob:** water chestnut cubes coated in tapioca flour, dyed red, and served in sweet coconut milk with crushed ice.
- **Lod chong:** short green noodles made with flour and pandan leaf, in sweet coconut milk.
- **Nam khaeng sai:** shaved ice piled on your choice of jellies, beans and fruit, then finished with syrup and coconut milk. Point at the toppings you want.

Ice in shops and markets is usually made from purified water. See drinking water.

Warm and street sweets

- **Roti:** cooked to order on a hot plate in the evening. The classic is banana and egg (roti kluay khai), folded, cut into squares and topped with sugar and condensed milk. Plain roti with condensed milk is the cheaper option.
- **Khanom krok:** little cups of coconut cream and rice flour cooked in a dimpled pan, crisp outside and soft inside, sometimes topped with spring onion, sweet corn or taro. Eat them hot.
- **Bua loy:** chewy rice-flour balls, often coloured with pandan, pumpkin or taro, in warm coconut milk. **Bua loy nam khing** has black sesame-filled balls in a warm ginger syrup.
- **Khanom buang:** small crispy Thai crepes topped with a meringue-like cream and foi thong.

Traditional market sweets

Morning markets and some night market stalls sell small trays and banana-leaf parcels of traditional khanom. They're cheap, so buy a few and share.

- **Foi thong:** fine golden threads of egg yolk cooked in syrup. Very sweet.
- **Khanom chan:** a firm, layered jelly of coconut milk, sugar and flour, often green with pandan.
- **Khanom tuay:** coconut milk custard in tiny cups.
- **Sangkaya:** rich coconut and egg custard, eaten on sticky rice or baked inside a small pumpkin (sangkaya fak thong).
- **Khao tom mat:** sticky rice with coconut milk and banana or sweet black beans, steamed in a banana leaf.

See fresh markets for the morning markets where these are sold.

Where to find them in Pattaya

- **Night markets** have the biggest choice in the evening: Thepprasit at the weekend, Jomtien, Runway and Sophon every night. See night markets.
- **Morning markets** are where the traditional sweets are freshest, and they sell out by late morning.
- **Street carts** for roti and coconut ice cream, especially in the evening. See street food.
- **Cafés** serve modern versions, from Thai tea cakes to mango desserts. See cafés and coffee.

Pro tip: Not strictly Thai, but at Sophon Market I get a Bavarian cream doughnut for ฿25, and Aroi Aroi on Grab Food does great desserts (prices as of November 2026).

Tips

- Thai desserts are sweet and rich in coconut. Small portions are the norm, so it's easy to try several.
- Many coconut-based sweets contain no dairy, but egg sweets such as foi thong and sangkaya don't suit vegans. Ask if you're unsure. See vegetarian and vegan.
- Market sweets are made fresh each day. Eat them the same day, and keep coconut-milk desserts cool.
- A Thai iced tea goes well with all of them. See Thai drinks.

Common questions

What is the most famous Thai dessert? Mango sticky rice (khao niao mamuang): sticky rice in sweet coconut milk with ripe mango.

When is mango sticky rice season in Thailand? Mangoes peak from about March to May. It's sold all year, but it's best then.

Where can I get Thai desserts in Pattaya? Night markets in the evening, morning markets for traditional sweets, and street carts for roti and coconut ice cream.

Are Thai desserts very sweet? Most are, and many are rich with coconut milk. Shaved ice lets you choose your toppings.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Michelin Guide, Thai mango varieties and seasons; Migrationology, Thai desserts guide; Pattaya.com, markets in Pattaya (Thai sweets at morning markets).

FOOD & DEALS

Thai Fruit and When It's in Season

The best fruit to try in Pattaya, from mango and durian to mangosteen, rambutan and pomelo, with Thai names, when each is in season, what's good right now, prices and where to buy it, and the durian rules.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/food-deals/thai-fruit/

Peak season	**Roughly April to June, from Rayong and Chanthaburi orchards**
All year	**Pineapple, papaya, watermelon, banana, coconut**
Cool season	**Thai oranges, rose apple, guava**
Durian	**Often banned in hotels, condos and on public transport**
Where	**Fruit carts, fresh markets, night markets, supermarkets**
Watch for	**Big markups on fruit shakes in beach restaurants**

Quick answer: Pattaya is close to the eastern fruit provinces of Rayong and Chanthaburi, so the big season, roughly April to June, is excellent here: mango, durian, mangosteen and rambutan. Pineapple, papaya, watermelon, bananas and coconuts are sold all year, and the cool season brings Thai oranges, rose apples and guava. Buy cut fruit in a bag from a street cart for a quick snack, or by the kilo at a fresh market, which is cheaper than a supermarket. Durian is a must-try for some and a no for many hotels and condos, so eat it at the stall.

At a glance

FRUIT	THAI	SAY IT LIKE THIS	MAIN SEASON (ABOUT)	WHAT IT'S LIKE
Mango	มะม่วง	mamuang	March to June	Sweet and fragrant; green ones are sour
Durian	ทุเรียน	thurian	April to July, peak May	Rich, creamy, strong smell
Mangosteen	มังคุด	mangkhut	May to August, peak May	Sweet and tangy white segments
Rambutan	เงาะ	ngo	May to August	Hairy red skin, juicy inside
Lychee	ลิ้นจี่	linchee	Around April	Fragrant, grown further north
Longan	ลำไย	lamyai	July to September	Small, sweet, eaten by the bunch
Langsat (longkong)	ลองกอง	longkong	About August to October, peak October	Small, sweet and sour segments
Pomelo	ส้มโอ	som-o	Sources disagree; sold much of the year	Like a mild, sweet grapefruit
Rose apple	ชมพู่	chomphu	Cool season, peak December	Crisp, light and watery
Guava	ฝรั่ง	farang	All year, best in the cool season	Crunchy; eaten with chilli salt
Pineapple	สับปะรด	sapparot	All year	Sweet; try it with salt and chilli
Papaya	มะละกอ	malakor	All year	Soft when ripe; green ones go in som tam
Watermelon	แตงโม	taeng mo	All year	Cheap and cooling
Coconut	มะพร้าว	maphrao	All year	Drink it chilled from the shell

Seasons are rough. They shift with the weather each year, run earlier in the south and later in the north, and sources disagree on some fruits, especially pomelo and mangosteen. The simplest test: when a fruit is piled high and cheap on every cart, it's in season.

What's good right now?

In November and the cool season that follows, expect the year-round fruit plus Thai oranges, rose apples and guava, and the tail end of the langsat season. The famous mid-year fruits (durian, mangosteen, rambutan) are mostly out of season, so they're harder to find and pricier. If you want those, plan a trip for April to June. Mango sticky rice is sold all year, but it's at its best and cheapest from about March to May. See Thai desserts.

The eastern fruit season

Rayong, about an hour or so east, and Chanthaburi, about 2.5 to 3.5 hours east, are famous for durian, mangosteen, rambutan and longkong. Chanthaburi's Tropical Fruit Festival ran from 1 to 5 May in 2026, and Rayong's fruit festival is usually held in late May or early June. In season, some orchards let you visit and eat on site. See Rayong and Chanthaburi.

Durian

- **The smell:** strong enough that many hotels, condos and taxis ban it. A sign with a crossed-out durian means not in here, not that durian is illegal.
- **Public transport:** Bangkok banned durian on its buses in 2023, under a 2014 Transport Ministry rule against strong-smelling items. Airlines and long-distance buses commonly refuse it too, so eat it at the stall or outside.

- **Buying:** sellers will open one and pack the flesh in a tray, so you don't need to deal with the spiky husk. Monthong is the variety you'll see most. Prices vary a lot by variety and grade; at a Bangkok fair in May 2026, export-grade durian sold for about ฿140 to ฿150 a kilo.
- **First try:** share a small tray. It's rich, and opinions are strong.

Where to buy

- **Fruit carts**: cut, chilled fruit in a bag with a stick, usually with a small packet of chilli-salt dip (**phrik kluea**, พริกเกลือ). The quickest snack in town.
- **Fresh markets**: cheapest by the kilo, and best early in the morning. See fresh markets.
- **Night markets**: cut fruit, shakes and coconuts in the evening. See night markets.
- **Supermarkets**: more expensive, but clean, packed and priced. See supermarkets.

Buying tips

- Ask the price per kilo before it's weighed: "**kilo la tao rai?**" (กิโลละเท่าไหร่, how much a kilo?).
- Buy small amounts of tropical fruit you'll eat within a day or two; it ripens fast in the heat.
- Wash fruit you eat with the skin on, and peel the rest.
- Fruit shakes are blended to order. Say "**wan noi**" (หวานน้อย) for less sugar or syrup. See Thai drinks.
- Fruit at a beachfront restaurant can cost several times the market price. Check the menu before you order.

Pro tip: Tourist markups are real. I've seen a ฿40 market smoothie sold for ฿280 at a beach restaurant. At Sophon Market I get a coconut shake for ฿40 (prices as of November 2026).

Fun facts

- **Farang** means both guava and a Western foreigner, so you may hear it a lot.
- Green, sour mango is eaten as a snack with a sweet, salty and chilli dip.
- Thai bananas (**kluay nam wa**) are smaller, sweeter and denser than the bananas many visitors know.

Common questions

When is mango season in Thailand? Roughly March to June, best from about March to May. That's also the season for mango sticky rice.

When is durian season near Pattaya? About April to July, peaking around May in Rayong and Chanthaburi.

What fruit is in season in Pattaya in November? Year-round fruit such as pineapple, papaya, watermelon, bananas, coconuts and guava, plus Thai oranges and rose apples as the cool season starts.

Can I take durian into my hotel? Usually not. Many hotels and condos ban it because of the smell. Eat it at the stall.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Thailand Foundation, a beginner's guide to seasonal Thai fruits (season months and Thai names); TAT News, the fruits of Thailand (May 2025); Pattaya Mail, Chanthaburi Tropical Fruit Festival 2026 (May 2026); Pattaya Mail, Fruits Festival 2026 (May 2026) (durian price); Asia News Network, durian banned on Bangkok buses (May 2023). Fruit guides disagree on exact months, especially for pomelo and mangosteen. Jonny's prices are from his own answers, November 2026.

Try these too

Mango sticky rice and fresh coconut are classics. See Thai dishes to try, street food and a street food night tour.

FOOD & DEALS

Thai Coffee, Tea and Cold Drinks Explained

A guide to Thai drinks in Pattaya: cha yen Thai iced tea, oliang iced coffee, lime tea, fresh coconut, fruit shakes, energy drinks and local beers, how to order less sweet in Thai, and the 2026 alcohol sale rules.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/food-deals/thai-drinks/

Classic	**Cha yen, orange Thai iced tea with milk**
Less sweet	**Say "wan noi" (หวานน้อย)**
Fresh	**Coconut and fruit shakes everywhere**
Local beers	**Leo, Singha and Chang**
Alcohol in shops	**11am to midnight; not on five Buddhist holy days**

Quick answer: Thailand runs on sweet, icy drinks. The classics are **cha yen** (orange Thai iced tea with condensed milk), **oliang** (strong, sweet iced black coffee), **cha manao** (iced lime tea), fresh young coconuts and fruit shakes blended to order. Say **wan noi** for less sweet. The local beers are Leo, Singha and Chang. Shops sell alcohol from 11am to midnight, and most can't sell at all on the five Buddhist holy days, though hotels, licensed entertainment venues and a few others can.

At a glance

DRINK	THAI	WHAT IT IS
Thai iced tea	ชาเย็น (cha yen)	Black tea with condensed and evaporated milk over crushed ice
Iced black tea	ชาดำเย็น (cha dam yen)	The same tea, sweet, no milk
Iced lime tea	ชามะนาว (cha manao)	Sweet black tea with lime juice
Thai iced coffee	โอเลี้ยง (oliang)	Dark coffee blend with roasted grains, sweet, over ice
Iced milk coffee	กาแฟเย็น (kafae yen)	Sweet, milky iced coffee
Fresh coconut	มะพร้าว (maphrao)	A chilled young coconut: drink the water, scoop the flesh
Fruit shake	น้ำปั่น (nam pan)	Fruit blended with ice and syrup

Thai iced tea

Cha yen means "cold tea". It is made from black tea, sweetened condensed milk and evaporated milk, poured over crushed ice. The tea is naturally reddish-brown and turns orange with the milk; some vendors add colouring to make it brighter. The Michelin Guide traces it to tea brought by Chinese merchants in the reign of King Rama V, later made with locally grown tea to suit the heat.

- Street vendors still pour it into a plastic bag or cup of ice to take away.
- **Cha dam yen** is the same tea without milk, and **cha manao** adds lime for a sweet-sharp drink.

Coffee

- **Oliang** is the traditional Thai iced black coffee. The blend is dark-roasted robusta with grains and seeds such as corn, soybeans, rice and sesame, brewed strong through a long cotton filter bag and poured over sugar and crushed ice. The name comes from the Teochew Chinese words for "black" and "cold".
- **Kafae yen** is sweet iced coffee with milk.
- Chain coffee shops (often at petrol stations) and specialty cafés serve espresso drinks too. See cafés and coffee.

Fresh and fruity

- **Fresh coconut**, chilled, with the top cut open and a straw.
- **Fruit shakes** are blended to order from mango, watermelon, pineapple, passion fruit, banana and more. See Thai fruit.
- Shakes are often made with sugar syrup, **nam chueam** (น้ำเชื่อม). Say "**mai sai nam chueam**" for no syrup.
- Bubble tea shops are everywhere too.

Pro tip: Fruit shakes from the Thai restaurants I order from on Grab cost ฿40 to ฿60, and a coconut shake at Sophon Market is ฿40. I've also seen a ฿40 market smoothie sold for ฿280 at a beach restaurant (prices as of November 2026).

How to order it your way

ENGLISH	THAI	SAY IT LIKE THIS
Less sweet	หวานน้อย	wan noi
Not sweet	ไม่หวาน	mai wan

ENGLISH	THAI	SAY IT LIKE THIS
No sugar	ไม่ใส่น้ำตาล	mai sai nam tan
Less ice	น้ำแข็งน้อย	nam khaeng noi
No ice	ไม่ใส่น้ำแข็ง	mai sai nam khaeng
A straw, please	ขอหลอด	kho lot
In a bag, to go	ใส่ถุง	sai thung

“Wan noi” still tastes sweet to most Western visitors. Start there, and go to “mai wan” if it’s still too much. More food and drink phrases: ordering food in Thai.

Factory ice in restaurants and shops is generally fine. In the heat, alternate sweet drinks with plain water. See drinking water and heat and sun safety.

Soft drinks and energy drinks

- Thailand has taxed sugary drinks by sugar content since 2017, raising the rates in phases. By 2023 the Excise Department counted more than 1,800 drinks under the 6 grams per 100 ml tax threshold, up from about 200 before the tax, so 7-Eleven fridges are full of low-sugar versions.
- **Krating Daeng**, a small-bottle Thai energy drink first sold in 1976, is the drink that inspired Red Bull: an Austrian businessman found it in Thailand in 1982 and Red Bull launched in 1987. It is not carbonated. M-150 and Carabao are the other big local brands.
- Electrolyte drinks are sold in convenience stores and help after a long hot day. See hangovers and dehydration.

Beer and alcohol

- **Thai beers:** Boon Rawd Brewery makes Singha and Leo, and ThaiBev makes Chang. Nation Thailand reported in October 2024 that Boon Rawd had about 62 to 63% of the beer market, Leo alone about half, and Chang about 32%.
- Beer is often served with ice in the glass.
- **Sale hours:** shops and restaurants can sell alcohol from 11am to midnight. The old 2pm to 5pm break is gone: a Royal Gazette notice in force from 29 May 2026 set the 11am to midnight window. Licensed entertainment venues follow their own licence hours, and hotels and international airports have exemptions.
- **Buddhist holy days:** on Makha Bucha, Visakha Bucha, Asalha Bucha, the start of Lent and the end of Lent, most shops, 7-Eleven, supermarkets and ordinary restaurants can’t sell alcohol. Hotels, licensed entertainment venues, international airports and some designated tourist-area and event venues are exempt and may sell. Details: Buddhist holidays and alcohol; see also Ok Phansa.
- Bar prices vary a lot. See drink prices. Not drinking? Bars serve soft drinks, mocktails and alcohol-free beer. See a night out without drinking.

Where to buy

Street carts, markets and 7-Eleven are cheapest; beach restaurants and hotel bars cost the most. See street food and night markets.

Common questions

What is Thai iced tea made of? Black tea, sweetened condensed milk and evaporated milk over crushed ice. The orange colour comes from the tea and milk, sometimes boosted with colouring.

How do I order a less sweet drink in Thailand? Say “wan noi” (less sweet) or “mai wan” (not sweet). “Mai sai nam tan” means no sugar.

What time can you buy alcohol in Thailand? Shops sell from 11am to midnight. On the five Buddhist holy days most shops can’t sell at all; hotels and licensed venues can (exemptions in place since 2025).

What is the most popular Thai beer? Leo, made by Boon Rawd, had about half the Thai beer market in 2023, according to the brewer.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Michelin Guide, Thai milk tea explained (April 2025); SEAsia, the story of oliang (October 2026); Nation Thailand, alcohol sale hours set at 11am to midnight (May 2026); Nation Thailand, holy-day exemption list re-issued (November 2026); Nation Thailand, Thai beer market shares (October 2024); Nation Thailand, sugary drinks tax (March 2023); Pattaya Mail, sugar tax since 2017 (January 2023); Wikipedia, Krating Daeng.

FOOD & DEALS

Cooking at Home in Pattaya

Cooking for yourself in Pattaya: where to buy ingredients, what is cheap and what is pricey, the Thai pantry basics, condo kitchen limits, gas and electricity costs, and whether it really saves money.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/food-deals/cooking-at-home/

Cheapest	**Fresh markets for vegetables, fruit, meat and fish**
Everyday shop	**Big C and Lotus's; Makro for bulk**
Pricey	**Imported cheese, butter, beef, wine**
Condo kitchens	**Often a small hob and no oven**
Cooking gas	**฿423 a 15 kg bottle under a 2026 price freeze**

Quick answer: Cooking at home in Pattaya works best if you cook Thai-style with local ingredients: buy vegetables, herbs, fruit, meat and fish at a fresh market, and rice, sauces and household basics at Big C, Lotus's or Makro. Imported cheese, butter, beef and wine cost far more than at home, so keep them for treats. Many condo kitchens have only a small hob and no oven, and for one person street food is often as cheap as cooking. Cooking pays off for health, for families and couples, and on long stays.

At a glance

WHERE	BEST FOR	GOOD TO KNOW
Fresh markets	Vegetables, herbs, fruit, meat, fish	Cheapest; go early, bring small notes and a bag
Big C, Lotus's	Rice, sauces, eggs, household basics	Lowest supermarket prices, small imported range
Makro	Bulk buys, freezer stocking, kitchen kit	Restaurant sizes; better for families
Tops, Foodland	A weekly shop with some imported lines	Mid-range prices; Foodland is open 24 hours
Villa Market, Friendship	Cheese, deli, Western brands	The widest imported range, at the highest prices
7-Eleven, FamilyMart	Eggs, milk, bread, a quick top-up	On almost every corner
Grab, LINE MAN, supermarket apps	Groceries to your door	Handy on hot or rainy days

Fresh markets

Fresh markets are the cheapest place for vegetables, herbs, fruit, meat and fish, and the only place to find some Thai herbs fresh. Easy ones to try are the Soi Buakhao market and the Wat Chai Mongkhon market in South Pattaya; for seafood, the Lan Pho market in Naklua. Go early, when meat and fish are freshest and the air is cooler, bring small notes, and point and ask “tao rai?” (how much?). Prices are per kilo, per piece or per bag, and mostly fixed. Full details are on fresh markets and the Naklua fish market.

Supermarkets

- **Big C and Lotus's** are the everyday choice: everything for Thai cooking at fair prices, plus pans, rice cookers and cleaning supplies.
- **Makro** sells in bulk and restaurant sizes. It suits families and people stocking a freezer more than a solo shop.
- **Tops and Foodland** are good mid-range supermarkets with some imported food.
- **Villa Market and Friendship** stock the most imported food: cheese, cereals, European pasta, deli meats and wine.

See supermarkets and groceries for branches, opening hours and delivery.

Cheap and pricey

USUALLY CHEAP	USUALLY PRICEY
Jasmine rice, noodles, eggs	Imported cheese and butter
Chicken and pork	Imported beef and lamb
Local vegetables and herbs	Wine and spirits
Tropical fruit in season	Western breakfast cereals
Tofu, local fish, squid	Olive oil and European pasta sauces

Cheese, wine and spirits carry heavy taxes, which is why the gap is so big. Thai brands of milk, yoghurt and bread are fine for everyday use, but many people from the West find they don't taste quite the same. See Western food.

Thai pantry basics

- **Sauces:** fish sauce (nam pla), oyster sauce, light soy sauce, and a bottle of chilli sauce.
- **Fresh:** garlic, shallots, small bird's eye chillies, limes, lemongrass, galangal and kaffir lime leaves.
- **Herbs:** holy basil (kra pao) for stir-fries, Thai basil (horapha) for curries.
- **Dry goods:** jasmine rice, rice noodles, palm sugar, and curry paste, sold by weight at markets or in packets.
- **Kit:** a rice cooker and a wok or deep frying pan cover most Thai cooking.

Easy first dishes

- **Pad kra pao:** minced pork or chicken stir-fried with garlic, chilli and holy basil, with rice and a fried egg.
- **Green curry:** a market curry paste, coconut milk, chicken, Thai aubergine and basil.
- **Tom yum:** lemongrass, galangal, lime leaves, chilli, mushrooms and prawns.
- **Fried rice:** the best use for yesterday's rice.

Learn the basics in a Thai cooking class, and see Thai curries and Thai dishes to try for ideas.

Condo kitchens

- Many condos, especially studios, have a small electric hob, a fridge and no oven. An air fryer, a rice cooker and a microwave go a long way.
- Ask before you sign a lease what the kitchen has, and check your building's rules on cooking smells and gas bottles. See condo living rules.
- If you cook with gas, the standard household bottle is 15 kg. The government held household cooking gas at **฿423 a 15 kg bottle** under a price freeze that ran to 31 October 2026, so check the current price when you reorder.
- Electricity matters more than you'd think if you cook on an electric hob or oven. The state rate averages about ฿3.86 a unit from September 2026, but many condos and landlords charge ฿5 to ฿8. See utilities and bills.
- Kitchen kit is cheap at Big C, Lotus's and Makro, or buy second-hand. See second-hand buy and sell.

Food safety in the heat

- Wash fruit and vegetables well and peel what you can.
- Get meat and fish into the fridge quickly; a cool bag helps.
- Don't drink the tap water. Use bottled or refill water for drinking, and see drinking water.
- Food left out draws ants fast. Keep the kitchen clean and see bugs and pests.
- Take food scraps out often. See rubbish and recycling.

Does cooking save money?

Not always. A Thai street meal often costs about ฿50 to ฿80, and by the time you've bought oil, sauces, gas or power and a few things you don't use up, cooking for one can cost the same or more. Cooking saves money when you cook for two or more, cook in batches, and stick to Thai ingredients. It saves the most when you'd otherwise eat Western food out. Buy local brands and seasonal produce (see Thai fruit), and watch the supermarkets' weekly promotions. See cheap eats and cost of living.

Pro tip: on a tight budget he lives on meals and snacks from 7-Eleven, Tops and Mini Big C through the day, then one high-protein meal with a few eggs and chicken.

Common questions

Is it cheaper to cook or eat out in Pattaya? For one person, Thai street food is often as cheap as cooking. Cooking wins for couples and families, for batch cooking, and against Western restaurant prices.

Do Pattaya condos have kitchens? Most have at least a small hob and a fridge, but many have no oven. Ask before you sign.

Can I use a gas stove in my condo? It depends on the building. Check the house rules, and ask the office before you bring in a gas bottle.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Nation Thailand, LPG held at ฿423 per 15 kg cylinder until 31 October 2026 (7 August 2026; no later extension found); our own supermarkets and groceries, fresh markets and utilities and bills pages, each with their own sources. Prices change often; check before you rely on them.

FOOD & DEALS

Indian Food in Pattaya

Pattaya has one of Thailand's biggest Indian food scenes: family curry houses on Central Road, a Michelin Guide listed restaurant on Thappraya Road, vegetarian and halal options, what to order and how delivery works.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/food-deals/indian-food/

Where	**Central Road, Second Road, South Pattaya, Thappraya Road**
Longest running	**Ali Baba on Central Road, open since 1981**
Michelin Guide listed	**Indian By Nature, Thappraya Road**
Vegetarian	**Easy almost everywhere; fully vegetarian places too**
Try	**Thali, biryani, dosa, butter chicken**
Delivery	**Most restaurants are on the delivery apps**

Quick answer: Pattaya has one of the biggest Indian food scenes in Thailand. The owner of Ali Baba on Central Road, open since 1981, estimated in 2025 that there are around 200 Indian restaurants in or near the city. You'll find North Indian curries, tandoori and naan, South Indian dosa and thali sets, and long vegetarian menus almost everywhere. Indian By Nature on Thappraya Road is listed in the Michelin Guide. Most places deliver through the food apps, which is handy late at night or in the rain.

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Main areas	Central Road, Second Road, South Pattaya, the beachfront roads, Thappraya Road
Longest running	Ali Baba on Central Road, run by the same family since 1981
Michelin Guide listed	Indian By Nature, Thappraya Road (North Indian staples, Kerala fish curry, thali for one)
Vegetarian	Easy: nearly every menu has a big meat-free section, and some places are fully vegetarian
Halal and Jain	Available at some restaurants; ask, or look for a halal certificate
Delivery	Most Indian restaurants are on the delivery apps

Why there is so much Indian food

India is now one of Thailand's biggest visitor markets. Thailand had about 32.97 million international visitors in 2025, and India sent about 2.49 million of them, third after Malaysia and China, according to Pattaya Mail. Many Indian visitors come to Pattaya on group tours with meals booked in advance, and the city's mid-range and larger hotels host Indian group tours, business events and weddings.

Restaurants followed. Pattaya Mail reported in May 2026 on a growing number of Indian and South Asian restaurants across Central Pattaya, South Pattaya and the beachfront roads, serving long-stay residents and visitors from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and the Middle East. Operators told the paper that much of their trade is delivery to hotels, group bookings and late-night orders rather than walk-in diners, which is why some places look quiet in the daytime.

There is an older community too. Ali Baba opened on Central Road in November 1981 and is still run by the same family; its owner told Pattaya Mail in September 2025 that some evenings his diners are mostly Indian and others mostly European.

Where to look

- **Central Road and Second Road.** The biggest choice is in Central Pattaya, including Ali Baba on Central Road. See Pattaya Klang (Central Road) and Second Road.
- **South Pattaya and the beachfront roads.** Pattaya Mail names these as areas where new Indian restaurants keep opening. See Beach Road.
- **Thappraya Road.** Indian By Nature is on the road between Pattaya and Jomtien. The Michelin Guide lists it for dishes from several regions of India, including chicken tikka, dal makhani and a Kerala fish curry in a tangy tamarind sauce, with thali sets for solo diners. See Thappraya Road.
- **Vegetarian only.** Govindam on Central Road is a vegetarian Indian restaurant serving North and South Indian food. Its HappyCow listing has reviews up to April 2026 and notes that vegan dishes aren't marked, so ask.
- **Everywhere else.** Smaller Indian restaurants are spread across other neighbourhoods. The delivery apps are the quickest way to see what is near you.

What to order

- **North Indian:** butter chicken, chicken tikka masala, dal makhani (slow-cooked black lentils), palak paneer (spinach with fresh cheese) and rogan josh.
- **Tandoori and kebabs:** chicken tikka, tandoori chicken and seekh kebab, cooked in a clay oven. Good with naan and raita (a yoghurt dip).
- **South Indian:** dosa (a big, thin, crispy rice and lentil pancake), idli (steamed rice cakes) and uttapam, served with sambar and chutneys. Lighter than North Indian food and often vegetarian.
- **Thali:** a tray of small portions, usually a couple of curries, dal, rice, bread, pickle and something sweet. The best way to try several dishes if you're eating alone.
- **Biryani:** rice layered with spiced meat or vegetables, a meal on its own.

- **Drinks and sweets:** mango lassi, masala chai, gulab jamun and kulfi.

Vegetarian, vegan, Jain and halal

- Indian restaurants are among the easiest places in Pattaya to eat vegetarian. Paneer, chickpea, lentil, potato and vegetable curries are standard. See vegetarian and vegan food.
- Vegans should ask: many curries use ghee (clarified butter), cream, yoghurt or paneer. Ask for oil instead of ghee and no cream.
- Jain food (no onion, garlic or root vegetables) is offered by some restaurants, especially vegetarian ones. Ask before ordering rather than assuming.
- Some Indian restaurants serve halal meat. If it matters to you, look for a halal certificate on the wall or ask; don't assume from the menu alone.

Ordering tips

- Rice and bread are usually ordered separately. A curry, a rice and a naan is often enough for two light eaters.
- Spice levels vary from kitchen to kitchen. Say mild, medium or hot when you order. For Thai dishes, see ordering food in Thai for "not spicy" in Thai.
- Check whether menu prices include service charge and VAT. Sit-down restaurants sometimes add them at the end. See tipping in Thailand.
- Indian food usually costs more than Thai street food and less than most Western restaurants. For the cheapest meals in town, see cheap eats.

Delivery

Most Indian restaurants deliver through the food apps. Menu prices on the apps can be higher than in the restaurant, and delivery fees rise with distance and in the rain. Choose places with plenty of recent reviews, and add your spice level in the order notes. See food delivery apps.

Diwali in Pattaya

Diwali, the festival of lights, brings Indian cultural events to Pattaya each autumn. See Diwali in Pattaya.

Common questions

Is there good Indian food in Pattaya? Yes. The city has one of Thailand's largest Indian restaurant scenes, from a family curry house running since 1981 to a Michelin Guide listed restaurant.

Where is the best area for Indian food in Pattaya? Central Road and Second Road have the most choice. Thappraya Road, between Pattaya and Jomtien, has Indian By Nature.

Is Indian food in Pattaya good for vegetarians? Very. Almost every menu has a large vegetarian section, and some restaurants are fully vegetarian. Vegans should ask about ghee and cream.

Is Indian food in Pattaya halal? Some restaurants are. Look for a halal certificate or ask; it varies by restaurant.

Do Indian restaurants in Pattaya deliver? Most do, through the food delivery apps.

Also try

- Vegetarian and vegan, Japanese and Korean food and Western food.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Michelin Guide, Indian By Nature; Pattaya Mail, interview with Ali Baba's owner (September 2025); Pattaya Mail, Indian restaurant expansion across Pattaya (May 2026); Pattaya Mail, the Indian market and Pattaya tourism (July 2026); HappyCow, Govindam. Opening hours change; check a restaurant's own listing before a special trip.

FOOD & DEALS

Japanese and Korean Food in Pattaya

Where to find sushi, ramen, Korean barbecue and more in Pattaya, from mall chains to buffets, with 2026 price ranges, buffet rules, and Si Racha's Japanese food scene nearby.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/food-deals/japanese-korean-food/

Easy	**Mall food courts and chains**
Value	**All-you-can-eat shabu, sushi and Korean BBQ buffets**
Snacks	**Onigiri and Korean noodles at convenience stores**
Day trip	**Si Racha has many Japanese restaurants**

Japanese and Korean food are hugely popular in Thailand, and Pattaya has plenty of both.

Quick answer: The easiest place to start is the big malls, where Thai-run Japanese and Korean chains serve set meals, ramen, sushi and buffets in air-conditioned comfort. A Japanese set meal at a chain typically costs about ฿230 to ฿360 in 2026, and all-you-can-eat shabu or Korean barbecue buffets run from about ฿430 to ฿1,500 net, depending on the tier. For cheap snacks, 7-Eleven sells onigiri and Korean noodles. For the widest choice, Si Racha, 40 to 60 minutes north, has a large Japanese community.

What it costs (2026)

MEAL	TYPICAL PRICE	NOTES
—	—	—
Japanese set meal at a mall chain	About ฿230 to ฿360	Rice, miso soup and sides included
Shabu buffet	About ฿430 to ฿640 net	Several tiers; drinks and dessert often included; time limit
Korean BBQ buffet	About ฿600 to ฿1,500 net	Price depends on the meat tier
Onigiri or kimbap at a convenience store	Cheap snack prices	Good for a quick lunch
Moo kata (Thai grill buffet)	Usually cheaper than Korean BBQ	See below

Prices come from 2026 menu and delivery listings for Thai chains such as Yayoi, Shabushi and Sukishi (see Sources). "Net" means including service charge and VAT; menus often show a lower "++" price first. Branch prices and promotions vary, so check the menu before ordering.

Japanese

- Sushi, ramen, tonkatsu and curry rice in the malls. See shopping malls.
- Set meals are the best value: a main, rice, soup and small sides on one tray.
- All-you-can-eat sushi and shabu buffets are popular and good value, especially for groups.
- Independent Japanese restaurants, often run by or for Japanese residents, are spread across the city and cost more than the chains.
- For even more choice, Si Racha nearby has a large Japanese community. See Si Racha day trip.

Korean

- Korean barbecue restaurants grill meat at your table, often as a buffet.
- Fried chicken, bibimbap, tteokbokki and noodle dishes in malls and cafés.
- Korean cafés with bingsu (shaved-ice desserts) and pastries are popular with young Thais.
- Korean supermarket shelves in the big malls stock ramyeon, kimchi, gochujang and snacks.

Where to look

- **Central Festival on Beach Road** and **Terminal 21 at the Dolphin roundabout** have the biggest choice of Japanese and Korean chains, plus food courts.
- **Central Marina** at the north end of Second Road, and the malls along Sukhumvit, have more chain branches and supermarkets with Japanese and Korean shelves.
- **Jomtien and Pratumnak** have smaller independent Japanese restaurants and cafés.
- **Delivery apps** cover most chains if you'd rather eat in.

Opening hours follow the malls, usually from late morning to about 22:00.

How buffets work

- **Pick a tier.** Most chains offer two to four price levels; higher tiers add better meat, seafood or sushi.
- **Watch the clock.** Many buffets give you about 90 minutes from when you sit down.

- **Leftovers cost extra.** Some buffets charge for food left on the plate. Order small rounds.
- **Everyone pays the same tier.** Usually the whole table must choose the same level.
- **Ask about drinks.** Soft drinks and dessert are included at some tiers, not others.

Quick snacks

7-Eleven and other convenience stores sell onigiri, sandwiches and Korean instant noodles, with hot water to make them in the shop. Supermarkets sell sushi trays and kimchi; sushi is often marked down in the evening. See supermarkets.

Thai-style grill

If you like Korean barbecue, try the Thai version: moo kata, a grill dome with soup in the moat around it, usually as a cheap buffet. It's a great group dinner.

Tips

- Lunchtime set menus are often cheaper than dinner.
- Mall restaurants get busy on weekend evenings; go early or late.
- If you have allergies, show a written note in Thai; staff in chains are used to it, but sauces often contain soy, sesame or shellfish.
- Delivery apps carry most chains. See food delivery apps.

Common questions

Where can I find Japanese food in Pattaya? In every big mall, plus independent restaurants around the city. Si Racha, north of Pattaya, has the biggest choice.

How much is a Korean BBQ buffet in Pattaya? About ฿600 to ฿1,500 per person net at the big chains in 2026, depending on the tier.

Are Japanese restaurants expensive in Pattaya? Chain set meals are about ฿230 to ฿360. Independent and high-end places cost much more.

What's the difference between Korean BBQ and moo kata? Korean BBQ grills meat on a flat or grated grill; moo kata uses a dome with soup around it, and is usually cheaper.

More food

See Western food and Indian food.

Sources

- Wongnai delivery listings for Yayoi branches (set meals such as ฿234 and ฿360). Checked November 2026.
- Menufans listings for Shabushi (buffet tiers about ฿427 to ฿641 net, 90 minutes, drinks and dessert included) and Sukishi (tiers about ฿603 to ฿1,483 net). Checked November 2026; branch prices vary.
- Our moo kata and Si Racha pages.

FOOD & DEALS

Food Delivery Apps in Pattaya

How food delivery works in Pattaya: Grab, LINE MAN and the smaller apps, paying by cash, card or QR, fees and subscriptions, condo drop-offs, tipping riders, and Jonny's own Grab orders.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/food-deals/food-delivery-apps/

Main apps	**Grab and LINE MAN; ShopeeFood and Robinhood are smaller**
foodpanda	**Left Thailand on 23 May 2025**
Pay	**Cash, card or wallet on Grab**
Condos	**Meet the rider at the lobby**
Save	**Saver delivery, pick-up, promo codes, subscriptions**

Quick answer: Almost every restaurant in Pattaya delivers, from street food stalls to pizza, and you don't need any Thai to order. **Grab** and **LINE MAN** are the two big apps; **ShopeeFood** and **Robinhood** are smaller, and foodpanda left Thailand in May 2025. Grab is the easiest place to start if you already use it for rides: you can pay by cash, card or wallet, choose a cheaper Saver delivery, or order up to two days ahead. Expect menu prices to be a little higher than in the shop, fees to rise with distance and rain, and to meet the rider in the lobby if you live in a condo.

At a glance

APP	GOOD TO KNOW
Grab	Food, groceries and rides in one app; cash, card or GrabPay wallet; Saver, Standard or Priority delivery
LINE MAN	Food, Mart groceries, rides, parcels and online pharmacist; LINE MAN VIP ฿19 a month or ฿99 a year
ShopeeFood	Smaller, linked to the Shopee shopping app
Robinhood	Smaller Thai app; took over foodpanda's restaurant and rider partners in 2025
foodpanda	Closed in Thailand on 23 May 2025; old accounts no longer work

Grab

- Grab is the app most visitors already have for rides, and its food service runs 24 hours.
- **Paying:** cash, debit or credit card, or the GrabPay wallet. If you pay cash with a big note, send the rider a message in the app chat first so they can bring change.
- **Delivery options:** Saver (the cheapest), Standard and Priority. The delivery fee is based on the distance from the restaurant to you.
- **Order for later:** schedule an order up to two days ahead.
- **Pick-up:** order in the app and collect it yourself to skip the delivery fee and the wait.
- **Several restaurants:** Grab lets you order from up to four restaurants in one order.
- **GrabUnlimited** is Grab's subscription for regular users; check the current price and perks in the app.

LINE MAN

- LINE MAN covers all 77 Thai provinces and lists over 700,000 restaurants.
- It also does **Mart** (groceries and household goods), **Ride** (cars, taxis and motorbikes) and **Messenger** (parcels), plus an online pharmacist service.
- Delivery fees start from ฿0 but depend on the area, the restaurant and the time.
- **LINE MAN VIP** costs ฿19 a month or ฿99 a year and gives discount coupons across its services.

The smaller apps

- **Robinhood** is still running. When foodpanda shut down on 23 May 2025, Robinhood took on its restaurant and rider partners and said it was making the app more English-friendly. In mid-2026 it offered extra discounts and delivery coupons during the government's co-payment scheme.
- **ShopeeFood** runs in Thailand alongside the Shopee shopping app.
- Check which restaurants near you are listed before you rely on a smaller app.

Pro tip (prices as of Nov 2026): my usual Grab orders are from Thai restaurants: pad kra pao for ฿70 to ฿100 and fruit shakes for ฿40 to ฿60. Ti Lek Im Aroi is a great one. For a treat, a big Cold Stone cup comes to ฿285 delivered.

Jonny's Grab picks

These are the Grab Food restaurants Jonny orders from. As far as he knows, none has a shop you can walk into, so search the names in the Grab app.

RESTAURANT	HIS ORDER	PRICE (NOV 2026)
Thai restaurants on Grab, like Ti Lek Im Aroi	Pad kra pao, fruit shakes	฿70 to ฿100, ฿40 to ฿60
Chez Mony	4 cheese pizza and creamy chicken spaghetti parmesan	฿550
Baantha	Ribeye beef steak bowl, miso soup	฿275 to ฿570 by size, ฿35
Hungry Panda	American Chinese: fried rice, 3 crab rangoon, sesame chicken	฿313 delivered
Aroi Aroi	American-ish pasta, great desserts and bread	Varies

Paying

- Card or wallet payment is easiest, and you don't need change.
- Cash on delivery is common. Have small notes ready.
- Some apps and restaurants take Thai QR payment from a Thai bank app. See QR payments and cash or card.
- Check the total before you confirm: menu prices plus the delivery fee and any other charges the app shows.

Getting it delivered

- Set your pin carefully. Pattaya sois and condo towers can confuse riders, so drop the pin at the right entrance, not just the building.
- Write your building name, tower and room number in the note, and a landmark if you can.
- In most condos riders can't go up. Meet them at the lobby or ask security to hold the food. See condo living rules.
- Keep your phone on: riders usually call or message when they arrive. A Thai number helps. See SIM cards and eSIMs.
- Hotels have their own rules for deliveries, so ask reception.

Ordering tips

- Add "**mai phet**" (not spicy) or "**phet nit noi**" (a little spicy) to the note. See ordering food in Thai.
- If a dish has no English name, the menu photo is a good guide.
- Allergies: say exactly what you can't eat, and don't rely on the note alone if it's serious.
- Rain and busy times can mean slower deliveries and higher fees. Order earlier in the rainy season. See rainy season survival.

Saving money

Choose Saver delivery or pick the food up yourself, order from places close to you, use promo codes, and compare Grab with LINE MAN for the same restaurant. A subscription only pays if you order often. Street food and food courts are still cheaper than delivery. See cheap eats.

Tipping riders

Tipping isn't required, but a small cash tip is appreciated, especially in rain or when the rider has had to find a hard-to-reach building. See tipping in Thailand.

Common questions

Which food delivery app is best in Pattaya? Grab and LINE MAN have the most restaurants. Grab is easiest if you already use it for rides; compare both for your favourite places.

Is foodpanda still in Thailand? No. foodpanda stopped operating in Thailand on 23 May 2025.

Can I pay cash for food delivery? Yes, Grab takes cash on delivery. Have small notes ready, or message the rider if you only have a big note.

Can I get food delivered late at night? Yes, in central areas, though choice shrinks after midnight. See late night food.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Grab Thailand, GrabFood (official: payments, Saver/Standard/Priority, order up to 2 days ahead, pick-up, up to 4 restaurants); LINE MAN Wongnai, LINE MAN services (official: 77 provinces, 700,000+ restaurants, VIP ฿19 a month or ฿99 a year); The Nation, Robinhood and foodpanda agreement (20 May 2025, foodpanda closing by 23 May); Pattaya Mail, Robinhood Food during the 2026 stimulus scheme (5 July 2026). Jonny's restaurant picks and prices are his own, as of November 2026. App fees and features change often; check in the app.

FOOD & DEALS

Moo Kata: Thai BBQ and Hotpot

Moo kata is Thailand's favourite social meal: grill meat on a domed pan while soup bubbles around the edge. How it works, what buffets cost, how to eat it, and Jonny's own pick in Pattaya.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/food-deals/moo-kata/

What	**Grill on a dome, soup in the moat around it**
Style	**Mostly all-you-can-eat buffets, often with a time limit**
Typical price	**About ฿199 to ฿299 a head (Bangkok Post, 2026)**
Best for	**Groups and evenings**
Tip	**Grease the dome with pork fat first**

Quick answer: Moo kata (หมูกระทะ, "pork pan") is Thai barbecue and hotpot in one: you grill thin meat on a domed pan over charcoal or gas while vegetables, noodles and eggs cook in soup in the moat around it. Most places are all-you-can-eat buffets, typically about ฿199 to ฿299 a head according to a 2026 Bangkok Post report, often with a time limit and drinks extra. It is cheap, social and best with friends.

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
The meal	Grill on top, soup around the edge, dipping sauce on the side
Price	Buffets usually about ฿199 to ฿299 a person; some charge by weight or by plate
Time	Most buffets have a time limit; ask when the clock starts
Drinks	Often extra; some buffets include soft drinks
Best for	Groups of two or more, evenings
Bring	Clothes you don't mind smelling of smoke

How it works

- A domed pan sits over a bucket of charcoal or a gas burner in the middle of the table. Meat goes on the dome; the moat around it holds a light soup.
- Start by rubbing a piece of pork fat on top of the dome so nothing sticks.
- Lay thin slices of meat on the dome. The juices run down into the soup, which gets richer as the meal goes on.
- Drop vegetables, glass noodles, mushrooms, fish balls and eggs into the soup. By the end, the broth is the best part.
- Ask staff to top up the soup when it runs low.

How the buffets work

- At a buffet you pay one price per person, take plates from the counter and grill at your table.
- Most have a time limit. Ask when the clock starts, and don't let it rush you into eating too fast.
- Some buffets charge for food left on your plates, so take small amounts and go back.
- Drinks, ice and dessert may be extra. Check the price board before you sit down.
- Not every place is a buffet. Some sell sets for two or charge by weight or by plate, which can work out cheaper if you don't eat much.

Pro tip (prices as of Nov 2026): Mr. Nova Mookata is the best Thai barbecue place in Pattaya in my book. It's buffet style and the price depends on weight. I pay about ฿175 to ฿250 with water, and in my October 2026 ride video it came to about ฿350 for two people with a couple of drinks. It's basically all you can eat. Not sponsored.

What to order

- **Pork** is the classic, in thin slices, often marinated.
- **Chicken, beef and seafood** such as prawns and squid are common, depending on the price level.
- **For the soup:** morning glory, Chinese cabbage, glass noodles, mushrooms, eggs, fish balls and crab sticks.
- Vegetarians can make a meal of the soup side, but the dome is greased with pork fat. See vegetarian and vegan food.

The dipping sauce

- The classic is **nam jim suki** (น้ำจิ้มสุกี้), a chilli-based sauce that is sweet, sour and garlicky.
- Seafood often comes with **nam jim seafood**, a sharp green sauce of lime, chilli and garlic.
- Many places let you add garlic, chilli and lime to adjust the heat. Taste before you load up. For "not spicy", say **mai phet**. See ordering food in Thai.

Tips for a good night

- Go with friends. It is a group meal, and everyone pays the same at a buffet, so there is no awkward bill splitting.
- Cook in small batches so the dome doesn't burn.
- Wear clothes you don't mind smelling of smoke, and expect heat at the table on hot evenings.
- Moo kata places tend to be big, open-air restaurants, busy with Thai families and groups of friends in the evening.
- Planning a group dinner? See the group trip planner.

Food safety

- Cook pork and chicken all the way through. Pork in particular must not be eaten pink.
- Use one set of tongs or chopsticks for raw meat and another for eating. Ask for a separate pair if you need one.
- Choose busy places where meat is kept cold and moves fast.
- Upset stomach afterwards? See food poisoning.
- It is a rich meal: lots of protein, fat and salty marinade. A treat rather than every night.

Common questions

What does moo kata mean? Moo (หมู) is pork and kata (กระทะ) is pan, so it means "pork pan". It is also spelled mookata, mu kratha or moo krata.

Is moo kata Korean? It looks like a mix of Korean barbecue and a Chinese or Japanese hotpot, but it is a Thai meal that became popular in Thailand in the late 20th century.

How much does moo kata cost in Pattaya? Buffets are typically about ฿199 to ฿299 a person, with drinks often extra. Jonny pays about ฿175 to ฿250 at his favourite place.

Can I go alone? Yes, though it is more fun in a group. A set for one or a pay-by-weight place makes more sense than a buffet if you don't eat much.

More food

See Japanese and Korean food, cheap eats and Thai dishes to try.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Bangkok Post, why Thais can't get enough of moo kratha (1 May 2026, buffet price range, time limits, hygiene); Wikipedia, mu kratha (name, equipment, sauces). Prices vary by restaurant; check the board before you sit down.

Related guides

- Isaan Food: Som Tam, Larb and Grilled Chicken
- Cafés & Coffee in Pattaya
- Thai Cooking Classes in Pattaya
- Vegetarian and Vegan Food in Pattaya

FOOD & DEALS

Street Food in Pattaya

What to eat from Pattaya's street stalls and markets, what it costs, where to find the best of it, the new Thai Street Gold Star app, how to order and pay, and how to eat safely.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/food-deals/street-food/

Typical dish	**About ฿40 to ฿100**
Grilled pork skewer	**About ฿10 to ฿15**
Fresh smoothie	**About ฿40 to ฿60 at markets**
Best areas	**Soi Buakhao, night markets, Thepprasit**
New in 2026	**Thai Street Gold Star app lists certified vendors**
Paying	**Cash in small notes; some stalls take Thai QR**

Quick answer: Street food is one of the best things about Pattaya: cheap, fast and often better than the restaurants. Most stalls cook one or two dishes and do them very well. Expect about ฿40 to ฿100 for a plate or bowl, ฿10 to ฿15 for a grilled skewer, and more on Beach Road and Walking Street. The best areas are Soi Buakhao, the night markets and any side soi with locals queuing. Pick busy stalls that cook to order, carry small notes, and say **mai phet** if you don't want it spicy. Since July 2026 a government app, Thai Street Gold Star, lists certified vendors in Pattaya.

At a glance

DISH	THAI	WHAT IT IS	TYPICAL PRICE (ABOUT)
Pad kra pao	ผัดกะเพรา	Holy basil stir-fry on rice; a fried egg costs a little extra	฿35 to ฿60
Khao man gai	ข้าวมันไก่	Poached chicken on rice cooked in chicken stock	฿40 to ฿60
Som tam	ส้มตำ	Green papaya salad, pounded to order	฿40 to ฿60
Moo ping	หมูปิ้ง	Grilled marinated pork skewers	฿10 to ฿15 a stick
Noodle soup	ก๋วยเตี๋ยว	Pick the noodle and broth, season it yourself	฿40 to ฿60
Pad thai	ผัดไทย	Stir-fried rice noodles	฿50 to ฿80
Mango sticky rice	ข้าวเหนียวมะม่วง	Mango with coconut sticky rice	฿60 to ฿100
Fruit shake	น้ำปั่น	Fresh fruit blended with ice	฿40 to ฿60

Prices are rough guides for central Pattaya in 2026; tourist streets charge more. What each dish is and how hot it gets: Thai dishes to try, noodle dishes and Isaan food.

What to look for

- **Curry-on-rice shops** (**khao gaeng**): trays of ready-made curries and stir-fries; point at one or two and get them over rice. Cheap and quick at lunchtime. See Thai curries.
- **Grills**: pork, chicken and meatball skewers, often with a small bag of sticky rice. A classic breakfast you can eat walking.
- **Isaan carts**: som tam, grilled chicken and sticky rice, best shared.
- **Noodle shops and carts**: say **nam** (with soup) or **haeng** (dry), then season from the jars on the table.
- **Snacks and sweets**: roti, coconut pancakes and cut fruit. See Thai desserts and Thai fruit.

Where to find it

- **Soi Buakhao:** stalls along the whole street and around the market, from breakfast to late at night.
- **Night markets:** Thepprasit (busiest Friday to Sunday) has the biggest food section; Jomtien night market is by the beach; Runway and Sophon stay open until about 1am to 2am. Times and details are on the night markets page.
- **Mall food courts:** the same dishes with air conditioning, clear prices and a card or coupon system.
- **Fresh markets** in the morning for breakfast and Thai sweets. See Thai fresh markets.
- **Side sois everywhere:** look for plastic stools and a queue of locals.

Late at night, see late night food.

The Thai Street Gold Star app

In July 2026 Thailand's Office of Small and Medium Enterprises Promotion (OSMEP) launched **Thai Street Gold Star**, an app and certification for street vendors, with Suan Dusit University. Vendors are assessed on food safety and hygiene, signature dishes and service, and the app shows certified stalls, recommended dishes and directions. The first rollout covers Bangkok, Pattaya and Chiang Mai. Many good stalls won't be on it yet.

Eating safely

- Choose busy stalls where food is cooked fresh in front of you, and skip trays that have sat in the sun.
- Ice in restaurants and at stalls is usually factory-made tube or cube ice and is generally fine.
- Drink bottled or filtered water. See drinking water.
- Go easy on raw dishes at first; see Isaan food for the ones to skip.
- If your stomach complains, see food poisoning and pharmacies, and see a doctor if it is severe or lasts.

Ordering and paying

- Point at what you want and say **ao an nee** (เอาอันนี้, I'll take this one), or show a number with your fingers.
- If there is no price on display, ask **tao rai?** (เท่าไหร่, how much?) before you order.
- Spice: **mai phet** (ไม่เผ็ด) not spicy, **phet nit noi** (เผ็ดนิดหน่อย) a little. Takeaway: **sai thung** (ใส่ถุง).
- Carry ฿20 and ฿100 notes; many stalls can't change ฿1,000. Some take Thai QR payments. See QR payments.

More phrases: ordering food in Thai.

Prices and tourist markups

Stalls in the sois and markets are the cheap end, mall food courts are close behind, and anything on Beach Road with a sea view or a foreign menu costs much more. In March 2026 Pattaya Mail reported that food prices in the city had stayed fairly stable, with some vendors trimming portions rather than raising prices.

Pro tip: At the mall food courts, duck noodles at Central Marina are about ฿60 and most meals are $2 to $3. Foreign-themed places on the beach are ฿200 to ฿500 a meal. I've also seen a ฿40 market smoothie sold for ฿280 at a beach restaurant. At Sophon Market, yakisoba is ฿65 and a coconut shake ฿40 (prices from October and November 2026).

Street food etiquette

- Order, sit at any free stool, and pay when you finish unless the vendor asks first.
- Sharing tables is normal at busy times.
- Return trays or plates if there is a place for them, and use the bins.
- Stalls move. In 2026 Pattaya City has run operations to clear footpaths and public land, including behind Wat Chai Mongkhon market in February, so a stall you liked may have shifted a few metres or onto a side soi. Leave the footpath clear when you sit down.

Vegetarian and allergies

- Vegetarian food is **jay** (เจ), sold under yellow flags with red lettering. See vegetarian and vegan.
- Fish sauce, shrimp paste and peanuts are in many dishes. With a serious allergy, carry a card in Thai and keep your own medicine with you.

Common questions

How much does street food cost in Pattaya? About ฿40 to ฿100 for a plate or bowl, ฿10 to ฿15 for a skewer and about ฿40 to ฿60 for a market fruit shake, more in tourist areas.

Where is the best street food in Pattaya? Soi Buakhao, the Thepprasit night market at weekends, and the side sois of Central Pattaya where locals eat lunch. Mall food courts are the easiest start.

Is Pattaya street food safe? Busy stalls that cook to order are generally fine. Drink bottled or filtered water and go slowly with raw and fermented dishes.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: The Star (The Nation/ANN), Thai Street Gold Star app launched, 27 July 2026; Pattaya Mail, food prices stay stable (9 March 2026); Pattaya Mail, footpath enforcement (11 January 2026); Pattaya Mail, Wat Chai Mongkol market operation (26 February 2026). Prices in the table are rough guides; Jonny's are his own.

Plan a food night

- Street food night tour
- Cheap eats
- Late night food
- Moo kata

FOOD & DEALS

Thai Cooking Classes in Pattaya

Thai cooking classes in Pattaya: the schools and hotel kitchens that run them, what a class includes, how long it takes, what it costs, and how to choose and book.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/food-deals/thai-cooking-classes/

Length	**About 1 to 5 hours; most half-day classes 3 to 4**
Dishes	**Usually 3 to 5, eaten at the end**
Price	**Independent schools cheapest; hotel classes cost more**
Example	**Avani Pattaya, private class for two from ฿2,600**
Book	**A day or two ahead; ask about pickup and diets**

Quick answer: A Thai cooking class is one of the best ways to understand Thai food, and you eat everything you make. In Pattaya you can choose a small independent cooking school or a hotel kitchen. Most classes last about three to four hours and cover three to five dishes, such as a curry with a paste you pound yourself, a stir-fry, a soup and a dessert; some start with a market walk. Independent schools are the cheaper option and hotel classes cost more: Avani Pattaya Resort lists a private one-hour class for two from ฿2,600. Book a day or two ahead, and say if you're vegetarian or have allergies.

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Who runs them	Independent cooking schools, hotel kitchens, some attractions
Length	About 1 to 5 hours; most half-day classes 3 to 4
Dishes	Usually 3 to 5, often chosen from a menu
Includes	Ingredients, a cooking station, recipes, eating your dishes
Sometimes includes	A market walk, hotel pickup, an apron or certificate
Price	Few schools publish prices; independent schools are cheapest
Book	A day or two ahead, by website, LINE or a booking site
Good for	Beginners, couples, families, rainy days

Where to take a class

These are listed in recent sources. Schools change hours and prices, so contact them before you plan your day around one.

- **Happy Chef Cooking School**, Pattaya Klang (Central Pattaya): listed by Pattaya.guide in August 2026 as open since 2007 and known for clear English teaching. A booking-site listing shows a two-hour class where you choose four dishes from twenty, with a twenty-recipe book. That listing showed the class as unavailable in November 2026, so contact the school directly.
- **Happy Home Thai Cookery School**, Pattaya Klang Soi 12: a smaller, more personal school, not connected to Happy Chef (Pattaya.guide, August 2026).
- **Pattaya Cookery School**, Soi Khao Noi, East Pattaya: described as running for over twenty years, with fruit and vegetable carving on top of the usual dishes (Pattaya.guide, August 2026).
- **Nah Pah at the Royal Cliff**, on Pratumnak hill: a teaching kitchen with an herb garden. The hotel says the class runs daily at 3pm and takes about three hours, with recipes to take home, an apron and chef's hat, and private and children's classes on request. No price is published; ask the hotel.
- **Avani Pattaya Resort**, on Beach Road: a private class for two, four Thai dishes in about an hour, listed from ฿2,600 with an apron, recipe book and certificate.
- **Nong Nooch**: Pattaya.guide lists cooking classes as part of the attraction, with a set menu of classic dishes. See Nong Nooch Garden.

What a class includes

- A welcome and a short talk about the herbs and sauces you'll use.
- Often a walk round a local market to learn the ingredients. Ask when you book, because not every class includes one. See fresh markets.
- Hands-on cooking at your own station: three to five dishes in most classes.
- Recipes on paper or sent to your phone.
- Eating your dishes at the end, so come hungry.

What you usually cook

- **A curry**, often green, red or massaman, sometimes with a paste you pound yourself. See Thai curries.
- **A stir-fry** such as pad thai or pad kra pao.
- **A soup** like tom yum or tom kha gai. See Thai soups.
- **A salad or dessert**, such as papaya salad or mango with sticky rice. See Thai desserts.

Prices

Few Pattaya schools publish prices online, so you'll usually need to ask. As a guide, independent schools sit at the lower end and hotel kitchens at the top, and private classes cost more than group classes. Things that change the price:

- How many dishes you cook and how long the class is.
- Group or private.
- Whether a market walk, hotel pickup and drinks are included. If pickup isn't included, add a Bolt, Grab or baht bus ride. See Bolt and Grab.
- If you book through a booking site, read the cancellation terms before you pay.

Choosing a class

- Read recent reviews and look at photos of the kitchen.
- Small groups and your own station mean more cooking and less watching.
- Check the menu: can you choose your dishes?
- Ask whether the market walk and pickup are included.
- Tell the school about allergies, vegetarian or vegan needs and spice level when you book. See vegetarian and vegan.

Good to know

- Wear light clothes and closed shoes. Kitchens are hot, and floors can be wet.
- Morning classes leave the afternoon free; afternoon classes can replace dinner.
- Classes make a good rainy-day plan. See rainy day attractions.
- Children can often join with an adult, and some hotels run children's classes. See Pattaya with kids.
- A one-off class isn't a visa route. The DTV visa can be based on enrolment with a Thai provider for activities including cooking courses, which is a much bigger commitment. See Destination Thailand Visa.

After the class

Try the same dishes at local stalls to compare, and cook them again at home: market curry paste makes it easy. See Thai dishes to try, street food and our cooking at home guide.

Common questions

How much is a Thai cooking class in Pattaya? It varies a lot and few schools publish prices. Independent schools are the cheapest; hotel classes cost more. Avani Pattaya Resort lists a private one-hour class for two from ฿2,600.

How long does a cooking class take? Most take about three to four hours, including eating. Short hotel classes can be about an hour, and longer ones with a market walk up to about five.

Do I need any cooking experience? No. Most classes are made for complete beginners.

Is there a vegetarian option? Usually, if you ask when you book. Fish sauce and shrimp paste are in many recipes, so say exactly what you don't eat.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya.guide, Thai cooking classes in Pattaya (published 9 August 2026; schools, class length, price levels); Royal Cliff, Nah Pah cooking class (official page: daily 3pm, about 3 hours); Avani Pattaya Resort, Thai culinary class (from ฿2,600 for two); Trazy, Happy Chef class listing (two hours, four of twenty dishes; showed as unavailable). Schools change prices and schedules without notice; confirm before you book.

FOOD & DEALS

Naklua Fish Market (Lan Pho)

The Lan Pho seafood market in Naklua: buy prawns, crab and squid by the kilo and have it cooked next door, listed hours, how to buy without overpaying, and what to do if something goes wrong.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/food-deals/naklua-fish-market/

Where	**Lan Pho, Naklua, north of the Dolphin roundabout**
Hours	**Listed daily, about 6am to 6pm**
How it works	**Buy by the kilo, pay a cook shop a small fee per dish**
Market	**Rebuilt by Pattaya City for up to 60 vendors**
Problems	**Call Pattaya City's 1337 hotline**

Quick answer: The Lan Pho fish market in Naklua, by the sea north of the Dolphin roundabout, is where many Pattaya locals buy seafood. Stalls sell prawns, crab, squid, shellfish and fish by the kilo; you then take what you bought to a cook shop alongside, which grills, steams or stir-fries it for a small fee per dish. Listings give the hours as about 6am to 6pm daily, so come in the morning for the best choice and plan lunch or a late-afternoon meal rather than a late dinner. Ask the price per kilo, watch the weighing, and if a vendor gives you a problem, call Pattaya City's 1337 hotline.

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Where	Lan Pho, Naklua, by the sea next to Lan Pho Park
Hours (listed)	Daily, about 6am to 6pm; check before a late visit
What's sold	Prawns, crab, squid, shellfish, fish, dried seafood, snacks
How you pay	By weight; cash is easiest, some stalls take a Thai QR scan
Cooking	Cook shops charge a small fee per dish; dipping sauce sometimes included, sometimes extra
Busiest	Weekends, public holidays and festival days
Getting there	Naklua baht bus (up to about ฿20), Bolt or Grab
Complaints	Pattaya City hotline 1337

What the market is like

Lan Pho is a working fishing-community market, not a tourist attraction, which is why it's worth the trip. Pattaya City rebuilt it as a modern, cleaner market hall for up to 60 vendors, with better handling of waste and wastewater; work was about 90% done when officials inspected it in February 2025. The city doesn't allow extra stalls from outside the area or goods spread outside the marked spaces, and said in September 2025 that officials would keep checking.

Next door is Lan Pho Park, a shady waterfront park where Thai families eat what they've bought. Expect a busy, wet, cheerful place with plastic tables, and dried and salted seafood that Thai visitors buy as gifts.

How buy-and-cook works

- **Walk the stalls first** and compare prices. Tourists can be quoted more, so don't take the first price.
- **Ask the price per kilo** ("kilo la tao rai?") and watch the weighing.
- **Pick your own seafood** where you can. Look for lively crabs, and fish with clear eyes and firm flesh.
- **Take the bag to a cook shop**, agree the fee per dish and how many dishes it covers, then choose how you want each thing cooked.
- **Sit down**, add rice and drinks, and eat. Ask whether the green dipping sauce (**nam jim seafood**) is included.

Popular ways to have it cooked: grilled squid or fish, prawns with garlic, steamed fish with lime, curried crab (**pu phat phong kari**), crab fried rice, and tom yum made with the prawns you bought. See seafood restaurants for a fuller list of dishes, and ordering food in Thai for useful phrases.

What it costs

Prices move with the catch, the season and fuel costs, so treat these as reported examples, not a price list:

- In August 2026 Pattaya Mail reported a shopper paying **฿340 for a kilo of blue crab** at Lan Pho.
- In March 2026 Pattaya Mail reported large blue crabs reaching **฿850 a kilo** at Samae San in Sattahip, south of Pattaya, as fuel problems kept boats in port. Size makes a big difference.
- The cooking fee is small, but no reliable current figure is published. Agree it before they start.

Prawns, squid, mussels and local fish are the value choices.

If something goes wrong

In August 2026 a visitor bought a kilo of blue crab at Lan Pho, chosen by a staff member, and found it spoiled when they got home to Bangkok. After a complaint, Pattaya City's complaints, consumer protection and sanitation teams inspected the stall, and the vendor paid compensation. If you have a problem with a vendor anywhere in Pattaya, call the city's **1337** hotline and keep your receipt or payment slip; if you paid by QR scan, your banking app keeps a record. For other help, see tourist police and common scams (scam hotline 1441).

Best time to go

- **Morning** has the widest choice and the coolest air.
- **Lunch or late afternoon** is the time to eat. Listings say the market closes around 6pm, so don't count on a late dinner here.
- **Weekdays** are quieter. Weekends, New Year and other holidays bring long queues at the cook shops and heavy traffic.
- **Festival days:** Pattaya's main Loy Krathong celebration is at Lan Pho Public Park, on Tuesday 24 November in 2026, and in 2026 Naklua's own Wan Lai water festival was held at Lan Pho too. Expect crowds and closed roads. See Loy Krathong and Songkran and Wan Lai.

Getting there

- **Naklua baht bus:** take the main loop (฿15) to the Dolphin roundabout, then wave down a Naklua baht bus on the north side. Longer runs like this cost up to about ฿20; ask before you get in. See baht bus routes and fares.
- **Bolt or Grab:** about 10 to 15 minutes from central Pattaya outside rush hour. See Bolt and Grab.
- **Driving:** parking is tight for anything bigger than a small car, so a scooter or a ride app is easier.

Taking seafood home

Ask for ice, carry a cool bag, and eat or freeze it the same day. See cooking at home, and food poisoning if something disagrees with you.

What's changing

In April 2026 Pattaya City announced an "Old Town Naklua" plan around the market, including a pier where people could watch fishing boats land and buy the catch straight from fishermen. No dates or budget have been published.

Nearby

Make a day of it with Wong Amat Beach and the Sanctuary of Truth. More in our Naklua guide.

Common questions

Can I bring seafood from the market to be cooked? Yes, that's how Lan Pho works. Buy at the stalls, then pay a cook shop a small fee per dish.

What time does the Naklua fish market open? Listings give about 6am to 6pm daily. Mornings have the best choice; check before planning an evening visit.

Who do I call if I'm sold bad seafood? Pattaya City's 1337 hotline. Keep your receipt or payment slip.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya Mail, spoiled crab complaint at Lan Pho Market (20 August 2026, ฿340 a kilo, 1337 hotline); Pattaya Mail, blue crab prices and fuel costs (20 March 2026); Pattaya Mail, Old Town Naklua plan (23 April 2026); Pattaya Mail, market rules at Lan Pho (14 September 2025); The Thaiger, Lan Pho market renovation (13 February 2025); Pattaya Mail, cook-it-for-you stalls at Lan Pho; Pattaya.guide, Lan Pho Naklua Market listing (verified 4 August 2026, hours and parking). Hours and prices change; ask before you buy.

Related guides

- Fresh Markets in Pattaya
- Thai Soups to Try
- Cooking at Home in Pattaya
- Night Markets

FOOD & DEALS

Food Courts in Pattaya

How Pattaya's mall and supermarket food courts work, from Pier 21 at Terminal 21 to Central Pattaya and Big C: the prepaid card system, typical prices, what to order, Thai phrases and tips for first-timers.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/food-deals/food-courts/

Price	**Often about ฿40 to ฿80 a dish at the stalls**
Pay	**Usually a prepaid card, loaded at a counter, balance refunded**
Best known	**Pier 21, top floor of Terminal 21**
Hours	**Roughly mall hours; supermarket food courts may open earlier**
Good for	**Air conditioning, prices on display, pointing to order**

Quick answer: Food courts are the easiest cheap, air-conditioned meal in Pattaya. Most big malls and hypermarkets have one, with dozens of small stalls selling Thai dishes at about ฿40 to ฿80 each, prices on the boards and photos you can point at. Many use a prepaid card: load it with cash at the counter, tap it at the stalls, and hand it back on the way out to get the unused balance refunded. The best known is **Pier 21** on the top floor of Terminal 21, where a listing updated in October 2026 gave som tam at about ฿40 and pork soup at about ฿55.

At a glance

FOOD COURT	WHERE	HOW YOU PAY	GOOD TO KNOW
Pier 21	Terminal 21, top floor, Dolphin roundabout	Prepaid card, refund on the way out	Listed 11am to 10pm Monday to Thursday, to 11pm Friday to Sunday
Central Pattaya	Basement, near the supermarket	Ask at the counter	Opens before the main mall, per guide listings
Central Marina	North Pattaya	Ask at the counter	Duck noodles about ฿60 in October 2026 (Jonny)
Big C hypermarkets	Inside the store, near the entrance	Bring cash	One 2026 listing gives 9am to 9pm

Hours and payment methods change, and listings don't always agree, so check before a late visit. For the malls themselves, see Central Pattaya and Terminal 21 and shopping malls.

How the prepaid card works

- **Step 1:** Walk around first and decide roughly what you want. Prices are on the boards.
- **Step 2:** Go to the cashier counter, usually at the entrance, and load the card with cash. Load a little more than you need: topping up again means another queue.
- **Step 3:** Order at each stall and hand over or tap the card. The stall takes the amount off your balance.
- **Step 4:** Collect your food, or wait for your number or buzzer, and find a table.
- **Step 5:** On the way out, return the card at the counter and get the unused money back in cash.

Good to know:

- Return the card on the same day. Ask at the counter whether a balance can be refunded later, and assume it can't.
- Some food courts use coupons instead, and others take cash or Thai QR payments at each stall. See QR payments.

The main food courts

- **Pier 21 at Terminal 21** is the one most visitors know: the top floor of the airport-themed mall at the Dolphin roundabout in North Pattaya, with Thai standards, noodle soups, som tam, tom yum, sukiyaki bowls, mango sticky rice and Thai iced tea. It runs on the prepaid card. Mall hours on Terminal 21's own site differ between 10pm and 11pm, so check before going late.
- **Central Pattaya** (still often called Central Festival) has its food court in the basement near the supermarket, between Beach Road and Second Road. Guide listings say the supermarket and food court open before the main mall. Sources differ on its name and how payment works, so ask at the counter.
- **Central Marina** in North Pattaya is a separate Central mall with its own food court.
- **Big C** hypermarkets have food courts near the entrance. A listing updated in October 2026 for a Big C Extra food court gives 9am to 9pm and advises bringing cash, and another listing describes the Big C at Central Marina as cash only.

Pro tip: in my October 2026 video I said mall food courts are some of the best value around. At Central Marina it was about ฿60 for duck noodles, and most meals were $2 to $3. It's the same with Terminal 21 upstairs and Central Festival downstairs.

What to order

- **Rice with toppings** (**khao rad gaeng**, ข้าวราดแกง): point at two or three dishes from the trays and they go on one plate of rice. It's one of the cheapest full meals.

- **Chicken rice** (**khao man gai**, ข้าวมันไก่): poached chicken on rice cooked in chicken stock, with a ginger and soy sauce dip.
- **Noodle soups**: choose the noodle, soup or dry, then the meat. See noodle dishes.
- **Som tam and grilled chicken** from the Isaan stall. See Isaan food.
- **Tom yum** and other soups. See Thai soups.
- **Dessert and drinks**: mango sticky rice in season, fruit shakes and Thai iced tea. See Thai desserts and Thai drinks.

Ordering without Thai

Pointing works everywhere, but a few words help. These match our ordering food in Thai guide:

ENGLISH	THAI	SAY IT LIKE THIS
Not spicy	ไม่เผ็ด	mai phet
A little spicy	เผ็ดนิดหน่อย	phet nit noi
I'll take this one	เอาอันนี้	ao an nee
Add a fried egg	ใส่ไข่ดาว	sai khai dao
Takeaway	ใส่ถุง	sai thung
Less sweet (drinks)	หวานน้อย	wan noi

Vegetarian? Say **mai sai neua sat** (ไม่ใส่เนื้อสัตว์, no meat), and remember fish sauce goes into many dishes. See vegetarian and vegan.

Food court or street food?

Prices are about the same as street stalls, with air conditioning and prices on display, so food courts are the easy first step for someone new to Thai food. Street stalls win late at night, when the malls have closed. See street food and cheap eats.

Tips

- Lunch from about 12 to 1pm is the busiest time. Go a little earlier or later for a table.
- Chilli, sugar, fish sauce and vinegar are on the counters or tables, so start mild and add heat.
- For the cheapest meal, eat from the stalls rather than the sit-down restaurants on the same floor.
- On a hot or rainy afternoon, a mall food court is a cheap place to cool off. See rainy day attractions.

Common questions

How does the Pier 21 food court card work? Load it with cash at the counter, tap it at the stalls, and hand it back on the way out to get any unused money refunded.

How much is a meal at a Pattaya food court? Usually about ฿40 to ฿80 for a Thai dish at the stalls, so a meal with a drink is often around ฿100 or a little more.

Can I pay by credit card at a food court? Not usually at the stalls. You pay with the prepaid card, coupons, cash or a Thai QR app. Some counters may take cards for loading; ask.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Visit Thailand Today, Pier 21 (updated October 2026) (card system, hours, som tam ฿40, pork soup ฿55); Visit Thailand Today, Big C Food Park (updated October 2026) and Big C Supercenter Central Marina (updated October 2026, food court cash only); Pattaya.guide, shopping and markets (May 2026); mall details from our Central Pattaya and Terminal 21 guide, checked the same day. Jonny's prices are from his video of 20 October 2026. Sources disagree on hours and on how some food courts take payment, so check at the counter.

Related guides

- Street food
- Cheap eats
- Night markets
- Useful Thai phrases

FOOD & DEALS

Ordering Food in Thai: Phrases and Tips

Thai phrases for ordering food in Pattaya, in Thai script with simple pronunciation: spice levels, leaving things out, allergies, vegetarian, menu words, noodle shops, drinks, takeaway and paying the bill.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/food-deals/ordering-food-in-thai/

Not spicy	**Mai phet (ไม่เผ็ด)**
A little spicy	**Phet nit noi (เผ็ดนิดหน่อย)**
Leave it out	**Mai sai … (ไม่ใส่…)**
Takeaway	**Sai thung (ใส่ถุง) or klap baan (กลับบ้าน)**
The bill	**Check bin (เช็คบิล)**

Quick answer: You can eat well in Pattaya with no Thai at all, but five phrases cover most meals: **mai phet** (not spicy), **phet nit noi** (a little spicy), **ao an nee** (I'll take this one, while pointing), **sai thung** (takeaway) and **check bin** (the bill, please). Add **khrap** if you're a man or **kha** if you're a woman to sound polite. Below are the words for leaving ingredients out, allergies, vegetarian food, noodle shops and drinks, in Thai script you can show on your phone.

At a glance

ENGLISH	THAI	SAY IT LIKE THIS
Not spicy	ไม่เผ็ด	mai phet
A little spicy	เผ็ดนิดหน่อย	phet nit noi
I'll take this one	เอาอันนี้	ao an nee
Don't put in …	ไม่ใส่…	mai sai …
Takeaway	ใส่ถุง / กลับบ้าน	sai thung / klap baan
Eat here	กินที่นี่	kin tee nee
The bill, please	เช็คบิล	check bin khrap / kha
Delicious!	อร่อย	aroi!

The romanisation is simple English sounds, not an official system, so menus and other guides may spell the same words differently (pet, phed, sai tung). Tones matter less at a food stall, where context does most of the work.

Polite basics

- End your sentences with **khrap** (ครับ) if you're a man or **kha** (ค่ะ) if you're a woman. See useful Thai phrases.
- **Kho** (ขอ) means "may I have": "kho menu noi khrap" (ขอเมนูหน่อยครับ) is "the menu, please". **Ao** (เอา) means "I'll take" and is fine at a street stall.
- To get attention, a polite "kho thot khrap / kha" (excuse me) works anywhere. Thais often call younger staff **nong** (น้อง). Raise a hand rather than clicking your fingers.
- No English menu? Ask "mee menu phasa angkrit mai?" (มีเมนูภาษาอังกฤษไหม). Pointing at photos or at someone else's plate works too.

Ordering

- One, two, three: **neung, song, saam**. "Pad kra pao song" is two plates of pad kra pao.
- One more: **kho eek neung** (ขออีกหนึ่ง).
- A bigger portion: **phiset** (พิเศษ), usually a little extra on the price.
- Add a fried egg: **sai khai dao** (ใส่ไข่ดาว).
- Water: **nam plao** (น้ำเปล่า). Ice: **nam khaeng** (น้ำแข็ง).
- Staff may ask "**kin tee nee rue klap baan?**" (กินที่นี่หรือกลับบ้าน): eat here or take home?

A full order can be as simple as "**pad kra pao moo, khai dao, phet nit noi khrap**" (ผัดกะเพราหมู ไข่ดาว เผ็ดนิดหน่อยครับ): holy basil pork stir-fry, fried egg, a little spicy.

Pro tip: At a food stall I eat at, pad kra pao is ฿35 and a fried egg on top is ฿10 (prices as of November 2026).

Spice levels

ENGLISH	THAI	SAY IT LIKE THIS
Not spicy	ไม่เผ็ด	mai phet

ENGLISH	THAI	SAY IT LIKE THIS
A little spicy	เผ็ดนิดหน่อย	phet nit noi
Spicy	เผ็ด	phet
Very spicy	เผ็ดมาก	phet mak
No chilli at all	ไม่ใส่พริก	mai sai phrik

“Mai phet” can still come with a little heat, because some sauces and pastes contain chilli. “Mai sai phrik” is stronger. It’s easier to start mild and add chilli from the condiments on the table: sugar, chilli flakes, fish sauce with chilli and chilli vinegar.

Leaving things out

Mai sai (ไม่ใส่) means “don’t put in”. Put any of these after it:

LEAVE OUT	THAI	SAY IT LIKE THIS
Chilli	พริก	phrik
Sugar	น้ำตาล	nam tan
MSG	ผงชูรส	phong chu rot
Fish sauce	น้ำปลา	nam pla
Coriander	ผักชี	phak chee
Ice	น้ำแข็ง	nam khaeng

Allergies and diets

- “I’m allergic to …”: **phom phae …** (ผมแพ้…) for men, **chan phae …** (ฉันแพ้…) for women.
- Peanuts: **tua lisong** (ถั่วลิสง). Shrimp: **kung** (กุ้ง). Seafood: **ahan talay** (อาหารทะเล).
- No meat: **mai sai neua sat** (ไม่ใส่เนื้อสัตว์). Strict Thai-Chinese vegan food is **jay** (เจ), and “gin jay” means you eat jay. See vegetarian and vegan.
- Fish sauce, oyster sauce and shrimp paste go into many dishes that look vegetarian, so say so clearly.
- For a serious allergy, carry a card written in Thai and show it, and ask the cook to check. Woks and oil are shared at street stalls, so trace amounts are hard to avoid. See pharmacy phrases for medical words.

Menu words

ENGLISH	THAI	SAY IT LIKE THIS
Pork / chicken / beef	หมู / ไก่ / เนื้อ	moo / gai / neua
Shrimp / fish / squid	กุ้ง / ปลา / ปลาหมึก	kung / pla / pla muek
Egg / fried egg	ไข่ / ไข่ดาว	khai / khai dao
Rice / sticky rice	ข้าว / ข้าวเหนียว	khao / khao niao
Stir-fried / deep-fried	ผัด / ทอด	pad / tod
Grilled / boiled, soup	ย่าง / ต้ม	yang / tom

Most Thai dish names are built from these: **khao pad gai** is chicken fried rice, **gai tod** is fried chicken, **moo yang** is grilled pork. See Thai dishes to try.

At a noodle shop

Choose the noodle, then soup or dry, then the meat:

- Noodles: **sen lek** (thin rice), **sen yai** (wide rice), **ba mee** (egg) or **woon sen** (glass).
- Soup or dry: **nam** (น้ำ) or **haeng** (แห้ง).
- Example: “**sen lek nam moo kha**” (เส้นเล็กน้ำหมูค่ะ) is thin rice noodles in soup with pork.

More on the bowls themselves: noodle dishes.

Drinks

- Less sweet: **wan noi** (หวานน้อย). No sugar: **mai sai nam tan** (ไม่ใส่น้ำตาล).
- Thai iced tea is **cha yen** (ชาเย็น): “cha yen wan noi khrap” is a less-sweet Thai iced tea.

- More on what to order: Thai drinks.

Paying

- The bill, please: **check bin khrap / kha** (เช็คบิล). At a street stall, just ask "**tao rai?**" (how much?).
- Can I pay by QR scan? **Scan dai mai?** (สแกนได้ไหม). See QR payments and tipping.
- At a food court you usually buy a card or coupons first and pay stalls with that. See food courts.

Common questions

How do you say "not spicy" in Thai? Mai phet (ไม่เผ็ด). For no chilli at all, say mai sai phrik (ไม่ใส่พริก).

How do I ask for the bill in Thai? Say "check bin khrap" (men) or "check bin kha" (women). At a stall, "tao rai?" (how much?) is enough.

How do I say I'm allergic in Thai? Phom phae (men) or chan phae (women), then the food: tua lisong for peanuts, kung for shrimp. For serious allergies, show a written card too.

How do I order takeaway in Thai? Sai thung (in a bag) or klap baan (take home).

Learn more

See useful Thai phrases, Thai dishes to try and learning Thai.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Preply, how to order food in Thai (updated January 2026); The World of Street Food, Thai phrases for eating out; Tourism Authority of Thailand, essential Thai phrases for visitors. The romanisation on this page is our own simple guide, not an official system.

FOOD & DEALS

Fresh Markets in Pattaya

How to shop at Pattaya's fresh markets: Soi Buakhao, Wat Chai Mongkhon and Naklua, what they sell, the best times to go, weights and prices in Thai, paying, hygiene tips and how they compare with supermarkets.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/food-deals/thai-fresh-markets/

Best time	**Early morning, from about 6am**
Main markets	**Soi Buakhao, Wat Chai Mongkhon, Naklua and Lan Pho**
Sells	**Fruit, vegetables, herbs, meat, fish, curry pastes, ready meals**
Pay	**Cash in small notes; some stalls take Thai QR**
Weights	**Per kilo, or per khit (100 grams)**
Tip	**Bring your own bag**

Quick answer: Fresh markets (ตลาดสด, **talat sot**) are where many Thai households buy their food, and they are usually cheaper than supermarkets for fruit, vegetables and herbs. In Pattaya the easiest to visit are Soi Buakhao market (listed as daily, early morning to about 6pm), the Wat Chai Mongkhon market in South Pattaya, and the seafood markets in Naklua. Go early in the morning for the best choice and the coolest air, bring small notes and your own bag, and expect prices per kilo or per bag that are mostly fixed.

At a glance

MARKET	WHERE	WHEN (ABOUT)	BEST FOR
Soi Buakhao market	South end of Soi Buakhao, off South Pattaya Road	Daily, early morning to about 6pm	Fruit, vegetables, cooked food, cheap clothes
Wat Chai Mongkhon market	Across the road from the temple, South Pattaya	Early morning breakfast stalls; listings give hours as late as 10pm	Thai breakfasts, curry bags, fresh food
Lan Pho market	Naklua	Mornings are best	Seafood, cooked for you nearby
Naklua old market	Naklua	Daily, about 6am to 6pm	Seafood and everyday local shopping

Hours come from recent listings, and sources don't always agree, so check before a special trip.

The markets

- **Soi Buakhao market** is at the south end of Soi Buakhao, just off South Pattaya Road. It used to run only on Tuesdays and Fridays; listings now say it opens every day from early morning until about 6pm. Expect fruit, vegetables, garlic and shallots by the bag, cooked food such as sticky rice with grilled pork, papaya salad and fried chicken, plus clothes, kitchenware and plants.
- **Wat Chai Mongkhon market**, across the road from the temple in South Pattaya, is a typical Thai fresh market with spices, vegetables, fruit, fish and meat, plus clothing stalls. Pattaya.com lists its early-morning food stalls (about 6am to 8:30am) for curry bags, patongko, Thai sweets, grilled pork and fresh soy milk; another guide lists the market open from 9am (7:30am on Saturdays) to 10pm.
- **Lan Pho market** in Naklua is a fishing-community market known for fresh seafood, with seating where families eat. Mornings have the widest choice. Full details are on our Naklua fish market page.
- **Naklua old market** is listed as open daily from about 6am to 6pm, with very fresh seafood and everyday goods. It is best very early.

What you can buy

- **Fruit**, often much cheaper than in supermarkets, and seasonal: mangoes from about March to May, for example. See Thai fruit.
- **Herbs and vegetables** you rarely find fresh abroad: holy basil (kra pao), Thai basil (horapha), lemongrass, galangal, kaffir lime leaves and small, very hot bird's eye chillies.
- **Curry pastes**, sold by weight from big mounds, red, green and yellow.
- **Meat, chicken, fish and seafood**, usually priced by the kilo. Seafood buyers should also see seafood restaurants.
- **Ready meals in bags**: curries, soups and stir-fries tied in small plastic bags to take home, with rice sold separately.
- **Thai sweets** wrapped in banana leaves or in small boxes. See Thai desserts.

Breakfast at the market

Morning markets are one of the best places for a Thai breakfast. Look for **patongko** (small fried dough sticks) with warm soy milk, **jok** (rice porridge), and grilled pork skewers with sticky rice (**moo ping khao niao**). Many stalls sell out by mid-morning. See breakfast and brunch.

When to go

- Early morning, from about 6am, is the freshest and coolest time. Meat and fish are best bought first thing.
- Late morning gets hot, and many breakfast stalls are gone.

- For evening food and shopping, see night markets.
- Heavy rain can thin out the stalls. See rainy season survival.

Weights, prices and paying

Market prices are per kilo, per piece or per bag. A **khit** (ขีด) is 100 grams, so “song khit” is 200 grams.

ENGLISH	THAI	SAY IT LIKE THIS
How much?	เท่าไหร่	tao rai?
How much per kilo?	กิโลละเท่าไหร่	kilo la tao rai?
Half a kilo	ครึ่งกิโล	khrueng kilo
100 grams	หนึ่งขีด	neung khit
I’ll take this one	เอาอันนี้	ao an nee
No bag, thanks	ไม่เอาถุง	mai ao thung

- Bring small notes and coins; a ฿1,000 note at a vegetable stall is a nuisance. Some stalls show a Thai QR code. See QR payments.
- Food prices are fairly fixed. If you buy a lot, a friendly “lot noi dai mai?” (a little discount?) is fine. Don’t haggle over a few baht. See useful Thai phrases.
- Market prices are a useful benchmark for what things should cost at tourist spots.

Pro tip: Tourist markups are real. I’ve seen a ฿40 market smoothie sold for ฿280 at a beach restaurant (prices as of November 2026).

Hygiene and comfort

- Wash fruit and vegetables well at home, and peel what you can.
- Buy meat and fish early and get it into a fridge quickly. A cool bag helps in the heat.
- For fish, look for clear eyes and firm flesh. Choose busy stalls with quick turnover.
- Wear closed shoes: floors near the fish and meat stalls are wet and slippery.
- Cooked food in bags is usually fine if it’s hot or freshly made. See food poisoning.

Fresh market or supermarket?

Markets are cheaper and fresher for Thai produce, herbs and meat, and you can buy exactly the amount you need. Supermarkets are easier for imported food, dairy, bread, cleaning products and paying by card, with air conditioning and printed prices. Many residents use both. See supermarkets and groceries and cooking at home.

Want to learn the herbs first? Many Thai cooking classes start with a market visit.

Common questions

What is the best fresh market in Pattaya? For visitors, Soi Buakhao market is the easiest: central, open daily and mixing fresh food with cooked food and cheap clothes. For seafood, go to Lan Pho in Naklua.

What time do Pattaya fresh markets open? Most get going from about 6am. Go before 9am for the best choice.

Can I pay by card at a fresh market? Almost never. Bring cash in small notes; some stalls take Thai QR payments.

Is it OK to bargain at a Thai fresh market? Food prices are mostly fixed. Light, friendly bargaining is fine when you buy a lot, not over a few baht.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya.com, markets in Pattaya (hours marked approximate); Pattaya Unlimited, Soi Buakhao market (updated April 2025); Thailand Magazine, Wat Chai Mongkhon market; Pattaya Mail, Naklua’s Lan Pho market area (September 2025); Michelin Guide, Thai mango varieties and seasons. Sources disagree on several opening times.

SECTION

🩺 Safety & Health

Pattaya is a safe city for most visitors, but it pays to know the common scams, who to call in an emergency, and where the hospitals and clinics are. These pages keep it practical.

Quick answer: Save three numbers: 1669 for an ambulance, 1155 for the English-speaking Tourist Police, and 191 for the police. The biggest everyday risks in Pattaya are not crime but heat, traffic, the sea and mosquitoes: drink water, wear a helmet, swim between the flags and use repellent. For scams, the golden rule is to agree the price before you start. Buy travel insurance before you fly, because a private hospital stay can cost tens of thousands of baht a night.

Emergency numbers

WHO	NUMBER
—	—
Ambulance and medical emergency	1669
Tourist Police (English)	1155
Police	191
Fire	199
Accidents at sea	1196
Bangkok Hospital Pattaya ambulance	1719
Online scam, freeze the account	1441

From our emergency numbers and common scams pages, checked in 2026. Save them in your phone before you need them.

Start here

- Emergency numbers: who to call and what to say.
- Common scams: jet ski damage claims, overcharging and online scams.
- Hospitals and clinics: private and public, and which to choose.
- After a road accident: what to do in the first hour.
- Travel insurance: what it must cover in Thailand.

The real risks, and what to do

RISK	WHAT HELPS	READ MORE
—	—	—
Heat and dehydration	Water, shade, no midday walks in the hot season	Heat and sun
Scooter accidents	A licence, a helmet, no riding after drinking	Road accidents
Scams and overcharging	Agree the price first; never share one-time codes	Common scams
The sea	Swim between the flags; vinegar for jellyfish stings	Beach safety
Dengue	Repellent in the day, especially May to October	Dengue
Dog bites	Wash for 15 minutes, hospital the same day	Rabies
Floods	Avoid deep water; plan around storms	Flood season

How the safety and health pages fit together

- **Emergencies and crime:** emergency numbers, tourist police, road accidents, common scams, love scams and online safety.
- **Seeing a doctor:** hospitals and clinics, hospital costs, registering at a hospital, health check-ups, dentists, eye care, sexual health testing and mental health support.
- **Medicines:** pharmacies, the pharmacy phrasebook and a first aid kit.
- **Climate and nature:** heat, dehydration, floods, the rainy season survival kit, air quality, dengue, jellyfish, beach safety and stray dogs.
- **Before you travel:** travel insurance, health insurance, vaccinations and food poisoning.
- **Travelling alone:** Pattaya for solo female travellers.

Scams to know before you arrive

These come from our common scams page, including the ones Jonny has seen himself:

- **Love scams.** In Jonny's experience, by far the most common. See love scams.
- **Jet ski damage claims.** Photograph the jet ski before you ride, or skip it.
- **Tourist markups.** Check prices before you order, especially on the beachfront.
- **The ฿1,000 note switch.** A cashier claims your ฿1,000 note was ฿100; say the amount out loud as you hand it over.
- **Overcharged repairs.** Get a price before work starts.
- **Online scams.** Never share one-time codes. If you lose money, call 1441 to freeze the account.

On a night out

Carry only the cash you need, leave your passport in the safe with a photo on your phone, and watch your drink being poured. Drug laws are tough, with long prison sentences, so never buy, carry or accept drugs. If a bill is wrong, stay calm and call 1155 if you can't sort it out. See staying safe on a night out.

Seeing a doctor: what it costs

A private GP-style visit, with medicine, often costs ฿1,000 to ฿3,000; public hospitals are much cheaper but slower. Always ask for an estimate before tests or admission. Pharmacies sell many medicines over the counter, and pharmacists often speak English. See hospital costs and pharmacies.

Common questions

Is Pattaya safe for tourists? For most visitors, yes. Traffic, heat and the sea are bigger risks than crime; scams target the careless.

What is the emergency number in Pattaya? 1669 for an ambulance, 1155 for the Tourist Police and 191 for the police.

Which hospital should I go to in Pattaya? Private hospitals such as Bangkok Hospital Pattaya and Pattaya Memorial are used to foreigners; public hospitals are cheaper. See hospitals.

Do I need travel insurance for Thailand? Yes. Private hospital stays are expensive, and many policies exclude scooter accidents without a licence and helmet.

Can I buy medicine without a prescription in Pattaya? Many medicines that need a prescription at home are sold over the counter. Ask the pharmacist, and check rules for anything you carry home.

Is the tap water safe to drink in Pattaya? Most people drink bottled or filtered water. Use it for brushing teeth too if your stomach is sensitive.

Sources

- Our emergency numbers, scams, hospital costs, pharmacies and insurance pages, each checked in 2026 with its own official and press sources.

SAFETY & HEALTH

Emergency Numbers & Hospitals

Who to call in an emergency in Pattaya: tourist police, police, ambulance and fire, the main hospitals, what to say on the phone, and how to be ready before you need help.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/safety-health/emergency-numbers/

Tourist police	**1155**
Police	**191**
Ambulance	**1669**
Fire	**199**
Accidents at sea	**1196**
Bangkok Hospital Pattaya ambulance	**1719**

Quick answer: In Pattaya, call **1669** for an ambulance, **191** for the police, **199** for fire and **1155** for the Tourist Police, who speak English and can help translate. For accidents at sea, call **1196**. Bangkok Hospital Pattaya runs its own ambulance on **1719**. All are free from any Thai mobile. Don't rely on 911 or 112: dial the Thai numbers. Save them in your phone now, along with your hotel's address in Thai.

Save these numbers before you need them. In a real emergency, call first and worry about everything else later.

The numbers

CALL	FOR	GOOD TO KNOW
1669	Ambulance and medical emergencies	National emergency medical line. Ask for a hospital by name if you have insurance
191	Police	Crimes in progress, violence, serious incidents. Thai is the main language
199	Fire	Fires and people trapped
1155	Tourist Police	English speaking, 24 hours. Best first call for scams, theft, disputes and lost passports. They can't send an ambulance, so use 1669 for medical cases
1196	Accidents at sea and on the water	Boat, ferry and jet ski accidents. See beach safety
1193	Highway police	Accidents on highways and motorways, such as Motorway 7 to Bangkok
1719	Bangkok Hospital Pattaya ambulance	Private. The hospital's main line is 038 259 999
1672	TAT tourist information	Not for emergencies; general visitor help

More on the Tourist Police.

Which number should I call?

- Someone is hurt, unconscious, not breathing or bleeding badly: **1669**, or the hospital's own line if you know where you want to go.
- You've been robbed, scammed or threatened, or you're in a dispute with a business: **1155**.
- A crime is happening now, or there's violence: **191**, then 1155 if you need English.
- A fire: **199**.
- Trouble on a boat or in the sea: **1196**, and tell the nearest lifeguard.
- A road accident: **1669** if anyone is hurt, then the police. See what to do after a road accident.

What to say on the phone

- Say what happened, how many people are hurt, and whether anyone is unconscious or bleeding badly.
- Give your location as clearly as you can: the road, the soi number, or a landmark such as a hotel or 7-Eleven. "Beach Road, Soi 7, opposite the 7-Eleven" is better than a hotel name alone.
- Share your live location if the operator asks. Keeping your address written in Thai helps a lot.
- If the operator only speaks Thai, ask a Thai bystander, your hotel or a shop to help, or call 1155 and ask them to translate.
- Stay on the line until they tell you to hang up.

Hospitals

HOSPITAL	TYPE	EMERGENCY
Bangkok Hospital Pattaya, Sukhumvit Road	Private	24-hour emergency centre, own ambulance on 1719
Pattaya Memorial Hospital, Central Pattaya Road	Private	24-hour emergency care. Sources list different phone numbers, so save the one on its official site
Pattaya International Hospital, near Soi 4	Private	Central, used by many visitors
Pattaya City Hospital	Public	Much cheaper, longer waits
Pattaya Patamakun Hospital, Naklua	Public	The district hospital, formerly Banglamung Hospital

Private hospitals have English-speaking staff and are used to foreign patients, but they are expensive without insurance and may ask for a deposit or an insurer's guarantee before admitting you. Public hospitals cost far less, with longer waits and less English. More on hospitals and clinics and hospital costs.

Common emergencies

- **Road accidents:** see what to do after a road accident.
- **Dog or monkey bites:** wash the wound with soap and water and go to a hospital the same day for a rabies check. See stray dogs and rabies.
- **Heatstroke:** move the person to shade, cool them with water and call 1669. See heat and sun safety.
- **Jellyfish stings:** see jellyfish and sea creatures.
- **Swimmer in trouble:** shout for a lifeguard, call 1669 or 1196, and throw something that floats rather than swimming out yourself. See beach safety.
- **Theft or a lost passport:** call 1155, get a police report, then contact your embassy. See common scams.

Be ready

- Save 1669, 191, 1155 and your hospital's number in your phone under a name you'll find fast.
- Keep your travel or health insurance details and its emergency phone number on your phone. See travel insurance.
- Know the name and address of where you're staying, in Thai if possible.
- Register at a hospital in advance if you live here. See hospital patient card.
- Keep a small kit at home. See first aid kit.
- For minor problems, pharmacies are everywhere and pharmacists are helpful. See pharmacies and medicines.

Your embassy

If you lose your passport, are arrested, or are seriously hurt, contact your country's embassy in Bangkok. Save its emergency number before you travel. Most embassies have a 24-hour line for citizens in serious trouble.

Common questions

What is the emergency number in Thailand? There isn't one single number. Call 1669 for an ambulance, 191 for police, 199 for fire and 1155 for the English-speaking Tourist Police.

Does 911 or 112 work in Thailand? Don't rely on it. Dial the Thai numbers directly.

Do the Tourist Police speak English? Yes. 1155 is staffed around the clock with operators who speak English and other languages, and they can translate for you with other services.

Is the ambulance free? The call is free. What you pay for the ride and treatment depends on where you're taken: private hospitals bill for everything, so have your insurance details ready and say which hospital you want if you're able to.

Who do I call if I'm scammed? 1155 first. For online and phone fraud, see common scams for the fraud hotline and how to report it.

SAFETY & HEALTH

Common Scams to Avoid

The tricks visitors run into in Pattaya most often, from jet ski damage claims to bar bills and fake officials, and simple ways to avoid them.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/safety-health/common-scams/

Most common	**Jet ski damage claims and overcharging**
Golden rule	**Agree the price before you start**
Help	**Tourist Police 1155**
Online	**Never share one-time codes**
Online scam lost money	**Call 1441 to freeze the account**

Quick answer: The scams visitors meet most in Pattaya are jet ski and scooter damage claims, overcharging by taxis, tuk-tuks and some restaurants, padded bills, and online scams that start on dating apps or messages. Agree every price before you start, photograph anything you rent, keep your own count of what you order, and never send money or one-time codes to someone you only know online. If something goes wrong, call the Tourist Police on 1155; for online fraud where money has left your account, call 1441 straight away so the bank account can be frozen.

Most people in Pattaya are honest and friendly, and most visits go without trouble. But a few tricks come up again and again. Knowing them is usually enough to avoid them.

Scams at a glance

SCAM	HOW IT USUALLY GOES	HOW TO AVOID IT
Love scams	A relationship that slowly turns into requests for money	Never send money to someone you have only known a short time. See our love scams guide
Jet ski damage	Operator claims old scratches are new damage	Photos and video before you ride, with the operator watching
Scooter damage	Same claim when you return a rental	Photograph every side, never leave your passport
Taxi and tuk-tuk overcharging	No meter, high price at the end	Agree the price first, or use Bolt or Grab
Padded bills	Extra items or the wrong total	Check each bill, keep your own count
Note switch	Cashier says your ฿1,000 was ฿100	Say the note out loud as you hand it over
Fake officials	Someone without ID asks for a “fine”	Ask for ID and an official ticket
Online and phone scams	Calls or messages “from the bank or police”	Hang up, call the official number yourself

The 5 I’ve run into myself

Everything else on this page is general. These are from me, Jonny, and every one has happened to me.

- **Love scams, by far the #1 in my experience.** It can happen to anyone. What feels like a relationship developing can look like an income source to the other person, during your trip and after it. Learn the difference between really wanting to help and feeling obligated. See our love scams guide.
- **Being overcharged for repairs.** I’ve been overcharged for motorcycle work as a foreigner with an iPhone 17 Pro Max on show.
- **Pressure to buy drinks for staff.** Buy your own drinks only. Once you buy for others, it becomes a pattern.
- **Tourist markups.** A ฿40 market smoothie was ฿280 at a beach restaurant.
- **The ฿1,000 note switch.** A cashier claims your ฿1,000 note was ฿100. It’s rare, but it happens, because they look similar. A friend once threw “฿100” notes in the air for workers, then noticed they were ฿1,000s.

Jet ski damage claims

- Some operators claim you damaged the jet ski and demand a large payment.
- Take photos and a video of the jet ski from every side before you ride, with the operator watching.
- Agree the price and the time in writing, and leave a copy of your passport, never the passport itself.
- If there is a dispute, stay calm and call the Tourist Police on 1155.

Overcharging

- Taxis and tuk-tuks without a meter: agree the price first, or use a ride app. See Bolt and Grab.
- Baht buses on their normal route charge a small set fare. If the driver offers to take you somewhere special, it becomes a private hire at a much higher price. See baht bus routes and fares.
- Ask the price before you order anything without a menu.

Bar bills

- Check each bill as it arrives, and keep your own count of drinks.
- Pay as you go if the bar allows it.
- Ask about any charge you do not understand. See drink prices and bar etiquette.

Fake officials and fines

- Be careful of people who claim to be police or officials without a uniform or ID.
- Real fines come with an official ticket. Ask for one.
- See police checkpoints and road rules and fines.

Scooter rental damage

- Photograph the scooter before you ride, especially scratches.
- Never leave your passport as a deposit. See renting a scooter.

Gems and “special deals”

Be wary of strangers who tell you an attraction is closed today and offer to take you to a shop or a special sale instead. Buy gold and jewellery only from established shops with receipts. See gold and pawn shops.

Online and phone scams

Online fraud is now the biggest scam problem across Thailand, and it reaches visitors too: fake booking pages, investment “opportunities”, romance, and callers pretending to be the police, a bank or a courier.

- Never share one-time codes or send money to people you have only met online.
- Banks and the police will not ask you to transfer money to “protect” it, and real police don’t contact you on LINE or video call to demand payment.
- Book hotels and tours through the official site or a known platform, not a link someone sends you.
- If you have already sent money, call the Anti Online Scam Operation Center on **1441** at once. It works 24 hours and coordinates with the police and banks to freeze the receiving account. The sooner you call, the better the chance.
- You can also file a report at the Royal Thai Police online reporting site, thaipoliceonline.com, or at a police station, and tell your own bank.
- See online safety.

ATM and card safety

Cover your PIN, use ATMs at bank branches, and choose to pay in baht. See ATM fees.

If it happens to you

- Stay calm and polite. Arguments rarely help.
- Call the Tourist Police on 1155. See Tourist Police.
- Keep receipts, photos and messages as evidence.
- Online fraud with money lost: call 1441 first, then report to the police.
- Lost passport or a serious problem: contact your embassy as well.

Who to call

PROBLEM	NUMBER
Tourist Police (English spoken)	1155
Online fraud, freeze an account	1441
Police emergency	191
Ambulance	1669

More numbers are on emergency numbers.

Common questions

Is Pattaya safe from scams? Most visits have no trouble at all. Scams in Pattaya are usually about money, not danger: a padded bill or an inflated price. A few habits, like agreeing prices first and checking bills, avoid most of them.

What is the most common scam in Pattaya? For visitors on the water, jet ski damage claims are the best known. For people who stay longer, love scams cost the most money, by far, in Jonny’s experience. Online scams are the fastest growing in Thailand as a whole.

What do I do if a jet ski operator says I damaged it? Stay calm, show your before photos and video, and don't hand over your passport. If they won't accept it, call the Tourist Police on 1155.

Can I get money back after an online scam? Sometimes, if you act fast. Call 1441 so the receiving account can be frozen, report to the police, and tell your bank. Money that has already been moved on is hard to recover.

Are tuk-tuk and taxi drivers in Pattaya honest? Most are. The problem is unmetered rides with no price agreed. Agree the fare before you get in, or book through an app so the price is fixed.

SAFETY & HEALTH

Love Scams in Pattaya: Warning Signs and How to Protect Yourself

How love scams usually unfold, the warning signs to watch for, how to protect your money, and what to do if it's already happened. They can happen to anyone.

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Golden rule	**Never send money to someone you haven't met**
Biggest warning sign	**Money keeps coming up**
Who it affects	**Anyone, including Thai people**
Tourist Police	**1155**

Quick answer: a love scam is when someone builds a relationship to get money from you. It can happen to anyone, in person or online, and Thai people get caught too. Most warning signs come down to money and pressure. Slow down before you send, lend or buy anything big, and never hand over more than you could afford to lose.

Royal Thai Police figures reported by the Bangkok Post counted 5,164 online romance scam cases from 2022 to 2024, with damages over ฿1.6 billion. Thai press has covered victims of all kinds, including a Thai woman who lost ฿100,000 to an online dating scammer. This isn't about any one group of people. It's about behaviour.

Pro tip: in my experience, love scams are by far the #1 way people get hurt here. I've seen hundreds of cases, and I've had my own emotions played with and been expected to provide for partners, their friends and family. If you're a tourist, Pattaya isn't the place to find love. Adjust your expectations and you'll have a much better time.

How it usually unfolds in person

This is the pattern I've seen most, in my experience. Not every relationship is like this, and plenty of people are honest. But it's worth recognising.

- **A quick connection:** you meet someone and hit it off. Soon it's movies, dinners, a Koh Larn day trip and nights out.
- **It feels like a relationship:** you think something real is developing. "You're my one and only" is a common line. The other person may see an income source for themselves and their family, during your trip and after it.
- **The income gap does the rest:** what started as short-term fun turns into long-term support once you're home.
- **More than one relationship:** some people I know have run 5 to 10 relationships at once, with multiple phones.

How it usually unfolds online

The FBI and the US Federal Trade Commission describe a different version, and it can start from anywhere:

- You've never met the person, or there's always an excuse why you can't.
- The video is blurry every time you chat.
- They quickly move you off the dating site to private messages.
- They talk about destiny or fate early on.
- They ask for money, gift cards or wire transfers, or for personal and financial details.

The FTC's rule is simple: never send money or gifts to a love interest you haven't actually met. See dating in Thailand and online safety.

Warning signs

SIGN	WHAT TO DO
Money comes up early and keeps coming up	Say no once and see how they respond
A sudden emergency: family, hospital, rent, a sick parent	Offer practical help, not cash. Ask to speak to the hospital or see a bill
Pressure to decide fast	Take a week. Real needs can usually wait a day
Guilt when you say no	Treat this as a warning sign, not a reason to pay
Being asked to hold or buy valuables in their name	Don't. See the gold story below
Business or investment "opportunities"	Get independent advice first. Foreigners using Thai nominees also face legal risk
Requests to keep it secret from your friends	Tell a friend who has no stake in it

A real example: the gold

Pro tip: a friend let a partner hold 10 baht of gold. By my estimate that was about ฿750,000, roughly $20,000. He left the country, and a day later the partner kept it, saying he'd been talking to others. Anything you hand over or put in someone else's name, assume you may never see again.

Pro tip: I recommend watching Thai Talk with Dan, who posts viewer-submitted romance scams almost daily. Adjust your expectations.

How to protect your money

- **Set a limit before you need one:** decide what you can afford to give and stop there.
- **Learn to say no:** I've had a hard time with this myself. Learn the difference between really wanting to help and feeling obligated.
- **Don't lend what you need back:** treat any money you give as a gift.
- **Keep valuables and property in your own name:** speak to an independent lawyer before any big purchase. See buying a condo.
- **Keep your documents and banking private:** don't share your passport, PINs or banking app.
- **Track your spending:** see Jonny's real monthly spending and what happens when you don't.

If it has already happened

Being taken in doesn't make you stupid. These scams work on feelings, and they catch careful people too.

- **Stop sending money,** even if you're promised it will all come back.
- **Contact your bank right away** if you've sent money.
- **Save everything:** messages, photos, account numbers, receipts.
- **Report it:** in Thailand, the Tourist Police are on 1155. In the US, the FTC takes reports at ReportFraud.ftc.gov and the FBI at ic3.gov. Your embassy can tell you what help is available.
- **Be careful of recovery offers:** anyone who promises to get your money back for a fee may be another scammer.
- **Talk to someone:** this can hit hard. See mental health support.

Common questions

Is every relationship in Pattaya a scam? No. Many people here have real, lasting relationships. The point is to watch behaviour, go slowly and protect your money.

How do I help without being scammed? Help in ways that don't depend on trust: pay a bill directly, or go to the hospital with them. If you feel obligated rather than willing, stop and think.

Should I report a love scam in Thailand? If you've lost money, yes. Reporting may not get it back, but your bank and the police need details quickly. Call the Tourist Police on 1155 and contact your embassy.

Sources

Checked 6 November 2026. Jonny's boxes and the in-person pattern are his own experience, not statistics.

- Bangkok Post, Love or lie?: Royal Thai Police figures
- The Thaiger, Thai woman loses ฿100,000 to online dating scammer
- Fox Business, quoting FTC and FBI on romance scams
- State of Connecticut, romance scams
- UK Foreign Office, Thailand safety and security: nominee rules

SAFETY & HEALTH

Hospitals & Clinics

Pattaya's main private and public hospitals, what to do in an emergency, clinics and pharmacies, and paying for treatment.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/safety-health/hospitals-clinics/

Ambulance	**1669**
Bangkok Hospital Pattaya emergency	**1719**
Private	**Bangkok Hospital Pattaya, Pattaya Memorial, Pattaya International**
Public	**Pattaya City Hospital, Pattaya Patamakun Hospital (formerly Banglamung)**

Quick answer: In an emergency, call **1669** for an ambulance, or **1719** for Bangkok Hospital Pattaya's own ambulance. For visitors, the usual choices are the private hospitals: Bangkok Hospital Pattaya on Sukhumvit Road is the largest, with a 24-hour emergency centre and interpreters, and Pattaya Memorial and Pattaya International are closer to the centre. Public hospitals cost far less but have longer waits and less English. For small problems, a clinic or a pharmacy is quicker and cheaper. Bring your passport and insurance details, and ask for a cost estimate before anything that isn't urgent.

Pattaya has good healthcare by regional standards, from large private hospitals used to foreign patients to cheaper public hospitals and a pharmacy on almost every corner. Knowing where to go before you need it saves time and money.

Hospitals at a glance

HOSPITAL	TYPE	WHERE	GOOD TO KNOW
Bangkok Hospital Pattaya	Private	Sukhumvit Road, north side of town	Largest in the area, 24-hour emergency centre, emergency line 1719, interpreters
Pattaya Memorial Hospital	Private	Central Pattaya Road	The city's longest-running private hospital, 24-hour emergency care
Pattaya International Hospital	Private	Near Soi 4, off Beach Road	Central, used by many visitors
Pattaya City Hospital	Public	Central Pattaya	Run by the city, much cheaper, longer waits
Pattaya Patamakun Hospital (formerly Banglamung Hospital)	Public	Naklua	The district hospital; many people still call it Banglamung

In an emergency

- Call **1669** for an ambulance, or **1155** for the English-speaking tourist police.
- The large private hospitals run their own ambulances. Bangkok Hospital Pattaya's emergency line is **1719**.
- Say where you are as clearly as you can: the road, the soi number or a landmark. Having your location in Thai on your phone helps, and sharing a map pin by phone or LINE is often easiest.
- If you can travel and it's quicker, a Grab or Bolt to the emergency entrance can beat waiting in traffic.

More numbers are on Emergency Numbers & Hospitals.

Private hospitals

- **Bangkok Hospital Pattaya**, on Sukhumvit Road: the biggest and best-equipped in the area, with a 24-hour emergency department, trauma care and interpreters in many languages, including English and Russian.
- **Pattaya Memorial Hospital**, on Central Pattaya Road: the city's longest-running private hospital, with 24-hour emergency care.
- **Pattaya International Hospital**, near Soi 4 off Beach Road.

Private hospitals have English-speaking staff and short waits, but they are expensive without insurance. For a stay, they may ask for a deposit or a guarantee from your insurer before admitting you.

Pro tip: every time I've needed healthcare here, it's been a million times faster and smoother than the West. A hospital trip for stomach issues was a smooth one.

Public hospitals

- **Pattaya City Hospital**: run by the city, much cheaper, with longer waits and less English.
- **Pattaya Patamakun Hospital** in Naklua, the district hospital that was called Banglamung Hospital until late 2024. The English spelling varies (Patamakun, Patimakun), and many locals and drivers still say Banglamung. A new six-storey building is being funded by a ฿100 million donation reported in August 2026.

Public hospitals treat everyone, foreigners included, at much lower prices than private ones. Expect to queue, bring a Thai speaker if you can, and arrive early in the morning for outpatient clinics.

Private or public?

	PRIVATE HOSPITAL	PUBLIC HOSPITAL
Cost	High, often many times the public price	Low
Waiting	Short	Can be hours for outpatients
English	Widely spoken, interpreters	Limited
Insurance	Many bill your insurer directly	Usually pay and claim later
Best for	Visitors with insurance, emergencies, comfort	Long-stay residents on a budget, routine care

Clinics and pharmacies

For minor problems like a stomach bug, an infected cut or a prescription refill, a small clinic or a pharmacy is quicker and cheaper than a hospital. Pharmacies are everywhere and the pharmacists are usually helpful. Many medicines that need a prescription at home are sold over the counter here, so ask the pharmacist and read the label. Bring the box or a photo of anything you already take, with the generic name.

Some medicines that are legal at home are controlled in Thailand. If you travel with prescription medicine, see what's legal in Thailand.

Paying

- Bring your passport and your insurance details.
- Ask for a cost estimate before non-urgent treatment. Private hospitals will usually give one.
- Many private hospitals will contact your insurer for a guarantee of payment; without one, expect to pay a deposit.
- Keep every receipt and medical report for your insurance claim.
- Check that your travel insurance covers scooter accidents; many policies don't without a valid licence. See renting a scooter.
- Living here? See health insurance.

Common questions

Which is the best hospital in Pattaya? Bangkok Hospital Pattaya is the largest and best-equipped private hospital in the area and is used to treating foreigners. The best choice also depends on where you are, your insurance and how urgent it is.

What number do I call for an ambulance in Pattaya? 1669 is the national ambulance number. Bangkok Hospital Pattaya's own emergency line is 1719. The Tourist Police on 1155 speak English and can help you explain.

Do public hospitals treat foreigners? Yes. Pattaya City Hospital and Pattaya Patamakun Hospital treat foreigners, at much lower prices than private hospitals, with longer waits and less English.

Do I need travel insurance in Thailand? It's strongly recommended. Private hospital bills for an accident or an admission can be large, and some hospitals ask for a deposit or an insurer's guarantee before treatment.

Can I just go to a pharmacy? For minor problems, yes. Pharmacists can advise and sell many medicines without a prescription. See a doctor if it doesn't improve in a day or two, or for anything serious.

Related guides

- Eye Care and Glasses in Pattaya
- Mental Health Support in Pattaya
- Emergency Numbers & Hospitals
- Sexual Health & STI Testing
- Dentists in Pattaya
- Vaccinations for Pattaya and Thailand
- Elderly Care and Home Nursing in Pattaya

SAFETY & HEALTH

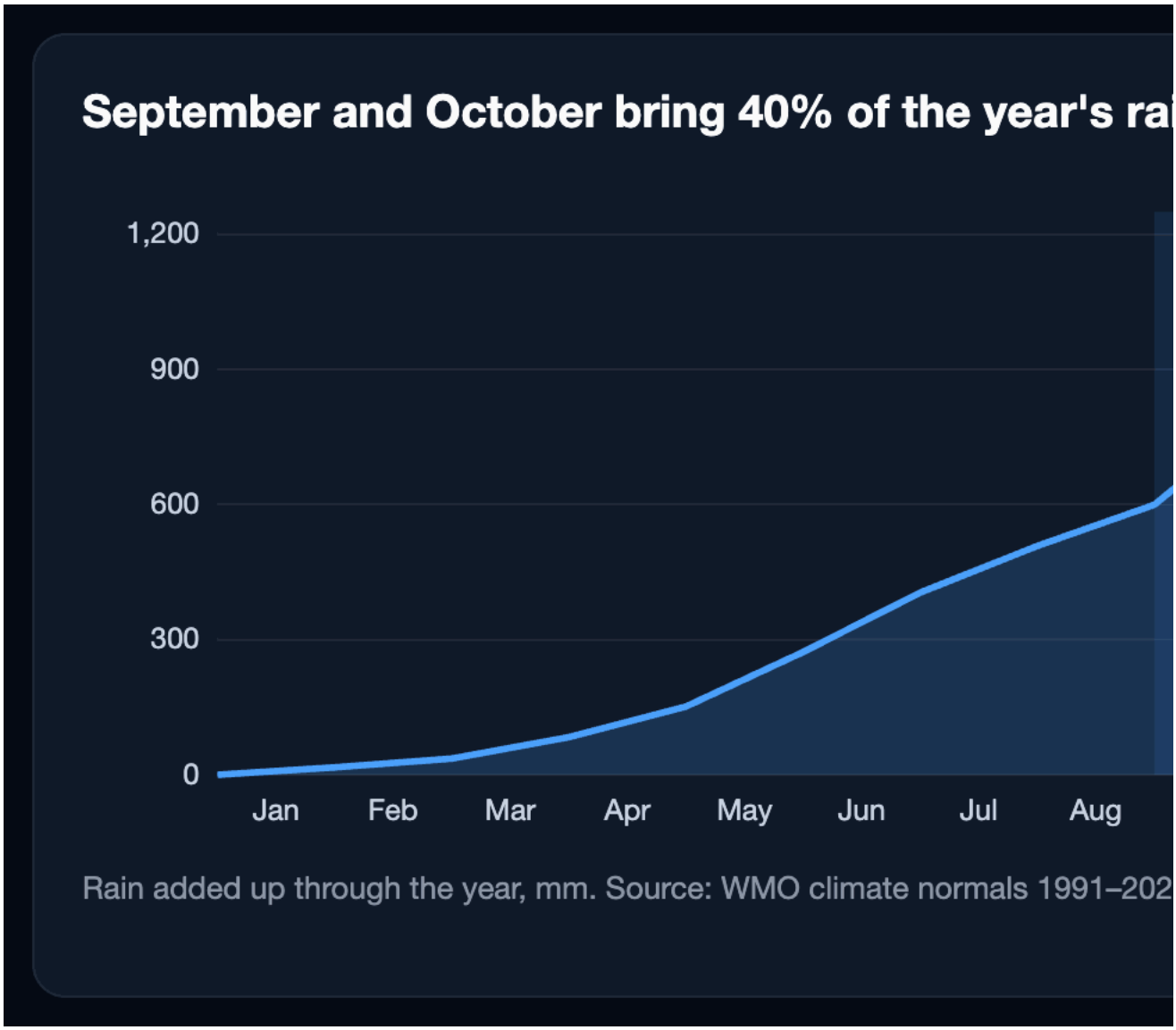
Rainy Season & Flooding

Pattaya's rainy season: when it rains, which streets flood, staying safe on the roads, and planning around it.

Verified October 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/safety-health/flood-season/

Rainy season	**Roughly May to October, wettest around September and October**
Floods first	**Low roads around Soi Buakhao, South Pattaya, Third Road, Sukhumvit**
Water depth	**Often 10 to 60 cm after heavy downpours**
Warnings	**Thai Meteorological Department; disaster line 1860**

Pattaya has a rainy season from roughly May to October, with the heaviest rain usually around September and October. Most days still have sunshine, but storms can be sudden and intense, and a couple of hours of heavy rain can flood the streets. In September 2026 Pattaya saw its worst flooding in about a decade.

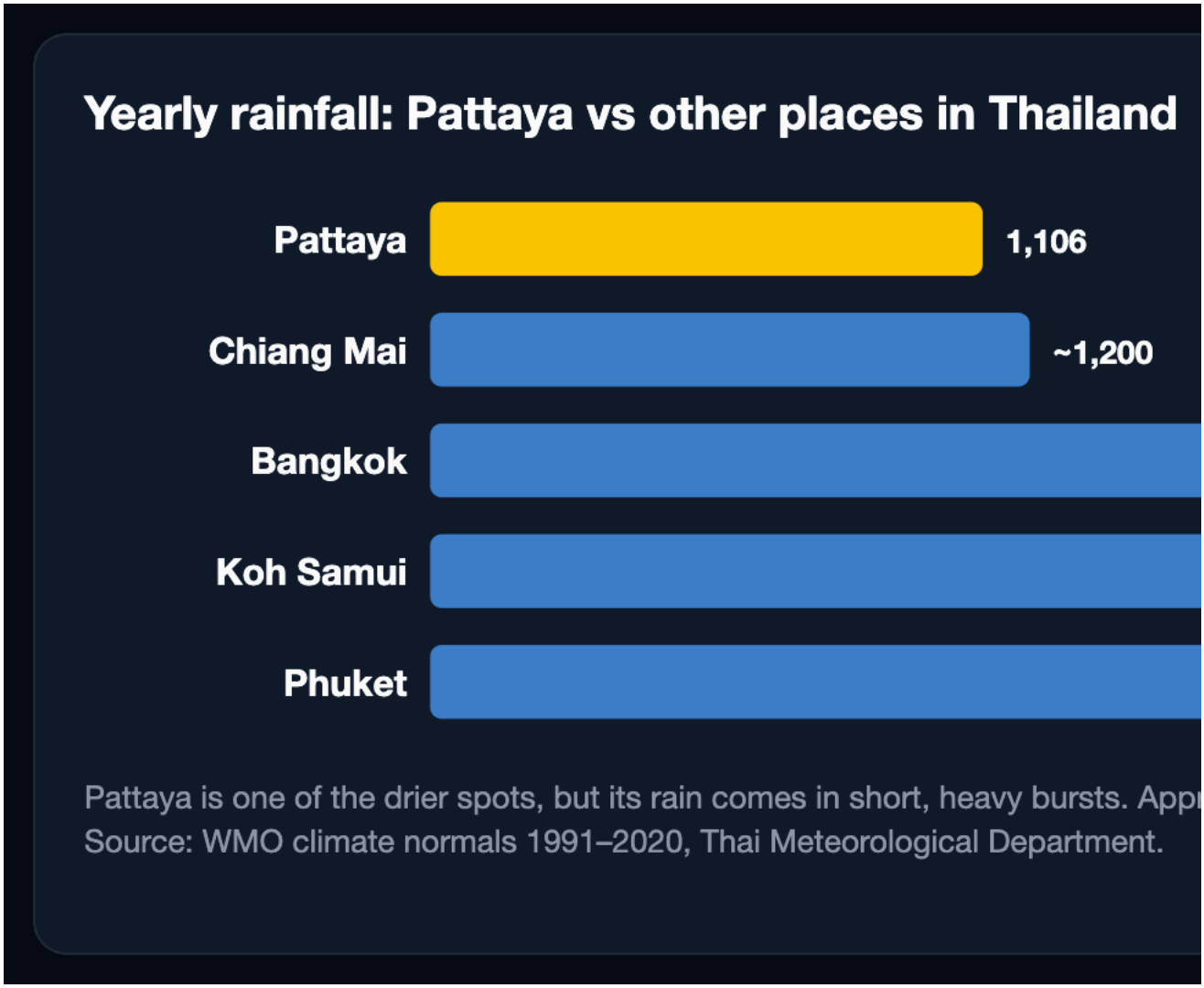


Rain added up through the year, mm. Source: WMO climate normals 1991–2020, Thai Meteorological Department.

Where floods first

Low-lying roads go under first, often by 10 to 60 cm:

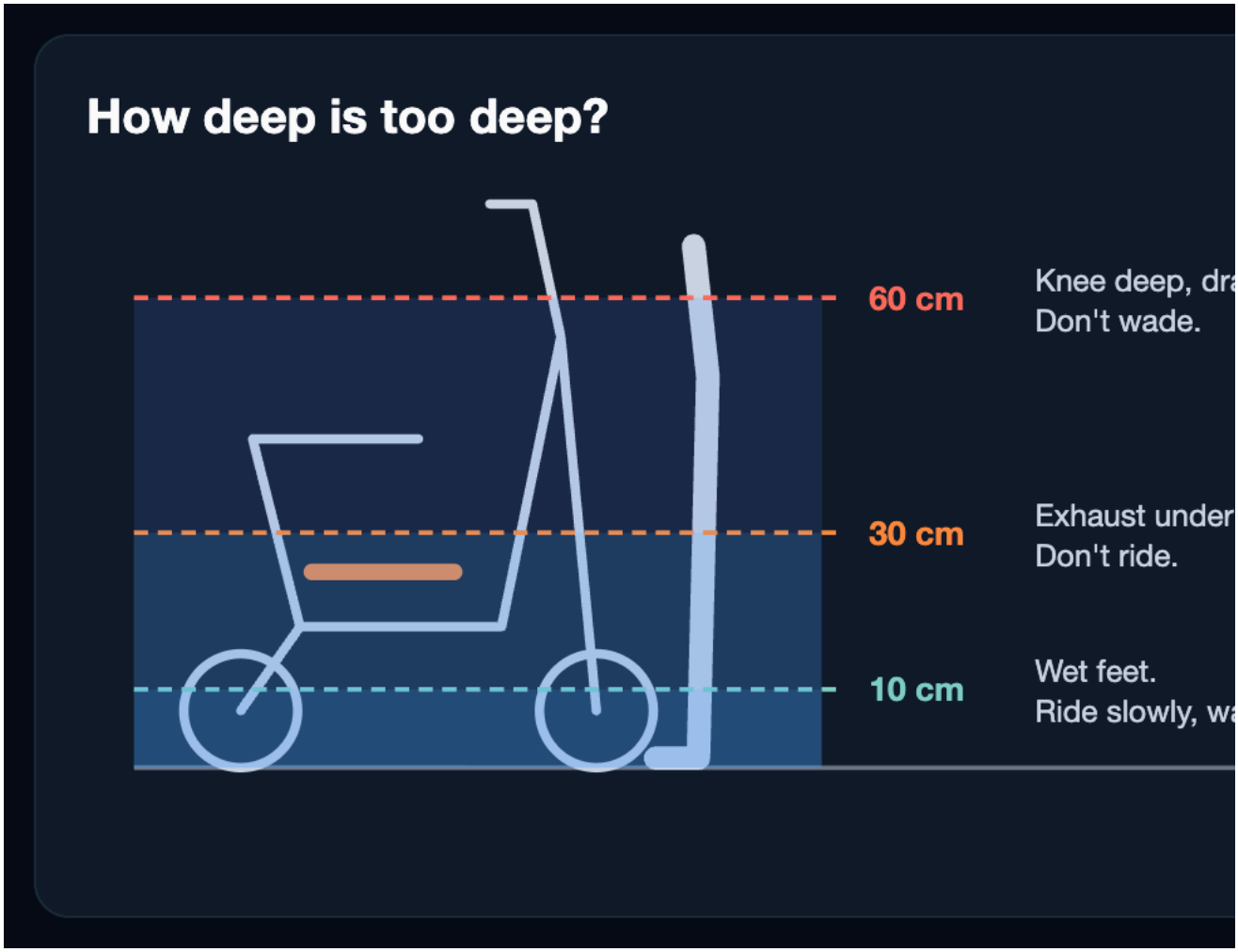
- Soi Buakhao and the streets around it.
- South Pattaya Road, Central Pattaya Road and parts of Beach Road.
- Pattaya Third Road and the road along the railway.
- Parts of Sukhumvit Road.
- Parts of Naklua.



Pattaya is one of the drier spots, but its rain comes in short, heavy bursts. Approximate yearly averages, mm. Source: WMO climate normals 1991–2020, Thai Meteorological Department.

Staying safe

- Don’t ride a scooter or drive through deep or moving water. Engines stall and potholes and open drains hide under the surface.
- Avoid wading where you can’t see the ground, and keep away from electrical boxes and cables.
- Expect slow traffic and pricier Bolt and Grab rides during storms.
- Boats to the islands are often cancelled when the sea is rough. See island hopping.



Planning around it

- Check the forecast and weather warnings each morning.
- Keep your phone, passport copy and cash in a waterproof bag.
- Have indoor plans ready. See rainy day attractions.
- The dry, cooler season from November to February is the busiest and most comfortable time to visit.

For emergencies, see emergency numbers.

If you are caught in a flood

- Do not ride or drive through deep or fast moving water. Scooters stall and can be swept over.
- Floodwater can hide open drains and electrical cables. Wade slowly or wait.
- Wash your feet and any cuts after walking in floodwater.
- In an emergency call 1669 for an ambulance, or 1155 for the Tourist Police. See emergency numbers.

More on the wet season

- See rainy season survival, weather by month and rainy day attractions.

SAFETY & HEALTH

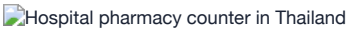
Pharmacies & Medicines

Using Pattaya's pharmacies: how Thai medicine rules work, what pharmacists can sell without a prescription, controlled medicines, fakes, delivery on LINE, and bringing medicines into Thailand.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/safety-health/pharmacies-medicines/

Where	**Pharmacies on most main roads; Boots and Watsons in malls**
Pharmacist	**Hands over "dangerous drugs", often without a prescription**
Over the counter	**Many medicines that need a prescription at home**
Prescription only	**Specially controlled drugs, narcotics and psychotropics**
Bringing medicine	**Up to 30 days' supply; controlled drugs need a Thai FDA permit**

Quick answer: Pattaya has pharmacies on almost every main road, from small family shops to chains like Boots and Watsons in the malls. Thai law lets a pharmacist sell many medicines that would need a doctor's prescription in the West, so for minor problems a pharmacy is often the quickest first stop. Strong painkillers, sleeping pills, anti-anxiety and ADHD medicines are a different story: they're tightly controlled and need a prescription. If you bring medicines into Thailand, carry no more than 30 days' supply in the original packaging with your prescription, and check whether yours needs a Thai FDA permit. This page is general information, not medical advice: ask a pharmacist or doctor about your own situation.


Hospital pharmacy counter in Thailand
Photo: User:Mattes, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

At a glance

Thai law puts medicines into groups. The group decides where a medicine can be sold and who can hand it over.

GROUP	WHERE AND HOW IT'S SOLD
Household remedies	Basic, lower-risk products; some may be sold outside pharmacies
Dangerous drugs (ya antarai)	Pharmacy only, handed over by the pharmacist; often no prescription needed. Many antibiotics are in this group
Specially controlled drugs	Prescription needed
Narcotics and psychotropic substances	Prescription and strict legal controls; a permit to bring them into Thailand

The same medicine can sit in different groups depending on strength and form, so the box in your hand at home may not follow the same rule here.

Where to go

- **Local pharmacies** are everywhere, often with a pharmacist who speaks some English. Some open 24 hours.
- **Chains** such as Boots and Watsons, mostly in malls, have clear price tags and a familiar range. Boots alone has about 250 stores in Thailand.
- **Hospital pharmacies** dispense after you see a doctor there. See hospitals and clinics.
- A licensed pharmacy should display its licence and a sign showing the pharmacist on duty. If you can't see one, ask.

What a pharmacist can help with

Thai pharmacists can sell many medicines on their own judgement: common antibiotics, inhalers, antihistamines, stomach remedies, rehydration salts, wound care and more.

- Tell the pharmacist your symptoms, any allergies, other medicines you take, and whether you're pregnant or breastfeeding.
- Show the box, a photo of the packaging, or the generic name of your usual medicine. Photos beat spelling. Brand names often differ in Thailand. See pharmacy phrases.
- Ask for the directions in writing, in English, and follow them exactly.
- Antibiotics don't help colds or flu, which are usually viral. Being able to buy them easily doesn't mean you need them. If you're not sure, see a doctor.

Pro tip: At 12:51am, wheezing with bronchitis, I sent a 24-hour pharmacy a photo of an inhaler on LINE. They replied in English within five minutes, I paid ฿250 by scanning their Thai QR code, and they booked a Bolt driver for ฿40. About 25 minutes after my first message it was at my door. (October 2026.) Read how I did it.

Delivery

- Many pharmacies take orders on LINE. Search Google Maps for a 24-hour pharmacy and look for a LINE ID on its listing or website.
- Send a clear photo, then ask if they can deliver by Bolt or Grab. You'll usually pay for the medicine by Thai QR code and the delivery fee in cash to the driver. See the LINE app guide and QR payments.

Controlled medicines

Narcotics and psychotropic substances are strictly controlled in Thailand. Codeine-based painkillers, many sleeping pills and anti-anxiety medicines, and ADHD stimulants are often in these groups. They need a prescription, usually from a doctor here, and some are hard to get at all.

- Don't buy them from anyone who offers them without a prescription. Penalties under Thai drug laws can be severe. See laws visitors break.

Avoiding fakes

- Buy from licensed pharmacies, not street stalls, market tables or social media sellers.
- Check the box is sealed, in date, and carries a Thai registration number.
- If a medicine looks or tastes different from your usual one, stop and ask the pharmacist or a doctor.

Bringing medicines into Thailand

- **Ordinary prescription medicines:** Thai embassies say you can bring up to 30 days of prescribed use for yourself. Keep them in the original labelled packaging with a copy of your prescription or a doctor's letter.
- **Narcotic and psychotropic medicines:** these need a permit from the Thai FDA. Apply on the Thai FDA's permit site for travellers, which has a tool to check whether your medicine is controlled. The Thai Embassy in London advises applying at least two weeks ahead; processing takes about 3 to 5 working days.
- Print the permit and carry it with the medicine through customs.
- Sources differ on how many days' supply a permit can cover, so check the Thai FDA site for your medicine rather than relying on a summary.
- Taking controlled medicines out of Thailand has rules too, and your home country may have its own limits on what you bring back.

When to see a doctor instead

- High fever, severe pain, trouble breathing, or symptoms that last more than a few days.
- Any dog or monkey bite. See stray dogs and rabies.
- Suspected dengue. Avoid ibuprofen and aspirin until a doctor has checked. See dengue.
- In an emergency, call 1669 for an ambulance. See emergency numbers.
- For sexual health, testing and PEP, see sexual health and STI testing.

Common questions

Can I buy antibiotics without a prescription in Thailand? Many common antibiotics are "dangerous drugs" that a pharmacist can sell without a doctor's prescription. Ask the pharmacist whether you really need one, and take it exactly as directed.

Are pharmacies in Pattaya open 24 hours? Some are. Search Google Maps for "24 hour pharmacy Pattaya", and many will deliver if you message them on LINE.

Can I bring my prescription medicines to Thailand? Usually yes, up to 30 days' supply in the original packaging with your prescription. Controlled medicines, such as strong painkillers and some sleeping or ADHD medicines, need a Thai FDA permit first.

Do Thai pharmacists speak English? Many in tourist areas do. A photo of the box and a translation app help.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Royal Thai Embassy London, Bringing medications to Thailand (30-day rule, Thai FDA permit, apply two weeks ahead, updated March 2024); Royal Thai Consulate-General Chicago, Bringing medication into Thailand (updated December 2024); Thai FDA, permit for travellers; Chiang Rai Times, Pharmacies in Thailand (medicine groups, pharmacist and licence signs, updated October 2026; not an official source); Inside Retail Asia, October 2026 (Boots stores in Thailand). Which group a medicine belongs to can change; ask a pharmacist or doctor.

From the blog

- How I got an inhaler delivered at 1am through one LINE chat.

SAFETY & HEALTH

Dengue & Mosquitoes

Dengue fever in Pattaya: when the risk is highest, symptoms and warning signs, why ibuprofen is out, the Qdenga vaccine in Thailand, 2026 case numbers and how to avoid bites.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/safety-health/dengue-mosquitoes/

Spread by	**Aedes mosquitoes, which bite mostly in the daytime**
Peak risk	**Rainy season, roughly May to October**
Symptoms	**High fever, severe headache, eye pain, aches, rash**
Painkiller	**Paracetamol only; avoid ibuprofen and aspirin**
Danger time	**As the fever drops; watch for warning signs**
Vaccine	**Qdenga at private hospitals, ages 4 to 60, two doses**

Quick answer: Dengue is a virus spread by Aedes mosquitoes, which bite mostly in the daytime, and it's common across Thailand, including Pattaya, especially in the rainy season. Most people get a few rough days of high fever, headache and aches, then recover in one to two weeks. A small number develop severe dengue, usually just as the fever drops, so that's the time to watch closely. If you get a high fever here, see a doctor and ask about a dengue test, take paracetamol rather than ibuprofen or aspirin, and drink plenty. A vaccine, Qdenga, is sold at private hospitals in Thailand for ages 4 to 60. This page is general information; ask a doctor about your own case.


Aedes aegypti, the mosquito that spreads dengue
Photo: James Gathany, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Spread by	Aedes mosquitoes, active mainly during the day
Symptoms start	4 to 10 days after the bite, lasting 2 to 7 days
Painkiller	Paracetamol only; avoid ibuprofen, aspirin and other NSAIDs
Watch closely	When the fever drops: warning signs often appear then
Second infection	Higher risk of severe dengue
Season	Cases rise in the rainy season, roughly May to October
2026 so far	21,620 cases and 31 deaths nationwide, 1 January to 19 August (DDC)
Vaccine	Qdenga, two doses 3 months apart, at private hospitals

Symptoms

According to the WHO, most people with dengue have mild symptoms or none at all. When it does show, the classic signs are:

- A sudden high fever, often around 40°C.
- Severe headache and pain behind the eyes.
- Muscle and joint pain, nausea, vomiting and swollen glands.
- A rash, often a few days in.

Because symptoms start 4 to 10 days after the bite, you can fall ill after you get home. Tell your doctor you've been in Thailand.

Warning signs: go to hospital straight away

These often appear after the fever has gone down, when people think they're getting better:

- Severe stomach pain or persistent vomiting.
- Bleeding gums or nose, or blood in vomit or stool.
- Fast breathing, intense thirst, pale cold skin.
- Feeling very tired, restless or weak.

Call 1669 for an ambulance if needed. See emergency numbers.

If you think you have dengue

- Thailand's Department of Disease Control (DDC) advises going to hospital for a fever above 38.5°C that lasts more than two days, especially with headache, pain behind the eyes, a red face or tiny bleeding spots, rather than treating yourself.
- A doctor can confirm dengue with a blood test and will usually check your platelet count over several days. See hospitals and clinics.

- There's no specific medicine for dengue. Treatment is rest, fluids and monitoring.
- Take paracetamol for fever and pain. Avoid ibuprofen, aspirin and other anti-inflammatories, which can increase bleeding risk. See pharmacies and medicines.
- Drink plenty of water and oral rehydration salts.
- Hospital stays for dengue can be expensive at private hospitals. See travel insurance and hospital costs.

Dengue in 2026

- The DDC reported 21,620 cases and 31 deaths across Thailand from 1 January to 19 August 2026, below the level for the same period in 2025.
- Cases usually rise with the rains, roughly May to October, and the DDC repeats its warnings every rainy season.
- We couldn't find a 2026 figure for Chonburi province or Pattaya alone. Pattaya's risk follows the season, not the headlines: protect yourself all year.

The dengue vaccine in Thailand

- **Qdenga** is available at private hospitals in Thailand. Bangkok Hospital lists it for people aged 4 to 60, as two injections three months apart. No blood test is needed first.
- It isn't for pregnant or breastfeeding women or people with weakened immune systems. If you've recently had dengue, the advice is to wait at least six months.
- The WHO currently recommends it only for children aged 6 to 16 in high-transmission areas. Advice for adults and travellers differs by country, so talk it through with a travel clinic or doctor.
- 2026 hospital offers we checked (outside Pattaya) ran from about ฿2,800 per dose plus doctor and hospital fees, to about ฿5,000 for both doses with fees included. Some offers are only for Thai citizens and foreign residents, so ask a Pattaya hospital for its own price.
- There's no free national programme yet. A government trial of a vaccine for children aged 7 to 10 started in Nakhon Phanom in April 2025 and is expected to run about three years.
- Because the second dose comes three months after the first, the vaccine suits people who live here or plan ahead. See travel vaccinations.

Avoiding bites

- The mosquitoes that spread dengue bite mostly during the day, with peaks in the early morning and late afternoon. Don't save repellent for the evening.
- Use repellent with DEET or picaridin, sold at 7-Eleven and pharmacies. Put sun cream on first, repellent on top.
- Wear light long sleeves and trousers when you can, especially in gardens, parks and near water.
- Air-con, window screens or a mosquito net keep them out at night.
- Mosquitoes breed in clean standing water. Empty plant pot saucers, buckets and anything that collects rain, and cover water jars. The DDC's advice is to clear rubbish and containers around the home.
- See rainy season survival and flood season.

Common questions

Is dengue common in Pattaya? Dengue is found across Thailand, including Chonburi province, and cases rise in the rainy season. Most visitors never catch it, but it's worth using repellent every day.

What should I take for a fever in Thailand? Paracetamol. Avoid ibuprofen and aspirin until a doctor has ruled out dengue.

Can I get the dengue vaccine in Pattaya? Private hospitals in Thailand offer Qdenga for ages 4 to 60. Call the hospital first to check stock, price and whether the offer applies to foreigners.

Can you get dengue twice? Yes. There are four types of the virus, and a second infection carries a higher risk of severe dengue.

When is dengue season in Thailand? Mainly the rainy season, roughly May to October, but cases happen all year.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: WHO, Dengue and severe dengue (symptoms, warning signs, paracetamol, vaccine recommendation, August 2025); ASEAN Now, 27 August 2026 (DDC figures and advice); Bangkok Hospital, Qdenga vaccine 2026 (ages, doses, who shouldn't have it, July 2026); The Thaiger, June 2025 (DDC vaccine trial). Vichaiyut Hospital, dengue vaccine package and Ratchaphruek Hospital, Qdenga offer (2026 prices, which change often). We didn't find the DDC's own English page for the 2026 figures.

Related

- See hospitals and clinics, first aid kit and travel vaccinations.

SAFETY & HEALTH

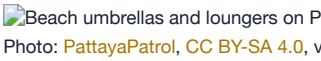
Heat & Sun Safety

Staying well in Pattaya's heat and sun: the hottest months, Thailand's heat index levels, UV and sunburn, who is most at risk, and daily habits that help.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/safety-health/heat-sun-safety/

Hottest months	**March to May; April is usually the peak**
Avoid	**Strong sun from about 11am to 3pm**
UV	**Often "extreme" (11 or more) at midday in the hot season**
Sun cream	**SPF 30+ and PA+++ or higher**
Heatstroke	**Call 1669**
Not advice	**General information only**

Quick answer: Pattaya is hot and humid all year, and from March to May, with April usually the worst, it can be fierce: in early April 2026 Pattaya Mail reported temperatures in the mid-30s °C climbing toward 40 °C, with the "feels like" figure higher still. Thai health officials say to stay out of strong sun from about 11am to 3pm, drink water before you feel thirsty, and go easy on alcohol. The midday UV level in Thailand often reaches "extreme", enough to burn unprotected skin in under 15 minutes, so use SPF 30+ sun cream, a hat and shade. Watch the heat index, not just the thermometer. If someone is confused, has hot skin or collapses, call **1669**. This page is general information; ask a doctor or pharmacist about your own situation.


Beach umbrellas and loungers on Pattaya Beach
Photo: PattayaPatrol, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

At a glance: Thailand's heat index levels

The Thai Meteorological Department and the Department of Health use a four-colour heat index scale. The heat index is what the air feels like with humidity added, and in Pattaya it is often far above the air temperature.

LEVEL	HEAT INDEX	WHAT IT MEANS
Green (observation)	27 to 32.9 °C	Long periods in direct sun can bring tiredness, headaches or rashes
Yellow (watch)	33 to 41.9 °C	Higher risk of fainting and heat cramps; cut back outdoor activity
Orange (danger)	42 to 51.9 °C	Long periods outdoors carry a high risk of heatstroke
Red (extremely dangerous)	52 °C and above	Can be life-threatening even without heavy activity

On orange and red days, plan anything outdoors for early morning or after sunset.

When it is hottest

- The hot season runs from about late February to mid-May. Pattaya Mail reported Pattaya in the mid-30s and heading toward 40 °C in early April 2026, just before Songkran, with humidity and light winds pushing the "feels like" temperature higher.
- Songkran in mid-April means long hours outdoors in the hottest weeks of the year. See Songkran and Wan Lai.
- The rainy season is cooler but still humid. See weather by month.

Heat illness: the short version

Thailand's Department of Disease Control (DDC) recorded 182 heat-related illnesses and 21 deaths in 2025. Two-thirds of the deaths happened outdoors, and more than half were in April.

- **Heat exhaustion**: heavy sweating, dizziness, headache, nausea, cramps. Get into shade or air-con, drink water or rehydration salts, and cool the skin. It should ease within about 30 minutes.
- **Heatstroke** is an emergency: very high temperature, hot dry skin, confusion, fainting or a fit. Call **1669**, move the person to shade, loosen clothing, cool them with water and a fan, and lay them on their side if unconscious. Don't give water to someone who isn't fully awake.

Signs, rehydration salts and the alcohol side are covered in detail on heat, hangovers and dehydration.

Sun and sunburn

- Thailand's midday UV index often reaches 11 to 12 in April, which is "extreme" on the World Health Organization scale. A Thai environmental health expert, quoted by Thairath in March 2026, warned that unprotected skin can burn in under 15 minutes at that level.
- Use sun cream rated SPF 30 or higher and PA+++ or higher, and put it on again after swimming, sweating or towelling off.
- Clouds don't stop UV. Many people burn on grey days, or on a boat where the breeze hides the heat.
- A wide hat, sunglasses and a light long-sleeved shirt do more than sun cream alone. Beach umbrellas and loungers are rented on the main beaches. See Pattaya Beach.
- Sun cream, after-sun and aloe gel are sold at pharmacies, Boots and Watsons. See pharmacies and medicines.

- For a bad burn with blisters or fever, see a pharmacist or doctor.

Where people get caught out

- **Boat and island days.** Hours on deck and on open beaches. Take a hat, a shirt and more water than you think. See island hopping.
- **Scooter riding.** Arms, hands, neck and feet burn on long rides, and the wind hides it. Cover up. See renting a scooter.
- **Walking in the afternoon.** A short walk on a map can feel long at 3pm. A baht bus or ride app costs little. See baht bus routes and fares.
- **A hot day, then a night out.** The Department of Health warned in February 2026 that heavy drinking in beach towns like Pattaya raises the risk in extreme heat. It suggests at least six to eight glasses of water a day and limiting alcohol.

Who needs extra care

- Older people, babies and young children, pregnant women, outdoor workers and people with heart disease, obesity or other long-term conditions.
- People on some medicines: Thai health officials note that diuretics and some blood pressure drugs can make it harder for the body to cool down. Ask your doctor or pharmacist.
- Never leave a child or a pet in a parked car, even for a few minutes. See living with a dog for keeping pets cool.

Daily habits that help

- Drink water steadily through the day, before you feel thirsty. Refill machines and 7-Eleven make it cheap. See drinking water.
- Wear loose, light-coloured clothes.
- Plan sightseeing for early morning or late afternoon, and use the middle of the day for malls, indoor attractions or a rest. See indoor attractions.
- Keep rehydration salts and sun cream in your first aid kit.

Pro tip: I keep my air-con at 25 °C around the clock. In the peak heat my electric bill is about ฿3,500 a month, and about ฿2,000 in the cooler months.

Common questions

What is the hottest month in Pattaya? Usually April. The hot season runs from about late February to mid-May, and Songkran falls in the middle of it.

What time of day is the sun strongest? Roughly 11am to 3pm, and in the hot season UV can stay very high until about 4pm.

What SPF do I need in Thailand? Thai health experts recommend at least SPF 30 with PA+++ or higher, put on generously and again after swimming or sweating.

What number do I call for heatstroke? 1669 for an ambulance. Keep cooling the person while you wait. More numbers are on emergency numbers.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: The Nation, Thailand's heat index scale (25 March 2026); The Nation, DDC heatstroke warning and 2025 figures (15 March 2026); Thairath, UV index forecast for the hot season (5 March 2026); Samitivej Hospitals, Thailand's UV index and sunburn; Pattaya Mail, Pattaya heat before Songkran (4 April 2026); Pattaya Mail, Department of Health warning on drinking and heat (26 February 2026). Figures are for 2025 and 2026; check the current heat index on hot days. General information, not medical advice.

SAFETY & HEALTH

Sexual Health & STI Testing

Where to get tested for HIV and STIs in Pattaya, what tests cost at private clinics and labs, PEP and PrEP, and free community services.

Verified October 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/safety-health/sexual-health-testing/

Budget labs	**GD Lab (Thappraya Road), Lifecare Laboratory (Third Road)**
Full-service clinic	**PULSE Clinic, with doctors, PEP and PrEP**
Basic STI blood panel	**From around ฿700 to ฿1,300 at budget labs**
PEP	**Start within 72 hours of a possible exposure**

Getting tested regularly is quick, private and affordable in Pattaya. You can walk into a lab without a doctor's referral, and most results arrive the same day by email or messaging app.

Budget labs

- **GD Lab**, 144/99 Thappraya Road (the road from Pattaya to Jomtien). Walk-in, open daily from about 8am to 7pm, and markets itself as an anonymous STI clinic. Typical prices: a blood panel for HIV and other common blood-borne STIs around ฿1,300; a urine test for gonorrhoea, chlamydia and ureaplasma around ฿1,200; a fuller urine, swab and blood check around ฿2,800; and a large urine PCR panel with HPV around ฿5,900.
- **Lifecare Laboratory**, 247/31 Pattaya Third Road. A long-standing lab popular with expats for affordable blood tests, with STI packages and a menu of individual tests. Its basic HIV and STI package has been around ฿700; check the current menu, as packages change.

Full-service clinic

PULSE Clinic on Second Road in South Pattaya is a sexual health clinic with English-speaking doctors. It offers large PCR panels covering up to 28 infections, same-day results, treatment, PEP and PrEP. Walk-in lab packages don't need a doctor; a doctor's consultation is around ฿800 plus any medicine. More expensive than the labs, but useful if you need treatment or advice.

PEP and PrEP

- **PEP** (post-exposure prophylaxis) is an HIV medicine taken after a possible exposure. It must be started as soon as possible, and within 72 hours. Go to a sexual health clinic or a hospital emergency department straight away.
- **PrEP** is a daily or on-demand pill that prevents HIV. It's available from private clinics, and free or low-cost through some community clinics for eligible people.

Free and community services

- Community organisations in Pattaya, such as SWING, the Sisters Foundation (which also offers transgender health services) and Rainbow Sky, provide HIV and STI testing, PrEP and advice. Some free services are for Thai nationals only; ask when you book.
- Public hospitals also test, at lower cost than private clinics. See hospitals & clinics.

Staying safe

- Condoms are sold at every 7-Eleven, FamilyMart and pharmacy.
- Many STIs have no symptoms. Testing after a new partner, and regularly if you're sexually active, is the only way to know.
- Some infections take time to show up on tests; ask the lab about the right timing.

Prices are approximate, from the clinics' own information and public listings in 2026. Check with the clinic before you go.

Privacy and results

- Clinics and labs keep results confidential. Many send results by app or email.
- Some tests need a waiting period after possible exposure to be accurate. Ask the clinic.
- PEP works best when started as soon as possible after exposure, ideally within hours.

Related

- See hospitals and clinics, pharmacies and health check-ups.

Related guides

- Eye Care and Glasses in Pattaya
- Mental Health Support in Pattaya
- Pattaya for Solo Female Travellers
- Health Insurance in Thailand

SAFETY & HEALTH

Health Insurance in Thailand

How health insurance works in Pattaya for visitors and long-stayers: travel, international and Thai policies, age limits, pre-existing conditions, direct billing, the 2025 co-pay rule and the visas that require cover.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/safety-health/health-insurance/

Holiday	**Travel insurance with medical cover and evacuation**
Long stay	**International expat policy or a Thai policy**
O-A visa	**Cover of at least ฿3,000,000 or US$100,000**
Thai policies	**Many stop taking new members at about 65 to 75**
Pre-existing conditions	**Often excluded or charged extra**
Not advice	**General information only**

Quick answer: Pattaya's private hospitals are good, but expensive, and can ask for a deposit or an insurer's guarantee before big treatment. On holiday, the usual answer is travel insurance with high medical and evacuation limits. If you live here, the choice is between an international expat policy (wider cover, higher price, more flexible on age) and a Thai policy from a Thai insurer (cheaper, mainly Thailand, with stricter entry ages). Buy while you are healthy: conditions you already have are often excluded. One visa makes cover compulsory: the Non-Immigrant O-A retirement visa, applied for abroad, needs at least ฿3,000,000 or US$100,000 of cover. This page is general information, not financial advice, and we don't recommend any insurer.

At a glance

TYPE	WHO IT SUITS	MAIN THINGS TO CHECK
Travel insurance	Holidays and trips of a few weeks or months	Medical and evacuation limits, motorbike and alcohol exclusions, trip length
International expat policy	People living here, often older or with homes in two countries	Area of cover, deductible, direct billing, how pre-existing conditions are treated
Thai policy (Thai insurer)	People living here long term who mostly need treatment in Thailand	Entry and renewal ages, co-pay clause, contract language
No insurance, own fund	Only those who could pay a large bill themselves	Public hospital option, cost estimates before treatment

Visiting: travel insurance

Travel insurance is built for trips, not for living here: it pays for emergencies, not check-ups or ongoing care. Look for:

- Emergency treatment and hospital stays with a high limit, and medical evacuation or repatriation.
- Motorbike cover, and what it demands. Most policies want a licence valid for the bike and a helmet. See renting a scooter and international driving permit.
- Alcohol exclusions: claims after drinking are often refused.
- Activities you plan, like diving or adventure sports, and the longest trip the policy allows.

More detail is on travel insurance.

Living here: international or Thai policy

	INTERNATIONAL EXPAT POLICY	THAI POLICY
Price	Usually higher	Usually lower
Cover	Worldwide or regional, often including your home country	Mainly Thailand
Age to join	Often more flexible	Many plans stop new members at about 65 to 75
Pre-existing conditions	Sometimes covered for an extra premium or after a waiting period	Usually excluded
Language	English throughout	Check the contract language before you sign
2025 co-pay rule	Generally outside the Thai rule	Can apply (see below)

Sources differ on Thai age limits: one large Thai insurer's plan accepts new applicants up to 65, while a December 2025 Thaiger guide says many local plans stop at 70 to 75. Check the renewal age as well as the joining age.

The Thai co-pay rule

Since 20 March 2025, Thai health policies can carry a co-payment clause allowed by the insurance regulator (OIC). If you make three or more claims in a policy year for minor illnesses, such as flu, diarrhoea or headaches, and they add up to more than twice your premium, you pay 30% of your bills the next year. Sources report a second trigger for general illness claims at four times the premium, and 50% if you hit both. Major surgery and critical illness claims are reported not to

count towards the triggers. Reports say the clause can come off once claims fall back below the limits. In practice, many people pay small visits themselves and keep the policy for real treatment.

Direct billing and deposits

- Direct billing means the insurer pays the hospital, so you don't pay up front. Ask the insurer which Pattaya hospitals it bills directly, and carry your policy card.
- Without it, private hospitals may want a deposit or full payment, and you claim back later. Keep every receipt and medical report.
- For planned treatment, get a written estimate and ask the insurer to pre-approve it.
- See hospital costs and hospitals and clinics.

Which visas require insurance

- **Non-Immigrant O-A** (retirement, applied for abroad): Thai embassy pages state cover for the whole stay of at least ฿3,000,000 or US$100,000, with a certificate signed by the insurer on the official form. Thai insurers must be on the approved long-stay list. Some sources say the rule also applies when O-A holders extend inside Thailand; ask immigration. See retirement visa.
- **Non-O retirement extensions** inside Thailand: insurance usually isn't required, which is why many people in Pattaya use that route. That doesn't make going without cover wise.
- **LTR visa**: the Board of Investment asks for health cover of at least US$50,000, or one of its listed alternatives.
- **DTV and tourist stays**: no insurance requirement. See DTV visa and visa options.

Without insurance

- Public hospitals cost much less, with longer waits and less English. Clinics and pharmacies handle small problems cheaply. See pharmacies and medicines.
- Keep an emergency fund you can reach quickly. See emergency numbers.

Pro tip: healthcare here has been, every time, "a million times faster and smoother than the West." I don't have health insurance at the moment. That's my own choice, based on a healthy, active lifestyle: no smoking, no alcohol, eating well. It isn't advice. Your age, health and savings are different, so decide for yourself.

Before you buy

- Is outpatient care covered, or only hospital stays? What is the deductible?
- Does the insurer bill Pattaya's hospitals directly?
- How are pre-existing conditions treated, and what must you declare? Leaving things out can void a policy.
- What is the oldest age it renews to, and how fast do premiums rise with age?
- Is motorbike riding covered, and on what conditions?
- Dental: most travel insurance only covers emergency pain. See dentists in Pattaya.

Common questions

Do I need health insurance to visit Thailand? Not for a normal tourist stay, but travel insurance with medical cover is strongly advised because private hospital bills can be large.

How much cover does the O-A visa need? Thai embassy pages state at least ฿3,000,000 or US$100,000 for the whole stay, shown with the insurer's signed certificate.

Can I get health insurance in Thailand over 70? Some Thai plans stop taking new members at 65, others later, and international insurers are often more flexible. Prices rise with age, so it is easier to start younger and keep renewing.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Royal Thai Consulate-General Los Angeles, Non-Immigrant O-A (updated 1 September 2026); Royal Thai Embassy Madrid, O-A health insurance requirements; Board of Investment, LTR brochure; Siam Legal, the co-pay rule from 20 March 2025; The Thaiger, healthcare at different ages (December 2025); Allianz Ayudhya, a Thai plan's entry age (cited for the age rule only, not a recommendation). Sources differ on Thai entry ages and the co-pay triggers. Rules change; read the policy wording and ask the embassy or immigration. General information, not financial or legal advice.

SAFETY & HEALTH

Registering at a Hospital in Pattaya

Why it helps to register at a Pattaya hospital before you need it: getting a patient card and HN number, what to bring, direct billing with your insurer, Social Security hospitals and getting copies of your records.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/safety-health/hospital-patient-card/

Register	**At reception or the international desk, with your passport**
You get	**A patient card with a hospital number (HN)**
Bring	**Passport, insurance card and policy, list of medicines**
Direct billing	**Only with insurers the hospital has a contract with**
Records	**Ask the medical records department for copies**
Emergency	**1669**

Quick answer: If you live in Pattaya or stay for months, register at a hospital near you before you are ill. Go to the registration counter or international desk with your passport. You are given a patient card with a hospital number, usually called an HN, which you quote at every visit, and your allergies, medicines and insurance go on file. Bangkok Hospital Pattaya asks outpatients to bring their passport with a signed copy, their insurance card and a copy of the policy. Cashless treatment only works with insurers that have a contract with the hospital; otherwise you pay and claim back. In an emergency, call **1669**.

What to bring

BRING	WHY
Passport, plus a signed photocopy	Identity for registration; some hospitals keep the copy
Insurance card and a copy of the policy	So the hospital can check cover and bill your insurer directly
List of medicines, allergies and past operations	Doctors see your history at once, even in an emergency
An emergency contact's name and number	Someone the hospital can call
Recent test results or reports from home	Can save repeat tests
Your Thai address and phone number	For appointments and follow-up

Why register before you need it

- When you are ill or hurt, the paperwork is already done and staff can find your record in seconds.
- Your allergies, medicines and conditions are on file for whoever treats you.
- You find out before a crisis whether the hospital bills your insurer directly.
- Your results stay in one place, which helps if you need follow-up care.
- A routine visit, such as a health check-up or vaccination, is an easy way to register.

How registration works

- Go to the registration counter or the international patient desk. Large private hospitals have English-speaking staff for foreign patients.
- Fill in a form with your name, date of birth, nationality, passport number, address, phone and emergency contact, and tell them about any allergies.
- You are given a patient card with your HN. Keep it in your wallet and a photo of it on your phone.
- Some Thai hospitals let you register online first and then collect the card by showing your passport. Ask your hospital whether it offers this.
- The number usually belongs to that hospital, so register at each one you expect to use, for example a private hospital and a cheaper public one.

Linking your insurance

Bangkok Hospital Pattaya says cashless service is only for insurers it has a contract with. For others it prefers an advance payment, issues a medical certificate for your claim, and may decline some policies. Before you need treatment:

- Ask the hospital, and your insurer, whether they work together on direct billing.
- For a hospital stay, the hospital usually asks your insurer for a guarantee of payment. Without one, expect a deposit.
- Keep every receipt and medical report for claims.

See health insurance, travel insurance and hospital costs.

If you pay into Thai Social Security

If you work legally in Thailand and pay into Social Security, your covered treatment is linked to a designated hospital, which should be in the province where you work or live. Changes for 2026 could be made from 16 December 2025 to 31 March 2026, online through the Social Security Office website, the SSO Plus app or its LINE account (@ssothai), or in person. Ask your employer which hospital you are registered with, and register there as a patient too. See working legally.

Your medical records

- Ask for copies of test results, scans and reports after each visit, and keep them on your phone.
- At Bangkok Hospital Pattaya, the Medical Records Department (Building E, 1st floor, 8am to 4pm) handles medical certificates, medical history summaries covering the past five years, insurance claim forms and receipt copies. You can also ask online through the hospital's BPH Connect service or by email. Allow 3 to 7 days; fees depend on the document.
- Bring your passport or other photo ID. Someone collecting for you needs your written authority (a power of attorney) and copies of both your IDs.
- Collect your records before you leave Thailand for good. They are much harder to get from abroad.

Choosing a hospital

Pick one near where you live, with an international desk, that works with your insurer and has the specialists you are likely to need. Private hospitals are faster and have more English but cost far more; public hospitals cost much less with longer waits. Pattaya's main options are listed on hospitals and clinics. Retiring here? See retiring in Pattaya and elderly care.

Be ready for an emergency

- Call **1669** for an ambulance. Say where you are, and if you have insurance, ask for the hospital where you are registered.
- Save the hospital's phone number, your HN and your emergency contact in your phone, and turn on your phone's emergency medical information.
- If language is a problem, the Tourist Police on **1155** speak English.
- See emergency numbers.

Common questions

Do I have to register before I can see a doctor? No. You register at your first visit. Doing it in advance just means the forms, insurance checks and allergy notes are done before you need them.

What is an HN number? Your hospital number. It identifies your record at that hospital and is printed on your patient card. Quote it when you book or arrive.

Will the hospital bill my insurer directly? Only if the hospital has a contract with your insurer. Ask both before you need treatment; otherwise expect to pay and claim back.

How do I get a copy of my medical records? Ask the hospital's medical records department and bring your passport. At Bangkok Hospital Pattaya it takes 3 to 7 days, and you can ask online or by email.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Bangkok Hospital Pattaya, for outpatients (documents, direct billing); Bangkok Hospital Pattaya, medical document services; Ramathibodi Hospital, registration for non-Thai patients (an example of online registration and HN cards); Thairath, 18 January 2026 (Social Security hospital changes for 2026); Pattaya Mail, emergency hotlines (December 2024) (1669 and 1155). Each hospital has its own process, so ask at the desk. General information.

SAFETY & HEALTH

Dentists in Pattaya

Dental care in Pattaya: what cleaning, fillings, root canals, crowns and implants cost at clinics and a big private hospital, how to check a dentist's licence, and what to ask before treatment.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/safety-health/dentists/

Check-up and cleaning	**About ฿600 to ฿1,500 at clinics**
Filling	**About ฿800 to ฿2,800**
Crown	**About ฿8,000 to ฿17,000 at clinics**
Implant with crown	**About ฿45,000 to ฿87,000, by brand**
Check	**The dentist's licence on the Dental Council site**
Tip	**Get a written treatment plan and price first**

Quick answer: Pattaya has dozens of dental clinics, and prices are far below most Western countries. In a January 2025 survey of Pattaya clinics, a cleaning was about ฿600 to ฿1,500, a tooth-coloured filling about ฿800 to ฿2,800, a crown about ฿8,000 to ฿17,000 and an implant with crown about ฿45,000 to ฿87,000 depending on the brand. A big private hospital charges more. Before big work, check the dentist's licence with the Thai Dental Council, get a written treatment plan with the total price, and ask about the guarantee. Travel insurance rarely pays for planned dental work.

Pattaya's clinics range from small neighbourhood practices to large modern clinics that see many foreign patients. Prices are much lower than in most Western countries, which is why some people combine a holiday with dental work. Choose carefully, especially for big treatments.

What things cost

TREATMENT	PATTAYA CLINICS (ABOUT)	BIG PRIVATE HOSPITAL (2026 LIST)
Check-up and cleaning	฿600 to ฿1,500	฿350 to ฿850 check-up, ฿1,800 to ฿2,700 scaling
Filling (tooth-coloured)	฿800 to ฿2,800	฿2,000 to ฿6,300
Root canal	฿6,000 to ฿15,000, more for complex molars	฿12,000 to ฿20,000
Crown	฿8,000 to ฿17,000, a few up to ฿22,000	฿19,500 to ฿32,000
Implant with crown	฿45,000 to ฿87,000	฿47,000 to ฿85,000
Porcelain veneer	฿11,000 to ฿15,000	฿16,000 to ฿18,000
Whitening	฿3,000 to ฿13,000 (home kit to in-chair)	Not listed
Extraction	฿500 to ฿1,500; surgical up to about ฿6,700	฿1,600 to ฿3,800

Clinic ranges come from Pacific Prime's January 2025 survey of ten Pattaya clinics. The hospital column is Bangkok Hospital's price list, valid to 31 December 2026; the implant figure is Bangkok Hospital Pattaya's 2026 package, which excludes CT scans and X-rays and may add bone grafting. Sources disagree on root canals: one October 2026 guide quotes ฿20,000 to ฿40,000. Prices depend on the clinic, materials and the dentist, so ask for a written quote.

Pro tip: I've had over ฿500,000 in dental work here and it was fantastic. I estimate the same work would be nearly ฿2 million back home. That's my own estimate for my own case, not a price guide. I highly recommend The Dental Design Center. I went to the one on Soi 10, and listings give its address as 365/12-13 Soi 10, Second Road, so confirm with the clinic before you go.

Checking a dentist and clinic

- **The dentist:** the Thai Dental Council has a free public search for licensed dentists. It is in Thai and searches by first name and surname, so ask the clinic for the dentist's full name in the right spelling.
- **The clinic:** licensed clinics can be looked up by name or licence number on the Department of Health Service Support's register, which shows the licence type, the staff and whether the licence is current.
- Warning signs, according to the Medical Council of Thailand in April 2026: a clinic that doesn't appear in the register, an expired licence, services that don't match the licence, odd advertising, or no clinic name, licence number or dentist's name on display.
- Report a suspicious clinic to the Department of Health Service Support on 1426.

Choosing a clinic

- Look for dentists who can show qualifications and specialist training for the treatment you need.
- A clean, modern clinic with its own X-ray is a good sign.
- Read recent reviews, and ask in the W Forum for personal recommendations.
- For implants and big crowns, ask how many they do and what guarantee they give.
- Large clinics often have English-speaking staff and handle insurance paperwork.

Before treatment

- Get a treatment plan with each step, the number of visits and the total price.
- Ask what's not included: X-rays, CT scans, bone grafts, medicine and temporary crowns are often extra.
- Ask which materials and implant brand they use, and get the details in writing. The brand changes the price a lot.
- Plan time: implants usually need more than one trip, months apart.
- Ask about the guarantee and what happens if something fails after you go home.

Common treatments

- Check-ups, cleaning and fillings are quick and often done the same day.
- Crowns, implants and veneers usually need several visits over days or weeks.
- Plan longer treatment around your visa dates. See visa options and visa extension.
- Combine a dental visit with a health check-up.

Insurance and emergencies

Most travel insurance only covers emergency dental pain, not planned work. Expat policies vary. See health insurance and travel insurance. For an emergency out of hours, the private hospitals have dental departments. See hospitals and clinics.

Tips

- Follow your dentist's aftercare advice on eating and drinking after treatment.
- Pharmacies sell basic painkillers; ask the dentist or a pharmacist what to take. See pharmacies and medicines.
- Keep copies of X-rays and your treatment notes for your dentist at home.
- Prices here are for comparison only, not quotes.

Common questions

How much is a dental cleaning in Pattaya? About ฿600 to ฿1,500 at most clinics in a January 2025 survey. Large private hospitals charge more.

How much is a dental implant in Pattaya? About ฿45,000 to ฿87,000 per tooth with the crown, mainly depending on the implant brand. Scans and bone grafts can be extra.

How do I know a dentist in Thailand is licensed? Search their name on the Thai Dental Council's public register, and check the clinic's licence on the Department of Health Service Support's site.

Does travel insurance pay for dental work in Thailand? Usually only emergency pain relief, not planned treatment.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pacific Prime, Pattaya dental clinics and prices (January 2025); Bangkok Hospital, dental treatment fees (valid to 31 December 2026); Bangkok Hospital Pattaya, implant with crown package (to 31 December 2026); Thailand Starter Kit, healthcare costs (October 2026); Thai Dental Council, dentist licence search (in Thai); Pattaya Mail, check clinic licences online (April 2026) (the hosp.hss.moph.go.th register and 1426). Clinic prices change; ask for a written quote. General information, not medical advice.

SAFETY & HEALTH

Vaccinations for Pattaya and Thailand

Which vaccinations travellers usually consider for Thailand in 2026, what US and UK health agencies advise, the yellow fever certificate rule, malaria, and where to get jabs in Pattaya.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/safety-health/travel-vaccinations/

Required	**None for most visitors; yellow fever proof only if arriving from a risk country**
Most travellers	**Routine jabs and hepatitis A**
Often advised	**Hepatitis B and typhoid**
Depends on your stay	**Rabies, Japanese encephalitis, dengue**
Timing	**See a travel clinic about 8 weeks before you go**
In Pattaya	**Private hospitals give travel vaccines**

Quick answer: Most visitors to Thailand need no vaccinations to enter. The one rule is a yellow fever certificate if you arrive from, or spend more than 12 hours in transit through, a country with yellow fever risk. Health agencies advise being up to date with routine vaccines such as measles and tetanus, plus hepatitis A. Hepatitis B and typhoid are often advised, and rabies, Japanese encephalitis and dengue depend on how long you stay and what you do. US and UK advice differs in places, so see a doctor or travel clinic about eight weeks before you fly. Private hospitals in Pattaya give most travel vaccines. This page is general information, not medical advice.

At a glance

VACCINE	US ADVICE (CDC)	UK ADVICE (TRAVELHEALTHPRO)
Routine: measles (MMR), tetanus, polio, flu	All travellers up to date	Everyone up to date; tetanus booster if the last was over 10 years ago and care may be limited
Hepatitis A	Unvaccinated travellers aged 1 and over	Most travellers
Hepatitis B	Unvaccinated travellers under 60	Could be considered for all; advised for long stays and higher-risk activities
Typhoid	Most travellers	Those at higher risk, such as long stays or visiting family
Rabies	Depends on your risk; ask a doctor	Stays over a month, running or cycling, remote areas
Japanese encephalitis	Living in Thailand, or a month or more in affected areas	Similar; risk peaks May to October, mainly in the north
Dengue (Qdenga)	Not listed on CDC's Thailand page	People aged 4 and over who have had dengue before; others after discussion
Chikungunya	Consider for stays of six months or more	Outbreak areas and long-term travellers
Yellow fever	Not recommended; proof needed only from risk countries	No risk in Thailand; certificate rule as CDC

Entry rules

Thailand has no yellow fever, but travellers aged 9 months and over who arrive from a country with yellow fever risk, or who spent more than 12 hours in transit at an airport in one, need an International Certificate of Vaccination. Check this if you are coming from parts of Africa or South America.

Advised for most travellers

- **Routine vaccines.** Make sure you are up to date with measles, mumps and rubella (MMR), tetanus and diphtheria, polio and flu. The US advice also asks eligible travellers to keep COVID-19 vaccines current.
- **Hepatitis A**, spread through food and water. Both US and UK advice recommend it for unvaccinated travellers. See food poisoning.

Depends on your stay

- **Hepatitis B** spreads through blood and sexual contact, including medical or dental treatment, tattoos and accidents. The CDC recommends it for unvaccinated travellers under 60; UK advice stresses long stays and higher-risk activities. See tattoos and dentists.
- **Typhoid**, also from food and water. Here the agencies differ: the CDC says most travellers, the UK says those at higher risk. The vaccine doesn't give full protection, so food and hand hygiene still matter.
- **Rabies.** Rabies is present in Thailand, and UK health officials noted seven deaths reported by July 2025, three times the same period of 2024. A course before you travel doesn't replace treatment after a bite, but it makes that treatment simpler. It is worth discussing for long stays, runners, cyclists and anyone who will be around animals. See stray dogs and rabies for what to do after a bite or scratch.
- **Japanese encephalitis** is spread by mosquitoes, mainly in rural and farming areas. The CDC doesn't recommend it for short trips to cities; it is for people living here or spending a month or more in affected areas.

- **Dengue.** The Qdenga vaccine is sold at private hospitals in Thailand for ages 4 to 60, as two doses three months apart, so it suits people who live here or plan well ahead. Who it suits, prices and side effects are on dengue and mosquitoes.
- **Chikungunya** is another mosquito-borne virus. UK officials reported 1,379 cases in Thailand in 2025, about double 2024, mostly in the north. A vaccine may be considered for long stays.
- **Mpox.** In July 2026, UK health officials noted 88 confirmed clade Ib cases reported in Thailand. The CDC suggests the vaccine for some adults depending on their sexual health risk; a sexual health clinic can advise. See sexual health and STI testing.

Malaria and mosquitoes

The CDC recommends malaria tablets only for certain areas, mainly provinces on the borders with Myanmar, Cambodia and Malaysia. Pattaya's province, Chonburi, is not a border province, so most Pattaya visitors don't need them; ask a travel clinic if you are going on to border areas. There is no vaccine for Zika, and UK officials linked two 2026 cases to travel in Thailand, so pregnant travellers and couples planning a pregnancy should get advice before travel. For everyone, avoiding bites is the main protection. See dengue and mosquitoes.

Getting vaccines in Pattaya

- **Bangkok Hospital Pattaya** runs adult and pre-travel vaccinations at its Health Promotion Center (Building E, 5th floor, open daily 7am to 5pm, +66 3825 9986). It lists yellow fever, typhoid and rabies among its travel vaccines and issues the international vaccination certificate. A travel medicine doctor sees patients in person at weekends, with video consultations on some weekday afternoons.
- Other private hospitals and some clinics give routine and travel vaccines. Call ahead to check stock and price, as hospital vaccine offers often have expiry dates. See hospitals and clinics.
- Bring your vaccination record so they can see what you've already had. A first visit is also a good time to register as a patient.

Before you fly

- Start about eight weeks ahead. The UK government advises checking vaccine needs at least eight weeks before travel, as some courses take several doses.
- Pack your regular medicines and check the rules on bringing them in. See pharmacies and medicines.
- Get travel insurance with medical cover. See travel insurance and the first trip checklist.

Keep records

- Keep your vaccine card, and a photo of it on your phone. After a bite or an injury, doctors need to know which rabies and tetanus doses you've had.
- Advice changes, so check with a travel clinic or doctor before you go.

Common questions

Do I need vaccinations to visit Thailand? None are required to enter, unless you arrive from a country with yellow fever risk. Routine vaccines and hepatitis A are advised for most travellers.

Do I need a rabies vaccine for Pattaya? Not usually for a short holiday. It is worth discussing for stays over a month or if you'll be around animals. Whether or not you've had it, any bite or scratch needs prompt treatment.

Do I need malaria tablets for Pattaya? The CDC recommends them only for certain border provinces, and Chonburi isn't one of them. Ask a travel clinic if you are travelling on to border areas.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: CDC Travelers' Health, Thailand (page reviewed 8 October 2026); TravelHealthPro (UKHSA), Thailand (vaccine advice and outbreak notices for rabies 2025, chikungunya 2025, Zika and mpox 2026); GOV.UK, Thailand travel advice: health (eight weeks); Bangkok Hospital Pattaya, Health Promotion Center. Dengue vaccine details and their sources are on our dengue page. US and UK advice differ on typhoid and hepatitis B. General information, not medical advice: ask a doctor or travel clinic about your own needs.

SAFETY & HEALTH

Pharmacy Phrasebook: Thai Words for Common Problems

Thai words and phrases for a Pattaya pharmacy, in Thai script with simple pronunciation: symptoms, types of medicine, allergies and conditions, and the questions to ask about how to take it.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/safety-health/pharmacy-phrases/

Ask	**Mee ya kae … mai? (มียาแก้…ไหม) Do you have medicine for…?**
Polite	**End with khrap (men) or kha (women)**
Show it	**Point to the Thai script or a photo of the box**
Tell them	**Allergies, other medicines, pregnancy**
Serious symptoms	**Go to a hospital or call 1669**

Quick answer: Most pharmacists in Pattaya speak some English, but a few Thai words help, especially away from the tourist areas. The key pattern is **mee ya kae … mai?** (Do you have medicine for…?) followed by the problem, such as **puat hua** (headache) or **thong sia** (diarrhoea). End with **khrap** if you're a man or **kha** if you're a woman. Thai is tonal, so if you aren't understood, point to the Thai script on this page. For what pharmacies can sell and the rules on medicines, see pharmacies and medicines. This page helps you describe a problem; it isn't medical advice, so follow the pharmacist's or doctor's instructions.

At a glance

ENGLISH	THAI	SAY IT LIKE THIS
Pharmacy	ร้านขายยา	raan khai ya
Do you have medicine for…?	มียาแก้…ไหม	mee ya kae … mai?
It hurts here	เจ็บตรงนี้	jep trong nee
I'm allergic to…	แพ้…	phae …
How many times a day?	วันละกี่ครั้ง	wan la kee khrang?
Before or after food?	ก่อนหรือหลังอาหาร	kon rue lang ahan?

The romanisation is the same simple style as our useful Thai phrases, not an official system, so you'll see other spellings elsewhere.

How to say it

- **Ya** (ยา) means medicine, and **ya kae** means medicine against something: **ya kae puat** is a painkiller.
- Thai often drops "I". Saying the problem plus khrap or kha is enough: **puat hua khrap** means "I have a headache."
- **Puat** (ปวด) is an ache, like a headache or stomach ache. **Jep** (เจ็บ) is a sore or sharp pain, like a sore throat.
- Say how long: **pen ma saam wan laeo** (เป็นมาสามวันแล้ว) means "I've had it for three days." **Tang tae muea wan** (ตั้งแต่เมื่อวาน) means "since yesterday."

Common problems

ENGLISH	THAI	SAY IT LIKE THIS
Headache	ปวดหัว	puat hua
Fever	เป็นไข้	pen khai
Stomach ache	ปวดท้อง	puat thong
Diarrhoea	ท้องเสีย	thong sia
Constipation	ท้องผูก	thong phuk
Nausea	คลื่นไส้	khluen sai
Vomiting	อาเจียน	a-jian
Sore throat	เจ็บคอ	jep kho
Cough	ไอ	ai
Runny nose	น้ำมูกไหล	nam muk lai
A cold	เป็นหวัด	pen wat
Dizzy	เวียนหัว	wian hua
Toothache	ปวดฟัน	puat fan

ENGLISH	THAI	SAY IT LIKE THIS
Back pain	ปวดหลัง	puat lang
Itchy rash	ผื่นคัน	phuen khan
Mosquito bite / insect bite	ยุงกัด / แมลงกัด	yung kat / malaeng kat
Sunburn	ผิวไหม้แดด	phiu mai daet
Cut, wound	แผล	phlae
Itchy eyes	คันตา	khan ta

Types of medicine

ENGLISH	THAI	SAY IT LIKE THIS
Painkiller	ยาแก้ปวด	ya kae puat
Fever reducer	ยาลดไข้	ya lot khai
Cough medicine	ยาแก้ไอ	ya kae ai
Cold medicine	ยาแก้หวัด	ya kae wat
Allergy medicine	ยาแก้แพ้	ya kae phae
Diarrhoea medicine	ยาแก้ท้องเสีย	ya kae thong sia
Rehydration salts	เกลือแร่	kluea rae
Antibiotic	ยาฆ่าเชื้อ	ya khaa chuea
Eye drops	ยาหยอดตา	ya yot ta
Medicine to put on the skin	ยาทา	ya tha
Mosquito repellent	ยากันยุง	ya kan yung
Tablets / liquid	ยาเม็ด / ยาน้ำ	ya met / ya nam

Antibiotics don't help colds or flu. If a pharmacist offers one, ask whether you really need it; the details are on pharmacies and medicines.

Telling the pharmacist about you

ENGLISH	THAI	SAY IT LIKE THIS
I'm allergic to medicine…	แพ้ยา…	phae ya …
I take this medicine	กินยานี้อยู่	kin ya nee yoo
I'm pregnant	ตั้งครรภ์	tang khan
I'm breastfeeding	ให้นมลูก	hai nom luk
I have diabetes	เป็นเบาหวาน	pen bao wan
I have high blood pressure	ความดันสูง	khwam dan sung
I have asthma	เป็นหอบหืด	pen hop huet

Show the name of any medicine you take, or a photo of the box. The active ingredient on the label is more useful than a brand name, because brands differ in Thailand.

Questions about the medicine

ENGLISH	THAI	SAY IT LIKE THIS
How many times a day?	วันละกี่ครั้ง	wan la kee khrang?
How many tablets?	กี่เม็ด	kee met?
Before or after food?	ก่อนหรือหลังอาหาร	kon rue lang ahan?
Will it make me sleepy?	กินแล้วง่วงไหม	kin laeo nguang mai?

ENGLISH	THAI	SAY IT LIKE THIS
Can I drink alcohol with it?	กินเหล้าด้วยได้ไหม	kin lao duay dai mai?
Please write it down	ช่วยเขียนให้หน่อย	chuay khian hai noi
How much?	เท่าไหร่	tao rai?
Do you have a cheaper one?	มีถูกกว่านี้ไหม	mee thuk kwa nee mai?

Pharmacists often answer with **kin lang ahan** (take after food) or **kin kon non** (take before bed). Ask for the instructions in writing, in English if possible, and follow them exactly.

Showing instead of saying

- Point to the line in the tables above. Thai script is clearer than any pronunciation.
- Show the packaging, or a photo of a medicine you use at home. Pharmacists can often match it.
- A translation app helps with symptoms, but keep sentences short and simple.
- Many pharmacies take questions on LINE: send a clear photo and a few words. See LINE app guide.

When to go to a hospital instead

For chest pain, trouble breathing, a high fever, severe pain, an animal bite, or anything that is getting worse, skip the pharmacy and see a doctor. In an emergency, call **1669**.

ENGLISH	THAI	SAY IT LIKE THIS
Help!	ช่วยด้วย	chuay duay!
I don't feel well	ไม่สบาย	mai sabai
Hospital	โรงพยาบาล	rong phayaban
Doctor	หมอ	mo
Call an ambulance	เรียกรถพยาบาล	riak rot phayaban

See hospitals and clinics and emergency numbers.

Common questions

Do pharmacists in Pattaya speak English? Many in the tourist areas do. Away from the centre, a few Thai words and a photo of the box help a lot.

How do I ask for a painkiller in Thai? Say **mee ya kae puat mai khrap** (men) or **mee ya kae puat mai kha** (women).

Do I need to say khrap or kha? It isn't required, but it sounds polite. Use the one for your own gender: men say khrap, women say kha.

What if they don't understand my pronunciation? Point to the Thai script. Tones change meaning in Thai, and written words avoid the problem.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Thailand Starter Kit, Thai medical vocabulary and buying medicine at a pharmacy (Thai script for symptoms, medicine types and pharmacy dialogue); Tourism Authority of Thailand, essential Thai phrases for visitors. The romanisation on this page is our own simple guide, not an official system. General information, not medical advice.

Related guides

- Pharmacies & Medicines
- Useful Thai Phrases
- First Aid Kit for Pattaya
- Health Insurance in Thailand
- Health Check-ups in Pattaya
- Common Scams to Avoid

SAFETY & HEALTH

Heat, Hangovers and Dehydration

Pattaya's heat dries you out fast, and alcohol makes it worse. Signs of dehydration, heat exhaustion and heatstroke, oral rehydration salts, hangovers, and when it's an emergency.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/safety-health/hangover-dehydration/

Drink	**Water through the day, before you feel thirsty**
Pharmacies	**Sell oral rehydration salts**
Heatstroke	**Hot dry skin, confusion or fainting: call 1669**
Hot season	**Late February to mid-May**
After drinking	**Blurred vision is an emergency, not a hangover**
Not advice	**General information only**

Quick answer: Pattaya's heat makes you lose fluid quickly, and alcohol makes you lose more. Drink water steadily through the day, before you feel thirsty, and use oral rehydration salts from a pharmacy after heavy sweating, vomiting or diarrhoea. Heat exhaustion (heavy sweating, dizziness, headache, nausea) should ease within about 30 minutes of cooling down and drinking. If it doesn't, or someone has hot skin that has stopped sweating, is confused or collapses, treat it as heatstroke and call **1669**. A hangover has no quick cure: water, simple food, rest and time. Blurred vision or trouble breathing after drinking is not a hangover and needs urgent help. This page is general information; for your own situation, ask a pharmacist or doctor.

Know the signs

PROBLEM	SIGNS	WHAT TO DO
Dehydration	Thirst, dark strong-smelling urine, dry mouth, headache, dizziness, tiredness	Drink water, use rehydration salts, get out of the heat
Heat exhaustion	Heavy sweating, pale clammy skin, cramps, nausea, high temperature	Cool place, fluids, cool the skin; should improve within 30 minutes
Heatstroke	Very high temperature, hot skin not sweating, fast breathing, confusion, seizure, collapse	Call **1669**, keep cooling them while you wait
Hangover	Headache, nausea, dry mouth, shakiness, tiredness, anxiety	Water, simple food, rest; time is the only cure
Alcohol poisoning	Confusion, vomiting, slow or irregular breathing, pale or bluish skin, can't be woken	Call **1669** and stay with them
Possible methanol poisoning	Blurred vision, trouble breathing, fits, often hours after drinking	Hospital now; say what they drank

Why it catches people out here

Pattaya is hot and humid all year. The hot season runs from about late February to mid-May, and April is usually the worst month. Thailand's Department of Disease Control (DDC) recorded 182 heat-related illnesses and 21 deaths in 2025, most of them outdoors, and named alcohol as an important risk factor in the deaths. A hot day outdoors followed by a night out is the mix that catches people, and alcohol makes you pass more urine, so you lose fluid faster. See heat and sun safety.

Staying hydrated

- Drink water before you feel thirsty, and more when you are outside or sweating. Pale urine is a good sign; dark yellow means drink more. See drinking water.
- The DDC advises limiting alcohol, caffeine and sugary drinks in the heat, staying out of the sun between 11am and 3pm, and wearing loose, light-coloured clothes.
- If you do drink alcohol, have water or soft drinks in between and a glass of water before bed.
- Never leave children or pets in a parked car in the sun, even briefly.

Oral rehydration salts

Oral rehydration salts (ORS) are powders you mix with clean water. They replace the salts and sugar your body loses when you sweat heavily, vomit or have diarrhoea, which plain water doesn't. Pharmacies in Pattaya sell them cheaply in sachets. Follow the instructions on the pack, and ask the pharmacist which one suits you, especially for children. Keep a few in your first aid kit. See pharmacies and medicines.

Heat exhaustion and heatstroke

If someone has heat exhaustion, move them somewhere cool, loosen extra clothing, give water, a sports drink or rehydration salts, and cool their skin with cool water and fanning (cold packs wrapped in cloth under the armpits or on the neck help). Stay with them: they should feel better within about 30 minutes.

If they don't improve within 30 minutes, or show any sign of heatstroke (very high temperature, hot skin that isn't sweating, confusion, fast breathing, a fit or collapse), call **1669**. Keep cooling them while you wait. If they are unconscious, lay them on their side. Older people, young children, pregnant women, outdoor workers and people with heart conditions are most at risk. More numbers are on emergency numbers.

Hangovers

There is no quick cure: only time clears alcohol from your body, and the liver handles roughly one standard drink an hour. What helps is water, some simple food, a shower and sleep. Ask a pharmacist before taking a painkiller after heavy drinking, especially if you have a stomach upset or a liver problem. If you have a fever as well, it may not be the drink: in Pattaya, dengue is common, and the advice is paracetamol rather than ibuprofen or aspirin until a doctor has ruled it out. See dengue and mosquitoes.

Because alcohol takes hours to leave your body, the morning after a heavy night is not the time to ride a scooter or drive. See road accidents.

When it's more than a hangover

Alcohol poisoning can happen in one night. Signs include confusion, being unable to stand, vomiting, slow or irregular breathing, pale or bluish skin, a fit, or not waking up. Call **1669**. While you wait, stay with the person, sit them up if awake or lay them on their side if not, and keep them warm. Don't give more alcohol, coffee or food, don't put them in a cold shower, and don't try to make them sick.

Methanol poisoning comes from fake or home-made spirits. Thai authorities have warned the public to avoid unregulated alcohol: home-made spirits, liquor with no clear origin and uncertified herbal liquors. Early signs look like being drunk; later come blurred vision, breathing trouble and fits, and without treatment it can cause blindness or death. Anyone with changes in their vision after drinking needs a hospital straight away.

If a drink tastes wrong or you feel far worse than you should, get help early. See night out safety.

Stomach upsets

Diarrhoea and vomiting in the heat dehydrate you quickly. Sip rehydration salts little and often. See a doctor if you can't keep fluids down, there is blood, you have a high fever, or you feel dizzy when you stand. See food poisoning.

Pro tip: I generally don't drink, and a big night out is now once every few months. What changed things for me was going out less, learning to say no, and buying only my own drinks: once you start buying for others, it becomes a pattern.

Common questions

How can I tell heat exhaustion from heatstroke? Heat exhaustion usually comes with heavy sweating and improves within about 30 minutes of cooling and drinking. Heatstroke brings hot skin that may stop sweating, confusion, fast breathing or collapse. That's an emergency: call 1669.

Do sports drinks work as well as rehydration salts? For a hot day, water and a sports drink are fine. After vomiting or diarrhoea, rehydration salts are designed to replace what you lost; ask a pharmacist.

I can't see properly after drinking last night. Is it a hangover? No. Changes in vision after drinking can be a sign of methanol poisoning. Go to a hospital now and say what you drank.

Go easier

For evenings out without alcohol, see Pattaya at night without drinking.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: The Nation, 15 March 2026 (DDC hot season dates, advice, 1669 for heatstroke); The Star (from The Nation), 16 March 2026 (2025 heat illness figures and symptoms); NHS, heat exhaustion and heatstroke; NHS, dehydration; NHS, alcohol poisoning; Healthdirect Australia, how alcohol affects your health (hangovers); Drinkaware, hangovers (alcohol and dehydration); Pattaya Mail, 26 November 2024 (methanol warning and symptoms). Sources differ on which painkiller suits a hangover, so ask a pharmacist. General information, not medical advice.

SAFETY & HEALTH

Eye Care and Glasses in Pattaya

Getting an eye test, glasses or contact lenses in Pattaya: what a shop test does and doesn't check, buying safe contact lenses, red eyes after floods, and when to see a hospital eye doctor.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/safety-health/eye-care-glasses/

Opticians	**In malls and on main roads; tests often free with glasses**
Speed	**Simple glasses are often ready in a day or two**
Contact lenses	**Medical devices in Thailand; buy from reputable shops**
Eye doctor	**Bangkok Hospital Pattaya has an Eye Center**
Eye-test shops	**Licensing rules drafted in June 2026**
Urgent	**Sudden vision loss or an eye injury: hospital now**

Quick answer: Optical shops in Pattaya's malls and on its main roads sell glasses and contact lenses, and many include an eye test when you buy. Simple glasses are often ready in a day or two; varifocals and special lenses take longer, and prices vary widely, so get a written quote. A shop test checks whether you need lenses, not the health of your eyes: for that, see an eye doctor (ophthalmologist) at a hospital. In Thailand contact lenses are regulated medical devices, so buy them from a reputable shop, not a street stall. Sudden changes in vision, eye pain, an injury or a chemical splash need a hospital straight away.

Where to go

NEED	WHERE	GOOD TO KNOW
New glasses, simple prescription	Optical shop	Test often included; quick turnaround
Varifocals or a strong prescription	Optical shop, or a hospital test first	Takes longer and costs more; compare quotes
Contact lenses	Optical shop	Bring your prescription and brand; check the product is approved
Eye health check (glaucoma, cataract, diabetes)	Hospital eye clinic	Seen by an ophthalmologist
Red, painful or injured eye	Hospital, the same day	Don't start eye drops on your own
Children's eyes	Hospital eye clinic	Draft rules send under-12s to doctors

Opticians and eye tests

- Most malls have several optical shops, and there are more along the main roads. See shopping malls.
- The standard of tests varies. In June 2026 the Ministry of Public Health put out for public hearing a draft regulation to license eye-testing and glasses-fitting businesses under the Health Business Establishment Act. Shops would need a licence, testers would need set training and registration, and shop tests would cover only lens prescriptions for people aged 12 and over, with children under 12 and people with eye-muscle problems referred to a doctor. It would take effect 180 days after publication in the Royal Gazette; we couldn't confirm whether that has happened yet.
- Before the test, ask whether you'll get a written copy of your prescription. It's useful for comparing shops and for buying later at home.
- Bring your old glasses or prescription so the shop can compare.

Buying glasses

- Simple single-vision glasses are often ready the same or next day. Varifocals, high prescriptions and special coatings take longer.
- Prices depend far more on the lenses than the frames. Ask for a written quote naming the lens type and coatings, and compare two or three shops.
- Try them on before you pay the balance. Headaches or blurred patches in the first days are worth taking back to the shop.
- Ask about free adjustments and any warranty, and keep the receipt.

Contact lenses

- In Thailand contact lenses, including coloured ones, are regulated as medical devices, and imports need Thai FDA approval.
- Coloured lenses are also sold at markets, beauty shops and online. In October 2025, police and the Thai FDA seized 322,500 unlicensed lenses sold online, citing the risk of poor manufacturing and eye infections, and police advised buying from reputable outlets and checking FDA approval. A 2021 Thai study that inspected coloured lenses bought from online shops found about 8% of products defective, from dirty packaging to foreign bodies in sealed vials.
- Bring your prescription and the brand you use. Follow the wearing schedule, don't sleep in lenses not made for it, and keep a pair of glasses for days your eyes are sore.

Sun, dust and the road

- The sun is strong all year. Sunglasses with UV protection help, especially on the beach and on boats. See heat and sun safety.
- On a scooter, a helmet visor or glasses keep out dust, grit and insects. See renting a scooter.

Red eyes and infections

Conjunctivitis (red, irritated, watery eyes, sometimes with a mild fever or sore throat) spreads easily by touch, and Thai health agencies warn it is among the common illnesses after flooding. Their advice: wash your hands often, don't rub your eyes, and don't use eye drops on your own or share them. If it doesn't settle, or it hurts or affects your vision, see a doctor. If you wear contact lenses and an eye turns red and painful, take the lenses out and get it checked that day. See flood season.

Eye doctors

- **Bangkok Hospital Pattaya's Eye Center** is in Building B, 3rd floor, open Monday to Friday 8am to 8pm and weekends 9am to 7pm (+66 3825 9986). It lists checks for glaucoma, cataract and retinal problems, treatment for diabetic eye disease and age-related macular degeneration, and LASIK equipment.
- Other private hospitals have ophthalmologists, and public hospitals cost less with longer waits. See hospitals and clinics.
- If you have diabetes, high blood pressure or glaucoma in the family, or you are over 40, ask a doctor how often your eyes should be checked. A health check-up package can include an eye exam.

Eye emergencies

- Sudden loss of vision, a curtain or shadow across your sight, or a sudden shower of flashes or floaters: go to a hospital now.
- A chemical splash: rinse with lots of clean water straight away, then go to a hospital.
- A blow to the eye, or something stuck in it: don't rub or try to remove it; get to a hospital.
- Call **1669** for an ambulance. See emergency numbers.

Insurance

Travel insurance usually covers eye injuries and infections as emergencies, but rarely tests or glasses. Long-stay policies differ. Check your health insurance before you book.

Common questions

Is the free eye test at a shop good enough? For updating glasses, often yes. It doesn't check eye health, so see an ophthalmologist for that, or if you have symptoms.

How fast can I get glasses in Pattaya? Simple glasses are often ready the same or next day. Varifocals and special lenses take longer, so order early in your trip.

Can I buy contact lenses without a prescription? Many shops will sell them, but it's safer to bring your prescription and buy approved products from a reputable optician.

Where can I see an eye doctor in Pattaya? Private hospitals have ophthalmologists. Bangkok Hospital Pattaya's Eye Center is open daily, including evenings on weekdays.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: The Nation, 17 June 2026 (draft licensing of eye-testing and glasses shops); The Nation, 17 October 2025 (unlicensed contact lens seizure, lenses as medical devices); Siriraj Medical Journal, September 2021 (inspection of coloured lenses sold online); Department of Medical Services flood warning, 4 September 2024 (conjunctivitis advice); Bangkok Hospital Pattaya, Eye Center. Shop prices and turnaround times vary and we haven't surveyed them. General information, not medical advice.

Related guides

- Health Check-ups in Pattaya
- Sexual Health & STI Testing
- Dentists in Pattaya
- Pattaya for Solo Female Travellers

SAFETY & HEALTH

Jellyfish and Sea Creatures: Staying Safe

What can sting or bite in Pattaya's sea: moon and box jellyfish, sea urchins, stonefish and more, when they are more common, how to avoid them, and official first aid if you are stung.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/safety-health/jellyfish-sea-creatures/

Most common	**Moon jellyfish, painful but not deadly**
Most dangerous	**Box jellyfish, rare in Pattaya**
More likely	**Rainy season and its end, after storms**
First aid	**Out of the water, vinegar for at least 30 seconds, don't rub**
Emergency	**Call 1669**

Quick answer: Most swims in Pattaya are trouble free, and serious stings here are rare. The jellyfish most often seen on Pattaya's beaches are moon jellyfish, which officials say are not deadly but can badly irritate the skin; blooms tend to come in the rainy season and towards its end. The dangerous box jellyfish is mostly reported in southern Thailand and is rarely seen in Pattaya, but it does exist in Thai waters. If you are stung: get out of the water, keep still, pour vinegar on the sting for at least 30 seconds, don't rub it or rinse it with fresh water, and call 1669 for anything more than mild pain. Wear water shoes on rocks for sea urchins.

At a glance

CREATURE	WHERE	RISK	WHAT TO DO
Moon jellyfish	Pattaya and Jomtien beaches, in blooms	Painful, itchy skin, not deadly	Vinegar, don't rub, see a pharmacist if it stays sore
Box jellyfish	Mostly the south; rare in Pattaya	Can be life-threatening	Vinegar, keep still, call 1669 at once
Bluebottle (a man o' war type)	Occasional, washed in by wind	Very painful	Get help; avoid touching any on the sand
Sea urchins	Rocks and reefs, Koh Larn	Spines in feet	Water shoes; see a doctor if spines break off
Stonefish and weever fish	Rocky shallows and sandy bottoms	Very painful sting	Hospital straight away

Jellyfish in Pattaya

- Pattaya's recent jellyfish news has mostly been about moon jellyfish. In October 2024 they appeared in numbers off Pattaya Beach, especially the Dongtan end. A marine official said their venom isn't fatal but can cause severe skin irritation, and that big numbers are common at the end of the rainy season. Lifeguards were told to warn swimmers.
- Small, painful but non-lethal jellyfish have also been reported off Koh Larn in the past, and island medical staff put up warning signs.
- Box jellyfish are the serious risk in Thailand. Thai tourism and marine officials list caution areas in the south and in Trat, not Pattaya, and a 2025 Pattaya Mail report described them as rarely seen here. In August 2026 a 13-year-old boy died after a box jellyfish sting at a beach in Nakhon Si Thammarat, and the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources stepped up warnings and vinegar stations at high-risk beaches.
- Jellyfish are more likely in the rainy months, when wind and currents push them towards the shore, and after storms. See rainy season survival.

Avoiding stings

- Swim at beaches with lifeguards and follow their flags and advice. Don't swim when a red flag is up.
- Don't swim after heavy rain, at night, or outside the buoy-marked swimming areas.
- A rash vest, swim leggings or a long-sleeved swim top cuts the skin you expose.
- Don't touch jellyfish washed up on the sand. They can still sting, so warn children too.
- Check official warnings. The Department of Marine and Coastal Resources posts them at warning.dmcr.go.th and in its Marine Warning app.
- Carry a small bottle of vinegar if you swim a lot. Hotels, beach restaurants and dive operators are told to keep it on hand, but don't rely on finding some.

If you are stung

Thai officials' first-aid steps are:

- Get out of the water and keep as still as possible.
- Call the emergency medical line **1669** for anything more than a mild sting.
- Pour vinegar over the sting for at least 30 seconds, then carefully remove any tentacles with gloves or a stick, not bare hands.
- Do not rub it, and do not use fresh water or alcohol. Officials say these can release more venom.
- Get emergency help at once for severe pain, confusion, chest discomfort, breathing difficulty or a change in skin colour. If the person becomes unconscious and isn't breathing normally, start CPR and keep going until help arrives.
- Vinegar is the official advice for box jellyfish. Some sources say vinegar can make some other jellyfish stings worse, while Pattaya officials advised vinegar for the 2024 moon jellyfish bloom; advice differs, so follow the lifeguard or medical staff on the spot.
- For a mild sting that stays itchy or sore, see a pharmacist or doctor. See pharmacies and medicines.

See emergency numbers and hospitals and clinics.

Sea urchins and rocks

Spiny sea urchins live on rocks and reefs. Wear water shoes when walking on rocks or snorkelling, and see a doctor if spines break off in your skin. Don't dig at spines with a needle: deep or broken spines can get infected.

Stonefish and other stings

Stonefish hide, well camouflaged, on rocky shallow bottoms, and weever fish bury themselves in sand; both have venomous spines that give a very painful sting. Shuffle your feet in shallow water, wear water shoes, and get to hospital straight away if you are stung. The blue dragon sea slug can also sting if picked up. As a rule, look but don't touch.

More beach safety

See beach safety and diving and snorkelling.

Common questions

Are there box jellyfish in Pattaya? They are rarely seen here. Most Thai box jellyfish reports come from the south, such as Krabi, Phuket and the Samui islands. They can't be ruled out, so learn the first aid.

When are jellyfish worst in Pattaya? Usually in the rainy season and towards its end, and after storms, when wind and currents push them inshore.

What should I put on a jellyfish sting? Thai officials say vinegar for at least 30 seconds, no rubbing and no fresh water. Call 1669 for anything serious.

Is it safe to swim at Koh Larn? Usually, yes. Wear water shoes on the rocky parts, and watch for warning signs. See Koh Larn beaches.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: TAT News, 25 August 2025 (box jellyfish and other species, season, first aid, 1669, caution areas); Pattaya Mail, 5 August 2026 (Nakhon Si Thammarat death, DMCR vinegar stations, warning.dmcr.go.th and Marine Warning app); Pattaya Mail, 8 September 2025 (stings rare, box jellyfish rarely seen in Pattaya); The Star, 1 October 2024 (moon jellyfish at Pattaya Beach, official advice); Pattaya Mail, Koh Larn jellyfish warnings (older report). This is general information, not medical advice: see a doctor or pharmacist.

When to take extra care

- Jellyfish are more common in some months and after storms. Ask locally and check for warning signs.
- Wear water shoes on rocky shores and around Koh Larn. See Koh Larn beaches.
- Look but do not touch coral and sea life when snorkelling. See diving and snorkelling.
- Pack the basics in a first aid kit.

SAFETY & HEALTH

Travel Insurance for Thailand

Why travel insurance matters in Pattaya, whether Thailand requires it in 2026, the proposed 450-baht tourist fee, the motorbike and alcohol exclusions that catch people out, and what to check before you buy.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/safety-health/travel-insurance/

450-baht tourist fee	**Proposed, with some insurance; not in force**
Motorbikes	**Often only covered with a valid licence and helmet**
Alcohol	**Claims can be refused if you were drunk**
Living here	**See health insurance instead**
Buy	**Before you travel**

Quick answer: You don't need travel insurance to enter Thailand as a tourist in November 2026, but you should have it. Private hospitals in Pattaya are good and expensive, and they want payment or a guarantee from your insurer before serious treatment. Look for high medical and evacuation limits, and read the motorbike rules: many policies only pay if you held a licence valid for the bike and wore a helmet. Thailand is planning a 450-baht fee for foreign visitors that would include some accident and medical cover, possibly from early 2027 for air arrivals, but it isn't approved yet and isn't a replacement for a real policy. Living here? See health insurance.

Travel insurance is what turns a bad accident into an inconvenience instead of a financial disaster.

At a glance

QUESTION	ANSWER (NOVEMBER 2026)
Is travel insurance required to visit Thailand?	No, not for visa-exempt or tourist stays
The 450-baht tourist fee?	Proposed, would fund some cover, not yet approved
Covered riding a scooter?	Usually only with the right licence and a helmet
Covered after drinking?	Often not
Planned dental or check-ups?	No, travel insurance is for emergencies
Staying months or years?	Look at health insurance

Why it matters

- Private hospitals in Pattaya treat most foreigners and can cost tens of thousands of baht a night for a serious case. See hospital costs.
- Motorbike accidents are the most common reason visitors end up in hospital. See renting a scooter.
- Flying home on a medical flight can cost far more than the treatment itself.
- Unpaid bills are a real problem: in April 2026, Thailand's Ministry of Public Health estimated at least ฿100 million a year in unpaid hospital bills from foreign patients, which is why the government is looking at making cover compulsory.

The 450-baht fee and compulsory cover

Thailand has discussed a fee for foreign visitors for some time; an earlier plan was 300 baht. The current proposal is 450 baht per person, with part of the money buying insurance for fee-paying visitors, including medical and death benefits. As of late October 2026 it still needed approval from the National Tourism Policy Committee and the Cabinet, and publication in the Royal Gazette. If approved, collection could start in the first quarter of 2027 for air arrivals, with land and sea arrivals a year later. The policy terms aren't final, so plan on buying your own insurance. We'll update this page if the rules change.

The exclusions that catch people out

- **Motorbikes:** many policies only cover you if you hold a motorcycle licence valid in Thailand and wore a helmet. The UK government warns that riding without a valid licence can invalidate your travel insurance. See Thai driving licence and international driving permit.
- **Alcohol:** claims are often refused if you were drunk when it happened.
- **Pre-existing conditions:** usually excluded unless you declare them.
- **Adventure activities:** diving, jet skis and similar may need an add-on. See adventure activities.
- **Dental:** usually only emergency pain relief, not planned work. See dentists.

What to check before you buy

- Medical cover of at least the equivalent of US$1 million, including emergency evacuation.
- Motorbike riding, and the engine size, if you plan to ride.
- A 24-hour emergency phone line, and whether the insurer can guarantee payment directly to Thai hospitals.
- The longest trip the policy allows, and whether you can extend it from Thailand.

- Theft and lost baggage limits, and how soon you must report a theft.
- Whether you need to call before treatment, except in an emergency.

Long stays

Some long-stay visas require health insurance, and travel insurance is usually limited to trips of a few months. The O-A retirement visa's insurance rule, expat and Thai policies, age limits and direct billing are all on health insurance. See also visa options.

If something happens

- Call your insurer's emergency line as soon as you can.
- Keep every receipt and medical report.
- For theft, get a police report from the Tourist Police (1155) for your claim.
- Hospitals and clinics: hospitals and clinics. For a crash, see road accidents.

This is general information, not advice on a specific policy. Read the policy wording before you buy.

Activities to check

- Riding a scooter, especially without the right licence. See motorbike insurance.
- Diving, jet skis and adventure sports. See adventure activities.
- Injuries after drinking are often not covered.
- What to do after a crash: see road accidents.

Common questions

Is travel insurance mandatory for Thailand? Not in November 2026 for a normal tourist stay. The government has discussed making it compulsory, and a proposed 450-baht visitor fee would include some cover, but neither is in force.

Will the 450-baht fee replace travel insurance? Don't count on it. It isn't approved yet, and the cover it would buy hasn't been finalised.

Does travel insurance cover scooter accidents in Thailand? Often only if you had a licence valid for the bike and wore a helmet. Check the policy wording.

Is travel insurance enough if I live in Pattaya? Usually not: it is built for trips. See health insurance.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: The Nation, private sector backs the 450-baht fee (28 October 2026) (status, approvals, timing, insurance); The Nation, tourist fee to fund insurance (May 2026); The Thaiger, Thailand's travel insurance plan and unpaid bills (April 2026); UK government travel advice, Thailand safety (licences and insurance). Reports differ on the fee's start date, and it is subject to final approval. General information, not financial advice.

SAFETY & HEALTH

Stray Dogs and Rabies: Staying Safe

How to stay safe around Pattaya's street dogs, what to do in the first minutes after a bite or scratch, why you shouldn't wait to see if the dog gets sick, and how rabies vaccines and the city's dog programme work.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/safety-health/stray-dogs-rabies/

Bitten or scratched	**Wash with soap and water for 15 minutes, then a hospital the same day**
Don't wait	**Start shots even if the dog seems healthy**
Rabies	**Almost always fatal once symptoms start, preventable with prompt shots**
Pre-trip vaccine	**Ask a doctor, especially for long stays**
Avoid	**Running, staring, feeding packs at night**
Disease Control hotline	**1422**

Quick answer: Most of Pattaya's street dogs ignore people, but some guard their soi, especially at night, and rabies is present in Thailand. If a dog, cat or monkey bites or scratches you, wash the wound with soap and running water for at least 15 minutes, then go to a hospital or clinic the same day for rabies shots, even if the animal looks healthy. Rabies is almost always fatal once symptoms start, but prompt treatment prevents it. Thailand's seven rabies deaths in 2025, one of them in Chonburi, were all people who didn't see a doctor after being bitten. This page is general information; see a doctor.

At a glance

SITUATION	WHAT TO DO
A dog barks or follows you	Walk on calmly, don't run or stare, cross the road
A pack blocks your soi at night	Go another way
Bitten, scratched or licked on broken skin	Wash 15 minutes with soap and water, hospital the same day
The dog has an owner and looks healthy	Still get checked and start shots; don't wait
Had a rabies vaccine before your trip	Still go: it doesn't replace treatment after a bite
A dog acting strangely	Keep away and report it (numbers below)

Avoiding trouble

- Walk calmly, do not run, and do not stare at a barking dog.
- Cross the road or go another way if a group of dogs looks unfriendly.
- On a scooter, slow down rather than speeding past.
- Do not feed or touch street dogs, especially at night, even if they seem friendly.
- Thai health officials' "5 don'ts" for dog bites: don't tease a dog, don't step on or startle it, don't break up a dog fight with your hands, don't touch its food bowl while it eats, and don't approach dogs you don't know.
- Pattaya Mail reports trouble spots are beachfront promenades, markets, quiet streets, beach access points and poorly lit areas, mainly at night.

If you are bitten or scratched

- Straight away, wash the wound with soap and plenty of running water for about 15 minutes. The World Health Organization says to do this every time.
- Apply an antiseptic, and go to a hospital or clinic the same day for rabies and tetanus shots. See hospitals and clinics.
- Don't wait to see if the animal gets sick. Thai officials say to start treatment right away. Doctors may also ask you to watch the animal for 10 days if it has an owner.
- Treatment usually means several injections over a few weeks. Complete the full course and keep your vaccine record card.
- In an emergency call 1669 for an ambulance, or 1155 for the Tourist Police. See emergency numbers.

What treatment involves

The World Health Organization sorts exposures into three levels. A lick on unbroken skin needs only washing. A nibble or a small scratch that doesn't bleed needs washing and the vaccine. A bite or scratch that breaks the skin, or saliva in the eyes or mouth, also needs rabies immunoglobulin, an extra injection given around the wound. Your doctor decides which applies and what schedule you need. The US CDC says rabies vaccines are available in most of Thailand. Private hospitals cost more than public ones; ask for a price.

Symptoms usually start two to three months after a bite, but it can be a week or as long as a year, so a bite from weeks ago still needs a doctor.

Rabies in Thailand now

- Seven people died of rabies in Thailand in 2025, in Chonburi, Tak, Sisaket, Nakhon Ratchasima, Chachoengsao and Rayong. None had seen a doctor after being bitten, and more than half were bitten by dogs that had owners.

- The first death of 2026 was in Rayong, a man bitten by a puppy in December 2025 who didn't clean the wound or get vaccinated.
- Between 1 January and 20 February 2026, tests confirmed rabies in 50 animals across Thailand, mostly dogs. Pattaya had not reported a human death.

Pattaya's dog programme

Pattaya City runs patrols that catch street dogs for sterilisation and vaccination; aggressive dogs may be moved, and calm ones returned. The city also offers free vaccination for owned dogs. In April and May 2026 it ran a 10-day campaign with the Soi Dog Foundation to sterilise and vaccinate at least 400 dogs on Koh Larn. To report a dangerous pack, call Pattaya City's 24-hour hotline on 1337. Suspected rabid animals can be reported to the Department of Livestock Development on 06-3225-6888, and the Department of Disease Control answers rabies questions on 1422.

Vaccines before you travel

For long stays, a pre-exposure rabies vaccine is worth discussing with your doctor. The US CDC suggests weighing it if you'll be around animals a lot or might struggle to get treatment quickly. The World Health Organization stresses that it doesn't replace treatment after a bite; ask your doctor how it changes what you would need. See vaccinations for Pattaya and Thailand.

Cats and monkeys

Bites and scratches from cats and monkeys need the same care. Bangkok Hospital Pattaya says about one rabies infection in ten in Thailand comes from cats. See the Pratumnak walk for monkey tips.

Living with your own dog

Keep your dog's rabies vaccine up to date every year, and keep it on a lead around soi dogs. See living with a dog.

Common questions

Do I need rabies shots after a scratch from a street dog? Get checked the same day. A scratch that breaks the skin usually needs the vaccine, and sometimes immunoglobulin. A doctor decides.

Is rabies common in Pattaya? Human cases are rare, and Pattaya had not reported a death in early 2026. But Thai officials say rabid animals are found especially in the east, northeast and south, and one of the 2025 deaths was in Chonburi.

I had the rabies vaccine before my trip. Do I still need treatment? Yes. The World Health Organization says a pre-trip vaccine doesn't replace care after a bite. Wash the wound and see a doctor the same day.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: World Health Organization, rabies fact sheet (updated September 2026); The Nation, first rabies death of 2026 and the 2025 deaths (February 2026); Pattaya Mail, rabies alert for tourists (February 2026); Bangkok Hospital Pattaya, rabies advice; US CDC, health advice for Thailand; Pattaya Mail, Pattaya's stray dog control (April 2026); Pattaya Mail, Koh Larn sterilisation drive (April 2026); Pattaya Mail (October 2026) for the 1337 city hotline. The wording of the "5 don'ts" varies between releases. General information, not medical advice: see a doctor.

Related guides

- Jellyfish and Sea Creatures: Staying Safe
- Vaccinations for Pattaya and Thailand
- Pharmacies & Medicines
- Staying Safe Online in Thailand

SAFETY & HEALTH

Food Poisoning and Stomach Bugs

What to do if your stomach turns in Pattaya: how common it is, how to lower the risk, rehydration, what pharmacies can help with, the warning signs, and when to see a doctor.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/safety-health/food-poisoning/

Most cases	**Settle within 3 to 4 days**
First step	**Oral rehydration salts from any pharmacy**
See a doctor	**Fever of 38 °C or more, blood, severe pain, or can't keep fluids down**
Thai advice	**"Eat hot, use serving spoons, wash hands"**
Emergency	**1669**
Not advice	**General information only**

Quick answer: A stomach upset is the most common health problem for travellers, in Thailand as anywhere hot. Most cases are mild and settle within three to four days with rest and fluids. The first thing to do is replace what you lose: sip oral rehydration salts, sold cheaply at every pharmacy, little and often. See a doctor quickly for a fever of 38 °C or more, blood or mucus in your stool, severe stomach pain, confusion, or if you can't keep fluids down; see one anyway if you are not improving after three days. To lower the risk, follow Thailand's own advice: eat food cooked hot, use serving spoons, and wash your hands. This page is general information, not medical advice; ask a pharmacist or doctor about your own situation.

At a glance

SITUATION	WHAT TO DO
Mild diarrhoea, feeling OK	Keep drinking and eating plain food; rest
Lots of diarrhoea or vomiting	Oral rehydration salts, sipped little and often; ask a pharmacist
No better after 3 days	See a doctor or clinic
Fever 38 °C or more, blood or mucus, severe pain	See a doctor straight away
Can't keep fluids down, dizzy, very little urine	See a doctor now; this is dehydration
Confused, fainting or very drowsy	Call **1669**

How common it is

- The UK's travel health service, TravelHealthPro, says travellers' diarrhoea affects more than 1 in 5 people visiting higher-risk destinations. It usually lasts three to four days, and fewer than 1% end up in hospital.
- In Thailand itself, the government reported 39,233 food poisoning cases and 274,151 cases of acute diarrhoea from 1 January to 17 March 2026, most of them in children under five.
- The hot season is a risky time. In March 2026 Thai health officials warned that food left out in the heat goes off quickly, and named diarrhoea, food poisoning, typhoid, cholera and hepatitis A as common summer diseases.

Lowering the risk

Thai health officials sum it up as "eat hot, use serving spoons, wash hands".

- Choose busy stalls and restaurants where food is cooked fresh in front of you. Hot, freshly cooked food is safest. See street food.
- Take care with raw or undercooked seafood, raw pickled crab or shrimp, and buffets or ready meals that have sat at room temperature for a long time. Thai officials say food left out for more than two hours should be reheated thoroughly.
- Drink bottled, refill-machine or boiled water, and Thai officials advise buying ice that is clean and labelled for eating. Restaurant factory ice is generally fine. See drinking water.
- Wash your hands with soap before eating and after the toilet. Hand gel helps when there is no sink, but TravelHealthPro notes it is not entirely effective.
- Seafood is a big part of eating in Pattaya. Pick places where it is kept on ice and cooked to order. See seafood restaurants.
- No one can avoid every bug. Careful eaters get ill too, so pack rehydration salts anyway.

If it happens

- Start rehydration early. Oral rehydration salts replace the salts and sugar you lose, which plain water doesn't. Mix with clean water as the pack says.
- Rest, and stay out of the heat. Heat and diarrhoea together dehydrate you fast. See heat, hangovers and dehydration.
- Eat when you feel ready: plain rice soup (jok or khao tom), toast, bananas and clear soups.
- Avoid alcohol, spicy, oily and dairy food for a day or two.
- Tell a pharmacist your symptoms, how long you've had them and any medicines you take. Ask before taking anything to stop diarrhoea, especially if you have a fever or blood. See pharmacies and medicines and pharmacy phrases.
- Many antibiotics are sold over the counter in Thai pharmacies, but mild stomach bugs usually get better without them. Let a doctor or pharmacist decide.

- If you are too ill to go out, many pharmacies deliver through LINE, and food apps deliver plain food. See food delivery apps.

When to see a doctor

TravelHealthPro advises getting medical help:

- Straight away for a fever of 38 °C or more, blood or mucus in your stool, severe stomach pain, confusion, yellow skin or eyes, or a rash.
- If you can't keep fluids down or show signs of dehydration: great thirst, dizziness, very little or dark urine, sunken eyes.
- If you are not getting better within three days.
- Sooner for babies, young children, older people, pregnant women and anyone with a weak immune system, kidney or heart disease, or bowel disease.

A fever with aches in Pattaya can also be dengue rather than food. If you have a high fever, see a doctor and avoid ibuprofen and aspirin until dengue is ruled out. See dengue and mosquitoes.

Clinics are cheaper than hospitals for a straightforward visit. See hospitals and clinics and hospital costs. In an emergency call **1669**; more numbers are on emergency numbers.

Pro tip: every time I've needed healthcare here, it's been a million times faster and smoother than the West. A hospital trip for stomach issues was a smooth one.

Insurance and receipts

Keep receipts and the doctor's notes for any treatment, and check whether your travel insurance covers outpatient visits and what the excess is. See travel insurance.

Common questions

How long does food poisoning last in Thailand? Most travellers' diarrhoea is over within three to four days, and mild cases often sooner. See a doctor if you're not improving after three days.

Is street food in Pattaya safe? Busy stalls cooking hot food to order are generally a good bet. The bigger risks are raw seafood and food that has sat out in the heat.

Can I drink the ice in Pattaya? Factory ice in restaurants and bars is generally considered fine. Crushed block ice at a street stall is less certain.

Should I take antibiotics for a stomach bug? Often not. Most mild cases get better on their own with fluids. A doctor or pharmacist can tell you if yours needs treatment.

Where do I buy rehydration salts? At any pharmacy, in sachets you mix with clean water. Keep some in your first aid kit.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: TravelHealthPro (UK), travellers' diarrhoea factsheet; Thairath, government figures on food poisoning and diarrhoea, January to March 2026 (29 March 2026); The Nation, DDC warning on five summer diseases (13 March 2026); Pattaya Mail, food poisoning risks in the hot season (13 April 2026). General information, not medical advice.

SAFETY & HEALTH

Air Quality and Haze in Pattaya

When PM2.5 haze affects Pattaya, how to read Air4Thai and IQAir (they use different scales), what the Thai standard is, and simple ways to protect yourself on bad air days.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/safety-health/air-quality/

Worst months	**The cool, dry season, roughly November to March**
Official readings	**Air4Thai (Pollution Control Department)**
Thai PM2.5 standard	**37.5 µg/m³ over 24 hours**
Scales differ	**Thai AQI and US AQI (IQAir) give different numbers**
Bad days	**N95 mask outdoors, purifier indoors, exercise inside**
Health	**General information; ask a doctor if you have asthma or heart disease**

Quick answer: Pattaya's air is usually fine, but fine dust (PM2.5) can build up in the cool, dry months, roughly November to March, especially on calm days. Local reports put the highest readings on busy roads such as Beach Road and Second Road. Check the official **Air4Thai** app or website from the Pollution Control Department, or **IQAir**. They use different scales, so don't compare their index numbers: compare the PM2.5 figure in µg/m³. Thailand's 24-hour standard is 37.5 µg/m³. On bad days, wear an N95 mask outdoors, run an air purifier indoors and move hard exercise inside. This is general information, not medical advice.

At a glance

	WHAT TO KNOW
Worst time	Cool, dry months, roughly November to March; rain and wind clear the air
Worst places	Busy roads; Beach Road and Second Road read highest in December 2025 reports
Main local causes	Traffic, construction and road dust, according to city officials
Official source	Air4Thai, from the Pollution Control Department
Popular app	IQAir, which shows the US AQI scale
Thai standard	PM2.5 37.5 µg/m³ averaged over 24 hours
Most at risk	Children, older people and anyone with an existing illness

When and where it gets worse

- **Season.** In December 2025 The Pattaya News, using Air4Thai data, put central and north Pattaya at about 30 to 48 µg/m³, in the yellow to orange bands, and said the winter pollution season typically lasts until February or March.
- **Spikes happen.** In early November 2023 Pattaya briefly topped IQAir's ranking of Thai cities, with a reading of 154, before rain was expected to bring relief.
- **It isn't always bad.** On 3 January 2026 the national check found the East, including the Pattaya area, in the healthy range, while Bangkok and nearby provinces were over the standard, Pattaya Mail reported.
- **Causes.** Pattaya's deputy mayor named construction, vehicle emissions and road dust as major contributors, and the city said it would wash and wet roads and enforce a ban on outdoor burning.
- **Weather.** Still air traps dust; rain and stronger wind usually clear it. See weather by month.

How to check the air

- **Air4Thai** (website and app) is the Pollution Control Department's official system, with readings from government monitoring stations. Thai news reports and health warnings use its scale.
- **IQAir** (website and app) is widely used by visitors. It shows the US AQI, so its number for the same air is different from Air4Thai's.
- Look at the **PM2.5 figure in µg/m³** and the time it was measured. Some apps show hourly readings and others 24-hour averages, so a single hour can look worse than the daily figure.
- Check the station or sensor nearest to where you are. Readings next to a busy road are often higher than a few streets away.

Reading the numbers

Thailand's scale has five colour bands: blue, green, yellow, orange and red. In June 2023 Thailand tightened its 24-hour PM2.5 standard from 50 to 37.5 µg/m³, and the red band now starts at 75.1 µg/m³.

THAI AQI (AIR4THAI)	MEANING
0 to 25	Very good
26 to 50	Good

THAI AQI (AIR4THAI)	MEANING
51 to 100	Moderate
101 to 200	Starting to affect health
201 and above	Affects health

The US AQI used by IQAir runs on a different scale:

US AQI (IQAIR)	MEANING
0 to 50	Good
51 to 100	Moderate; unusually sensitive people may feel effects
101 to 150	Unhealthy for sensitive groups
151 to 200	Unhealthy
201 to 300	Very unhealthy
301 and above	Hazardous

For comparison, the World Health Organization's guideline for 24-hour exposure is 15 µg/m³, stricter than the Thai standard.

Protecting yourself on bad days

The Public Health Ministry advice reported in December 2025 was simple:

- Wear an N95 or equivalent mask outdoors. Make sure it fits closely around your nose and chin.
- Limit hard exercise outside, especially in the morning and late afternoon.
- Use an air purifier indoors.
- Keep an eye on real-time readings in Air4Thai.
- People with asthma, heart or lung conditions should keep their usual medicines with them and follow their doctor's plan. If you have chest pain or trouble breathing, get medical help. See hospitals and clinics and pharmacies and medicines.

At home or in your room

- Keep windows closed when readings are high and run the air conditioning.
- A purifier with a HEPA filter helps most in the room where you sleep. Size it for the room.
- Clean or change air conditioner filters regularly. See home repairs.

Planning around haze

- Exercise indoors on hazy days. See gyms and fitness and running and cycling.
- Choose indoor plans when readings are high. See indoor attractions.
- Visiting with children or older relatives in the cool season? Check the readings each morning and keep flexible plans. See best time to visit.

Common questions

Is air pollution bad in Pattaya? Usually not. Most of the year the air is in the good range, but fine dust can rise in the cool, dry months, and there are occasional bad spells, like November 2023.

Which app should I use, Air4Thai or IQAir? Either is fine if you understand the scale. Air4Thai is the official Thai source; IQAir shows the US AQI. Compare the PM2.5 figure in µg/m³, not the index numbers.

When is the air worst in Pattaya? Local reports point to the cool, dry season, roughly November to March, on calm days and near busy roads.

Do I need a mask in Pattaya? Only on bad air days. An N95 or equivalent, well fitted, is what health officials advise.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: The Pattaya News, Pattaya air pollution and Public Health Ministry advice (December 2025, Air4Thai data); The Pattaya News, city leaders on PM2.5 causes and measures (December 2023); The Pattaya News, Pattaya PM2.5 spike (November 2023); Pattaya Mail, PM2.5 mostly safe nationwide (January 2026); The Nation, new PM2.5 standard from June 2023; Chiang Rai Times, reading Thailand's AQI (updated September 2026; not an official source); AirNow (US EPA), AQI basics; Air4Thai, Pollution Control Department; IQAir, Pattaya City. The months are a pattern from local reports, not a forecast. General information, not medical advice.

SAFETY & HEALTH

Staying Safe Online in Thailand

Protect your phone, accounts and money in Thailand: the scams of 2026, fake police and utility messages, LINE and SIM safety, public Wi-Fi, and what to do in the first hour if you lose money (call 1441).

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/safety-health/online-safety/

Lost money	**Call 1441 (AOC) at once, 24 hours**
Never share	**One-time codes (OTP), PINs or passwords**
Police and officials	**Never demand money by phone, LINE or video call**
Thai banks	**Don't send links by SMS or email**
Shopping complaints	**1212**
Tourist Police	**1155**

Quick answer: Online fraud is now Thailand's biggest scam problem: the Thailand Consumers Council put losses at nearly ฿9 billion across more than 170,000 cases in the first half of 2026 alone. The scams that reach visitors and expats are fake police or bank calls, payment links in texts and LINE messages, fake shops and hotel pages, investment offers and online romance. Never share a one-time code, never click a payment link you didn't ask for, and hang up on anyone "official" who wants money. If money has already left your account, call the Anti Online Scam Operation Center on **1441** straight away so the receiving account can be frozen. Minutes matter.

At a glance

SCAM	HOW IT STARTS	WHAT TO DO
Fake police or officials	A call or LINE message saying you are linked to a crime or money laundering	Hang up. Officials don't do this; call 1155 if worried
Fake bill or fine	A text or LINE message from a "utility" or agency with a payment link	Don't click. Pay bills only in your own app or at the counter
AI voice or video	A friend or relative's voice asking for an urgent transfer	Call them back on the number you already have
Fake shop or hotel	A cheap deal on Facebook or TikTok, pay by transfer first	Book on the official site or a known platform
Investment	Crypto or "digital stock" with high returns and small early payouts	Don't invest through people you met online
Romance	A new online contact who soon needs money	See love scams

The scams of 2026

Thailand's Ministry of Digital Economy and Society named four trends for 2026: fake payment links by SMS or LINE posing as the electricity or water authority (the links can install data-stealing apps), AI deepfake voices and videos, bogus crypto and "digital stock" investments, and fake profiles for romance, shops and hotels. Government agencies don't send payment links by SMS or email.

In one week from 28 June to 4 July 2026, Thailand's Anti Cyber Scam Center logged 5,588 online scam complaints with losses of about ฿208 million. Fake goods and services made up most complaints, but impersonating officials cost the most money.

Fake police, banks and couriers

These calls are built to frighten you into acting fast. Thai officials say real agencies:

- don't phone to tell you about criminal charges,
- don't send arrest warrants through LINE,
- don't question people by video call,
- never ask you to transfer money to "check" or "protect" your assets.

Hang up, don't add the caller on LINE, and call the official number yourself. The Tourist Police on **1155** speak English. See Tourist Police.

Your phone and SIM

- Use a screen lock and turn on two-factor login for email, Apple or Google, and social media.
- Since August 2025 operators must use a live face check for new SIMs and for SIM swaps that keep the same number, and since 16 May 2026 new SIMs are registered in person. That makes SIM swap fraud harder, but if your phone suddenly loses signal for no reason, contact your network at once. See SIM cards and eSIMs.
- Only install apps from the App Store or Google Play, never from a link in a message.
- Back up photos and documents, including a copy of your passport. See phone repair and electronics.

LINE

Scammers use LINE too. Never share a LINE verification code, even with a friend whose account may have been taken over, and if a friend suddenly asks for money on LINE, call them first. Setup and safety settings are on the LINE app guide.

Banking and payments

- Never share a one-time code (OTP), PIN or password, even with someone who says they are your bank.
- The Bank of Thailand told banks in 2023 to stop sending links in SMS and email. A text from “your bank” with a link is a red flag.
- Thai banking apps ask for a face scan for transfers over ฿50,000 at a time. If someone asks you to do a face scan “for verification” while on a call, stop. See mobile banking apps.
- Check the name that appears after you scan a QR code before you confirm. See QR payments.

Public Wi-Fi

Avoid logging into banking on open hotel, café or mall Wi-Fi. Thai mobile data is cheap, so use it for anything sensitive. For home internet, change the router’s default password. See home internet.

Shopping, bookings and second-hand deals

- Book hotels and tours on the official website or a well-known platform, not through a link someone sends you.
- Never send a deposit to a seller you haven’t met. See buying and selling second-hand.
- For problems with online shopping that isn’t outright fraud, the 1441 centre points people to the consumer line **1212**.

If you have lost money

- Call **1441** at once. It runs 24 hours and works with the police and banks to freeze the receiving account. If the line is busy, stay on: hanging up and calling again puts you at the back of the queue.
- Have ready: your ID, your bank and account number, the date and time of each transfer, the scammer’s bank and account numbers, a short timeline, and a phone number for the police text.
- Your report goes to the Thai Police Online system. You should get a text with a police case number within 24 hours, and you need to meet an investigator at the police station you chose within 7 days.
- Tell your own bank, and keep screenshots of chats, profiles and payment slips.
- Be wary of anyone online offering to “recover” your money for a fee. The 1441 centre says its service is only through the hotline, not social media.

See common scams for the scams that happen face to face.

Common questions

What is 1441 in Thailand? The Anti Online Scam Operation Center, run by the Ministry of Digital Economy and Society. Call it as soon as you realise you have sent money to a scammer, so the receiving account can be frozen.

Do Thai police contact people on LINE? Not to demand money. Officials say real agencies don’t send warrants through LINE, don’t question people by video call and never ask you to transfer money.

Can I report a scam online? Yes, through the Thai Police Online system at thaipoliceonline.go.th, or at a police station. Calling 1441 first is fastest when money has just left your account.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Ministry of Digital Economy and Society, AOC 1441; The Nation, DE Ministry’s four scam trends for 2026 (26 December 2025); The Nation, weekly scam reports and official warnings (6 July 2026); The Nation, scam losses in the first half of 2026 (Thailand Consumers Council figures, 9 August 2026); Bank of Thailand, measures against online fraud (9 March 2023); Biometric Update, face checks for SIM registration and swaps (August 2025). Rules and numbers change; when in doubt, call 1441 or 1155.

SAFETY & HEALTH

Beach and Sea Safety in Pattaya

Staying safe in the sea around Pattaya: red flags and rough seas in the rainy season, jellyfish and vinegar first aid, jet skis and swim zones, children and lifeguards, runoff after storms, sun and theft.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/safety-health/beach-safety/

Red flag	**Don't swim**
Jellyfish	**Most likely in the rainy season; vinegar for 30 seconds or more**
Swim	**Inside the buoy lines, away from boats and jet skis**
After heavy rain	**Avoid swimming near drains and outflows**
Children	**Watch them every second**
Emergency	**1669, marine 1196**

Quick answer: Pattaya's beaches are fine for swimming most of the time, but a few risks are worth knowing, especially for children and weak swimmers. Don't swim when a red flag is up, and swim only inside the buoy lines, away from speedboats and jet skis. Jellyfish are most likely in the rainy season (roughly May to October): if you're stung, get out, pour vinegar over the sting for at least 30 seconds, don't rub it or rinse it with fresh water, and call **1669** if it's severe. Avoid swimming after heavy rain, at night and near drain outflows. For trouble at sea, call **1196**. See also heat and sun safety.

At a glance

RISK	WHEN	WHAT TO DO
Rough seas and rip currents	Mainly the rainy season and after storms	Obey red flags; if pulled out, swim parallel to the shore
Jellyfish	More common in the rainy season	Vinegar 30 seconds or more, no rubbing, 1669 if severe
Speedboats and jet skis	All year, busiest in high season	Swim inside the buoys only
Dirty water	A day or two after heavy rain	Stay away from drains and outflows
Children drowning	Any time, even in shallow water	Constant watching, within arm's reach
Theft	All year	Don't leave phones and wallets on the sand

Currents and flags

- Rough seas and rip currents are more common in the rainy season. The UK government's travel advice notes people have drowned in strong riptides in Thailand.
- Red flag means no swimming. In late September 2026, red flags went up in Pattaya Bay and tourist boats were kept on shore after strong winds and waves sank six boats, according to Pattaya Mail. Check conditions before a boat trip.
- If you're caught in a current, don't fight it. Swim parallel to the shore until you're out of it, then back in. If you can't, float and wave for help.
- If you see someone in trouble, shout for a lifeguard, call 1669 or 1196, and throw something that floats rather than swimming out yourself.

Jellyfish

- Jellyfish appear at certain times of year, including some dangerous species. UK travel advice says they can come close to shore, especially from May to October, and that some stings can be fatal. Follow local warnings, signs and lifeguards.
- Don't touch jellyfish washed up on the sand: they can still sting.
- A rash vest or long-sleeved swimwear reduces the risk.
- If you're stung: get out of the water and keep still. Pour vinegar over the sting for at least 30 seconds, then carefully remove any tentacles with gloves or a stick. Don't rub it, and don't use fresh water or alcohol, which can release more venom.
- Call 1669 for severe pain, breathing problems, chest discomfort, confusion or a large sting. If the person collapses and isn't breathing, start CPR.
- Box jellyfish can kill: a 13-year-old boy died after a sting in Nakhon Si Thammarat in August 2026. Pattaya Mail's report says vinegar stations with first-aid instructions are on many high-risk beaches in Thailand, but don't count on one at every beach.

More on stings, urchins and other creatures: jellyfish and sea creatures.

Boats and jet skis

Pattaya Beach and Jomtien are busy with speedboats and jet skis. Jet skis and other motor craft are banned from the buoy-marked swim zones, but not every rider keeps out: in March 2026 a jet ski crossed the buoy line near Jomtien Soi 5 and hit a 65-year-old swimmer, who was taken to hospital with a head wound. Swim inside the marked areas, keep away from boat lanes, and watch the water around you.

- Renting a jet ski: see common scams. Photograph the jet ski before you ride, and don't leave your passport as a deposit.
- Banana boats, parasailing and boat trips: ask about life jackets and don't go out when red flags are up. See island hopping.

Swimming with children

- Most Pattaya beaches have no lifeguards on duty most of the time. Watch children constantly.
- Drowning is quick and quiet, and can happen in shallow water. In October 2026 a five-year-old girl was pulled from the sea near the market area at Jomtien Beach and taken to hospital.
- Use a swim area marked with buoys, away from boat lanes, and keep young children within arm's reach.
- See Pattaya with kids and jellyfish and sea creatures.

Water quality

After heavy rain, runoff from drains can flow into the sea. Avoid swimming near outflows for a day or two, and if the water looks dark or smells, stay out. Clearer water is on Koh Larn; see Koh Larn beaches.

Sun and heat

The midday sun is strong all year. Use high-factor sunscreen, find shade in the middle of the day, and drink plenty of water. See heat and sun safety.

Your things

Don't leave phones and wallets unattended on the sand or take valuables into the sea. Waterproof pouches help. If something is stolen, call the Tourist Police on 1155 for a report.

Emergency numbers

- 1669: ambulance.
- 1196: accidents at sea.
- 1155: Tourist Police, in English.
- 1337: Pattaya City's 24-hour hotline.

See emergency numbers.

Common questions

Is it safe to swim at Pattaya Beach? Usually, yes, inside the buoy lines and when no red flag is up. Avoid swimming after heavy rain, at night or near drains.

When is jellyfish season in Pattaya? They can appear at any time, but are more common in the rainy season, roughly May to October, and after storms.

What do I do for a jellyfish sting? Get out, pour vinegar over it for at least 30 seconds, don't rub it or use fresh water, and call 1669 for severe pain or breathing problems.

Are there lifeguards in Pattaya? On parts of Pattaya and Jomtien beaches, yes, but not everywhere or all the time. Don't rely on them for children.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: UK government travel advice, Thailand safety (riptides, red flags, jellyfish May to October); Tourism Authority of Thailand, jellyfish safety advice (August 2025); Pattaya Mail, box jellyfish death and vinegar stations (August 2026); Pattaya Mail, red flags after rough seas sink six boats (September 2026); Pattaya Mail, jet ski in the Jomtien swim zone (March 2026); Pattaya Mail, child rescued at Jomtien (October 2026). Conditions change daily; follow flags, signs and lifeguards. General information, not medical advice.

SAFETY & HEALTH

Pattaya for Solo Female Travellers

Practical safety advice for women travelling alone in Pattaya: where to stay, getting home at night, drink safety, unwanted attention, what to wear, and exactly who to call and what to do if something goes wrong.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/safety-health/solo-female-travel/

Stay	**Jomtien, Pratumnak or Wongamat for calmer evenings**
At night	**Book Grab or Bolt and share the trip**
Drinks	**Never leave one unattended; don't accept drinks from strangers**
Emergency	**191 police, 1669 ambulance, 1155 Tourist Police**
Sexual violence support	**1300 hotline, any hospital, your embassy**

Quick answer: Plenty of women travel to Pattaya alone and have a great time. The risks are much the same as in any busy resort town with a big nightlife scene: late nights near bars, drink spiking, traffic and the odd scam. Stay somewhere with 24-hour reception, plan your ride home before you go out, book Grab or Bolt at night and share the trip, and never leave a drink unattended. Save **1155** (Tourist Police, English spoken), **191** (police) and **1669** (ambulance) in your phone. If the worst happens, you can get hospital care without a police report, and help is available in English.

At a glance

TOPIC	WHAT HELPS
Where to stay	Calmer areas, 24-hour reception, recent reviews from solo travellers
Getting home at night	Ride apps with trip sharing; arrange it before you leave
Drinks	Watch your glass, buy your own, don’t accept drinks from strangers
On foot at night	Busy, well-lit streets; avoid isolated areas and empty beaches
Dress	Beachwear at the beach; covered shoulders and knees at temples
Help	1155 Tourist Police, 191 police, 1669 ambulance, 1300 crisis hotline

Where to stay

Quieter areas such as Jomtien, Pratumnak and Wongamat feel calmer at night than central Pattaya, while central Pattaya puts you close to malls, food and nightlife. Whichever you choose:

- Pick a hotel or condo with 24-hour reception or security, so you are never arriving to a locked, empty lobby.
- Save the address in Thai on your phone, with a map pin, for drivers.
- See where to stay.

Getting around, especially at night

- **Ride apps.** At night, book Grab or Bolt so the driver, car and route are recorded. Grab’s Thailand app lists a Share My Ride feature that sends your live location and driver details to someone you trust, and an Emergency Button. Check the plate matches before you get in.
- **Plan the ride home.** The UK Foreign Office advises arranging your transport home in advance so you don’t end up accepting a ride in an unlicensed vehicle, and taking care in open transport like tuk-tuks.
- **Baht buses** are fine in the day and on busy routes; at night they can be quiet and you share the back with strangers. See baht bus routes and fares.
- **Motorbike taxis** are quick for short hops. Since 16 October 2026 registered riders wear blue vests. Wear the helmet. See motorbike taxis.
- **On foot**, stick to busy, well-lit roads after dark. The Foreign Office advises avoiding isolated areas at night. See night transport and walking in Pattaya.

Nights out and drinks

- The UK Foreign Office says drink spiking and drug-assisted sexual assault happen in tourist areas around Thailand, to men and women, and that attacks are most common near bars late at night. Don’t leave your drink unattended and don’t accept drinks from strangers.
- Bar drinks are often stronger than at home. Pace yourself, eat, and alternate with water.
- Drink from sealed bottles or drinks you watched being poured. The Foreign Office warns that even small amounts of methanol in illicit spirits can kill and can’t be tasted; get urgent medical help if anyone feels very unwell after drinking.
- If you suddenly feel very drunk or strange, tell staff or a friend straight away. Don’t leave with someone you’ve just met.
- See rooftop bars, live music, night out safety and a night out without drinking.

Unwanted attention

- Walk into a shop, hotel lobby or busy restaurant and ask staff for help. Convenience stores are open late and usually have staff on hand.
- Call 1155: the Tourist Police speak English and can send officers.

- Be wary of people who approach you with offers of tours, rides or a “better” place. A calm “mai ao kha” (no thanks) and walking on is enough. See useful Thai phrases.

Dress and culture

Beachwear is fine at the beach and pools. In town most people dress casually; at temples, cover your shoulders and knees. A light scarf or sarong in your bag covers most situations. See Thai etiquette and temple customs.

Scams and online dating

Scams can happen to anyone. Keep money and passwords to yourself, never hand over your passport as a deposit for a jet ski or bike, and be careful with anyone you’ve just met online who quickly asks for money or help. See common scams, love scams and online safety.

If something goes wrong

- **In danger:** call 191, or 1155 for English. For an ambulance, 1669.
- **Theft or a lost passport:** see Tourist Police and reporting a crime.
- **Ill or injured:** see hospitals and clinics.

If you are sexually assaulted

UK government guidance for victims in Thailand is useful for any visitor:

- You can get medical treatment without a police referral, and reporting to the police is your choice.
- HIV prevention medicine (PEP) and emergency contraception both need to start within 72 hours. Emergency contraception is sold at pharmacies and government hospitals. See sexual health and STI testing.
- If you may report, try not to wash or change first; if you have changed, bring the clothes in a paper bag. If you think you were drugged, tell the hospital.
- The 1300 hotline connects to One Stop Crisis Centre support, which can help with medical care and filing a complaint.
- If you report, you can ask for a female officer and an interpreter, and for a copy of your statement.
- Your embassy can give confidential support and contact family for you.

For emotional support afterwards, see mental health support.

Before you go

Share your plans and live location with someone at home, keep a photo of your passport and travel insurance details, and get a local SIM or eSIM so ride apps work everywhere. See SIM cards and eSIMs.

Common questions

Is Pattaya safe for solo female travellers? Many women visit alone without problems. Take the same care you would in any big nightlife resort: plan rides home, watch your drink and avoid isolated places late at night.

Is it safe to walk at night in Pattaya? On busy, well-lit roads, most people do. Avoid isolated streets and empty beaches late at night, and use a ride app if in doubt.

Who do I call in an emergency? 191 for police, 1669 for an ambulance, and 1155 for the Tourist Police, who speak English. The 1300 hotline supports victims of sexual violence.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: UK Foreign Office, Thailand safety and security (drink spiking, attacks near bars, transport at night, methanol, passports as deposits); UK government, information for victims of rape and sexual assault in Thailand (updated March 2025); Grab Thailand, passenger safety features; Pattaya Mail, 24-hour Tourist Police hotline 1155 (April 2025). General safety information, not legal or medical advice.

Related guides

- Tourist Police and Reporting a Crime
- Night Out Safety
- Bolt and Grab in Pattaya
- Emergency Numbers

SAFETY & HEALTH

Mental Health Support in Pattaya

Where to find mental health support in Pattaya: the free 1323 hotline, an English listening line, hospital psychiatrists and psychologists, online therapy, help with drinking, and what to do in a crisis.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/safety-health/mental-health-support/

Hotline	**1323, free, 24 hours (mainly Thai)**
English line	**Samaritans of Thailand, 02 113 6789, press 2**
Emergency	**1669 for an ambulance, or go to a hospital**
In Pattaya	**Bangkok Hospital Pattaya has a Mental Health Center**
Drinking worries	**AA Thailand lists meetings in Pattaya**
Not advice	**General information only**

Quick answer: If you are struggling, you are not alone, and you don't need to wait until things feel very bad to ask for help. If you or someone else is in danger right now, call **1669** for an ambulance or go to the nearest hospital emergency department. To talk to someone, Thailand's Department of Mental Health runs the **1323** hotline: free, 24 hours a day, mainly in Thai. For English, the Samaritans of Thailand listen on **02 113 6789** (press 2). In Pattaya, Bangkok Hospital Pattaya has a Mental Health Center with psychiatrists and psychologists, and online therapy lets you talk in your own language. This page is general information, not medical advice.

Where to turn

WHO	WHEN	GOOD TO KNOW
1669 ambulance	Someone's life is in danger now	Free national emergency medical line
1323 mental health hotline	Any time you need to talk	Free, 24 hours, run by the Department of Mental Health; mainly Thai
Samaritans of Thailand, **02 113 6789**	You want to talk in English	Trained volunteers; press 1 for Thai, 2 for English; listed as noon to 10pm daily
Hospital psychiatrist or psychologist	Low mood, anxiety or poor sleep that won't lift, or help with medicine	Book ahead and ask about cost and insurance
Online therapy	Talking in your own language from home	Check the therapist is licensed where they practise
Alcoholics Anonymous	Worries about drinking	Free; AA Thailand lists Pattaya meetings

If you need help right now

- If someone is hurt, has taken an overdose, or you think they may act on thoughts of suicide, call **1669** or go to a hospital emergency department.
- Stay with the person if it is safe to do so.
- If language is a problem, the Tourist Police on **1155** speak English and can help you explain. For crimes or violence, the police number is **191**.
- More numbers, and what to say on the phone, are on emergency numbers.

Talking to someone

- **1323** is run by the Department of Mental Health at the Ministry of Public Health. Counsellors answer 24 hours a day and the call is free. After the March 2025 earthquake the department expanded it from 20 to 30 lines. It is set up for Thai speakers, so if your Thai is limited, the English line below may suit you better.
- **The Samaritans of Thailand** on 02 113 6789 offer a confidential, non-judgemental listening ear from trained volunteers. Press 2 for English. Their helpline listing, checked by the charity in September 2026, gives noon to 10pm every day. Older listings show other numbers and hours, so if you can't get through, try again later or call 1323.

Seeing a professional in Pattaya

- **Bangkok Hospital Pattaya's Mental Health Center** is in Building E, 2nd floor, open every day from 9am to 5pm (+66 3825 9986). The hospital lists assessments, talking therapies such as CBT, medicine management, an inpatient ward for severe symptoms and an addiction clinic.
- Other private hospitals can tell you at the international desk whether a psychiatrist is available and in which language. See hospitals and clinics.
- A **psychiatrist** is a medical doctor who can diagnose and prescribe. A **psychologist** or counsellor offers talking therapy. Many people see both.
- Public hospitals cost much less, but expect services mainly in Thai and longer waits. Taking a Thai-speaking friend helps.
- Private care adds up over several sessions. Ask for prices before you book and check what your policy pays: many limit mental health cover. See health insurance and hospital costs.

Online therapy

Online sessions let you talk to a therapist in your own language, sometimes one you already know from home. Check they are registered with a professional body where they practise, and find a private room with a steady connection. See home internet.

If you take medicine

Some medicines for anxiety, sleep and ADHD are tightly controlled in Thailand. Bring no more than 30 days' supply in the original packaging with your prescription or a doctor's certificate, and check whether yours needs a Thai FDA permit before you fly. Pharmacies here can't sell controlled medicines without a prescription, so plan refills with a doctor. Don't stop or change a medicine without talking to a doctor first. Details are on pharmacies and medicines and what's legal in Thailand.

Alcohol and mood

Pattaya makes it easy to drink every night, and alcohol can deepen low mood, anxiety and poor sleep. If you are worried about your drinking, Alcoholics Anonymous Thailand has a Pattaya page listing local groups, including meetings at the Skaw Beach AA Meeting Rooms, and a helpline (090 269 9707). There are no fees and no referral is needed; check each listing for the language and whether the meeting is open or closed. For evenings out without alcohol, see Pattaya at night without drinking.

Loneliness, heartbreak and life abroad

Moving abroad, retiring far from family, a language you don't speak and a relationship that ends can all hit hard, even in a place that feels like a holiday. See love scams and dating in Thailand for warning signs worth knowing early.

Pro tip: I've had my own emotions played with here, and I've found it hard to say no. What helped was learning the difference between really wanting to help someone and feeling obligated to.

Small things that help

- Keep a routine: regular sleep, daylight and meals. Heat and late nights wear you down. See noise and sleep and heat and sun safety.
- Move every day: a walk at dawn, a gym or a class. See Pattaya at dawn, running and cycling, gyms and fitness and yoga and wellness.
- Meet people away from bars: clubs, volunteering or a Thai class. See expat clubs and learning Thai.
- Keep in touch with home: a regular video call is not a burden to the people who care about you.

Helping a friend

- Ask how they are really doing, and listen.
- If you are worried about suicide, ask them directly. Suicide prevention charities say asking does not raise the risk and can help.
- Help them call 1323 or the Samaritans, or go with them to a hospital.
- If they are in danger, call 1669 and stay with them.

Common questions

Is there an English mental health helpline in Thailand? The Samaritans of Thailand take calls in English on 02 113 6789 (press 2), listed as noon to 10pm daily. The government's 1323 line is free and 24 hours but mainly in Thai.

Can I see a psychiatrist in Pattaya? Yes. Bangkok Hospital Pattaya has a Mental Health Center open daily, and other hospitals can tell you what they offer. Book ahead and ask about language and cost.

Does travel insurance cover mental health? Often only partly, and some policies exclude conditions you already have. Read the policy wording or ask the insurer before treatment.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya Mail, 6 March 2026 (1323 free and 24 hours); The Nation, 31 March 2025 (1323 run by the Department of Mental Health, lines expanded); Find A Helpline, Samaritans of Thailand (number, press 2 for English, noon to 10pm, verified by the helpline September 2026); Pattaya Mail, emergency hotlines (December 2024) (1669, 191, 1155, 1323 and the Samaritans' lines); Bangkok Hospital Pattaya, Mental Health Center; AA Thailand, Pattaya; Thai FDA, bringing health products into Thailand; Samaritans (UK), myths about suicide. Sources differ on the Samaritans of Thailand's older numbers and hours. Services and hours change, so call ahead. General information, not medical advice.

SAFETY & HEALTH

Tourist Police and Reporting a Crime

The Tourist Police in Pattaya: the 24-hour 1155 hotline and app, what officers can and can't do, how to make a police report for theft or a crime, lost passports, and what to do if a police fine looks wrong.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/safety-health/tourist-police/

Tourist Police	**1155, 24 hours, several languages**
Police emergency	**191**
Ambulance	**1669**
App	**Thailand Tourist Police**
Office	**Call 1155 first; sources differ on the address**
Lost passport	**Police report first, then your embassy**

Quick answer: In Pattaya, call the Tourist Police on **1155**. The line runs 24 hours with staff who speak English and other languages, and officers can advise you, interpret, come to you and help settle disputes. They are not a court: they can explain the law and help both sides agree, but they can't order a business to refund you. For a theft you need a police report, and for a serious crime the formal complaint goes to the local police station that investigates it; the Tourist Police can help with the language. If you are in danger right now, call **191**. For an ambulance, call **1669**.

At a glance

SITUATION	WHO TO CONTACT	GOOD TO KNOW
Danger or a crime happening now	191, or 1155	Get somewhere safe first
You need help in English	1155	24 hours, multilingual staff
Dispute with a hotel, driver or rental shop	1155	Officers mediate; they can't force a refund
Theft or loss for an insurance claim	Police station report	Ask for a copy, in English if possible
Assault, robbery or harassment	Formal complaint at the local police station	1155 can help with language
Lost or stolen passport	Police report, then your embassy	Keep a photo of your passport
Online or phone scam	1441	See common scams
Medical emergency	1669	See emergency numbers

What the Tourist Police do

The Tourist Police are a national police unit set up to help foreign visitors. In Pattaya they patrol the tourist areas.

- **The 1155 hotline** runs 24 hours and is multilingual. Pattaya Mail reported eight languages in April 2025; other reports give different numbers. If the first person you reach struggles, say the name of your language.
- **The app.** The Thailand Tourist Police app lets you ask for help, report an emergency and share your location. Pattaya Mail reports that alerts go to the 191 police and 1669 medical services.
- **Disputes.** In July 2026 Pattaya Mail reported officers answering a 1155 call about a room refund, explaining the law and the options to both the visitor and the business, and helping them reach an agreement.
- **Explaining the system.** In June 2026 officers helped visitors with a lost property case and a harassment case, using interpreters to explain the legal steps, the case status and the visitor's rights.
- **Crime and fraud.** In May 2026 they asked the public to report suspicious activity, such as scams, to 1155.

What they can't do

- **They don't decide who is right in a money dispute.** In the reported cases, officers explained the law and helped both sides agree. If a business refuses, you may need a formal complaint or a lawyer.
- **They usually don't run the investigation of a serious crime.** In the June 2026 harassment case, officers advised the visitor to record an official daily report and file a formal complaint at the local police station. After that, follow up with the investigating officer named on your case.
- **They can't replace your passport or fix your visa.** That is your embassy and immigration.

Where to go in Pattaya

Sources disagree on the Tourist Police office address. The Pattaya News reported a new Tourist Police office opening on Jomtien Beach Road in September 2023, while older travel guides list an office on Beach Road in central Pattaya. Call 1155 first: they can send officers or tell you where to go. Pattaya City Police Station is the main police station for the city.

Reporting a theft or crime, step by step

- **Get safe first.** Call 191 if you are in danger, or 1669 if anyone is hurt.
- **Write it down** while it is fresh, and keep photos, screenshots, messages and receipts.
- **Go to the police station** as soon as you can with your passport or a copy, and the address where you are staying.
- **Get language help.** If you can't make yourself understood at the station, call 1155 and ask for help interpreting.
- **Be clear what you need.** A record of the incident (a "daily report") is often enough for lost items and insurance. A formal complaint asks the police to investigate and can lead to charges.
- **Read what you sign**, or have it interpreted. Ask for a copy of the report, in English if available, and note the officer's name and case number.

Your insurer will usually ask for the report for a theft claim. See travel insurance.

Lost or stolen passport

- Make a police report first. Your embassy will normally ask for it.
- Contact your embassy in Bangkok for a new passport or an emergency travel document.
- Ask immigration about moving your permission to stay into the new passport. See Jomtien immigration office.
- The UK Foreign Office advises against handing over your passport as a guarantee when renting a jet ski or motorbike, because firms may keep it against claimed damage.

If a police fine looks wrong

In July 2026 three Pattaya City Police officers were moved to the station's operations centre during an inquiry, after visitors alleged they were stopped, made to pay cash and given receipts that did not look official, The Nation reported. Police said the move was not a finding of guilt, and asked anyone who feels unfairly treated by officials to report directly to Pattaya City Police Station or the Chonburi provincial police hotline. Stay calm and polite, ask for a proper receipt, and note the time, place and any names or numbers. Know the rules before you ride: see police checkpoints and road rules and fines.

Common questions

Do the Tourist Police speak English? Yes. The 1155 line is multilingual and runs 24 hours. Reports differ on exactly how many languages it covers.

Can the Tourist Police get my money back? They can bring both sides together and explain the law, and many disputes end in an agreement. They can't force a business to pay. For anything serious, file a formal complaint at the police station.

Where is the Tourist Police office in Pattaya? Sources give different addresses. Call 1155 first and they will tell you where to go or send officers. Read common scams and laws visitors break to avoid needing them.

Do I need a police report for travel insurance? For theft, usually yes. Ask for a copy and check what your insurer wants before you leave the station.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya Mail, 1155 hotline in 8 languages and the Tourist Police app (April 2025); Pattaya Mail, room refund dispute mediated (July 2026); Pattaya Mail, property loss and harassment cases (June 2026); Government Public Relations Department, Tourist Police meeting in Pattaya (May 2026); TAT News, the Tourist Police (November 2024); The Pattaya News, new Tourist Police office in Jomtien (September 2023); The Nation, Pattaya officers reassigned over cash fines (July 2026); UK Foreign Office, Thailand safety and security. We could not confirm the Tourist Police office address from an official source, so call 1155 before you go.

Related guides

- Emergency Numbers
- Common Scams to Avoid
- Road Accidents
- Online Safety
- Pattaya for Solo Female Travellers

SAFETY & HEALTH

Hospital Costs in Pattaya

What hospital care costs in Pattaya: rough prices for doctor visits, emergencies, stays and surgery at private and public hospitals, deposits, published package prices, and how to keep the bill under control.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/safety-health/hospital-costs/

Private doctor visit	**About ฿1,000 to ฿2,600 (US$30 to $80), estimate**
Public hospital	**Much cheaper, with longer waits and less English**
Deposits	**Private hospitals may ask ฿50,000 to ฿200,000 before big treatment**
Ask first	**A written estimate before tests, surgery or admission**
Emergency	**1669, or 1719 for Bangkok Hospital Pattaya**
Not advice	**General information only**

Quick answer: Hospital bills in Pattaya depend mostly on one choice: private or public. Private hospitals are fast, English-speaking and expensive. A Thaiger guide estimated a private doctor visit at about US$30 to $80 (roughly ฿1,000 to ฿2,600) and an overnight stay at US$300 to $1,000 or more. Public hospitals charge far less but have long waits and less English. Before anything big, a private hospital may want a deposit or your insurer's guarantee, and you usually pay in full before you leave. Ask for a written estimate, ask for a prescription if you'd rather buy medicine outside, and check how your insurance pays. These figures are guides, not quotes.

At a glance

ITEM	PRIVATE HOSPITAL	PUBLIC HOSPITAL
Doctor visit (GP-style)	About ฿1,000 to ฿2,600 (US$30 to $80)	About US$10 to $20
Specialist visit, before tests	About US$45 to $120	Lower
Emergency room visit	About US$100 to $300	Cheaper, per the same guide
Overnight stay	About US$300 to $1,000+	Lower
Deposit before major treatment	Often ฿50,000 to ฿200,000	Smaller, if any
Health check-up package	฿7,800 to ฿36,900 (Bangkok Hospital Pattaya, Nov 2026)	Ask the hospital
Appendix removal, 2-night package	฿79,000 open, ฿119,000 keyhole (Bangkok Hospital Khon Kaen, 2026)	Ask the hospital

The visit, emergency, stay and deposit figures are a Thaiger estimate from May 2025, converted at about ฿33 to the dollar; they aren't official price lists, and the guide gives the specialist, emergency and overnight figures without splitting them by hospital type. The package prices are what the hospitals publish online. Pattaya prices for the same surgery may differ from Khon Kaen's.

Private or public

- **Private hospitals** such as Bangkok Hospital Pattaya, Pattaya Memorial and Pattaya International have short waits, interpreters and direct billing with many insurers. Costs add up quickly.
- **Public hospitals** such as Pattaya City Hospital and Pattaya Patamakun Hospital in Naklua treat foreigners too, at much lower prices. Expect queues, arrive early, and bring a Thai speaker if you can.
- **Clinics and pharmacies** handle colds, small cuts and stomach upsets for a fraction of a hospital visit. See pharmacies and medicines.

Which hospital is where: hospitals and clinics.

What makes up a private bill

- The doctor's fee, medicines, supplies, tests and the room are all charged separately, plus a hospital service charge.
- Specialists, scans such as CT and MRI, and a private room raise the bill fast.
- Medicine from the hospital pharmacy usually costs more than from a pharmacy outside.
- Surgery packages bundle much of this into one price. Bangkok Hospital Khon Kaen's 2026 packages, for example, include the surgeon and anaesthetist, the operating room, a standard room and up to 7 days of take-home medicine, but not tests before surgery, specialist consultations, implants or intensive care. Read what a package leaves out before you agree.

Your right to a prescription

Since 2019, Thai rules have required private hospitals to publish their medicine prices, on their website or by QR code, and to give patients a prescription so they can buy medicines at an outside pharmacy instead. If a bill is mostly medicine, ask for the prescription and compare prices at a pharmacy. For anything urgent or complicated, take what the hospital gives you.

Deposits, payment and your passport

- Bring your passport: hospitals use it to register you. A hospital patient card makes later visits faster.
- Without direct billing, private hospitals may ask for a deposit before admitting you. Thaiger's guide puts it at about ฿50,000 to ฿200,000, and more for major surgery.
- You generally pay in full before discharge. Thaiger reports that some hospitals hold a passport until a bill is paid.
- Emergencies are stabilised first. Payment questions come before surgery, intensive care or a longer stay.
- If you can't pay, ask for the hospital's social worker or patient relations team, and contact your embassy.

Emergencies

Call **1669** for an ambulance, or **1719** for Bangkok Hospital Pattaya's own ambulance. Thailand's emergency scheme for critical patients (UCEP), revised on 15 September 2026, covers the first 72 hours of critical emergency care at the nearest hospital, with later costs billed to the patient's health fund, an insurer or the patient. It is built around Thai health funds, and we couldn't confirm how it applies to foreign visitors, so don't count on it instead of insurance. See emergency numbers.

Keeping the bill down

- For small problems, start at a pharmacy or clinic.
- Ask for an estimate in writing before tests, scans, surgery or admission, and ask which items are extra.
- Check-up packages are cheaper than ordering the same tests one by one. Compare the test lists, not the names. See health check-ups.
- Ask whether a standard room is available if you are admitted.
- Keep every receipt and medical report for your insurer.
- Some pharmacies deliver at night by LINE: how Jonny got an inhaler delivered at 1am.

Insurance

Check whether your health insurance or travel insurance bills the hospital directly. Bring the policy card, and for planned treatment ask the insurer to approve the estimate first. Direct billing is the difference between paying nothing up front and paying a large deposit.

Pro tip: every time I've needed healthcare here, it's been a million times faster and smoother than the West. I've spent over ฿500,000 on dental work, and I estimate the same would have cost nearly ฿2 million back home. That's my own estimate, not a price guide. See dentists in Pattaya.

Common questions

How much is a doctor visit in Pattaya? At a private hospital, roughly ฿1,000 to ฿2,600 including the doctor's fee, by Thaiger's estimate, plus any tests and medicine. Clinics and public hospitals cost less.

Do Pattaya hospitals need a deposit? Private hospitals often ask for one before admission or surgery unless your insurer guarantees payment. Emergencies are treated first.

Can I buy my medicine outside the hospital? Thai rules since 2019 say private hospitals must give you a prescription so you can buy medicines at an outside pharmacy.

Are public hospitals much cheaper? Yes, usually many times cheaper, with longer waits and less English.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: The Thaiger, being hospitalised in Thailand without insurance (May 2025, estimates); Bangkok Hospital Khon Kaen, surgery packages (valid to 31 December 2026); The Nation, revised 72-hour emergency care rules (15 September 2026); CodeBlue, private hospitals must show drug prices and give prescriptions (May 2019). Bangkok Hospital Pattaya check-up prices are from our health check-ups page, checked the same day. Prices change and every case is different; ask the hospital for an estimate.

SAFETY & HEALTH

Rainy Season Survival Kit

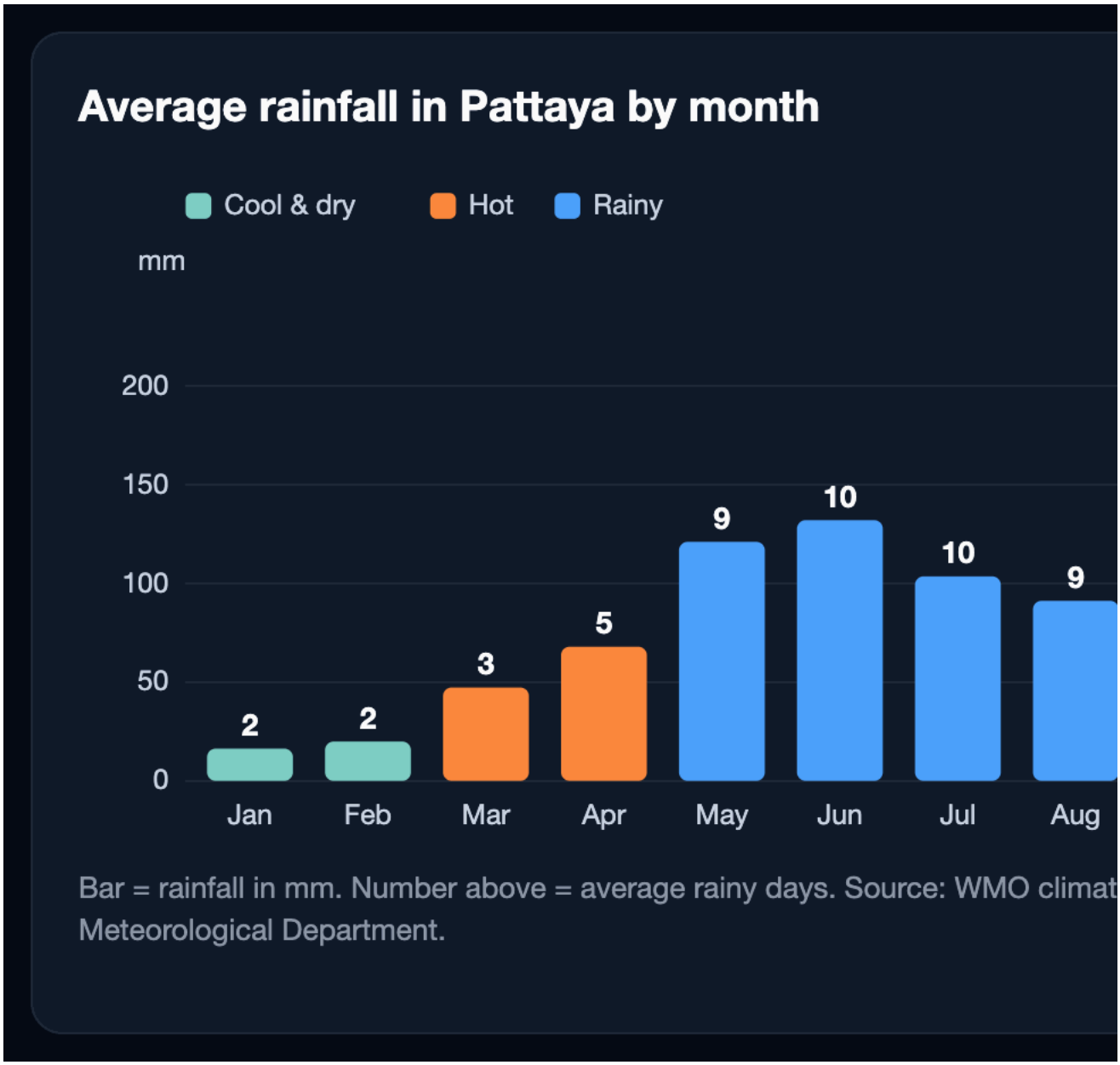
What to carry, how to ride, what flooded streets really mean and how to plan your days in Pattaya's rainy season, with lessons from the September 2026 floods.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/safety-health/rainy-season-survival/

When	**Roughly May to October, wettest in September and October**
Pattern	**Often sunny mornings, heavy afternoon or evening storms**
Carry	**Poncho, dry bag, spare phone power**
Avoid	**Riding or walking through floodwater**
Sea	**Red flag means no swimming; boats can be banned in storms**

Quick answer: Pattaya's rainy season runs roughly from May to October, with the heaviest rain usually in September and October. Many days start sunny, then a short, heavy storm hits in the afternoon or evening. Carry a cheap poncho, a dry bag for your phone and a power bank, do outdoor trips in the morning, and wait out storms under cover instead of riding through them. The real danger is floodwater: in September 2026 overnight rain left about 50 cm of water on many Pattaya roads and up to a metre in low spots, and a man walking through floodwater was swept into a drainage canal. Never walk or ride into water you can't see the bottom of.

The rainy season is a good time to visit: fewer crowds and lower prices. Most storms are short and heavy. A little preparation keeps them from wrecking your day.



Bar = rainfall in mm. Number above = average rainy days. Source: WMO climate normals 1991–2020, Thai Meteorological Department.

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Season	Roughly May to October; wettest in September and October
Daily pattern	Often dry mornings, storms in the afternoon or evening
Most storms	Short and heavy; many pass within an hour
Floods first	Low roads such as Soi Buakhao, South Pattaya, Third Road and Sukhumvit
At sea	Red flags mean no swimming; in bad storms boats can be banned
Emergency	1669 medical, 191 police

The kit

- A cheap plastic poncho from any 7-Eleven. Keep one under your scooter seat.
- A dry bag or zip bags for your phone, wallet and passport copy.
- A power bank. Storms can cause power cuts.
- Sandals instead of trainers.
- Mosquito repellent. Rain brings mosquitoes. See dengue and mosquitoes.

Riding in the rain

- Slow down. Road paint and metal covers are slippery when wet.
- If a storm hits, pull over under a shop front and wait. Most pass within an hour.
- Never ride into deep water. You cannot see holes or drains. Read flood season.
- Water in the engine can stall a scooter or a small car. Officials warned small cars and motorbikes to keep out of flooded sections during the September 2026 floods.
- Brakes work less well when wet. Leave more space, and test them gently after riding through puddles.
- Wear a helmet with a clear visor or glasses: rain in your eyes at speed is painful and blinding. See road rules.

Floodwater: the real danger

On 24 September 2026, overnight rain from about 1:30am flooded roads across Pattaya, including Third Road, Sukhumvit, South and Central Pattaya Roads, Beach Road and Soi Buakhao. The Nation reported about 50 cm of water in many places and up to a metre in flood-prone spots. The same day, a foreign man walking through floodwater with two friends was swept into a drainage canal in the Nong Prue area; his friends were rescued while the search went on. The next day the Pattaya Marine Office raised a red flag and banned boats, including speedboats and jet skis, from leaving shore.

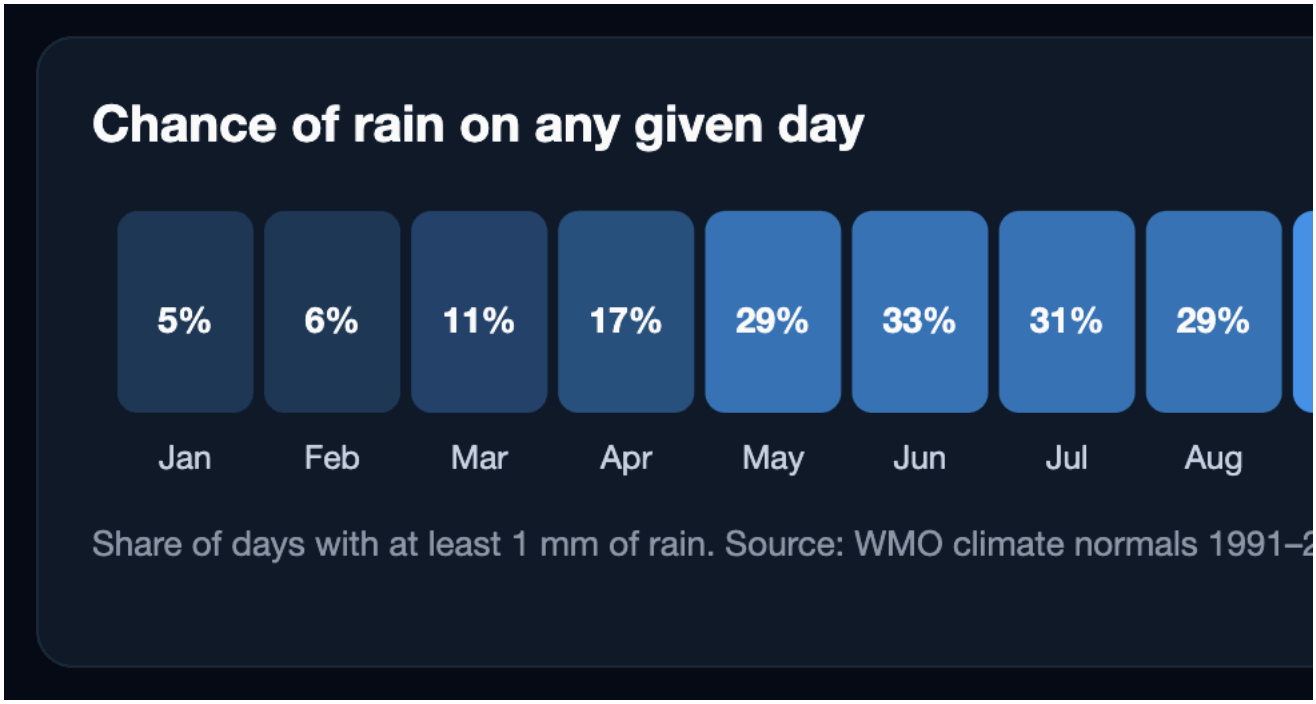
- Don’t walk through floodwater. Currents near drains and canals are strong, open drains are invisible, and the water is dirty.
- Keep children and pets well away from drains and fast-moving water.
- If water is rising around you, go up, not out: stay inside on a higher floor until it drops.

Island trips and the sea

- Check the weather before booking a Koh Larn trip. Small speedboats are rough in high waves, and services can stop in storms.
- Don’t swim when a red flag is up or after heavy rain, when runoff and drains flow into the sea. Jellyfish are also more common in the rainy months. See jellyfish and sea creatures.

Planning your day

- Do outdoor trips in the morning; storms usually build in the afternoon or evening.
- Check the radar on a weather app before you go out, and compare two apps: they often disagree.
- Watch for Thai Meteorological Department warnings, which are often reported in English by Pattaya Mail and The Nation.
- Keep a list of rainy day attractions for wet afternoons.



Share of days with at least 1 mm of rain. Source: WMO climate normals 1991–2020, Thai Meteorological Department.

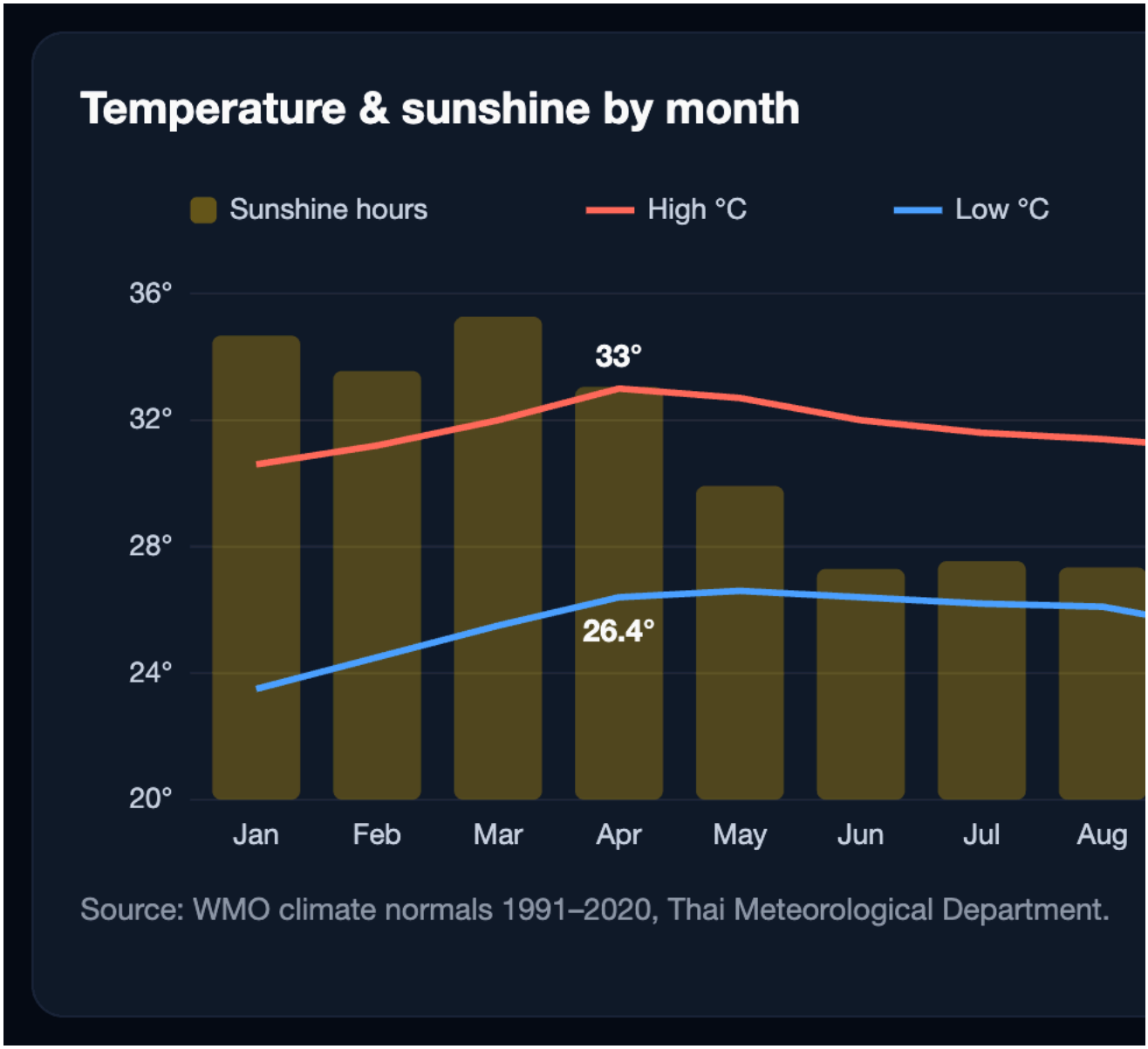
Pro tip: Weather apps don't always agree. One evening Apple's app said rain all evening, so we made other plans. AccuWeather showed only a very small chance, and it stayed dry. And a ride on a rainy night can get really, really cold, so bring a layer.

Getting around

Baht buses keep running (฿15 on the normal loop), and Bolt and Grab are the easiest dry option, though prices rise during heavy rain.

Health in the wet season

- Mosquitoes increase, so use repellent. See dengue and mosquitoes.
- Keep cuts clean and dry, they get infected easily.
- Avoid wading through floodwater. See flood season.
- Air conditioning and wet clothes can cause colds. Carry a light layer.
- Dry your feet and change wet shoes. Days in damp sandals can lead to fungal skin problems; a pharmacist can help.



Source: WMO climate normals 1991–2020, Thai Meteorological Department.

At home

- Keep a power bank charged and a torch handy for power cuts.
- Unplug computers and TVs during big thunderstorms.
- Run the air-con or a dehumidifier now and then to stop mould on clothes and shoes in closed rooms.
- On the ground floor, keep valuables and electrics off the floor.

Common questions

Is the rainy season a bad time to visit Pattaya? Not usually. Most days still have sun, storms tend to be short, and it's quieter and often cheaper. Plan outdoor trips for the morning.

When does it rain most in Pattaya? Usually September and October. In 2026, heavy storms in September flooded many roads.

Can I ride a scooter in the rainy season? Yes, with care. Slow down, pull over in heavy storms, and never ride into floodwater.

Do Grab and Bolt work in the rain? Yes, but prices rise and waits get longer during heavy rain. Baht buses keep running.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: The Nation, 24 September 2026 (flooded Pattaya roads, depths, advice to small cars and motorbikes); The Nation, 24 September 2026 (man swept into a drainage canal); The Nation, 25 September 2026 (red flag and boat ban); The Nation, June 2026 (TMD eastern region storm forecast). Jonny's notes are from his own ride videos, September and October 2026.

SAFETY & HEALTH

First Aid Kit for Pattaya

What to pack or buy for a first aid kit in Pattaya: dressings for cuts and scooter scrapes, rehydration salts, sun and bite care, sea stings, your own medicines, and where to buy supplies.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/safety-health/first-aid-kit/

Buy locally	**Pharmacies, Boots, Watsons and 7-Eleven sell most basics**
Must haves	**Plasters, dressings, antiseptic, rehydration salts, sun cream**
Own medicine	**Up to 30 days' supply, original packs, with the prescription**
Fever	**Paracetamol, not ibuprofen or aspirin, until dengue is ruled out**
Serious injury	**Call 1669 for an ambulance**
Not advice	**General information only**

Quick answer: You don't need to fly in with a big kit: Pattaya has a pharmacy on almost every main road, and 7-Eleven sells plasters, painkillers and rehydration drinks. What helps is a small kit you already have when something happens: dressings and antiseptic for cuts and scooter scrapes, oral rehydration salts for heat and stomach upsets, sun cream, insect repellent and bite cream, and enough of your own regular medicine. In Thailand, keep paracetamol rather than ibuprofen or aspirin for fevers, because dengue is common. Bring prescription medicines in their original packs with the prescription, no more than 30 days' supply unless you have checked the rules. This page is general information; ask a pharmacist or doctor about your own needs.

At a glance

ITEM	WHY IN PATTAYA	WHERE TO GET IT
Plasters (waterproof) and sterile dressings	Small cuts get infected quickly in heat and humidity	Pharmacies, 7-Eleven
Antiseptic liquid or wipes	Cleaning cuts and road rash	Pharmacies
Bandage, tape, small scissors	Holding dressings on, sprains	Pharmacies
Disposable gloves	Cleaning someone else's wound	Pharmacies
Oral rehydration salts	Heat, sweating, diarrhoea, vomiting	Pharmacies; 7-Eleven sells rehydration drinks
Paracetamol	Pain and fever; the safer choice if dengue is possible	Pharmacies; 7-Eleven sells painkillers
Sun cream SPF 30+, after-sun or aloe gel	Midday UV is often "extreme"	Pharmacies, Boots, Watsons
Insect repellent, bite cream or antihistamine	Mosquitoes, including dengue mosquitoes	Pharmacies
Tweezers	Splinters and small sea urchin spines	Pharmacies
Your regular medicines	Brands differ here, and some are controlled	Bring from home

Cuts and scooter scrapes

Road rash from a scooter fall is common.

- Wash your hands or put on gloves, then rinse the wound well with clean running water to get the grit out.
- Cover it with a sterile dressing and change it daily, or when it gets wet or dirty.
- See a clinic if a wound is deep, gaping, still full of dirt, on the face or a joint, or shows signs of infection: spreading redness, swelling, pus, heat or fever.
- Ask a doctor whether you need a tetanus booster, especially if yours isn't up to date. See travel vaccinations.
- After any crash, check for head injury first. Call **1669** if someone was knocked out, is confused or can't move a limb. See road accidents and renting a scooter.

Heat and stomach

- Oral rehydration salts are the most useful thing in a Pattaya kit. They replace the salts lost through sweating, diarrhoea and vomiting, which plain water doesn't. See heat, hangovers and dehydration.
- For diarrhoea, rehydration comes first. Ask a pharmacist before using anything to stop it, and see a doctor if there is blood or a high fever. See food poisoning.
- Paracetamol for pain and fever. Dengue is common in Thailand, and doctors advise avoiding ibuprofen and aspirin until it has been ruled out. See dengue.

Sun, bites and the sea

- High-factor sun cream and after-sun or aloe gel. See heat and sun safety.
- Insect repellent, especially in the day, when dengue mosquitoes bite, and a cream or tablet for itchy bites.
- For jellyfish stings, rinse with vinegar if available and don't rub or use fresh water. Some beaches keep vinegar stations. Water shoes help on rocks with sea urchins. See jellyfish and sea creatures and beach safety.
- Dog, cat or monkey bite or scratch: wash it at once with soap and running water for about 15 minutes, then go to a hospital or clinic the same day for rabies shots, even if the animal looks healthy. See stray dogs and rabies.

Your own medicine

- Thai embassies say you can bring up to 30 days of prescribed use of ordinary medicines for yourself, in the original labelled packaging, with a doctor's letter or prescription.
- Some medicines are controlled in Thailand, including many strong painkillers, sleeping pills, anti-anxiety and ADHD medicines. They may need a Thai FDA permit, applied for online at least two weeks before you travel. Details are on pharmacies and medicines.
- Carry a list of your medicines with their generic names, since brand names often differ here, and any allergies.
- Keep a few days' supply in your hand luggage in case your bag is delayed.

Keeping the kit useful

- A small zip bag or waterproof box is enough for a day bag or scooter; keep a fuller kit at your hotel or condo.
- Check the storage temperature on medicine labels. A parked car or a scooter seat box gets very hot in the sun.
- Check dates every few months and replace what you used.
- Save emergency numbers in your phone: 1669 for an ambulance, 1155 for the Tourist Police, 1719 for Bangkok Hospital Pattaya's ambulance.

Where to buy

- Local pharmacies sell almost everything on this list, and the pharmacist can suggest what to use. Photos of the packaging from home help. See pharmacy phrases.
- Boots and Watsons, mostly in the malls, have clear price tags and familiar brands.
- 7-Eleven sells plasters, painkillers and rehydration drinks.
- Many pharmacies deliver through LINE. See pharmacies and medicines.

When it is serious

Call **1669** for an ambulance, or go to a hospital emergency department, for heavy bleeding, a head injury, chest pain, trouble breathing, a severe allergic reaction or signs of heatstroke. See emergency numbers and hospitals and clinics.

Common questions

Should I bring a first aid kit to Thailand? A small one is worth it, mainly for your own medicines and a few dressings. Most other things are cheap and easy to buy in Pattaya.

Can I buy rehydration salts in Pattaya? Yes, at any pharmacy, in sachets you mix with clean water. 7-Eleven sells ready-made rehydration drinks.

Why not ibuprofen in Thailand? It isn't banned, but dengue is common here, and with dengue ibuprofen and aspirin can raise the risk of bleeding. Doctors advise paracetamol for a fever until dengue is ruled out.

How much medicine can I bring into Thailand? Up to 30 days of prescribed use of ordinary medicines, in original packs with the prescription. Controlled medicines may need a Thai FDA permit.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Royal Thai Embassy London, bringing medications to Thailand; St John Ambulance, what to put in a first aid kit; Pattaya Mail, Department of Health summer advisory including bite first aid (26 February 2026). Dengue, sea sting and pharmacy details follow our linked pages, checked the same day. General information, not medical advice.

SAFETY & HEALTH

What to Do After a Road Accident in Pattaya

Step by step help after a scooter or car accident in Pattaya: making the scene safe, 1669 and 191, photos and witnesses, fault and money, the police report, what compulsory insurance pays, hospital bills and rented bikes.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/safety-health/road-accidents/

Ambulance	**1669**
Police	**191, Tourist Police 1155 (English)**
Stay at the scene	**Driving off is an offence**
Compulsory insurance	**Up to ฿30,000 medical per person at first**
Don't sign	**Anything in Thai you can't read**
Insurance	**Call your insurer and rental shop the same day**

Quick answer: After a crash in Pattaya, make the scene safe, call **1669** for an ambulance if anyone is hurt and **191** for the police, or **1155** for the English-speaking Tourist Police. Stay at the scene, take photos, and call your insurer and, for a rented bike, the rental shop. Don't sign anything in Thai you can't read, and don't agree to pay until the police or an insurer are involved. Every Thai vehicle must carry compulsory insurance (Por Ror Bor), which pays up to ฿30,000 of medical costs per injured person at first, but travel insurance often refuses scooter claims if you had no valid motorcycle licence or no helmet.

Accidents are common on Pattaya's roads, especially on scooters. Knowing what to do in the first hour can protect your health, your money and your visa.

At a glance

WHEN	WHAT TO DO
First minute	Get out of traffic if it is safe, hazard lights on, don't move anyone who may have a neck or back injury
Call	1669 for an ambulance, 191 for police, 1155 if you need English
At the scene	Photos of vehicles, plates, the road and injuries; names and numbers; stay until the police say you can go
Same day	Call your travel or vehicle insurer and the rental shop
Paperwork	A police report for any insurance claim
Hospital	Passport and insurance details; private hospitals may want a deposit

First, stay safe

- Get yourself and others out of traffic if it is safe to move.
- Turn on hazard lights and warn other traffic.
- Do not move someone who may have a neck or back injury.

Call for help

- Ambulance: 1669. Bangkok Hospital Pattaya also runs its own ambulance on 1719.
- Police: 191, or the Tourist Police on 1155 for help in English. They can also translate for you. See Tourist Police.
- Say where you are as clearly as you can: the road, the nearest soi number or a landmark.
- If you are registered at a hospital, ask to go there. See registering at a hospital.
- See all numbers on emergency numbers.

At the scene

- Take photos of the vehicles, plates, the road and any injuries, plus a wide shot showing where everything ended up. A dash cam or helmet camera clip helps too.
- Exchange names, phone numbers and insurance details, and get the numbers of any witnesses.
- Stay at the scene. Driving off after an accident is an offence, and a hit-and-run costs 3 points on a Thai licence.
- Show a copy of your passport, but don't hand the passport itself over as a guarantee.
- Stay calm and polite. Shouting or blaming makes things harder.

Fault and money

In Pattaya, fault is usually worked out on the spot between the drivers, the police and, for insured cars, the insurance company's representative, who often comes to the scene. A few things help:

- Be careful about admitting fault before the police or your insurer have looked at it.
- Don't sign a Thai-language document unless a lawyer or a Thai person you trust has read it to you. It can be an admission of guilt.

- For a small knock where you are clearly at fault, a cash settlement on the spot is possible. Write down the amount, both names, the plates and the date, and both sign it, ideally in front of the police.
- If a crowd gathers and you feel pressured to pay, wait for the police and call 1155. Never agree to pay someone's medical bills with no limit.

If someone is badly hurt

If someone is seriously injured or killed, the police may hold the driver they believe was at fault while the case goes forward. Ask for the Tourist Police, contact your embassy, and get a lawyer before signing anything. Some Thai first-class car insurance includes bail bond cover; check your policy.

The police report

- Insurers usually need a police report. Ask the police where and when to get it.
- If you rented the vehicle, call the rental shop too.
- Bring your passport and driving licence. See Thai driving licence and international driving permit.
- Keep copies of the report, receipts and medical reports for claims.

Insurance: who pays what

Every vehicle must have compulsory insurance (Por Ror Bor). It covers injuries, not damage to bikes or cars. Limits per person, as listed by a Thai insurer in 2025:

COVER	PAID STRAIGHT AWAY, WHOEVER WAS AT FAULT	TOTAL IF YOU WERE NOT AT FAULT
Medical costs	Up to ฿30,000	Up to ฿80,000
Death or permanent disability	฿35,000	Up to ฿500,000
Hospital stay	Not listed	฿200 a day, up to 20 days

- Travel insurance often does not cover scooter riders without a licence valid for the bike, or without a helmet. Check your policy. See motorbike insurance and travel insurance.
- Call your insurer as soon as you can; many need to approve hospital treatment. Private hospitals may ask for a deposit or proof of insurance. See hospital costs and hospitals and clinics.
- Damage to the bike or car is down to voluntary insurance or whoever is found at fault.

Rented scooters

Rental bikes are not always properly registered or insured, and the shop will want the damage paid for. Before you ride, check for a current tax sticker and insurance papers, and photograph the bike. After a crash, get the repair price in writing before you pay. See renting a scooter.

Prevention

Thailand recorded 17,447 road deaths in 2024, and 14,144 of them were linked to motorcycles, according to the Department of Disease Control. It also found that 84% of motorcyclists taken to hospital between 2020 and 2024 were not wearing a helmet. Wear a helmet, ride sober, carry the right licence and follow the road rules; stricter fines have been enforced since 1 April 2026. See also police checkpoints.

Common questions

What number do I call after an accident in Pattaya? 1669 for an ambulance and 191 for the police. The Tourist Police on 1155 speak English and can help translate.

Does compulsory insurance cover me as a foreigner? It covers injured people, Thai or foreign, up to its limits: up to ฿30,000 of medical costs straight away, more once fault is decided.

Will travel insurance pay if I crash a scooter without a motorcycle licence? Often not. Many policies need a licence valid for the bike and a helmet. Read your policy before you ride.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Roojai, compulsory motor insurance limits (updated April 2025); Howden Thailand, 2026 changes to compulsory insurance (policy periods from 1 September 2026; the page gives no new limits); The Nation, Department of Disease Control road death figures (June 2025); UK government travel advice, Thailand safety (rented bikes, passports as deposits, insurance and licences); Pattaya City Expats Club, police and accidents (fault, settlements and signing Thai documents). Penalty points are from our road rules and fines page. General information, not legal advice; in a serious case, get a lawyer and contact your embassy.

SAFETY & HEALTH

Health Check-ups in Pattaya

How health check-up packages work at Pattaya hospitals: the main package types, what they include, published price examples from about ฿5,000 to ฿37,000, booking, preparing and results.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/safety-health/health-checkups/

Where	**Private hospitals; public hospitals cost less with longer waits**
Published prices	**About ฿5,000 to ฿37,000 per package (Nov 2026 example)**
Usually included	**Doctor's exam, blood and urine tests, a doctor to explain results**
Prepare	**Fast 8 to 12 hours before; water is fine**
Not included	**Usually extra tests, specialist fees and medicines**
Not advice	**Ask a doctor which tests suit you**

Quick answer: Pattaya's private hospitals sell health check-ups as fixed packages: a doctor's exam plus a set list of blood, urine and scan tests, with a doctor to go through the results. Packages run from basic blood tests to senior and heart screenings. Bangkok Hospital Pattaya, which publishes its prices online, listed its general check-up packages at about ฿7,800 to ฿36,900 in November 2026, with a basic heart screen at ฿4,999. Prices change with frequent promotions, and extra tests, specialist fees and medicines cost extra. Fast for 8 to 12 hours before. This page explains how packages work; it doesn't recommend a hospital or a package, so ask a doctor which tests make sense for your age and health.

At a glance

PACKAGE TYPE	TYPICAL CONTENTS	EXAMPLE PRICE (BANGKOK HOSPITAL PATTAYA, NOV 2026)
Heart screen	Blood sugar and cholesterol, ECG, artery check, exercise stress test	฿4,999 (Heart Classic EST)
Starter or basic	Exam, blood and urine tests, chest X-ray, ECG, abdominal ultrasound	฿7,800 (Healthy Starter)
Mid-range by sex	Adds exercise stress test and cancer markers; men: PSA, bone density; women: breast imaging over 35	฿17,000 (Signature Course)
Senior (geriatric)	Adds fall assessment, bone density, heart calcium CT, neck artery ultrasound	฿19,800 (Basic) to ฿34,000 (Plus)
Premium	Adds specialist eye exam, liver scan, heart ultrasound and more	฿29,500 to ฿36,900
Single checks	Dental exam; basic eye screening	฿1,599; ฿900

These are one hospital's published promotion prices, valid for purchase until 31 December 2026 and for use until 28 February 2027. Other hospitals price differently, and earlier 2026 listings at the same hospital had different packages and prices.

What a package usually includes

- **A physical exam** and a doctor's review of your results. Bangkok Hospital Pattaya's package terms say the price includes the doctor's fee for explaining your results and the hospital service charge.
- **Blood tests**: blood count, fasting blood sugar and HbA1c (longer-term blood sugar), cholesterol and triglycerides, kidney and liver function and uric acid. Bigger packages add thyroid hormones, vitamin D and tumour markers such as AFP (liver) or PSA (prostate).
- **Urine and stool tests**: many packages include a stool test that screens for bowel cancer.
- **Imaging and heart tests**: chest X-ray, ECG and abdominal ultrasound are common in mid-range packages; an exercise stress test, heart ultrasound or CT scan in bigger ones.
- **Women's and men's checks**: mammogram and breast ultrasound, cervical screening, prostate tests and bone density appear in sex-specific packages.

What usually costs extra

- Specialist consultations if a result needs follow-up, extra tests the doctor suggests on the day, and any medicines.
- Changes to the package: the published terms say the items in a package can't be swapped.
- If something abnormal turns up, follow-up care is billed separately. See hospital costs.

Choosing a package

- Start with what you actually need. Age, family history and existing conditions matter more than the package name. A doctor at home or here can tell you which tests are worth doing.
- Compare the test lists, not the titles. Two packages with similar names can include very different scans.
- Check the dates: promotions have a sale period and a separate period when you can use them.
- Ask other hospitals for their current list. We didn't find published online prices for Pattaya Memorial or Pattaya International Hospital, so contact them directly. Public hospitals, such as Pattaya City Hospital and Pattaya Patamakun Hospital in Naklua, cost much less, with longer waits and less English. See hospitals and clinics.

Booking

- Bangkok Hospital Pattaya sells packages online as e-coupons and also takes bookings by phone and LINE. Its heart packages ask you to book ahead and arrive 30 minutes early.
- Other hospitals usually take bookings by phone or LINE. See LINE app guide.
- Bring your passport. For blood tests, morning appointments are easiest because you'll be fasting.
- Some hospitals offer home testing: Bangkok Hospital Pattaya listed a women's blood and urine screening at home for ฿11,900, with a ฿100 surcharge outside a 10 km radius.

Preparing

- **Fasting**: the published terms ask for no food or drink except plain water for 8 to 12 hours before blood tests.
- **Alcohol and exercise**: one package asks you to avoid alcohol and hard exercise for 24 hours before, and to sleep well the night before.
- **Medicines and conditions**: tell the staff about long-term conditions and any medicines you take before the tests. Don't stop a prescribed medicine to fast without asking a doctor.
- Bring a list of past illnesses and operations, and any recent results from home.

Results

- Ask when results will be ready. Some tests take longer than others: one micronutrient test is listed as taking about 10 days.
- A doctor goes through the results with you. Ask for a printed or digital copy in English to keep or show your doctor at home.
- Ask what any abnormal result means and what follow-up it needs, and what that follow-up will cost.

Insurance and other checks

- Check whether your insurance covers routine check-ups before you book. Travel insurance is built for emergencies, not check-ups. See health insurance.
- A Thai driving licence needs its own medical certificate, which is a separate document. See Thai driving licence.
- Dental check-ups and cleaning: see dentists. Eye tests: see eye care and glasses. Vaccinations: see travel vaccinations.
- Sexual health screening: see sexual health and STI testing.

Common questions

How much is a health check-up in Pattaya? At Bangkok Hospital Pattaya in November 2026, general packages were listed at about ฿7,800 to ฿36,900, with a heart screen from ฿4,999. Other hospitals differ, and public hospitals cost less.

Do I need to fast? Usually yes, for 8 to 12 hours before blood tests, drinking only plain water. Ask the hospital, and ask a doctor before skipping any regular medicine.

Can I change the tests in a package? Package items usually can't be swapped. You can add tests, which are charged separately.

Is a bigger package better? Not automatically. More tests mean more cost, and sometimes more follow-up tests. Ask a doctor which tests suit your age and history.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026, Bangkok Hospital Pattaya package pages (prices valid to 31 December 2026): Healthy Starter; Signature Course (Male) and (Female); Geriatric (Basic) and (Plus); Longevity (Male); Chef's Special; Heart Classic (EST); Comprehensive Health Check for Female (home service); Dental Examination; Basic Eye Screening. Cited to show typical package contents and prices, not as a recommendation. Prices and packages change often; confirm with the hospital before you book. General information, not medical advice.

SECTION

🎉 Events

What's on in Pattaya through the year: Songkran, the fireworks festival, Loy Krathong, Muay Thai fights and markets, with dates and tips for each.

Quick answer: The next big dates in Pattaya are Loy Krathong on 24 November 2026, the Pattaya International Fireworks Festival on 27 and 28 November 2026, and the New Year countdown from 29 to 31 December, with stages at Bali Hai and Central Pattaya Beach. In 2027, Chinese New Year falls on 6 February, Songkran is 13 to 15 April with Pattaya's own Wan Lai water festival on 18 and 19 April, and most shops and bars can't sell alcohol on Buddhist holy days such as Makha Bucha (21 February). Check our calendar before you book: these dates move every year.

The year at a glance

WHEN	EVENT	GOOD TO KNOW
—	—	—
24 Nov 2026	Loy Krathong	Floating krathongs on the sea and lakes
27 to 28 Nov 2026	Fireworks festival	Free on Pattaya Beach; arrive early, roads close
24 to 25 Dec 2026	Christmas	Hotel dinners, mall decorations
29 to 31 Dec 2026	New Year countdown	Stages at Bali Hai and Central Pattaya Beach, fireworks at midnight
6 Feb 2027	Chinese New Year	Lion dances, red lanterns
21 Feb 2027	Makha Bucha	No alcohol sales in most shops and bars
March 2027	Pattaya Music Festival	Free stages on Central Pattaya Beach and Jomtien, usually Fridays and Saturdays
13 to 15 Apr 2027	Songkran	Water fights everywhere
18 to 19 Apr 2027	Wan Lai	Pattaya and Naklua's own water festival
20 May 2027	Visakha Bucha	No alcohol sales in most shops and bars
July 2027	Pattaya Marathon	Usually July; see sports events
18 to 19 Jul 2027	Asahna Bucha and Khao Phansa	No alcohol sales in most shops and bars
30 Sep to 8 Oct 2027	Vegetarian Festival	Yellow flags, meat-free food stalls
15 Oct 2027	Ok Phansa	End of Buddhist Lent; no alcohol sales in most shops and bars

Dates come from our events calendar, which we check against official and press announcements. Some 2027 dates, such as the music festival and marathon, are usual months, not confirmed days. See the full events calendar and Thai public holidays.

Start here

- Events calendar: everything coming up, with dates.
- Songkran and Wan Lai: the biggest party of the year.
- Fireworks festival: where to watch, road closures, getting there.
- Loy Krathong: what it means and where to float a krathong.
- Alcohol ban days: the dry days, so they don't surprise you.

How the events pages fit together

- **Festivals:** Songkran and Wan Lai, Loy Krathong, Chinese New Year, Vegetarian Festival, Diwali and Chonburi buffalo racing.
- **Shows and big nights:** fireworks festival, music festival, Christmas and the New Year countdown.
- **Holidays and rules:** public holidays, Buddhist holidays and alcohol ban days and Ok Phansa.
- **Sport:** sports events, from the marathon to Muay Thai.
- **Staying safe:** Songkran safety for riders and drivers.

Planning tips

- Hotels fill and prices rise around Songkran, the fireworks festival and New Year. Book early.
- Big events close Beach Road and nearby streets; walk or use baht buses where they still run. See baht buses.
- On Buddhist holy days most shops and bars can't sell alcohol (hotels and licensed entertainment venues can), sales also stop on election days, and many bars close.

- Bank holidays close banks and government offices, including immigration. Plan visa errands around them. See Jomtien immigration office.

Getting around on big event nights

- **Fireworks and countdown:** Beach Road closes to traffic and the sois around it fill up. Arrive early, walk the last part, and expect long waits for Bolt and Grab afterwards. In recent years the city has made Central Pattaya Road one way out of town after the last fireworks show.
- **Songkran and Wan Lai:** riding a scooter means getting soaked and is genuinely risky, with wet roads and drink-driving. Waterproof your phone and passport copy. See Songkran safety.
- **Loy Krathong:** the beach and lakes get crowded around sunset; keep children close near the water.
- **Weather:** the cool, dry season from November to February suits the outdoor events best. Songkran falls in the hottest month, so drink plenty of water. See weather by month.

Common questions

When is the Pattaya fireworks festival 2026? 27 and 28 November 2026, on Pattaya Beach.

When is Songkran in Pattaya in 2027? Songkran is 13 to 15 April 2027; Pattaya's Wan Lai water festival follows on 18 and 19 April.

When is Loy Krathong 2026? 24 November 2026.

Are there days when alcohol isn't sold in Pattaya? Yes. On the five Buddhist holy days most shops and bars can't sell it, though hotels and licensed entertainment venues can, and sales also stop on election days. See alcohol ban days.

When is Chinese New Year 2027 in Pattaya? Saturday 6 February 2027, with lion and dragon dances at shrines and malls.

Is Christmas a holiday in Thailand? No, it's a normal working day, but hotels and malls celebrate and it's peak season.

Sources

- Our events calendar data (events.json), checked against Pattaya City, the Tourism Authority of Thailand and local press; each event page lists its own sources. Checked November 2026.

EVENTS

Pattaya Events Calendar

Pattaya's year month by month, with the dates confirmed so far for late 2026 and 2027: Loy Krathong, the fireworks festival, the countdown, Chinese New Year, Songkran and Wan Lai, the music festival, Vegetarian Festival and the alcohol ban days.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/events/pattaya-events-calendar/

Next up	**Loy Krathong 24 Nov, fireworks festival 27-28 Nov 2026**
Countdown	**Usually 29 to 31 December on Pattaya Beach**
Biggest party	**Songkran 13-15 April, then Wan Lai (18-19 April in 2026)**
2027 alcohol ban days	**21 Feb, 20 May, 18 and 19 Jul, 15 Oct (expected)**
Dates	**Many follow the lunar calendar and move each year**

Quick answer: Pattaya has a festival or big event most months. Coming up in 2026 are Loy Krathong on 24 November, the Pattaya International Fireworks Festival on 27 and 28 November, Tomorrowland Thailand near Pattaya from 11 to 13 December, and the New Year countdown on the beach, usually 29 to 31 December. In 2027, Chinese New Year falls on 6 February, Songkran on 13 to 15 April, and Pattaya's own Wan Lai water festival follows a few days later (18 and 19 April in 2026). Many dates follow the lunar calendar or are set by Pattaya City only weeks ahead, so check the latest before you book around one. Our events calendar lists dates as they are confirmed.

Coming up: dates confirmed so far

DATE	EVENT	STATUS
22 Nov 2026	Ray Run charity race, Central Pattaya Beach	Announced
24 Nov 2026	Loy Krathong	Full moon date, Thai press and Pattaya City
27-28 Nov 2026	Pattaya International Fireworks Festival	Announced
11-13 Dec 2026	Tomorrowland Thailand, Wisdom Valley near Pattaya (ticketed)	Organisers' dates; one report says 10-13
24-25 Dec 2026	Christmas	Not a public holiday
29-31 Dec 2026	Pattaya Countdown	Usual dates; 2026/27 programme not announced yet
13-17 Jan 2027	WGP#1 Waterjet World Cup, jet ski racing at Jomtien	Announced
6 Feb 2027	Chinese New Year	Lunar calendar
21 Feb 2027	Makha Bucha, alcohol ban day	Bank of Thailand 2027 list
March 2027	Pattaya Music Festival	Expected; not announced
13-15 Apr 2027	Songkran	Bank of Thailand 2027 list
Mid-April 2027	Wan Lai, Naklua then Pattaya	2027 dates not announced
20 May 2027	Visakha Bucha, alcohol ban day	Bank of Thailand 2027 list
18-19 Jul 2027	Asalha Bucha and Khao Phansa, alcohol ban days	Bank of Thailand list and lunar calendar
15 Oct 2027	Ok Phansa, alcohol ban day	Expected, lunar calendar

Month by month

MONTH	WHAT'S ON
January	New Year's Day; jet ski racing at Jomtien in 2027; Chinese New Year in some years
February	Chinese New Year (6 February in 2027); Makha Bucha
March	Pattaya Music Festival: free concerts every Friday and Saturday, moving between beaches
April	Songkran (13 to 15 April) and Pattaya's Wan Lai water festival a few days later
May to August	Low season; Visakha Bucha, Asalha Bucha and the start of Buddhist Lent
September	The Pattaya Marathon was held on 26 and 27 September in 2026 (July in 2025)
September or October	Vegetarian Festival (around 11 to 20 October in 2026)
October	Ok Phansa, the end of Buddhist Lent; Chonburi buffalo racing, usually the day before
November	Loy Krathong; the fireworks festival; the jazz festival on the beach (6 and 7 November in 2026)

MONTH	WHAT'S ON
December	Christmas events, Tomorrowland Thailand in 2026, and the New Year countdown on the beach

Songkran and Wan Lai

Songkran is Thailand's New Year, 13 to 15 April, with water fights all over the country. Pattaya then carries on with Wan Lai, a local water festival. In 2026 Pattaya City held Wan Lai Naklua on 18 April and Wan Lai Pattaya on 19 April, with concerts on Beach Road from 17 April, and closed Beach Road to traffic from noon to midnight on the 19th. The 2027 dates haven't been announced. Riding during these days is risky: see Songkran safety for riders and drivers.

Event guides

- Chinese New Year
- Pattaya Music Festival
- Songkran and Wan Lai
- Vegetarian Festival
- Ok Phansa
- Loy Krathong
- Fireworks festival
- New Year countdown

Good to know

- On the five Buddhist holy days most shops and bars can't sell alcohol (hotels and licensed entertainment venues can), sales also stop on election days, and many bars close. See alcohol ban days.
- In 2027 the ban days are 21 February, 20 May, 18 and 19 July, and 15 October (expected). On other days shops sell from 11am to midnight.
- Hotels fill up and prices rise around Songkran, Chinese New Year and New Year.
- Big beach events close Beach Road for hours, and the sois between Beach Road and Second Road can be kept clear for emergency vehicles. Walk in, or use a baht bus to the edge of the closure.
- Banks and the immigration office close on public holidays, but not for Chinese New Year, Loy Krathong or Christmas. See Thai public holidays.
- Weather: see best time to visit.

Why dates move

Buddhist holy days, Chinese New Year, Loy Krathong and the Vegetarian Festival follow lunar calendars, so they shift by days or weeks each year. City events such as Wan Lai, the music festival and the countdown are set by Pattaya City, often only a few weeks ahead, and the line-ups come later. Royal and national holidays have fixed dates, but a substitute day off is added when one falls on a weekend. Unofficial listings online often copy last year's dates, so treat a date as confirmed only when the city, the organiser or the Bank of Thailand has published it.

Common questions

What is the biggest event in Pattaya? Songkran and Wan Lai in mid-April, and the New Year countdown on the beach. The fireworks festival in late November also draws big crowds.

When is Songkran 2027? 13 to 15 April 2027, on the Bank of Thailand's 2027 holiday list. Pattaya's Wan Lai usually follows a few days later; 2027 dates aren't announced yet.

Is there a quiet time to visit? May to August is low season, with fewer big events and lower hotel prices, but more rain. Check the alcohol ban days if nightlife matters to you.

Where can I find this week's events? Our events calendar lists confirmed dates, and you can suggest an event there.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Nation Thailand, Bank of Thailand 2027 holidays (28 August 2026); Pattaya Mail, Wan Lai Naklua and Pattaya, 18 and 19 April 2026; Pattaya Mail, Songkran 2026 road closures; Khaosod English, three-day Wan Lai 2026. Other dates are taken from our linked event guides, which list their own sources. The Ok Phansa and Khao Phansa 2027 dates are from the lunar calendar and are not on the bank holiday list; the 2027 music festival, Wan Lai and countdown dates had not been announced.

More events

- Christmas in Pattaya
- Chonburi buffalo racing
- Sports events
- Buddhist holidays and alcohol ban days
- Thai public holidays

Planning tips

- Book hotels early for Songkran, Chinese New Year, the fireworks festival and New Year.
- Expect road closures on Beach Road during big beach events.
- Check visa office closures before public holidays. See Jomtien immigration office.
- For rainy and hot months, see weather by month.

EVENTS

Pattaya International Fireworks Festival

Pattaya International Fireworks Festival, 27 and 28 November 2026: show times, Beach Road closures, where to watch, parking, buses back to Bangkok and hotel tips.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/events/fireworks-festival/

2026 dates	**27 and 28 November**
Where	**Pattaya Beach, Bali Hai to North Pattaya**
Cost	**Free beachfront viewing**
Tip	**Arrive early; roads close**

The Pattaya International Fireworks Festival runs on Friday 27 and Saturday 28 November 2026 on Pattaya Beach. Watching from the sand is free. Beach Road is reported to close to traffic from about 3pm on both days, so plan to walk the last part.

When we checked on 6 November 2026, Pattaya City had not published a full programme, so the show times and road details below come from local press and may change. The city's final announcements normally appear in the last two weeks before the festival.

2026 at a glance

QUESTION	ANSWER
Dates	Friday 27 and Saturday 28 November 2026
Festival hours	5pm to midnight, according to Pattaya Mail
First fireworks	Sources conflict: 8pm (Pattaya Mail, Pattaya Land) or 7:15 to 7:30pm (Royal Cliff)
Beach Road	Closed to traffic from about 3pm
Cost	Free on the beach; hotel terraces and dinners cost extra
Also on	Live concerts and food stalls along the beachfront

Be in place by 7pm to be safe, since the first show could start as early as 7:15pm. Bangkok Rooftops says recent editions had five displays a night, each 10 to 15 minutes, but the 2026 running order is not out yet.

Where to watch

SPOT	COST	WHY GO	WHEN TO ARRIVE
Central Pattaya Beach, around Soi 4 to Soi 6	Free	Closest to the barges and busiest	By 3pm for the front
South end near Bali Hai pier	Free	Thinner crowds	Late afternoon
North end, Dusit curve towards Naklua	Free	Quietest sand and easiest exit, but about 2 km from the barges	Late afternoon
Pratumnak Hill viewpoint, by the naval radio station	Free	Wide view of the bay, good for photos, far from the music	By 5pm
Hotel terraces	Paid	A seat, dinner and a clear view	Book ahead

The spots and the 3pm and 5pm times come from Bangkok Rooftops' guide, based on recent years. Pattaya City says it will announce designated viewing areas closer to the dates. See night viewpoints and rooftop bars.

Holiday Inn, Dusit Thani and Hard Rock were listed with 2026 fireworks packages, at about ฿2,500 to ฿3,500 per person on 2 November. Check directly with the hotel, because prices and deadlines can change. No 2026 boat charter had been announced at that date, so choose only a licensed operator with life jackets if one appears.

Road closures and parking

- **Beach Road:** closed from about 3pm (Pattaya Mail, Royal Cliff). Bangkok Rooftops says about 3 to 4pm until after midnight.
- **Parking bans:** in recent years these started in the early morning on Beach Road, Central Pattaya Road, South Pattaya Road and the numbered sois, and Second Road lost a lane in the afternoon.
- **Traffic:** expect a build-up through the day on both dates, and allow extra time around central Pattaya.
- **After the last show:** Central Pattaya Road and Phettrakul Road ran one way out of the city in recent years.
- **Parking in 2025:** Terminal 21, Lotus North and South, Central Marina, Central Pattaya, Big C Central and South, Harbor Mall, Wat Chai Mongkhon, Wat Nong Yai, City Hall and the Bali Hai pier car park.
- **Shuttles in 2025:** free, from about 4pm to midnight, from Wat Nong Yai and Lotus South.

The bans, parking and shuttles above are last year's pattern, as reported by Bangkok Rooftops. They are not confirmed for 2026, so check the city's traffic announcement before you drive.

Getting there

- The easiest way is to walk in from Second Road using one of the sois.
- Baht buses on Beach Road will divert. Second Road buses run late and are ฿15 a ride. See baht bus routes.
- Ride apps can drop you near Second Road. Expect surge prices and long waits after the show. See Bolt and Grab.
- If you ride a scooter, park well away from Beach Road and walk. See renting a scooter.
- From Bangkok, buses leave Ekkamai every 20 to 60 minutes for about ฿130 to ฿150. See Bangkok to Pattaya.

Getting home

- Everyone leaves at the same time. Wait 30 to 60 minutes, have dinner, and let the crowd thin out.
- Walking back along the sois to Second Road is often quicker than waiting for a car.
- **Day trip warning:** the last public buses to Ekkamai are reported to leave around 9:30 to 10pm, before the final display. Book a car (about ฿1,500 to ฿2,500) or stay the night.
- See night transport for late options.

Where to stay

- Book early. Bangkok Rooftops reports that hotels were near full a month before the 2025 festival, with rates roughly doubled.
- Jomtien, Pratumnak and Naklua can be cheaper and are a short ride away. See Jomtien, Pratumnak and Naklua.

What to bring

- A beach mat or towel to claim a spot early.
- Water, insect repellent and a small torch.
- A charged phone and a power bank, signal can be slow in big crowds.
- Small notes for food stalls. See street food.

Safety and rules

- Agree a meeting point with your group before the crowds build, because phone networks may be weak.
- Do not fly a drone: drones were banned without city authorisation in 2024, so assume the ban applies. Do not set off your own fireworks.
- Keep your phone and wallet in a front pocket. See common scams.
- Keep children close and write your phone number on their arm. See Pattaya with kids.
- In an emergency call 1669, or the Tourist Police on 1155. See emergency numbers.

Common questions

Is the fireworks festival free? Yes, watching from the public beach is free. You only pay for hotel terraces, dinner packages or a boat.

What time do the fireworks start? Sources disagree: 8pm according to Pattaya Mail, or 7:15 to 7:30pm according to Royal Cliff. Aim to be settled by 7pm.

Which night is better? We can't say yet, because the 2026 teams and running order have not been published.

Can I drive to the beach? Not on Beach Road from about 3pm. Park well back from the beachfront and walk.

Also that month

Loy Krathong is on 24 November, a few days earlier, so one trip can cover both. See Loy Krathong in Pattaya, Diwali in Pattaya and our events calendar.

EVENTS

Loy Krathong in Pattaya

Loy Krathong in Pattaya: Tuesday 24 November 2026, the main celebration at Lan Pho Park in Naklua, Koh Larn's two-day event, eco krathongs, traffic and etiquette.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/events/loy-krathong-pattaya/

2026 date	**24 November**
What	**Floating krathongs on water**
Where	**The beach and local lakes**
Cost	**Krathongs from street stalls**

Loy Krathong is one of Thailand's most beautiful festivals. On the full moon night of the twelfth Thai month, people float small decorated baskets, called krathongs, on rivers, lakes and the sea to give thanks to the water spirits and let go of bad luck.

In 2026 it falls on Tuesday 24 November. Pattaya City's main celebration is at Lan Pho Public Park in Naklua, and Koh Larn holds its own event on 23 and 24 November.

24 or 25 November?

It is 24 November. Thai press gives Tuesday 24 November 2026, the night of the full moon, and Pattaya City's planning report uses the same date. A few travel sites say 25 November, and at least one of them calls it a Wednesday, so treat those listings as wrong. Loy Krathong is not an official public holiday in Thailand, so banks and offices keep normal hours.

2026 at a glance

EVENT	DATE	PLACE	DETAILS
Pattaya City main celebration	Tuesday 24 November	Lan Pho Public Park, Naklua	Start time not yet published
Koh Larn celebration	Monday 23 and Tuesday 24 November	Grounds in front of Wat Mai Samran, Koh Larn	Theme: Eco-Friendly Loy Krathong, Local Ways of Koh Larn

Details come from a Pattaya City planning meeting on 12 October, reported by The Pattaya News. The final schedule may come later, so check again in the week before. We last checked on 6 November 2026.

What it means

- A krathong is a small float, traditionally made from banana trunk and banana leaves, decorated with flowers, a candle and incense.
- Many people add a small coin, a lock of hair or a nail clipping, a symbol of letting go of the past year.
- Couples often float a krathong together. If it floats away together, it is said to bring luck.
- It is a calm, happy family festival rather than a party night.

Where to go in Pattaya

- **Lan Pho Public Park, Naklua:** the city's main event, beside the Naklua seafood market. See Naklua.
- **Koh Larn:** boat-paddling contests on both days, a local food activity on 23 November and free souvenirs for visitors. Organisers encourage traditional Thai clothing. See Koh Larn.
- **Pattaya Beach and Jomtien Beach:** people traditionally float krathongs at the water's edge, and some guides also name Bali Hai pier. We found no official 2026 stage at these spots. See Jomtien.
- **Hotels and malls:** some run their own evenings with food and shows. Check with them directly.

The city also discussed a krathong-making contest using natural materials and the Little Noppamas contest for young participants. Registration details had not been published when we checked.

Traffic and getting there

- No road closures had been announced for 2026 when we checked.
- One travel guide warns of severe traffic after 6pm on Sukhumvit, Beach Road and in Naklua. Allow extra time, and go early if you can.
- A ride app or walking is easier than looking for parking. See Bolt and Grab and baht bus routes.
- If you go to Koh Larn, check the time of the last ferry back before you leave, or stay on the island. See Koh Larn overnight.
- It is a weeknight in 2026, so expect normal workday traffic on top of the festival crowd.

Buying a krathong

- Stalls sell krathongs along Beach Road and near parks from the afternoon. Prices are usually low.

- Choose one made from banana trunk, bread or other natural materials. Foam krathongs pollute the sea.
- Bread krathongs are eaten by fish and are a good eco choice.
- You can also make your own, some hotels and schools run workshops.

How to float it

- Light the candle and incense, make a wish or a quiet thank you, then place it gently on the water.
- On the beach, wade in just a little at the water's edge. Waves can push it back, so be patient.
- Take care with your clothes and hair near the candles.

Sky lanterns

- Floating lanterns, khom loy, are mostly a northern tradition and are often restricted in Pattaya for safety and air traffic reasons.
- Do not release lanterns unless it is an approved event. Rules change, so follow local announcements.

Etiquette

- Be respectful, it is a spiritual festival for many Thais.
- Ask before taking close-up photos of people making wishes.
- Do not take or move other people's krathongs.

Practical tips

- Bring small notes for krathongs and street food. See night markets.
- Watch your belongings in crowds. See common scams.
- Children love it, but keep them away from open flames and the water at night. See Pattaya with kids.

Common questions

Is Loy Krathong free in Pattaya? The public celebrations are normally free to walk around. You only pay for your krathong and food.

Where is the best place to go? Lan Pho Public Park in Naklua is the city's main event in 2026. For a quieter island setting, go to Koh Larn.

Can I release a sky lantern? Only at an approved event. Do not release one on the beach.

The same month

The fireworks festival follows on 27 and 28 November, and Diwali runs earlier in the month. See Pattaya fireworks festival, Diwali in Pattaya and our events calendar.

EVENTS

Diwali in Pattaya

Diwali in Pattaya 2026: two free events, Nine Nights of Candlelight at Central Festival (7-15 November) and the Beach Road festival (13-15 November). Times, getting there.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/events/diwali-pattaya/

2026 dates	**7-15 and 13-15 November**
Where	**Central Festival and Beach Road**
Cost	**Free entry**
Highlight	**Diya lighting, 13 Nov, 6pm**

Diwali, the Hindu festival of lights, comes to Pattaya twice in November 2026, and both events are free. Nine Nights of Candlelight runs at Central Festival Pattaya Beach from 7 to 15 November, with Diwali Day activities on 8 November. Lamps Along the Shore then runs on Beach Road from 13 to 15 November, opening with a beachfront lamp-lighting ceremony.

Both are part of the Amazing Thailand Grand Diwali Festival, which runs from 3 to 29 November in Bangkok, Pattaya and Phuket. We checked these details on 6 November 2026.

2026 at a glance

EVENT	DATES	PLACE	HIGHLIGHT
Nine Nights of Candlelight	Saturday 7 to Sunday 15 November	Central Festival Pattaya Beach	Diwali Day activities on 8 November
Lamps Along the Shore, also called Diwali Pattaya Festival	Friday 13 to Sunday 15 November	Beach Road, central Pattaya Beach	Diya lighting on 13 November, 6pm to 7pm

Daily opening hours were not published when we checked. The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) contact centre on 1672 can help with questions.

Why you may see different dates

- Older listings show one event from 7 to 15 November, while Pattaya City and local press announce 13 to 15 November. TAT's announcement explains it: these are two separate events.
- Some reports use other names, such as "Evenings by the Sea" for the Central Festival event. The dates and places match.
- The date moves each year: Pattaya's beach festival was held on 8 to 10 November in 2024 and 24 to 26 October in 2025.

What's on

- **On Beach Road:** The Pattaya News lists traditional Indian cultural performances, light and sound displays, and imported products from India for sale.
- **The diya lighting:** small oil lamps are lit on the beachfront on 13 November from 6pm to 7pm. It is the only timed activity TAT has published for Pattaya, so it is the safest time to plan around.
- **Across the national festival:** organisers list puja ceremonies, music and dance, Indian food stalls, henna and craft workshops. They have not said which of these appear at each Pattaya event.

Where to go

- For the biggest outdoor atmosphere, go to Beach Road from 13 to 15 November and arrive before 6pm on the opening night. See Beach Road.
- If you are only here from 7 to 12 November, Central Festival Pattaya Beach is your option. See shopping malls.
- For Indian food the rest of the month, see Indian food in Pattaya.

Road closures and traffic

No road closures had been announced when we checked. Pattaya City lists traffic management in its preparations but has not published routes. Check local announcements before you drive to Beach Road on those three days.

The same beach is busy that weekend. From 13 to 15 November, a beach volleyball competition takes place in front of Central Pattaya, and Chonburi Coffee on the Beach is held opposite the Hard Rock Hotel. The city says it is arranging space to keep public access open.

Getting there

- Beach Road and Central Festival are close together in central Pattaya, so you can walk between them.
- Baht buses run along Beach Road and Second Road. See baht bus routes.
- Ride apps are easy, but may be slower around the beachfront in the evening. See Bolt and Grab.
- If you ride a scooter, park away from Beach Road and walk the last part. See renting a scooter.

Tips for visitors

- Everyone is welcome, and you don't need to be Hindu to attend.
- If you join a puja, follow your hosts' lead, dress modestly and ask before taking close-up photos.
- Take care around open flames, especially with children and loose clothing. See Pattaya with kids.
- Bring small notes for stalls, and watch your belongings in crowds. See common scams.

Common questions

Is Diwali in Pattaya free? Yes. TAT says admission to all seven celebrations in the festival is free.

When is Diwali Day in 2026? 8 November. Central Festival Pattaya Beach has Diwali Day activities that day, and the Beach Road festival follows the next weekend.

Where exactly on the beach is it? Pattaya City says central Pattaya Beach and Beach Road. A narrower location had not been published when we checked.

Also this month

See Loy Krathong on 24 November, the fireworks festival on 27 and 28 November, and our events calendar.

EVENTS

Songkran & Wan Lai

Songkran and Pattaya's Wan Lai water festival: dates, what happens, where the biggest water fights are, protecting your phone, safety and etiquette.

Verified October 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/events/songkran-wan-lai/

Songkran (nationwide)	**13 to 15 April**
Pattaya Wan Lai	**Usually 19 April**
Expect	**Water fights everywhere**
Tip	**Waterproof your phone**

Songkran is the Thai New Year, and Pattaya celebrates it longer and wetter than almost anywhere else. The national holiday is 13 to 15 April, and Pattaya then holds its own Wan Lai festival, usually around 19 April, when the biggest water fights happen.

What Songkran is

- Traditionally, families visit temples, make merit, and gently pour scented water over the hands of elders and Buddha images to show respect.
- The water fights grew from this custom of washing away the old year.
- It falls in the hottest month, so being soaked is welcome.
- Many Thais travel home to their families, so offices close and some shops shut.

Wan Lai in Pattaya

- Wan Lai is a local tradition in Pattaya, Naklua and nearby towns, held a few days after the national holiday.
- The main water fight day is usually 19 April, with events in Naklua and other areas on nearby days.
- Dates can change each year. Check local announcements and our events calendar.

Where the action is

- Beach Road and Second Road become huge water zones, with stages, music and foam parties.
- Walking Street and Soi Buakhao are busy and very wet. See Walking Street and Soi Buakhao.
- Naklua and Jomtien have their own events, sometimes on different days. See Naklua.
- Temples hold quieter, traditional ceremonies in the mornings. Visitors are welcome. See temple customs.

Protect your things

- Put your phone in a waterproof pouch, sold everywhere in April.
- Carry only a little cash in a sealed bag, and leave your passport in the hotel safe.
- Do not bring cameras or electronics you are not ready to lose.

What to wear

- Light, quick drying clothes, and sandals with grip.
- Avoid white or see-through clothing.
- Sunglasses or goggles protect your eyes from water and powder.
- Dress modestly. Very revealing outfits can cause problems and may break local rules.

Water fight etiquette

- Anyone outside is fair game, but do not soak monks, older people, babies, or people clearly not joining in.
- Do not throw water at motorbike riders, it causes accidents.
- Avoid ice water and high pressure guns aimed at faces.
- The white paste, din sor pong, is applied gently on cheeks. Do not rub it in eyes.

Getting around

- Traffic is slow and roads close near the main zones. Baht buses still run but riders get soaked.
- Riding a scooter during Songkran is very risky. See Songkran riding safety.
- Ride apps get expensive. Walking is often easiest. See night transport.

Safety

- Songkran has some of the highest road accident numbers of the year. Never drink and drive.
- Drink plenty of water, the heat is intense. See heat and sun safety.

- Keep your mouth closed when soaked, street water is not always clean.
- In an emergency call 1669. See emergency numbers.

Planning your trip

- Hotels fill up and prices rise, so book early.
- Banks and government offices close on the holiday. Plan visa tasks around it. See Thai public holidays.
- If you want a quieter time, stay away from Beach Road and Second Road on the main days.

EVENTS

Thai Public Holidays

Thailand's public holidays for 2027 from the Bank of Thailand list, substitute days, the difference between bank, government and private-sector holidays, what closes in Pattaya, and the days when most shops and bars can't sell alcohol.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/events/thai-public-holidays/

2027 bank holidays	**18, on the Bank of Thailand list**
Songkran 2027	**Tuesday 13 to Thursday 15 April**
Lunar dates	**Buddhist holidays move each year**
Closed	**Banks, government offices, immigration**
Alcohol	**Most shops and bars can't sell on five Buddhist holy days**
2027 ban days	**21 Feb, 20 May, 18 and 19 Jul, 15 Oct (expected)**

Quick answer: On Thai public holidays, banks, government offices and the immigration office close, while malls, restaurants, bars and attractions mostly stay open. The Bank of Thailand's list for 2027, published in August 2026, has 18 bank holidays, including Songkran on 13 to 15 April and five Monday substitute days for holidays that fall on a weekend. Buddhist holidays follow the lunar calendar and change every year, and on five of them most shops and bars can't sell alcohol. The government's own 2027 list for its offices had not been published when we checked, so a few government dates may still differ.

2027 holidays

These are the Bank of Thailand's 2027 holidays for banks and other financial institutions, published on 28 August 2026.

DATE	HOLIDAY
Friday 1 January	New Year's Day
Monday 22 February	Substitute for Makha Bucha (Sunday 21 February)
Tuesday 6 April	Chakri Memorial Day
Tuesday 13 to Thursday 15 April	Songkran
Monday 3 May	Substitute for National Labour Day (Saturday 1 May)
Tuesday 4 May	Coronation Day
Thursday 20 May	Visakha Bucha
Thursday 3 June	Queen Suthida's Birthday
Monday 19 July	Substitute for Asalha Bucha (Sunday 18 July)
Wednesday 28 July	King's Birthday
Thursday 12 August	Queen Mother's Birthday and Mother's Day
Wednesday 13 October	King Bhumibol Memorial Day
Monday 25 October	Substitute for Chulalongkorn Day (Saturday 23 October)
Monday 6 December	Substitute for King Bhumibol's Birthday, National Day and Father's Day (Sunday 5 December)
Friday 10 December	Constitution Day
Friday 31 December	New Year's Eve

Still to come in 2026: King Bhumibol's Birthday and Father's Day (Saturday 5 December), Constitution Day (Thursday 10 December) and New Year's Eve (Thursday 31 December). Christmas is a normal working day.

Bank, government and private-sector holidays

Thailand has three overlapping holiday lists, which is why calendars online disagree:

- **Banks** follow the Bank of Thailand's list above. It includes National Labour Day (1 May), but not Khao Phansa, the start of Buddhist Lent.
- **Government offices**, including immigration, follow the Cabinet's list. It includes Khao Phansa (Monday 19 July 2027) but not Labour Day, and its substitute day for Asalha Bucha is expected on Tuesday 20 July, not yet official. It can also include the Royal Ploughing Ceremony, whose 2027 date hadn't been set.
- **Private employers** must give at least 13 traditional holidays a year, including Labour Day, chosen from the official holidays and local custom. Shops and hotels often work through holidays and give days off at other times.

The Cabinet can also add special holidays at short notice. In 2026 it gave Bangkok and three nearby provinces two extra days off, 28 and 29 September, because of flooding; Chonburi wasn't included. Check the news before you plan around an office visit.

What closes

- Banks, government offices and the immigration office. Plan visa extensions and 90-day reports around holidays. See visa extensions and 90-day reports.
- When a holiday falls on a weekend, the next working day is usually a substitute day off.
- Malls, restaurants, beaches and attractions open as normal, and are busier than usual.

Alcohol-ban days

On the five Buddhist holy days (Makha Bucha, Visakha Bucha, Asanha Bucha, Khao Phansa and Ok Phansa), most shops, 7-Eleven, supermarkets and ordinary bars and restaurants can't sell alcohol and many bars close, but hotels, licensed entertainment venues and international airports can. See Pattaya at night without drinking.

In 2027 the ban days are 21 February, 20 May, 18 and 19 July, and 15 October (Ok Phansa, expected). The ban follows the holy day itself, so the Monday substitute days are not ban days. On other days shops sell from 11am to midnight.

Royal holidays

Royal birthdays are marked with portraits, flags and ceremonies. Be respectful. See Thai etiquette.

Busy times

Songkran, New Year and long weekends bring crowds and higher hotel prices. In 2027 there are long weekends in February, May, July, October and December thanks to the Monday substitute days. Pattaya's own Wan Lai water festival follows Songkran a few days later (18 and 19 April in 2026). See the events calendar and Songkran and Wan Lai.

Planning around holidays

- Do bank tasks and visa reports before long weekends.
- ATMs keep working, but cash can run low in busy areas. See ATM fees.
- Buses and trains to and from Bangkok are busiest before and after long holidays. See Bangkok to Pattaya.
- Hotels and condo rentals cost more over Songkran and New Year.
- Roads are at their most dangerous over Songkran and New Year. See Songkran safety for riders and drivers.

Unofficial celebrations

- Chinese New Year is widely celebrated but is not an official national holiday. In 2027 it falls on Saturday 6 February. See Chinese New Year.
- Loy Krathong is not a public holiday either (24 November in 2026). See Loy Krathong.
- Christmas is a normal working day. See Christmas in Pattaya.

Common questions

Is immigration open on public holidays? No. Immigration is a government office and closes on government holidays, including substitute days. Plan extensions and reports for the days before.

When is Songkran 2027? Tuesday 13 to Thursday 15 April 2027, on the Bank of Thailand's list.

Are banks open on Khao Phansa? Khao Phansa isn't on the Bank of Thailand's list, but in 2027 it falls on Monday 19 July, which is a bank holiday anyway as the substitute for Asalha Bucha.

Is Labour Day a public holiday? For banks and private employers, yes. Government offices stay open.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Nation Thailand, Bank of Thailand 2027 holidays (28 August 2026); Thai Law Online, 2027 holidays and employer rules (Bank of Thailand Notification 37/2569; government list not yet announced; updated 31 October 2026); Pattaya Mail, special flood holidays (28 September 2026). The Ok Phansa 2027 date is from the lunar calendar. The Cabinet's 2027 list for government offices was not published when we checked; we will update this page when it is.

Alcohol ban details

See Buddhist holidays and alcohol ban days for which days usually stop sales and what stays open.

EVENTS

Vegetarian Festival (Nine Emperor Gods)

Everything about Thailand's nine-day Vegetarian (Jay) Festival in Pattaya: 2027 dates, the rules of jay, yellow-flag food, dishes to try, shrine etiquette, processions and tips.

Verified October 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/events/vegetarian-festival/

2027 dates	**Around 30 September to 8 October (lunar calendar)**
Look for	**Yellow flags with red lettering, meaning jay food**
Jay means	**No meat, fish, eggs, dairy, garlic or onion**
In Pattaya	**Chinese shrines, especially in Naklua, plus markets everywhere**
Wear	**White, if you visit shrines during the festival**
Bigger events	**Phuket, Bangkok's Chinatown and Trang**

Every year in the ninth lunar month, Thailand's Chinese-Thai community celebrates the Nine Emperor Gods festival, known in Thai as Thetsakan Kin Jay and in English as the Vegetarian Festival. For nine days, many people eat strictly plant-based "jay" food, dress in white and visit Chinese shrines to cleanse body and mind. In 2027 it should run around **30 September to 8 October**. Dates follow the lunar calendar, so check local announcements.


Colourful vegetarian steamed buns and dumplings at a Vegetarian Festival food stall in Thailand
Photo: Kirill Kay (cropped), CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons

What the festival is about

- It honours the Nine Emperor Gods, Taoist deities linked to the stars of the Big Dipper, and is believed to bring good health, luck and merit.
- It is strongest in communities of Chinese descent, but many Thais of all backgrounds join in, at least for the food.
- People see it as a time to purify the body by avoiding animal products and to keep a calm, kind mind.
- The festival starts and ends with ceremonies at Chinese shrines, with lanterns raised to welcome the gods and send them off.

The rules of jay

Those who follow the festival strictly try to keep these traditional rules for the nine days:

- No meat, fish, seafood, eggs or dairy.
- No pungent vegetables such as garlic, onion, shallots, chives and leeks.
- No alcohol.
- Keep clean, wear white and use clean, separate cooking utensils.
- Behave kindly, speak gently and avoid arguments.

Visitors are not expected to follow the rules, but it is respectful to eat jay at shrines and dress modestly.

Jay, vegan and vegetarian

	JAY	VEGAN	VEGETARIAN
Meat and fish	No	No	No
Eggs and dairy	No	No	Often yes
Garlic and onion	No	Yes	Yes
Alcohol	No	Yes	Yes

For eating meat-free all year, see vegetarian and vegan food in Pattaya.

How to spot jay food

- Look for yellow flags or signs with red lettering. The red character means jay (เจ in Thai).
- Stalls set out trays of ready-cooked dishes over rice, so you can point and choose.
- 7-Eleven and supermarkets sell special jay products during the festival, from noodles to snacks. See supermarkets.

Dishes to try

- Mock meats made from soy, wheat gluten or mushrooms, shaped like pork, chicken or shrimp.
- Jay noodles, often yellow noodles stir-fried with vegetables and mock meat.
- Jay curries, including green curry and massaman made without fish sauce.
- Stir-fried mixed vegetables, tofu dishes and spicy salads made jay.
- Colourful steamed buns and dumplings, like the ones in the photo above.

- Jay desserts and Chinese sweets. See Thai desserts.

Prices are usually street-food prices. See street food and a self-guided street food night tour.

Where to go in Pattaya

- Chinese shrines and temples, especially in Naklua, hold ceremonies, offerings and small processions.
- Night markets and fresh markets add extra jay stalls. See night markets.
- Mall food courts often have jay counters during the festival. See shopping malls.
- Ordinary restaurants keep serving meat, and bars stay open, so you can join in as much or as little as you like.

Visiting a shrine

- Wear white or light, modest clothes. Cover shoulders and knees.
- Walk calmly, keep your voice low and ask before photographing people or rituals.
- You can buy incense and offerings to join in, and donate if you wish.
- Expect firecrackers. Keep your distance and consider earplugs for children.

See temple customs and Thai etiquette.

Processions and rituals

- Processions carry statues of the gods through the streets with drums, flags and many firecrackers.
- In Phuket and some other towns, spirit mediums perform extreme rituals such as cheek piercing. These can be shocking and are not for children or the squeamish.
- Pattaya's events are smaller and calmer, focused on shrine ceremonies and food.

Bigger celebrations elsewhere

- Phuket hosts the most famous festival, with large street processions. Flights to Phuket leave from U-Tapao airport and Bangkok.
- Bangkok's Chinatown (Yaowarat) fills with yellow-flag food stalls. See the Bangkok day trip.
- Trang and other southern towns also hold big events.

Useful phrases

ENGLISH	THAI (SPOKEN)
I eat jay	Gin jay
Is this jay?	An nee jay mai?
Do you have jay food?	Mee ahan jay mai?
No meat	Mai sai neua sat
Less spicy	Pet noi

More in useful Thai phrases.

Tips

- Go in the late afternoon or evening, when stalls are busiest and the food is freshest.
- Jay food can be oily and salty. Mock meats often contain soy and wheat gluten; take care if you have allergies.
- Vegetable prices can rise during the festival.
- Carry small notes and coins, or pay by QR. See QR payments.
- If you have a sensitive stomach, read food poisoning tips.

Around the same time

The festival usually falls in October, close to Ok Phansa at the end of Buddhist Lent, and around the time of the Chonburi buffalo races. See the events calendar and Thai public holidays.

EVENTS

Ok Phansa (End of Buddhist Lent)

The full-moon day that ends Buddhist Lent: next expected 15 October 2027. Temple ceremonies, Tak Bat Devo, and the alcohol rules, including the new November 2026 exemptions.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/events/ok-phansa/

Next date	**expected Friday 15 October 2027 (2026 was 26 October)**
What	**End of the three-month Buddhist Lent**
Alcohol	**No-sale day, except hotels, licensed venues and a few others**
Also	**Merit-making at temples in the morning**

Quick answer: Ok Phansa (ออกพรรษา) is the full-moon day that ends the three-month Buddhist Lent. The next one is expected on **Friday 15 October 2027**; in 2026 it fell on 26 October. It is a day of temple ceremonies and merit-making, and one of five Buddhist holy days when most shops may not sell alcohol. Hotels, licensed entertainment venues, international airports and a few other places are allowed to sell. The morning after, temples hold Tak Bat Devo, a big alms-giving that visitors can watch or join.

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Next date	Expected Friday 15 October 2027 (full moon of the 11th lunar month)
2026 date	Monday 26 October
Tak Bat Devo	The morning after Ok Phansa, at many temples
Alcohol	Most shops and bars can't sell; hotels, licensed venues, international airports and some tourist-area venues can
Public holiday?	No. Banks, offices and immigration open as normal
Shops and malls	Open as normal

What Ok Phansa is

Buddhist Lent (Phansa) is the rains retreat. For about three months from the full moon of the eighth lunar month, monks stay in their temples to study and meditate. Ok Phansa, on the full moon of the eleventh lunar month, ends it. Many Thais give up drinking or keep other promises for Lent, so the end of it is a day of merit-making, family visits and, for some, the first drink in three months.

The date moves every year with the lunar calendar. 15 October 2027 is the expected date from the lunar calendar; Thai government holiday calendars are published towards the end of the year before, so check the events calendar nearer the time.

What happens on the day

- Early-morning alms-giving and merit-making at temples: people bring food, flowers, candles and incense.
- Sermons and chanting during the day; some temples hold candle processions around the main hall in the evening.
- In some provinces, illuminated boat processions on rivers. The best known is in Nakhon Phanom in the north-east.
- Families gather, and many Thais travel home, so roads out of Bangkok can be busier than usual around the long weekend if it falls near one.

Tak Bat Devo, the morning after

- Tak Bat Devo (ตักบาตรเทโว) remembers the Buddha returning to earth after spending Lent teaching in heaven. Temples on hills often have monks walk down long staircases to recreate it.
- Long lines of monks walk past people who place food in their alms bowls. Sticky rice wrapped in banana leaves (khao tom mat) is the traditional offering, alongside packed food, drinks and snacks.
- In Pattaya, Pattaya Mail has reported Tak Bat Devo ceremonies at local temples in past years, including Wat Nong Or, Wat Suthawas and Wat Nongprue in east Pattaya. Times and temples change each year; ask at the temple or your hotel a few days before.
- Many temples sort the donated food afterwards and sell or share it to fund temple projects.

If you want to join in

- Arrive early: ceremonies usually start soon after sunrise, around 6 to 7am.
- Dress modestly: shoulders and knees covered, and take off shoes where others do. See temple customs.
- Buy offerings from the stalls that usually set up near the temple, or bring sealed packaged food and water.
- Kneel or stand quietly and place food in the bowl. Don't touch the monks; women should not hand anything directly to a monk.
- Photos are usually fine from a respectful distance. No flash in faces and don't block the line.

Alcohol on Ok Phansa: what the rules allow

Ok Phansa is one of five Buddhist holy days with an alcohol sales ban, alongside Makha Bucha, Visakha Bucha, Asalha Bucha and the start of Lent (Khao Phansa). The ban has allowed sales at five kinds of place since a May 2025 notification, and a new notice in force from 7 November 2026 (Royal Gazette, 6 November 2026) keeps the same list:

- Passenger buildings at airports with international flights.
- Licensed entertainment venues.
- Hotels recognised under Thai hotel law.
- Venues in tourist areas that operate like entertainment venues, but only where the Minister of Public Health designates them.
- Venues hosting major national or international events, if they are on an official list.

What this means in practice: 7-Eleven, supermarkets, restaurants and most bars still can't sell alcohol on the day. A hotel bar or a fully licensed venue may serve, but it isn't automatic, so ask before you plan around it. Exempt places must check ages and keep order. Buying earlier and drinking at home isn't banned. See Buddhist holidays and alcohol ban days and laws visitors break.

Festivals around Ok Phansa

- The Chonburi buffalo races are usually held around this time.
- Some years the Vegetarian Festival falls in the weeks before.
- After Ok Phansa comes the Kathin season, about a month when communities present new robes to monks. Temples hold robe-offering ceremonies, sometimes with parades.
- Loy Krathong follows about a month later, on the full moon of the twelfth lunar month.

Planning your day

- Buy anything you need from shops the day before, if alcohol is on the list.
- Restaurants, malls, beaches and attractions stay open as normal.
- Immigration and banks are open: it isn't a public holiday unless the government adds one.
- Use the evening for a temple visit, a night out without drinking or a covered night market.
- For a calm morning, watch Tak Bat Devo, then have breakfast nearby. See breakfast and brunch.

Common questions

When is Ok Phansa 2027? Expected on Friday 15 October 2027, the full moon of the eleventh lunar month. Check the official Thai holiday calendar when it is published.

Can you buy alcohol on Ok Phansa? Not in most shops, 7-Eleven, supermarkets or ordinary bars and restaurants. Hotels, licensed entertainment venues, international airports and some designated venues can.

Is Ok Phansa a public holiday? No. It is a Buddhist holy day, not an official day off, so offices, banks and immigration open as usual.

What is the difference between Ok Phansa and Khao Phansa? Khao Phansa starts Buddhist Lent in July; Ok Phansa ends it about three months later. Both are alcohol ban days.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Nation Thailand, five exemptions to the alcohol ban (Royal Gazette notification of 6 November 2026); Pattaya Mail, Tak Bat Devo at Pattaya temples; TAT News, end of Lent festivals. The 2027 date is from the lunar calendar and is not yet official.

EVENTS

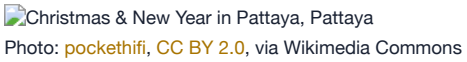
Christmas & New Year in Pattaya

Christmas and New Year's Eve in Pattaya: what the free Pattaya Countdown on the beach usually looks like, what is known about 2026/27, road closures, getting home and the alcohol rules.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/events/new-year-countdown/

Countdown	**Usually three nights, 29 to 31 December, on Pattaya Beach**
Entry	**Free in recent years**
2026/27	**Planned by Pattaya City; dates and line-up expected in December**
Midnight	**Usually fireworks over the bay**
31 December	**Beach Road closes to traffic in the evening**
Book	**Hotels and restaurants well ahead**

Quick answer: New Year's Eve is Pattaya's biggest night of the year. Pattaya City usually runs the free **Pattaya Countdown**, three nights of concerts on Pattaya Beach from 29 to 31 December, ending with fireworks over the bay at midnight. For the 2026/27 countdown, the city has confirmed it is planned for the end of the year, but as of 13 November 2026 the dates, line-up and road plan have not been announced. They usually come out in December. Beach Road closes to traffic on the evening of 31 December, so walk in or use the shuttle, and book hotels and dinner tables early.


Christmas & New Year in Pattaya, Pattaya
Photo: pockethifi, CC BY 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Event	Pattaya Countdown, run by Pattaya City with partners and a sponsor
Usual dates	29 to 31 December, with the countdown on the 31st
Where	Pattaya Beach and Beach Road; some listings still name Bali Hai pier
Cost	Free to watch from the beach
Last year	29 to 31 December 2025, free concerts from 4pm each day
2026/27	Planned; full details expected in December
Alcohol	Not a Buddhist holy day, so normal licensing rules apply

The Pattaya Countdown

The countdown is Pattaya City's big free beach party: in recent years, three nights of Thai pop and rock acts, light shows and food stalls on Pattaya Beach, ending with the countdown to midnight, usually marked with fireworks over the bay.

What happened last year. The countdown for 2026 ran from 29 to 31 December 2025 on Pattaya Beach, free and open to everyone, with shows from 4pm each day. It opened with a drone light show. A separate countdown was held on Koh Larn on the night of 31 December. Because of the national mourning period for Queen Sirikit, the Queen Mother, the city toned the event down and, according to The Pattaya News, replaced fireworks with a light and music show.

What is known about 2026/27. At a city council meeting reported by Pattaya Mail on 2 October 2026, the deputy mayor listed the Pattaya Countdown among the city's year-end events and estimated it would draw about 393,000 people and about ฿5.7 billion in spending. No official dates, stage location or line-up had been published when we checked on 13 November 2026. Some event listing sites already show 29 to 31 December 2026, but they are not official. Check Pattaya City's official Facebook page and Pattaya Mail in December.

Christmas

Christmas isn't a Thai holiday, so banks and offices stay open, but malls and hotels go all out with lights and Christmas dinners, and many bars and restaurants hold parties. See Christmas in Pattaya and shopping malls.

Road closures, shuttles and parking

Expect Beach Road and the streets around it to close on countdown night. Last year's plan, announced about a week before, gives a good idea of what to expect:

- **31 December 2025**: Beach Road was closed from the Dolphin Roundabout to Soi 10 from 3pm to 1am, with parking banned on Beach Road, Central Pattaya Road and Sois 1 to 10.
- **Free shuttle buses** ran from Lotus's South Pattaya and Wat Nong Yai, 4pm to 1am.
- **Parking** was set aside at malls and temples around the city, including Terminal 21, Central Marina, Central Pattaya, Big C and Lotus's branches and the Bali Hai pier car park.

The Thaiger advised allowing one to two extra hours to travel. The 2026/27 plan may differ, so check the announcement in late December.

Where to watch the fireworks

- The beach near the main stage has the biggest crowds and the best atmosphere. Arrive early.
- The Walking Street end of the beach and Bali Hai pier are lively but very packed.
- Pratumnak hill viewpoints give a wide view of the whole bay. See night viewpoints.
- Rooftop bars and sea-view restaurants often sell New Year packages. Book early. See rooftop bars.

Alcohol on New Year's Eve

New Year's Eve is not one of Thailand's five Buddhist holy days with an alcohol sales ban, so the normal licensing rules apply. Normal sale hours, 11am to midnight since 29 May 2026, apply, and licensed venues and hotels follow their own licences; the holy-day rules don't affect this night. See Buddhist holidays and alcohol and laws visitors break.

Getting home after midnight

- Wait 30 to 60 minutes for the crowds to thin out.
- Ride apps surge after midnight, and drivers can't reach the closed roads. Walking back along the sois to Second Road is often faster. See night transport and Bolt and Grab.
- Never ride or drive after drinking. Thailand's "seven dangerous days" road safety campaign runs over New Year with extra police checkpoints. Over the last campaign, from 30 December 2025 to 5 January 2026, 272 people died on Thai roads. See police checkpoints.

Tips

- Book hotels and restaurant tables well ahead. Prices are at their highest of the year.
- Keep your phone and wallet in a front pocket in the crowds. See staying safe on a night out.
- Agree a meeting point with friends in case you get separated in the crowd.
- 31 December and 1 January are public holidays: banks, government offices and the immigration office close. Shops, malls and restaurants stay open. See Thai public holidays.

Common questions

When is the Pattaya Countdown 2026/27? It usually runs from 29 to 31 December, with the countdown on the 31st. As of 13 November 2026 Pattaya City had not announced the dates or line-up. Details usually come out in December.

Is the Pattaya Countdown free? Yes, in recent years it has been free to watch from the beach. Hotels, rooftop bars and restaurants with a view charge for their own packages.

Are there fireworks at midnight? Usually, yes, over the bay. Last year's event replaced them with a light show during the national mourning period, so check this year's programme.

Can I drive to Beach Road on New Year's Eve? No. Last year Beach Road was closed from 3pm to 1am on 31 December. Walk in, use the free shuttle if there is one, or park at a mall and walk.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya Mail, 2 October 2026, Pattaya's year-end events (countdown planned, visitor and spending estimates); Pattaya Mail, December 2025 countdown plan; The Thaiger, last year's shuttles, parking and road closures; The Pattaya News, the toned-down 2025 event; Pattaya Mail, opening night drone show; Pattaya Mail, holy-day alcohol exemptions from 7 November 2026; The Nation, New Year road safety campaign figures. Unofficial listings give different dates for 2026/27; we will update this page when Pattaya City announces the programme.

More

See the events calendar, nightclubs and Pattaya fireworks festival.

EVENTS

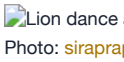
Chinese New Year in Pattaya

Lunar New Year in Pattaya: dragon and lion dances, red decorations, shrine visits and busy weekends. The 2027 date is 6 February.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/events/chinese-new-year/

2027 date	**Saturday 6 February (Year of the Goat)**
Expect	**Lion and dragon dances, red lanterns, fireworks**
Where	**Lan Pho Park in Naklua, Walking Street, shrines and malls**
City festival	**In 2026 it ran for two weeks, with nightly shows from 9pm**
Crowds	**Many visitors from across Asia**

Quick answer: Thailand has a large Chinese-Thai community, and Lunar New Year is celebrated with energy. In 2027 it falls on **Saturday 6 February**, the start of the Year of the Goat. Pattaya City usually runs a festival around it: in 2026 it lasted two weeks, from 10 to 24 February, with decorations at Lan Pho Public Park in Naklua, at the Walking Street arch and outside City Hall, and nightly lion and dragon shows from 9pm. Expect red lanterns, lion dances at shops and malls, shrine visits and busy hotels.


Lion dance at Chinese New Year in Thailand
Photo: siraprapa khrueakaeo…, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
2027 date	Saturday 6 February (Year of the Goat)
Pattaya festival	Usually about two weeks around the date; 2026 ran 10 to 24 February
Main venues	Lan Pho Public Park (Naklua), Walking Street, City Hall plaza, malls
Shows	Lion and dragon dances, Thai-Chinese performances, concerts
Public holiday?	No; banks and immigration usually open
Crowds	Many visitors from China and across Asia; book early

What happens in Pattaya

- **Lan Pho Public Park, Naklua:** the heart of the city's celebrations, with lanterns, food stalls, stage shows and lion and dragon dances in the evenings. In 2026 Pattaya Mail reported nightly performances from 9pm and a concert in the park.
- **Walking Street:** the entrance arch is decorated, and dragon parades have passed along it in recent years. See Walking Street.
- **The blessing ceremony:** the mayor leads a ceremony on the main festival day, with offerings and lion dances.
- **Shops and malls:** lion dance troupes visit businesses to bring luck, with drums, cymbals and firecrackers. Malls such as Central Festival and Terminal 21 hold shows. See shopping malls.
- **Shrines:** families visit Chinese shrines to make offerings, especially in Naklua and around the old town areas.

Dates and programmes are announced a few weeks before, so check the events calendar nearer the time.

Traditions to know

- Families clean their homes before the holiday to sweep away bad luck.
- Red envelopes with money, called ang pao, are given to children and family.
- Offerings of food, fruit and paper gold are made to ancestors and spirits.
- Firecrackers are set off to scare away bad spirits. Stand back from them.
- Wearing red is lucky; avoid all-black or all-white outfits at family events.

Food to try

- Shops and markets sell oranges, sweet cakes and dried fruit for luck.
- Many restaurants offer Chinese banquet menus. Book early for family dinners.
- See seafood restaurants and fresh markets.

Day trips

- Bangkok's Chinatown, Yaowarat, has one of the biggest celebrations in Thailand. See Bangkok day trip.
- Chonburi town and Si Racha have large Chinese-Thai communities and their own events. See Si Racha.

Practical tips

- It is not an official Thai public holiday, so banks and immigration normally stay open.
- Some Chinese-Thai family businesses close for a few days, including some shops and restaurants.
- Expect more traffic and fuller hotels, especially if the date falls near a weekend. Book hotels and tours early.
- Keep an eye on children near firecrackers and lion dances.
- Taking photos of lion dances is fine; don't step into the dancers' space.

Common questions

When is Chinese New Year 2027? Saturday 6 February 2027, the start of the Year of the Goat.

Where is Chinese New Year celebrated in Pattaya? Mainly at Lan Pho Public Park in Naklua, plus Walking Street, City Hall, malls and Chinese shrines.

Is Chinese New Year a public holiday in Thailand? No, though some businesses close and it is a big family occasion.

Is it busy in Pattaya over Chinese New Year? Yes. Many visitors come from China and across Asia, so hotels, tours and restaurants fill up.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya Mail, Chinese New Year blessing ceremony and celebrations 2026; Pattaya Mail, festival set for 10 to 24 February 2026. 2027 programme not yet announced.

EVENTS

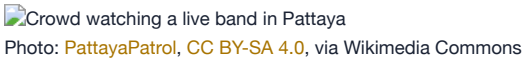
Pattaya Music Festival

Free concerts every Friday and Saturday in March, moving between Pattaya Beach, Jomtien, Koh Larn and Lan Pho Park in Naklua. What happened in 2025 and 2026 and what to expect in 2027.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/events/pattaya-music-festival/

When	**Fridays and Saturdays through March (2026: 6 to 28 March)**
Where	**A different stage each weekend: Pattaya Beach, Jomtien, Koh Larn, Naklua**
Cost	**Free**
2027	**Not announced yet; expected in March if the pattern holds**

Quick answer: The **Pattaya Music Festival** is a month of free concerts every Friday and Saturday night in March. It ran in both 2025 and 2026. In 2026 it moved each weekend: **Pattaya Beach (6-7 March), Jomtien Beach (13-14), Koh Larn (20-21) and Lan Pho Public Park in Naklua (27-28)**, with Thai pop, rock and hip-hop acts. The 2027 dates haven't been announced; if the pattern holds, expect it on the weekends of March 2027, with the line-up released a few weeks before.


Crowd watching a live band in Pattaya
Photo: PattayaPatrol, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
When	Every Friday and Saturday in March
2026	6 to 28 March, four weekends
2025	7 to 22 March, three weekends
2027	Not announced yet
Cost	Free entry
Music	Mostly Thai pop, rock and hip-hop
Show times	From early evening, about 6pm; the Koh Larn shows in 2026 ran 6pm to midnight

2026: where and who

WEEKEND	VENUE	SOME OF THE ACTS
6-7 March	Central Pattaya Beach	VIIS, Tigger, Jackie Jackrin, Perses, DA Endorphine, 4EVE, Atlas
13-14 March	Jomtien Beach	Goodmoof, Lomosonic, Joey Phuwasit, Gamma, Paradox
20-21 March	Samae Beach, Koh Larn	Purpeech, Gunner, YoungGu, Gavin:D, Wanyai, The Toys
27-28 March	Lan Pho Public Park, Naklua	Felizz, Clo'ver, Nanon, Perth, F.Hero, Mean, PiXXiE

The Governor of Chonburi opened the 2026 festival on the Central Pattaya Beach stage at 7pm on 6 March. Line-ups were published by weekend, not by night, so check which acts play which evening before you go.

2025: how it ran

- Three weekends: 7-8, 14-15 and 21-22 March.
- The first weekend had several stages along Pattaya Beach, including a main stage in central Pattaya, one at Beach Road Soi 6 and one in North Pattaya.
- Beach Road was closed from the Dolphin Roundabout to the central Pattaya junction from 3pm to 1am on 7 and 8 March.
- Jomtien Beach hosted the second weekend; Lan Pho Park in Naklua the third, with an extra show on Koh Larn on 22 March. Stages typically started at 6:30pm.

What to expect

- Big crowds of Thai fans and visitors, food stalls and a festival feel. It's a family-friendly free event, not a ticketed club night.
- Each weekend moves to a new area, so check where the stage is before you set off.
- Arrive early if you want to be near the front.
- Pattaya City and TAT announce dates and line-ups a few weeks ahead. We add them to the events calendar when they're out.

Getting there

- **Pattaya Beach weekend:** parts of Beach Road can close. Walk in from Second Road, or take a baht bus, Bolt or Grab and walk the last part.

- **Jomtien weekend:** in 2026 the stage was on Jomtien Beach in front of The Now Hotel. See Jomtien.
- **Koh Larn weekend:** allow extra time for the ferry from Bali Hai pier. In 2026 the piers and boats were crowded, songthaews and motorbike taxis on the island charged ฿30 a person each way to Samae Beach, and golf carts and tricycles couldn't carry passengers between Na Baan pier and Samae from 4pm to midnight. Check how you'll get back to the mainland before you go, or stay over. See Koh Larn and staying overnight on Koh Larn.
- **Naklua weekend:** Lan Pho Public Park is in Naklua, north of the centre. A ride app is easiest.

Tips

- Keep your phone and wallet in a front pocket in the crowds.
- Bring water; March is hot even at night. See heat and sun safety.
- Food stalls set up near the stages. See street food.
- Ride apps surge when the shows end. Walk a few streets away before booking.
- Don't ride a scooter after drinking. See night transport.

Where to stay

- Beach Road hotels are closest for the Pattaya Beach weekend, but busiest and loudest.
- Jomtien and Pratumnak are quieter and a short ride from most stages.

Other music events

- **Pattaya International Jazz Festival:** free, on Central Pattaya Beach. The 2026 edition ran from 4pm to midnight on 6 and 7 November, with Kenny G headlining.
- **Tomorrowland Thailand:** the electronic music festival's first Thai edition, at Wisdom Valley near Pattaya, 11 to 13 December 2026 according to the organisers' announcement (one local report said 10 to 13 December). Tickets went on sale worldwide in March 2026; this one is not free.
- **New Year countdown:** stages at Bali Hai and Central Pattaya Beach. See New Year countdown.
- For live music the rest of the year, see live music bars.

Common questions

When is the Pattaya Music Festival 2027? Not announced yet. It has run every Friday and Saturday in March in 2025 and 2026, so March 2027 is likely; check Pattaya City's announcements in February.

Is the Pattaya Music Festival free? Yes, entry was free at every stage in 2025 and 2026.

Where is the Pattaya Music Festival held? It moves: in 2026 it was at Pattaya Beach, Jomtien Beach, Samae Beach on Koh Larn and Lan Pho Public Park in Naklua, one weekend each.

What time do the shows start? In the early evening. The 2025 stages typically started at 6:30pm, and the 2026 Koh Larn shows ran from 6pm to midnight.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: The Pattaya News, 2026 weekends and venues; Thairath, 2026 dates and line-ups; The Pattaya News, 2026 opening; Pattaya Mail, Koh Larn weekend 2026; Pattaya Mail, 2025 stages and road closure; The Pattaya News, 2025 final weekend; Nation Thailand, Pattaya jazz festival 2026; Pollstar, Tomorrowland Thailand announced; Pattaya Mail, Tomorrowland. The Pattaya News named the 2026 final venue as Bodhi Plaza, Naklua Public Park; other reports say Lan Pho Public Park. No 2027 announcement found.

EVENTS

Songkran Safety for Riders and Drivers

Songkran water fights make Pattaya's roads dangerous. The 2026 "seven dangerous days" figures, Pattaya's road closures and water-truck bans, the fines, how to stay safe on a scooter or in a car, and protecting your phone.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/events/songkran-riding-safety/

2026 toll	**242 deaths, 1,242 crashes nationwide over the seven dangerous days**
Motorcycles	**About 65% of vehicles in the 2026 crashes**
Pattaya	**Beach Road closed for Wan Lai (19 April in 2026)**
Fines	**No helmet ฿2,000 each; high-pressure water guns up to ฿4,000**
Best	**Avoid riding on the big water-fight days if you can**
Protect	**Phone and passport copy in waterproof pouches**

Quick answer: Songkran, Thailand's New Year water festival on 13 to 15 April, is great fun on foot and dangerous on the roads. Over the 2026 "seven dangerous days" road safety campaign, Thailand recorded 1,242 crashes, 1,200 injuries and 242 deaths, and motorcycles made up about two-thirds of the vehicles involved. Pattaya keeps the water fights going for several more days with Wan Lai (18 and 19 April in 2026), when Beach Road closes to traffic. If you can, don't ride a scooter on the main water-fight days: walk, or take a baht bus and accept you'll get wet. If you do ride, go slowly, wear a helmet with a visor or glasses, and never ride after drinking. For the festival itself, see Songkran and Wan Lai.

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
National holiday	13 to 15 April (Tuesday to Thursday in 2027)
Pattaya's Wan Lai	A few days later; 18 April Naklua and 19 April Pattaya in 2026
2026 road toll	242 deaths, 1,242 crashes, 1,200 injuries (10 to 16 April)
Main causes in 2026	Speeding (about 41%) and cutting in too closely (about 25%)
No helmet	Up to ฿2,000, rider and passenger each
Drink-driving	Up to ฿20,000 and jail; limit 0.05%, or 0.02% without a valid licence
High-pressure water guns	Banned, fine up to ฿4,000
Emergency	1669 ambulance, 1155 Tourist Police

Why the roads get dangerous

Thai road deaths rise sharply every Songkran, which is why the holiday is called the "seven dangerous days". Millions travel home, many people drink through the day, roads are wet, and riders get buckets of water thrown at them. Final figures for the 2026 campaign, published by Nation Thailand from government data, put speeding and cutting in at close range as the leading causes, with crashes peaking between 9am and noon and between 3pm and 6pm. Deaths were about 10% below the average of the previous three years.

Thailand's roads are among the most dangerous in the world for motorcyclists all year: of 17,447 road deaths in 2024, 14,144 involved motorcycles, according to the Department of Disease Control. See road accidents.

On a scooter

- If you can, do not ride during the main water-fight days. Walk or use a baht bus instead.
- Water thrown in your face at speed can cause crashes. Slow right down in party areas, and expect people to step into the road with buckets.
- Wear a helmet with a visor, or clear glasses, so water and powder don't hit your eyes. Your passenger needs a helmet too.
- Wet roads and painted lines are slippery. Brake early and gently.
- Never ride after drinking. Police run extra checkpoints over the holiday. See police checkpoints.
- Keep your licence and passport copy in a waterproof bag: checkpoints still ask for them.
- Ride without the right licence and the drink-drive limit for you drops to 0.02%, and travel insurance may not pay out. See Thai road rules and fines.

In a car

Keep windows closed in party zones, drive slowly and watch for people running into the road. Allow plenty of time: Pattaya traffic crawls near the water zones, and some roads close completely.

Pattaya's road closures and bans

For Songkran 2026, Pattaya Mail reported these measures, which give a good idea of what to expect each year:

- Beach Road fully closed on Wan Lai day, 19 April, from noon to midnight, from the Dolphin Roundabout to the Wat Chai Mongkhon intersection.
- The sois linking Beach Road and Second Road, Soi 1 to Soi 13/4, closed and kept clear for emergency vehicles. Don't park on Second Road.
- Water trucks and high-pressure water vehicles banned from Sukhumvit Road, Beach Road, Pattaya Sai 1, 2 and 3, and Thepprasit Road.
- Water play to end by 8pm from 13 to 16 April, and by midnight from 17 to 19 April.
- Parking for about 2,000 vehicles at malls and public areas, and Highway 331 and Motorway 7 suggested as routes around the city.

Check the city's announcements each year. See Beach Road and Second Road.

The rules and fines

Nation Thailand listed ten rules for Songkran 2026. The ones riders and water fighters meet most:

- No helmet: ฿2,000 each for rider and passenger.
- Drink-driving: up to ฿20,000, with possible jail.
- High-pressure water guns: banned, fine up to ฿4,000.
- Trucks with large water tanks in restricted areas: fine of ฿50,000.
- Splashing people who don't want to play, or putting powder on someone without asking: fines.

Protect your things

- Put your phone, cash and passport copy in a waterproof pouch, sold everywhere in April.
- Leave valuables and your passport in your room safe.

Water etiquette

Do not throw water at monks, the elderly, babies or people clearly not joining in. Avoid ice water and high-pressure jets. Never throw water at someone riding a motorbike. See Thai etiquette.

Pickup trucks

Pickups full of people with water barrels drive around the city. Do not ride in the back on main roads, and keep away from moving vehicles when throwing water. Never stand up or sit on the edge of a moving truck.

Travel

Long-distance roads and buses are very busy before and after Songkran. Book early. See Bangkok to Pattaya and Thai public holidays.

If you have an accident

- Call 1669 for an ambulance and 1155 for the Tourist Police.
- Take photos, stay calm, and call your insurer. See what to do after a road accident.
- Many travel insurance policies do not cover scooter riders without the right licence. See motorbike insurance.

Safer ways to get around

- Walk in the main party areas. It is often the fastest way.
- Baht buses run but you will get wet. The normal loop fare is ฿15. See baht bus routes.
- Ride apps cost more over the holiday. See Bolt and Grab.

Common questions

Is it safe to ride a scooter in Pattaya during Songkran? It is the riskiest time of the year to ride. If you must, ride slowly, sober and with a helmet and eye protection, and avoid the water zones on the main days.

What are the seven dangerous days? Thailand's road safety campaign around Songkran (and New Year), when traffic, drinking and crashes peak. In 2026 it ran from 10 to 16 April.

When is Beach Road closed for Wan Lai? In 2026 it closed from noon to midnight on 19 April. Check the city's plan for the year you visit.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Nation Thailand, final Songkran 2026 road toll (17 April 2026); Nation Thailand, ten Songkran 2026 rules and fines; Pattaya Mail, Pattaya's Songkran 2026 traffic plan (10 April 2026); Pattaya Mail, Wan Lai 18 and 19 April 2026; Nation Thailand, Bank of Thailand 2027 holidays. Reports give slightly different campaign dates (10 to 16 or 11 to 17 April) and daily cause percentages; we use the final figures. Licence, helmet and drink-drive rules match our road rules page.

EVENTS

Chonburi Buffalo Racing Festival

Chonburi's buffalo races, held every year in Chonburi town about an hour north of Pattaya, on the day before Ok Phansa in 2025 and 2026. Dates, what happens, the history and how to get there.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/events/buffalo-racing/

Where	**In front of the Mueang Chonburi District Office and Provincial Hall**
2026	**Fair 17-25 October, races Sunday 25 October (155th festival)**
Timing	**Race day was the day before Ok Phansa in 2025 and 2026**
2027	**Not announced; Ok Phansa is expected on 15 October**
From Pattaya	**About an hour north by road**

Quick answer: Chonburi's Buffalo Racing Festival (ประเพณีวิ่งควาย, wing khwai) is held every year in Chonburi town, about an hour north of Pattaya. The 155th festival ran from **17 to 25 October 2026**, with the races on Sunday 25 October, the day before Ok Phansa. In 2025 the races were on 6 October, also the day before Ok Phansa. The 2027 dates aren't announced; with Ok Phansa expected on 15 October 2027, race day may fall around mid-October if the pattern holds. Expect buffalo races with riders, a cart parade, buffalo beauty contests and a week-long fair.

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Where	Grounds in front of the Mueang Chonburi District Office and the Chonburi Provincial Hall
2026	Fair 17-25 October; opening and races Sunday 25 October (155th festival)
2025	Fair 28 September to 6 October; races 6 October (154th festival)
2027	Not announced; Ok Phansa expected 15 October
Race day start	Opening ceremony at 9:30am in 2026
From Pattaya	About an hour by road; leave early on race day

When it happens

The festival follows the lunar calendar and is closely tied to the end of Buddhist Lent, so the date moves every year. In both 2025 and 2026 the main race day was the day before Ok Phansa, with a fair of about a week leading up to it. Chonburi City Municipality organises it with the province, so watch for its announcement. We'll add it to the events calendar when it's announced.

What happens on race day

- **The opening parade:** in 2025 and 2026, 13 decorated ceremonial carts linked to Buddhist Jataka stories, plus a parade showing Chonburi's provincial motto.
- **The races:** buffalo race down a straight track in several categories, with riders hanging on bareback. It is loud and fast, and over in seconds.
- **Buffalo contests:** judging for appearance, breeding qualities, health and condition, and prizes for the most creatively decorated buffalo.
- **Country contests:** traditional pageants for local children and young people, folk games and traditional sports.
- **The buffalo blessing:** a ceremony honouring the animals, one of the highlights.
- **Art for kids:** drawing and colouring contests and painting plaster buffalo sculptures.

The fair around it

In the days before the races, the grounds become a fair with food stalls, shopping, concerts by Thai artists, photo spots and games. It is a local event first, so expect Thai food and a local crowd rather than a tourist show.

A short history

- The tradition began when farmers raced their buffalo near Wat Yai Intharam in Chonburi town. Locals believed running the animals kept them healthy and protected them from disease.
- As it grew, it moved from the temple to its current site in front of the provincial hall, where on 7 December 1912 the governor and residents held a race for King Vajiravudh (Rama VI).
- It was registered as national intangible cultural heritage in 2012, under traditional Thai sports. Its slogan is "one of a kind in Thailand, one of a kind in the world".

Getting there from Pattaya

- Chonburi town is about an hour north of Pattaya by car, more in race-day traffic. Go early to find parking and a good spot near the track. See renting a car.
- Buses and minivans towards Chonburi and Bangkok run up Sukhumvit Road; ask to get off in Chonburi town. See buses.
- Bolt or Grab will take you, but a ride back in the evening can be harder to find. Agree a return time with a driver or book early. See Bolt and Grab.

Tips for the day

- Bring water, a hat and sun cream; October can still bring heavy showers, so pack a light rain jacket. See heat and sun safety.
- Stand well back from the track and keep children behind the barriers. Buffalo are big and can swerve.
- Don't touch the animals without the owner's permission. They are much loved by their owners.
- The next day is Ok Phansa, when most alcohol sales stop. See Buddhist holidays and alcohol.

Make a day of it

- Bang Saen beach is close by, on the way back to Pattaya.
- Si Racha has seafood on the waterfront and the ferry to Koh Sichang.
- More ideas: day trips from Pattaya.

Common questions

When is the Chonburi buffalo racing festival 2027? Not announced yet. In 2025 and 2026 the races were held the day before Ok Phansa, which is expected on 15 October 2027.

Where are the buffalo races held? On the grounds in front of the Mueang Chonburi District Office and the Chonburi Provincial Hall, in Chonburi town.

How old is the festival? The 2026 edition was the 155th, and a race was held for King Rama VI in 1912.

Is it worth the trip from Pattaya? If you want to see a local Thai tradition rather than a tourist show, yes. Go on race day for the parade and races, and arrive in the morning.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: The Pattaya News, 155th festival opens (programme and history); Bang Phra Town Municipality, 2026 festival notice (dates and venue, in Thai); Pattaya Mail, 154th festival 2025. The 2027 Ok Phansa date is from the lunar calendar and not yet official. One travel-agent guide gave very different 2026 dates (September to early October); the official notices say 17 to 25 October.

EVENTS

Buddhist Holidays and Alcohol Ban Days in Pattaya

The five Buddhist holy days when most alcohol sales stop, the 2027 dates, who can still sell under the rules in force from 7 November 2026, normal sale hours and election-day bans.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/events/buddhist-holidays-alcohol/

2027 ban days	**21 Feb, 20 May, 18 and 19 Jul, 15 Oct (expected)**
Can't sell	**7-Eleven, supermarkets, ordinary bars and restaurants**
Can sell	**Hotels, licensed entertainment venues, international airports, some listed venues**
Rules	**Notification in force from 7 November 2026**
Other days	**Shops sell 11am to midnight**
Elections	**Separate bans, usually 6pm to 6pm**

Quick answer: Thailand bans most alcohol sales on five Buddhist holy days: Makha Bucha, Visakha Bucha, Asalha (Asahna) Bucha, Khao Phansa and Ok Phansa. In 2027 they fall on **21 February, 20 May, 18 and 19 July, and 15 October** (Ok Phansa, expected). On those days 7-Eleven, supermarkets and ordinary bars and restaurants can’t sell alcohol. A notification in force from 7 November 2026 keeps the ban but lets five kinds of place sell, including hotels, licensed entertainment venues and international airport terminals. On every other day, shops can sell from 11am to midnight.

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Ban days	Makha Bucha, Visakha Bucha, Asalha Bucha, Khao Phansa, Ok Phansa
2027 dates	21 Feb, 20 May, 18 Jul, 19 Jul, 15 Oct (expected)
Can’t sell	Convenience stores, supermarkets, ordinary bars and restaurants
Can sell	Hotels, licensed entertainment venues, international airport terminals, designated tourist-area venues, listed event venues
Normal sale hours	11am to midnight; the 2pm to 5pm break ended in May 2026
Elections	Separate bans, usually 6pm the day before to 6pm on voting day
Penalty for sellers	Up to 6 months in prison, a ฿10,000 fine or both, as reported in 2026

The five holy days and their 2027 dates

HOLY DAY	WHAT IT MARKS	2027 DATE
Makha Bucha	A gathering of monks to hear the Buddha’s teaching	Sunday 21 February (banks close Monday 22nd)
Visakha Bucha	The Buddha’s birth, enlightenment and death; the most important day of the year	Thursday 20 May
Asalha (Asahna) Bucha	The Buddha’s first sermon	Sunday 18 July (banks close Monday 19th)
Khao Phansa	Start of the three-month Buddhist Lent	Monday 19 July
Ok Phansa	End of Lent	Friday 15 October, expected

The dates follow the lunar calendar, so they move every year. The Makha Bucha, Visakha Bucha and Asalha Bucha dates come from the Bank of Thailand’s 2027 holiday list, published in August 2026. Khao Phansa is the day after Asalha Bucha, and the Ok Phansa date is from the lunar calendar; neither is a bank holiday, so neither is on that list. The ban follows the holy day itself: the Monday substitute days are bank holidays, not listed ban days. Check the events calendar and Thai public holidays nearer the time.

The rules from 7 November 2026

A notification published in the Royal Gazette on 6 November 2026 and in force from 7 November 2026 keeps the sales ban on all five holy days but allows sales at five kinds of place:

- Passenger buildings at airports with international flights.
- Licensed entertainment venues.
- Hotels recognised under Thai hotel law.
- Venues in tourist areas that operate like entertainment venues, but only where the Minister of Public Health designates them.
- Venues hosting major national or international events, if they are on an official list.

Exempt places must screen customers, keep children and young people away from alcohol, and keep order. The notification comes from the Alcoholic Beverage Control Committee under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Act 2008, as amended in 2025, and replaces a Prime Minister’s Office notification dated 7 May 2025.

Some coverage calls these new exemptions, but Nation Thailand's reports on the March and July 2026 holy days listed the same five kinds of place under the 2025 notification. The November rules confirm that list under the amended law.

What it means in Pattaya

- **Shops:** 7-Eleven, other convenience stores and supermarkets refuse alcohol at the till all day.
- **Bars and restaurants:** ordinary ones can't sell. Many bars close for the night or serve soft drinks only, and the nightlife streets are much quieter.
- **Hotels:** a hotel recognised under hotel law may serve, so a hotel bar or restaurant is the most likely place to get a drink. Not every place called a hotel qualifies, so ask.
- **Licensed entertainment venues:** only places with an entertainment venue licence. You can't tell from the street, so ask the venue a few days ahead.
- **Tourist-area venues:** only where the Minister of Public Health has designated them. We didn't find a published list of designated venues in Pattaya when we checked on 13 November 2026.
- **Event venues:** only events on an official list.
- **Drinking:** the ban is on selling. Alcohol you bought the day before can be drunk at home. Don't ask a restaurant to slip you a beer: since the amended law took effect in November 2025, customers drinking at a venue during banned times can be fined up to ฿10,000, The Thaiger reported.

Normal sale hours the rest of the year

Since 29 May 2026, shops and most bars and restaurants can sell alcohol from **11am to midnight**. The 2pm to 5pm break, in place since 1972, was lifted on trial in December 2025 and ended for good in May 2026. Airport terminals, hotels, licensed entertainment venues and designated event areas have their own hours. The legal drinking age is 20. See laws visitors break for the other rules that catch visitors out.

Election days

Elections bring their own short bans. For the Pattaya mayor and city council elections on 28 June 2026, sales were banned from 6pm on 27 June to 6pm on 28 June, with penalties of up to six months in prison, a ฿10,000 fine or both. The general election on 8 February 2026 used the same 6pm-to-6pm window and penalties. Dates are announced a week or two ahead and added to the events calendar.

Planning around a ban day

- If nightlife is the point of a short trip, check the dates before you book.
- Buy anything you want from a shop the day before.
- Restaurants, malls, cinemas, beaches and attractions open as normal.
- Many temples hold candlelit walks around the main hall in the evening; visitors who dress respectfully are welcome. See temple customs.
- Try a night out without drinking: night markets, shows, Muay Thai and late food all carry on.

Common questions

Can you buy alcohol on Buddhist holidays in Thailand? Not from shops or ordinary bars and restaurants. Hotels recognised under hotel law, licensed entertainment venues, international airport terminals and some designated venues can sell.

Does 7-Eleven sell alcohol on Buddhist holidays? No. Convenience stores and supermarkets can't sell alcohol at any time on the five holy days.

Can I drink alcohol I bought the day before? The ban is on sales, so drinking your own at home is fine. Drinking at a venue during banned times can bring a fine.

What time can you buy alcohol in Thailand? From 11am to midnight on normal days, since the afternoon break ended in May 2026.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Nation Thailand, five exemptions to the holy-day alcohol ban (Royal Gazette, 6 November 2026); Nation Thailand, two-day ban for Asalha Bucha and Khao Phansa, July 2026 (exemptions and penalty); Nation Thailand, Makha Bucha 2026 rules and exceptions; Nation Thailand, Bank of Thailand 2027 holidays; Nation Thailand, sale hours extended, May 2026; Pattaya Mail, 11am to midnight from 29 May 2026; The Thaiger, customer fines, November 2025; Nation Thailand, Pattaya election alcohol ban, June 2026; Nation Thailand, general election alcohol ban, February 2026. One Nation Thailand report also quoted a higher seller penalty (1 year, ฿20,000); most 2026 reports give 6 months and ฿10,000. The Khao Phansa and Ok Phansa 2027 dates are from the lunar calendar and are not on the bank holiday list.

EVENTS

Christmas in Pattaya

What Christmas in Pattaya is really like: mall lights from mid-November, hotel dinners, church services, peak-season crowds and prices, Christmas 2026 dates, and what is open on the day.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/events/christmas-in-pattaya/

Christmas 2026	**Thursday 24 and Friday 25 December**
Public holiday	**No, offices, banks and immigration work normally**
Decorations	**Malls usually light up from mid-November into January**
Dinners	**Hotels and Western restaurants run set menus and buffets**
Season	**Peak high season, so book rooms, tables and flights early**
New Year	**Pattaya Countdown usually 29 to 31 December**

Quick answer: Christmas is not a Thai public holiday, but Pattaya celebrates it in a big, cheerful way because so many visitors and expats are in town. The malls put up giant trees and light displays from about mid-November, hotels and Western restaurants run Christmas Eve dinners and Christmas Day buffets, and churches hold services in English and Thai. In 2026, Christmas Eve is a Thursday and Christmas Day a Friday, and both are normal working days for Thai offices, banks and the immigration office. It is also the busiest stretch of the high season, so book rooms, tables and flights early. A week later comes the New Year countdown.

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Dates in 2026	Christmas Eve Thursday 24 December, Christmas Day Friday 25 December
Public holiday?	No. Offices, banks and immigration are open as usual
Nearby holidays	Constitution Day 10 December; New Year's Eve 31 December and New Year's Day are public holidays
Decorations	Malls and hotels, usually from mid-November into early January
Food	Hotel buffets, set menus at Western restaurants, turkey and roasts
Church	Catholic and Protestant services, many in English
Weather	December is the driest month, about 30°C by day
Crowds and prices	Peak season: rooms and flights cost the most from mid-December

The atmosphere

- Pattaya's big malls decorate early. For the 2025 season, Central Pattana ran its Christmas campaign across 24 malls, including Central Pattaya, from 14 November 2025 to 11 January 2026. Expect something similar in 2026, with dates announced by the malls nearer the time. See Central Pattaya and Terminal 21 and shopping malls.
- Hotel lobbies get trees, festive displays and Christmas music.
- Beach Road and the malls are busiest in the evenings.
- The weather is the big difference: Christmas here is dry and sunny. Some people spend the day on the beach or on Koh Larn, then dress up for dinner.

Christmas dinner

- Big hotels usually offer a Christmas Eve dinner, a Christmas Day lunch or brunch buffet, and a New Year's Eve gala dinner. Menus and prices are announced from about November, often on the hotel's own site and social pages.
- Western restaurants and pubs run set Christmas menus with turkey, roast potatoes and the trimmings. See Western food.
- Prices marked "++" have a 10% service charge and 7% VAT added on top. Ask what drinks are included.
- Book early. Popular places fill up, and walk-in tables on Christmas Eve are hard to find.
- Cooking at home? Bigger supermarkets stock imported foods, but popular items can sell out near the day. Order or buy early. See supermarkets and groceries and cooking at home.

Church services

- St. Nikolaus Church, a long-established Catholic church in Pattaya, holds regular Masses in Thai and English, and in Korean. A guide updated in 2026 lists English Masses on Sunday at 8:30am and 4pm, and Saturday evening.
- Pattaya Mail has reported Christmas services at St. Nikolaus and at Assumption Church in English and Thai in past years. Christmas Eve and Christmas Day times change each year, so check with the church in December.
- Protestant and international congregations also hold Christmas services. Look for their current times on their own pages or social media.
- Dress modestly and arrive early: Christmas Eve services are often full.

Christmas with children

Malls often run children's activities over the season; in 2025 Central Marina held a children's Christmas contest. Water parks, shows and the zoo are popular on the day, and tickets can sell out in Christmas week, so book ahead. See Pattaya with kids, water parks and cabaret shows.

Far from home

Christmas can feel strange, or lonely, away from family. Plan video calls around the time difference: Thailand is 7 hours ahead of UTC, so a Christmas morning call to the UK is your afternoon, and to the US your evening or night. Expat clubs and social groups often hold Christmas get-togethers. See expat clubs, and mental health support if the season is hard.

High season tips

- Book rooms early. Prices rise from mid-December to early January. See where to stay.
- Flights to Thailand cost more around the holidays. See compare airlines.
- Expect slow traffic on Beach Road and Second Road in the evenings.
- Need immigration or a bank? Christmas Day is a normal working day, but New Year's Eve and New Year's Day are not. Plan visa extensions around the New Year closure. See Jomtien immigration office.
- December has other big events too. See the events calendar.

Then New Year

A week after Christmas, the free Pattaya Countdown usually runs on the beach from 29 to 31 December, with concerts and fireworks at midnight. See New Year countdown.

Common questions

Is Christmas a holiday in Thailand? No. Christmas Day is a normal working day for Thai offices, banks and government offices, including immigration.

Are there Christmas events in Pattaya in 2026? Malls and hotels hold their own events every year. As of 13 November 2026 we had not found a Pattaya City Christmas programme for 2026; we will add dates when they are announced.

Where can I go to church at Christmas in Pattaya? St. Nikolaus Church holds regular Masses in English and Thai, and other churches hold services too. Check Christmas times with the church in December.

Is Christmas a good time to visit Pattaya? For the weather, yes: December is the driest month. It is also the busiest and most expensive time, so book early.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Marketech APAC, Central Pattana's 2025 Christmas campaign dates; TravelTriangle, Catholic churches in Thailand (updated August 2026) (St. Nikolaus Mass times); Pattaya Mail, Christmas in Pattaya (2016) (church services and dinners); Pattaya Mail, December 2025 events (last year's pattern; no 2026 list yet). Public holidays from our Thai public holidays page and weather from weather by month. Mass and event times change every year; check before you go.

Related guides

- Thai Public Holidays
- Ok Phansa (End of Buddhist Lent)
- Buddhist Holidays and Alcohol Ban Days in Pattaya
- Central Pattaya and Terminal 21

EVENTS

Sports Events in Pattaya

Pattaya's sports events with real dates: the Pattaya Marathon, beach runs, a Spartan race, jet ski racing at Jomtien, beach soccer, Muay Thai and golf, and how to enter or watch.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/events/pattaya-sports-events/

Marathon	**26-27 September 2026 (2025 was in July); 2027 not announced**
Next up	**Ray Run charity race, 22 November 2026, Central Pattaya Beach**
Jet ski racing	**WGP#1 Waterjet World Cup, Jomtien, 13-17 January 2027**
Muay Thai	**Fight nights most evenings**
Tip	**Races start early or at sunset to beat the heat**

Quick answer: Pattaya's biggest sports event is the **Pattaya Marathon**, held on 26 and 27 September 2026 (the 2025 race was in July, and 2027 dates aren't announced yet). Coming up next are the **Ray Run** charity race on Central Pattaya Beach on 22 November 2026 and the **WGP#1 Waterjet World Cup**, jet ski racing at Jomtien from 13 to 17 January 2027. Through the year there are beach runs, an obstacle race, beach soccer, Muay Thai most nights and dozens of golf courses. Dates move, so check each organiser before you plan.

At a glance

EVENT	MOST RECENT	NEXT
Pattaya Marathon	26-27 September 2026	2027 not announced
Ray Run Pattaya (charity)	Earlier years not checked	21-22 November 2026, race on Sunday 22nd
WGP#1 Waterjet World Cup (jet ski)	17-21 December 2025, Jomtien	13-17 January 2027, Jomtien
Pattaya International Bikini Beach Race (5 km)	31 October 2026	2027 not announced
Spartan Race Pattaya	1-2 August 2026, Wisdom Valley	2027 not announced
Pattaya International Beach Soccer	13-19 February 2026, Jomtien	2027 not announced
Muay Thai	Most evenings	Ongoing

Pattaya Marathon

- The 2026 race ran over two days. On Saturday 26 September there was a 10 km race, a 4.5 km wheelchair race and a 4.5 km fun run; on Sunday 27 September, the half marathon (21 km) and full marathon (42.195 km).
- The opening ceremony was outside Terminal 21, and runners came from Thailand and abroad. The men's full marathon was won in 2:32:47 and the women's in 2:47:39, Pattaya Mail reported.
- The 2025 edition, the 32nd, was on 19 and 20 July, and some race calendars still list July 2026. The September 2026 dates were confirmed by Pattaya Mail in July 2026, so treat old July listings with care.
- Entries usually open online a few months ahead. Watch the city's announcements for 2027.

Running and beach races

- **Ray Run Pattaya, 21-22 November 2026:** 1 km, 3 km and 5 km runs and a 2.5 km wheelchair race on Central Pattaya Beach on Sunday 22nd, with bib collection on Saturday. It promotes inclusion in sport, and entry fees help the Father Ray Foundation.
- **Pattaya International Bikini Beach Race:** a 5 km sunset run on Pattaya Beach in front of Central Pattaya. The 10th edition was on 31 October 2026, starting about 5:30pm, with more than 5,000 runners and supporters expected and registration through Thai Run. The 2025 race was on 20 December, so the date moves.
- **Spartan Race Pattaya:** obstacle races at Wisdom Valley on 1 and 2 August 2026: Sprint 5 km, Super 10 km, Beast 21 km, a 12-hour team event and a kids' race. Entry started from about ฿2,257.
- Social running groups meet through the week. See running and cycling.

Cycling and triathlon

We couldn't find a road cycling race or triathlon in Pattaya itself with confirmed 2026 or 2027 dates. Group rides use the quieter roads east of the city, around Mabprachan Lake and Huay Yai; see running and cycling. Burapa Pattaya Bike Week, often mistaken for a cycling event, is a motorcycle and music festival: its 29th edition ran from 12 to 14 February 2026.

On the water and the beach

- **Jet ski racing:** the WGP#1 Waterjet World Cup and World Series moved from December to **13-17 January 2027**, at the event area on Jomtien Beach. The Jet Ski Association of Thailand expects at least 2,500 athletes and team members, with Pattaya City co-hosting. The 2025 edition ran from 17 to 21 December.

- **Beach soccer:** Pattaya City's international beach soccer tournament ran from 13 to 19 February 2026 on Jomtien Beach in front of the D Varee hotel, with matches from 5pm daily.
- **Kitesurfing and sailing:** Jomtien is the centre. See kitesurfing in Jomtien.
- We found no Pattaya beach volleyball tournament with confirmed 2026 dates.

Muay Thai

Fight nights run most evenings, from small local cards to televised shows. See Muay Thai for venues, tickets and gyms.

Golf

The Pattaya area has dozens of courses and plenty of amateur society days and tournaments. See golf courses and golf on a budget.

Watching sport

For football, rugby and big fights on TV, head to a sports bar.

Tips for race days

- Morning races start early and beach runs often start near sunset, to avoid the worst heat. Drink plenty and use sun protection. See heat and sun safety.
- Roads near the course can close, so plan your travel that morning.
- Check the official dates close to the time: several Pattaya events changed month between 2025 and 2026.
- New events are added to the events calendar.

Common questions

When is the Pattaya Marathon? The 2026 race was on 26 and 27 September; 2025 was in July. The 2027 date hasn't been announced.

What sports events are coming up in Pattaya? The Ray Run charity race on 22 November 2026 and the WGP#1 Waterjet World Cup at Jomtien from 13 to 17 January 2027.

Is there a triathlon in Pattaya? We couldn't find one with confirmed 2026 or 2027 dates in Pattaya itself.

Can visitors enter Pattaya races? Yes. The marathon and beach runs draw Thai and international runners, and most take entries online; register early.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya Mail, Pattaya Marathon 2026 dates; Pattaya Mail, marathon day one; Pattaya Mail, marathon day two; Pattaya Mail, Pattaya Marathon 2025; Pattaya Mail, Ray Run 2026; Pattaya Mail, Bikini Beach Race 2026; Spartan Race Thailand, Pattaya 2026; Pattaya Mail, Waterjet World Cup January 2027; Pattaya Mail, beach soccer 2026; Pattaya Mail, Burapa Bike Week 2026. Some race calendars still list the marathon for July 2026; we follow Pattaya Mail's reports of the September race.

SECTION

What Things Cost

Real prices from Pattaya, taken from receipts, the posts on this site and the bars on the JJ Map. Each one links to where it came from. We check them every month and change them when they move. How we do it: how we verify information.

Drinks

WHAT	PRICE	WHERE IT'S FROM
Beer at a beer bar	฿60 to ฿120 (typical ฿85)	JJ Map featured bars
Mixed drink at a beer bar	฿100 to ฿215 (typical ฿180)	JJ Map featured bars
Pool	Free at many featured bars	The map

Food

WHAT	PRICE	WHERE IT'S FROM
Street food or market plate	About ฿50 to ฿80	Cheap eats
Thai restaurant meal	About ฿100 to ฿250	Cost of living

Getting around

WHAT	PRICE	WHERE IT'S FROM
Baht bus, Beach Road and Second Road loop	฿15 per person	Baht bus guide
Taxi, Bangkok to Pattaya	฿1,000 (cheapest we've found)	W Member Pro post
Private transfer, Suvarnabhumi to Pattaya	About ฿1,100 to ฿1,800	Airport transfers
Airport bus, Suvarnabhumi to Pattaya	About ฿140 to ฿170	Bangkok to Pattaya
Lalamove, Bangkok to Pattaya and back, two deliveries	฿1,698	Our receipt
Traffic fine we were given, plus impounded scooter	฿2,000	Traffic stop post

Money

WHAT	PRICE	WHERE IT'S FROM
ATM withdrawal with a foreign card	฿220 to ฿250 per withdrawal	ATM fees guide
Cash deposit at 7-Eleven with K PLUS	฿15 fee (up to ฿10,000)	Our deposit

Living here

WHAT	PRICE	WHERE IT'S FROM
One-bed condo, one-year lease	About ฿10,000 to ฿20,000 a month	Renting a condo
Parcel, 4.1 kg, Pattaya to Bangkok	฿63	Our receipt
Water heater from Shopee	฿699	Condo repair post

Visas

WHAT	PRICE	WHERE IT'S FROM
Extending the 30-day visa exemption (once, up to 30 days)	฿1,900	Visa options

Help keep it current

Paid something different? Tell us what, where and when in the W Forum (or use "Ask in the Pattaya Forum" below), and we'll check it on the next ride.

SECTION

🎟️ Things to Do & Tours

Pattaya is much more than nightlife. Within an hour you can visit a tropical garden, an island with clear water, a wooden temple on the sea, water parks and an open zoo, and there are day trips to Bangkok, Ayutthaya and beyond. These pages cover what each one is like, what it costs and how to get there, so you can book directly or through a tour.

Quick answer: If you only pick a few: the carved wooden Sanctuary of Truth (about ฿500), Nong Nooch Garden (about ฿500, or ฿800 with shows), a ferry to Koh Larn (฿30 or ฿40 each way), the free viewpoint and Big Buddha on Pratumnak Hill, and an evening cabaret show (from about ฿450). Add a water park or Khao Kheow Open Zoo for families, and Muay Thai for a big night out. Book attractions online or at the gate and compare with tour prices: tours add hotel pickup but cost more.

Top picks at a glance (2026)

ATTRACTION	ROUGH PRICE	TIME NEEDED	READ MORE
—	—	—	—
Sanctuary of Truth	About ฿500 adults	2 hours	Sanctuary of Truth
Nong Nooch Garden	About ฿500; ฿800 with shows	Half a day	Nong Nooch
Koh Larn by public ferry	฿30 or ฿40 each way	A day	Koh Larn
Big Buddha and viewpoint	Free	1 to 2 hours	Big Buddha
Cabaret show	About ฿450 to ฿2,200	About 70 minutes	Cabaret shows
Muay Thai fight night	From about ฿1,500 at the stadium	An evening	Muay Thai
Water parks	About ฿800 to ฿1,700, cheaper online	A day	Water parks
Khao Kheow Open Zoo	About ฿350 adults (foreigners)	Half a day	Khao Kheow
Art in Paradise	About ฿400 at the gate	1 to 2 hours	Art in Paradise

Prices are foreigner prices from the linked pages, each checked in 2026. They change; booking apps are often cheaper than the gate.

Start here

- 3 days in Pattaya or Pattaya in one day: pick from the options, not a fixed timetable.
- Best time to visit: November to February for the best weather.
- Day trips: Bangkok, Koh Samet, Ayutthaya and more.
- Tours from Pattaya: when a tour is worth it.
- Rainy day attractions: for wet afternoons.

Ideas by traveller

- **First-timers:** one day, three days, the Pratumnak walk and Pattaya Beach.
- **Couples:** Pattaya for couples, sunset spots and a night on Koh Larn.
- **Families:** Pattaya with kids, with a baby, water parks and the open zoo.
- **Active:** adventure activities, diving, kitesurfing, golf and horse riding.
- **Culture:** temples and viewpoints, Wat Yansangwararam, Khao Chi Chan and the floating market.
- **Relaxing:** massage, massage etiquette, beach clubs and Pattaya at dawn.
- **Groups and access:** the group trip planner and accessible Pattaya.

Islands and day trips

The nearest island is Koh Larn, about 45 minutes by ferry. For more, see Koh Samet vs Koh Larn, island hopping and Koh Sichang. Day trips and overnights include Bangkok, Si Racha, Bang Saen, Chachoengsao, Rayong and Chanthaburi, Ayutthaya, Khao Yai, Kanchanaburi, Hua Hin and Koh Chang.

Book direct or take a tour?

Tours add hotel pickup in Pattaya and Jomtien and sometimes a guide, which helps for places far out of town, like Khao Kheow or Ayutthaya. For attractions in town, booking a ticket online or at the gate and taking Bolt or Grab is usually cheaper. Compare the ticket-only price with the tour price before you book. See tours from Pattaya.

At night

Cabaret shows, Muay Thai fight nights, night markets, the city lights from the viewpoint, and late massages all work after dark, with or without a drink. See night viewpoints and Pattaya at night without drinking.

When to go

The best weather is November to February. March to May is hottest, often 34°C or more, and September and October are the rainiest months. High season runs roughly November to March, when prices and crowds peak. See weather by month.

Common questions

What is Pattaya famous for besides nightlife? The Sanctuary of Truth, Nong Nooch Garden, Koh Larn, the Big Buddha viewpoint, cabaret shows and Muay Thai.

What can I do in Pattaya for free? The beaches, the Big Buddha and viewpoint, Khao Chi Chan, the Jomtien promenade and the night markets.

Is it cheaper to book attractions online? Often yes, especially water parks and Art in Paradise. Compare with the gate and tour prices.

What can families do in Pattaya? Water parks, Khao Kheow Open Zoo, Nong Nooch, Koh Larn and the malls.

How many days do you need in Pattaya? One day gives you a taste; three days lets you add an island and a day trip without rushing. See 3 days in Pattaya.

Sources

- Our attraction, island and day-trip pages, each checked in 2026 with its own official and press sources.

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Tours From Pattaya

The kinds of tours you can book in Pattaya, what they cost in 2026, which trips are easy on your own, how to check a tour company is licensed, and which longer trips need an overnight.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/tours-from-pattaya/

Book with	**A licensed agency, your hotel or a known booking site**
Check	**The company's tourism business licence number**
Usually included	**Hotel pickup in Pattaya and Jomtien**
Koh Larn	**Public ferry ฿30 to ฿40; speedboat tours from about ฿750**
Long trips	**River Kwai, Khao Yai, Hua Hin and Koh Chang suit an overnight**
Problems	**Tourist Police 1155**

Quick answer: Tour desks on Beach Road and Second Road, hotels and booking websites sell the same trips: islands, attractions, shows, adventure and long days out, usually with a hotel pickup in Pattaya or Jomtien. Many close attractions are easy on your own with Bolt or Grab and a gate ticket, so tours earn their price mainly for far-away places, early starts and groups. Book with a licensed company: Thai tour businesses need a tourism business licence, and in 2026 officials have been arresting unlicensed operators, including one running trips to Koh Larn. Get the inclusions in writing, keep the receipt, and call the Tourist Police on 1155 if something goes wrong.

At a glance

TRIP	ROUGH PRICE (APPROX.)	EASY ON YOUR OWN?
Koh Larn island	Public ferry ฿30 to ฿40; speedboat tours from about ฿750	Yes, ferry from Bali Hai pier
Sanctuary of Truth	Ticket ฿500 adults	Yes, Bolt or Grab to Naklua
Nong Nooch	Foreigners from about ฿500, about ฿800 with the show	Yes, about 15 km south
Khao Kheow Open Zoo	฿350 foreign adults	Needs a car, about 45 minutes
Cabaret shows	About ฿550 to ฿2,800 by show and seat	Yes
Elephant sanctuary, half day	About ฿2,300 to ฿2,900 with hotel transfer	Hard without a car
Bangkok	Bus from about ฿144 each way, plus entry fees	Yes, but a long day
River Kwai	Tours from about ฿3,000 to ฿4,000	Possible via Bangkok, very long

Prices follow our linked pages, each checked against its own sources in 2026. Sellers' prices for the same trip vary a lot.

Types of tours

- **Islands and boat trips**: speedboat, snorkelling and catamaran trips. See island hopping and diving and snorkelling.
- **More**: the floating market and Muay Thai.
- **Water parks and adventure**: see water parks and adventure activities.

Long trips: a day or an overnight?

Sellers offer all of these as day trips, but some mean more time in the van than at the sights.

- **Bangkok**: about 2 hours each way; a full day works. See Bangkok day trip.
- **Ayutthaya**: about 3 to 3.5 hours each way. See Ayutthaya.
- **Khao Yai**: about 3 hours each way; one or two nights is better. Haew Narok waterfall and the Khao Khiao road were still closed after the September 2026 floods at our latest check, so ask whether the tour's stops have changed. See Khao Yai.
- **River Kwai (Kanchanaburi)**: 4 to 5 hours each way; two or three days is more relaxed. See Kanchanaburi.
- **Hua Hin**: the ferry stopped in 2020, so it's one direct bus a day (about 5 hours) or a car. Plan two or three nights. See Hua Hin.
- **Koh Chang**: about 250 km, then a 30-minute car ferry. Plan two or three nights. See Koh Chang.
- **Closer**: Koh Samet, Chachoengsao, Bang Saen and Koh Sichang all fit in a day.

What's included, and what isn't

- **Pickup**: usually from hotels in Pattaya and Jomtien. Check your pickup time; long trips often leave before 7am.
- **Entry fees**: some tours include them, others quote a "tour only" price and you pay at the gate. National park and island fees are usually paid in cash.
- **Lunch and guide**: often a set lunch, drinks extra; ask the guide's language.
- **Shopping stops**: cheap group tours may stop at gem or souvenir shops. You don't have to buy.

- **Per person or per car**: private tours priced per vehicle work out cheaper per head for three or four people.

Booking safely

In Thailand, a company selling tours needs a tourism business licence, and tour guides need an official guide licence and ID card. In the first half of 2026 the Department of Tourism inspected 3,187 tour companies and guides and found 197 violations, most often missing licences and guide ID cards. In March 2026, Tourist Police arrested an organiser at Bali Hai pier for running Pattaya and Koh Larn trips without a licence, and officials urged visitors to verify licences before booking.

- Ask for the company's licence number and check it with the Department of Tourism.
- Pay an office or a well-known booking site, not a stranger on the street, and keep the receipt.
- Get the inclusions, pickup time and cancellation terms in writing.
- For boats, wear the life jacket for the whole trip. After a speedboat collision near Bali Hai pier on 9 November 2026, officials raised a red flag that kept small boats ashore, so ask what happens to your trip if boats are stopped. See island hopping.
- Check your travel insurance covers activities such as ATVs, jet skis and diving. See health insurance.
- If a company doesn't deliver what you paid for, call the Tourist Police on 1155 (English speaking, 24 hours). For fraud, the hotline is 1441. See common scams.

On your own or with a tour?

Group tours suit solo travellers and couples on far-away trips. A private driver for the day is good value for three or four people; agree hours, fuel and tolls first. For attractions in and near Pattaya, Bolt or Grab and a gate ticket is usually cheapest. Compare options on day trips.

Useful sites

We often browse pattaya-tour.com to see what tours are running, and Thailand Red Cat has a good overview of things to do. Check prices on the day.

Common questions

Is it cheaper to book tours in Pattaya or online? It depends on the trip. Prices for the same tour vary a lot between desks and websites, so compare the total, including entry fees and pickup, and check the company is licensed.

Can I do the River Kwai as a day trip? Yes, on a tour, but it's 4 to 5 hours each way. Two or three days is much more relaxed.

Do I need a tour for Koh Larn? No. The public ferry from Bali Hai pier costs ฿30 to ฿40. Tours add speedboats and snorkelling stops.

How do I know a tour company is legal? Ask for its tourism business licence number and check it with the Department of Tourism. Guides should carry an official guide ID card.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya Mail, tour operator and guide inspections, January to June 2026 (6 August 2026); Pattaya Mail, unlicensed Koh Larn tour arrest (1 April 2026); Pattaya Mail, boat restrictions after the 9 November collision (11 November 2026). Prices and travel times in the table follow our linked guide pages, each with its own sources. Prices change often; confirm before you pay.

Plan your day

- Compare the hotel pick-up time and total hours before you book, long drives eat into the day.
- Read recent reviews and check what is included, such as lunch and entry fees.
- See day trips.

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Sanctuary of Truth

The huge hand-carved wooden sanctuary on the sea in Naklua, under construction since 1981: day and night tickets, tour times, dress code, getting there and tips.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/sanctuary-of-truth/

Where	**Naklua Soi 12, north Pattaya**
Day ticket	**฿500 adults, ฿250 children 110 to 140 cm**
Night ticket	**฿700 adults, ฿350 children**
Hours	**Day tours about 8am to 6pm; night tours 6:20pm to 8:30pm**
Dress	**Shoulders and knees covered; hard hat inside**
Allow	**2 to 4 hours, including a 45 to 60 minute guided talk**

Quick answer: The Sanctuary of Truth is a giant building made of hand-carved wood, standing on the shore at the end of Soi 12 in Naklua, north Pattaya. Work started in 1981 and carvers are still adding to it. Day tickets are ฿500 for adults and ฿250 for children 110 to 140 cm tall, and an evening session costs ฿700 for adults. Visits are built around guided tours, so allow two to four hours. Cover your shoulders and knees, and expect to wear a hard hat inside.


Sanctuary of Truth, Pattaya
Photo: Luka Krstulović, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Where	206/2 Moo 5, Pattaya-Naklua Road, at the end of Soi Naklua 12
Day ticket	Adults ฿500, children 110 to 140 cm ฿250, under 110 cm free
Night ticket	Adults ฿700, children 110 to 140 cm ฿350
Discounts	Monks, priests and disabled visitors with a certificate pay half
Day hours	Tickets 8am to 5pm; tours until 6pm
Night session	Tickets from 5:30pm; tours 6:20pm to 8:30pm
Time needed	2 to 4 hours, by the museum's own estimate
Parking	Free; about 200 car spaces

What it is

The Sanctuary of Truth was the idea of Lek Viriyaphan and his wife Praphai, the same founders behind the Ancient City and the Erawan Museum near Bangkok. It's run as a museum rather than a working temple, but every surface is religious and philosophical art: Hindu gods, Buddhist figures, Chinese and Khmer influences, and scenes about how people should live. The museum describes it as the world's largest all-wood structure, carved entirely by hand.

It is still being built. That's part of the appeal: you'll see scaffolding, fresh pale wood next to weathered dark wood, and a carving area where Thai and Burmese craftsmen work with hammer and chisel in front of visitors.

You'll often read that it was built without a single nail. The museum's own page on its building methods is more nuanced: traditional joints and wooden wedges hold the large pieces, and metal nails are used to fix carvings in place.

Tickets and times

- **Day:** ticket counter open 8am to 5pm, tours run until 6pm.
- **Night:** ticket counter from 5:30pm to 7:30pm, tours 6:20pm to 8:30pm. The building is lit after dark, and it's cooler.
- Buy at the ticket office on the day, or online from the museum's own shop. Online tickets are for the date you pick and can't be refunded or changed.
- The museum's pages don't all agree on exact times (one says day tours start at 8am, another 8:20am), so check before you go if timing matters.

Tip: The official site is sanctuaryoftruthmuseum.com. A similar-looking domain without "museum" in it is not the attraction's website, so book only through the official one or a reseller you trust.

Guided tours

Entry includes a guided walk, and the museum runs a busy schedule in different languages.

- **English:** tours roughly every 20 to 40 minutes from about 9am to 5pm, plus night tours at 6:30pm and 7pm.
- **Thai, Chinese, Russian, Korean, Japanese and Arabic** tours or audio guides run at set times, some only on certain days.
- Leaflets come in about 20 languages.

- The guide's talk lasts about 45 to 60 minutes, so arrive a little before a tour starts.

Rules and what to wear

- Dress modestly: shoulders and knees covered. Shawls and sarongs can be borrowed for a ฿200 deposit.
- Wear the hard hat you're given inside the building. Work goes on overhead.
- No food, drink, pets or smoking inside. No drones.
- Speak quietly. Many visitors treat it as a sacred place, even though it isn't a temple. See temple customs.

Accessibility

- There is a wooden lift inside for older visitors, disabled visitors and anyone who needs it.
- Wheelchairs and folding chairs can be borrowed free at the information desk.
- A free shuttle carriage runs from the viewpoint to the sanctuary for people who need it.

Around the grounds

- **The viewpoint** on the cliff gives the classic photo, with the building looking as if it floats on the sea.
- **The carving workshop**, where you can watch the craftsmen.
- **Food:** Naklua Kitchen by the cliff serves Thai and halal food, and a café in the courtyard does snacks, coffee and smoothies, with Thai music. Both open about 9am to 6pm.
- **Add-ons** include carriage rides, a speedboat, rowing trips in an old dugout boat, horse riding, a small petting zoo, Thai costume hire and foot massage. Ask the price before you agree.
- Elephant rides and feeding are also offered. Many animal welfare groups advise against riding elephants. See elephant sanctuaries for a better way to see them.

Getting there

It's at the end of Soi Naklua 12, off Naklua Road, a few minutes north of central Pattaya.

- **Bolt or Grab** is easiest. See Bolt and Grab.
- **Scooter:** free parking on site.
- **Baht bus:** the museum suggests a Naklua Road baht bus to Soi 12, then a motorbike taxi down the soi. See baht bus routes and fares.

Tips

- Go at opening time or for the night session to avoid the midday heat and the biggest tour groups.
- The carvings are high up. A phone zoom or small binoculars help.
- Combine it with lunch in Naklua. See Naklua fish market.

Common questions

How much is the Sanctuary of Truth? ฿500 for adults and ฿250 for children 110 to 140 cm by day; ฿700 and ฿350 for the night session. Children under 110 cm go free.

What should I wear? Clothes that cover your shoulders and knees. If you forget, you can borrow a shawl or sarong for a ฿200 deposit.

Is the night visit worth it? It costs more and the window is shorter, but the building is lit up and it's cooler. If you only go once, the day visit gives you more time and more tour slots.

How long do I need? The museum says two to four hours, including a guided talk of 45 to 60 minutes.

Is it a temple? It's run as a museum, not a working temple, but it is full of religious art. Dress and behave as you would in a temple.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Sanctuary of Truth, Visit Us (hours, prices, tour schedule, rules, accessibility); Sanctuary of Truth, FAQ (discounts, time needed, parking, restaurants); Sanctuary of Truth, online ticket (day ฿500, night ฿700, redemption times); Sanctuary of Truth, Founder; Sanctuary of Truth, construction techniques. The museum's pages differ slightly on start times; prices and tours can change.

Related guides

- Best Sunset Spots in Pattaya
- The Best Photo Spots in Pattaya
- Temples & Viewpoints
- Pattaya in One Day

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Nong Nooch Tropical Garden

Nong Nooch Tropical Garden, the huge landscaped garden south of Pattaya: what to see, the official booking site, ticket packages and what foreigners pay, opening hours, the Thai cultural and elephant shows, getting there and tips.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/nong-nooch-garden/

Where	**Sukhumvit Road, Na Chom Thian, about 15 km south of Pattaya**
Hours	**Daily, 8am to 6pm (official site)**
Ticket	**Foreigners from about ฿500; about ฿800 with the show**
Shows	**Thai cultural show and elephant show daily**
Book	**nongnoochpattaya.com; online tickets valid 5 days**
Time needed	**Half a day or more**

Quick answer: Nong Nooch Tropical Garden (Nong Nooch) is a privately run botanical garden of about 500 acres on Sukhumvit Road, roughly 15 km south of Pattaya. The official site says it's open every day from 8am to 6pm, with a Thai cultural show and an elephant show daily. Foreigners pay more than Thais: booking sites list garden-only tickets from about ฿500 and garden plus show from about ฿800, with packages that add the sightseeing bus or a buffet lunch. Book on the official site or at the gate, go early, and allow at least half a day.


Nong Nooch Tropical Garden, Pattaya
Photo: Wayne77, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Official site	nongnoochpattaya.com (online booking, tickets valid 5 days from the booking date)
Hours	Daily, 8am to 6pm, no closing days (official site)
Garden ticket	From about ฿500 for foreigners on booking sites
With show	From about ฿800; more with bus or lunch
Shows	Thai cultural show daily; elephant show twice a day (official site)
Where	34/1 Moo 7, Na Chom Thian, Sattahip, on Sukhumvit Road
From Pattaya	About 15 km, roughly 20 to 30 minutes by car
Reservations	087-488-0028 or 061-647-7088 (official contact page)
Good for	Families, photos, plant lovers, a slow half day

What it is

Pisit and Nongnooch Tansacha bought the land in 1954, first planning a fruit orchard. Nongnooch turned it into a tropical garden, and it opened to the public in 1980. The Tansacha family still runs it, and it has become one of the best-known day trips from Pattaya. Behind the photo spots there's serious botany too: the garden keeps a large cycad collection and gene bank used for conservation and research, along with big collections of palms, heliconias, gingers and succulents.

What to see

- **French Gardens:** two formal gardens inspired by Versailles, opened in 1998, with views from the raised walkways.
- **Dinosaur Valley:** more than 180 life-size dinosaur models, opened in 2017. A hit with children.
- **Stonehenge Garden:** a replica built in 2000.
- **Italian Garden:** the first garden Nongnooch created, with marble statues.
- **Cactus and succulent houses**, near the main entrance.
- **Garden in the Sky:** a two-level raised display of ferns, orchids, bromeliads and cycads.
- **Skywalk:** an elevated walkway that crosses much of the garden and keeps you out of the crowds below.
- Orchid nursery, flower displays and lakes throughout.

Tickets and packages

- The official booking page sells packages online in baht. Prices only appear inside its booking tool, and tickets bought there are valid for 5 days from the booking date. Prices differ for foreigners and Thai residents.
- On booking sites, foreigner tickets start at about ฿500 for the garden only and about ฿800 with the Thai cultural and elephant show. Packages with the sightseeing bus, a buffet lunch or hotel transfers cost more.
- Some reseller tickets are discounted but say "non-Thai residents only" and can't be cancelled. Read the conditions before you pay.

- Extras such as pedal boats, animal feeding and the private golf-cart tour with a driver are paid separately.

The shows

The official site describes a daily Thai cultural performance of dance and traditional martial arts, followed by an elephant show with two rounds a day, in which elephants paint, play football and are fed bananas by visitors. Show times differ between sources: booking sites give anything from two to four rounds between about 10am and 5pm. Ask for the day's times when you buy your ticket and plan your walk around them.

Some visitors prefer not to watch animal performances. If that's you, buy the garden-only ticket. For ethical elephant experiences, see elephant sanctuaries.

Getting there

Nong Nooch is just off Sukhumvit Road south of Jomtien, in Na Chom Thian.

- **Bolt or Grab:** the easiest option. It's far enough out that getting a car back can take a while near closing time, so book early or agree a return. See Bolt and Grab.
- **Tour or package:** many packages include hotel pickup. See tours from Pattaya.
- **Train:** Suan Nong Nooch station on the eastern line is about a 16-minute walk away, but there are few trains a day. See train to Pattaya.
- **Scooter:** doable if you're comfortable on Sukhumvit Road. See renting a scooter.

Tips for a good visit

- Arrive close to 8am. By midday much of the garden is in full sun. See heat and sun safety.
- The grounds are huge. Use the sightseeing bus or the Skywalk rather than trying to walk everything.
- Bring a hat, sun cream and water. There are restaurants and cafés on site.
- Booking sites describe it as wheelchair and stroller accessible on the main paths. See accessible Pattaya.
- If rain is forecast, go anyway in the morning and keep the afternoon free. See weather by month.
- You can stay on site: the garden runs a resort and villas.

Common questions

How much is Nong Nooch for foreigners? Booking sites list garden-only tickets from about ฿500 and garden plus show from about ฿800. Thai residents pay less. Check the official booking page or the gate for today's price.

What time does Nong Nooch open? The official site says 8am to 6pm, every day.

What time are the shows? Sources disagree, so ask at the ticket desk. The official site says the elephant show has two rounds a day.

How long do I need at Nong Nooch? At least half a day. With the shows, lunch and Dinosaur Valley, many people stay most of the day.

Is it good for kids? Yes. Dinosaur Valley and the open space work well for children. See Pattaya with kids.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Nong Nooch official site, booking and contact pages (8am to 6pm daily, tickets valid 5 days, daily shows, two elephant show rounds, address, phone); Wikipedia, Nong Nooch Tropical Botanical Garden (history, gardens, cycad collection); Headout (show ticket from ฿800, show times, train station); Thaiways (distance, different show times). The official site doesn't publish prices outside its booking tool, so foreigner prices here come from booking sites and may change.

Plan your day

- Go early in the day to beat the heat and the crowds, and bring water and sun cream.
- Allow at least half a day, the gardens are large.
- See Pattaya with kids.

Related guides

- Pattaya with a Baby or Toddler
- Horse Riding and Outdoor Activities
- Tours From Pattaya
- Temples & Viewpoints
- Khao Chi Chan (Buddha Mountain)
- Wat Yansangwararam

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Cabaret Shows (Tiffany's, Alcazar & Colosseum)

Pattaya's three big cabaret shows compared for 2026: Tiffany's, Alcazar and Colosseum show times, ticket ranges, seats, getting there, photos after the show and whether to bring children.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/cabaret-shows/

Shows	**Tiffany's, Alcazar and Colosseum, every evening**
Length	**About 60 to 75 minutes**
Tickets	**From about ฿550 to ฿2,800 depending on show and seat**
Times	**First shows from about 5pm, last about 9pm to 9:30pm**
Photos	**Not allowed during shows; photos outside cost extra**
Family friendly	**Mainstream stage shows, loud and glitzy**

Quick answer: Pattaya's cabaret shows are big, glamorous stage productions: elaborate costumes, dance numbers, comedy and lip-sync performances by transgender performers. They are mainstream entertainment, seen by tour groups, couples and families, and three are well known. **Tiffany's** on Second Road is the best-known name and hosts international pageants; its box-office prices run from about ฿1,200 to ฿2,800, with shows at 6pm, 7:30pm and 9pm. **Alcazar**, also on Second Road, sells VIP seats from about ฿900 and a VVIP package at ฿1,800. **Colosseum**, on Thepprasit Road, is newer and usually the cheapest through resellers, at about ฿550 to ฿800, with shows at 5:30pm, 7pm and 8:30pm. Each show lasts about an hour to an hour and a quarter.


Cabaret Shows (Tiffany's, Alcazar & Colosseum), Pattaya
Photo: nakhon100, CC BY 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons

The three shows compared

SHOW	WHERE	SHOW TIMES	TICKETS (ABOUT)	LENGTH
Tiffany's Show	Second Road, North Pattaya	6pm, 7:30pm, 9pm daily	฿1,200 Mezzanine to ฿2,800 VIP Diamond at the box office	About 75 minutes
Alcazar	Second Road, Central Pattaya	Sources differ: 5pm, 6:30pm, 8pm and 9:30pm, or 6pm, 8pm and 9:30pm plus a late Saturday show	VIP about ฿900; VVIP ฿1,800	About 70 minutes
Colosseum	Thepprasit Road	5:30pm, 7pm, 8:30pm daily	About ฿550 to ฿800 through resellers	About 60 minutes

Times and prices change, and agents, hotel desks and booking apps often sell below the box-office price, sometimes with hotel pickup. Check the show's own site or call before you go.

Tiffany's Show

- The best-known name, on Second Road in North Pattaya. It runs the Miss Tiffany pageant, held at the theatre on 1 March 2026, and hosted the Miss International Queen 2026 final there on 19 September 2026.
- Seats come in four classes: Mezzanine (upstairs), VIP Silver, VIP Gold and VIP Diamond (closest to the stage). A bank promotion for Thai residents listed regular prices of ฿1,200, ฿2,200, ฿2,400 and ฿2,800, valid to 31 October 2026. Reseller prices for visitors vary a lot.
- Big, polished production with large sets, and it fills up with tour groups in high season.

Alcazar

- On Second Road, where baht buses run past. See baht bus routes and fares.
- The official site sells a VVIP package at ฿1,800: the best seats, a snack and drink, a meet-and-greet and photos with performers, and a souvenir. VVIP seating is limited to 24 seats.
- A review updated in April 2026 put standard VIP seats at about ฿900, with street resellers sometimes lower.
- Sources disagree on the schedule. One lists four shows a night, another three plus a late Saturday show. Ask when you book.

Colosseum

- A newer, large theatre styled on the Roman Colosseum, on Thepprasit Road towards Jomtien. See Thepprasit Road.
- The official site lists three shows a day: 5:30pm to 6:30pm, 7pm to 8pm and 8:30pm to 9:30pm, and says times can change.
- Seats are sold as Deluxe, VIP and Gold (front). Resellers list regular tickets from about ฿550 to ฿800.
- Easy to combine with the Thepprasit night market on Friday to Sunday evenings.

Which one to pick

- **First time, want the classic:** Tiffany's.
- **Want photos with the cast as part of the ticket:** Alcazar's VVIP package.

- **On a budget, or staying in Jomtien:** Colosseum.
- All three are similar in style: if you have seen one, a second is optional.

Photos and tips

- Photos and videos are not allowed during the shows.
- After the show, performers often wait outside for photos, for a fee. A 2026 review of Alcazar put it at about ฿100 per performer, per picture, and said some sellers can be pushy. Agree the price first, or politely walk on.
- Arrive 20 minutes early, especially if you need to swap a voucher for a ticket at the box office.
- No formal dress code, but skip beachwear.

Bringing children

These are mainstream shows, and families go. Some costumes are revealing and the music is loud, so one reviewer suggested waiting until children are about 7 or older. You know your children best. See Pattaya with kids.

Getting there

- Tiffany's and Alcazar: baht bus along Second Road, Bolt or Grab. See Bolt and Grab in Pattaya.
- Colosseum: Bolt or Grab is easiest, as there is no regular baht bus along Thepprasit Road.
- Many agents include hotel pickup and drop-off. Check the pickup time and where you are dropped after the show.

Plan your evening

- Book a day ahead in high season and at weekends.
- An early show leaves time for dinner afterwards. See night markets.
- See a night out without drinking.

Common questions

Which is the best cabaret show in Pattaya? Tiffany's is the best known and most expensive, Alcazar is the other long-running name, and Colosseum is newer and often cheaper. They are similar in style, so pick by price, time and location.

How much are Tiffany's Show tickets? Box-office prices run from about ฿1,200 for Mezzanine to ฿2,800 for VIP Diamond. Agents and apps often sell for less.

How long is a Pattaya cabaret show? About 60 to 75 minutes.

Can children watch cabaret shows in Pattaya? Yes, they are mainstream stage shows. The music is loud and some costumes are revealing, so judge for younger children.

Can I take photos during the show? No. You can usually pay for photos with performers outside afterwards.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Colosseum Show Pattaya, show times and address; Alcazar official site (VVIP package); KTC, Tiffany's Show seat prices and show times (to 31 October 2026); Backpack Moments, Alcazar review (updated April 2026); The Thai Pass, Alcazar schedule; Waug, Colosseum ticket listing; Pattaya Mail, Miss International Queen 2026 at Tiffany's. Tiffany's own site did not show a price list when we checked. Prices and times change; confirm with the theatre.

Related guides

- Pattaya for Couples
- Pattaya in the Rain: A 3-Day Plan
- Rainy Day & Indoor Attractions
- Tours From Pattaya
- Pattaya with Friends: Group Trip Planner

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Muay Thai in Pattaya

Muay Thai in Pattaya: fight nights at Max Muay Thai Stadium (times, tickets from about ฿1,500), what happens on the night, training at a gym and what classes cost, and the DTV visa route for longer training stays.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/muay-thai/

Main stadium	**Max Muay Thai, Sukhumvit Road, about 2,000 seats**
Fights	**Mon to Fri 7pm, Sat and Sun 7:30pm (ticket agent)**
Tickets	**VIP seats from about ฿1,500**
Train	**Gym sessions from about ฿800 at a big-name camp**
Long stays	**Muay Thai can qualify for the DTV visa**

Quick answer: Pattaya's main fight venue is **Max Muay Thai Stadium** on Sukhumvit Road, a purpose-built arena of about 2,000 seats whose fight nights are televised across Asia. Its ticket agent lists cards from 7pm on weekdays (five bouts) and 7:30pm at weekends (four bouts), and VIP seats were about ฿1,500 in October 2026. To train, Pattaya has many gyms: at Fairtex in North Pattaya a single session is ฿800 in 2026. If you want to train for months, a Muay Thai course can be your route to the Destination Thailand Visa (DTV).

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Stadium	Max Muay Thai, Sukhumvit Road, Nong Prue, near King Power
Fight nights	Mon to Fri from 7pm (5 bouts); Sat and Sun from 7:30pm (4 bouts)
Doors	About 6:40pm weekdays, 7:20pm weekends
Finishes	About 8:30pm to 9pm
Tickets	VIP from about ฿1,500 (October 2026); children over 120 cm pay the adult price
Booking	Non-refundable, fixed date; exchange your voucher at the counter
Training	Big-name camp: ฿800 a session, ฿16,500 a month (Fairtex, 2026)
Visa	DTV "soft power" category with a gym enrolment letter

Watching a fight night

Max Muay Thai is the venue most visitors mean when they talk about Muay Thai in Pattaya. Its regular cards are broadcast live, and the stadium hosted Tyson Fury's boxing tune-up fight against Mariusz Wach on 24 July 2026, in a room that normally holds about 2,000 people.

- **The schedule:** the stadium's ticket agent lists weekday cards from 7pm to 8:30pm with five bouts, and weekend cards from 7:30pm to 9pm with four. A 2026 guide says bouts are three rounds. Weekend schedules are the least consistent, so check your date before you go.
- **Tickets:** booking sites and the stadium sell mostly ringside and VIP seats. One guide reported VIP seats from about ฿1,500 in October 2026, but prices vary by seller.
- **Rules on the ticket:** tickets are for one date only and can't be cancelled or changed. Children over 120 cm pay the adult price. You show your mobile voucher at the counter and swap it for a paper ticket.
- **Getting there:** it's on Sukhumvit Road near King Power Pattaya, an easy Bolt or Grab ride. Afterwards there are plenty of cars and motorbike taxis on Sukhumvit.

The stadium also runs bigger tournament events. In October 2025 its MAX4MAN tournament put on a free show at Central Pattaya, so watch the stadium's Facebook page and the sports events page for special nights.

What happens on the night

- Each fighter performs the **wai kru ram muay**, a slow ritual dance to honour their teachers, before the bout. It's worth arriving on time to see it.
- Traditional live music, drums and a Thai oboe, plays through each bout and speeds up with the action.
- Ringside seats are close enough to hear the kicks land. They cost more but are worth it for a first visit.

Training at a gym

Pattaya has camps for every level, from beginners who want one sweaty morning to fighters training full time. A group class usually mixes skipping or running, shadow boxing, pad work with a trainer, bag work, clinch and conditioning, and at the bigger camps a session runs two hours or more.

As one example with published 2026 prices, **Fairtex Training Center** at the Fairtex hotel on North Pattaya Road lists Muay Thai classes Monday to Saturday from 7:30am to 10am and 2:30pm to 5pm, with new students invited in the morning.

FAIRTEX 2026 PRICE	BAHT
Single session	฿800
10 sessions	฿7,000
One month, unlimited	฿16,500
Private lesson	฿1,500

Smaller gyms around the city charge their own rates, and many hotels and fitness centres run beginner classes too. Compare a few, ask for a trial session, and check how many students each trainer handles.

- Bring water, a towel and handwraps if you have them. Ask whether gloves are provided.
- Train early or late; midday heat is hard work. See heat and sun safety.
- Tell your trainer if you're a total beginner, and build up slowly. Injuries happen, so check your insurance covers combat sports. See travel insurance.
- For general fitness gyms, see gyms and fitness.

Training for months: the DTV route

Muay Thai is one of the "soft power" activities that can qualify for the Destination Thailand Visa. In short:

- It's a five-year visa with stays of up to 180 days per entry, extendable once by up to 180 days.
- You need an enrolment or invitation letter from a Thai gym, proof of at least ฿500,000 in savings and the ฿10,000 fee.
- Since 31 August 2026 you also need a criminal record certificate and must apply from the country where you hold nationality or permanent residence, through the Thai e-visa system.
- There's no official minimum course length published. Gym guides and applicant reports suggest embassies look more kindly on several months of booked training than on a few weeks, so ask the gym what it puts in its letter and check with the embassy before you pay.
- Some gyms also offer education (ED) visas for Muay Thai through licensed schools. That is a different visa with its own rules. See visa options.

Tips

- Betting on fights is common among locals but illegal in Thailand. Stay out of it.
- Buy from the stadium, its ticket agent or a well-known booking site, not from someone on the street.

Common questions

How much are Muay Thai tickets in Pattaya? At Max Muay Thai, VIP seats were from about ฿1,500 in October 2026. Prices vary by seller, so compare before you book.

What time do fights start at Max Muay Thai? The ticket agent lists 7pm on weekdays and 7:30pm at weekends. Doors open about 20 minutes earlier.

Can a beginner train Muay Thai in Pattaya? Yes. Most gyms welcome beginners to group classes, and private lessons are available. Tell the trainer it's your first time.

Can I get a visa to train Muay Thai? Muay Thai can qualify for the DTV with a gym enrolment letter and ฿500,000 in savings. Requirements tightened on 31 August 2026, so read our DTV guide first.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Megatix, Max Muay Thai Pattaya (weekday and weekend times, bouts, ticket rules); Thai Holiday Guide, Max Muay Thai Stadium (address, doors, VIP from about ฿1,500, updated October 2026); Thaiger, 13 July 2026 (2,000 seats, broadcasts); Bangkok Post (Fury v Wach); Pattaya Mail, 4 October 2025 (MAX4MAN free show); Fairtex Training Center prices and classes. DTV details from our DTV guide, checked the same day.

Plan your day

- Fight nights usually start in the evening with several bouts.
- Training camps offer drop-in classes for beginners.
- See sports events.

Related guides

- Gyms & Fitness in Pattaya
- Rainy Day & Indoor Attractions
- Pattaya with Friends: Group Trip Planner
- Tours From Pattaya
- Destination Thailand Visa (DTV)

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Water Parks

Pattaya's big water parks, Ramayana and Columbia Pictures Aquaverse: prices, hours and which to choose.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/water-parks/

Ramayana	**South of Pattaya, near Nong Nooch**
Aquaverse	**Near Jomtien**
Tickets	**Roughly ฿900 to ฿1,700 at the gate; cheaper online**
Closed	**Aquaverse closes on Wednesdays**
Tip	**Book online and go on a weekday**

Quick answer: Pattaya has two large, modern water parks: Ramayana Water Park, south of the city near Nong Nooch, and Columbia Pictures Aquaverse, a movie-themed water and theme park near Jomtien. Both are a great day out in the heat, especially with kids. Gate prices run from roughly ฿900 to ฿1,700, and booking online a day ahead is usually much cheaper. Aquaverse is closed on Wednesdays; check opening days for both before you go.


Water Parks, Pattaya
Photo: Ramayana Water Park, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons

Which one?

	RAMAYANA WATER PARK	COLUMBIA PICTURES AQUAVERSE
Where	Sukhumvit Road, south near Nong Nooch, about 30 minutes from central Pattaya	Near Jomtien, about 15 minutes from central Pattaya
Best for	Big slides, wave pool, a full day of water	Film-themed rides and water areas, mixed ages
Hours	Usually around 10 or 11am to 6pm	10am to 6pm, closed Wednesdays
Price	Gate price around ฿999 reported; online deals cheaper	Gate prices higher; online deals cheaper
Getting there	Car, Bolt or Grab; some tours include transfers	Car, Bolt or Grab

Ramayana Water Park

Ramayana Water Park: one of the biggest water parks in Asia, on Sukhumvit Road south of Pattaya near Nong Nooch. Lots of slides, from gentle to very steep, plus a wave pool, a lazy river and children's areas. A Thai travel guide in 2025 listed ฿999 for visitors over 106 cm, with small children free, and online resellers often sell for less. Most sources give hours of about 11am to 6pm, with last entry around 4pm; some days open earlier.

Columbia Pictures Aquaverse

Columbia Pictures Aquaverse: a movie-themed water and theme park near Jomtien, with rides and areas themed on films. It's listed as open 10am to 6pm daily except Wednesdays, and it occasionally closes early for private events. Gate prices are higher than Ramayana, around ฿1,700, with online deals well below that.

What to bring

- Swimwear (no street clothes on the slides), a rash vest and sun cream.
- A waterproof phone pouch; lockers cost extra.
- Flip-flops for the hot paths.
- A small amount of cash or a card for food and lockers; outside food is usually not allowed.

Height rules and safety

- The biggest slides have minimum heights and weight limits; children are measured at the entrance to some rides.
- Lifeguards are on duty, but watch children yourself in the wave pool.
- Drink water through the day. See heat and sun safety.

Getting there

- Neither park is on a regular baht bus route from the centre. Bolt or Grab is easiest; book the return ride before closing time, when many people leave at once. See Bolt and Grab.
- Some ticket sellers bundle hotel transfers; compare the total.
- For Ramayana, combining it with Nong Nooch Garden on another day saves a second long ride.

Tips

- Buy tickets online a day ahead for the best price.

- Weekdays are much quieter than weekends and Thai holidays.
- Arrive at opening for the shortest slide queues.
- Rainy season afternoons can bring storms and slide closures; mornings are safer.

Common questions

Which water park in Pattaya is best? Ramayana for big slides and a full water day; Aquaverse for themed rides closer to town.

How much is Ramayana Water Park? Around ฿999 at the gate for adults has been reported, with cheaper online tickets. Check the park's site.

Is Aquaverse open every day? No, it's closed on Wednesdays.

Can I bring food into the water parks? Usually not. There are food courts inside.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Trvlogue, Columbia Pictures Aquaverse 2026; TravelTriangle, Ramayana Water Park 2026. Neither park's official 2026 price list was available; check before you go.

Related guides

- Pattaya Park and Tower
- Pattaya with kids
- Tours From Pattaya
- Hua Hin Trip from Pattaya

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Khao Kheow Open Zoo

The big open zoo in the hills north of Pattaya, home of Moo Deng the pygmy hippo: tickets, hours and the night safari.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/khao-kheow-open-zoo/

Where	**Hills near Si Racha, about 45 minutes north**
Ticket	**฿350 adults, ฿120 children (foreigners)**
Hours	**Daily, roughly 8am to 5pm**
Night safari	**Friday to Sunday from about 6:30pm, separate ticket**
Moo Deng	**The famous pygmy hippo, now in the Hippo Village area**

Quick answer: Khao Kheow is a large open zoo in forested hills between Pattaya and Si Racha, about 45 minutes to an hour north of Pattaya. Animals live in big enclosures that you drive, cycle, take a golf cart or ride a tram between. Foreigner tickets are ฿350 for adults and ฿120 for children, it's open daily from 8am to 5pm, and a night safari runs on Friday to Sunday evenings with a separate ticket. It is world-famous as the home of Moo Deng, the pygmy hippo.


Khao Kheow Open Zoo, Pattaya
Photo: Yellow man, CC BY 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Where	Hills near Si Racha, Chonburi; about 45 to 60 minutes north of Pattaya
Hours	Daily, about 8am to 5pm
Tickets (foreigners)	Adults ฿350, children ฿120; under 90 cm free (reported)
Thai prices	Adults ฿200, children ฿40
Night safari	Friday to Sunday from about 6:30pm, separate ticket
Getting round	Your own car, golf cart, bicycle or tram (tram ticket extra)
Getting there	Car, Bolt, Grab or a tour; no public transport to the gate

Moo Deng and the hippos

- Moo Deng, the pygmy hippo who went viral in 2024, turned two in July 2026. The zoo opened a new Hippo Village area around her.
- The hippo area draws the biggest crowds. Go early, and check the zoo's page or social media for viewing times and any queue system.
- Pygmy hippos are endangered. Be patient, keep quiet, and don't bang on glass or throw anything.

Getting around inside

- **Your own car** is easiest: you drive the loop and park at each zone.
- **Golf carts** can be rented at the entrance, good for families. Bring a driving licence.
- **Bicycles** are cheap but the roads are hilly and it gets hot by late morning.
- **The tram** runs between the main zones with a separate ticket.
- Walking it all isn't realistic: the zoo is spread over a big area.

A good half day

TIME	WHAT TO DO
8am to 9am	Arrive at opening, go straight to the hippos while it's quiet
9am to 11am	Big animals and the open zones while they're active
11am to 1pm	Lunch at the zoo food court, shade and shows
Afternoon	Head back before the hottest hours, or stay for the evening

Night safari

- Runs Friday to Sunday from about 6:30pm, with a separate ticket.
- Animals are active after dark, and it's cooler. Bring insect repellent.
- Check the zoo's page before you go: times and prices change, and it may be cancelled in heavy rain.

Getting there

It's about 45 minutes to an hour north of Pattaya (map). With no public transport to the gate, most people go by car, Bolt, Grab or a tour. Book a return ride in advance, or agree a waiting price with the driver, because finding a car back from the zoo can be slow. See tours from Pattaya and car rental.

Tips

- Go early, when the animals are most active and it's cooler.
- Buying tickets online in advance through resellers can be cheaper than at the gate.
- Bring water, a hat and sun cream; the hills are hot and open in places.
- Combine it with a stop in Si Racha for seafood on the way back. See Si Racha.

Common questions

How much is Khao Kheow Open Zoo for foreigners? ฿350 for adults and ฿120 for children at the gate, with extras like the tram and night safari charged separately.

Can you see Moo Deng at Khao Kheow? Yes. She lives in the Hippo Village area. Go early to avoid the longest crowds.

How far is Khao Kheow from Pattaya? About 45 minutes to an hour by car, north towards Si Racha.

Is Khao Kheow good for kids? Yes, it's one of the best family days out near Pattaya. A golf cart makes it much easier with small children.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Thai Holiday Guide, Khao Kheow Open Zoo (prices and hours, reviewed July 2026); Trvlogue, 2026 review (Moo Deng, Hippo Village). Not the zoo's own price list; check it before you go.

Plan your day

- Go early in the day to beat the heat and the crowds, and bring water and sun cream.
- See Pattaya with kids.

Related guides

- Tours From Pattaya
- Khao Yai Trip from Pattaya
- Pattaya in One Day
- Koh Chang Trip from Pattaya
- Day Trips From Pattaya

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Pattaya Floating Market

The Four Regions Floating Market on Sukhumvit Road: about ฿200 entry for foreigners, open daily 9am to 7pm, rowing-boat rides, regional Thai food and dance shows, and whether it is worth the trip.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/floating-market/

Where	**Sukhumvit Road, Nong Prue, south-east of central Pattaya**
Entry	**About ฿200 for foreign adults; Thai ID holders free**
Hours	**Daily 9am to 7pm, ticket desk closes 6:30pm (official site)**
Boat ride	**Extra, or in a combo ticket**
Time needed	**About 2 hours**
Best for	**Regional Thai snacks, souvenirs, photos**

Quick answer: The Pattaya Floating Market, also called the Four Regions Floating Market, is a purpose-built market of wooden walkways, stilt houses and canals on Sukhumvit Road, with sections for the food and crafts of Thailand's North, Northeast (Isan), Central region and South. Its official website lists it as open daily from 9am to 7pm, with the ticket desk closing at 6:30pm. Foreign adults pay about ฿200 to enter, Thai ID holders get in free, and a rowing-boat ride costs extra or comes in a combo ticket. It is a tourist attraction rather than a local market, so prices are higher than in town, but it is an easy two hours of Thai snacks, souvenirs and photos.


Pattaya Floating Market, Pattaya
Photo: Jonashtand, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Entry, foreign adult	About ฿200 at the gate (2026 guides)
Entry, Thai nationals	Free with a Thai ID card (2026 guide)
Combo tickets	From about ฿250 with a boat ride or extras; sources differ
Hours	Daily 9am to 7pm; ticket desk closes 6:30pm (official site)
Where	451/304 Moo 12, Nong Prue, on Sukhumvit Road
Getting there	Bolt or Grab from central Pattaya or Jomtien
Time needed	About 2 hours
Open since	2008

What it is

The market opened in 2008 on a former marshland site, and it was designed as a show of traditional Thai riverside life rather than as a working market for locals. The official site describes more than 400 shops and boat vendors. You walk along wooden boardwalks between old-style wooden shophouses, cross small bridges and watch vendors cook from boats moored along the canals. Each regional zone sells its own snacks and handicrafts, so it is a quick way to try dishes from the whole country in one place.

Not every stall floats: most shops sit on the boardwalks, with food boats along the water. A 2023 visitor review also noted that parts of the site looked closed or run down, so don't expect every corner to be busy, especially on weekdays in the low season.

Tickets and prices

- **Entry:** about ฿200 for foreign adults at the gate, according to 2026 visitor guides. A July 2026 guide says Thai nationals enter free with a Thai ID card. We found no official price list online, so check the board at the entrance.
- **Boat rides and combos:** short rowing-boat rides around the canals cost extra, or come in combo tickets with entry. Guides give combos from about ฿250, and a 2023 review paid ฿500 at the gate for entry plus a 20-minute boat ride. Some booking sites also sell options with Thai costume hire, which must be returned before closing.
- **Booking online:** booking apps have sold entry and boat combos for less than the gate price in the past. Compare before you go, and read what is included.
- **Inside:** food and souvenirs are priced for visitors. Expect to pay more than at a night market for the same snack.

Hours

The official website lists the market as open every day from 9am to 7pm, with the ticket desk closing at 6:30pm. Third-party listings disagree: some say 9am to 6pm, others 9am to 8pm. Go by the official hours and arrive by mid afternoon so you are not rushed.

What to do there

- **Eat your way round.** Each region has its own dishes: northern curry noodles, Isan grilled chicken and papaya salad, central-region boat noodles and southern curries. Buy small portions and share. See Thai dishes to try and Thai desserts.
- **Take a rowing boat** through the canals. It is the best way to see the stilt houses and photograph the boat vendors.
- **Watch a show.** The official site lists a traditional Thai dance show every day. Visitor guides mention Muay Thai demonstrations and live music too, mostly in the afternoon. Times change, so ask at the ticket desk.
- **Shop for crafts** from each region: textiles, wood carving, soaps and dried snacks. See souvenir shopping for what travels well.

The 2023 fire

On the evening of 7 September 2023, a fire destroyed part of the market. The Nation put the damage at about ฿70 million, with roughly 30% of the commercial area affected. The market reopened to visitors on 12 September 2023, with damaged areas closed off behind panels. It has been operating since: a July 2026 visitor guide covers it, and the official site still lists daily hours in November 2026.

Getting there

The market is on Sukhumvit Road, in the Nong Prue area south-east of central Pattaya. It isn't walkable from the beach. The easiest way there is a Bolt or Grab; journey time depends on Sukhumvit traffic, which is heavy at rush hour. The site has a large car park if you drive or ride. Many tours from Pattaya include it alongside other sights.

Is it worth it?

It is worth it if you want an easy, photogenic introduction to regional Thai food and crafts, especially with children or on a first trip. It is less worth it if you want a real local market: for that, go to a Thai fresh market early in the morning, or a night market for cheap food in the evening.

Common questions

How much is the Pattaya Floating Market entrance fee? About ฿200 for foreign adults at the gate, according to 2026 guides. Thai ID holders are reported to enter free. Boat rides and shows cost extra unless you buy a combo ticket.

What are the Pattaya Floating Market opening hours? The official website lists daily 9am to 7pm, with the ticket desk closing at 6:30pm. Some other listings say 6pm or 8pm, so arrive by mid afternoon.

Is the Pattaya Floating Market still open after the fire? Yes. The fire in September 2023 damaged part of the site, and the market reopened on 12 September 2023. It is still operating in 2026.

How long do you need at the Pattaya Floating Market? About two hours covers a walk round, a snack in each zone and a boat ride. Add time if you want to catch a show.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya Floating Market official website (hours, address, opening year, daily dance show); Thai Holiday Guide, Pattaya Floating Market (updated July 2026: entry price, Thai ID rule, combos, shows); CK Travels review (2023 prices and site condition); TAGTHAi listing (hours); Pattaya Mail, market reopens after the fire; The Nation, fire damage and reopening date; Thansettakij, the 2023 fire and the market's history. Sources disagree on hours and combo prices, and we found no official price list. Check at the gate.

Plan your day

- It is built for visitors, so treat it as a fun outing rather than a traditional market.
- Check prices before you buy from boats.
- See souvenir shopping.

Related guides

- 3 Days in Pattaya: First-Timer Itinerary
- Tours From Pattaya
- Chachoengsao Day Trip
- Rayong and Chanthaburi Day Trips

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Elephant Sanctuaries

Seeing elephants responsibly near Pattaya: what elephant-friendly really means, the red flags, what half-day visits cost, and where to see wild elephants instead.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/elephant-sanctuaries/

Best practice	**Watch, don't touch: no riding, shows or bathing**
Near Pattaya	**No venue on World Animal Protection's 2025/26 observation list**
Half-day visit	**About ฿2,300 to ฿2,900 with hotel transfer**
Red flags	**Chains, bullhooks, baby elephants, crowds for selfies**
Wild elephants	**Khao Yai and Khao Ang Rue Nai**

Quick answer: Several places around Pattaya sell elephant experiences, and they vary a lot. Welfare groups say the best choice is a venue where you **watch elephants** from a distance as they roam, graze and socialise, with no riding, no shows and no bathing or washing with visitors. Several venues near Pattaya now advertise "no riding", but some still offer feeding, mud baths or bathing, which World Animal Protection does not count as elephant-friendly. Half-day trips from Pattaya with a hotel transfer and a meal are listed at about ฿2,300 to ฿2,900 per adult. If you can, the best way to see elephants is in the wild, in a national park.


Elephant Sanctuaries, Pattaya
Photo: Chirstelle EL JAMALI, CC BY 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Best practice	Observation only: elephants free to move, visitors at a distance
Avoid	Riding, shows, painting, bathing or washing, selfies with elephants
Grey area	Hand feeding, sometimes over a barrier
Half-day price	About ฿2,300 to ฿2,900 with transfer and a meal, on booking sites
Shorter sessions	Feeding-only and feed-and-bathe programmes cost less
Pickup	Usually early morning from Pattaya and Jomtien hotels
In the wild	Khao Yai and Khao Ang Rue Nai, with no guaranteed sightings

Why it matters

Thailand has thousands of elephants living in captivity for tourism. World Animal Protection (WAP), an international animal welfare charity, visited 236 Thai tourism venues housing 2,849 elephants between February 2024 and January 2025. In its January 2026 report it found that nearly two in three were living in poor conditions. Riding has fallen sharply, from 92% of captive elephants in 2010 to 43% in 2024, but only about 7% were in observation-only venues.

The word "sanctuary" has no legal meaning. Any venue can use it, so judge a place by what visitors actually do there, not by its name.

What elephant-friendly means

WAP's guidance for tourists sums it up as "look, don't touch". A venue that meets its standard:

- Lets elephants move freely, choose who they spend time with and behave naturally.
- Keeps visitors at a distance, often on a platform or path, with mahouts nearby for safety.
- Offers no riding, no shows, no painting and no bathing or washing with visitors.
- Doesn't breed elephants. Baby elephants are a warning sign, except at genuine orphanages for calves rescued from the wild.
- Doesn't keep elephants on chains or use bullhooks, except in a real emergency.

WAP published a list of the highest-scoring observational venues in Thailand for 2025/26. None of them is in Chonburi province. The nearest on that list are in Kanchanaburi and Phetchaburi, several hours' drive from Pattaya. See Kanchanaburi.

Red flags

- Rides of any kind.
- Shows, painting or tricks.
- Bathing, washing or mud baths with tourists. WAP says these deny elephants a choice and force interaction.
- Elephants kept on chains or unable to move freely.
- Bullhooks or sharp sticks in the mahouts' hands.
- Calves, especially without their mothers.
- Big groups crowding round for photos.

Some gardens, parks and day tours around Pattaya include elephant rides or shows in the ticket. You can skip those parts.

What it costs

Booking sites list half-day no-riding programmes from Pattaya at about ฿2,300 to ฿2,900 per adult, including a round-trip hotel transfer, a guide and a meal. Shorter sessions focused on feeding, or feeding and bathing, cost less. Prices vary by seller, and resellers sometimes charge more than booking direct. Pickups are usually early in the morning, from hotels in Pattaya and Jomtien, and some don't collect from private villas or Airbnb rentals. Check before you pay.

How to choose

- Read the full programme, not just the headline. If the day includes bathing, washing or a mud bath, it isn't observation only.
- Ask how many elephants there are, where they came from, and whether the venue breeds them.
- Look at recent visitor photos and reviews rather than the venue's own pictures. Watch for chains, hooks and calves.
- Ask whether you can watch from a distance and skip any contact activities.
- If no venue near Pattaya meets the standard you want, consider the wild options below, or a trip further away.

Seeing wild elephants

WAP says the best place to see elephants is in the wild. Two protected areas are within day-trip or overnight range of Pattaya:

- **Khao Yai National Park**, north of Pattaya, has wild elephants as well as gibbons and hornbills. See Khao Yai trip.
- **Khao Ang Rue Nai Wildlife Sanctuary** in Chachoengsao province, at the western edge of the Cardamom Mountains, is a protected forest with a population of wild elephants.

Sightings are never guaranteed. Never approach or feed wild elephants, and if one is on the road, stop, keep your distance and wait for it to move.

On the day

- Wear clothes and shoes you don't mind getting muddy, plus sunscreen and insect repellent. See dengue and mosquitoes.
- Listen to the staff and keep your distance. Elephants are wild animals and can hurt people even when they seem calm.
- Don't bring food of your own for the elephants.

Common questions

Is there an ethical elephant sanctuary in Pattaya? Several venues near Pattaya advertise no riding and no shows, but none is on World Animal Protection's 2025/26 list of observation-only venues in Thailand. Some still offer feeding, bathing or mud baths. Read the programme and choose the least contact you can.

How much is an elephant sanctuary trip from Pattaya? Booking sites list half-day programmes at about ฿2,300 to ฿2,900 per adult with hotel transfer and a meal. Shorter feeding sessions cost less.

Is bathing with elephants ethical? Welfare groups say no. World Animal Protection says washing experiences deny elephants a choice and force them to interact with visitors.

Is feeding elephants OK? It is a grey area. WAP's best practice is no direct contact, and it encourages visitors to skip hand feeding even at some of the venues on its own list that offer it over a barrier.

Where can I see wild elephants near Pattaya? Khao Yai National Park and Khao Ang Rue Nai Wildlife Sanctuary, though sightings are never guaranteed.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: World Animal Protection, captive elephants in Thai tourism, January 2026; World Animal Protection, list of observational elephant venues 2025/26 (PDF); World Animal Protection, elephant-friendly tourist guide; Ticket2Attraction and Thai Holiday Guide (half-day prices, inclusions and pickup areas for one Pattaya venue; we list them as price sources only, not a recommendation); Wikipedia, Khao Ang Rue Nai Wildlife Sanctuary. We have not visited any elephant venue near Pattaya.

Related guides

- Tours from Pattaya
- Day trips from Pattaya
- Koh Chang Trip from Pattaya
- Sanctuary of Truth
- Chachoengsao Day Trip
- Ayutthaya Day Trip from Pattaya
- Kanchanaburi and the River Kwai

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Island Hopping & Boat Trips

The islands you can reach from Pattaya and how: Koh Larn by public ferry, Koh Sak and Koh Phai on tours and charters, longer trips to Koh Sichang, Koh Samet and Koh Chang, what tours include and the boat safety rules in force in November 2026.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/island-hopping/

Easiest	**Koh Larn by public ferry from Bali Hai pier**
Speedboat tours	**Booking sites list Koh Larn day tours from about ฿750, more with extras**
Further out	**Koh Phai only on charters or snorkel and dive trips**
Longer trips	**Koh Sichang, Koh Samet, Koh Chang (see their pages)**
Since 9 Nov 2026	**Small boats held ashore under a red flag; larger vessels only**
Best months	**November to April, when the sea is calmer**

Quick answer: The easy island from Pattaya is Koh Larn, about 45 minutes by public ferry from Bali Hai pier for ฿30 or ฿40 in cash, and you don't need a tour to visit it. Tours add speedboats, snorkelling stops at Koh Sak or Koh Phai, water sports and lunch. Further afield, Koh Sichang is a quiet day trip from Si Racha, and Koh Samet and Koh Chang are better as overnight trips. Go between November and April for the calmest sea, check the weather the day before, and wear the life jacket: it's compulsory. After a collision on 9 November 2026, small boats were held ashore, so check what's running.


Island Hopping & Boat Trips, Pattaya
Photo: Alex Voinich, CC BY 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons

At a glance

ISLAND	HOW TO GET THERE	GOOD FOR	DETAILS
Koh Larn	Public ferry from Bali Hai pier, about 45 minutes, ฿30 or ฿40; or speedboat	Beaches, an easy day on your own, staying a night	Koh Larn
Koh Sak	Speedboat tours and charters, close to Koh Larn	A quieter beach and snorkelling stop	Included on many tours
Koh Phai and nearby islets	Charters, snorkelling and dive trips only	Clearer water, further out	Diving and snorkelling
Koh Sichang	Road to Si Racha, then about ฿50 by ferry from Ko Loi pier	A quiet, very Thai island day	Koh Sichang
Koh Samet	Road to Ban Phe pier, then a ferry	White sand, better overnight	Koh Samet
Koh Chang	Road to Trat, then a car ferry	Jungle and beaches, two or three nights	Koh Chang

Koh Larn: do it yourself or take a tour?

Most people only need the public ferry. It leaves from Bali Hai pier at the end of Walking Street to Na Ban pier or Tawaen beach, and on the island shared trucks and motorbike taxis take you to the beaches. Fares, the last boat back and which beach suits you are on our Koh Larn page and Koh Larn beaches. If you want a quiet evening and sunset on the west side, stay the night: see Koh Larn overnight.

A tour makes sense if you want hotel pickup, a speedboat, a snorkel stop and lunch sorted for you. It costs more and gives you less say over where you spend your time.

What speedboat tours include

Booking sites list shared Koh Larn speedboat tours from about ฿750 a person, and the price climbs with extras. One listing we checked in November 2026 started at ฿750 with hotel transfers, the speedboat, lunch and some water activities, but showed ฿2,290 for one adult on another option on the same page. Before you pay, ask:

- Which islands and beaches, and how long at each? "Koh Larn and Koh Sak" can mean an hour at each.
- Is pickup from your area included, and what time? Outer areas often cost extra.
- Which water sports are included, and which are paid on the day? Parasailing and sea walking usually have weight and height limits.
- Is lunch included, and are there any fees not in the price?
- Is it a shared boat or private? A private speedboat costs many times the shared price but goes when and where you want.

Catamarans and yachts run shared day sails and private charters, and dive shops run trips to Koh Larn, Koh Sak and Koh Phai, including the navy wrecks HTMS Khram, Kut and Mataphon off those islands. See diving and snorkelling.

Koh Sak and Koh Phai

Koh Sak is a small island beside Koh Larn with a quiet beach. Most visitors reach it as a stop on a speedboat tour, often with snorkelling. **Koh Phai** and the islets around it are further out, with no public ferry. You reach them on a chartered boat or on snorkelling and dive trips, and the water is usually clearer than closer to

shore. Bring your own water and food unless the trip includes them.

Longer island trips

- **Koh Sichang**: about 40 to 60 minutes by road to Si Racha, then about ฿50 by ferry from Ko Loi pier.
- **Koh Samet**: about 1.5 to 2 hours by road to Ban Phe pier, then a ferry, plus a national park fee for foreign visitors. A day trip is possible but rushed. Compare it with Koh Larn on Koh Samet vs Koh Larn.
- **Koh Chang**: a much bigger island near Trat, most of a day each way, so plan at least two nights.

Boat safety in 2026

- **Life jackets are compulsory** for every passenger on every boat, including the Koh Larn ferries. Put it on before the boat leaves and keep it on.
- **Check the flag.** When the Marine Office raises a red flag, small boats and speedboats stop running. After a speedboat carrying 27 passengers hit a fishing boat near Bali Hai pier around 11pm on 9 November 2026, injuring eight people, officials raised a red flag that kept small boats ashore and allowed only larger passenger vessels meeting safety rules to carry tourists to Koh Larn.
- Avoid boats after dark, and book with an operator you can find again.
- May to October brings rougher seas and cancellations. See weather by month.
- Photograph any jet ski all round before you ride, and agree the price and time first. See common scams (scam hotline 1441).
- Accidents at sea: call 1196. See emergency numbers and jellyfish and sea creatures.

Common questions

Do I need a tour to visit Koh Larn? No. The public ferry from Bali Hai pier is cheap and easy, and you can get around the island by shared truck or motorbike taxi.

How much is an island tour from Pattaya? Booking sites list shared Koh Larn speedboat tours from about ฿750 a person, with prices well over ฿2,000 for some options. Check what's included before you pay.

Can I visit Koh Phai on my own? There's no public ferry. Go on a chartered boat or a snorkelling or dive trip.

What's the best month for island hopping? November to April usually has the calmest sea. Trips are more often cancelled from May to October.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya Mail, boat restrictions after the speedboat collision (11 November 2026); Pattaya Mail, Bali Hai pier pontoons (May 2025); Click2GoThailand, Koh Larn speedboat tour listing (prices and limits, cited as an example, not a recommendation). Ferry fares and times for Koh Larn, Koh Sichang, Koh Samet and Koh Chang follow our linked pages, each checked separately. Prices change; confirm before you book.

Plan your day

- Check the weather and sea conditions the day before, and the flag at the pier on the day.
- Bring cash: island shops and boats may not take cards.
- See beach safety.

Related guides

- Koh Sichang Day Trip
- Koh Samet from Pattaya
- Day Trips From Pattaya
- Diving & Snorkelling in Pattaya

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Day Trips From Pattaya

The best days out from Pattaya, near and far: Koh Larn, Koh Sichang, Bang Saen, Chachoengsao, Koh Samet, Bangkok, Ayutthaya, Khao Yai and the River Kwai, with travel times, costs and tips.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/day-trips/

Bangkok	**About 2 hours by road**
Koh Samet	**About 1.5 to 2 hours to Ban Phe pier, then a ferry**
Ayutthaya	**About 3 to 3.5 hours**
River Kwai	**4 to 5 hours each way, better as an overnight**
Closest	**Koh Larn, about 45 minutes by ferry**

Quick answer: The easiest day trips from Pattaya are close by: Koh Larn island (45 minutes by ferry), Koh Sichang, Bang Saen and Chachoengsao (about 1 to 2 hours). For white sand, Koh Samet is 1.5 to 2 hours to the pier plus a short boat. Bangkok is about 2 hours each way. Ayutthaya and Khao Yai are around 3 hours, and the River Kwai is 4 to 5, so those work better as an overnight or a tour. Leave early, bring cash for park fees and ferries, and check the last boat or bus back.

Pattaya makes a good base for exploring the east and centre of Thailand. Here is how the main options compare, then the details for each.

Day trips at a glance

TRIP	TRAVEL TIME EACH WAY	ROUGH COSTS	BEST FOR
Koh Larn	About 45 min by ferry	Ferry ฿30 to ฿40	Easy beach day, first-timers
Koh Sichang	About 1 hour to Si Racha, then 40 to 45 min ferry	Ferry about ฿50 to ฿60	A quiet island, history
Bang Saen	About 1 hour	Bolt, Grab or bus	A Thai beach town, cheap seafood
Chachoengsao	About 1.5 to 2 hours	Private car or tour	Temples, the giant Ganesha, a riverside market
Koh Samet	1.5 to 2 hours to Ban Phe, then a ferry	Ferry about ฿70, park fee ฿200 to ฿300	White sand and clear water
Bangkok	About 2 hours, more in traffic	Bus about ฿150	Temples, river, shopping
Ayutthaya	About 3 to 3.5 hours	Tour or private car	UNESCO temple ruins
Khao Yai	About 3 hours	Park fee about ฿400 for foreign adults	Forest, waterfalls, wildlife
River Kwai	4 to 5 hours	Tours from about ฿3,000 to ฿4,000	War history, waterfalls

Prices are rough guides from 2026 sources and change often. Check the linked pages for detail.

Close to Pattaya (half a day to a day)

- **Koh Larn:** the island you can see from Pattaya Beach. Public ferry from Bali Hai pier, proper sand and clearer water. See Koh Larn.
- **Koh Sichang:** a quiet island off Si Racha with a former royal summer palace and small viewpoints. See Koh Sichang.
- **Bang Saen:** the beach town Thais love, with the monkeys of Khao Sam Muk. See Bang Saen.
- **Chachoengsao:** Wat Sothon, the giant reclining Ganesha and the old Ban Mai market. See Chachoengsao.
- **Bang Saray and the south:** a fishing village, seafood and quieter beaches. See Bang Saray and Rayong and Chanthaburi.

Koh Samet

A beautiful island with white sand beaches in Rayong province. Drive or take a minibus to Ban Phe pier (about 1.5 to 2 hours), then a slow ferry (about 40 minutes, around ฿70) or a speedboat. Foreigners pay a national park fee on arrival: our Koh Samet page gives ฿200 per adult, the figure in a recent travel guide, while press reports of a fee rise gave ฿300, so carry cash for either. See Koh Samet and Koh Samet vs Koh Larn.

Bangkok

About two hours away by road, more in traffic. Temples, the river, shopping and street food. Buses to Ekkamai cost about ฿150, or take a taxi or tour. Staying overnight makes it less rushed. See Bangkok day trip and buses.

Ayutthaya

The old capital, with temple ruins listed by UNESCO. About 3 to 3.5 hours each way, so most people go on a tour or stay a night. See Ayutthaya.

River Kwai (Kanchanaburi)

The bridge on the River Kwai, war cemeteries and waterfalls. It's a very long day, 4 to 5 hours each way, so overnight tours are more relaxed. Tours from Pattaya typically start from around ฿3,000 to ฿4,000. See Kanchanaburi.

Khao Yai

Thailand's oldest national park, with forest, waterfalls and wildlife, plus vineyards nearby. About three hours away, so two-day trips are popular. Foreign adults pay a park fee, reported at ฿400 after a fee rise, plus a vehicle fee. Never approach wild elephants. See Khao Yai.

Tour, driver or do it yourself?

OPTION	PROS	CONS
Group tour	Cheap per person, hotel pickup, guide	Fixed schedule, shopping stops
Private driver for the day	Your own timing, good value for 3 or 4 people	Agree hours, fuel and tolls first
Rental car	Total freedom	Thai traffic, you need the right licence
Bus, minivan or ferry	Cheapest	Slower, more planning, last departures

Compare tour prices: the same trip can cost very different amounts. See tours from Pattaya and car rental.

Tips

- Long day trips leave very early. Get a good night's sleep.
- Start early to avoid traffic leaving Pattaya.
- Carry cash for park fees, ferries and temple entry.
- Dress for temples: shoulders and knees covered. See temple customs.
- In the rainy season, check the sea before island trips; boats are cancelled in rough weather.
- Check the last ferry or bus back before you set off.

Common questions

What is the best day trip from Pattaya? For most first-timers, Koh Larn: it's close, cheap and easy. For a bigger island day, Koh Samet. For culture, Bangkok or Chachoengsao.

Can you do Bangkok as a day trip from Pattaya? Yes, about two hours each way by bus or car. You'll see the main temples, but staying a night is less rushed.

Is Ayutthaya too far for a day trip? It's doable on a tour, but it means six to seven hours on the road. An overnight stay is more relaxed.

How much does a day trip from Pattaya cost? From under ฿200 for Koh Larn by public ferry to ฿3,000 or more for a guided tour to the River Kwai. A private driver for the day usually works out cheaper per person for a group.

Which islands can I visit from Pattaya? Koh Larn is the closest. Koh Sichang is north near Si Racha, and Koh Samet is south in Rayong. See island hopping.

Related guides

- Ayutthaya Day Trip from Pattaya
- Koh Sichang Day Trip
- Bang Saen Day Trip
- Rayong and Chanthaburi Day Trips

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Adventure Activities

Go-karts, ATV and buggy tours, ziplines, tower rides and water sports around Pattaya: operators we could confirm are running in 2025-2026, what they cost, and how to stay safe and insured.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/adventure-activities/

Go-karts	**฿499 to ฿1,499 a race (EasyKart)**
ATV tours	**From ฿2,990 for about 2 hours' riding**
Zipline	**Tarzan Adventure, from about ฿1,400 on resale sites**
Jet ski	**About ฿1,200 per 30 minutes**
Insurance	**Check your policy covers it before you pay**

Quick answer: The adventure activities around Pattaya that we could confirm are running in 2025-2026 are go-karting at EasyKart (from ฿499 a race), ATV and buggy tours east of the city (from about ฿2,990), the Tarzan Adventure zipline near Na Jomtien, the cable rides down Pattaya Park Tower, and water sports such as jet skis (about ฿1,200 per 30 minutes). Some names in older guides, such as the Flight of the Gibbon zipline, are reported closed. Whatever you choose, check the equipment and the safety briefing, don't do it after drinking, and make sure your travel insurance covers it.

At a glance

ACTIVITY	WHERE	TYPICAL PRICE	GOOD TO KNOW
Go-karts	EasyKart, Thepprasit Road and Bali Hai Pier	฿499 kid kart, ฿699 regular or two-seater, ฿1,499 fast kart	Solo from age 7 and 125 cm
ATV and buggy tours	Countryside east of Pattaya, near Mabprachan Lake	From ฿2,990 (27 km) or ฿3,500 (34 km)	About 2 hours' riding, transfers included
Zipline	Tarzan Adventure, Na Jomtien area	From about ฿1,400 on resale sites	Kids, half and full courses
Tower rides	Pattaya Park Tower, Jomtien	Often included with a deck ticket	Ask about weight and height limits
Jet ski	Pattaya and Jomtien beaches	About ฿1,200 per 30 minutes	Film it before you ride
Kitesurfing	Jomtien	Lessons by the hour	Windy season matters

Go-karting

EasyKart runs two outdoor tracks in Pattaya: a technical circuit on Thepprasit Road and a waterfront track near Bali Hai Pier, at the end of Walking Street. Its own site lists:

- Kid karts ฿499, regular and two-seater family karts ฿699, and fast karts, which reach about 70 km/h, ฿1,499.
- Races of about 8 minutes (10 to 15 laps), starting every 10 minutes.
- Solo driving from age 7 and 125 cm tall; children from 110 cm can ride in a two-seater with an adult.
- Helmets, a safety briefing and track marshals for every race, with the tracks open late under lights.

Wear closed shoes, tie back long hair and loose clothes, and follow the flags.

ATV and buggy tours

Off-road tours run on dirt trails in the hills and farmland east of the city. ATV & Buggy Adventures, operating since 2006 near Mabprachan Lake about 20 minutes from Pattaya, lists two routes: an easier 27 km route for beginners and families from ฿2,990, and a steeper 34 km route from ฿3,500. Both give about two hours of riding in a three-hour visit, with a guide, helmet, goggles, gloves and boots, a meal and hotel transfers. Non-drivers and younger children can ride as passengers in two- and four-seat buggies. Other operators sell similar tours through booking sites.

ATVs tip over more easily than people expect, especially on slopes and in ruts. Choose the easier route on your first ride, keep a safe gap, and ask about age limits and licence rules before you book.

Ziplines

Tarzan Adventure is a forest zipline course in the Na Jomtien area, south of Jomtien between Nong Nooch and the Khao Chi Chan Buddha cliff. It has a kids' course of 7 platforms (ages about 4 to 7, under 130 cm), a half course of 15 and a full course of 25. Big booking platforms were still selling it with a promotion in mid-2026. Reseller prices start from about ฿1,400; hours are listed as roughly 8:30 or 9am to 5pm. It is easy to combine with Khao Chi Chan or Nong Nooch.

Older guides often recommend Flight of the Gibbon at Khao Kheow. A Pattaya guide updated in April 2025 reports that site closed around 2020, so don't book it without checking.

Bungy jumping

Bungy jumps over a lake have operated on the edge of Pattaya for years, and resale sites still list a 60 m jump at about ฿2,200 to ฿2,500. We could not confirm a current operator from a reliable 2025-2026 source, and at least one big ticket site had no tickets available. If you want to jump, read recent reviews, ask to see the equipment and the operator's licence, and check the weight limits before you pay.

Water and wind sports

- **Jet skis:** about ฿1,200 per 30 minutes on central Pattaya Beach in April 2026. Damage claims after a ride are a known scam: film the jet ski all round first, agree the price and time, and never leave your passport. See Pattaya Beach and common scams.
- **Parasailing and banana boats:** sold on Pattaya Beach and Koh Larn. Agree the price and what is included before you pay.
- **Kitesurfing and windsurfing:** Jomtien is the place. See kitesurfing and wind sports in Jomtien.
- **Diving and snorkelling:** see diving and snorkelling.

Safety

- **Insurance:** many travel policies exclude or limit motorised activities, riding without the right licence, and anything done after drinking. Read your policy before you pay. See travel insurance.
- **Equipment:** look at the helmets, harnesses and machines before you pay. If something looks worn or the briefing is rushed, walk away.
- **Limits:** ask about age, height and weight limits, and be honest about health problems such as heart or back conditions, or pregnancy.
- **No alcohol:** don't ride, drive or jump after drinking.
- **Heat:** go early in the day, drink water, and wear sun cream. See heat and sun safety.
- **Getting there:** many venues are outside the city. If you ride a scooter, wear a helmet; otherwise take the included transfer or Bolt or Grab.
- **If something goes wrong:** call 1669 for an ambulance and 1155 for the Tourist Police. See emergency numbers.

Common questions

How much is go-karting in Pattaya? At EasyKart, ฿499 for a kid kart, ฿699 for a regular or two-seater kart, and ฿1,499 for a fast kart, per race of about 8 minutes.

Is there still a zipline in Pattaya? Yes. Tarzan Adventure in the Na Jomtien area was still being sold in 2026. The Flight of the Gibbon site at Khao Kheow is reported closed.

Can kids do these activities? Many can: kid karts from age 7, two-seater karts from 110 cm with an adult, a kids' zipline course, and buggy passenger seats on ATV tours. Always ask about limits when you book.

Do I need a licence for an ATV tour? Operators set their own rules, so ask. Your insurer may also have conditions for riding motorised vehicles.

Is bungy jumping available in Pattaya? Resale sites still list a lake jump, but we couldn't confirm a current operator from a reliable source. Check recent reviews before you go.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: EasyKart (tracks, prices, age and height rules); ATV & Buggy Adventures and Thai Holiday Guide (routes and prices, fact-checked November 2026); Ramayana Water Park partner page and booking listings for Tarzan Adventure; Pattaya Unlimited on Flight of the Gibbon (updated April 2025); Pattaya Mail on jet ski prices (April 2026). No operator paid to be listed. Prices change; check before you book.

Plan your day

- Check your travel insurance covers the activity. See travel insurance.
- Look at the equipment and safety briefing before you pay.
- Go early in the day to beat the heat and the crowds, and bring water and sun cream.

Related guides

- Horse Riding and Outdoor Activities
- Pattaya Park and Tower
- Kitesurfing and Wind Sports in Jomtien
- Diving & Snorkelling in Pattaya

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Pattaya Beach

The city's main beach along Beach Road: official chair prices, the chair-free Wednesday, jet skis and water sports, swimming and water quality, the smoking ban, and how to avoid overpaying.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/pattaya-beach/

Length	**About 3 km, Dolphin roundabout to Walking Street**
Chairs	**฿50 canvas chair, ฿100 lounger (official rate)**
Chair-free day	**Wednesday**
Jet ski	**About ฿1,200 per 30 minutes (April 2026 report)**
Smoking	**Banned on the beach, fine up to ฿5,000**
Best time	**Early morning, or late afternoon to sunset**

Quick answer: Pattaya Beach is the city beach that runs about three kilometres along Beach Road, from the Dolphin roundabout in the north to Walking Street in the south. It faces west, so sunset is the main event. The official rental rate is ฿50 for a canvas chair and ฿100 for a lounger, but some visitors report paying ฿100 to ฿200, so agree the price before you sit. Rental chairs stay off the sand on Wednesdays. Jet skis cost about ฿1,200 per 30 minutes. Smoking is banned on the beach, the water is calm but not the clearest, and for better swimming most people head to Jomtien, Wongamat or Koh Larn.


Pattaya Beach, Pattaya
Photo: Vyacheslav Argenberg, CC BY 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Where	Along Beach Road, Dolphin roundabout to Walking Street, about 3 km
Canvas chair	฿50 a day, official rate
Lounger	฿100 a day, official rate
What some visitors report paying	฿100 to ฿150 a chair, up to ฿200 on festival nights
Chair-free day	Wednesday, no rental chairs or umbrellas
Your own mat or chair	Allowed for personal use
Jet ski	About ฿1,200 per 30 minutes
Smoking	Banned on the beach and beachfront footpaths, fine up to ฿5,000
Price complaints	Pattaya City hotline 1337

The road behind the beach

Getting here, the one-way traffic, the ฿15 baht bus and the numbered sois are all on our Beach Road page. In short: traffic and baht buses run south only, and you go back north on Second Road. This page is about the sand and the sea.

Chairs and umbrellas

- Rental stalls along the beach are numbered (Pattaya Mail reported stalls 001 to 118 in 2025). City officials say the rate is ฿50 for a canvas beach chair and ฿100 for a lounger, and that it has been stable for over a decade.
- In practice, visitors told Pattaya Mail they often pay ฿100, foreigners sometimes ฿150, and up to ฿200 a chair during fireworks festivals and Songkran. Some stalls ask you to rent a full set of chairs and a table.
- Ask the price, and whether a drink order is expected, before you sit down. If you are overcharged, note the stall number. Complaints go to the city hotline, 1337.
- Food, drinks and massages come to you from vendors. Prices vary, so ask first here too.

Pro tip: one of the overcharges he has run into himself: a smoothie that costs ฿40 at a market, sold for ฿280 at a beach restaurant. Check the menu price before you order.

Chair-free Wednesdays and your own gear

Pattaya City has kept rental chairs and umbrellas off Pattaya Beach every Wednesday since 2015, to give the beach a rest day. The sand is open and quiet, but there is little shade, so bring a towel or mat, a hat and water.

You can bring your own mat, chair or umbrella any day, for personal use. In 2026 the city repeated that renting out mats and chairs on public beach land without permission is illegal, and officers confiscate gear from unlicensed operators. Also banned: tents and staying overnight, bonfires, and loud music that disturbs others.

Water sports

- **Jet skis:** in April 2026 Pattaya Mail found operators on central Pattaya Beach charging ฿1,200 per 30 minutes, with business slow. Jet ski damage claims are a long-running problem here. Before you ride, film the jet ski all round, agree the price and the time on video or in writing, don't hand over your passport, and ride away from swimmers. See common scams. If there is a dispute, call the Tourist Police on 1155 or the scam line 1441.
- **Parasailing and banana boats:** sold from boards and touts along the beach and on Koh Larn. We found no reliable current price list, so agree the price, the number of laps and what is included before you pay.
- Check your travel insurance covers motorised water sports. See travel insurance.

Swimming and water quality

The bay is usually calm, but it is a busy working seafront with boats and jet skis, and the water is rarely clear. Swim where others do, stay inside any marked swimming areas, and keep clear of boat lanes.

After heavy rain, storm drains empty into the sea along the Pattaya and Jomtien seafronts. In 2026 there were several reports of dark water at Jomtien after rain, and in August the city advised against swimming at Jomtien while oil-like slicks were checked. Give it a day or two after a big storm, and stay out of the water near drain outlets. Watch the flags: red means don't swim. See beach safety and jellyfish and sea creatures.

For clearer water, go to Jomtien, Wongamat or the beaches on Koh Larn.

When to go

TIME	WHAT IT'S LIKE
Early morning	Quiet and cool, walkers and joggers, the nicest time for a swim
Midday	Hot with little shade. Rent an umbrella or come back later
Late afternoon to sunset	The best time, busy but relaxed
Wednesday	No rental chairs, open sand, bring your own shade
Festival nights	Crowded, and chair prices can rise. See the events calendar

Tips

- Smoking is banned on the sand, fine up to ฿5,000. See laws visitors break.
- Keep valuables with you or leave them at your hotel. Don't leave a phone on a chair while you swim.
- Take your rubbish with you; bins fill up fast on busy days.
- The sun is strong even when it's hazy. See heat and sun safety.
- Want a pool and a cocktail instead? See beach clubs vs beach chairs.

Common questions

How much is a beach chair on Pattaya Beach? The official rate is ฿50 for a canvas chair and ฿100 for a lounger. Many visitors report being asked ฿100 to ฿150, and more on festival nights, so agree the price first.

Are there beach chairs on Wednesdays? No. Rental chairs and umbrellas are kept off Pattaya Beach on Wednesdays. You can bring your own mat or chair.

Is Pattaya Beach good for swimming? It's calm, but the water is not very clear and there are boats and jet skis. Avoid swimming for a day or two after heavy rain. Jomtien, Wongamat and Koh Larn are better for swimming.

How much is a jet ski in Pattaya? About ฿1,200 per 30 minutes on central Pattaya Beach in April 2026. Film the jet ski before you ride and agree the price first.

Can you smoke on Pattaya Beach? No. The beach is smoke-free, with a fine of up to ฿5,000.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya Mail on official chair fees and visitor complaints (August 2025), chair-free Wednesdays (July 2025), personal gear allowed, tents and loud music banned (May 2026), bring your own beach gear (July 2026) and jet ski prices (April 2026); Khaosod English on the August 2026 slick at Jomtien. Smoking ban and baht bus fare as on our Beach Road page. Prices change; check on the day.

Plan your day

- Mornings are calmer, evenings are lively along the beach road.
- See sunset spots.
- See jellyfish and sea creatures.

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Massage in Pattaya

Thai, foot and oil massage in Pattaya: typical prices, what to expect at a massage shop, and how much to tip.

Verified October 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/massage-in-pattaya/

Thai or foot massage	**Around ฿200 to ฿350 an hour**
Oil massage	**Around ฿300 to ฿500 an hour**
Spas	**Much more, often ฿1,000 and up**
Tip	**฿50 to ฿100 an hour**

Massage shops are everywhere in Pattaya, and a traditional massage after a long day is one of the city's great cheap pleasures.

Types and typical prices

MASSAGE	TYPICAL PRICE PER HOUR
Foot massage	฿200 to ฿350
Thai massage	฿200 to ฿350
Oil massage	฿300 to ฿500
Hotel or day spa	฿1,000 and up

Prices are lower in local areas like Soi Buakhao and higher on Beach Road and in hotels.

What to expect

- Thai massage is done fully clothed; you'll be given loose clothes to change into.
- Say if the pressure is too strong; "bao bao" means gently.
- Tell the therapist about injuries before they start.

A note on massage shops

Some venues use the word "massage" as a front for other services. This guide covers traditional Thai, foot and oil massage only. Licensed shops display prices clearly and staff wear uniforms.

Tipping

Around ฿50 to ฿100 per hour is normal, given in cash to your therapist. See tipping in Thailand.

Plan your day

- Start with a foot or Thai massage to find a shop you like.
- Tell the therapist about injuries or pressure you prefer.
- See massage etiquette.

Related guides

- Cinemas, Bowling and Indoor Fun
- Pattaya in One Day
- Pattaya for Couples
- Pattaya in the Rain: A 3-Day Plan

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Rainy Day & Indoor Attractions

Things to do in Pattaya when it rains: Art in Paradise, Underwater World, malls, cinemas, bowling, cooking classes and more, with 2026 prices and tips for getting around in a downpour.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/rainy-day-attractions/

Art in Paradise	**About ฿400 at the gate, less online**
Underwater World	**About ฿550 at the gate, cheaper online**
Malls	**Central Festival, Terminal 21**
Rainy season	**Roughly May to October**

Pattaya's rainy season runs roughly from May to October, and downpours can last hours. These indoor options keep the day going.

Quick answer: On a wet day, head for a mall first: Central Festival on Beach Road and Terminal 21 at the Dolphin roundabout have cinemas, bowling, arcades and food courts under one roof, and cost nothing to walk around. For a paid attraction, Art in Paradise (3D illusion art, about ฿400 at the gate) and Underwater World (an aquarium, about ฿550) both take one to two hours. Booking sites usually sell tickets for less than the gate price. Finish with a long massage or a cooking class.

Indoor options at a glance

OPTION	ROUGH COST (2026)	TIME NEEDED	GOOD FOR
—	—	—	—
Shopping malls	Free to walk around	As long as you like	Everyone, food, air con
Cinema	Varies by mall and seat	2 to 3 hours	Couples, families
Art in Paradise	About ฿400 adult at the gate, less online	1 to 2 hours	Photos, families
Underwater World	About ฿550 adult at the gate, less online	1 to 2 hours	Kids, families
Thai cooking class	About ฿1,000 to ฿2,000	3 to 4 hours	Food lovers, couples
Massage	See our massage guide	1 to 2 hours	Everyone
Cabaret show	See our cabaret guide	About 1 hour	Evenings

Attraction prices are the foreigner gate prices given by 2026 visitor guides. Sources disagree (see below), and online tickets on booking apps are often cheaper, so compare before you go.

Attractions

- **Art in Paradise**: a 3D illusion art museum on Second Road where you pose inside the paintings. A 2026 visitor guide lists ฿400 for adults and ฿200 for children 100 to 130 cm, with under-100 cm free; resellers sell it for less. Opening hours differ between sources, from about 9:00 to anywhere between 20:00 and 22:30, so check before an evening visit. See Art in Paradise and Mini Siam.
- **Underwater World**: an aquarium with a walk-through tunnel on Sukhumvit Road. A guide reviewed in July 2026 lists ฿550 for foreign adults and ฿320 for children; another lists ฿599 and ฿399. Most sources give 9:00 to 18:00 daily. Online tickets are cheaper.
- **Cabaret shows** in the evening. See cabaret shows.

Malls

Pattaya's malls, such as Central Festival on Beach Road and Terminal 21 by the Dolphin roundabout, have cinemas, food courts, bowling and arcades. Food courts are the cheapest proper meal in town on a wet day, and you can spend a whole afternoon moving between floors without getting wet. Many films are in English with Thai subtitles; stand for the royal anthem before the film. See cinemas and bowling.

Other ideas

- A long massage. Rain is the perfect excuse for a two-hour oil or Thai massage.
- A Thai cooking class: usually three to four hours, several dishes, often with a market tour. Book a day or two ahead.
- Watching a Muay Thai fight night at an indoor stadium.
- A slow café morning with a book. See books and libraries.

With kids

Malls are the easy win: arcades, bowling, play areas and food courts close together. Underwater World and Art in Paradise both work for children, and under-100 cm children go free at Art in Paradise according to 2026 guides. See kids' activities and classes.

Getting around in the rain

- Streets can flood quickly in heavy rain. See flood season.
- Bolt and Grab prices rise when it rains, and cars are harder to find; a baht bus is still ฿15 on the main loop.
- Don’t ride a scooter through flood water; you can’t see potholes or open drains underneath.
- Rain usually comes in heavy bursts, often in the afternoon or evening. Waiting 30 to 60 minutes in a café often beats going out in it.

Pro tip: weather apps don’t always agree. One evening in October 2026 his phone’s forecast said rain all evening, so plans changed; AccuWeather showed only a very small chance, and it stayed dry. Check more than one app before cancelling plans.

Rain also changes the city. In September 2026, reports called it the worst rain and flooding in ten years, and Jonny filmed streets that were quieter than usual, with people sheltering indoors. If a big storm is forecast, plan the whole day around one mall or one area.

Common questions

What can you do in Pattaya when it rains? Malls with cinemas and bowling, Art in Paradise, Underwater World, a massage, a cooking class or a Muay Thai night.

Does it rain all day in Pattaya in the rainy season? Usually not. Most days have sunny spells with heavy bursts of rain, often later in the day. Some storms do last for hours.

How much is Art in Paradise Pattaya? About ฿400 for adults at the gate in 2026 guides, less online.

How much is Underwater World Pattaya? About ฿550 for foreign adults at the gate (another guide says ฿599), less online.

Plan your day

- Rain usually comes in heavy bursts, so plan an indoor stop nearby.
- See a rainy week plan.
- See cinemas and bowling.

Sources

- Pattaya Pointer: “Art in Paradise Pattaya: 3D Museum Visitor Guide (2026)” (฿400 adult, ฿200 child, under 100 cm free). pattayapointer.pages.dev. Hours from several ticket sellers, which disagree.
- Thai Holiday Guide: Underwater World Pattaya (reviewed July 2026; ฿550 adult, ฿320 child). Pickyourtrail lists ฿599 and ฿399. Hours 9:00 to 18:00 per most sellers.
- Jonny James ride videos, 10 October 2026 (forecast apps), 22 and 26 September 2026 (rain and flooding).

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

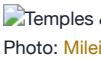
Temples & Viewpoints

Pattaya's best temples and views in one place: the Big Buddha and the city viewpoint on Pratumnak Hill, Wat Chai Mongkhon in town, the Sanctuary of Truth, and Khao Chi Chan, Wat Yansangwararam and Viharn Sien to the south. Costs, timing, dress and getting there.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/temples-viewpoints/

Entry	**Most temples and viewpoints are free**
Paid	**Sanctuary of Truth ฿500 by day; Viharn Sien about ฿50**
Dress	**Shoulders and knees covered at temples**
Closest	**Big Buddha and the city viewpoint on Pratumnak Hill**
Further	**Khao Chi Chan, Wat Yansangwararam and Viharn Sien, about 15 to 20 km south**
Best time	**Early morning or late afternoon**

Quick answer: Pattaya's two easiest sights are on Pratumnak Hill, between Pattaya and Jomtien: the golden Big Buddha at Wat Phra Yai and the Pattaya City viewpoint over the bay. Both are free. In town, Wat Chai Mongkhon on South Pattaya Road is the city's main working temple, and the Sanctuary of Truth in Naklua is the big paid sight (฿500 by day). About 15 to 20 km south, the Khao Chi Chan Buddha cliff and the royal temple Wat Yansangwararam are free and sit close together, with the Viharn Sien museum (about ฿50) nearby. Cover your shoulders and knees, go early or late to avoid the heat, and use Bolt, Grab or a tour for the southern sights.


Temples & Viewpoints, Pattaya
Photo: Milei.vencel, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons

At a glance

PLACE	WHERE	COST	TIME NEEDED	BEST FOR
Big Buddha (Wat Phra Yai)	Top of Pratumnak Hill	Free	30 to 60 minutes	A working hilltop temple, dragon staircase
Pattaya City viewpoint	Pratumnak Hill, above Bali Hai	Free	20 to 40 minutes	The classic view of the bay, sunset
Wat Chai Mongkhon	South Pattaya Road, in town	Free	30 to 60 minutes	Everyday temple life, the market opposite
Sanctuary of Truth	Naklua, north Pattaya	฿500 by day, ฿700 at night	2 to 4 hours	Carved wood, guided tours
Khao Chi Chan	Na Chom Thian, south	Free	20 to 45 minutes	The giant gold Buddha on a cliff
Wat Yansangwararam	Next to Khao Chi Chan	Free	1 to 2 hours	A large, quiet royal temple park
Viharn Sien	Near Wat Yansangwararam	About ฿50	45 to 90 minutes	Chinese art, a cool indoor stop

On Pratumnak Hill

Pratumnak is the green hill between Pattaya and Jomtien, and it has the city's best free views.

- **Big Buddha (Wat Phra Yai):** a large golden seated Buddha on the hilltop, reached by a staircase lined with dragons, with smaller Buddha images for each day of the week around the base. It is an active temple, so dress for it. See Big Buddha and Pattaya viewpoint.
- **Pattaya City viewpoint:** the lookout near the top of the hill above Bali Hai, with the view north over the bay and the Pattaya City sign. The same hilltop has Wat Khao Phra Bat, with a replica of the Buddha's footprint, and a monument to Admiral Prince Abhakara, Prince of Chumphon, regarded as the father of the Royal Thai Navy, where Thai visitors, many with links to the sea, come to pay respects. One listing gives the viewpoint's hours as 7am to 10pm. It is busiest at sunset.
- Both are close together: allow an hour or two, or walk them as a loop. See the Pratumnak walk and Pratumnak Hill.
- Monkeys live on the hill. Keep food in your bag and don't feed them.

In town

- **Wat Chai Mongkhon** on South Pattaya Road, near Second Road, is the main temple in central Pattaya, a working temple where local people come to make merit, and at its busiest on Buddhist holy days. A local market runs across the road. See Thai fresh markets.
- **The Sanctuary of Truth** in Naklua is a huge hand-carved wooden building by the sea, worked on since 1981. It isn't a temple you just wander into: tickets are ฿500 for adults by day and ฿700 at night, with guided tours and a hard hat inside. See Sanctuary of Truth.

South of Jomtien

These three are close together, about 15 to 20 km south of central Pattaya off Sukhumvit Road, and make an easy half day.

- **Khao Chi Chan (Buddha Mountain):** a seated Buddha outline about 109 m tall, cut into an old quarry cliff by laser in 1996 and inlaid with gold, for King Rama IX's Golden Jubilee. Entry and parking are free. See Khao Chi Chan.
- **Wat Yansangwararam:** a large royal temple set in gardens, lakes and forest, with a hilltop chedi, a replica Buddha footprint and pavilions in different Thai and Asian styles. Free, and listed as open 8am to 5pm. Allow an hour or more; it is spread out. See Wat Yansangwararam.

- **Viharn Sien (Anek Kusala Sala):** a three-storey Chinese-style museum and shrine with bronzes, jade, Buddha images and replica terracotta warriors. It is not a working temple. A guide updated in 2026 lists entry at ฿50 and hours of 8am to 5pm; one other source says ฿100, so bring a little extra.

How to get there: Bolt or Grab is easiest, but getting a car back can be slow this far out, so agree a wait-and-return price or book before you finish. A scooter is a pleasant ride if you are confident on Sukhumvit Road. Many half-day tours combine these with Nong Nooch. See tours from Pattaya.

Temple etiquette

- Cover your shoulders and knees. Swimwear and very short shorts are not suitable, even on a hot day. Carry a light scarf or sarong.
- Take your shoes off before entering temple buildings, where you see others doing so.
- Don't point your feet at Buddha images or monks, and don't climb on statues.
- Women should not touch monks or hand items to them directly.
- Speak quietly and ask before photographing people praying.
- Drones are out of place at temples and shrines.

For the full guide, including merit-making and fortune sticks, see temple customs.

Buddhist holy days

Temples are at their busiest, and most beautiful, on Buddhist holy days, with candlelit processions in the evening on days like Makha Bucha, Visakha Bucha and Asalha Bucha. Alcohol sales are restricted on five of these days. See Ok Phansa and Buddhist holidays and alcohol.

Common questions

Are Pattaya's temples free? Most are: the Big Buddha, the city viewpoint, Wat Chai Mongkhon, Khao Chi Chan and Wat Yansangwararam. The Sanctuary of Truth (฿500 by day) and Viharn Sien (about ฿50) charge entry.

What should I wear to a temple in Pattaya? Clothes that cover your shoulders and knees. You will take your shoes off to enter buildings.

What is the best viewpoint in Pattaya? The Pattaya City viewpoint on Pratumnak Hill for the classic bay view, especially at sunset. For a view from much higher up, there is the deck at Pattaya Park Tower.

How far is Khao Chi Chan from Pattaya? About 15 to 20 km south, around 30 to 40 minutes by road. Wat Yansangwararam and Viharn Sien are next to it.

Can I see the Big Buddha and the viewpoint together? Yes. They are a short walk apart on Pratumnak Hill.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Thai Holiday Guide, Wat Yanasangwararam and Anek Kuson Sala (Viharn Sien) (both updated July 2026); Love Thailand, Khao Phra Tamnak (Khao Phra Bat) for the viewpoint, Wat Khao Phra Bat and the Prince of Chumphon monument. Sanctuary of Truth prices and Khao Chi Chan details as on our own pages for those sights, checked in 2026. Hours and fees can change on holidays.

Plan your day

- Visit early morning or late afternoon for softer light and cooler air.
- See temple customs.
- See photo spots.

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Pattaya in One Day

Only have one day in Pattaya? How to choose what to do: viewpoint, Sanctuary of Truth, beach time, a market, a massage and an evening on Walking Street, with times, costs and tips for cruise visitors.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/pattaya-in-one-day/

Morning	**Viewpoint and Sanctuary of Truth**
Afternoon	**Beach, lunch and a massage**
Evening	**Sunset, then Walking Street**
Getting around	**Baht buses and app taxis**

One day is enough to get a taste of Pattaya. This plan keeps travel short and mixes the big sights with time to relax. Staying longer? See 3 days in Pattaya.

Quick answer: With one day, pick two or three things you really want and don't rush. A good mix is a cool-morning viewpoint, one big sight like the Sanctuary of Truth (about ฿500), a beach or a massage in the heat of the afternoon, and Beach Road and Walking Street after dark. Baht buses cost ฿15 on the main loop; Bolt and Grab cover the rest. Arriving by cruise ship? Laem Chabang is about 30 to 40 minutes north, so plan around the all-aboard time.

Pro tip: he isn't a fan of one-size-fits-all itineraries. Everyone is different and there's so much to do, so learn what's available and build your own day. Use the blocks below as a menu, not a timetable.

Your day at a glance

TIME	PICK ONE OR TWO	ROUGH COST (2026)
—	—	—
Early morning	Pattaya viewpoint and the Big Buddha on Pratumnak Hill	Free
Morning	Sanctuary of Truth in Naklua	About ฿500 adults
Lunch	Local restaurant, market or mall food court	About ฿60 to ฿200 a dish
Afternoon	Beach time at Jomtien or Wongamat, or a Thai massage	Beach chair or massage at local prices
Sunset	Beach, rooftop or viewpoint	Free to the price of a drink
Evening	Dinner, Beach Road and Walking Street lights	Your choice

The Sanctuary of Truth price is from our own guide; check the gate price on the day. Shoulders and knees must be covered there.

Morning

- Start early at the Pattaya viewpoint and the Big Buddha. It's cooler, the light is better and there are fewer people. See the Pratumnak walk.
- Then the carved wooden Sanctuary of Truth in Naklua, open roughly 8:00 to 18:00. Allow about two hours.

Afternoon

- Lunch at a local restaurant or market. See cheap eats.
- Beach time on Jomtien or Wongamat. Wongamat is close to the Sanctuary of Truth, so it saves travel.
- A Thai massage to recover. See massage.
- Too hot or raining? Go indoors. See rainy day attractions.

Evening

- Sunset from the beach or a rooftop. See sunset spots.
- Dinner and a walk down Walking Street to see the lights. It's a sight even if you don't go into a single bar.

Other ways to spend the day

- **Island day:** skip the sights and take the ferry to Koh Larn, about 45 minutes from Bali Hai pier for ฿30 or ฿40. Check the last ferry back.
- **Family day:** a water park or Nong Nooch Garden.
- **Food day:** markets, street food and a cooking class.

What to bring

- Clothes that cover shoulders and knees for the Sanctuary of Truth and temples.
- Sun cream, a hat and water; the midday heat is the hardest part of the day. See heat and sun safety.

- Small notes and coins for baht buses, drinks and tips.
- Your phone charged, with Bolt or Grab set up before you arrive.

Getting around

Baht buses run along the main roads, and app taxis fill the gaps. On the main loop, baht buses go south on Beach Road and north on Second Road for ฿15. See baht buses and Bolt and Grab.

Arriving from a cruise ship

Ships usually dock at Laem Chabang, about 25 km north of Pattaya. The drive takes roughly 30 to 40 minutes each way, longer in traffic. Inside the port you can't walk to the gate; you need the port shuttle or a taxi.

- **Cruise line shuttle:** many lines run a paid shuttle to a central drop-off in Pattaya. The easiest option; check with your ship.
- **Port taxis:** cruise forums report fixed prices at the port, with one passenger quoting about ฿1,400 to Pattaya. Agree the price before you get in.
- **Pre-booked transfer or app:** possible, but some passengers report trouble finding app cars at the port.

Plan to be back at the port at least an hour before all-aboard. Traffic on Sukhumvit can be slow in the late afternoon, and the ship won't wait.

Common questions

Is one day enough for Pattaya? It's enough for a taste: one viewpoint, one sight, the beach and an evening walk. Three days lets you add an island and a day trip.

What should I not miss in Pattaya in one day? Most visitors put the Sanctuary of Truth, the viewpoint and an evening on Beach Road at the top.

How far is Laem Chabang cruise port from Pattaya? About 25 km, roughly 30 to 40 minutes by road.

Can I visit Koh Larn in one day? Yes. The ferry takes about 45 minutes; check the time of the last boat back.

Plan your day

- Start early to fit in a viewpoint before the heat.
- See late night food.

Sources

- Our Sanctuary of Truth, Koh Larn and baht bus guides (prices and times checked 2026).
- Cruise Critic forum threads on Laem Chabang to Pattaya transport, and Cruisesheet's Laem Chabang port page (distance, shuttles, taxi prices). Checked November 2026.
- Jonny James on itineraries, from his own notes.

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Pattaya Weather by Month

Pattaya weather month by month from official climate averages: temperatures, rain, rainy days and sea temperature, and what each month means for your trip.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/weather-by-month/

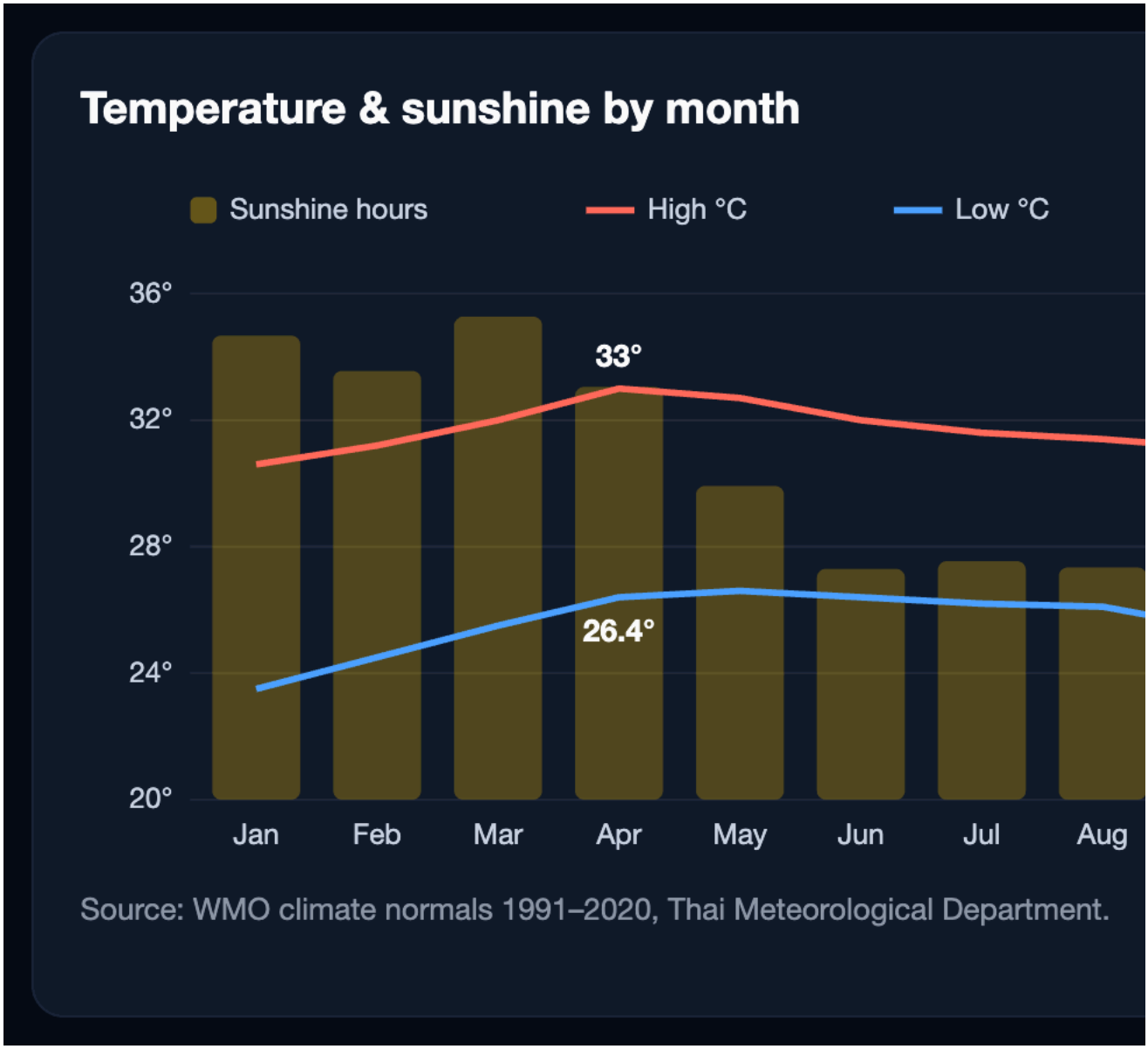
Average highs	**About 30 to 33°C every month**
Hottest	**April, average high about 33°C**
Driest	**December to February, 1 to 2 rainy days a month**
Wettest	**September and October, about 13 to 14 rainy days each**
Sea	**About 28°C in January to 31°C in May**
Source	**WMO climate normals 1991–2020**

Quick answer: Pattaya is warm all year. Average highs stay between about 30°C and 33°C in every month, and average lows rarely drop below 23°C. What really changes is the rain. December to February are the driest months, with only one or two rainy days a month on average. April is the hottest. September and October are by far the wettest, with about 214 mm and 225 mm of rain and 13 to 14 rainy days each. These are long-term climate averages, not a forecast, and any single year can be quite different.

At a glance

MONTH	AVERAGE HIGH / LOW	RAIN	RAINY DAYS	WHAT TO EXPECT
January	31°C / 24°C	16 mm	1.6	Dry, sunny, the most comfortable month
February	31°C / 25°C	20 mm	1.8	Dry and sunny, slowly warming up
March	32°C / 26°C	47 mm	3.3	Hot and dry, the sunniest month
April	33°C / 26°C	68 mm	5.0	Hottest month, Songkran
May	33°C / 27°C	121 mm	9.0	Still hot, first big storms
June	32°C / 26°C	132 mm	9.8	Showers, plenty of dry spells
July	32°C / 26°C	104 mm	9.5	Rainy spells, often cloudy
August	31°C / 26°C	91 mm	9.1	Rainy spells, a little less rain
September	31°C / 25°C	214 mm	13.2	Wet, the heaviest storms start
October	31°C / 25°C	225 mm	14.4	Wettest month, most humid
November	31°C / 24°C	57 mm	4.0	Drying out fast, getting busy
December	30°C / 23°C	12 mm	1.5	Driest month, busiest season

Figures are rounded averages for the Pattaya weather station, from the WMO climate normals for 1991 to 2020. A “rainy day” means a day with at least 1 mm of rain. The yearly total is about 1,100 mm over about 82 rainy days.



Source: WMO climate normals 1991–2020, Thai Meteorological Department.

The three seasons

The Thai Meteorological Department splits Thailand's year into a hot season, a rainy season and a cool season (it calls it winter). It announces each new season when the weather data show it has started, so the dates move a little every year. In 2026 it declared the rainy season from 15 May and winter from 9 November.

SEASON	PATTAYA MONTHS	IN NUMBERS
Cool and dry	November to February	Highs about 30 to 31°C, lows 23 to 25°C, humidity lowest (about 70% in December)
Hot	March to mid May	Highs about 32 to 33°C, lows about 26°C, and humid enough to feel hotter
Rainy	Mid May to October	Two peaks: May and June, then a much bigger one in September and October

In Pattaya the rainy season has two parts. May and June bring the first storms, July and August are a little calmer, and then September and October bring about 40% of the whole year's rain between them.

Month by month

- **January and February:** the driest, most comfortable weather, with lots of sunshine and the lowest humidity of the year. Hotels are at their busiest, so book early.
- **March and April:** the heat builds. March has the most sunshine of any month, about 239 hours. April is the hottest, with Songkran water fights from 13 April and Pattaya's own Wan Lai a few days later. Plan outdoor trips for the morning and evening. See heat and sun safety and Songkran and Wan Lai.
- **May and June:** the rainy season starts, usually in mid May. Expect about 9 to 10 rainy days a month, often as short, heavy storms with dry hours either side.
- **July and August:** slightly less rain than June, but part of the cloudiest stretch of the year (June to September), with about half the sunshine of March.

- **September and October:** the wettest months. Heavy storms can flood low streets quickly. In late September 2026, for example, overnight rain flooded roads around Pattaya and Si Racha, and the Pattaya Marine Office stopped all boats leaving shore on 25 September. See flood season.
- **November and December:** the rain drops away fast, from about 57 mm in November to about 12 mm in December, the driest month of all. The crowds and prices rise with it. See Loy Krathong and New Year countdown.

The sea

The Gulf of Thailand stays warm enough to swim in all year: about 28°C in January, rising to about 31°C in May, according to long-term sea temperature averages. In storms the sea can turn rough quickly, and red flags go up on dangerous days. See beach safety.

Planning around the weather

- Phone weather apps are often wrong about rain here. A rain radar shows where the rain actually is.
- In the rainy season, plan beaches and island trips for the morning, carry a poncho, and keep an indoor plan in your pocket. See rainy day attractions and a 3-day plan for the rain.
- Don't ride a scooter through deep floodwater. See the rainy season survival kit.
- Boat trips can be cancelled at short notice in storms, so leave a spare day if an island trip matters to you.

Pro tip: Where Apple Weather tends to get things very wrong, the AccuWeather radar hasn't disappointed me once. Most Pattaya downpours are heavy but short: if a storm is heading for the coast, give it 30 to 60 minutes.

Common questions

What is the hottest month in Pattaya? April, with an average high of about 33°C and nights around 26°C. March and May are almost as hot.

What is the rainiest month in Pattaya? October, with about 225 mm of rain on average, just ahead of September at about 214 mm.

Does it rain all day in the rainy season? Usually not. Even October averages about 14 days with 1 mm or more of rain, so more than half the days stay dry, and most storms are heavy but short.

When is the best weather in Pattaya? December to February: dry, sunny and the least humid. It is also the busiest and most expensive time. See best time to visit.

Is the sea warm enough to swim in January? Yes. The sea averages about 28°C in January, the coolest month for the water.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Wikipedia, Pattaya climate table (temperature, rain, rainy days and humidity from the WMO climate normals 1991–2020; sunshine from the Royal Irrigation Department, 1981–2010); VietnamPlus, Thailand enters 2026 rainy season (15 May 2026); Pattaya Mail, Thailand enters winter (11 November 2026); Nation Thailand, Pattaya bans boat departures on 25 September; seatemperature.info, Pattaya water temperature. Averages only: check a forecast and a rain radar before you go.

Plan your day

- Weather varies year to year, so check a forecast and a rain radar a few days before.
- See best time to visit.
- See heat and sun safety.

From the blog

- Read Jonny's story: If You Don't Know This About Pattaya Weather, Your Plans Could Be Ruined.

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Beach Clubs vs Beach Chairs

The two ways to spend a beach day in Pattaya: a beach club with a pool, music and service, or a ฿50 chair on the sand. Official chair prices, chair-free Wednesdays, named beach clubs and what they cost.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/beach-clubs/

Beach chair	**฿50 canvas, ฿100 lounger (official rate)**
Beach club	**Pool, day beds, DJ; spend usually ฿1,000+ a person**
Chair-free day	**Wednesday on Pattaya Beach**
Best for chairs	**Jomtien, Wongamat, Pattaya Beach**
Best for clubs	**Beach Road and Na Jomtien**

Quick answer: A rented chair on the sand is the cheap, simple option: the official rate on Pattaya and Jomtien beaches is ฿50 for a canvas chair and ฿100 for a lounger, with food and drinks from vendors. A beach club gives you a pool, day beds, music and table service, usually inside or beside a hotel, and you should expect to spend ฿1,000 or more each on food and drinks. Chairs suit families, budgets and long lazy days; clubs suit groups, birthdays and a treat day. Pattaya Beach has no rental chairs on Wednesdays, and always agree prices before you sit.

At a glance

	BEACH CHAIR	BEACH CLUB
Cost	฿50 to ฿100 a day, plus what you buy	Often ฿1,000 or more a person in food and drinks; packages and brunches from about ฿1,000 to ฿2,600
What you get	A chair, an umbrella, vendors who come to you	Pool, day beds, shade, toilets, showers, music, table service
Where	Pattaya Beach, Jomtien, Wongamat, Koh Larn	Beach Road, Na Jomtien and hotels along the coast
Best for	Budgets, families, long days by the sea	Groups, birthdays, couples, a day off from the heat
Watch out for	Overcharging, chair-free Wednesdays	Minimum spends, service charge and VAT on top
Book?	No	Weekends, holidays and day beds, yes

Beach chairs: how it works

- Find a chair stall, ask the price, and sit down. Pattaya City's official rate is ฿50 for a canvas beach chair and ฿100 for a lounger. A Jomtien operator told Pattaya Mail the same rates held over the 2025-26 New Year holiday, for Thai and foreign visitors alike.
- Not everyone pays that. On Pattaya Beach, visitors have reported ฿100 to ฿150 a chair, and up to ฿200 on festival nights, and some stalls push you to rent a whole set with a table. Agree the price, and whether you must buy drinks, before you sit.
- Vendors bring food, cold drinks, fruit and massages to your chair. You can also bring your own food and drink.
- Pattaya Beach is chair-free on Wednesdays, a city rule since 2015. You can bring your own mat, chair or umbrella any day for personal use; renting them out without a licence is illegal.

For each beach, see Pattaya Beach, Jomtien, Wongamat and Koh Larn beaches.

Beach clubs: how it works

Pattaya's beach clubs are mostly run by hotels or sit right on the sand next to them. You pay through food and drinks rather than a ticket, though some ask for a minimum spend on day beds or at weekends. Prices usually have a 10% service charge and 7% VAT added unless they say "net". Many play DJ sets in the afternoon and turn into a sunset party.

Three beach clubs that recent reputable sources show operating:

- **LAY Beach Club** on Beach Road in central Pattaya, run by the Meliá Pattaya hotel. It opened in mid-2025 with a cocktail pool, cabanas, a rooftop lounge and nightly fire shows, and is listed as open daily from 11am to midnight.
- **Esmé Beach Club** at The Standard, Pattaya Na Jomtien, which opened in October 2025. Its mid-2026 offers included a Saturday beach brunch (noon to 4pm) at ฿1,599 net for food only or ฿2,599 net with free-flow drinks, and two hours of free-flow drinks for ฿1,499 net.
- **Cave Beach Club** on the Na Jomtien coast, south of Jomtien, with day beds and a terrace over the sea, popular for sunset.

Offers and hours change often. Check the club's own page or call before you go, and ask about minimum spends and day-bed prices before you sit. Hotel pools are usually for hotel guests only unless the hotel sells a day pass.

Which to pick

- On a budget or with kids: beach chairs. Bring snacks and water and you can have a full day for a few hundred baht.
- Want a pool, clean toilets, shade and service: a beach club.
- A group or a birthday: a beach club day bed, booked ahead.
- Want quiet: an island beach. See Koh Larn beaches.
- Want both: a chair in the morning, a beach club for sunset drinks.

Buddhist holy days

On the five Buddhist holy days with an alcohol sales ban, most shops and ordinary bars can't sell alcohol. Hotels, licensed entertainment venues and some designated venues may still sell, so a hotel beach club may still serve drinks while beach vendors can't. See Ok Phansa and Buddhist holidays and alcohol.

Tips

- Go in the morning before the strongest sun, and take shade at midday. See heat and sun safety.
- Watch the flags and read beach safety. Don't swim after a long boozy afternoon.
- Ask for the menu before you order on the beach. Beach restaurants can charge several times market prices.
- Smoking is banned on Pattaya and Jomtien beaches, and beach clubs set their own smoking areas.
- Watch sunset afterwards. See sunset spots.

Common questions

How much is a beach chair in Pattaya? The official rate is ฿50 for a canvas chair and ฿100 for a lounger, on both Pattaya Beach and Jomtien. Some visitors report being asked more, so agree the price before you sit.

Do Pattaya beach clubs charge entry? The ones we checked sell food, drinks and packages rather than an entry ticket. Some ask for a minimum spend on day beds, at weekends or on event days. Ask when you book.

Which day are beach chairs banned in Pattaya? Wednesday, on Pattaya Beach. Bring your own mat or chair that day.

Can I bring my own chair or mat? Yes, for personal use. Renting gear out on public beaches without permission is illegal.

Do beach clubs serve alcohol on Buddhist holy days? Hotels and licensed entertainment venues may sell on those days, so hotel beach clubs may serve. Shops and beach vendors may not.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya Mail on official chair fees on Pattaya Beach (August 2025), Jomtien chair prices over New Year (January 2026), chair-free Wednesdays (July 2025) and personal gear on beaches (May 2026); TTG Asia on LAY Beach Club (August 2025); The Standard Pattaya Na Jomtien, Esmé offers; Roof21 beachfront dining guide (September 2025) for Cave Beach Club. None of these clubs paid to be listed.

Plan your day

- Ask about minimum spends and day bed prices before you sit.

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

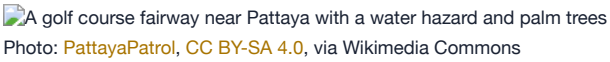
Golf in Pattaya

Pattaya is one of Asia's big golf destinations, with more than twenty courses within an hour. 2026 green fees from courses' own price lists, caddies, tips and carts, the best time to play, booking, etiquette and the LPGA event.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/golf-courses/

Courses	**More than twenty within about an hour of Pattaya**
Weekday green fee	**About ฿1,500 to ฿6,500 on courses' own price lists**
Caddie	**About ฿350 to ฿500, plus a cash tip of about ฿400 to ฿600**
Cart	**About ฿600 to ฿1,000, compulsory at some courses**
Best season	**November to February, cooler and drier**
Pro event	**Honda LPGA Thailand, Siam Country Club, 18 to 21 Feb 2027**

Quick answer: Pattaya is one of Asia's best-known golf destinations, with more than twenty courses within about an hour of town, from the championship Siam Country Club, home of the women's LPGA tour event, to relaxed, cheaper courses. Weekday green fees published on the courses' own websites ran from about ฿1,500 to ฿6,500 in November 2026, with weekends and holidays higher. Every round adds a caddie fee (usually ฿350 to ฿500), a cash tip for your caddie (about ฿400 to ฿600) and often a cart (about ฿600 to ฿1,000). The best weather is November to February; tee off early whatever the month.


A golf course fairway near Pattaya with a water hazard and palm trees
Photo: PattayaPatrol, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

What a round costs

ITEM	TYPICAL PRICE (NOV 2026, APPROX.)
Green fee, weekday	฿1,500 to ฿6,500, depending on the course
Green fee, weekend and holidays	Usually ฿500 to ฿2,000 more than weekdays
Caddie fee	฿350 to ฿500, paid to the course
Caddie tip	About ฿400 to ฿600 in cash, paid to the caddie
Cart	About ฿600 to ฿1,000; optional at some courses, compulsory at others
Weekday total with caddie and cart	About ฿4,100 to ฿8,000 at the courses that publish all three

Weekend and holiday rounds cost more, and some courses have cheaper afternoon or twilight rates. Booking agents and golf societies can sometimes beat the published price. For ways to save, see golf on a budget.

Published rates at three courses

These come straight from each course's own website, checked on 13 November 2026. They show how wide the range is.

COURSE	WEEKDAY GREEN FEE	WEEKEND	CADDIE	CART
Siam Country Club, Old Course	฿6,500	฿8,500	฿500	฿1,000
Phoenix Gold	฿3,000	฿3,500	฿400	฿700
Pattaya Country Club	฿2,500	฿3,000	฿400	฿600 (weekday)

None of the three pages states when its prices took effect, so confirm when you book. Phoenix Gold also lists 9-hole twilight rates: ฿700 after 3pm Monday to Thursday and ฿500 after 4pm any day, plus a caddie.

The courses

Courses spread east and south of the city, mostly 20 to 60 minutes away. Siam Country Club has four courses east of town (the Old Course, Plantation, Waterside and Rolling Hills) and is the area's best-known name. Other courses around Pattaya include Phoenix Gold, Laem Chabang International, Chee Chan, Pattaya Country Club, Burapha, Khao Kheow, Bangpra and Eastern Star. Not every course publishes its prices online; several only post rates on social media or quote by phone, so ask for the full price before you book.

Caddies and carts

Every course uses caddies, who carry or drive your bag, read greens, rake bunkers and find balls. The caddie fee goes to the course; the tip goes to your caddie and is a big part of their pay. Siam Country Club says tips there generally start at ฿500, and recent guides give about ฿400 to ฿600 for 18 holes as normal. Pay the tip in cash after the round, so carry small notes.

Some courses make a cart compulsory for each player, while others let small groups walk with a caddie. Walking is pleasant in the cool months but hard work on hilly courses in the heat.

When to play

- **November to February**: the best weather, the busiest courses and the highest prices.
- **March to May**: hot; tee off early.
- **June to October**: rainy season, often cheaper, with afternoon storms. See flood season and weather by month.
- **February 2027**: the Honda LPGA Thailand, a women's professional tour event, is scheduled for 18 to 21 February 2027 at Siam Country Club. See sports events.

Booking

- Book directly with the course, or through a local golf booking service that adds transport and sometimes a discount. Compare the total, not just the green fee.
- Golf societies play on set days, share transport and bundle caddie and cart into one price; many welcome visitors. See golf on a budget and expat clubs.
- Many players stay in East Pattaya or Jomtien to be closer to the courses. See where to stay.
- Transport: a car with driver is easiest with clubs; check boot space. See airport transfers for golf-bag-friendly vehicles and car rental.
- Hiring clubs at the course adds to the bill; ask the price first, or bring your own.

Etiquette and tips

- Collared shirts and golf shoes are expected; check each course's dress code.
- Drink plenty of water and use sunscreen. See heat and sun safety.
- Bring cash for caddie tips and drinks on the course.
- Lightning: courses stop play when storms come in; follow the siren and your caddie's advice.
- Drinks at the halfway house and clubhouse cost more than in town, and the normal 11am to midnight alcohol sale hours apply.

Common questions

How much does a round of golf in Pattaya cost? For a weekday round with caddie and cart, courses' published prices ran from about ฿4,100 to ฿8,000 in November 2026, plus a ฿400 to ฿600 caddie tip. Weekends cost more; society days and agent deals can cost less.

Which is the best-known course in Pattaya? Siam Country Club's Old Course, which hosts the Honda LPGA Thailand. It is also one of the most expensive, at ฿6,500 on weekdays before caddie and cart.

Do I have to take a caddie? At most Pattaya courses, yes. The caddie fee is paid to the course, and a tip is expected on top.

Can I play without a cart? At some courses. Others make a cart compulsory for every player, so ask when you book.

When is the cheapest time to play? Weekdays, twilight tee times where offered, and the rainy season, roughly May or June to October.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Siam Country Club, Old Course rates; Phoenix Gold, price list; Pattaya Country Club, rates; Pattaya Golf, dated green fee comparison of courses' own published rates (checked by them 4 to 12 November 2026); Golf News Net, 2027 LPGA Tour schedule. Tip ranges also follow our golf on a budget page. Rates change; the course's own price on the day is the one that counts.

Plan your day

- Tee off early to avoid the midday heat.
- See golf on a budget.
- See sports events.

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Golf on a Budget in Pattaya

How to play golf in Pattaya for less: weekday and twilight rates, local courses, caddie and cart costs, societies, and booking tips.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/golf-on-a-budget/

Cheaper	**Weekdays and twilight tee times**
Extra costs	**Caddie fee, caddie tip and cart**
Societies	**Group rates and shared transport**
Book	**Through agents or societies for better deals**

Pattaya is one of Asia's golf capitals, and you don't need a big budget to play here. The trick is knowing that the green fee is only part of the bill. See golf courses for the courses themselves.

Quick answer: Around Pattaya, the weekday green fees that courses publish on their own websites ran from about ฿1,500 to ฿6,500 when checked in November 2026. Add a caddie fee (usually ฿350 to ฿500), a cash tip for the caddie (often ฿400 to ฿600) and a cart if you want or need one. The cheapest way for most visitors is a weekday round with a golf society, where the course, caddie and cart are often bundled into one price.

What a round really costs

These are the pieces that make up the bill. Prices change often and every course sets its own, so treat them as a guide and ask for the total before you book.

COST	TYPICAL RANGE (NOV 2026)	NOTES
—	—	—
Green fee, weekday	฿1,500 to ฿6,500	Published by the courses themselves; weekends and holidays cost more
Caddie fee	฿350 to ฿500	Most courses require a caddie
Caddie tip	฿400 to ฿600	Cash, paid to the caddie after the round; your choice
Cart	Often ฿700 to ฿850	Optional at some courses, compulsory at others
Weekday total, published prices	฿4,100 to ฿8,000	For the five courses that publish fee, caddie and cart together

Figures come from a dated independent price guide that checks courses' own published rates (see Sources). They don't always agree with older listings and booking-agent prices, which can be lower. If two numbers conflict, the course's own price on the day is the one that counts.

Ways to pay less

- **Play on a weekday.** Weekends and Thai public holidays cost more. See public holidays.
- **Ask about twilight rates.** Some courses offer cheaper afternoon tee times. Not every course has them, so ask when you book.
- **Look for discount days.** Some courses run promotion days on set weekdays.
- **Go with a society.** Societies negotiate group rates and often share transport (see below).
- **Use a booking agent.** Agents can sometimes beat the walk-in rate. Compare the total, not just the green fee.
- **Pick a nearer course.** Transport is a real cost. A course 20 minutes away saves money and time over one an hour away.
- **Walk if allowed.** Some courses let you walk with a caddie instead of taking a cart. Hilly courses really need a cart in the heat.
- **Go in the low season.** Rates are often lower in the rainy season, roughly May to October. See best time to visit.

The extras people forget

- **Caddie fee and tip are separate.** The fee goes to the course; the tip goes to the caddie in cash.
- **Carts.** Some courses make every player take their own caddie-driven cart. Others allow walking for small groups.
- **Club hire.** Hiring clubs at the course adds to the bill. Ask the price first, or bring your own.
- **Food and drinks.** Clubhouse prices are higher than in town. Bring water.
- **Getting there.** A taxi or driver there and back can cost as much as a cheap green fee.

Golf societies

Societies are organised groups that play on set days, usually starting from a bar or hotel in town. You sign up the day before, meet in the morning, share transport to the course and play in a group competition.

- Prices vary by group and by course. One large society's November 2026 schedule showed ฿1,850 to ฿2,950 a round with caddie and cart included, with transport and tips extra.
- Some groups charge a small playing fee on top, plus a car share of a few hundred baht.
- Many welcome visitors, but some ask for a handicap, and regulars may be asked to join the umbrella sports club after a few rounds.

- Turning up without booking doesn't guarantee a place. Book the day before.

Societies are also one of the easiest ways to meet people in Pattaya. See expat clubs.

Getting there for less

Most courses are east and south of the city, 20 to 60 minutes away. Sharing a car or van with your group is the cheapest way. Societies usually arrange this. See renting a car and Bolt and Grab.

Tips for your first round

- Book a morning tee time. By midday the heat is hard work. See heat and sun safety.
- Carry cash in small notes for the caddie tip and drinks.
- Ask what the price includes before you pay: green fee, caddie, cart, tax.
- Check the dress code: collared shirts and golf shoes are normal.
- In the rainy season, afternoon storms can stop play. Ask about the rain policy.

Common questions

How much does a round of golf in Pattaya cost? For a weekday round with caddie and cart, published course prices ran from about ฿4,100 to ฿8,000 in November 2026, plus a tip. Society days and agent deals can be cheaper.

Do I have to take a caddie? At most Pattaya courses, yes. The caddie fee is paid to the course, and a tip is expected on top.

How much should I tip my caddie? There's no fixed rule. Recent guides suggest about ฿400 to ฿600 for 18 holes, paid in cash after the round.

Is a cart compulsory? It depends on the course. Some require one per player, others let small groups walk. Ask when you book.

Can visitors join a golf society? Usually, yes. Contact the group the day before and check whether they need a handicap.

When is golf cheapest in Pattaya? Weekdays, twilight tee times where offered, and the rainy season, roughly May to October.

Plan your day

- Weekday and twilight rounds are often cheaper.
- Ask for the full price, including caddie, tip and cart.
- See golf courses.

Related guides

- Cheap Eats in Pattaya
- Pattaya on 1,000 Baht a Day
- Sports Events in Pattaya
- Pattaya Nightlife on a Budget

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

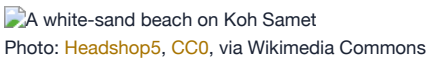
Koh Samet from Pattaya

Koh Samet is the nearest white-sand island to Pattaya: getting to Ban Phe pier, 2026 ferry, catamaran and speedboat fares, the national park fee (and why sources disagree), the best beaches, and day trip or overnight.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/koh-samet/

Getting there	**About 80 km by road to Ban Phe pier, then a boat**
Slow ferry	**About ฿50 to ฿70 one way, around 40 minutes**
Faster boats	**Catamaran ฿150; shared speedboat about ฿200 to Sai Kaew**
National park fee	**฿200 foreign adults, ฿100 children in most 2026 guides; carry ฿300**
Best for	**White sand and clearer water, one or two nights**

Quick answer: Koh Samet is a small island in Rayong province with soft white sand and clearer water than Pattaya's, about 80 km from Pattaya. Drive or take a car to Ban Phe pier (Grab, Bolt or a taxi is about ฿700 to ฿1,100), then a slow wooden ferry to Na Dan pier for about ฿50 to ฿70 one way (around 40 minutes), the ฿150 catamaran (about 10 minutes), or a shared speedboat from about ฿200. The island is a national park: most 2026 guides give the foreigner fee as ฿200 per adult and ฿100 per child, paid in cash on arrival, but a 2022 announcement and one 2026 guide give ฿300, so carry enough for either. A day trip is possible but rushed; one or two nights is better.


A white-sand beach on Koh Samet
Photo: Headshop5, CC0, via Wikimedia Commons

Koh Samet has no high-rise hotels, most of its beaches face east, and it's the easiest "proper island" trip from Pattaya. For a closer island, see Koh Larn, or compare the two on Koh Samet vs Koh Larn.

At a glance

WHAT	TYPICAL COST OR TIME	NOTES
Pattaya to Ban Phe by car	About ฿700 to ฿1,100, roughly 1 to 1.5 hours	Grab, Bolt or a booked car
Shared van and boat package	About ฿650 to ฿750	Hotel pickup, about 2 to 2.5 hours to the island
Local buses via Rayong	About ฿150	About 3 hours to the pier, with changes
Slow ferry to Na Dan	About ฿50 to ฿70 one way, ฿100 to ฿120 return	Around 40 minutes, roughly hourly
Catamaran to Na Dan	฿150	About 10 minutes
Shared speedboat	About ฿200 to Sai Kaew, up to ฿500 to southern beaches	Drops at the beach
Private speedboat	About ฿1,800 to ฿3,000	Per boat
National park fee	฿200 adults, ฿100 children (most sources)	Cash, at the checkpoint after Na Dan

Prices come from 2026 guides checked in November 2026; check at the pier.

Getting there from Pattaya

- **By car**: Ban Phe is about 81 km from central Pattaya via Rayong. An October 2026 guide puts the drive at about an hour; allow longer in traffic. Taxis usually don't wait at the pier, so book your return or ask the travel desks at Na Dan. See Bolt and Grab.
- **Shared van and boat**: packages with hotel pickup cost about ฿650 to ฿750 and take about 2 to 2.5 hours to the island. Book through a travel agent or a booking app.
- **Local route**: a van to Rayong, a songthaew to the bus station and another to Ban Phe, about ฿150 in all and about three hours. Cheap, but slow.

Boats from Ban Phe

Ban Phe has several piers run by different operators, and the ticket sellers will steer you to theirs.

- **Slow ferry or catamaran** to Na Dan pier, the cheapest options. From Na Dan, take a songthaew to your beach.
- **Shared speedboats** go straight to the beaches, worth it if you're staying at Ao Wong Duean or further south.
- **Last boats**: sources disagree by an hour or two. Timetable listings give the last ferries from about 16:30 to 18:00, and one notes sailings can be cut to save fuel. Plan to be at the pier by mid-afternoon.
- Rough seas in the rainy season, roughly May to October, can cancel speedboats. Wear the life jacket.

The national park fee

Koh Samet is part of Khao Laem Ya–Mu Ko Samet National Park, declared in 1981. Foreign visitors pay at a checkpoint just past Na Dan pier, or when the boat drops you at a beach. Most 2026 guides, including the island's timetable site, give ฿200 per adult and ฿100 per child, with Thais paying ฿40. The Thaiger reported

in October 2022 that the national parks department had announced ฿300 for foreign adults and ฿150 for children here, and one 2026 hotel guide still quotes ฿300. Bring cash for ฿300 a head to be safe, and keep your ticket for your stay. One timetable site also lists a ฿20 pier fee at Na Dan.

Beaches

Most beaches are on the east coast, a short ride or walk from Na Dan.

- **Sai Kaew**: the longest beach, nearest the pier, busy with restaurants and water sports.
- **Ao Hin Khok and Ao Phai**: smaller bays just south, with a more relaxed feel.
- **Ao Wong Duean**: a curved bay further south with restaurants, resorts and its own small pier.
- **Ao Prao**: the main beach on the west coast, with more secluded, upscale resorts and the sunset.
- Quieter coves further south for those who walk or hire a scooter.

Getting around the island

Green songthaews wait at Na Dan: about ฿20 to ฿60 per person shared to Sai Kaew and Ao Phai, or about ฿200 to ฿600 to charter one to the southern beaches. The roads are rough in places. Scooters are rented on the island; ride only if you're confident and licensed. See renting a scooter.

Day trip or overnight?

A day trip works if you leave Pattaya early: about four to five hours of travelling in total for a few hours on the sand, plus the park fee for a short visit. Stay a night and you get the beach in the evening after the day-trippers leave, and a calm swim next morning. Weekends and Thai holidays get busy; book rooms ahead. See Thai public holidays.

Tips

- Bring cash: ATMs on the island are few. See ATM fees.
- The white sand reflects the sun. See heat and sun safety.

Common questions

How much is the Koh Samet ferry? About ฿50 to ฿70 one way on the slow ferry, ฿150 on the catamaran, and from about ฿200 by shared speedboat.

How much is the Koh Samet national park fee? Most 2026 guides say ฿200 for foreign adults and ฿100 for children, but a ฿300 rate was announced in 2022 and still appears in some guides. Carry cash for ฿300.

Can I do Koh Samet as a day trip from Pattaya? Yes, with an early start, but it's rushed. One night is more relaxed.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Visit Thailand Today, Pattaya to Koh Samet (updated October 2026) (distance, cars, vans, boats, park fee, songthaews); Koh Samet ferry timetables (November 2026) (ferry times and fares, park and pier fees); The Thaiger, national park fee rise (October 2022); Wikipedia, Ko Samet (beaches, national park). Sources disagree on the park fee and last boats; check at the pier.

Plan your day

- Book the ferry and room ahead on weekends and holidays.
- See Koh Samet vs Koh Larn.
- See beach safety.

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Bangkok Day Trip from Pattaya

Seeing Bangkok in a day from Pattaya: bus, car or tour, a realistic plan for the Grand Palace, Wat Pho, Wat Arun and Chinatown, 2026 entry fees and hours, the river boats, dress code, scams and getting back.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/bangkok-day-trip/

Travel time	**About 2 hours each way, more in traffic**
Bus	**Ekkamai from about ฿144 each way**
Grand Palace	**฿500, tickets sold 8:30am to 3:30pm**
Wat Pho	**฿300; Wat Arun: ฿200**
River boat	**Orange flag ฿19 a ride (Oct 2026)**
Best start	**Leave Pattaya by 7am**

Quick answer: Bangkok is about two hours from Pattaya by road, more in traffic, so a long day trip works if you keep to one area. The classic plan is the old city by the river: the Grand Palace (฿500, tickets sold 8:30am to 3:30pm), Wat Pho (฿300) and Wat Arun across the river (฿200), then street food in Chinatown. The cheapest way there is the bus to Ekkamai (from about ฿144), then the BTS Skytrain and a river boat; a private car or a tour is easier. Leave Pattaya by 7am, cover shoulders and knees for the temples, and ignore anyone who tells you the palace is closed.


The Grand Palace in Bangkok
Photo: Jakub Hałun, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Distance	About 2 hours each way by road, more at rush hour
Bus	Ekkamai from about ฿144, Mo Chit 2 from about ฿155
Grand Palace	฿500; tickets 8:30am to 3:30pm, grounds close about 4:30pm
Wat Pho	฿300; open about 8am to 6:30pm
Wat Arun	฿200; open about 8:30am to 6pm
River boat	Orange flag boat ฿19 a ride since 5 October 2026
Dress	Shoulders and knees covered at the palace and temples

Getting there and back

- **Bus**: the cheapest. Roong Reuang Coach runs from the Pattaya bus terminal on North Pattaya Road to the Eastern Bus Terminal at **Ekkamai**, next to BTS Ekkamai, from about ฿144, roughly hourly. From Ekkamai, take the BTS towards the river and change at Siam for Saphan Taksin, then walk to Sathorn pier for the boat. See buses between Bangkok and Pattaya.
- **Private car or taxi**: the easiest, door to door. A one-way transfer is similar to the airport run, about ฿1,100 to ฿1,800 from Suvarnabhumi; a driver who waits all day costs more, so agree the hours, tolls and parking first. See Bangkok to Pattaya.
- **Organised tour**: transport and a guide, sometimes entry fees. Check whether the ฿500 palace ticket is included. See tours from Pattaya.

Avoid coming back in the Friday or Sunday evening rush, and check the time of the last bus back from Ekkamai before you set off.

A realistic one-day plan

TIME	STOP	ENTRY FOR FOREIGNERS (APPROX.)
9:30	Grand Palace and the Temple of the Emerald Buddha	฿500
12:00	Lunch near Tha Tien pier	
13:00	Wat Pho (the Reclining Buddha)	฿300
15:00	Cross the river by ferry to Wat Arun	฿200
17:00	Chinatown (Yaowarat) for street food	Free
19:00	Head back to Pattaya	

Do the Grand Palace first: ticket sales stop at 3:30pm, and the palace can close for royal ceremonies, so check the official site the day before. Wat Pho and Wat Arun stay open later.

The sights

- **Grand Palace and Wat Phra Kaew**: the former royal palace and the Temple of the Emerald Buddha. The ฿500 ticket also covers the Queen Sirikit Museum of Textiles. Allow two to three hours; it's busy and hot by late morning.
- **Wat Pho**: a short walk south, home of the huge Reclining Buddha and a famous traditional massage school.
- **Wat Arun**: the Temple of Dawn, on the other bank. Take the small cross-river ferry from the pier by Wat Pho.
- **Chinatown (Yaowarat)**: street food stalls from early evening. Easy by Grab or Bolt from the river.

Dress code

The Grand Palace and temples need covered shoulders and knees: no vests, shorts, short skirts or see-through clothes. Wear shoes you can slip off easily for temple halls. Sarongs and trousers can be rented or bought near the entrance. See temple customs.

Getting around Bangkok

- **River boats**: the orange flag Chao Phraya Express boat runs between Sathorn pier (by BTS Saphan Taksin), Tha Tien pier (N8) for Wat Pho and Tha Chang pier (N9) for the Grand Palace. The fare was ฿19 a ride after a rise on 5 October 2026; it moves with diesel prices, so carry small notes.
- **BTS Skytrain and MRT subway**: fast and air-conditioned, and they avoid the traffic.
- **Grab and Bolt**: work well; use them instead of hailing tuk-tuks. See Bolt and Grab.

Scams to avoid

- Anyone telling you the Grand Palace is "closed today" and offering a tuk-tuk tour: it's a classic scam leading to gem or tailor shops. The palace's own website shows real closures.
- Agree tuk-tuk prices first, or don't take one.
- If you're cheated, call the Tourist Police on 1155.

See common scams.

Day trip or overnight?

A day trip covers the old city well, but not much else. If you also want the big malls, rooftop bars or a night market, staying one night is far less rushed. Bangkok also works as a stop on the way to or from Ayutthaya, Kanchanaburi or Hua Hin, which all route through or past the city. See day trips from Pattaya for how they compare.

Tips

- Bring water, a hat and sunscreen; see heat and sun safety.
- Carry cash for boats, temple tickets and street food. See ATM fees.
- Wear comfortable shoes: the palace and temples mean a lot of walking.
- More ideas closer to home: temples and viewpoints.

Common questions

Is a Bangkok day trip from Pattaya worth it? Yes, if you stick to the riverside old city. With about four hours of travel, trying to add shopping or other districts usually means rushing.

How much does a Bangkok day trip cost on your own? Roughly ฿300 for the return bus, ฿1,000 for the three main entry tickets, plus BTS, boat fares and food. A car or tour costs more but saves time.

What time does the Grand Palace close? Ticket sales run from 8:30am to 3:30pm and the grounds close about 4:30pm, according to the palace's official website. It can close for royal ceremonies.

Can I wear shorts to the Grand Palace? No. Shoulders and knees must be covered. You can rent or buy cover-ups near the entrance.

When should I head back to Pattaya? Before about 7pm, and avoid Friday and Sunday evenings when traffic out of Bangkok is heavy.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: The Grand Palace, official site (hours and ticket price); Your Thai Guide, Bangkok entry fees 2026 (Wat Pho and Wat Arun fees and hours); Thaiest, orange flag boat fare and piers. Bus and transfer prices follow our buses and Bangkok to Pattaya pages. Temple fees and hours come from a travel guide, not the temples themselves, so check on the day.

Plan your day

- Leave by 7 am and head back before the evening rush.
- See Bangkok to Pattaya.
- Read up on tricks aimed at visitors in common scams.

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Pattaya Park and Tower

The tall tower at the north end of Jomtien: the 55th-floor observation deck, three revolving buffet restaurants, the Tower Jump and shuttle rides, the water park and Wonderland rides. Prices, hours, getting there and tips.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/pattaya-park-tower/

Where	**North end of Jomtien Beach, below Pratumnak Hill**
Up top	**Observation deck on the 55th floor**
Dining	**Three revolving buffet restaurants, floors 52 to 54**
Thrills	**Tower Jump, Sky Shuttle and Speed Shuttle**
Tickets	**About ฿200 to ฿700 by package; buffets about ฿700 to ฿1,000**
Below	**Water park and Wonderland rides (10am to 6pm)**

Quick answer: Pattaya Park is a hotel and family attraction at the north end of Jomtien Beach, topped by the tower you can see from all over the bay. Go up to the observation deck on the 55th floor for the view over Jomtien, Pratumnak and Pattaya, eat at one of three revolving buffet restaurants on floors 52 to 54, or ride back down on the Tower Jump, Sky Shuttle or Speed Shuttle. At the bottom there is a water park and an amusement park called Wonderland. Ticket listings for 2025 and 2026 range from about ฿200 to ฿700 depending on the package, and buffets about ฿700 to ฿1,000, but sources disagree, so check the price at the counter.

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Where	North end of Jomtien Beach, where Thappraya Road comes down from Pratumnak Hill
Observation deck	55th floor, the “Apex” deck
Revolving restaurants	Panorama (52nd floor), Pinnacle (53rd), Meridian (54th): international buffet with seafood, lunch and dinner
Tower rides	Tower Jump, Sky Shuttle, Speed Shuttle
Wonderland rides	Open 10am to 6pm daily, according to Pattaya Park
Water park	Slides, pools and a whirlpool, next to the beach
Prices	About ฿200 to ฿700 for tower tickets and packages; buffets about ฿700 to ฿1,000; listings conflict
Time needed	1 to 2 hours for the tower; half a day with the water park

The tower and the view

The observation deck is on the 55th floor. From the top you look north over Pratumnak Hill to Pattaya Bay, south along the long curve of Jomtien Beach, and out to sea towards Koh Larn. On a clear day it is one of the widest views in the city, and it is a good way to understand how Pattaya, Pratumnak and Jomtien fit together before you explore.

Sources disagree on the tower’s height, with figures from about 180 m to 240 m. Pattaya Park’s own site simply lists the floors.

Clear mornings and the hour before sunset usually give the best views. Haze is common in the dry season, and the view can disappear in rain.

Revolving restaurants

Three restaurants on floors 52, 53 and 54 slowly turn so the view changes while you eat. Pattaya Park describes them as serving an international buffet with seafood at lunch and dinner. One ticket agency lists lunch from 11am to 3pm and dinner from 4:30pm to 10pm, with buffets at about ฿700 to ฿1,000, and children 90 to 130 cm tall at a child rate. Buffet tickets often include the lift to the top, so if you want to eat anyway, it can be better value than a separate deck ticket. Book ahead for sunset at weekends.

Thrill rides off the tower

Three rides take you from the top of the tower back towards the ground on cables:

- **Tower Jump:** you are harnessed and lowered down the outside of the tower on a wire, fast.
- **Speed Shuttle:** a small cage, usually for two people, that runs down a cable.
- **Sky Shuttle:** a larger capsule for several people, the option usually suggested for families.

Agency listings put the descent at about 170 m. Many observation packages include one ride. Ask about weight, height and age limits at the counter before you pay, and skip the rides if you have heart or back problems, are pregnant, or have been drinking. Check your travel insurance covers them. For more adrenaline, see adventure activities.

Water park and Wonderland

- The water park sits at the foot of the tower next to the beach, with giant slides, pools and a whirlpool. It is smaller than the big water parks south of the city. Listed prices range from about ฿200 to ฿400 for adults, with a lower child rate.
- Wonderland, the amusement park, has a Tower Shot drop ride, a slalom roller coaster and a Vikings swing ride, plus family rides such as a musical carousel, a monorail, the Demolition Derby and a family swinger. Pattaya Park lists it as open 10am to 6pm daily.

For bigger, newer water parks, see water parks. For more family ideas, see Pattaya with kids.

Prices

We could not find a current official price list, and agency listings disagree:

- One guide updated in July 2026 lists the observation deck at ฿200, the Tower Jump at ฿300 and the water park at ฿200 for adults and ฿100 for children.
- A ticket agency lists an observation package with one ride at ฿500 (from ฿700), buffet lunch or dinner at ฿700 (from ฿1,000) and the water park at ฿300, with children over 130 cm paying the adult price.

Compare the counter price with online sellers on the day; online combo tickets are sometimes cheaper. Prices are per person.

Getting there

Pattaya Park is at the north end of Jomtien Beach, at the foot of Pratumnak Hill.

- **Baht bus:** the green route from Second Road near South Pattaya Road runs along Thappraya Road to Jomtien for up to ฿20. Ask the driver for Pattaya Park, or press the buzzer when you see the tower close by. See Thappraya Road and baht bus routes.
- **Bolt or Grab:** the easiest from anywhere in the city. See Bolt and Grab.
- From the Jomtien side, it is a short walk from Dongtan Beach.

Tips

- Go up in the late afternoon, watch sunset, then stay for the night views. See night viewpoints.
- If the sky is hazy or stormy, save your ticket for another day.
- Bring swimwear if you plan to try the water park, and sun cream for the outdoor rides.
- Combine it with a walk along Jomtien beach or over Pratumnak Hill.

Common questions

How much does Pattaya Park Tower cost? Listings in 2025 and 2026 range from about ฿200 for the deck alone to ฿500 to ฿700 for a deck ticket with one ride, and about ฿700 to ฿1,000 for a buffet. Sources disagree, so check at the counter.

Which floor is the observation deck? The 55th floor. The revolving restaurants are on floors 52, 53 and 54.

Is the Tower Jump safe? It is a harnessed, guided descent on a cable, run by staff. Ask about limits, follow the briefing, and skip it if you have heart or back problems or have been drinking.

Is Pattaya Park good for kids? Yes for the deck, the Sky Shuttle, the water park and Wonderland's family rides. Children's prices usually go by height.

What time is best to go up? Late afternoon into sunset, or a clear morning. Avoid hazy or rainy days.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya Park, Park Tower (floors, restaurants, rides) and Wonderland (rides, hours); Thai Holiday Guide, Pattaya Park (prices, updated July 2026); TNG Holidays ticket listing (packages, buffet times, height rules). Prices and heights differ between sources, as noted above.

Plan your day

- Go near sunset for the best views from the top.
- See Pattaya with kids.
- See night viewpoints.

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Koh Sichang Day Trip

Koh Sichang is a quiet island off Si Racha, under an hour from Pattaya: the ferry from Ko Loi pier, a former royal summer palace, a small swimming beach, hilltop shrines and island tours by skylab.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/koh-sichang/

From Pattaya	**About 40 to 60 minutes by road to Si Racha's Ko Loi pier**
Ferry	**About ฿50 one way, 40 to 45 minutes, roughly hourly**
Last boat back	**Around 6pm in one guide; check at the pier**
Palace museum	**Free entry reported; closed Mondays (some say Tuesdays too)**
Getting around	**Skylab tour about ฿400, or hire a scooter**
Best for	**A quiet, very Thai island day out**

Quick answer: Koh Sichang is a small, rocky island off Si Racha, about 40 to 60 minutes north of Pattaya by road. Ferries leave Ko Loi pier in Si Racha roughly every hour, cost about ฿50 one way and take 40 to 45 minutes. On the island you can see the remains of King Rama V's summer palace (now a free museum), swim at Tham Phang beach and climb to a Chinese shrine with big sea views. It isn't a white-sand party island: it's a sleepy fishing community, busy with Thai visitors on long weekends and quiet on weekdays.

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Where	In the Gulf of Thailand off Si Racha, Chonburi
Getting to the pier	About 40 to 60 minutes by car, Bolt, Grab or bus from Pattaya
Ferry	Ko Loi pier, Si Racha; about ฿50 one way; 40 to 45 minutes
How often	Roughly hourly; one guide says every 90 minutes to 2 hours in low season
Last boat back	Around 6pm according to one guide; ask when you buy your ticket
Palace museum	Free entry reported; about 9am to 5pm, later at weekends in one guide; closed Mondays (and Tuesdays, in another)
Getting around	Skylab (motorbike tuk-tuk) tours about ฿400; scooters about ฿200 to ฿300 a day

Getting there

- **Pattaya to Si Racha:** about 40 to 60 minutes north up Sukhumvit Road by car, scooter, Bolt or Grab, or on a bus towards Bangkok. See Si Racha.
- **Ko Loi pier:** the ferry pier is at the base of the causeway out to Ko Loi, the little temple island on Si Racha's waterfront. Buy your ticket at the pier.
- **The crossing:** about 40 to 45 minutes. Guides agree on a fare of about ฿50 one way; some Thai sources give ฿60, and prices can change.
- **On the island:** boats normally use Tha Lang pier in the main village. One guide says they may use Tha Bon pier, a little further north, at high tide, so check where your return boat leaves from.
- **Timetable:** there is no official online timetable. Guides give first boats from about 6am to 8am and roughly hourly sailings through the day, with the last boat back to Si Racha around 6pm in one guide. Take an early boat and ask about the last return before you leave the mainland.

What to see

- **Phra Chudadhut Palace:** King Chulalongkorn (Rama V) built a seaside summer palace here around 1892. It was abandoned after French forces occupied the island in 1893, and in 1900 parts of it were taken apart and rebuilt in Bangkok as part of Vimanmek Mansion. Today Chulalongkorn University looks after the grounds, with a museum opened in 2004, gardens and Wat Atsadang Nimit, which mixes Thai and Gothic styles. Dress modestly.
- **Chao Pho Khao Yai shrine:** a Chinese shrine north of the harbour, said to have been founded by Chinese sailors and still visited by pilgrims from across Asia.
- **Buddha's footprint shrine:** next to the Chinese shrine, up a steep path of more than 500 steps.
- **Hat Tham Phang:** the island's main swimming beach, a small sheltered cove with deckchairs, kayak hire and simple restaurants. Quiet on weekdays.
- **Khao Noi viewpoint:** a lookout over the bay and the big ships anchored offshore.

Getting around the island

Skylabs, the island's big three-wheeled motorbike taxis, wait at the pier and offer loop tours of the main sights; one guide puts a tour at about ฿400. Agree the price and the stops before you set off. Scooters can be hired near the pier for about ฿200 to ฿300 a day, but you need a valid licence and a helmet. See renting a scooter. The island is small, but hilly and hot to walk.

A simple day plan

TIME	WHAT TO DO
Early morning	Drive or ride up to Si Racha and catch a morning boat from Ko Loi
Late morning	Skylab tour: palace museum, Chinese shrine, viewpoint
Lunch	Simple restaurants at Tham Phang beach, or food stalls in the village
Afternoon	Swim at Tham Phang, then back to the pier in good time
Evening	Seafood on the Si Racha waterfront on the way home

Weekends, holidays and weather

- Weekdays are quietest. On long weekends the queue can be huge: on 2 May 2026, the ticket line at Ko Loi pier stretched for nearly a kilometre, and operators added extra boats.
- Boats stop in bad weather. On 25 September 2026, services between Ko Loi and Koh Sichang were suspended because of thunderstorms, strong winds and high waves. In the rainy season, check the weather before you set off. See weather by month.
- If you miss the last boat, the island has a few guesthouses and small resorts.

Tips

- Bring cash. There are ATMs on the island, but shrines, food stalls and skylabs are cash.
- Bring water and sunscreen, and cover shoulders and knees at the shrines and temples. See heat and sun safety and temple customs.
- Combine it with Si Racha's seafood on the way back, or Bang Saen nearby.

Common questions

How do I get to Koh Sichang from Pattaya? Go north to Si Racha (about 40 to 60 minutes by road), then take the ferry from Ko Loi pier, about 40 to 45 minutes.

How much is the Koh Sichang ferry? About ฿50 one way in most guides; some Thai sources say ฿60.

What time is the last ferry back from Koh Sichang? One guide says around 6pm, but there is no official online timetable. Ask at the pier when you buy your ticket.

Is Koh Sichang worth it? If you want a quiet, local island with history and views rather than white sand and nightlife, yes. For beaches, Koh Larn is closer to Pattaya.

Is the palace on Koh Sichang free? Guides report free entry, and the grounds have no charge. They disagree on whether the museum closes on Tuesdays as well as Mondays, and one says it stays open until 7:30pm at weekends.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Thai Holiday Guide, Koh Sichang (June 2026); Thai Holiday Guide, Ko Loi (July 2026); Thai Holiday Guide, Phra Chuthathut Ratchathan Museum (Wednesday to Sunday, July 2026); Tripniceday, palace museum (closed Mondays only, later at weekends); Wikipedia, Phra Chuthathut Palace; I Am Koh Chang, Koh Si Chang guide (piers, last boats, skylab and scooter prices); Naewna, Ko Loi pier queues, 2 May 2026; Nation Thailand, ferry suspended 25 September 2026. No official ferry timetable found.

Plan your day

- Ferries leave from Si Racha. Check the last boat back before you go.
- Rent a skylab or scooter on the island to see the main sights in a day.
- See Si Racha.

Related guides

- Day trips from Pattaya
- Island hopping

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Bang Saen Day Trip

Bang Saen is the beach town Thais love, about an hour north of Pattaya: the 2.5 km beach and its weekly day off, the monkeys and shrine of Khao Sam Muk, the Bangsaen Aquarium, local markets, cheap seafood and the Bryde's whales offshore.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/bang-saen/

From Pattaya	**About an hour north by road**
Beach	**About 2.5 km; operators take a weekly day off (Tuesday in 2026 reports)**
Khao Sam Muk	**Small hill with a shrine, sea views and wild monkeys; free**
Aquarium	**Bangsaen Aquarium, daily 9am to 4pm**
Markets	**Walking Street Friday and Saturday evenings**
Best time	**Weekdays for space, weekends for atmosphere**

Quick answer: Bang Saen is where Thai families from Bangkok and Chonburi have gone to the beach for generations, about an hour north of Pattaya. It feels nothing like Pattaya: no bar streets, very few foreigners, and a long, tree-lined beach full of deckchairs, food sellers and families. The main sights are the beach itself, the monkeys and sea views of **Khao Sam Muk** hill, the **Bangsaen Aquarium** at Burapha University, and cheap seafood. Beach businesses take one day off a week, reported as Tuesday in 2026.


Bang Saen beach
Photo: Slyronit, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL (ABOUT)
Distance	About an hour by road north of Pattaya, past Si Racha
Beach	About 2.5 km, deckchairs, umbrellas and food sellers
Weekly day off	Beach operators close one day a week; Tuesday in an August 2026 report
Khao Sam Muk	Hill with a shrine, viewpoint and wild monkeys; free
Bangsaen Aquarium	Daily 9am to 4pm; about ฿220 for foreign adults in a 2022 report
Evening markets	Bangsaen Walking Street Fri and Sat; The Park in Market Thu, Sat, Sun 5pm to 11pm
Getting there	Car or scooter, Bolt or Grab, or a bus or minivan towards Chonburi

Getting there

Bang Saen is on the coast north of Si Racha, about an hour from Pattaya by road, longer on weekend afternoons when traffic heads back to Bangkok. The easiest options:

- **Drive or ride** up Sukhumvit Road, or take the motorway and turn off for Bang Saen. A scooter trip is possible, but Sukhumvit is a busy highway. See renting a scooter.
- **Bolt or Grab** both ways; check the price in both apps. See Bolt and Grab.
- **Bus or minivan** towards Chonburi or Bangkok, getting off at the Bang Saen turn-off, then a short local songthaew or app ride to the beach. Ask at the bus station which services stop there. See buses.

Bang Saen beach

The beach runs for about 2.5 km, shaded by trees, with rows of deckchairs and umbrellas you rent for the day and sellers bringing grilled seafood, fruit and drinks to your chair. People come to eat and paddle more than to swim; the water is often murky.

Saen Suk municipality sets aside one business-free day a week so the beach can recover. Pattaya Mail reported in August 2026 that this is Tuesday, when most chair operators are off and municipal crews trim coconut palms and clean; older reports named other days, so check if you go midweek. From November to February the town sets out photo buoys on the water. Bring cash for chairs and sellers.

Khao Sam Muk: the monkey hill

At the north end of the beach, between Bang Saen and Ang Sila, a small hill of about 45 m rises from the sea. A paved road goes to the top, so there is no hike, and the viewpoint looks over the bay; it is a popular sunset spot, and the municipality has added a ramp for older and disabled visitors.

- **The shrine**: Chao Mae Sam Muk, a Thai-Chinese shrine at the foot of the hill, is still an active place of worship. Dress respectfully.
- **The monkeys**: wild long-tailed macaques live on the slopes and in the summit car park. They are generally not aggressive but grab anything that looks like food. Don't feed them, and keep food, drinks and plastic bags out of sight. If you are bitten or scratched, see a doctor the same day. See rabies.
- **Entry** is free. One 2026 listing gives 6am to 6pm; parking at the top fills up near sunset.

Bangsaen Aquarium

Burapha University's Institute of Marine Science runs the **Bangsaen Aquarium** and a marine museum on campus, a few minutes from the beach. The highlight is a 37 m tunnel through the big tank, and there are jellyfish, rays and reef fish. The municipality lists it as open daily from 9am to 4pm. A 2022 report gave tickets of ฿80 for Thais and ฿220 for foreign adults; check the current price at the gate.

Other things to see

- **Wonnapa beach**: the southern stretch next to the fishing community's jetty, with benches and space for food stalls.
- **Laem Thaen**: a seaside point with the former guesthouse of Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat, which the municipality calls the birthplace of ASEAN.
- **Whales**: Bryde's whales feed in the bay. In June 2026 local surveys counted up to 13, including calves, about 2 km offshore near Khao Sam Muk and Ang Sila. Boats are asked to stay at least 100 m away and switch off engines when whales come close.

Markets and food

Bang Saen is known for good, cheap seafood: grilled squid, crab, prawns and fish, eaten at simple restaurants by the beach. Check the price per kilo before anything is cooked. See seafood in Pattaya and around.

- **Nong Mon market**: fresh and dried seafood and local snacks such as **khao lam**, sticky rice roasted in bamboo.
- **Bangsaen Walking Street**: Friday and Saturday evenings, with food, clothes, handmade goods and live music.
- **The Park in Market**: Thursday, Saturday and Sunday, 5pm to 11pm, down the soi behind Laem Thong shopping mall.
- **Bangsaen fish market**: on the road before the beach, closed on Tuesdays.

More on night markets.

When to go

- **Weekdays** are calm, but avoid the weekly day off if you want chairs and sellers.
- **Weekends and public holidays** are lively, with heavy traffic on the way back.
- **Wan Lai**: Bang Saen holds its own late Songkran festival with sand pagodas and concerts; in 2026 it ran on 16 and 17 April. Expect closed roads and big crowds. See Songkran and Wan Lai.

Common questions

How far is Bang Saen from Pattaya? About an hour by road, north past Si Racha. Weekend afternoons can take longer.

Can you swim at Bang Saen? Yes, but the water is often murky and the beach is more about eating and relaxing. For clearer water, go to Koh Larn.

Are the Khao Sam Muk monkeys dangerous? They are usually not aggressive, but they snatch food and bags. Don't feed them, keep food hidden, and see a doctor if you are bitten or scratched.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Saen Suk municipality, attractions (beach, Khao Sam Muk, Wonnapa, Laem Thaen, aquarium hours, markets); Pattaya Mail, Bang Saen's Tuesday day off (19 August 2026); Thai Holiday Guide, Khao Sam Muk (July 2026); The Smart Local, Institute of Marine Science (November 2022); Thairath, Bryde's whales off Bang Saen (27 June 2026); The Nation, Chon Buri Songkran and Wan Lai 2026.

Plan your day

- Bring cash in small notes; go early or late, as midday is hot and hazy.
- Combine with Si Racha or Koh Sichang.
- See day trips.

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Thai Massage Etiquette and Tipping

How to enjoy a massage in Pattaya: choosing a shop, what to wear, telling the therapist about pressure, how much to tip, and what is not acceptable.

Verified October 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/massage-etiquette/

Choose	**Clean, licensed shops with clear price lists**
Pressure	**"Bao bao" (softer), "nak nak" (harder)**
Tip	**Often 50–100฿ for an hour, more for great work**
Professional	**Massage is therapy; respect the therapist**

A Thai massage is one of the best things to do in Pattaya. A few tips make it more relaxing for you and respectful for the therapist. For massage types and prices, see massage in Pattaya.

Choosing a shop

- Look for clean shops with a clear price list and trained staff.
- Busy shops with local customers are often a good sign.

During the massage

- For Thai massage, you are given loose clothes to wear. For oil massage, you are covered with towels.
- Tell the therapist about injuries or pain before they start.
- Say “bao bao” for softer and “nak nak” for harder, or “jeb” if it hurts. See useful Thai phrases.

Tipping

Therapists earn much of their income from tips. Around 50–100 baht for an hour is common, more for excellent work. See tipping in Thailand.

Keep it professional

Massage is a respected therapy. Treat the therapist with respect, and choose reputable shops.

Health

Avoid strong massage if you have certain medical conditions, are pregnant or have just had surgery. Ask a doctor if unsure.

Plan your day

- Shower before an oil massage if you have been at the beach.
- See massage in Pattaya.
- See tipping.

Related guides

- Pattaya with a Baby or Toddler
- Fishing Parks and Sea Fishing
- Hua Hin Trip from Pattaya
- Wat Yansangwararam

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

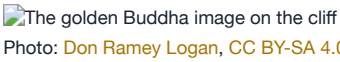
Khao Chi Chan (Buddha Mountain)

Khao Chi Chan is a giant golden Buddha outline laser-cut into a cliff south of Pattaya in 1996: how to get there, hours, free entry, what to wear and what to combine it with.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/khao-chi-chan/

What	**A Buddha outline inlaid with gold on a cliff, about 109 m tall**
Made	**1996, cut by laser for King Rama IX's Golden Jubilee**
Where	**Na Chom Thian, about 15 to 20 km south of central Pattaya**
Entry	**Free, with free parking; donations welcome**
Hours	**About 8am to 6pm (listings vary)**
Time needed	**20 to 45 minutes**

Quick answer: Khao Chi Chan, often called Buddha Mountain, is an enormous seated Buddha outlined in gold on the face of a limestone cliff in Na Chom Thian, about 15 to 20 km south of central Pattaya. It was cut into the rock by laser in 1996 to honour King Rama IX's 50 years on the throne. Entry and parking are free, it's open in daylight hours (about 8am to 6pm), and most people spend 20 to 45 minutes there. It's a short stop, so pair it with Wat Yansangwararam, Silverlake vineyard or Nong Nooch nearby.


The golden Buddha image on the cliff at Khao Chi Chan
Photo: Don Ramey Logan, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
What you see	A seated Buddha outline in gold leaf on a sheer limestone cliff
Size	About 109 m tall and 70 m wide (some sources say about 130 m)
Where	Na Chom Thian, inland from Sukhumvit Road, near Wat Yansangwararam
From Pattaya	About 30 to 40 minutes by road
Entry	Free; donation boxes on site
Hours	About 8am to 6pm; other listings say 6am to 6pm
Dress	Shoulders and knees covered
Best light	Early morning or late afternoon

What it is

The hill was once a quarry. Stone from it was used to build the runways at U-Tapao airfield during the Vietnam War era, leaving a bare, cut cliff. In 1995 the late Supreme Patriarch, Somdet Phra Yanasangworn, moved to stop the quarrying, and the cliff became the canvas for a royal project.

In January 1996, teams from the King Mongkut's Institute of Technology in Thonburi used lasers to cut the design, drawn by computer, into the flattened rock face. The lines were then inlaid with gold leaf. The image was made to mark the Golden Jubilee of King Bhumibol Adulyadej (Rama IX), and the project was overseen by the then Crown Prince, now King Rama X. It is often described as the largest carved Buddha image in the world. The forest planted around it dates from a royal reforestation project begun in 1990.

It is a place of worship as well as a sight. You'll see Thai visitors leaving flowers and incense at the shrine in front of the cliff.

Visiting

- You view it from a landscaped garden with a pond and a viewing area at the foot of the cliff. You can't climb the cliff itself.
- Entry and parking are free. There are donation boxes and shrine points for offerings.
- Shade is limited around the main viewing area, so a hat and water help.
- Most people stay 20 to 45 minutes. It's more of a photo and quiet moment than a half-day trip.
- Monkeys are reported to live on the hill. Don't feed them, and keep food and bags closed.

When to go

- Early morning or the hour or two before closing give the best contrast on the gold and gentler heat.
- At midday the sun flattens the carving in photos and the garden gets very hot. See heat and sun safety.
- Listed hours differ between sources, from 6am or 8am to 5pm or 6pm, and one even says 9pm. Go in daylight and you'll be fine.

Dress and behaviour

- Cover your shoulders and knees, as at any temple.
- Keep your voice down near the shrine, and don't climb on statues or point your feet at Buddha images.
- Drones and loud music are out of place here. See temple customs.

Getting there

It's south of Pattaya: head down Sukhumvit Road (Highway 3) towards Sattahip and turn inland at the Wat Yansangwararam junction. The road to Khao Chi Chan and the temple is the same route.

- **Bolt or Grab:** easy to get there. Getting a car back can take longer this far out, so agree a wait-and-return price with the driver, or book your ride home before you start looking around. See Bolt and Grab.
- **Scooter:** a pleasant ride if you're confident on Sukhumvit Road traffic. See renting a scooter and scooter rides around Pattaya.
- **Tours:** many half-day tours stop here with Wat Yan and Silverlake. See tours from Pattaya.

Combine it with

- Wat Yansangwararam, the large royal temple complex on the same road, with a lake and pavilions in different national styles.
- **Silverlake vineyard** at the foot of the hill: a winery with gardens and a café.
- **Viharn Sien**, a Chinese-style museum and temple in the same area.
- Nong Nooch Tropical Garden, a little further south.
- Bang Saray for seafood by the sea on the way back.
- More sights in town: temples and viewpoints.

A simple half day

TIME	WHAT TO DO
8am	Khao Chi Chan in the soft morning light
9am	Wat Yansangwararam, a few minutes away
10:30am	Coffee or a walk at Silverlake, or on to Nong Nooch
Lunch	Seafood in Bang Saray, then back to Pattaya

Common questions

Is Khao Chi Chan free? Yes. Entry and parking are free, and donations are welcome.

How big is the Buddha at Khao Chi Chan? Most sources give about 109 m tall and 70 m wide. Some say about 130 m. Either way, it fills the cliff.

How far is Khao Chi Chan from Pattaya? About 15 to 20 km south of central Pattaya, roughly 30 to 40 minutes by road depending on traffic.

How was it made? The outline was cut into the cliff with lasers in 1996, then inlaid with gold leaf.

Is it worth the trip? On its own it's a short stop. Combined with Wat Yansangwararam and Silverlake or Nong Nooch, it makes an easy half day south of town.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Wikipedia, Khao Chi Chan (history, laser carving, size, quarry, nearby sights); Thai Holiday Guide, Khao Chi Chan (hours, free entry, dress, best light, updated July 2026). Other travel listings give different hours and a 130 m height; there is no official visitor page, so treat hours as a guide.

Plan your day

- Go early in the day to beat the heat and the crowds, and bring water and sun cream.
- Dress modestly, it is a religious site.
- Ride apps are the easiest way to get there and back. See Bolt and Grab.

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Pattaya in the Rain: A 3-Day Plan

A flexible three-day plan for a wet week in Pattaya: dry-morning outdoor trips, indoor sights for the afternoon storms, food and evenings that work in any weather, with 2026 prices and rain tips.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/rainy-week-plan/

Best for	**May to October visits**
Rule of thumb	**Outdoors in the morning, indoors after lunch**
Indoor picks	**Malls, Art in Paradise, massage, cabaret**
Keep handy	**Poncho and an app taxi**

Rain rarely lasts all day in Pattaya. Plan outdoor things for the morning, keep the afternoons flexible, and the trip works. Pack the rainy season survival kit first.

Quick answer: In the rainy season, roughly May to October and wettest in September and October, Pattaya's mornings are often sunny and the storms come in the afternoon or evening. So do the outdoor sights early (the Big Buddha viewpoint, the Sanctuary of Truth, Koh Larn on a clear day), and save the afternoons for indoor places: malls, Art in Paradise (about ฿400), a long Thai massage (about ฿200 to ฿350 an hour) or a cooking class. Evenings work in any weather: a cabaret show from about ฿450, live music or a covered night market.

Pro tip: he isn't a fan of fixed itineraries, because everyone is different and there's so much to do. Treat the days below as a menu and swap things around to suit the weather and your mood.

The plan at a glance

DAY	MORNING (USUALLY DRIER)	AFTERNOON (STORM TIME)	EVENING
—	—	—	—
1	Big Buddha and the viewpoint	Art in Paradise or a mall	Cabaret show
2	Sanctuary of Truth	A long Thai massage	Covered bars and live music
3	Koh Larn if the sea is calm	Cooking class or more indoor sights	Night market or mall food court

Day 1: City and viewpoints

- Morning: Big Buddha and the viewpoint while it is dry. Entry is free; cover shoulders and knees.
- Afternoon: Art in Paradise or a mall such as Terminal 21, with cinemas, bowling and food courts under one roof.
- Evening: a cabaret show, about 70 minutes, with several shows a night.

Day 2: Culture and comfort

- Morning: Sanctuary of Truth, about ฿500, open roughly 8:00 to 18:00. Much of it is under cover.
- Afternoon: a long Thai massage. Rain is the perfect excuse for two hours.
- Evening: covered bars and live music. Bands usually start around 21:00. See live music.

Day 3: Your choice

- If the sky is clear: a morning trip to Koh Larn, about 45 minutes by ferry from Bali Hai for ฿30 or ฿40. Check the sea and the ferry times first; rough seas can cancel speedboats, and the last public ferry back is usually around 18:00.
- If it is pouring: a Thai cooking class (about ฿1,000 to ฿2,000, three to four hours) or more ideas from rainy day attractions.

Reading the weather

- Rain usually comes in heavy bursts, often in the afternoon or evening, then clears. Waiting 30 to 60 minutes in a café often beats going out in it.
- Weather apps disagree. Jonny has had his phone's forecast promise rain all evening while AccuWeather showed a very small chance, and it stayed dry. Check more than one app before cancelling plans.
- Some years bring real storms. In September 2026, reports called it the worst rain and flooding in ten years. Follow Thai Meteorological Department warnings; the disaster line is 1860.

Getting around in the wet

- Low roads flood first, often by 10 to 60 cm: around Soi Buakhao, South Pattaya, Third Road and parts of Sukhumvit. See flood season.
- Don't ride a scooter through flood water; you can't see potholes or open drains.
- Bolt and Grab prices rise and cars are harder to find in heavy rain; a baht bus is still ฿15 on the main loop. See baht buses.

What to pack

A light poncho or rain jacket, a dry bag for your phone and passport copy, sandals that can get wet, a spare power bank, and mosquito repellent: dengue risk peaks in the rainy season. See dengue and mosquitoes.

Tips

- Book outdoor trips with free cancellation where you can.
- Keep a Bolt or Grab app ready for heavy showers.
- The rainy season is low season: hotels are cheaper and attractions quieter. See best time to visit.

Common questions

Is it worth visiting Pattaya in the rainy season? Yes, if you plan around the weather: mornings are often dry, prices are lower and crowds smaller.

Does it rain all day in Pattaya? Rarely. Most days have sunny spells with heavy bursts of rain, often later in the day.

What is the wettest month in Pattaya? September and October are usually the wettest.

What can I do in Pattaya when it rains? Malls, Art in Paradise, massage, cooking classes, cabaret and Muay Thai.

Do attractions close when it rains? Indoor attractions, malls and shows carry on. Boat trips are the exception: rough seas can cancel speedboats, so check before you go to the pier.

Plan your day

- Keep a light rain jacket and waterproof bag handy.
- See rainy season survival.
- See Thai cooking classes.

Sources

- Our weather by month, flood season, Koh Larn, Sanctuary of Truth and rainy day attractions pages (prices and times checked 2026).
- Jonny James ride videos, 10 October 2026 (forecast apps) and 26 September 2026 (rain and flooding reports).

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Diving & Snorkelling in Pattaya

Pattaya is a good place to learn to dive: the islands off Pattaya, the navy wrecks HTMS Khram, Kut and Mataphon, 2026 course and fun-dive prices from local dive centres, visibility, the best season and snorkelling trips.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/diving-snorkelling/

Dive sites	**Koh Larn, Koh Sak, Koh Krok, Koh Phai and the navy wrecks**
Wrecks	**HTMS Khram, HTMS Kut and HTMS Mataphon, sunk as artificial reefs**
Open Water course	**About ฿13,000 to ฿17,800 at dive centres checked**
Two-dive day trip	**About ฿2,700 to ฿3,300 with boat and lunch**
Best season	**November to April**

Quick answer: Pattaya isn't Thailand's famous dive destination, but it's a good, affordable place to learn and an easy one to dive from. Boats leave in the morning for the islands off Pattaya, Koh Larn, Koh Sak and Koh Krok for shallow training dives, and Koh Phai further out for better coral, plus three navy ships sunk as artificial reefs: the HTMS Khram, Kut and Mataphon. Local dive centres list the PADI Open Water course at about ฿13,000 to ฿17,800 and two-dive day trips at about ฿2,700 to ฿3,300 with boat and lunch. Visibility is modest compared with the Andaman coast, best from about November to April. For snorkelling, skip the busy Koh Larn beaches and join a boat to Koh Sak or Koh Phai.


A dive boat in Thailand
Photo: Eli Duke, CC BY-SA 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons

At a glance

ITEM	TYPICAL PRICE (APPROX.)	NOTES
Try dive / Discover Scuba	฿2,800 to ฿4,500	One or two ocean dives, no certificate
PADI Open Water (about 3 days)	฿13,000 to ฿17,800	Group and e-learning options change the price
PADI Advanced Open Water	฿11,000 to ฿14,950	Needed for deeper wreck dives
Two-dive day trip	฿2,700 to ฿3,300	Boat and usually lunch; gear rental sometimes extra
Snorkelling day trip	About ฿1,500 to ฿1,900	Riding along on a dive boat

Prices are list prices on four Pattaya dive centres' websites, checked in November 2026; one says prices can change in high season (December to February). Ask what's included: equipment, transfers, lunch, the certification card (one centre lists a separate ฿1,990 card fee in some cases), and any pier or park fees.

Where you dive

- **Near islands**: Koh Larn, Koh Sak and Koh Krok, with shallow coral, fish and easy conditions. Most Open Water training happens here.
- **Far islands**: Koh Phai (Bamboo Island) and the islets around it, further out with usually clearer water and better coral. Trips leave earlier.
- **Samae San**: a marine area near Sattahip, south of Pattaya, run as a separate day trip by some centres.

The wrecks

Thailand's navy sank old ships off Pattaya as artificial reefs, and they're now the area's signature dives.

- **HTMS Khram**: a former US landing ship handed to the Thai navy in 1962 and sunk in 2003, about 300 m from Koh Phai. Its deck is at about 15 m and the seabed at about 28 to 30 m.
- **HTMS Kut**: the Khram's sister ship, scuttled on 17 September 2006 a few hundred metres north of Koh Sak, upright in about 28 m, around 40 minutes by boat from Pattaya.
- **HTMS Mataphon**: a Second World War-era tank landing craft scuttled on 20 October 2012 south of Koh Larn, in about 23 m.

Dive sites list the Khram as possible with an Open Water card, with Advanced needed to go inside. The wrecks are deep for new divers, so go with a guide and within your training.

Conditions and season

- Visibility around Pattaya is usually modest, often 3 to 10 m near the shore and better further out, and best from about November to February.
- November to April has calmer seas. From May to October the sea is rougher, visibility drops and far-island trips are cancelled more often. See weather by month.
- The water is warm all year; a thin wetsuit is plenty.
- When the Marine Office raises a red flag, small boats stay in port. After a speedboat collision near Bali Hai pier on 9 November 2026, small boats were held ashore while restrictions lasted. See island hopping.

Choosing a dive centre

- Pick a centre with recognised instructors (PADI or SSI), well-kept equipment and a proper dive boat, and ask to see both.
- Ask about group size and the instructor-to-student ratio. Smaller is better when you're learning.
- Many centres let you do the theory online before you arrive, so your holiday days go on the water.
- You'll fill in a medical form. Some conditions need a doctor's sign-off, so check before you travel.
- Make sure your insurance covers diving to the depth you'll dive. See travel insurance.

Pro tip: he's not a fan of scuba himself (the skin-tight suits). A diver friend of his called Phuket the clearest water he's ever seen and worth every penny, and divers based in Pattaya have told Jonny that Pattaya is great and Phuket is unbelievable.

Snorkelling

- The easiest option is the public ferry to Koh Larn, but a 2026 guide says the reefs off its busy beaches are in poor condition. See Koh Larn beaches.
- Better snorkelling is around Koh Sak and Koh Phai, which you reach only on a tour, a charter or a dive boat. Snorkellers can often join dive trips and stay at the surface.
- Wear a rash vest for the sun and water shoes for sea urchins, and watch for jellyfish, more common in the rainy season. See jellyfish and sea creatures.

Safety tips

- Don't fly within 18 to 24 hours after diving.
- Don't dive with a cold, after drinking, or deeper than your training.
- Wear the life jacket on the boat ride; it's compulsory.
- Don't touch, stand on or take coral or shells.
- Sun protection on the boat. See heat and sun safety.
- Accidents at sea: call 1196. See emergency numbers.

Common questions

Is Pattaya good for diving? It's good for learning and for wreck dives, with calm, shallow island sites and reasonable prices. For clear water and big reefs, the Andaman coast is better.

How much is a PADI Open Water course in Pattaya? About ฿13,000 to ฿17,800 at the dive centres we checked in November 2026, usually over three days with equipment included.

What are the best wrecks near Pattaya? The HTMS Khram near Koh Phai, the HTMS Kut near Koh Sak and the HTMS Mataphon south of Koh Larn, all former navy ships in about 23 to 30 m.

When is the best time to dive in Pattaya? November to April for calmer seas, with the best visibility from about November to February.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: dive centre price lists from Dive Centre Pattaya, Jomtien Dive Center (2026 prices), Pattaya Scuba Club and No Limit Dive (cited as price examples, not recommendations); Thai Wreck Diver, HTMS Khram; Private Scuba, HTMS Kut wreck; Thailand Diving, HTMS Mataphon; Visit Thailand Today, Koh Larn guide (October 2026) (snorkelling). Wreck dates and depths differ slightly between dive sites. Prices change; confirm when you book.

Plan your day

- Visibility is usually best in the dry season.
- Do not fly within 24 hours after diving.
- See jellyfish and sea creatures.

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Best Time to Visit Pattaya

When to visit Pattaya: the dry, busy cool season, the hot months and the rainy low season, with what each means for weather, crowds, prices and festivals.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/best-time-to-visit/

Best weather	**December to February, the driest months**
Hottest	**April, average high about 33°C**
Wettest	**September and October**
Busiest	**November to March, peak at Christmas and New Year**
Cheapest	**May to October, the rainy low season**

Quick answer: For the best weather, visit from December to February: it is dry, sunny and the least humid, with average highs of about 30 to 31°C. That is also the busiest and most expensive time. For lower prices and quieter streets, come in the rainy low season from May to October, when storms are usually heavy but short. Avoid September and October if rain would ruin your trip: they are the two wettest months by a long way. Pattaya is warm all year, so there is no bad month for heat.

At a glance

IF YOU WANT	GO IN	WHY
The best weather	December to February	Driest months, about 1 to 2 rainy days a month on average
Lower prices, fewer crowds	May to October	The rainy low season; hotels have more empty rooms
Big festivals	November, April	Loy Krathong, the fireworks festival, Songkran and Wan Lai
A good balance	November or March	Mostly dry, a little quieter than the peak weeks
To avoid the most rain	Skip September and October	About 214 mm and 225 mm of rain on average
To avoid the heat	Skip April and May	The hottest months, highs about 33°C

Climate figures are 1991 to 2020 averages for Pattaya. For every month in detail, see Pattaya weather by month.

The three seasons

SEASON	MONTHS	WEATHER	CROWDS AND PRICES
Cool and dry	November to February	Sunny, highs about 30 to 31°C, lows 23 to 25°C	Busiest and most expensive, peaking at Christmas and New Year
Hot	March to mid May	Highs about 32 to 33°C, humid, most sunshine in March	Busy around Songkran, quieter otherwise
Rainy	Mid May to October	Short, heavy storms; wettest in September and October	Low season, the best hotel deals

The Thai Meteorological Department announces each season when the data show it has started, so the dates move a little every year. In 2026 it declared the rainy season from 15 May and the cool season from 9 November.

Crowds and prices

High season runs roughly from November to March. Hotels fill up most around Christmas, New Year and big festival weekends, and room prices rise with them, so book early for those dates. In the low season you have far more choice: the Thai Hotels Association's Eastern Chapter expected Pattaya occupancy of about 80 to 85% in high season and 50 to 60% in low season (its forecast for 2025).

Low season is not empty. Asian holiday periods, such as China's National Day holiday in early October, and Thai long weekends still bring busy days. Check the Thai public holidays before you book.

Who should come when

- **First trip, short stay:** December to February gives you the best chance of dry beach days and island trips.
- **On a budget:** May to August. Prices are lower and the rain is lighter than in September and October.
- **Long stays and snowbirds:** November to March, when the weather is at its best. See snowbirds and winter stays.
- **Families:** in the hot months, plan water parks and indoor attractions for the middle of the day. See Pattaya with kids.
- **Island trips and diving:** dry, calm days are best. Boats can be cancelled in storms: on 25 September 2026 the Pattaya Marine Office stopped all boats leaving shore. See island hopping.

Festivals worth planning around

- **Loy Krathong (November):** candlelit floats on the water. In 2026 it falls on 24 November. See Loy Krathong.
- **Pattaya International Fireworks Festival (late November):** 27 and 28 November in 2026 on Pattaya Beach, with Beach Road closed to traffic from 3pm. See fireworks festival.
- **New Year countdown:** fireworks and big crowds on the beach. See New Year countdown.
- **Chinese New Year (January or February):** lion dances and shrine visits, 6 February in 2027. See Chinese New Year.
- **Songkran (13 to 15 April):** Thai New Year water fights, and in Pattaya the party carries on to Wan Lai a few days later. See Songkran and Wan Lai.
- **Vegetarian Festival (September or October):** at the Chinese shrines in Naklua. See Vegetarian Festival.

Most shops and bars can't sell alcohol on the five Buddhist holy days, which fall in every season, though hotels and licensed entertainment venues can. See Buddhist holidays and alcohol and the events calendar.

Rainy season, honestly

Even in October, the wettest month, Pattaya averages about 14 days with 1 mm or more of rain, so more than half the days stay dry. Storms tend to be heavy and short rather than all day. The risk is the big storms: in late September 2026, overnight rain flooded roads around Pattaya and Si Racha. If you come in the rainy season, keep plans flexible, and read the rainy season survival kit and flood season guides.

Pro tip: Ignore the little cloud icon on your phone. Trust the radar. Where Apple Weather tends to get things very wrong, the AccuWeather radar hasn't disappointed me once.

Common questions

What is the best month to visit Pattaya? December, January or February for the weather. December is the driest month, with about 12 mm of rain on average, but also the busiest.

What is the cheapest time to visit Pattaya? The rainy low season, roughly May to October, when hotels have more empty rooms and offer better deals.

Is Pattaya worth visiting in the rainy season? Yes, if you can be flexible. Most days have dry spells, prices are lower, and there are plenty of rainy day attractions. September and October are the riskiest months.

When is it too hot in Pattaya? April and May are the hottest, with average highs of about 33°C and warm, humid nights. Plan outdoor things for the morning and evening. See heat and sun safety.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Wikipedia, Pattaya climate table (WMO climate normals 1991–2020); VietnamPlus, Thailand enters 2026 rainy season; Pattaya Mail, Thailand enters winter (11 November 2026); Nation Thailand, THA Eastern Chapter occupancy forecast (January 2025); Pattaya Mail, fireworks festival 2026; Nation Thailand, boats banned on 25 September 2026. Festival dates come from our events calendar; some are still to be confirmed.

Plan your day

- Book flights and hotels early for December, January and Songkran.
- Low season brings lower prices and quieter beaches.
- See events calendar.

From the blog

- Read Jonny's story: If You Don't Know This About Pattaya Weather, Your Plans Could Be Ruined.

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Cinemas, Bowling and Indoor Fun

Pattaya's cinemas, bowling and arcades: the four multiplexes, how to find English-language showings, the royal anthem, where to bowl now that older alleys have closed, and ideas for rainy or hot afternoons.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/cinemas-bowling/

Cinemas	**SFX Central Pattaya, SFX Terminal 21, Major Cineplex (The Avenue), SF Central Marina**
English films	**Original soundtrack with Thai subtitles; avoid "Thai dubbed"**
Before the film	**Stand for the royal anthem**
Cheapest day	**Wednesday is the traditional discount day**
Bowling	**SF Strike Bowl, 6th floor of Central Pattaya**
Closed	**Blu-O and PS Bowl; Harbor Pattaya shut for renovation since Nov 2025**

Quick answer: Pattaya has four main cinemas: SFX at Central Pattaya on Beach Road, SFX at Terminal 21 by the Dolphin roundabout, Major Cineplex at The Avenue on Second Road, and SF Cinema at Central Marina in North Pattaya. Hollywood films usually show with the original English soundtrack and Thai subtitles, but dubbed showings exist, so check the language on the listing. Everyone stands for the royal anthem before the film. For bowling, SF Strike Bowl is on the 6th floor of Central Pattaya; older alleys such as Blu-O and PS Bowl are listed as closed. Bring a jacket: cinemas and bowling alleys are cold.

At a glance

VENUE	WHERE	GOOD FOR
SFX Cinema Central Pattaya	Upper floors of Central Pattaya, Beach Road	The widest choice of formats, including 4D and a First Class tier
SFX Cinema Terminal 21	Terminal 21, Dolphin roundabout, North Pattaya	Gold Class recliners; the Pier 21 food court downstairs
Major Cineplex Pattaya	The Avenue, Second Road	The most central; listed open 10am to midnight (Aug 2026)
SF Cinema Central Marina	Second Road, North Pattaya	Quieter, easy parking
SF Strike Bowl	6th floor, Central Pattaya	Bowling for groups and families
Mall arcades and karaoke	The big malls	Kids, rainy afternoons, groups

Cinemas

All four are modern multiplexes inside malls, so you can eat, shop and stay dry before and after the film. Find them on SFX Central Pattaya, SFX Terminal 21, Major Cineplex and SF Central Marina.

- **Central Pattaya** has the widest range, including 3D, 4D and a First Class tier with reclining seats, blankets, and food and drink before the film. It's a few steps from the beach, so it works when rain stops play.
- **Terminal 21** has Gold Class reclining seats and self-service ticket machines. See Central Pattaya and Terminal 21.
- **Major Cineplex at The Avenue** is the most central on Second Road, and a local guide verified it as open 10am to midnight in August 2026.
- **SF Cinema Central Marina** is the quiet one, with plenty of parking.

Finding films in English

Each showing on the listing has a language code or small flag. What you want for Hollywood films is the original soundtrack with Thai subtitles. "Thai dubbed" means no English audio and no English subtitles, and visitors book it by mistake. Thai films usually have no subtitles; a few show with English subtitles, which is the listing to look for if you want to try Thai cinema. If you can't tell, ask at the counter before you pay.

Tickets and booking

- Book in the SF Cinema or Major Cineplex app or website: choose the branch first. Guides say both accept foreign cards. You can also pay at the counter or at ticket machines.
- Wednesday is the traditional discount day at Thai cinema chains. Weekday afternoons are usually quiet enough to walk in.
- Book ahead for big releases, especially on weekend evenings.
- Prices depend on the seat type. Premium recliners and First Class or Gold Class cost several times a normal seat, so check before you choose.
- Trailers and adverts can run 20 minutes or more, so you don't need to rush in.

The royal anthem

Before the feature, the royal anthem plays and the whole audience stands. It lasts about a minute. You don't need to do anything except stand quietly until everyone sits down again. Staying seated is noticed, and it is seen as disrespectful. See Thai etiquette.

Bowling

- **SF Strike Bowl** is on the 6th floor of Central Pattaya on Beach Road, with 16 lanes according to Pattaya Unlimited. It was in use for a charity bowling event in May 2025. Call or check Google Maps for hours and prices before a special trip.
- **Blu-O Bowl** at The Avenue and **PS Bowl** on Third Road are listed as permanently closed by Pattaya Unlimited (April 2025), even though some older guides still mention them.
- Bowling and arcades work well for groups and families. See Pattaya with kids.

Arcades, karaoke and play zones

The big malls have arcades with claw machines and video games, and karaoke rooms you rent by the hour. Harbor Pattaya, once known for its large indoor play zones, closed all its play zones on 3 November 2025 and its shops by the end of that month for a major renovation. We found no confirmed reopening date, so check before you go.

Pro tip: the claw machine arcades are a good way to spend maybe an hour. Expect about ฿1,000 for a lot of coins (October 2026).

For karaoke and pool in the evening, see pool and karaoke and pool in Pattaya.

More indoor ideas

- Art in Paradise for illusion photos.
- A long massage in the hottest part of the day.
- A Thai cooking class.
- More ideas, with prices, in rainy day attractions.

Common questions

Are films in Pattaya shown in English? Most Hollywood films show with the original English soundtrack and Thai subtitles. Some showings are Thai dubbed, so check the language code on the listing before you book.

Do you have to stand in Thai cinemas? Yes. The royal anthem plays before the film and everyone stands for about a minute.

Where can I go bowling in Pattaya? SF Strike Bowl on the 6th floor of Central Pattaya on Beach Road. Blu-O and PS Bowl are listed as closed.

What is the cheapest day for the cinema in Thailand? Wednesday is the traditional discount day at the big chains. Weekday afternoons are also the quietest.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya.guide, movies guide (published August 2026: cinemas, formats, language codes, royal anthem, discount day); Pattaya.guide, Major Cineplex Pattaya (verified 4 August 2026); Pattaya Unlimited, ten-pin bowling (updated April 2025: SF Strike Bowl lanes, closed alleys); The Pattaya News, charity bowling at SF Strike Bowl (May 2025); The Pattaya News, Harbor Pattaya closes for renovation (November 2025). Showtimes, prices and hours change; check the chain apps.

Plan your day

- Cinemas are cold, bring a light jacket.
- Thai cinemas play the royal anthem before films. Please stand.
- See shopping malls.

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

3 Days in Pattaya: First-Timer Itinerary

Not a fixed timetable: a menu of options for a first three days in Pattaya, with a land day, a sea day and a free day to mix and match, evening choices, what each costs, and how to get around for ฿15.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/3-days-in-pattaya/

Shape	**A land day, a sea day, a free day, in any order**
Land day	**Sanctuary of Truth (฿500), viewpoint and Big Buddha (free)**
Sea day	**Koh Larn ferry about ฿30 to ฿40, about 45 minutes**
Free day	**A day trip, a slow day, or more of what you liked**
Getting around	**Baht bus ฿15 on the normal loop, Bolt and Grab**

Quick answer: Three days is enough for a good first look at Pattaya without rushing, but there is no single right plan. A simple shape that works for most people is one land day of sights, one sea day on Koh Larn, and one free day for whatever you enjoyed most, a day trip or a slow day by the pool. Pick one or two things from each menu, then choose your evenings. The baht bus costs ฿15 on the normal loop.

Pro tip: I don't like one-shot itineraries. Everyone is different and there is so much you can do here; one guide just guesses. Learn what's available, then craft your own.

At a glance

CHOICE	OPTIONS	COST (ABOUT)	TIME
Land day	Sanctuary of Truth, viewpoint and Big Buddha, beach walk	฿500 for the Sanctuary; the hill is free	Half a day to a full day
Sea day	Koh Larn by ferry or speedboat, or Jomtien beach	Ferry ฿30 to ฿40 each way; beach chair ฿100 to ฿200	Full day
Free day	Nong Nooch, floating market, Khao Chi Chan, a massage and mall day	Free to about ฿800	Half a day to a full day
Evenings	Night markets, cabaret, Muay Thai, rooftop sunset, Walking Street, moo kata	From street-food prices to ฿2,800 for top cabaret seats	2 to 5 hours
Getting around	Baht bus, Bolt, Grab, motorbike taxi	฿15 a baht bus ride on the normal loop	

Menu 1: a land day

Pick one big sight for the morning, then something easy for the afternoon.

- **Sanctuary of Truth**: the huge hand-carved wooden temple by the sea in Naklua. About ฿500 for adults, open 8am to 6pm, with night tours from 6:20pm. Allow two to four hours, and cover shoulders and knees.
- **Pattaya viewpoint and Big Buddha** on Pratumnak Hill: both free and about 1.2 km apart. Best early, or in the late afternoon for the light over the bay.
- **Pattaya Beach and Beach Road**: a walk, a swim and lunch. Wednesday is the chair-free day.
- **Too hot or raining?** Art in Paradise (about ฿400) or a mall. More on rainy day attractions.

Menu 2: a sea day

- **Koh Larn**: the ferry from Bali Hai pier takes about 45 minutes and costs about ฿30 to ฿40 each way in cash (reports differ in 2026, so check at the pier). Shared speedboats are about ฿150 to ฿300 a seat and take 15 to 20 minutes. Tawaen is the busy beach; Samae and Nual are quieter. Return boats end in the early evening, so don't leave it to the last one. See Koh Larn beaches.
- **Stay the night** on the island for quiet evenings and empty early beaches. See Koh Larn overnight.
- **Stay on the mainland**: walk part of the 6 km Jomtien beach and end at the night market.

Menu 3: a free day

- **Nong Nooch Garden**: huge gardens with shows, about 15 km south. From about ฿500, about ฿800 with the show.
- **Pattaya Floating Market**: regional snacks and souvenirs, about ฿200 for foreign adults.
- **Khao Chi Chan**: the golden Buddha outline on a cliff, free, 20 to 45 minutes. Easy to combine with Nong Nooch.
- **Further out**: Bang Saen, Si Racha or Koh Samet. See day trips.
- **A slow day**: a Thai massage, a mall, a cooking class or a café. See massage in Pattaya and cafés.

Evenings: pick three

- **Night markets**: Thepprasit is biggest from Friday to Sunday; Jomtien's is right by the beach.
- **Sunset** from a rooftop bar or one of the sunset spots.
- **Cabaret**: Tiffany's, Alcazar and Colosseum run shows every evening, about 60 to 75 minutes, from about ฿550.
- **Muay Thai**: live fights most evenings.
- **Street food and a beer**: eat on Soi Buakhao, then the open-air bars of Tree Town. See street food.
- **Moo kata**: Thai barbecue and hotpot, great with a group.
- **Walking Street**: busiest after 10pm, and the most expensive street in town.

Not drinking? See a night out without drinking. Shops sell alcohol from 11am to midnight, and on the five Buddhist holy days most shops and ordinary bars can't sell at all. See Buddhist holidays and alcohol.

Getting around

- **Baht buses** run loops along Beach Road and Second Road for ฿15 a ride since 10 April 2026; longer runs, such as to Jomtien, are up to about ฿20. Press the buzzer to stop and pay the driver. See baht bus routes and fares.
- **Bolt and Grab** give a fixed price before you ride and run late at night. See Bolt and Grab.
- **Motorbike taxis** are quickest in traffic; official riders have worn blue vests since 16 October 2026. Agree the price first. See motorbike taxis.

Pro tip: If I'm not driving myself, I prefer a motorbike taxi. It's so much faster through traffic, and in high season you can lose a lot of time if you don't plan ahead.

Plan around the weather

- Start early; midday heat is strong most of the year. See heat and sun safety.
- The rainy season runs roughly May to October; keep an indoor option for each day. See weather by month.
- Koh Larn boat schedules can change with the weather, and small boats stay in under a red flag, so put the sea day early and keep a spare day to swap it into.

Common questions

Is 3 days enough for Pattaya? For a first look, yes: sights, an island and a few evenings. Add days for day trips or simply slower days.

What should I not miss in 3 days? It depends on you, but most first-timers enjoy the Sanctuary of Truth, Koh Larn and a night market. Pick what appeals from the menus above.

How much will 3 days cost? Beyond your room, the sights above cost from nothing to about ฿800 each, and street food and baht buses are cheap. See budget for a week and Pattaya on ฿1,000 a day.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya Mail, Koh Larn ferry times and prices for 2026 (16 August 2026); Sanctuary of Truth official site (opening hours). Other prices come from our linked guide pages, each checked with its own sources; reports of the Koh Larn ferry fare differ between ฿30 and ฿40.

If you have more time

Add a day trip: Nong Nooch Garden, the floating market, or Koh Samet.

Plan your day

- Keep one evening free for the night markets. See night markets.
- If it rains, swap in an indoor day. See rainy day attractions.
- Short on time? See Pattaya in one day.

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Big Buddha and Pattaya Viewpoint

Pratumnak Hill's two free sights: the 18-metre golden Big Buddha at Wat Phra Yai and the Pattaya City viewpoint over the bay, with opening times, temple etiquette, the sign's lighting, and how to get there.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/big-buddha-viewpoint/

Where	**Pratumnak Hill, between Pattaya and Jomtien**
Entry	**Free for both**
Big Buddha	**18 m gilded seated Buddha, built 1977**
Viewpoint hours	**Listed as 7am to 10pm**
Distance apart	**About 1.2 km on the same hill**
Dress	**Shoulders and knees covered at the temple**

Quick answer: Pratumnak Hill, between Pattaya and Jomtien, has two of the city's best free sights about 1.2 km apart. Wat Phra Yai, the Big Buddha temple, is a working temple with an 18-metre gilded seated Buddha built in 1977, reached by a staircase lined with naga serpents. The Pattaya City viewpoint, above Bali Hai pier, has the classic view north over the bay and the lit PATTAYA CITY sign. Both are free. Visit the temple by day with shoulders and knees covered, then go to the viewpoint for sunset; it is listed as open 7am to 10pm. Take Bolt, Grab or a motorbike taxi up, because baht buses don't climb the hill and the roads are steep with little shade.

At a glance

SIGHT	COST	HOURS	TIME NEEDED	GOOD TO KNOW
Big Buddha (Wat Phra Yai)	Free, donations welcome	Daily; a 2026 listing says it closes around 10pm	30 to 60 minutes	Working temple; dress code; go by day
Pattaya City viewpoint	Free	Listed as 7am to 10pm	20 to 40 minutes	Busiest at sunset; sign lit in the evening
Both together	Free	Late afternoon into sunset	1.5 to 2 hours	A Grab between them takes a few minutes

Big Buddha (Wat Phra Yai)

The temple dates back to the 1940s, when Pattaya was a fishing village, and the big golden Buddha was added in 1977. It sits near the top of the hill, which is about 98 metres high, the highest natural point in the city.

- **The staircase**: long, colourful naga serpent balustrades line the steps up to the terrace. There is a car park at the foot of the stairs.
- **The day Buddhas**: around the main image is a ring of smaller Buddhas in different postures, one for each day of the week. Thai visitors make an offering at the one for the day they were born.
- **Merit and donations**: you will see people lighting incense, offering flowers and dropping coins in donation boxes. Joining in is welcome but never expected.
- **Shade**: the terrace is open, so avoid midday in the hot season.
- **Monkeys**: there are monkeys on the hill. Keep food in a closed bag and don't feed them.

Temple etiquette

Wat Phra Yai is a place of worship, not just a photo stop.

- Cover your shoulders and knees. A light scarf or sarong in your bag solves this.
- Take your shoes off where others do, usually at the entrance to buildings.
- Keep your voice down, don't point your feet at Buddha images, and don't climb on or pose disrespectfully with statues.
- Women should not touch monks or hand things to them directly.

See temple customs for more.

Pattaya City viewpoint

The viewpoint is on the northern side of the hill above Bali Hai pier, inside a small park. It looks across the whole of Pattaya Bay: the high-rise skyline to the north, Walking Street and the pier below, and Koh Larn offshore on clear days. Pattaya Mail reported upgraded steps, handrails and CCTV here in May 2025.

- **The sign**: the big PATTAYA CITY letters on the hillside were refitted with colour-changing LED lights in 2025. Pattaya Mail reported in March 2025 that the sign would be lit from 6:30pm, with light shows from 7pm to 8pm daily and again from 9pm to 10pm Friday to Sunday. Schedules can change.
- **Sunset**: the most popular time. Arrive 30 to 45 minutes early to get a spot at the railings.
- **Early morning**: quieter and cooler, with clear light over the bay.
- The same hilltop has Wat Khao Phra Bat, with a replica of the Buddha's footprint, and a monument to Admiral Prince Abhakara, Prince of Chumphon, regarded as the father of the Royal Thai Navy. Thai visitors come to pay respects there, so keep it respectful.

For night photos and other high views, see night viewpoints.

Getting there

- **Bolt, Grab or a motorbike taxi** is easiest. For the temple, show the driver the Thai name วัดพระใหญ่ (Wat Phra Yai). See Bolt and Grab and motorbike taxis.
- **Baht buses** don't climb to the temple.
- **Walking**: possible from Walking Street, about 2 km uphill with little shade. Go early or late and carry water. See the Pratumnak walk.
- **Scooter**: both sights have parking. The road up to the viewpoint has tight bends, so ride slowly.

Suggested late afternoon

1. Arrive at Wat Phra Yai about 2 hours before sunset, dressed for the temple. 2. Spend 30 to 60 minutes at the Big Buddha and the day Buddhas. 3. Take a short Grab or motorbike taxi to the Pattaya City viewpoint for sunset. 4. Stay for the sign lighting, then head down to Bali Hai pier and Walking Street, or across to Jomtien for dinner.

Common questions

Is the Big Buddha in Pattaya free? Yes. Entry to Wat Phra Yai and to the Pattaya City viewpoint is free. Donations at the temple are welcome but optional.

How tall is the Big Buddha in Pattaya? About 18 metres. It is a gilded seated Buddha built in 1977 at a temple that dates back to the 1940s.

What should I wear to Wat Phra Yai? Clothes that cover your shoulders and knees. Take your shoes off where others do.

Can I visit the Big Buddha at night? Treat it as a daytime visit. It is a working temple, so go before dark, and save the evening for the viewpoint.

How far is the Big Buddha from the Pattaya viewpoint? About 1.2 km on the same hill, a few minutes by Grab or motorbike taxi.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Thai Holiday Guide, Big Buddha Pattaya (updated October 2026); Wikipedia, Khao Phra Tamnak for the statue's height and date and the hill's height; Pattaya Mail, the PATTAYA CITY sign's lighting schedule (March 2025); Pattaya Mail, Khao Phra Tamnak viewpoint upgraded (May 2025). Opening hours come from listings, not an official notice; the temple may close earlier for ceremonies.

Related guides

- Best Sunset Spots in Pattaya
- Khao Chi Chan (Buddha Mountain)
- The Best Photo Spots in Pattaya
- Day Trips From Pattaya
- Temples and Viewpoints

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

The Best Photo Spots in Pattaya

The best places for photos in Pattaya, from the lit-up PATTAYA CITY sign and the Sanctuary of Truth to Khao Chi Chan, sunset beaches and night views, with timing tips, photo etiquette and Thailand's 2026 drone rules.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/photo-spots/

Classic shot	**Pattaya Bay and the PATTAYA CITY sign from the Pratumnak viewpoint**
Sign lit	**Evenings from 6:30pm (viewpoint listed open until 10pm)**
Golden hour	**Sunset over the sea, around 6pm**
Night	**Bay views, Walking Street neon, rooftops**
Drones	**CAAT and NBTC registration plus ฿1 million insurance**
Respect	**Ask before photographing people up close**

Quick answer: For the classic Pattaya photo, go to the viewpoint on Pratumnak Hill: the whole bay plus the PATTAYA CITY sign, which has been lit with colour-changing LEDs every evening from 6:30pm since a 2025 upgrade. Pattaya faces west, so sunsets over the sea from the beaches, Bali Hai pier or a rooftop are the next best thing. Add the carved wooden Sanctuary of Truth, the gold-outlined Buddha at Khao Chi Chan and the city lights at night. Ask before photographing people up close, dress modestly at temples, and don't fly a drone without Thailand's registrations and insurance.

At a glance

SPOT	BEST TIME	COST	WHY GO
Pratumnak viewpoint and city sign	Sunset into the evening	Free	The classic bay view, the sign lit at night
Big Buddha, Wat Phra Yai	Early morning	Free	Golden Buddha on Pratumnak Hill
Sanctuary of Truth	Morning	฿500 adult day ticket	Hand-carved wooden temple on the sea
Khao Chi Chan	Daylight, about 8am to 6pm	Free	Giant Buddha outline on a cliff
Beaches and Bali Hai pier	Sunset, around 6pm	Free	Sun setting over the Gulf
Rooftop bars	Sunset and after dark	Price of a drink	City and bay lights
Walking Street	After dark	Free	Neon signs and street life

Viewpoints

- **Pratumnak viewpoint.** The viewpoint on Pratumnak Hill looks over the full curve of Pattaya Bay with the PATTAYA CITY sign on the hillside. In May 2025 the Thaiger reported a revamped plaza, CCTV for safety after dark, and a new LED system on the sign, lit every evening from 6:30pm with light shows at set times. The viewpoint is listed as open 7am to 10pm (October 2026), so the best window for the lit sign is from dusk until about 9:30pm. See the Pratumnak walk.
- **Big Buddha.** The golden Buddha at Wat Phra Yai is on the same hill. Go early, before the heat and the tour groups. See Big Buddha viewpoint.
- **Night views.** For the bay lit up after dark, from the hill, the pier or a rooftop, see night viewpoints.
- **Higher up.** The observation deck at Pattaya Park Tower looks over Jomtien, and The View Pattaya Ferris wheel at Runway Market on Second Road has gondolas over 100 metres up. See night markets for the wheel's prices.

Landmarks

- **Sanctuary of Truth.** The giant hand-carved wooden building on the shore in Naklua is at its best in morning light, from the gardens and the seafront. Expect a hard hat inside and cover your shoulders and knees. See Sanctuary of Truth.
- **Khao Chi Chan.** The enormous seated Buddha outlined in gold on a limestone cliff, south of Pattaya. It's free, and you view it from a garden with a pond at the foot of the cliff. Avoid midday, when the sun flattens the carving. See Khao Chi Chan, and pair it with nearby Wat Yansangwararam.
- **Pattaya Floating Market.** Wooden stilt houses, boat vendors and canals, best from a rowing boat. See Pattaya Floating Market.

Beaches and sunsets

Pattaya faces west over the Gulf, so the sun sets over the sea, around 6pm and a little earlier in December. Good spots are Pattaya Beach, Jomtien Beach, the end of Bali Hai pier looking back at the city, and Samae Beach on Koh Larn if you stay the night. See sunset spots.

For soft light and empty beaches, go at sunrise instead: monks on alms rounds, joggers and fresh markets. Photograph monks from a respectful distance and never block their path. See Pattaya at dawn.

Night

- Walking Street neon after dark. Wide shots of the street and signs are fine; don't point a camera into venues or at staff.
- City lights from rooftop bars, ideally arriving before sunset to get a table.
- Night markets for food stalls and colour. See night markets.

Fun and indoor shots

Art in Paradise is built for photos, with 3D illusion paintings you step into. Terminal 21's themed floors are popular for quick snaps on a rainy day. See rainy day attractions.

Photo etiquette

- Ask before taking close-up photos of people, and accept a no. Many people, especially staff in bars and shops, don't want to be photographed or posted online.
- At temples, cover your shoulders and knees, take your shoes off where others do, and don't climb on or pose disrespectfully with Buddha images. See temple customs and Thai etiquette.
- Respect signs that ban photos inside some halls and private areas.

Drones

Thailand's drone rules are strict. A Tourism Authority of Thailand guide dated June 2026 says every drone must be registered with the NBTC, and drones with a camera also need CAAT registration of the drone and the pilot, which requires a Thai SIM card. You need third-party insurance of at least ฿1 million. Flights are for daylight, in sight, below 90 metres and at least 9 km from airports unless you have approval, and flying over urban areas, crowds, government buildings and hospitals is banned without authorisation. That covers much of central Pattaya. TAT puts the penalty for breaking the flying rules at up to a year in prison, a ฿40,000 fine, or both, with possible confiscation; owning an unregistered drone carries separate, heavier penalties. Check the latest CAAT guidance before every trip. See legal in Thailand, not elsewhere.

Practical tips

- Golden hour, just after sunrise and before sunset, gives the best light and the least heat.
- Lenses fog up when you step from air conditioning into humid air. Give the camera a few minutes before you shoot.
- Carry water and shade for midday shoots. See heat and sun safety.

Common questions

Where is the PATTAYA CITY sign? On Pratumnak Hill, next to the viewpoint between central Pattaya and Jomtien. It's free, and since a 2025 upgrade the sign is lit every evening from 6:30pm.

What is the best time for photos in Pattaya? Sunset, around 6pm, because the city faces west over the sea. Sunrise is best for empty beaches and soft light.

Can I fly a drone in Pattaya? Only with NBTC and CAAT registration and ฿1 million third-party insurance, and flights over urban areas and crowds are banned without authorisation, which covers most of the city.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: The Thaiger, Khao Phra Tamnak viewpoint and city sign upgrade (May 2025); TAT News, flying a drone in Thailand (June 2026). Viewpoint hours, ticket prices and sunset times match our linked pages. Drone rules change often; check the CAAT before you fly.

Plan your day

- Golden hour, just after sunrise and before sunset, gives the best light.
- Ask before photographing people, monks and private homes.
- See Pattaya at dawn.

From the blog

- 7 secret Pattaya spots most foreigners don't know.

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Pattaya with Kids

A family guide to Pattaya: water parks, the open zoo, gardens, aquarium and island beaches for children, what they cost, which areas to stay in, car seats, the heat and which streets to skip at night.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/pattaya-with-kids/

Best family areas	**Jomtien, Naklua and Wongamat, Pratumnak**
Top picks	**Water parks, Khao Kheow Open Zoo, Nong Nooch**
Cool indoor options	**Art in Paradise, Underwater World, malls**
Beaches	**Wongamat, Jomtien and Koh Larn are calmer than Pattaya Beach**
Car seats	**Required for under-6s by law, rare in taxis**
Emergency	**1669 for an ambulance**

Quick answer: Pattaya is a popular family destination once you step away from Walking Street, Soi 6 and the bar streets. The big days out are the two water parks, Khao Kheow Open Zoo and Nong Nooch Garden; the easy cool-down options are Art in Paradise, Underwater World and the malls. Stay in Jomtien, Naklua and Wongamat or Pratumnak for calmer nights and beaches. Plan outdoor time for mornings and late afternoons, bring a car seat for under-6s (Thai law requires one, taxis rarely have them), and call **1669** for an ambulance. With a baby or toddler, see Pattaya with a baby.

Family days out at a glance

ATTRACTION	ROUGH PRICE	TIME NEEDED	GOOD TO KNOW
Ramayana Water Park	Around ฿999 at the gate reported; cheaper online	Most of a day	South of the city near Nong Nooch
Columbia Pictures Aquaverse	Around ฿1,700 at the gate; much cheaper online	Most of a day	Near Jomtien; closed Wednesdays
Khao Kheow Open Zoo	Foreigners ฿350 adults, ฿120 children	Half a day, plus 45 to 60 min each way	Home of Moo Deng; night safari Friday to Sunday
Nong Nooch Garden	From about ฿500, about ฿800 with show (booking sites)	Half a day	Gardens, shows, dinosaur sculptures
Art in Paradise	About ฿400 adults, ฿200 children	1 to 2 hours	Air-conditioned 3D art
Underwater World	฿550 adults, ฿320 children 91 to 130 cm (reported)	1 to 2 hours	Indoor aquarium on Sukhumvit Road
Pattaya Park Tower	About ฿200 to ฿700 by package	1 to 3 hours	Viewing deck, water park and funfair

Prices come from our linked guides, checked in 2025 and 2026. Foreigners often pay more than Thais, and children's prices often go by height.

Where to stay with kids

- Jomtien: a long beach, family hotels and condos, calmer nights, close to Aquaverse and Pattaya Park.
- Naklua and Wongamat: quieter resort hotels, handy for Art in Paradise and the road north to Khao Kheow.
- Pratumnak: green and hilly, with small beaches.
- Ask for a room away from the street and any bar. More on where to stay.

Pro tip: asked which area he'd pick for a family moving here, his answer was East Pattaya, the area people call the Darkside. His tip for claw machine arcades: expect to spend about ฿1,000 for a good pile of coins, which he calls a good way to spend maybe an hour.

Water parks

Ramayana, on Sukhumvit Road south of the city, is one of the largest water parks in Asia, with slides from gentle to very steep, a wave pool, a lazy river and children's areas. **Columbia Pictures Aquaverse** near Jomtien is movie-themed, with slides and dry rides. Arrive at opening, book online a day ahead for a lower price, and check opening days. Details on water parks.

Animals

- Khao Kheow Open Zoo: big enclosures in forested hills about 45 minutes to an hour north. You get around by car, bicycle, golf cart or tram, which suits small legs in the heat. Open daily 8am to 5pm; go early, before the animals rest at midday.
- **Underwater World**: an indoor aquarium for an hour or two out of the sun, listed in July 2026 as open 9am to 6pm.
- **Elephants**: welfare groups say the best venues let you watch from a distance, with no riding, shows or bathing. Read elephant sanctuaries before you book.

Gardens, art and rainy days

- Nong Nooch Garden, about 15 km south: huge gardens, a daily cultural show and dinosaur sculptures. Allow half a day.
- Art in Paradise: giant 3D paintings you pose inside, open about 9am to 9pm. Mini Siam nearby has nearly 100 model landmarks outdoors.
- Cinemas and bowling in the malls, and more rainy day attractions.

Beaches

Pattaya Beach is busy with speedboats and jet skis. Wongamat, Jomtien and Koh Larn's beaches are calmer; on Koh Larn, Tawaen is the easiest with children, and life jackets are compulsory on every boat.

- Swim inside the buoy lines, and stay out when a red flag is up.
- Jellyfish are most likely from about May to October. If a child is stung, get out, pour vinegar on the sting for at least 30 seconds and don't rub it; call 1669 if it's severe. See beach safety.

Getting around with children

- Thailand's Land Traffic Act, as amended in 2022, requires a child seat for under-6s, and passengers under 135 cm must use a seat belt or a special seat. Bolt, Grab and taxis rarely have child seats, so bring your own or book a transfer that supplies one.
- Baht buses have open backs and high steps; hold small children firmly or take a car.
- Never put a child on a scooter or motorbike taxi. See road accidents.
- Pavements are often broken or blocked, so a carrier beats a pushchair. See walking in Pattaya.

Health, heat and evenings

- Shade, hats, sun cream and lots of water. See heat and sun safety.
- Dengue mosquitoes bite by day: cover arms and legs and ask a pharmacist which repellent suits your child's age. See dengue and mosquitoes.
- Keep children away from stray dogs and monkeys, and get any bite seen the same day. See stray dogs and rabies.
- For medicines, ask a doctor or pharmacist. See hospitals and clinics.
- Walking Street, Soi 6 and LK Metro are adult nightlife areas: fine to pass by day, best avoided with children in the evening. The beach promenade and malls make easy family evenings.

Common questions

Is Pattaya good for kids? Yes, if you stay in the quieter areas and plan around the heat. Water parks, the open zoo, Nong Nooch and the islands fill a week.

Where should families stay in Pattaya? Jomtien, Naklua and Wongamat, or Pratumnak: calmer at night than central Pattaya, with quieter beaches.

Do taxis in Pattaya have car seats? Rarely. Thai law requires a child seat for under-6s, so bring your own or book a transfer with one.

What can kids do when it rains? Art in Paradise, Underwater World, cinemas, bowling and the malls.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Thai Holiday Guide, Underwater World Pattaya (updated July 2026) (prices, hours). Other prices, hours and the car seat rule follow our linked guides, each checked separately: water parks, Khao Kheow Open Zoo, Nong Nooch, Art in Paradise, Pattaya Park Tower and Pattaya with a baby. Prices change.

Plan your day

- Plan outdoor fun for mornings and indoor attractions for the hot afternoons.
- See water parks.
- See kids activities and classes.

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Pattaya's Best Night Views

Where to see Pattaya lit up at night: the viewpoint on Pratumnak Hill, rooftop bars, the Bali Hai pier, and quiet spots along the coast.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/night-viewpoints/

Classic	**Pattaya Bay from the Pratumnak viewpoint**
Easy	**Rooftop bars in central Pattaya and Jomtien**
Free	**Bali Hai pier and the beach promenades**
Ride safely	**Go slow on hill roads at night**

Pattaya looks its best after dark, with the curve of the bay lit up from Walking Street to Naklua. These are our favourite places to see it, many of them on our night ride routes.

Quick answer: For the classic view of the whole bay lit up, go to the viewpoint on Pratumnak Hill. It's free and listed as open daily 7am to 10pm (Oct 2026), so arrive by about 9pm. For a view with a drink, try a hotel rooftop bar. For a free view back across the bay from sea level, walk out along Bali Hai Pier.

At a glance

SPOT	COST	BEST TIME	GOOD TO KNOW
—	—	—	—
Pratumnak Hill viewpoint	Free	Sunset to about 9pm	Listed hours 7am to 10pm; tight bends on the road up
Rooftop bars	Price of a drink	After sunset	Dress codes at some hotels
Bali Hai Pier	Free	Evening	At the end of Walking Street; busy with ferry traffic by day
Beach Road promenade	Free	Any time after dark	Lit and busy; easy walk
Jomtien promenade	Free	Evening	Quieter, with views north to the city

Pratumnak viewpoint

The viewpoint on Pratumnak Hill, between Pattaya and Jomtien, looks across the whole of Pattaya Bay, with the high-rise skyline to the north, Jomtien to the south and Koh Larn offshore on clear days.

- **Cost:** Free. There's a car park at the top.
- **Hours:** Listed as 7am to 10pm daily (checked Oct 2026). Go before 9pm so you're not rushed.
- **Crowds:** Busiest at sunset, often with tour groups. Calmer later in the evening.
- **Getting there:** A paved road with tight hairpin bends goes up to the top. Use Bolt or Grab if you're not confident on a scooter. See Bolt and Grab.
- The Big Buddha temple (Wat Phra Yai) is about 1.2km away on the same hill. It's a daytime visit: go before dark, and cover shoulders and knees. See Big Buddha viewpoint.

See the Pratumnak walk.

Rooftop bars

Hotel rooftops give city views with a drink in hand. Drink prices are higher than at street level, so think of it as paying for the view. Some have dress codes, so check before you go. See rooftop bars.

Bali Hai Pier

Walk out along the pier at the end of Walking Street for a view back along the bay and the lights of the city. It's free, and a good stop before or after Walking Street. See Bali Hai Pier.

Beach promenades

The Beach Road and Jomtien promenades are lit at night and good for a slow walk. Beach Road is busier, with the lights of the bay all along it. Jomtien is quieter, with views north towards the city. See Beach Road and the Jomtien Beach Road walk.

Night photo tips

- Shoot just after sunset, in the "blue hour", when there's still colour in the sky behind the lights.
- Rest your phone or camera on a wall or railing to keep it steady, or bring a small tripod.
- Use your phone's night mode and hold still for a few seconds.
- Haze is common, especially in the dry season. Clear nights after rain often give the sharpest views.

See photo spots and sunset spots.

Staying safe at night

- Riding up the hill at night? Go slowly, use your lights, and watch for dogs and unlit corners. See scooter rides.
- Stray dogs gather on quieter hilltops after dark. Keep your distance. See stray dogs and rabies.
- Bring insect repellent for hilltop viewpoints.
- Keep your phone and bag close in busy spots like Walking Street.

Common questions

Where is the best night view in Pattaya? The Pratumnak Hill viewpoint, which looks across the whole bay. It's free.

Is the Pattaya viewpoint open at night? It's listed as open until 10pm (Oct 2026). Go before 9pm to be safe.

Is it free? Yes. The viewpoint and the road up are free.

How do I get to the viewpoint? By Bolt, Grab, taxi or scooter. The road up has tight bends, so take care at night.

Can I visit the Big Buddha at night? Treat it as a daytime visit. It's a working temple, so go before dark and dress respectfully.

Plan your evening

- Start at the Pratumnak viewpoint for sunset, then head down to Bali Hai Pier and Walking Street.
- Bring insect repellent for hilltop viewpoints.
- See night transport.

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Art in Paradise and Mini Siam

Two classic north Pattaya attractions: Art in Paradise, the air-conditioned 3D illusion museum on Second Road (about ฿400), and Mini Siam's Thai and world landmarks at 1:25 scale on Sukhumvit (about ฿300). Prices, hours, how long, photo tips and getting there.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/art-in-paradise-mini-siam/

Art in Paradise	**3D illusion museum, Second Road; about ฿400 adults, ฿200 children**
Art in Paradise hours	**About 9am to 9pm, last tickets about 8pm**
Mini Siam	**About 100 models at 1:25 scale, Sukhumvit Road**
Mini Siam price	**About ฿300 adults, ฿150 children (foreigners)**
Time needed	**1 to 2 hours (Art in Paradise), 2 to 3 hours (Mini Siam)**
Good for	**Families, hot or rainy days, photos**

Quick answer: Art in Paradise is an air-conditioned museum of more than 150 giant 3D paintings at the north end of Second Road, where you pose to look as if you're inside the scene. It costs about ฿400 for adults and ฿200 for children, and opens about 9am to 9pm. Mini Siam is an outdoor park on Sukhumvit Road with nearly 100 models of Thai and world landmarks at 1:25 scale, at about ฿300 for foreign adults. Both are in north Pattaya, both suit families, and Art in Paradise is one of the best options on a hot or rainy afternoon.

At a glance

WHAT	ART IN PARADISE	MINI SIAM
What it is	Indoor 3D illusion art museum	Outdoor park of miniature landmarks
Where	North end of Second Road, opposite Tiffany's Show	Sukhumvit Road, north Pattaya, opposite Bangkok Pattaya Hospital
Adult ticket	About ฿400 at the door	About ฿300 for foreigners
Children	About ฿200 (100 to 130 cm); under 100 cm free	About ฿150 for foreigners
Hours	About 9am to 9pm, last tickets about 8pm	About 8am to 6pm or 9am to 7pm (listings differ)
Time needed	1 to 2 hours	2 to 3 hours
Best time	Any time; quietest on weekday mornings	Early morning or after 4pm

Art in Paradise

An indoor museum of large 3D paintings on two floors, designed for photos. Floor markers show where to stand, so that in the photo you appear to be riding a wave, escaping a dinosaur or tiptoeing across a gorge. Themes include an underwater world, dinosaurs and animals, Egyptian halls, European streets and classic paintings with a twist.

- **Prices:** two 2025 and 2026 guides list ฿400 for adults and ฿200 for children. One says children under 100 cm go free, children 100 to 130 cm pay the child price, and adults with a Thai driving licence pay ฿180. Booking sites often sell cheaper online tickets.
- **Hours:** most listings say 9am to 9pm, with ticket sales ending about 8pm. One booking site says 9:30am to 8pm, so check if you're going late.
- **How long:** about 1 to 2 hours. Weekends are busier; weekday mornings are quietest.
- **Shoes:** you take them off at the entrance and carry them in a bag, so wear something easy.
- **Food:** food and drink aren't allowed in the galleries. There are cafés and shops nearby.

Photo tips at Art in Paradise

- Go with someone who will take your photos.
- Follow the posing guides on the floor and walls: the illusion only works from the marked spot.
- Charge your phone fully before you go, and turn off the flash to avoid glare.
- Act it out. The best shots come from people who pull a face or strike a pose.

Mini Siam

An outdoor park, founded in 1985, with scale models of Thai temples, palaces and monuments in the Mini Siam section, and world landmarks such as the Eiffel Tower and the Leaning Tower of Pisa in the Mini Europe section. One ticket covers both.

- **Prices:** a July 2026 guide lists ฿300 for foreign adults and ฿150 for children, with lower prices for Thai nationals. Other sellers show about ฿400. Booking sites also sell combo tickets with the mini train ride. Thai or resident prices need photo ID.
- **Hours:** sources disagree: one says 8am to 6pm, booking sites say 9am to 7pm, and an older listing gives 7am to 10pm. Check before you plan an evening visit.
- **How long:** 2 to 3 hours for both sections at a relaxed pace.
- **Heat:** it's mostly outdoors with little shade. Go early in the morning or after 4pm, and bring a hat and water. See heat and sun safety.

Which one should I pick?

IF YOU…	CHOOSE
Want air conditioning on a hot or wet day	Art in Paradise
Love silly photos with friends or kids	Art in Paradise
Like architecture, history or model making	Mini Siam
Have small children who need room to run	Mini Siam, early or late in the day
Have only an hour	Art in Paradise

Both fit into one afternoon: Mini Siam in the cooler morning or after 4pm, then Art in Paradise for an hour of air conditioning.

Getting there

- **Art in Paradise:** at the north end of Second Road, before the Dolphin Roundabout, opposite Tiffany's Show. The baht bus along Second Road is ฿15 on the normal loop. A ride app costs about ฿100 from central Pattaya or Naklua, one 2026 guide says.
- **Mini Siam:** on Sukhumvit Road in north Pattaya, opposite Bangkok Pattaya Hospital. A ride app is easiest. Show the driver the Thai name, เมืองจำลองพัทยา.
- See Bolt and Grab and Second Road.

Nearby

- Cabaret shows: Tiffany's is across the road from Art in Paradise.
- Sanctuary of Truth in Naklua, a short ride away.
- Terminal 21 and Central for food courts, a cinema and more air conditioning.

Common questions

How much is Art in Paradise Pattaya? About ฿400 for adults and ฿200 for children at the door, with children under 100 cm free. Online tickets are often cheaper.

How long do you need at Art in Paradise? About 1 to 2 hours, depending on how many photos you take.

Is Mini Siam worth it? It's a gentle, old-fashioned attraction that suits families and anyone who likes landmarks. Go when it's cooler, as there's little shade.

Is Mini Siam open in the evening? Listings disagree. Recent ones say it closes at 6pm or 7pm, so don't plan a night visit without checking.

Are they good on a rainy day? Art in Paradise is fully indoors. Mini Siam is outdoors. See rainy day attractions.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Nasha Planeta, Art in Paradise guide (location, prices, child heights, Thai licence price, hours, shoes, edited October 2026); Your Thai Guide (฿400 and ฿200, hours, time needed, no food in galleries, updated December 2025); Thai Holiday Guide, Mini Siam (prices, 8am to 6pm, sections, updated July 2026); Thaiways, Mini Siam (founded 1985, 1:25 scale, location); Pelago (9am to 7pm, train combo, ID for Thai prices). We couldn't open an official website for either attraction, so prices and hours may have changed.

Plan your day

- Both are good choices on hot or rainy afternoons.
- Go to Mini Siam early or late, when it is cooler.
- See Pattaya with kids.

Related guides

- Cinemas, Bowling and Indoor Fun
- Pattaya in the Rain: A 3-Day Plan
- Sukhumvit Road in Pattaya
- Elephant Sanctuaries

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Souvenir Shopping in Pattaya

What to buy and where in Pattaya: Thai snacks, spa products, cotton and silk, handicrafts and clothes, plus how to bargain, VAT refunds, and the souvenirs that can get you in trouble at customs.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/souvenir-shopping/

Good buys	**Thai snacks, spices, spa products, cotton clothes, handicrafts**
Where	**Night markets, the Night Bazaar, malls, supermarkets**
Bargaining	**Expected at markets, not in malls or supermarkets**
VAT refund	**฿2,000 or more per shop per day at participating stores**
Never buy	**Ivory, coral, protected wildlife products**
Permit needed	**Buddha images and antiques (Fine Arts Department)**

Quick answer: The best Pattaya souvenirs are small, cheap and useful: dried fruit, Thai tea and curry pastes from supermarkets, soaps, balms and herbal products, cotton clothes and sarongs from the markets, and handicrafts like carved wood and ceramics. Buy food gifts in supermarkets at local prices, haggle politely at night markets and the Night Bazaar, and use the malls for fixed prices and VAT refunds. Never buy ivory, coral or protected wildlife products, and remember that Buddha images and antiques need a Fine Arts Department permit to leave Thailand.

At a glance

WHAT	BEST PLACE TO BUY	GOOD TO KNOW
Snacks, tea, spices, curry pastes	Supermarkets and convenience stores	Fixed local prices; check your home country's food rules
Soaps, balms, oils, herbal products	Markets, malls, pharmacies	Liquids over 100 ml go in checked bags
Cotton clothes, sarongs, elephant trousers	Night markets, Night Bazaar	Bargain; cheap but not always durable
Silk and better textiles	Malls and specialist shops	Price usually reflects quality
Handicrafts, wood, ceramics	Night Bazaar, Floating Market, malls	Wrap well for the flight
Gold	Gold shops	See our gold and pawn shops page

What to buy

- **Food gifts.** Dried mango and other dried fruit, Thai tea and coffee mixes, curry pastes, chilli sauces and snacks with Thai flavours are light, cheap and easy to share. Buy sealed, labelled packs so they are easier to declare at home.
- **Spa and herbal products.** Soaps, body scrubs, massage oils, herbal balms and the small herbal inhalers sold everywhere. Pack liquids and balms in your checked bag.
- **Clothes.** Cotton shirts, sarongs, fisherman and elephant trousers, and beachwear cost little at markets. Quality varies a lot, so check seams and fabric before you pay.
- **Textiles.** Silk scarves and woven cotton from different regions. Real silk costs more; very cheap "silk" is usually synthetic.
- **Handicrafts.** Carved wood, ceramics, woven baskets and bags, and small decorative items. The Pattaya Floating Market groups crafts by region, at visitor prices.

Pro tip: I like the clothes here and they're super cheap, but they can be fragile. I spend an extra ฿300 to ฿500 a month replacing them, and I don't mind. Watch for tourist markups, though: I've seen a ฿40 market smoothie sold for ฿280 at a beach restaurant, so compare before you buy.

Where to buy

- **Pattaya Night Bazaar** on Second Road, across from Central Pattaya: an indoor, air-conditioned market with more than 250 stalls of clothes, souvenirs and handicrafts. Guides disagree on its hours; many stalls are only fully open from mid afternoon, and it is busiest from about 5pm to 10pm. It is a shopping market, not a food market.
- **Night markets** such as Thepprasit (busiest Friday to Sunday) and the Jomtien night market sell clothes, gadgets and cheap gifts alongside food. See night markets.
- **Malls** like Central Pattaya and Terminal 21 have fixed prices, Thai brands, better-quality crafts and the "VAT Refund for Tourists" scheme. See shopping malls.
- **Supermarkets** are the cheapest place for food gifts, at local prices with no haggling. See supermarkets and groceries.

How to bargain

- At markets and street stalls, a friendly bargain is normal. Ask the price, smile, offer less, and meet somewhere in the middle.
- Walk the whole market before you buy: the same item can cost very different amounts at different stalls.
- Buying several items from one stall gives you more room to ask for a discount.
- Only bargain if you really want the item, and don't argue over a few baht.

- Malls, supermarkets and shops with printed price tags have fixed prices.
- Carry small notes. Many stalls are cash only, and paying ฿100 for a ฿60 item is easier than breaking ฿1,000. See cash or card.

VAT refunds

Visitors can claim back much of Thailand's 7% VAT on goods they take home. Shop at stores with the "VAT Refund for Tourists" sign, spend at least ฿2,000 (including VAT) at one shop on one day, show your passport when you pay, and take the goods out of Thailand within 60 days. If your refund goods total ฿20,000 or more, get them checked by customs at the airport before check-in. Market stalls are not part of the scheme. Full steps are on leaving Thailand.

Souvenirs to avoid

- **Ivory.** The Tourism Authority of Thailand says buying ivory and taking it out of the country is illegal, with penalties of up to 10 years in prison, a fine of up to ฿1 million, or both, under the wildlife protection law.
- **Coral, rare shells and protected wildlife.** Thai Customs lists reserved and CITES-listed wildlife as prohibited for import and export. Leave coral and shells on the beach, and don't buy turtle shell, reptile skins or animal parts.
- **Buddha images and antiques.** Thai Customs says Buddha images, antiques and artefacts need a permit from the Fine Arts Department to leave Thailand. Small souvenir images from shops are a grey area, so ask the shop and don't take antiques without paperwork. Many Thais also find Buddha heads used as decoration disrespectful. See Thai etiquette.
- **Fake designer goods.** Counterfeits can be seized by customs at home, and some countries fine the buyer.
- **Cannabis, kratom and vapes.** Rules in Thailand have changed, and many of these products are illegal in other countries. Don't pack them. See legal in Thailand, not elsewhere.

Packing it home

- Liquids, sauces and oils over 100 ml go in checked luggage. Wrap bottles in plastic bags.
- Many countries restrict meat, fresh fruit, seeds and some plant products. Check your home country's rules and declare food if asked.
- Leave space in your case. If you run out, the Night Bazaar sells bags and luggage.

Gold

Gold shops sell by weight at the day's price, plus a making charge. See gold and pawn shops.

Common questions

What is the best souvenir to buy in Pattaya? Food gifts and herbal or spa products give the most for the money: dried fruit, Thai tea, curry pastes, soaps and balms. Cotton clothes from the markets are cheap and fun.

Can I take a Buddha statue home from Thailand? Buddha images and antiques need a Fine Arts Department export permit, according to Thai Customs. Ask the shop about small modern souvenirs, and don't take antiques without paperwork.

Do Pattaya shops give VAT refunds? Shops in the "VAT Refund for Tourists" scheme do, mainly in the malls, if you spend ฿2,000 or more at one shop on one day. Markets don't.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: TAT News, travel ivory-free (February 2024); Thai Customs, prohibited and restricted goods; The Nation, VAT refund rules for tourists; Lorenzigo, Pattaya Night Bazaar (stalls and hours, which other guides dispute). VAT refund details match our leaving Thailand page. Customs rules in your home country also apply.

Plan your day

- Night markets are best for cheap gifts, malls for fixed prices.
- See night markets.
- See VAT refunds when leaving.

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Best Sunset Spots in Pattaya

Pattaya faces west over the sea, so the sun sets straight into the Gulf: the best free viewpoints and beaches, rooftop bars and the tower, the Koh Larn catch, sunset times month by month and weather tips.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/sunset-spots/

Why	**Pattaya faces west over the Gulf of Thailand**
Sunset time	**About 5:48pm in November, about 6:47pm in early July**
Best free spots	**Pratumnak viewpoint, Bali Hai pier, the beaches**
With a drink	**Rooftop bars, often ฿200 to ฿400 a drink**
Koh Larn	**Sunset comes close to the last ferry; stay the night to see it**

Quick answer: Pattaya looks west across the Gulf of Thailand, so on a clear evening the sun drops straight into the sea. For the classic view over the whole bay, go to the free viewpoint on Pratumnak Hill. For sand under your feet, try Jomtien, Dongtan or Wongamat beach, or walk out along Bali Hai pier. For a drink with the view, pick a rooftop bar and arrive early. Sunset is earliest in November, about 5:48pm, and latest in early July, about 6:47pm, so check the time and arrive 30 to 45 minutes before it.

At a glance

SPOT	COST	BEST FOR	GOOD TO KNOW
Pratumnak viewpoint	Free	The whole bay and the PATTAYA CITY sign	Busiest at sunset; listed open 7am to 10pm (Oct 2026)
Bali Hai pier	Free	Sea-level view back along the bay	End of Walking Street; busy with boats
Jomtien and Dongtan beaches	Free, or a beach chair	A long beach and a slow evening	Dongtan is shady and relaxed
Wongamat Beach	Free	Quieter, north Pattaya	Few bars; goes quiet after dark
Pattaya Beach	Free	Easy, central	Busiest beach; promenade lit at night
Rooftop bars	Price of a drink	Height, comfort and a table	Smart casual; book at weekends
Pattaya Park Tower	Ticket	The highest view, over Jomtien and Pattaya	Ticket prices vary by package; check at the counter
Koh Larn west beaches	Ferry fare plus a night's stay	Sunset with no city in the way	Last ferry is around 6pm

Sunset times by month

Pattaya is close enough to the equator that sunset only moves about an hour across the year. Times below are calculated for Pattaya and match published sunrise and sunset tables to within a minute or two.

MONTH	SUNSET (ABOUT)
January	6:00pm to 6:15pm
February	6:15pm to 6:25pm
March and April	6:25pm to 6:30pm
May	6:30pm to 6:40pm
June and July	6:40pm to 6:47pm
August	6:45pm to 6:30pm
September	6:30pm to 6:10pm
October	6:05pm to 5:50pm
November	5:50pm to 5:48pm
December	5:48pm to 6:00pm

The light changes fast near the equator. The colour is best in the 20 minutes either side of sunset, and it gets dark about 20 to 25 minutes after.

Pratumnak viewpoint

The viewpoint on Pratumnak Hill between Pattaya and Jomtien looks north over the whole curve of Pattaya Bay. It's free, there's a car park at the top, and it's listed as open 7am to 10pm (checked October 2026). Sunset is its busiest time, often with tour groups, so arrive early for a spot at the rail. Stay on after dark: the PATTAYA CITY sign is lit from 6:30pm. The road up has tight bends, so take Bolt or Grab if you're not confident on a scooter. Full details are on Pattaya's best night views, and the temple on the same hill is on Big Buddha viewpoint.

Beaches and the pier

- **Bali Hai pier**: walk out from the end of Walking Street for a sea-level view back along the bay as the lights come on. Watch your step around the boats.
- **Jomtien**: a long, straight beach facing west. Walk the promenade at sunset: see the Jomtien Beach Road walk.
- **Dongtan Beach**: at the north end of Jomtien, shady and relaxed, and late afternoon into sunset is its social time.
- **Wongamat Beach**: quieter, in north Pattaya near the Sanctuary of Truth. It faces west across the bay.
- **Pattaya Beach**: the easiest of all, right in town, with the lit promenade along Beach Road afterwards.

With a drink, or from the tower

Rooftop bars in the big Beach Road hotels and on Pratumnak Hill look straight out over the bay. Drinks often cost ฿200 to ฿400, hotel bars expect smart casual dress, and the tables by the edge go first, so arrive about 30 minutes before sunset or book at weekends. Open decks can close in storms.

Pattaya Park Tower at the north end of Jomtien has an observation deck on the 55th floor and revolving buffet restaurants just below it, looking over Jomtien, Pratumnak and Pattaya. Ticket prices vary by package and listings conflict, so check at the counter, and book the buffet ahead for sunset at weekends.

Koh Larn: the catch

The west-facing beaches on Koh Larn, such as Samae, have open sea sunsets with no city in the way. The catch is the boat: the last public ferry back usually leaves Na Ban around 6pm, which is before or close to sunset for most of the year. Don't count on seeing the sunset and making the last ferry. Stay the night instead: see Koh Larn overnight. Boat trips after dark are a bad idea, and in November 2026 small boats were held ashore under a red flag. See island hopping.

Weather and photo tips

- Haze is common in the dry season and can turn the sun into an orange disc before it reaches the sea.
- Rainy-season clouds can hide the sunset completely, but a clearing sky after rain often gives the most colourful evenings. See weather by month.
- Stay 15 to 20 minutes after the sun goes down for the "blue hour", when the sky still has colour behind the city lights.
- Rest your phone on a railing or wall and use night mode. See photo spots.
- Mosquitoes come out at dusk, especially on beaches and the hill. Bring repellent. See dengue and mosquitoes.

Common questions

What time is sunset in Pattaya? Between about 5:48pm in November and about 6:47pm in early July. In December and January it's around 5:50pm to 6:15pm.

Where is the best place to watch the sunset in Pattaya? The Pratumnak Hill viewpoint for the whole bay, which is free. For a beach, Jomtien or Wongamat. For a drink, a rooftop bar.

Can I watch the sunset on Koh Larn and get back the same day? Usually not on the public ferry, which last leaves around 6pm. Stay the night, or watch the sunset from the mainland.

Is the Pratumnak viewpoint free? Yes. It's listed as open 7am to 10pm, and the city sign is lit from 6:30pm.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: SunriseSunset.io, Pattaya sun times (November 2026 sunsets of about 5:47pm to 5:50pm); the monthly table is our own calculation for Pattaya and matches it. Viewpoint hours, the lit sign, rooftop drink prices, the tower and Koh Larn ferry times follow our linked pages (night views, photo spots, Pattaya Park Tower, Koh Larn); the November 2026 boat restriction is from Pattaya Mail (11 November 2026).

Plan your day

- Check the sunset time and arrive 30 to 45 minutes early.
- Rainy-season clouds can still make dramatic skies.
- See photo spots.

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Pattaya at Dawn: The Early Morning City

Pattaya before the heat: sunrise times, quiet beaches, monks collecting alms, fresh markets, joggers, breakfast stalls and the best light for photos.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/pattaya-at-dawn/

Sunrise	**About 5:50 (May, June) to 6:45 (January)**
See	**Monks on alms rounds, fresh markets**
Do	**Beach walks, runs, viewpoints**
Eat	**Street breakfasts and coffee**

Most visitors see Pattaya at night. Get up early and you will find a calm, cool and very different city.

Quick answer: Set the alarm for about half an hour before sunrise, which in Pattaya ranges from roughly 5:50 in late May and June to about 6:45 in late January. The two hours after that are the coolest and quietest of the day: walk the beach, watch monks collecting alms, eat a street breakfast at a fresh market, and climb Pratumnak Hill for the view before the heat arrives. Most of it is free.

Sunrise through the year

MONTH (MID-MONTH)	SUNRISE, ROUGHLY	NOTES
—	—	—
January	6:40	Latest sunrises, coolest mornings
March	6:25	Hot season starting
May and June	5:50	Earliest sunrises; rain often comes later in the day
September	6:05	Rainy season
November	6:15	Cooler, drier mornings
December	6:30	Busy season, pleasant mornings

Times are from sunrise calculators for Pattaya (see Sources), rounded. Pattaya's beaches face west, so the sun rises behind the city, not over the sea. For a sunrise over water, the morning light on the hills and the sea from Pratumnak is the best you'll get.

Quiet beaches

Beach Road and Jomtien are peaceful at dawn, with joggers, walkers and fishermen. The sand has just been raked, there are no chair rows yet, and the light is soft. See the Jomtien Beach Road walk.

Monks' alms rounds

Monks walk through neighbourhoods early in the morning to collect food. Watch respectfully, or offer food yourself.

- Stand still and let the monks come to you; don't block their path.
- If you give, place food in the bowl, don't hand it into a monk's hands. Women should not touch monks.
- Dress modestly, take shoes off if others do, and keep your head lower than the monk's.
- Take photos from a distance, without flash, and never pose with a monk without asking.

See temple customs.

Fresh markets

Fresh markets are busiest early, full of fruit, vegetables and snacks. Bring small notes and your own bag; many stalls also take QR payment. See fresh markets, supermarkets and markets and Thai fruit.

Breakfast

Rice soup, fried dough sticks, grilled pork with sticky rice and coffee from street stalls. A grilled pork skewer is about ฿10 and a typical street dish ฿40 to ฿80, according to our street food page. Western set breakfasts are cheap in local cafés too. See breakfast and brunch and street food.

Exercise and views

- Run or cycle before the heat. Beach Road and the Jomtien promenade are flat and lit. See running and cycling.
- Walk up Pratumnak Hill for the morning view and the Big Buddha. See the Pratumnak walk and Big Buddha viewpoint.

Photos

Soft early light is the best of the day, and the streets are empty. Long shadows on Beach Road, fishermen on the sand and the hills behind Jomtien all work well. See photo spots.

A simple dawn plan

- **About 30 minutes before sunrise:** a ride or walk to Pratumnak Hill for the view as the light comes up.
- **Sunrise to about 7:00:** walk down to Dongtan and along the Jomtien promenade, or along Beach Road if you're staying in the centre.
- **7:00 to 8:00:** a fresh market for fruit and a street breakfast; this is also when you're most likely to see monks on their alms rounds in residential streets.
- **After 8:00:** coffee somewhere with air con, then back to bed or the pool before the heat of the day.

Tips

- Carry water; it gets hot quickly after about 8:00.
- Watch for street dogs early in the morning, especially on quiet sois. Don't run past a pack; slow down and walk calmly.
- Many shops and malls don't open until 10:00 or 11:00, so plan breakfast at a market or café.
- Night owls still heading home are part of the scene on the main streets; the beaches and markets are calm.

Common questions

What time is sunrise in Pattaya? Between about 5:50 and 6:45 depending on the month: earliest in late May and June, latest in late January.

Can you see the sunrise over the sea in Pattaya? Not really: the beaches face west. Sunsets are over the sea; sunrise is behind the city.

What can I do in Pattaya early in the morning? Beach walks, runs, alms rounds, fresh markets, street breakfasts and viewpoints.

Is it safe to walk in Pattaya at dawn? Generally yes on the main roads and beaches. Watch for street dogs on quiet sois and for scooters at junctions.

Plan your day

- Sunrise is roughly between 5:50 and 6:45, depending on the month.
- See fresh markets.

Sources

- Sunrise times: sunrisesunset.io and Alpenglow sun tables for Pattaya, 2026 (latest sunrise about 6:44 in late January, earliest about 5:49 to 5:50 in late May and early June). Checked November 2026.
- Our street food and temple customs pages.

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Pratumnak Hill Viewpoint Walk

An easy walk over Pratumnak Hill linking the Pattaya viewpoint, the Big Buddha and the quiet beaches below, best early morning or at sunset. Route, timing, dress, monkeys and getting back.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/pratumnak-walk/

Time	**About 1 to 2 hours with stops**
Cost	**Free (viewpoint and Big Buddha)**
Best	**Early morning or sunset**
Bring	**Water, hat, shoulders and knees covered for the temple**

Pratumnak Hill sits between central Pattaya and Jomtien. A walk over the top gives you the best views in the city. See Pratumnak for the area.

Quick answer: Start near Bali Hai pier at the end of Walking Street, walk up the hill road to the Pattaya City viewpoint, carry on to the golden Big Buddha at Wat Phra Yai, then drop down the Jomtien side to a small beach like Cosy Beach. Both sights are free. Allow one to two hours with stops, go early morning or for sunset, cover your shoulders and knees for the temple, and keep food out of sight because of the monkeys. Take a Bolt, Grab or baht bus back.

The walk at a glance

STOP	WHAT'S THERE	GOOD TO KNOW
—	—	—
Bali Hai pier area	Start point, the south end of Walking Street	Easy to reach by baht bus or app taxi
Pattaya City viewpoint	The classic view over Pattaya Bay	Free; best at sunset and after dark
Big Buddha, Wat Phra Yai	Golden Buddha at the top, reached by a dragon-lined staircase	Free; dress code; monkeys
Cosy Beach and the small beaches	Quiet sand below the hill, reached by steps	A cool drink and a swim
Dongtan and Jomtien	The long beach to the south	Carry on for the Jomtien beach walk

The route

- Start at the south end of Walking Street near Bali Hai Pier and walk up the hill road.
- Stop at the Pattaya viewpoint for the classic view over Pattaya Bay. You'll see the whole curve of the beach, and Koh Larn out to sea.
- Continue to the Big Buddha temple on top of the hill, Wat Phra Yai. Climb the staircase lined with dragons to the statue. See Big Buddha viewpoint.
- Walk down towards the small beaches on the Jomtien side, such as Cosy Beach, for a cool drink.

Shorter or longer

- **Short version:** take a Bolt or Grab straight to the viewpoint, walk to the Big Buddha and back down. About 45 minutes.
- **Sunset version:** Big Buddha first in the late afternoon, then the viewpoint for sunset and the city lights.
- **Long version:** the full route, then down to Dongtan Beach and south along the Jomtien promenade. Half a day with breaks.

When to go

- **Early morning:** cool, quiet, soft light and few tour groups. See Pattaya at dawn.
- **Late afternoon to sunset:** the viewpoint is busiest, but the light over the bay is the best of the day. The beaches face west.
- **Midday:** avoid it. There's little shade on the hill road and the steps.
- **Weekends and holidays:** tour buses arrive at the viewpoint; weekdays are calmer.

At the temple

- Cover your shoulders and knees; carry a light scarf or sarong if you're in beach clothes. See Thai etiquette.
- Take your shoes off before entering any building, and don't point your feet at Buddha images.
- Speak quietly, and don't climb on statues for photos.
- A small donation is welcome but not expected. See temple customs.

Tips

- Go early or at sunset. Midday is very hot. See heat and sun safety.
- Watch for monkeys and stray dogs; keep food and drinks out of sight, and don't feed the monkeys.
- Wear shoes with grip: some sections are steep, and the steps to the beaches can be slippery after rain.

- Carry water and small notes for drinks at the top and on the beach.
- Get back with a baht bus or an app taxi. Baht buses pass the bottom of the hill; Bolt and Grab can pick you up at the viewpoint. See Bolt and Grab.

Photo tips

- The viewpoint's classic shot is the curve of Pattaya Bay with the city behind it; a little after sunset, when the lights come on, is the best time.
- From the Big Buddha terrace you can see across to Jomtien; morning light works best on this side.
- Ask before photographing people praying, and don't turn your back to a Buddha image for a selfie on the main altar.
- Hold your phone firmly near the monkeys; they grab shiny things.

Common questions

Is the Big Buddha in Pattaya free? Yes, entry is free. Dress modestly.

How long is the Pratumnak Hill walk? About one to two hours with stops, from Bali Hai to the beaches on the Jomtien side.

Can you walk to the Pattaya viewpoint? Yes, from the Bali Hai end of Walking Street up the hill road. It's steep in places and hot at midday.

When is the best time to visit Pattaya viewpoint? Early morning for quiet and cool air, or sunset for the view and the city lights.

More sunsets

See sunset spots and night viewpoints.

Plan your day

- Go early in the day to beat the heat and the crowds, and bring water and sun cream.
- See Pratumnak.

Sources

- Our Big Buddha and viewpoint and Pratumnak pages (free entry, dress code, monkeys, Cosy Beach; checked 2026).
- Our temple customs page.

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Jomtien Beach Road Walk

An easy walk along Jomtien Beach Road: the promenade, Dongtan, beach cafés, the night market, sunset spots and street food, with distances, timing and how to get back.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/jomtien-beach-walk/

Length	**Up to about 6 km; walk as much as you like**
Best	**Early morning or late afternoon into sunset**
Along the way	**Beach cafés, chairs, street food, the night market**
Getting back	**Baht bus along Jomtien Beach Road, up to ฿20**

Jomtien Beach Road runs for kilometres along a long, gently curved beach south of Pratumnak Hill. The promenade is perfect for a relaxed walk. See Jomtien for the area.

Quick answer: Start at Dongtan, the shady north end below Pratumnak, in the late afternoon and walk south along the promenade with the sea on your right. An hour gets you a good stretch with cafés, coconut stalls and beach chairs; carry on to sunset, which is over the sea because the beach faces west. Jomtien's beach is about 6 km long, so you don't need to walk it all: flag a baht bus on Jomtien Beach Road to get back (up to ฿20), or use Bolt or Grab.

Walk options at a glance

ROUTE	DISTANCE, ROUGHLY	TIME	GOOD FOR
—	—	—	—
Dongtan stroll	1 to 2 km	30 to 45 minutes	Shade, a coffee, people-watching
Dongtan to the middle of Jomtien	3 km	About an hour	Sunset walk with a dinner stop
The whole beach	About 6 km	1.5 to 2 hours	A proper walk or run, early morning
Pratumnak walk, then down to Dongtan	Add 2 to 3 km	Add an hour	Viewpoint and beach in one outing

Distances are approximate, based on the beach's length of about 6 km.

The walk

- Start at the north end near Pratumnak, after the Pratumnak walk if you like. The first stretch is Dongtan Beach, tree-lined and relaxed.
- Walk south along the promenade, with the sea on one side and cafés on the other.
- Stop for a drink, a coconut or a beach chair. Agree the chair price before you sit down. See beach clubs vs beach chairs.
- Further south the beach gets quieter and wider. At the far end, in the windy season from roughly November to March, kitesurfers fill the sky. See kitesurfing in Jomtien.

Food along the way

Street food carts set up in the late afternoon, and there are plenty of seafood and Thai restaurants. A typical street dish costs about ฿40 to ฿80 and a fresh smoothie ฿40 to ฿60, according to our street food page. Jomtien's night market, near Jomtien Beach Road, opens in the early evening with street food, snacks and clothes, which makes a good end point. See street food.

Sunset

The beach faces west, so sunsets are excellent. Find a spot on the sand or a beachfront café about 30 minutes before the sun goes down. See sunset spots.

Getting there and back

- **From Pattaya:** the green baht bus runs from Second Road near the South Pattaya Road junction, over Thappraya Road to Jomtien Beach Road, for up to ฿20.
- **Getting back:** baht buses run both ways along Jomtien Beach Road. Wave one down and press the buzzer to stop.
- **By app:** Bolt and Grab pick up anywhere along the beach road.

See baht bus routes.

Rules and safety

- Avoid midday heat; there is little shade outside Dongtan. See heat and sun safety.
- Watch for scooters at side-street junctions and where cafés' customers park on the pavement.
- Smoking is banned on Pattaya's beaches and the footpaths beside them, with fines reported at up to ฿5,000.
- Swim only where the flags allow, and not near drains after heavy rain. See beach safety.

With kids or a dog

Children like the walk best in the late afternoon, when the sand is cooler, the street food carts arrive and there's a sunset at the end; build in stops for a coconut and a swim. Pushchairs work on most of the promenade, but expect a few kerbs and parked scooters. With a dog, go early or late when the pavement is cool enough for paws, carry water, and keep the lead short near street dogs. Baht buses usually take small and calm medium dogs if you need a ride back. See living with a dog.

Running and cycling

Early morning, the promenade is one of the best flat routes in the city, popular with runners before 7:00. See running and cycling. Go after dark with a light and keep to the promenade, away from traffic.

Common questions

How long is Jomtien Beach? About 6 km, from Dongtan in the north to the southern end near Na Jomtien.

Is Jomtien Beach good for walking? Yes. The promenade is flat and long; go early morning or late afternoon.

How do I get from Pattaya to Jomtien Beach? The green baht bus over Thappraya Road (up to ฿20), or Bolt or Grab.

Can you watch the sunset at Jomtien? Yes, the beach faces west, so the sun sets over the sea.

Plan your day

- Walk early morning or late afternoon, there is little shade at midday.
- See Jomtien bars.
- See kitesurfing in Jomtien.

Sources

- Our Jomtien and baht bus pages (beach length, the green baht bus and the April 2026 fare change).
- Our street food page (typical prices, 2026).
- Pattaya Mail: "Pattaya imposes 5,000 baht fine for smoking on beaches and footpaths" (July 2025).

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Pattaya for Couples

Pattaya is not just a nightlife city. Ideas for couples: where to stay, sunset dinners, island days, couples massage, cooking classes, shows, day trips and rough 2026 costs.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/pattaya-for-couples/

Stay	**Naklua, Pratumnak, Wongamat or Jomtien for quieter nights**
Do	**Island day, cooking class, couples massage**
Evening	**Sunset dinner, cabaret show, rooftop drinks**
Day trips	**Koh Samet, Bang Saen, Khao Chi Chan**

Pattaya has a reputation for nightlife, but many couples love it for the beaches, food and easy day trips. Here are our ideas.

Quick answer: Stay somewhere calmer, such as Naklua, Wongamat, Pratumnak or Jomtien, and treat central Pattaya as a place to visit rather than sleep. Then mix island time (a night on Koh Larn, or a weekend on Koh Samet), a couples massage, a Thai cooking class, a cabaret show and a sunset seafood dinner. Most of it is good value: a cooking class is about ฿1,000 to ฿2,000 each, a Thai massage ฿200 to ฿350 an hour, and cabaret tickets from about ฿450.

Pro tip: asked where he'd send a couple, his answer was "maybe Naklua". It's quieter and more local than the centre, with seafood, Wongamat Beach and the Sanctuary of Truth close by. See Naklua.

Where to stay

Quieter areas like Naklua, Pratumnak, Wongamat and Jomtien are calmer than central Pattaya. See where to stay.

AREA	WHY COUPLES LIKE IT	TRADE-OFF
—	—	—
Naklua and Wongamat	Seafood, a quieter beach, the Sanctuary of Truth	Further from the centre's restaurants and shows
Pratumnak	Quiet hill, small beaches, the viewpoint	You'll need rides to most places
Jomtien	Long beach, sunsets, relaxed restaurants	Busier at weekends
Central Pattaya	Everything on the doorstep	Noise and nightlife until late

Days together

- An island day, or a night away on Koh Larn, when the day-trippers have gone. See staying overnight on Koh Larn and Koh Samet vs Koh Larn.
- A Thai cooking class: usually three to four hours, several dishes, often with a market tour.
- A couples massage. Spas cost more, often ฿1,000 and up, but street shops will often seat you side by side. See massage.
- A day at a beach club, with a pool and cocktails, often with a minimum spend. See beach clubs.
- The Sanctuary of Truth in the morning, then lunch and Wongamat Beach.
- A sunrise walk over Pratumnak Hill. See the Pratumnak walk.

Evenings

- Sunset dinner by the sea. See sunset spots and seafood restaurants. In Naklua you can buy seafood by weight at the market and have it cooked nearby.
- A cabaret show (about 70 minutes, family-friendly) or drinks at a rooftop bar at sunset.
- A night market for street food and people-watching. See night markets.
- Thai barbecue for two. Jonny calls Mr. Nova Mookata "the best Thai barbecue place in Pattaya"; two people with a couple of drinks cost him about ฿350 in October 2026. See moo kata.

A simple two-day plan

- **Day 1:** sunrise walk on Pratumnak Hill, breakfast, then the Sanctuary of Truth and an afternoon on Wongamat Beach. Seafood dinner in Naklua, then a cabaret show.
- **Day 2:** morning ferry from Bali Hai to Koh Larn, a long beach lunch, back on an afternoon boat. Couples massage, then sunset on Jomtien and moo kata for dinner.

Swap in a cooking class on a rainy day, or add a night on Koh Larn or Koh Samet if you have more time. Use it as a menu: pick what you both enjoy, and leave room to do nothing at all. See Pattaya in one day and 3 days in Pattaya.

What a day might cost for two (2026)

ITEM	ROUGH COST FOR TWO
—	—
Koh Larn public ferry, return	฿120 to ฿160
Thai cooking class	About ฿2,000 to ฿4,000
One-hour Thai massage each	About ฿400 to ฿700, plus tips
Cabaret tickets	From about ฿900
Moo kata dinner with drinks	About ฿350 (Jonny's own spend)
Rooftop drinks	About ฿400 to ฿800 for one drink each

Prices come from our own guides to each activity, checked in 2026.

Day trips

Koh Samet, Bang Saen and Khao Chi Chan make easy escapes. Koh Samet is best with a night or two. See day trips.

Common questions

Is Pattaya good for couples? Yes, if you stay in a quieter area and plan days around islands, food, massage and sunsets.

Where should couples stay in Pattaya? Naklua, Wongamat, Pratumnak or Jomtien for quieter nights.

What can couples do in Pattaya at night? Sunset dinners, cabaret, rooftop bars, night markets and moo kata.

Is Pattaya good for a honeymoon? It works as a relaxed, good-value stop, especially with a night on Koh Larn or Koh Samet.

Is Pattaya expensive for couples? Not compared with most beach destinations. Street food, massage, ferries and baht buses are cheap; beachfront hotels, spas and rooftop bars cost more.

When is the best time for a couples' trip? November to February is cooler and drier, but busiest. March to May is hot; the rainy season is quieter and cheaper. See best time to visit.

Plan your day

- Book sunset dinners and spa treatments ahead in high season.
- See Koh Larn overnight.
- See Thai cooking classes.

Sources

- Our guides to Koh Larn, cooking classes, massage, cabaret and rooftop bars (prices checked 2026).
- Jonny James: area picks from his own notes, and Mr. Nova Mookata from his ride video of 15 October 2026 (not sponsored).

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Pattaya with a Baby or Toddler

Practical tips for Pattaya with a baby or toddler: where to stay, nappies, formula and water, prams versus carriers on Pattaya's pavements, the heat and mosquitoes, children's hospital care, car seats and easy days out.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/pattaya-with-a-baby/

Supplies	**Nappies, wipes, formula and baby food in big supermarkets and pharmacies**
Prams	**Pavements are uneven; a carrier is often easier, malls and promenades are fine**
Heat	**Babies under 6 months out of direct sun; go out early and late**
Children's care	**Bangkok Hospital Pattaya Child Health Center, birth to 15**
Car seats	**Required by law for under-6s since 2022, rare in taxis**
Emergency	**1669 ambulance**

Quick answer: Pattaya is easier with a baby than its reputation suggests. Big supermarkets and pharmacies sell nappies, wipes, formula and baby food, the large private hospitals have paediatricians, and the malls are cool, flat and pram-friendly. The hard parts are the heat, mosquitoes and the pavements: away from the beach promenades they are often broken or blocked, so a baby carrier is usually easier than a pram. Keep babies under 6 months out of direct sun, plan outdoor time for early morning and late afternoon, and bring or book a car seat, because Thai law has required child seats for under-6s since 2022 but taxis and ride-app cars rarely have them. In an emergency call **1669**.

At a glance

NEED	WHAT TO EXPECT	TIP
Nappies and wipes	Easy to buy in supermarkets, pharmacies and convenience stores	Bring a few days' supply for the first nights
Formula and baby food	Big supermarkets carry several brands	Bring your baby's usual formula; brands and recipes differ
Pram	Hard on most pavements	Carrier for streets; pram for malls and promenades
Doctor	Private hospitals have children's clinics	Bangkok Hospital Pattaya's Child Health Center covers birth to 15
Car seat	Required for under-6s, rare in taxis	Bring your own or book a transfer with one

Where to stay

- Quieter areas such as Jomtien, Wongamat and Pratumnak are calmer at night than central Pattaya.
- Ask the hotel for a cot, a fridge, a kettle and a room away from the street and any bar. Noise carries late in the centre. See noise and sleep and where to stay.
- A serviced apartment or condo with a small kitchen makes bottles, washing and naps much easier on a longer stay.

Nappies, formula and baby food

- Big C, Lotus's and Tops supermarkets, and the big malls, sell nappies, wipes, formula, baby food and bottles. 7-Eleven and pharmacies sell nappies and wipes in smaller packs. See supermarkets.
- Formula brands and recipes sold in Thailand may not match the one your baby uses at home. Bring enough of your usual formula for the trip, or at least the first week, and ask your doctor before switching.
- Make up formula with bottled water or water you have boiled. Thai tap water isn't usually drunk. See drinking water.
- Pharmacies sell basics such as nappy cream and thermometers. For any medicine for a baby, ask a doctor or pharmacist first. See pharmacies and pharmacy phrases.

Prams, carriers and pavements

Pattaya's pavements are the main reason parents switch to a carrier. Away from the seafront they are often narrow, broken or blocked by stalls, poles and parked scooters, with high kerbs and open drains, so with a pram you will often end up walking in the road. See walking in Pattaya.

- A soft carrier or sling is easiest for the streets, sois, markets and baht buses.
- A light, folding pram is still useful for malls, hotel grounds and the wide beach promenades in Pattaya and Jomtien, which are best early in the morning.
- Fit a parasol or a breathable sunshade to the pram. The NHS advises against draping a blanket over a pram in the heat because it can cause overheating.
- Baht buses have open backs and high steps, and are not a safe way to carry a pram with a baby in it. See baht buses.
- Never ride a scooter or motorbike taxi with a baby or toddler. See road accidents.

Car seats and getting around

- Thailand's amended Land Traffic Act, in force since September 2022, says children under 6 must ride in a child seat, and passengers under 135 cm must use a seat belt or a special seat. The maximum fine is ฿2,000.
- Taxis and Bolt or Grab cars rarely have child seats. Bring your own, or book an airport transfer or private car that supplies one, and confirm the seat type when you book. See airport transfers and Bolt and Grab.

Heat, sun and mosquitoes

- Pattaya is hot all year. The NHS says babies under 6 months should be kept out of direct sunlight, sunscreen is for babies 6 months and older, and older babies should stay out of the sun as much as possible between 11am and 3pm. Use a wide-brimmed sunhat. See heat and sun safety.
- Offer feeds often in hot weather. Ask a doctor or nurse how much water, if any, your baby should have at their age.
- Dengue is spread by mosquitoes that bite in the daytime. The US CDC advises covering prams and carriers with mosquito netting, dressing children in clothes that cover arms and legs, and not using products with oil of lemon eucalyptus or PMD on children under 3. Ask a pharmacist which repellent suits your child's age. See dengue and mosquitoes.

Doctors and hospitals

- Bangkok Hospital Pattaya on Sukhumvit Road has a Child Health Center for children from birth to 15, in Building B on the ground floor. Its own page lists it as open 7am to 11pm daily and also describes 24/7 care, with neonatal and paediatric intensive care units.
- Pattaya Memorial and Pattaya International are the other main private hospitals, closer to the centre. Public hospitals cost much less but have longer waits and less English. See hospitals and clinics.
- In an emergency call **1669** for an ambulance, or **1719** for Bangkok Hospital Pattaya's ambulance. See emergency numbers.
- Check your travel insurance covers your baby by name. See travel insurance.

Easy days out

- Malls are cool, flat and pram-friendly, with lifts, clean toilets and food courts. Changing facilities vary, so ask at the information desk. See shopping malls.
- Calm beaches early in the morning, in the shade. See beach safety.
- Gardens such as Nong Nooch, early before the heat.
- For rainy afternoons, see rainy day attractions. For older children, see Pattaya with kids.

Common questions

Can I buy nappies and formula in Pattaya? Yes. Big supermarkets, malls and pharmacies sell nappies, wipes, formula and baby food, and 7-Eleven sells nappies too. Bring your baby's usual formula, because brands sold here may differ.

Is Pattaya pram-friendly? Only partly. Malls and the beach promenades are fine, but most pavements are uneven or blocked, so many parents use a carrier for the streets.

Do taxis in Pattaya have car seats? Rarely. The law has required child seats for under-6s since September 2022, so bring your own or book a transfer that provides one.

Where can my baby see a doctor in Pattaya? The private hospitals have paediatricians. Bangkok Hospital Pattaya's Child Health Center sees children from birth to 15. In an emergency, call 1669.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Bangkok Hospital Pattaya, Child Health Center; The Nation, children under six must use a car seat (amended Land Traffic Act, 2022); NHS, safety in the sun for babies; US CDC, preventing mosquito bites. The hospital's page gives both 7am to 11pm and 24/7 for its children's centre, so phone ahead for non-urgent visits. General information only: for anything about your baby's health, feeding or medicines, ask a doctor or pharmacist.

Plan your day

- Pack a baby carrier, pavements are hard for prams. See walking in Pattaya.

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Accessible Pattaya: Travelling with a Disability

Visiting Pattaya with a wheelchair or limited mobility: what the pavements are really like, cars and vans instead of baht buses, the ramps at Bali Hai pier, the Sanctuary of Truth's free lift and wheelchairs, hotels, malls and getting help.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/accessible-pattaya/

Pavements	**Often narrow, broken or blocked; many sois have none**
Transport	**Book a car or van; baht buses have a high step at the back**
Airport	**Free wheelchairs at Suvarnabhumi before check-in (ID needed)**
Bali Hai pier	**Two pontoons with ramps since May 2025**
Sanctuary of Truth	**Lift, slopes, free loan wheelchairs, half price with a disability certificate**
Ask ahead	**Step-free entrance, lift size, bathroom layout**

Quick answer: Pattaya is possible with a wheelchair or limited mobility, but it takes planning. The biggest problem is the pavement: many streets and sois have narrow, broken or blocked footpaths, or none at all, so most wheelchair users travel door to door by car or van rather than rolling between places. The easier places are big hotels, the large malls and some attractions: the Sanctuary of Truth lends wheelchairs free and has a lift and slopes inside. Ask every hotel and venue specific questions before you book.

At a glance

WHAT	THE REALITY	WHAT HELPS
Pavements	Often uneven, blocked by stalls, poles and parked scooters; many sois have none	Travel by car between places; use the beach promenades and malls for longer stretches
Baht buses	Pickup trucks with a high step at the back and bench seats	Bolt, Grab or a booked car or van
Airport	Suvarnabhumi lends wheelchairs free before check-in	Ask your airline for assistance when you book
Boats to Koh Larn	Bali Hai pier pontoons No. 4 and No. 6 have ramps	Boarding the boat itself still means a step and some swell
Hotels	Newer and larger hotels are usually better equipped	Ask for photos of the entrance, lift and bathroom

Pavements and streets

Pattaya's footpaths are the hardest part of a visit. In September 2025 Pattaya Mail reported that many streets and sois still lack proper sidewalks, that paths often vanish or are blocked by vendors, motorbikes and clutter, and that even tactile paving for blind people can lead straight into poles, kerbs or drops. In March 2026 the Thaiger reported a wheelchair user stopped on Central Pattaya Road by a new street light pole standing in the middle of the footpath, part of roughly 4,000 lights the city had installed.

- Expect high kerbs, missing ramps, loose tiles and open drains. Many people end up on the edge of the road, which needs a companion and great care. See walking in Pattaya.
- The smoother, more open stretches are the beach promenades. See Beach Road and the Jomtien Beach Road walk.

Getting around

- **Ride apps.** Bolt and Grab both work in Pattaya, and you can choose a larger car so a folding wheelchair fits in the boot. See Bolt and Grab.
- Grab launched a GrabAssist service for wheelchair users and people with sight or hearing impairments in 2018, but the launch covered Bangkok only. We couldn't confirm it is offered in Pattaya, so check the app before relying on it.
- **Booked transfers.** For the airport run and day trips, a private van gives the most room. Ask whether the driver can help with transfers and how much space is left once the chair is folded. See airport transfers.
- **Baht buses** have a step up at the back and no ramp, so they don't work for most wheelchair users. See baht bus routes and fares.
- **At Suvarnabhumi airport**, wheelchairs are lent free at a service point on Level 4 (Gate 2, in front of Row C) before check-in. You show an ID card, passport or driving licence and can keep it for up to three hours. After check-in, your airline's staff handle assistance, so request it when you book.

Boats and islands

In May 2025 Pattaya City finished replacing the floating docks at Bali Hai pier. Pontoons No. 4 and No. 6 have ramps for older passengers, people with disabilities and people with luggage. The step into the boat is still there, so go on a calm day with someone who can help. Since a speedboat collision on 9 November 2026, small boats have been kept ashore under a red flag and only larger passenger vessels are carrying tourists to Koh Larn, so check what is running on the day.

Attractions with good access

- **Sanctuary of Truth**: its official site says it lends a wheelchair or folding chair free (ask at the information desk), has a wooden lift and slopes for wheelchairs inside, and runs an on-site shuttle for older visitors and people with disabilities. Visitors with a disability certificate pay half price, ฿250 instead of ฿500.

- **Shopping malls**: the large malls have lifts and accessible toilets, and they're cool, flat places to rest between outings. See shopping malls.
- **Elsewhere**: the Pratumnak viewpoint has a car park at the top. For Nong Nooch and other big parks, ask about paths and toilets before you go. Temples and older sights often have steps and few ramps.

Hotels and condos

- Newer and larger hotels are usually better equipped. Some smaller and budget hotels have no lift at all.
- Before you book, ask: is the entrance step-free? Does the lift fit a wheelchair? How wide is the bathroom door? Is there a walk-in shower with grab rails? Ask for photos, not just a yes.
- See where to stay.

Health, heat and help

- Private hospitals have English-speaking staff. See hospitals and clinics and pharmacies.
- Go out early or late to avoid the worst heat. See heat and sun safety.
- Save the numbers before you go: ambulance 1669, Tourist Police 1155. See emergency numbers.
- Pattaya Mail reported "Tourism for All" events planned for 20 to 22 November 2026, including Ray Run Pattaya on Sunday 22 November with a 2.5 km wheelchair race.

Common questions

Is Pattaya wheelchair friendly? Partly. Pavements are the main barrier, but door-to-door cars, big hotels, malls and some attractions make it workable.

Does the Sanctuary of Truth have wheelchair access? Yes. Its official site lists a lift, slopes, free loan wheelchairs and an on-site shuttle, and half-price entry with a disability certificate.

Can I get to Koh Larn in a wheelchair? Possibly, with help. Two pontoons at Bali Hai pier have ramps, but boarding the boat still involves a step, and the island's roads are steep. Go on a calm day and ask the crew first.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Sanctuary of Truth, visit us (accessibility) and FAQ (fees and facilities); Suvarnabhumi Airport, wheelchair service; Pattaya Mail, sidewalks (September 2025); The Thaiger, light pole blocking a wheelchair user (March 2026); Pattaya Mail, Bali Hai pier pontoons (May 2025); Pattaya Mail, boat restrictions (11 November 2026); Pattaya Mail, Ray Run Pattaya (April 2026); Grab, GrabAssist launch (2018); The Thaiger, disability travel in Thailand (2022). Facilities change; confirm with each venue before you travel.

Plan your day

- Ask hotels about step-free access, lift size and bathroom layout before booking, and ask for photos.
- Travel door to door by car or van; save the pavements for short, checked stretches.
- See airport transfers.

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Pattaya with Friends: Group Trip Planner

Planning a Pattaya trip with a group of friends: agreeing budgets and dates, legal villas versus hotels, vans and ride apps, choosing activities without a fixed itinerary, splitting money, the 2026 rules that catch groups out and keeping everyone safe.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/group-trip-planner/

Stay	**Hotel rooms for small groups; a licensed pool villa for 6+**
Daily rentals	**Condos and houses rented by the day need a hotel licence**
Transport	**Bolt and Grab larger cars; a van with driver for day trips**
Alcohol sales	**11am to midnight since 29 May 2026**
Money	**One kitty, one person keeps receipts, settle up daily**
Safety	**Tourist Police 1155, scams 1441**

Quick answer: Agree the boring things before you fly: a rough daily budget, who books what and how you'll split bills. For six or more, a pool villa can cost less per person than hotel rooms, but daily rentals need a hotel licence and noisy villas get raided. Use larger Bolt or Grab cars, or a van with a driver for day trips. Skip the fixed itinerary: book a few things the whole group wants, then let people split up. Vapes are illegal, and nobody rides a scooter after drinking.

At a glance

DECISION	OPTIONS	WHAT TO CHECK
Budget	Agree a rough daily range per person	Big nights add up fast; agree a ceiling
Stay	Hotel rooms, a serviced apartment, a licensed pool villa	Licence, noise rules, deposit, distance to town
In town	Baht bus ฿15, Bolt and Grab	Larger cars for groups; agree charter prices first
Day trips	A van with a driver	Hours, fuel, tolls, parking and overtime in writing
Money	Kitty, bill-split app, PromptPay	One person keeps receipts

Before you book

- **Agree the budget out loud.** One person's cheap week is another's blowout, so agree a daily range for food and nights out. See cost of living and budget for a week.
- **Pick dates with care.** November to March is the busiest and priciest time, peaking at Christmas and New Year; May to October is cheaper and wetter. See best time to visit.
- **Check everyone's entry and insurance.** Many nationalities get 30 days visa-free since 15 September 2026, and everyone fills in the free TDAC arrival card before arriving. See visa extension and travel insurance.
- **Split the jobs:** one person books the stay, one the transport, one keeps the kitty.

Where to stay together

- **Small groups:** hotel rooms near Beach Road or Jomtien keep everyone close to everything. See where to stay.
- **Six or more:** a pool villa can work out cheaper per person and gives you a shared base. Many are out in East Pattaya or Huay Yai, so budget for daily transport.
- **Check it's legal.** Renting a condo or house by the day as a hotel needs a hotel licence, and the government repeated in March 2025 that daily condo rentals are prohibited. In May 2025 officials raided a pool party with more than 200 foreign guests near Pattaya after neighbours complained about noise. Book through a hotel or an operator that can show its licence.
- **Read the house rules** before you pay: quiet hours (often from 11pm), the guest limit and the deposit.

Getting around as a group

- **From the airport:** a private van is usually cheapest per person, about ฿1,800 to ฿2,500 from Suvarnabhumi for up to about nine people. See airport transfers.
- **Baht buses** cost ฿15 a person on the normal loop. To hire a whole truck for the group, agree the price for the truck before anyone gets in. See baht bus routes and fares.
- **Bolt and Grab:** compare both apps and choose a larger car for four or more. See Bolt and Grab.
- **Day trips:** hire a van with a driver; agree the hours, fuel, tolls and overtime in writing. See day trips.
- **Scooters:** each rider needs a motorcycle licence (or an International Driving Permit covering motorcycles), a helmet and sober judgement. See renting a scooter.

Choosing what to do

No single plan suits every group. Instead, everyone names two or three things they really want, you book the ones the group shares, and leave the rest open. Do outdoor things in the morning or late afternoon, and save the midday heat for a pool, mall or massage.

- **Water:** Koh Larn by ferry or a speedboat tour. See island hopping.
- **Active:** go-karts and ziplines, water parks, golf or Muay Thai.
- **Food:** a moo kata dinner, night markets or a cooking class.
- **Evenings:** a cabaret show, pool, sunset or a night out without drinking.

Money

- Use one kitty for shared costs, with one person keeping receipts, and settle up every day or two rather than at the airport.
- Carry small notes for baht buses and street food; cards and QR codes work in malls and many restaurants. See QR payments and PromptPay.
- ATM fees on foreign cards are about ฿220 to ฿250 a withdrawal, so take out larger amounts less often. See ATM fees.
- Check every bar bill before you pay. See how Pattaya bars work and nightlife on a budget.

Pro tip: he doesn't like one-size itineraries: everyone is different and there's so much to do here, so learn what's available and craft your own. His rule on nights out is to buy his own drinks only, because once you start buying for others it becomes a pattern.

Rules that catch groups out

- Alcohol is sold from 11am to midnight since 29 May 2026. On the five Buddhist holy days, hotels and licensed entertainment venues may sell, but shops and ordinary bars may not. See Ok Phansa.
- **Vapes are illegal**, even for personal use, and smoking on the beach can cost up to ฿5,000.
- Police may ask for your passport; keep it in the safe and carry a copy. Full list: laws visitors break.

Staying safe as a group

- Agree a meeting point, share live locations and keep phones charged.
- Nobody rides a scooter after drinking; book a car home. See night transport.
- Watch each other's drinks and look out for anyone who's had too much. See night out safety.
- Save the numbers: Tourist Police 1155, ambulance 1669, and 1441 to report a scam. See common scams.

Common questions

Is a pool villa cheaper than hotels for a group? Often, for six or more, but add daily transport if it's out of town, and make sure it's licensed for short stays.

Is it legal to rent a condo by the night in Pattaya? Daily rentals run like a hotel need a hotel licence. The government said again in 2025 that daily condo rentals are prohibited, so book hotels or licensed operators.

Should we book a full itinerary? Book only what everyone wants and what sells out, then leave time open.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Nation Thailand, daily condo rentals are illegal (March 2025); The Pattaya News, pool party raid in Pong (May 2025); The Thaiger, day-rented villas need a hotel licence (2018); Pattaya Mail, alcohol sales 11am to midnight from 29 May 2026. Other details follow our linked pages. Jonny's words are from his own notes (November 2026).

Plan your day

- A licensed pool villa can be cheaper per person than hotel rooms for a big group.
- Hire a van with a driver for day trips, with the terms in writing.
- See adventure activities.

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Horse Riding and Outdoor Activities

Get out of the city: horse riding in the countryside, ATV and buggy tours, archery, paintball and nature walks around Pattaya.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/horse-riding-outdoors/

Horse riding	**Lessons and trail rides in the countryside**
Off-road	**ATV and buggy tours on dirt tracks**
Groups	**Paintball, archery and shooting ranges**
Best time	**Early morning or late afternoon**

Pattaya's countryside starts about 20 minutes inland, and it is full of things to do outdoors: horse riding, ATV and buggy tours, paintball, archery and nature walks. Most of it is around Pong, Mabprachan Lake and Huay Yai. See East Pattaya and Huay Yai.

Quick answer: The best-known place to ride is Horseshoe Point, a large riding school near Mabprachan Lake with more than 100 horses, open daily 9am to 5pm. Rides range from short pony leads for small children to two-hour trail rides for experienced riders. Few operators publish prices, so ask for the full price first. ATV and buggy tours are the other big outdoor draw, at about ฿2,300 to ฿3,500 per person for one to two hours of riding on listings seen in 2026.

At a glance

ACTIVITY	WHERE	GOOD FOR	TYPICAL PRICE (2026 LISTINGS)
—	—	—	—
Horse riding lessons and trail rides	Horseshoe Point, Pong, near Mabprachan Lake	Beginners to experienced riders, children on ponies	Not published; ask the stable
Two-hour trail ride	Other stables around Pattaya, via booking sites	Riders with some experience	From about US$116 on one booking site
ATV and buggy tours	Countryside east of the city	Groups, first-timers with a guide	About ฿2,300 to ฿3,500 per person
Paintball, archery	Activity parks inland	Groups, birthdays, team days	Ask the operator
Nature walks	Nong Nooch, Mabprachan Lake, viewpoints	Everyone	Free to a garden ticket

Prices come from operator and booking-site listings (see Sources). They change often and some listings show no date, so treat them as a guide.

Horse riding

Horseshoe Point in Pong is the main riding centre. It has an international riding school, more than 100 horses and five indoor and outdoor arenas. Entry to see the horses is free; lessons and rides are paid separately. It also has mountain biking, paintball, a hotel and restaurants on site.

- **Beginners:** Book a lesson in an arena before a trail ride. An instructor will match you with a calm horse.
- **Children:** Short pony leads are offered for young children.
- **Experienced riders:** Trail rides of up to two hours go through the countryside.
- Other smaller stables run trail rides and sell them through booking sites. Read recent reviews, and check what is included.

Before you book

- Ask for the full price: ride, instructor or guide, helmet, transport.
- Check that helmets are provided and fit properly.
- Look at the horses. Healthy horses look alert, are a good weight and have shade and water. If they look thin or tired, go elsewhere.
- Tell the stable your real experience level, so they give you the right horse.
- Wear long trousers and closed shoes with a small heel. Shorts and sandals are a bad idea.

ATV and buggy tours

Guided off-road tours run on dirt tracks and through plantations east of the city. Listings seen in 2026 include a 1-hour, 17km quad tour at about ฿2,280, and 27km and 34km tours at ฿2,990 and ฿3,500 with about two hours of riding.

- Wear closed shoes and clothes you don't mind getting muddy.
- Ask what insurance is included. Your travel insurance may not cover off-road vehicles. See travel insurance.
- Check for extra charges before you start, such as fuel, a passenger fee or a video package. Some reviews mention unexpected extras.
- Wear the helmet and follow the guide. Rollovers and falls are the main risk.

Group activities

- Paintball, archery and shooting ranges suit groups, birthdays and team days. See the group trip planner.
- More ideas in adventure activities.

Nature

Gardens, viewpoints and the lake are good for a slower day outdoors. See Nong Nooch, Mabprachan Lake and Khao Chi Chan.

Getting there

Most outdoor activities are 20 to 40 minutes from the city by road. Many tour operators include hotel pickup, so ask when you book. Otherwise, use Bolt or Grab, and arrange your ride back in advance, because cars can be hard to find out in the countryside.

Tips

- Go early or late in the day. The midday heat is hard on you and on the horses. See heat and sun safety.
- Bring water, sun cream and insect repellent.
- In the rainy season, roughly May to October, tracks get muddy and afternoon storms are common. Morning is safest.
- Choose operators with proper safety gear, and walk away if something feels wrong.

Common questions

Where can I go horse riding in Pattaya? Horseshoe Point in Pong, near Mabprachan Lake, is the biggest riding centre. Some smaller stables sell trail rides through booking sites.

Can beginners ride? Yes. Start with a lesson in an arena, and tell the stable you're new.

Can children ride? Young children can do short pony leads at Horseshoe Point. Ask about age limits for trail rides.

How much is an ATV tour in Pattaya? About ฿2,300 to ฿3,500 per person on 2026 listings, for one to two hours of riding. Ask what is included.

What should I wear? Long trousers and closed shoes. Bring sun protection and water.

Plan your day

- Go early in the day to beat the heat and the crowds, and bring water and sun cream.
- Wear long trousers and closed shoes for riding.
- See adventure activities.

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Fishing Parks and Sea Fishing

Fishing around Pattaya: the easy beginner catfish park in Jomtien, specialist day-ticket lakes for arapaima and giant carp, squid fishing and sea trips from Bali Hai Pier, what each costs, park rules and what to confirm before you pay.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/fishing-parks/

Beginner park	**Jomtien Fishing Park, listed ฿300 entry; visitors report about ฿500 to ฿700**
Specialist lakes	**Arapaima, giant carp, catfish; full-day packages from ฿4,000**
Sea	**Squid fishing and day trips from Bali Hai Pier**
Rules	**Catch and release at most parks; bait bought on site**
Before you go	**Agree the full price and check the weather flag for boats**

Quick answer: Pattaya has three kinds of fishing. For a first try, Jomtien Fishing Park is a small stocked catfish lake where guides bait, cast and help you land fish of 10 kg or more; it lists ฿300 entry for foreigners, though 2025 visitors reported paying about ฿500 to ฿700 all in. Serious anglers go to specialist day-ticket lakes outside town for arapaima, giant Siamese carp and Mekong catfish, at about ฿4,000 or more for a full day with rods and bait. At sea, speedboats leave Bali Hai Pier for squid fishing on floating platforms in the bay and for day trips. Most parks are catch and release, and you should agree the full price before you start.

At a glance

TYPE	WHAT YOU CATCH	TYPICAL COST	BEST FOR
Beginner catfish park	Striped catfish, mostly 7 to 10 kg	Listed ฿300 entry plus rod and bait; about ฿500 to ฿700 reported	First-timers, families, a short afternoon
Specialist day-ticket lake	Arapaima, Siamese carp, Mekong and red tail catfish	From ฿4,000 a day with three rods and bait (one lake's 2026 price)	Keen anglers, a full day
Squid fishing in the bay	Squid, cooked for you on board	Varies by seller; boats from about 4pm	An evening out, groups
Sea fishing trip	Reef and open-water fish	Varies; compare what's included	Experienced anglers, calm days

Beginner park: Jomtien Fishing Park

The closest park to town is just off Jomtien Second Road. It's a single lake stocked mostly with striped catfish, with some Mekong giant and Chao Phraya catfish. You pay at the counter, a guide sets up and casts your rod, and when a fish bites they hand it to you and talk you through the fight.

- Listed prices: ฿300 entry for foreigners, ฿150 for Thais, about ฿100 to ฿200 for a rod and a little for bait.
- Visitors in 2025 reported paying about ฿500 to ฿700 in total, and one group was quoted ฿1,200, so agree the full price first.
- Listed hours conflict (9am to 7pm in one listing, 8am to 10pm in the DASTA tourism listing), so call ahead.
- Outside bait isn't allowed. Allow 2 to 3 hours.

Full details, map pin and phone number are on our Jomtien Fishing Park page.

Specialist day-ticket lakes

Around East Pattaya and the countryside towards Huay Yai there are larger, privately run lakes aimed at anglers who want big "exotic" species. Here you book a peg for the day, fish with carp-style rods on alarms, and follow strict fish-care rules.

As one example with published prices and rules, **Wasana Fishing Park** in the Nong Hin area, about 20 minutes from central Pattaya, lists:

- Opening hours of 8:30am to 6:30pm, Monday to Saturday, closed on Sundays.
- A three-rod day package for ฿4,000 per person with 8 kg of ground bait, bread and predator bait, or a premium package for ฿5,900 with a personal guide, four rods and the best peg. Family members who don't fish come in free.
- Over 40 species, with arapaima listed at over 2 m, Siamese carp to 54 kg and Mekong catfish to 34 kg.
- Catch and release only, barbless hooks only, and fish over 12 kg must stay in the water for unhooking and photos.

Other lakes appear in older listings, but we couldn't confirm which are open in 2026. Contact any park before a special trip, ask for the day price in writing, and check what's included: rods, bait, a guide, food and transfers. See East Pattaya and Huay Yai.

Park rules you'll meet

- **Catch and release** is the norm. Fish stay at the park, and guides often handle unhooking.
- **Bait:** many parks sell their own bait and don't allow outside bait.
- **Tackle:** specialist lakes often ban treble hooks and wire traces, and ask for barbless hooks.
- **Big fish:** heavy fish are slippery and easily hurt. Let the staff lead on handling and photos.
- **Tips:** guides are often tipped. Ask what's normal when you agree the price.

Sea fishing and squid fishing

Squid fishing is the easiest way to fish at sea. Speedboats from Bali Hai Pier take you out to floating platforms in Pattaya Bay. Current booking listings for one of them, Tappia Floating Café, show a 4pm check-in for a speedboat to the platform, a drink, a squid rod and your catch cooked as sashimi or grilled, with the café open about 4pm to 10pm. Prices and what's included vary by seller, so compare.

Day and night fishing trips also run from the piers on chartered boats. Before you book:

- Ask what's included: boat, rods, bait, food, drinks and hotel transfers.
- Check the life jackets and how many people the boat carries.
- Check the weather and the Marine Office flag. When a red flag is up, small boats and speedboats stop running. See island hopping and weather by month.
- Trips can be cancelled at short notice when the wind picks up, so ask about refunds or rebooking.
- For a marine accident, call 1196. See emergency numbers.

Tips for a good day

- Go early or late to miss the worst of the heat, and bring a hat, sun cream and plenty of water. See heat and sun safety.
- Wear clothes you don't mind getting splashed with bait.
- If you get seasick, take squid fishing in the bay over a long offshore trip, and talk to a pharmacist before you go.

Common questions

Where can I go fishing in Pattaya? Jomtien Fishing Park is the easy option in town. Specialist day-ticket lakes outside the city suit keen anglers, and squid fishing and boat trips leave from Bali Hai Pier.

How much does a fishing park cost? Jomtien Fishing Park lists ฿300 entry plus rod and bait, but visitors report about ฿500 to ฿700 in total. Specialist lakes cost more, about ฿4,000 a day at one lake with rods and bait included.

Can I keep the fish? Usually not. Most parks are catch and release. Squid you catch on the bay platforms is cooked for you.

Can I fish at Mabprachan Lake? It's a working water-supply reservoir, so follow the posted signs about fishing and ask locally first. See Mabprachan Lake.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: our Jomtien Fishing Park guide (prices, hours and visitor reports, checked the same day); Wasana Fishing Park official site (hours, packages, species, rules); Tiqets, Tappia Floating Café listing (Bali Hai Pier departure, inclusions, hours); Pattaya Unlimited fishing parks list (other lakes, status not confirmed). Prices and hours change, and some parks have no current website, so confirm before you go.

Plan your day

- Most parks rent rods and sell bait, and charge by the hour or day.
- Ask the rules on catch and release before you start.
- Go early in the day to beat the heat and the crowds, and bring water and sun cream.

Related guides

- Water Parks
- Pattaya Park and Tower
- Khao Yai Trip from Pattaya
- Cabaret Shows (Tiffany's, Alcazar & Colosseum)
- Jomtien Fishing Park

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Jomtien Fishing Park

Big catfish a few minutes from Jomtien Beach: Jomtien Fishing Park prices (listed and what visitors report paying), what you can catch, hours, how a session works, and what to confirm before you pay.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/jomtien-fishing-park/

Hours	**Listed 9am to 7pm daily; one listing says 8am to 10pm**
Listed entry	**฿300 foreigners, ฿150 Thais**
Visitors report	**About ฿500 to ฿700 all in, so agree the total first**
Rod hire	**฿100 to ฿200**
Catch	**Big catfish, mostly 7 to 10 kg**
Phone	**081-935-8181 (tourism listing)**

Quick answer: Jomtien Fishing Park is a small stocked catfish lake just off Jomtien Second Road where complete beginners can land a fish of 10 kg or more, with guides who bait, cast and help you reel in. Listed prices are ฿300 entry for foreigners (฿150 for Thais) plus about ฿100 to ฿200 for a rod, but visitors in 2025 reported paying about ฿500 to ฿700 per person or rod, and one group was quoted ฿1,200. Agree the full price before you start. Listed hours differ, so call ahead, and allow 2 to 3 hours.

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Where	Jomtien Second Road, between Soi Wat Boon and Soi Chaiyapruek 1 (map pin below)
Size	A single lake, roughly 40 to 60 m by 95 m
Fish	Mostly striped catfish, some Mekong giant and Chao Phraya catfish
Listed price	฿300 entry (foreigners), rod ฿100 to ฿200, bait ฿20 to ฿40
Reported price	About ฿500 to ฿700 all in (2025 visitor reports)
Hours	9am to 7pm in one listing, 8am to 10pm in the DASTA tourism listing
Good for	First-timers, families with patient kids, a group afternoon

Prices

Published prices vary, and recent visitors report paying more than the listed rates. **Agree the total price before you start fishing**, and ask exactly what it covers: entry, rod, bait and the guide.

ITEM	LISTED PRICE
Entry, foreigners	฿300
Entry, Thais	฿150
Rod hire	฿100 to ฿200
500 g bag of breadcrumbs	฿20
Small bag of bread	฿20
Bait flavouring	฿40

- Older listings show ฿100 per rod if you bring your own and ฿200 for a house rod, which may no longer apply.
- Visitor comments on a local fishing site report ฿540 for entry, rod and bait, ฿700 for one rod, and, in 2025, a group quote of ฿1,200 that the visitor said was above the published rates.
- Guides are often tipped; ask what's normal when you agree the price rather than at the end.

What you can catch

- Mostly striped catfish, usually 7 to 10 kg, with some around 20 kg.
- Some Mekong giant catfish and Chao Phraya catfish. The park has claimed Mekong giants up to 40 kg, and booking sites go higher, but treat those as the top end, not the norm.
- Some visitors land many fish in an afternoon, and others catch nothing in 3 to 4 hours. It's still fishing.

How a session works

- You pay at the counter, a guide sets up your rod with bread bait packed around the hook, and casts for you if you want.
- Fish often gather near the far bank, so casts can be 30 to 50 metres. Most beginners let the guide cast.
- When a fish takes the bait, the guide hands you the rod and talks you through it. A big catfish can take several minutes to bring in, and it's hard work on the arms.
- Outside bait isn't allowed, so buy it there. Food and drinks are sold at pavilions round the lake, and outside food may not be allowed.
- Thai fishing parks are usually catch and release. Ask the park's rule before you start, and let the guide handle unhooking and photos; big fish are heavy and slippery, and they belong back in the water quickly.

Competitions

Older listings mention weekend competitions on Saturdays and Sundays from 3pm to 5pm, at about ฿100 per rod. We couldn't confirm in 2026 that they still run or what the prizes are, so ask when you call. These are not the same as the Jomtien Fishing Games, a separate boat-based sea fishing event.

Hours and getting there

- One listing gives 9am to 7pm every day; the DASTA tourism listing gives 8am to 10pm. Call 081-935-8181 (the number on the DASTA listing) before a special trip.
- Open the location in Google Maps. Many listings still say Jomtien Beach Road Soi 14, but a local fishing site says the entrance has moved to Jomtien Second Road, between Soi Wat Boon and Soi Chaiyapruek 1. Follow the map pin and look for the sign.
- It's easy by Bolt or Grab or scooter.

Tips

- Go late in the day to miss the worst of the heat, and bring a hat, sun cream and water. See heat and sun safety.
- Wear clothes you don't mind getting splashed and smelling of bait.
- Good with kids who can sit still for a while, and an adult should help with the bigger fish. See Pattaya with kids.
- For other options, including sea trips, see fishing parks and sea fishing.

Common questions

How much is Jomtien Fishing Park? The listed price is ฿300 entry for foreigners plus about ฿100 to ฿200 for a rod and a little for bait. Visitors in 2025 reported paying about ฿500 to ฿700 in total, so agree the price first.

Do I need any fishing experience? No. Guides set up the rod, cast and help you land the fish.

Can I bring my own bait or food? Outside bait isn't allowed, and food and drinks are meant to be bought at the park.

How big are the fish? Mostly 7 to 10 kg striped catfish, with some around 20 kg and occasional larger Mekong giant catfish.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya Fishing, Jomtien Fishing Park (listed prices, entrance on Jomtien Second Road, species, visitor comments to 2025); DASTA tourism app listing (prices, 8am to 10pm, phone); OffPeakTrip (9am to 7pm). We couldn't find an official park website or a dated 2026 price list, so prices and hours may have changed.

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Kitesurfing and Wind Sports in Jomtien

Jomtien is one of Thailand's kitesurfing spots. When the wind blows, what lessons cost, how a beginner course works, safety tips, and other wind and water sports.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/kitesurfing-jomtien/

Where	**The southern end of Jomtien and Na Jomtien**
Windy season	**Roughly November to March (northeast winds)**
Lessons	**Beginner courses usually 6 to 9 hours over a few days**
Safety	**Learn with a certified instructor**

Jomtien's long beach and steady winds make it one of the best-known kitesurfing spots in Thailand.

Quick answer: Come between about November and March, when the northeast winds blow steadily down the coast, and learn at one of the schools at the southern end of Jomtien or in Na Jomtien. A full beginner course is usually 6 to 9 hours of lessons spread over two or three days; listings for Jomtien and other Thai schools in 2026 ranged from about ฿4,000 for a short taster to roughly ฿11,000 to ฿12,000 for a full beginner course. Pick a school with internationally certified instructors, radio helmets and a rescue boat.

Kitesurfing at a glance

THING	WHAT TO EXPECT
—	—
Best season	Roughly November to March, northeast winds
Off season	Some kiting in the southwest monsoon, less reliable
Where	Southern end of Jomtien Beach and Na Jomtien
Taster lesson	About 1.5 to 3 hours; around ฿4,000 at some schools
Beginner course	About 6 to 9 hours over 2 to 3 days; roughly ฿11,000 to ฿12,000 at Thai IKO schools
Certification	IKO (International Kiteboarding Organization) levels are common

Prices come from school and booking listings in 2026, including Thai schools outside Pattaya (see Sources). Jomtien schools set their own rates and some price by group size, so ask for a written quote that says how many hours of instruction are included.

When to go

- The main kite season runs roughly November to March, when northeast winds blow steadily.
- Some kiting is possible in the southwest monsoon too, roughly May to October, but conditions are less reliable and storms come through. See weather by month.
- Afternoons are often windier than mornings. Schools plan lessons around the forecast, so stay flexible and book more days than you need.

How a beginner course works

- **Day 1, on the beach:** safety, wind, setting up the kite and flying a small trainer kite.
- **Day 2, in the water:** body-dragging with the kite, learning to control the power and recover your board.
- **Day 3, on the board:** water starts and your first short rides, with a radio helmet so the instructor can talk to you.

Many people need more than one course before riding on their own, so budget for extra hours or a supervised practice session. When you can ride upwind and self-rescue, schools usually sign off an IKO level that lets you rent gear elsewhere.

Choosing a school

- Several schools on the southern end of Jomtien and in Na Jomtien offer beginner courses.
- Ask whether instructors are IKO or similarly certified, how many students share one instructor and one kite, and whether a rescue boat is on the water.
- Check what's included: gear, wetsuit or rash vest, radio helmet, and whether unused hours carry over if the wind dies.
- Read recent reviews, and watch a lesson before you book.

Safety

- Never kite near swimmers or in crowded areas.
- Check the wind and the forecast, and kite with others. Offshore wind can carry you away from the beach.
- Wear a helmet and impact vest when learning.

- Read beach safety, and check that your travel insurance covers kitesurfing; many policies exclude it unless you add water sports.

Other water sports

- **Windsurfing:** some schools also teach windsurfing, which is easier to start in lighter wind.
- **Stand-up paddleboarding:** best on calm mornings outside the windy season.
- **Jet skis and parasailing:** available on busier beaches; agree the price and check the craft before you ride.

See adventure activities for ziplines, go-karts and more.

Watching

You don't have to kite to enjoy it. On a windy afternoon in the cool season, the southern end of Jomtien fills with kites, and a beach chair is a good seat. See the Jomtien beach walk.

Common questions

When is kitesurfing season in Jomtien? Roughly November to March, with steady northeast winds.

How much are kitesurfing lessons in Jomtien? A taster is around ฿4,000 at some schools; a full beginner course of 6 to 9 hours was about ฿11,000 to ฿12,000 at Thai IKO schools in 2026. Ask each school for a quote.

How long does it take to learn kitesurfing? Most beginners need 6 to 9 hours of lessons to start riding, and more practice to ride independently.

Is Jomtien good for beginner kitesurfers? Yes, in the cool season, with a long beach and several schools. Learn with an instructor, not on your own.

Plan your day

- Wind is usually strongest in the cool season months.
- See beach safety.
- See travel insurance.

Sources

- International Kiteboarding Organization (IKO): course structure and typical beginner course length (6 to 9 hours). ikointl.com. Checked November 2026.
- Trazy listing for Blue Lagoon Kiteboarding School, Jomtien (3-day beginner package; ฿4,000 listing). Checked November 2026.
- 2026 price lists from IKO schools in Hua Hin (3-day beginner course ฿11,000) and Koh Phangan (9-hour course ฿12,000, 3-hour discovery ฿4,000), used as Thai benchmarks.

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Koh Larn Beaches, One by One

Each main beach on Koh Larn compared: busy Tawaen, walk-in Thong Lang, wide Samae, quieter Tien, Nual at the southern tip and tiny Ta Yai, with how to get between them, what they cost and the boats home.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/koh-larn-beaches/

Ferry	**From Bali Hai pier, about 45 minutes, ฿30 or ฿40**
Busiest	**Tawaen Beach, with its own ferry pier**
Quieter	**Tien, Ta Yai and Thong Lang**
Sunset	**Samae, on the west side**
Getting around	**Shared trucks, motorbike taxis or a rented scooter**
Last public ferry back	**Usually around 18:00**

Quick answer: Tawaen is Koh Larn's biggest and busiest beach, with its own ferry pier and every water sport. **Thong Lang**, a short walk away, is calmer. **Samae** is wide, on the west side, and the sunset beach. **Tien** is quieter, down a footpath. **Nual** (Monkey Beach) is at the southern tip, and tiny **Ta Yai** in the north has almost no facilities. The public ferry from Bali Hai pier takes about 45 minutes for ฿30 or ฿40, and shared trucks run from Na Ban pier to most beaches. Be on a boat back well before the last public ferry, usually around 18:00. When a red flag is up at the pier, small boats don't run.

Ferries, fares and a day plan are on our Koh Larn page; this page helps you pick a beach.

The beaches at a glance

BEACH	WHERE	FEEL	GOOD FOR
Tawaen	North coast, own pier	Busiest, about 700 m, rows of chairs	A first visit, water sports
Thong Lang	Next to Tawaen	Narrow, calmer, no road	Tawaen's facilities without the crowd
Samae	West side	Wide, about 500 m, restaurants	Sunset, a longer swim
Tien	West side, north of Samae	Quieter, reached on foot	A slower afternoon
Nual (Monkey Beach)	Southern tip	Small, about 250 m	A short stop
Ta Yai	Northern tip	Tiny, about 100 m, few sunbeds	Getting away from everyone

Tawaen Beach

The most developed beach, where tour groups land. Some public ferries from Bali Hai go straight to its pier instead of Na Ban, and boats return from here too. Expect long rows of chairs, seafood restaurants at close to mainland tourist prices, and parasailing, jet skis, banana boats and sea walking. Easiest for a first visit, worst for quiet, especially at weekends.

Thong Lang Beach

A narrow beach just north of Tawaen, reached by a concrete walkway of about 150 to 200 m around the rocks. With no road it's quieter, yet you're minutes from Tawaen's restaurants and boats. Its own restaurants fill up at lunch.

Samae Beach

About 500 m of sand on the west side, with restaurants behind it, and the island's best-known sunset spot. Calmer than Tawaen and good for a longer swim. A walkway at the south end climbs to a viewpoint by the wind turbines.

Tien Beach

North of Samae. Trucks drop you at the start of a path, then it's a 5 to 8 minute walk, ending on a rough wooden walkway with no railing. That walk keeps it quieter. Pattaya Mail describes clear water and a relaxed feel. Facilities are fewer, so bring water.

Nual Beach (Monkey Beach)

A small beach at the southern tip, the longest ride from Na Ban, with monkeys in the hills at one end. Keep food and bags closed, don't feed them, and keep children back; get any bite or scratch checked the same day. See stray dogs and rabies. Pattaya Mail calls it popular for snorkelling, but a 2026 guide quoting regulars says the reef is mostly dead, with sea urchins in the shallows, so wear water shoes.

Ta Yai Beach

About 100 m of sand at the northern tip, with very few sunbeds. An October 2026 guide says shared trucks don't go there, so you need a scooter or your legs. Bring water and snacks.

Getting around the island

- **Shared trucks** wait at Na Ban pier with a fixed fare per beach: roughly ฿40 to ฿70 on our Koh Larn page, about ฿30 to ฿40 to the main beaches in an October 2026 guide. Ask first.
- **Motorbike taxis** are quicker for one person and cost a little more.
- **Scooters** rent near the piers for about ฿200 to ฿300 a day. Leave a cash deposit and a copy, not your passport. The roads are steep and twisty, so ride only if you're confident and licensed, with a helmet. See renting a scooter.
- Photograph any scooter or jet ski before you use it, with the operator watching. See common scams (hotline 1441).

What you'll pay on the beach

ITEM	ROUGH PRICE
Chair or sunbed	About ฿100 to ฿200; some restaurants waive it if you order
Toilet	About ฿10 to ฿20
Shower	About ฿50
Jet ski	About ฿600 for 15 minutes (one 2026 listing, Tien)

Bring cash: ATMs around Na Ban can't be relied on at busy times.

Boats home, flags and the sea

- The last public ferry from Na Ban usually leaves around 18:00 and changes with the season. Check the board when you land. Miss it and you pay for a private speedboat or stay the night.
- **Red flag, no small boats.** After a speedboat hit a fishing boat near Bali Hai pier on the night of 9 November 2026, injuring eight people, officials raised a red flag keeping small boats ashore; only larger passenger vessels meeting safety rules could carry tourists, and the ferries kept running. See island hopping.
- Life jackets are compulsory for the whole crossing.
- Swim inside the buoy lines, away from jet skis. Seas are roughest from May to October. The better snorkelling is around Koh Sak, by tour or charter. See beach safety and diving and snorkelling.

Common questions

Which Koh Larn beach is best? Tawaen for an easy first day, Samae for space and sunset, Tien, Thong Lang or Ta Yai for quiet.

Which beach can I reach directly by ferry? Tawaen has its own pier, served by some public ferries from Bali Hai. Others go to Na Ban pier, where shared trucks wait.

Is Monkey Beach safe with children? The beach is, but keep children and food away from the monkeys, and get any bite or scratch checked the same day.

What time should I leave the island? Well before the last public ferry, usually around 18:00 from Na Ban. With a red flag up, only larger ferries run.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya Mail, Koh Larn guide for 2026 (August 2026) (beaches, chairs, weather); Visit Thailand Today, Koh Larn guide (updated October 2026) (beach lengths and access, trucks, toilets, scooters, snorkelling); Pattaya Mail, boat restrictions after the collision (11 November 2026). Ferry fares and the last boat follow our Koh Larn page. Prices change.

Plan your day

- Go on a weekday for quieter beaches.
- Bring cash and check the last ferry time back.
- See Bali Hai pier.

Related guides

- Staying Overnight on Koh Larn
- Koh Samet vs Koh Larn
- Beach Clubs vs Beach Chairs
- Island Hopping & Boat Trips

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Staying Overnight on Koh Larn

Why a night on Koh Larn is worth it: quiet evenings after the day trippers leave, sunset at Samae and empty morning beaches, plus where to stay, cash, water, getting around after dark and what to pack.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/koh-larn-overnight/

Best part	**Evenings and early mornings without the day crowds**
Where to stay	**Guesthouses and small hotels, mostly in Na Ban village**
Book ahead	**Weekends and Thai holidays**
Bring	**Cash; don't rely on the island's ATMs**
Water	**Supply is limited in peak season, so use it sparingly**
Ferries	**See our Koh Larn page for fares and last boats**

Quick answer: Most visitors see Koh Larn on a day trip and leave on the late-afternoon boats. Stay a night and you get a different island: a quiet village evening, sunset on the west-facing beaches, and sand almost to yourself the next morning before the first boats arrive. Most guesthouses and small hotels are in Na Ban village by the main pier, with a few near the beaches. Book ahead for weekends and Thai holidays, bring enough cash from Pattaya, use water sparingly, and don't ride a scooter on the steep roads after dark unless you're confident. Ferries, fares and the last boat times are on our Koh Larn page.

At a glance

WHAT	GOOD TO KNOW
Why stay	Quiet evenings and empty beaches before the day boats arrive
Where	Na Ban village for food and the pier; a few places near the beaches
When	Weekdays are calmer; weekends and holidays fill up
Money	Cash for most things; ATMs in Na Ban can't be relied on
Water	Produced on the island and limited at busy times
Getting around	Shared trucks, motorbike taxis or a rented scooter
Ferries	Fares, piers and last boats on the Koh Larn page

Why stay the night

- **The crowds go home.** Day trippers head back for the last public boats, usually around 18:00, and the beaches go quiet.
- **Sunset on the island.** Samae Beach faces west, so you can watch the sun go down over the sea instead of rushing for a boat.
- **Morning beaches.** Swim before the first boats from Pattaya arrive. Popular beaches like Tawaen are a different place at 8am.
- **Viewpoints in the cool.** The island's lookouts have little shade, so early morning is the time to go up.

For each beach, see Koh Larn beaches.

Where to stay

Accommodation on Koh Larn is limited and mostly simpler than on the mainland: guesthouses, small hotels and a few small resorts.

- **Na Ban village**, by the main pier, has the most guesthouses and small hotels, the cheapest food and the easiest boats home. It suits a first overnight stay without your own transport.
- **Near the beaches.** A few places sit near Tawaen, Samae and the quieter bays. You wake up close to the sand, but you'll need a truck, a motorbike taxi or a scooter for food and the pier.
- **Booking.** Use the booking apps, read recent reviews about the road to the property, water pressure and air conditioning, and check whether the hotel offers a pier pick-up.
- Book ahead for weekends and Thai public holidays, when Thai visitors fill the island.

Food and evenings

- Evenings are quiet. There is no nightlife scene like Pattaya's; it's dinner, a drink and an early night.
- Na Ban village is the cheapest place to eat, with simple Thai food and seafood restaurants. Beach restaurants are priced for day trippers.
- At seafood restaurants, ask the price by weight before the fish is cooked.
- If you stay near a beach, bring snacks and water so you don't need a late trip to the village.

Money

Bring enough cash from Pattaya. Pattaya Mail's August 2026 guide says there are ATMs around Na Ban but that travellers shouldn't rely on them, especially at busy times, and most small restaurants, beach businesses and transport run on cash. See ATM fees.

Water on the island

Koh Larn makes its own fresh water, and it is tight. In April 2026 Pattaya Mail reported that the island's desalination plants produce about 300 cubic metres a day, which covers basic needs but comes under strain in peak tourist season. Pattaya City has taken over the island's water supply and plans to expand production. As a guest, keep showers short, report leaks and drink bottled water.

Getting around after dark

- Shared trucks and motorbike taxis run from Na Ban pier to the beaches. Agree the fare before you get in, and ask your hotel how to get back in the evening.
- Scooters can be rented near the pier. The roads are narrow, steep and winding, so only ride with a valid licence and a helmet, and avoid riding after dark or after drinking. See renting a scooter and road accidents.
- Photograph any scooter before you ride it, with the owner watching. See common scams.

Weather and the boats home

Boats can be cancelled when the sea is rough, mostly from May to October, and Pattaya Mail notes that speedboats may stop running in unsafe conditions. In the rainy season, keep the next day free in case you have to stay longer, and keep any medicines you need with you. See flood season and weather by month.

What to pack

- Cash in small notes.
- Sun cream, a hat and insect repellent for the evening. See dengue and mosquitoes.
- A torch or phone light: some roads and paths are dark.
- A dry bag for your phone and money on the boat and the beach.
- Any medicines you need. Pattaya's hospitals are a boat ride away. See hospitals and clinics.

Common questions

Is it worth staying overnight on Koh Larn? Yes, if you want quiet. The island is much calmer after the day boats leave, and you get the beaches early the next morning. If you want nightlife, stay in Pattaya.

Where should I stay on Koh Larn? Na Ban village is the easiest: most guesthouses, cheaper food and the pier for boats home. Stay near a beach if you have transport and want the sand on your doorstep.

Are there ATMs on Koh Larn? There are some around Na Ban, but they can't be relied on, especially when the island is busy. Bring enough cash from Pattaya.

What if I miss the last ferry back? You can pay for a private speedboat or stay the night. Fares and boat times are on our Koh Larn page.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya Mail, Koh Larn guide for 2026 (August 2026) (ATMs, cash, scooters, weather); Pattaya Mail, Koh Larn water shortage (April 2026); Visit Thailand Today, Koh Larn travel guide (accommodation, Samae sunset, food in Na Ban, viewpoints). Ferry details follow our Koh Larn page.

Plan your day

- Book a room ahead on weekends, the island fills with Thai visitors.
- ATMs on the island are few, bring enough cash.

Related guides

- Koh Samet vs Koh Larn
- Pattaya for Couples
- Island Hopping & Boat Trips
- Koh Samet from Pattaya

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Koh Samet vs Koh Larn

Which island should you pick from Pattaya? Koh Larn is close, cheap and easy for a day; Koh Samet is further but feels more like a real island holiday. Times, costs and who each suits.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/koh-samet-vs-koh-larn/

Koh Larn	**About 45 minutes by ferry from Pattaya**
Koh Samet	**About 2.5 to 3 hours by road and boat**
Day trip	**Koh Larn**
Overnight or weekend	**Koh Samet**

Both islands are popular from Pattaya, but they suit different trips. Here is how they compare.

Quick answer: Pick Koh Larn for a day trip. The public ferry from Bali Hai pier takes about 45 minutes and costs ฿30 or ฿40, so you can be on a beach within an hour of leaving your hotel. Pick Koh Samet for one or two nights. It takes about 2.5 to 3 hours door to door, and foreigners pay a ฿200 national park fee, but the sand is whiter, the water usually clearer, and the island is quieter once the day-trippers leave.

Side by side

	KOH LARN	KOH SAMET
—	—	—
Getting there	Ferry from Bali Hai, about 45 minutes	Road to Ban Phe (1.5 to 2 hours), then a boat (about 40 minutes)
Ferry, one way	฿30 or ฿40 public ferry; speedboat seats ฿150 to ฿300	About ฿70 slow boat; speedboats cost more
Park fee	None	฿200 foreign adults, ฿100 children in most 2026 guides; some quote ฿300, so carry ฿300
Best for	Day trips	Overnight stays and weekends
Beaches	Several good beaches, busy at weekends	Many beaches, whiter sand, clearer water
Crowds	Busy with day trippers	Busy at weekends and holidays
Places to stay	A small choice, mostly simple	Many bungalows and resorts
Evenings	Quiet once the last ferry leaves	Beach bars on the main beaches

Prices come from our Koh Larn and Koh Samet guides, checked in 2026. The Koh Larn ferry fare is a known conflict: the long-standing fare was ฿30, several 2026 reports say ฿40 on some sailings, so have ฿40 ready.

What a day costs per person

ITEM	KOH LARN	KOH SAMET
—	—	—
Getting to the pier	฿15 to ฿20 baht bus, or a short Bolt ride	Shared minivan through an agent, or about ฿1,100 or more for a private car (split between your group)
Boat, return	฿60 to ฿80	About ฿140 on the slow boat
Park fee	฿0	฿200 to ฿300
Getting around the island	Shared trucks or motorbike taxis from the pier	Shared trucks (songthaews) from the pier
Beach chair and food	Same as on the mainland, a bit more on the beach	A bit more than on the mainland

On a budget, Koh Larn is the clear winner: the transport for the whole day can cost less than ฿200. Koh Samet's transport alone is several times that, which is why most people stay at least one night to make the trip worth it.

Choose Koh Larn if

- You have one day and want an easy trip. See Koh Larn and Koh Larn beaches.
- You want to stay a night without much travel. See staying overnight on Koh Larn.
- You're travelling with young children or older parents and want a short boat ride.

- You want to come back for dinner in Pattaya the same day.

Choose Koh Samet if

- You have two or three days and want a proper island break. See Koh Samet.
- You want clearer water and beach bars at night.
- You'd like to combine it with Rayong's seafood or a trip further east. See Rayong and Chanthaburi.

Getting there

Koh Larn ferries leave from Bali Hai Pier at the end of Walking Street. Boats go to Na Ban pier in the village, with a few daily sailings straight to Tawaen Beach. The last public ferry back from Na Ban usually leaves around 18:00, so check the board when you land.

For Koh Samet, go to Ban Phe pier in Rayong by car or minivan. Slow ferries take about 40 minutes; speedboats take 10 to 15 minutes and can drop you at different beaches. Pay the park fee when you arrive and keep the ticket for your stay. See Rayong.

Weather and timing

- Both islands are at their best from about November to April, when the sea is calmer. See best time to visit.
- In the rainy season, rough seas can cancel speedboats on both routes. The bigger ferries usually still run.
- Weekends and Thai public holidays are busiest on both islands. Go on a weekday if you can.

Common questions

Is Koh Samet better than Koh Larn? For beaches and a real island feel, many visitors think so. For an easy, cheap day out from Pattaya, Koh Larn wins.

Can you do Koh Samet as a day trip from Pattaya? Yes, but you'll spend about 4 to 5 hours travelling. One night is more relaxed.

How long is the ferry to Koh Larn? About 45 minutes on the public ferry, or 15 to 20 minutes by speedboat.

Do you pay a fee to visit Koh Samet? Yes. Most 2026 guides say foreign adults pay a ฿200 national park fee and children ฿100, but some quote ฿300, so carry enough. Koh Larn has no park fee.

Which island is better for families? Koh Larn, for the short crossing and the option to come home the same day.

Plan your day

- Short on time? Koh Larn is a 30 to 45 minute ferry from Pattaya.
- See Koh Larn overnight.

Sources

- Our Koh Larn guide (ferry fares, times and the ฿30 or ฿40 conflict, with its own sources, including an August 2026 Pattaya Mail guide).
- Our Koh Samet guide (Ban Phe transfer, ferry and the national park fee, with its own sources).

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Si Racha Day Trip

A day trip to Si Racha, the seaside town north of Pattaya known for its seafood, waterfront, Japanese food and the ferry to Koh Sichang. Getting there, what to do and how to plan the day.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/si-racha/

Where	**About 30 km north of Pattaya**
Getting there	**Car, scooter, minivan or bus, about 40 to 60 minutes**
Known for	**Seafood, waterfront, Japanese restaurants**
Ferry	**To Koh Sichang from Ko Loi pier, about ฿50 to ฿60**

Si Racha is a working seaside town about half an hour north of Pattaya. It is quieter than Pattaya, with a long waterfront, good seafood and the ferry to Koh Sichang. Yes, it is where the famous chilli sauce name comes from.

Quick answer: Si Racha is an easy half day or full day out: about 40 to 60 minutes up Sukhumvit Road by car, scooter, Bolt or Grab, or a bus towards Bangkok. Walk out to Ko Loi, the little island temple on a causeway, eat seafood on the waterfront, and if you have time, take the ferry from Ko Loi pier to Koh Sichang (about ฿50 to ฿60, 40 to 45 minutes). It feels like an ordinary Thai town rather than a resort, which is the point.

Si Racha at a glance

THING	DETAILS (2026)
—	—
Distance	About 30 km north of Pattaya
Travel time	About 40 to 60 minutes by road
Main sights	Waterfront, Ko Loi island temple, seafood, Japanese food
Ferry	Koh Sichang from Ko Loi pier, roughly hourly, about ฿50 to ฿60 one way
Time needed	Half a day; a full day with Koh Sichang
Good for	Food lovers, a quiet day, seeing everyday Thai life

Ferry details come from our Koh Sichang guide, checked in 2026. Times and fares can change, so check at the pier.

Things to do

- **Ko Loi.** Walk the waterfront and the pier to Ko Loi, a small island temple joined to the town by a causeway. Go late in the afternoon for softer light and sea views.
- **Seafood.** Eat on the waterfront, where restaurants sit over the water. Oysters, crab, grilled fish and spicy salads are the local favourites. See seafood restaurants.
- **Koh Sichang.** Take the ferry for a half day of viewpoints, a former royal summer palace and quiet roads. See Koh Sichang.
- **Japanese food.** Si Racha has many Japanese restaurants, supermarkets and shops, thanks to the industrial estates nearby. It's one of the best places in the region for ramen, sushi and Japanese groceries. See Japanese and Korean food.
- **The sauce.** The famous chilli sauce takes its name from the town. Look for local brands in shops and markets; it's a cheap, light souvenir.

Koh Sichang in brief

If you add the island, the main sights are the remains of Phra Chudadhut Palace, a royal summer palace from the reign of King Rama V with gardens and a small museum; Tham Phang beach on the west side, the island's main swimming beach; and hilltop shrines with views back to the mainland. Big-engined tuk-tuks wait at the pier and offer island tours for a set price, so agree it before you set off. Dress modestly for the shrines.

Getting there

OPTION	TIME	NOTES
—	—	—
Car or scooter	About 40 to 60 minutes	Up Sukhumvit Road; parking near the waterfront fills at weekends
Bolt or Grab	About 40 to 60 minutes	Price shown in the app; ask the driver to wait or book again for the return
Bus or minivan	About an hour	Pattaya to Bangkok buses can drop you; ask for Si Racha. See buses

Riding a scooter on Sukhumvit means fast traffic and trucks. If you're not confident on big roads, take a car. See renting a scooter.

A simple plan

- **Late morning:** leave Pattaya, arrive for an early lunch of seafood on the waterfront.
- **Early afternoon:** walk out to Ko Loi, or catch a ferry to Koh Sichang if you started early.
- **Late afternoon:** a Japanese café or supermarket, then sunset on the waterfront.
- **Evening:** back to Pattaya before the evening traffic builds, or stay for dinner.

With Koh Sichang, start by 9:00 so you can catch a morning ferry and still be back on the mainland before the last boat. Weekends are busier with Thai day-trippers, which is lively but means longer waits for tables.

Combine it

Si Racha pairs well with Bang Saen, about an hour north of Pattaya, for its long beach and the monkeys on Khao Sam Muk hill. See more day trips.

Common questions

How far is Si Racha from Pattaya? About 30 km, or 40 to 60 minutes by road.

Is Si Racha worth visiting? Yes, for seafood, Japanese food and a calm, local feel. Don't expect beaches like Pattaya's.

How do I get to Koh Sichang from Pattaya? Go to Si Racha's Ko Loi pier and take the ferry, about ฿50 to ฿60 one way and 40 to 45 minutes.

Is Sriracha sauce from Si Racha? The name comes from the town, where the original Thai-style chilli sauce was made.

Plan your day

- Si Racha has a large Japanese community, with many Japanese restaurants. See Japanese and Korean food.
- See Koh Sichang.

Sources

- Our Koh Sichang guide (Ko Loi pier ferry times and fares, checked 2026, with its own sources).
- Our Bang Saen and buses guides.

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Chachoengsao Day Trip

A day trip to Chachoengsao, north of Pattaya: famous temples, the riverside old market, and a relaxed look at a Thai provincial town.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/chachoengsao-day-trip/

Where	**A little over 100 km north of Pattaya, about 1.5 to 2 hours by car**
Known for	**Wat Sothon, the giant reclining Ganesha, Ban Mai riverside market**
Best for	**Culture and a quieter day out**
Go	**Weekdays are calmer; temples are busiest at weekends and on Buddhist holidays**

Quick answer: Chachoengsao is a provincial town on the Bang Pakong River, a little over 100 km north of Pattaya: about 1.5 hours by car in good traffic, often closer to 2. The big three are Wat Sothon, home of the revered Luang Pho Sothon Buddha; Wat Saman Rattanaram, with its giant pink reclining Ganesha; and Ban Mai, a riverside market that dates back to around 1900. A private car or driver is the easiest way to do it in a day. The train is cheap but runs only once a day, so it doesn't work for a same-day return.

Chachoengsao is popular with Thai visitors, who come to make merit and pray for luck and success. It makes a calm, cultural day out, and a real look at a Thai provincial town after the busy streets of Pattaya.

Chachoengsao at a glance

STOP	WHAT IT IS	TIME TO ALLOW
Wat Sothon Wararam Worawihan	Huge riverside temple, home of the Luang Pho Sothon Buddha	1 to 1.5 hours
Wat Saman Rattanaram	Giant pink reclining Ganesha, about 16 m high and 22 m long, by the river about 11 km east of town	1 hour
Ban Mai market	Old wooden shophouses on the river, snacks and local food	1 to 2 hours
Getting there and back	A little over 100 km each way	About 3 to 4 hours on the road

Wat Sothon

Wat Sothon Wararam Worawihan stands on the bank of the Bang Pakong River, about 2 km south of the town centre. Its very tall, white ordination hall houses Luang Pho Sothon, a Buddha image in meditation pose that many Thais travel here to pay respect to. Expect crowds and queues on weekends and holidays, with stalls selling flowers, incense and offerings outside.

- Dress modestly: shoulders and knees covered. Remove your shoes where others do.
- Follow the flow of worshippers and keep your voice down inside.
- See temple customs.

The giant Ganesha

Wat Saman Rattanaram, east of town by the river, is known for its huge pink reclining Ganesha, often described as the largest of its kind in Thailand. Visitors come to pray for success. The temple grounds also have statues of other deities. It's colourful, busy and very photogenic. The area has other well-known Ganesha sites, so you may see several on a tour.

You can drive straight to the temple, or take a boat along the river from Ban Mai market. Travel guides list the boat at around ฿100 per adult, but that figure is several years old, so check at the pier.

Ban Mai market

Talat Ban Mai is a traditional riverside market of old wooden shophouses that has stood in this form since around 1900. It's a good place to slow down: snacks, sweets, coffee, noodles and local dishes, with views of the river. It's busiest at weekends. See street food and Thai dishes to try.

A simple day plan

- **7:30 to 8:00:** leave Pattaya early to beat the heat and the traffic.
- **9:30:** Wat Sothon, before the biggest crowds.
- **11:30:** Ban Mai market for lunch and a walk.
- **13:30:** boat or drive to Wat Saman Rattanaram and the Ganesha.
- **15:30:** head back, arriving in Pattaya around 17:00 to 17:30.

Getting there

OPTION	HOW IT WORKS	GOOD FOR
Private car or driver	Door to door, your own timing, about 1.5 to 2 hours each way	Couples, families, groups
Rental car	Drive yourself via Chonburi	Confident drivers with an international licence
Tour	Hotel pickup, guide, often includes lunch	Visitors who don't want to plan
Bus or minivan	Services run from Pattaya and Chonburi, details change	Budget travellers with time
Train	One ordinary train a day, about 1 hour 45 minutes	One-way or an overnight stay, not a same-day return

See renting a car, tours from Pattaya and the train.

In town, local songthaews and tuk-tuks link the market, Wat Sothon and the bus and train stations. Agree the fare before you get in.

Tips

- Go on a weekday for calmer temples. Weekends are livelier at the market.
- Bring cash for offerings, snacks and the boat.
- Carry water and a hat. Temple courtyards get very hot by midday. See heat and sun safety.
- Buddhist holidays bring big crowds. Check the events calendar.

Common questions

How far is Chachoengsao from Pattaya? A little over 100 km, about 1.5 hours by car in good traffic and closer to 2 at busy times.

Can you take the train from Pattaya to Chachoengsao? Yes, there's one ordinary train a day, taking about 1 hour 45 minutes. With only one train, you can't get back to Pattaya the same day, so it suits a one-way trip or an overnight stay.

What is Chachoengsao famous for? Wat Sothon and its Luang Pho Sothon Buddha, the giant reclining Ganesha at Wat Saman Rattanaram, and the old Ban Mai riverside market.

Is Chachoengsao worth a day trip? If you like temples, markets and seeing ordinary Thai life, yes. It's calmer and less touristy than Bangkok or Ayutthaya.

What should I wear? Clothes that cover your shoulders and knees, and shoes that are easy to slip off.

More day trips

See day trips, Ayutthaya and Bangkok.

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Rayong and Chanthaburi Day Trips

Two longer day trips east of Pattaya: Rayong for beaches, fruit and seafood, and Chanthaburi for its weekend gem market, old riverside town and cathedral. Times, transport and how to plan them.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/rayong-chanthaburi/

Rayong	**About 1 to 1.5 hours east by car**
Chanthaburi	**About 2.5 to 3.5 hours east**
Best for	**Fruit season, seafood, quieter beaches**
Getting there	**Car, minivan or tour**

East of Pattaya, the coast gets quieter. Rayong and Chanthaburi make good long day trips, or an overnight stay.

Quick answer: Rayong is the easy one: about an hour or so by car, with quiet beaches, seafood and fruit orchards, and it's where boats leave for Koh Samet. Chanthaburi is a long day, about 2.5 to 3.5 hours each way, so start early or stay a night. Go on a Friday, Saturday or Sunday if you want to see the gem market, which most sources say runs from about 10:00 to 15:00 on those days. A car or driver is the simplest way to do either; minivans from Pattaya bus terminal are the budget option.

At a glance

	RAYONG	CHANTHABURI
—	—	—
From Pattaya	About 1 to 1.5 hours by car	About 2.5 to 3.5 hours by car, bus or minivan
Known for	Beaches, seafood, fruit orchards, Koh Samet ferries	Gem market, riverside old town, cathedral, fruit
Best days	Weekdays for quiet beaches	Friday to Sunday for the gem market
Day trip?	Easy	Long; an overnight is more relaxed
Best season	November to April for the sea; April to June for fruit	Any time; fruit April to June; waterfalls in or after the rains

Travel times are from booking sites and our own day trips guide; traffic on Sukhumvit and Thai holidays can add an hour.

Rayong

- Beaches that are quieter than Pattaya, and the jumping-off point for Koh Samet from Ban Phe pier.
- Fruit orchards in season, roughly April to June: durian, mangosteen and rambutan. Some orchards let you visit and eat on site. See Thai fruit.
- Fresh seafood by the sea, and dried seafood shops where Thai visitors stock up on squid and fish to take home.
- An easy add-on to a Koh Samet trip if you have your own car.

Chanthaburi

- **The gem market** on and around Si Chan Road, the city's "gem street". Most guides say it runs Friday to Sunday from about 10:00 to 15:00, with Saturday the busiest; one says Friday and Saturday only. Dealers sit at tables sorting stones, and buyers come from all over the world. It is fascinating to watch. Look, but be careful buying expensive stones unless you know what you are doing: fakes and treated stones exist, and prices are negotiated stone by stone.
- **Chanthaboon Riverside**, the old community along the river, with wooden shophouses, cafés and small museums. It stretches for about a kilometre along the water.
- **The cathedral**, often described as the largest Catholic church in Thailand, a short walk across the river from the old town.
- Waterfalls and national parks inland, best in or just after the rainy season.

Getting there

OPTION	RAYONG	CHANTHABURI	NOTES
—	—	—	—
Own car or rental	About 1 to 1.5 hours	About 2.5 to 3 hours	Most flexible; see renting a car
Car with driver or tour	Same	Same	Easiest; compare prices with tours
Bus or minivan	1.5 to 2.5 hours or more	About 3 to 3.5 hours	From Pattaya bus terminal; booking sites listed ฿160 to ฿390 to Chanthaburi in 2026

Fares and timetables differ a lot between booking sites, so check the latest on the day. Minivans can stop often and drop you at a bus station rather than the sights, so allow time for a local ride at the other end.

How to plan the day

- **Rayong:** leave at about 9:00, beach or orchard in the morning, a long seafood lunch, back by sunset.
- **Chanthaburi:** leave by 7:00, arrive for the gem market mid-morning, lunch by the river, walk the old town and the cathedral in the afternoon, then the long drive back. If that sounds tiring, stay one night by the river and come back the next morning.
- Carry cash for markets, fruit stalls and parking.

Combine it

Rayong is on the way to Chanthaburi, so you can stop for lunch or a beach break. Koh Samet is best as its own overnight. See Koh Samet vs Koh Larn.

Common questions

How far is Rayong from Pattaya? About 1 to 1.5 hours by car, longer by minivan.

Is Chanthaburi worth a day trip from Pattaya? Yes, if you like markets, old towns and food, but it's a long day. An overnight stay is more relaxed.

What days is the Chanthaburi gem market open? Most sources say Friday to Sunday, about 10:00 to 15:00, with Saturday busiest. Sources differ, so check before you go.

When is fruit season in Rayong and Chanthaburi? Roughly April to June for the big fruits like durian and mangosteen.

More ideas

See day trips and tours from Pattaya.

Plan your day

- Chanthaburi is a long day trip. An overnight stay is more relaxed.
- See car rental.

Sources

- Gemological Institute of America: "Bargaining for Gems in Chanthaburi" (the Si Chan Road gem trade). gia.edu.
- Thai Holiday Guide and Lonely Planet: Chanthaburi gem market (Friday to Sunday or Friday and Saturday, about 10:00 to 15:00; sources differ). Checked November 2026.
- 12Go and Rome2Rio: Pattaya to Rayong and Chanthaburi buses and minivans (times and the ฿160 to ฿390 fare range). Checked November 2026.
- Our day trips and Koh Samet guides.

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Koh Chang Trip from Pattaya

Koh Chang is a big, green island near the Cambodian border, about 250 km from Pattaya. The only working ferry pier, 2026 fares, bus, van and car options, the national park fee, where to stay and how many nights to plan.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/koh-chang-trip/

Distance	**About 250 km by road to the ferry piers near Trat**
Ferry	**Ao Thammachat to Ao Sapparot, about 30 minutes**
Fare (2026)	**About ฿90 a person, ฿200 a car plus passengers, cash**
By bus or van	**About 6 to 7 hours door to door**
Park fee	**฿200 foreign adults at Khlong Plu and Than Mayom waterfalls**
Plan	**At least two or three nights**

Quick answer: Koh Chang is one of Thailand's biggest islands, in Trat province near the Cambodian border, and most of it is national park: jungle hills, waterfalls and beaches on the west coast. From Pattaya it's about 250 km by road to the piers near Trat, a little over three hours' drive, then a car ferry of about 30 minutes from Ao Thammachat pier to Ao Sapparot on the island. In 2026 the ferry costs about ฿90 a person and ฿200 for a car plus its passengers, in cash. By bus or minivan it takes most of a day, so plan at least two or three nights.

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Where	Trat province, about 250 km east of Pattaya
Drive	A little over 3 hours to the pier via Rayong and Chanthaburi
Ferry	Ao Thammachat (Laem Ngop) to Ao Sapparot, about 25 to 35 minutes
Ferry hours	About 6:30am to 6:30pm in one 2026 guide; check on the day
Fares	About ฿90 adult, ฿40 child 110 to 150 cm, ฿200 car, ฿90 to ฿150 motorbike
Bus from Pattaya	Boonsiri, about ฿850 including the ferry, leaves 8:30am
Park fee	฿200 foreign adults, ฿100 children 3 to 14, at two waterfalls
Best months	November to April

Getting there

By car. Drive east on Sukhumvit Road (Route 3) through Rayong and Chanthaburi to Ao Thammachat pier at Laem Ngop, near Trat. The car ferry costs about ฿200 for the car plus each passenger's fare. Only drive if you're used to Thai roads. See renting a car and road rules.

By Boonsiri bus. Boonsiri runs one bus a day from its Pattaya office at 8:30am (with an 8am pickup at Terminal 21 listed), for about ฿850 including the ferry, reaching Ao Sapparot pier about 3pm. The return leaves Ao Sapparot at 10am and reaches Pattaya about 4pm. These are one guide's October 2026 figures; check before you book.

By minivan or private car. Vans from Pattaya hotels, including the ferry, cost roughly ฿700 to ฿1,050 a person; cars with drivers about ฿3,300 to ฿4,600. Some stop at the mainland pier, so check whether the ferry and hotel drop are included.

The budget way. A bus to Trat, about ฿300, then a shared songthaew to the pier, about ฿60. Cheapest and slowest.

See buses and tours from Pattaya.

The ferry in 2026

Only one route is running: Ferry Koh Chang from **Ao Thammachat** pier to **Ao Sapparot** on the island's north coast. The Centrepoint ferry to Dan Kao has been suspended since mid-2024, though some timetables online still show it.

Fares rose in April 2026 with diesel prices. On 7 April Trat province approved ฿130 for adults and ฿280 for cars, up from ฿80 and ฿120. After a public backlash the operator settled on ฿90 for adults and ฿200 for cars from 10 April, according to Pattaya Mail. A guide updated in October 2026 lists the same, plus ฿40 for children 110 to 150 cm and ฿90 to ฿150 for motorbikes, in cash. Fares can move with fuel prices.

The crossing takes about 25 to 35 minutes. The same 2026 guide lists boats from about 6:30am to 6:30pm, roughly hourly, leaving when full; the national parks website gives about 6am to 7:30pm.

Getting around the island

Shared songthaews meet the boats at Ao Sapparot. One 2026 guide lists about ฿50 to White Sand Beach, ฿70 to Klong Prao, ฿100 to Lonely Beach and ฿150 to Bang Bao; agree the fare before you get in. The hill roads between beaches have tight hairpins, so only rent a scooter if you're a confident rider with the right

licence. See renting a scooter.

Where to stay

The west coast has the main beaches and most hotels, linked by one road. **White Sand Beach** is the most developed strip, with the most hotels and restaurants, and the easy base for a first visit. **Klong Prao**, further south, is the longest beach and quieter. **Lonely Beach** is the backpacker beach, with the cheapest rooms, quiet by day and social at night. **Bang Bao** in the south is a fishing village on stilts with seafood restaurants over the water, dive shops, and boats on to Koh Mak and Koh Kood. The east coast is a separate, much quieter world of mangroves and fishing villages.

Things to do

- **Waterfalls.** Mu Ko Chang National Park lists six waterfalls you can reach on Koh Chang; the park fee is charged at two of them, Khlong Plu and Than Mayom (฿200 foreign adults, ฿100 children 3 to 14, as of June 2026). Khlong Chao Luam has no park fee, but a ฿40 parking charge on private land.
- **Hiking.** Short trails lead to waterfalls and mangroves, and longer forest trails climb towards Salak Phet peak, the island's highest point at about 740 m. Go with a local guide on the longer trails.
- **Snorkelling and boat trips** to the smaller islands nearby. See diving and snorkelling.
- **Elephants:** choose places that don't offer rides or shows. See elephant sanctuaries.

How many nights?

Two nights is the minimum to make the journey worth it; three gives you a waterfall, a beach day and a boat trip without rushing. November to April has calmer seas and drier days. May to October brings rough seas and cancelled boat trips, though fuller waterfalls. See weather by month.

Common questions

How long does it take to get from Pattaya to Koh Chang? About three hours' drive to Ao Thammachat pier plus a 30-minute ferry. By bus or minivan, most of a day: the Boonsiri bus leaves at 8:30am and reaches the island pier about 3pm.

How much is the ferry to Koh Chang in 2026? About ฿90 a person and ฿200 for a car plus passengers, in cash, since April 2026. Fares are linked to fuel prices and can change.

Is the Centrepoint ferry running? No. It has been suspended since mid-2024; use Ao Thammachat pier.

Do I pay a national park fee on Koh Chang? Only at the two waterfalls where it's charged, Khlong Plu and Than Mayom: ฿200 for foreign adults.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Pattaya Mail, operator settles on ฿90 and ฿200 (10 April 2026); Nation Thailand, Trat approves ฿130 adult fare (7 April 2026); Visit Thailand Today, Koh Chang ferry guide (updated 22 October 2026) and Pattaya to Koh Chang (updated 26 October 2026) (child and motorbike fares, ferry hours, bus, van and car prices, songthaew fares) and Koh Chang guide (updated 27 October 2026) (beaches and roads); Boonsiri, ferry to Koh Chang (October 2025) (Centrepoint out of service); Thai National Parks, Mu Ko Chang (fees as of June 2026). Sources differ on ferry hours, and bus, van and car prices come from one guide, so treat them as approximate and confirm before you travel.

Break the journey

Stop in Chanthaburi on the way. See Rayong and Chanthaburi and Koh Samet vs Koh Larn.

Plan your day

- Plan at least two nights; the journey takes most of a day.
- Carry cash for the ferry, songthaews and the park fee.
- See Rayong and Chanthaburi.

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Ayutthaya Day Trip from Pattaya

Visiting Ayutthaya, Thailand's old capital, from Pattaya: car, tour or bus via Bangkok, the main temple ruins, 2026 temple fees, getting around by bike or tuk-tuk, dress code, heat, and whether to stay overnight.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/ayutthaya-day-trip/

Distance	**Roughly 3 to 3.5 hours each way by car**
Public transport	**No direct service; change in Bangkok**
Temple fees	**About ฿50 to ฿80 per major temple for foreigners (sources differ)**
Get around	**Bicycle, tuk-tuk or your driver**
Best time	**November to February, early morning**
Tip	**Stay a night if you're using buses**

Quick answer: Ayutthaya, Siam's capital for over four hundred years and now a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is about 3 to 3.5 hours from Pattaya by car each way, so a day trip means a very early start. A private car or tour is the only direct way; by bus you go via Bangkok, about five hours each way, so stay a night. Pick three or four temples, get between them by bicycle or tuk-tuk, and carry cash: foreigners pay about ฿50 to ฿80 per major temple (2026 sources differ). Cover shoulders and knees, beat the midday heat, and go between November and February if you can. Our day trips page suggests a tour or a night there.

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Time from Pattaya	About 3 to 3.5 hours by car, more in Bangkok traffic
By bus and van	About 5 hours via Mo Chit in Bangkok
Temple tickets	About ฿50 or ฿80 per major temple for foreigners; Thais pay ฿10
Combined ticket	Reported at ฿220 for six sites or ฿300 for seven
Hours	Major temples from about 8am; closing times reported from 4:30pm to 6:30pm
Bicycle	About ฿50 to ฿100 a day
Tuk-tuk	About ฿200 to ฿300 an hour, or ฿500 to ฿600 a day
Dress	Shoulders and knees covered

Getting there from Pattaya

- **Private car or driver.** The only direct option, about 3 to 3.5 hours each way, and your driver can take you between temples. Agree the price, hours and overtime first. See car rental to drive yourself.
- **A tour.** Hotel pickup, a guide, often a river boat and lunch. Many listings from Pattaya are private tours with pickups around 6:45am; check whether temple fees are included. See tours from Pattaya.
- **Bus and van via Bangkok.** There's no direct public service. Take a bus from the Pattaya bus terminal on North Pattaya Road to Mo Chit in Bangkok (about ฿130 to ฿160, 2.5 to 3 hours; see buses), then a van from the Mo Chit 2 van terminal to Ayutthaya (about ฿150 to ฿220, 1.5 to 2.5 hours, roughly hourly from 6am to 6pm, according to an October 2026 guide).
- **Train from Bangkok.** If you're already in Bangkok, trains from Krung Thep Aphiwat take about 50 to 80 minutes, with third class about ฿20. The State Railway also started a direct air-conditioned service, Bangkok Connex, in August 2026, reported at ฿50 and about 75 minutes, with tickets sold at the station. Ayutthaya station is across the river from the old city; a small ferry crosses for about ฿10. See Bangkok day trip.

What to see

Pick three or four temples rather than trying to see everything.

- **Wat Mahathat**: the Buddha head wrapped in tree roots, one of Thailand's most photographed sights. Crouch or kneel for your photo so your head isn't above the Buddha's.
- **Wat Phra Si Sanphet**: three tall chedis in a row, on the old royal palace grounds. The best-known image of Ayutthaya.
- **Wat Ratchaburana**: a large central prang near Wat Mahathat.
- **Wat Chaiwatthanaram**: riverside ruins on the west bank, popular in the late afternoon.
- **Wat Yai Chai Mongkhon**: a working temple with a big chedi and rows of Buddha images, south-east of the island, with a lower fee of about ฿20.
- **Wat Lokayasutharam**: a huge reclining Buddha in the open, reported as free.

Temple fees

Sources disagree. An August 2026 price guide gives ฿50 per major temple for foreigners and a six-site combined ticket at ฿220, valid 30 days, cash only. An October 2026 guide gives ฿80 each and a seven-site ticket at ฿300. The park itself is free to walk around; you pay at each fenced temple, so bring small notes.

Getting around Ayutthaya

- **Bicycle**: about ฿50 to ฿100 a day. The main ruins are close together and flat, but the heat makes long rides hard.
- **Tuk-tuk**: about ฿200 to ฿300 an hour, or ฿500 to ฿600 for a day. Agree the route, the time and the price first, and write it down.
- **Your driver**, if you came by private car, is the easiest option in the heat.
- **River**: boat trips around the island take in the riverside temples.

Dress and etiquette

- Cover your shoulders and knees, especially at working temples like Wat Yai Chai Mongkhon. See temple customs.
- Don't climb on ruins or Buddha images, and don't pose with your head above the Buddha head at Wat Mahathat.
- Buddha images are sacred, whatever their condition: no posing that mocks them, and no sitting with your feet pointing at one.

Heat and comfort

- Ayutthaya is very hot, with little shade at some ruins. Start at opening time, rest in the middle of the day, and finish in the late afternoon. See heat and sun safety.
- Bring water, a hat and sun cream.
- The cool season, roughly November to February, is the most comfortable. See weather by month.

Day trip or overnight?

By car, a day trip means six to seven hours on the road, leaving around 6 or 7am and getting back after dark: fine with a driver and only the highlights. By bus and van, stay at least one night, and see the temples early the next morning before the heat. In recent cool seasons the Fine Arts Department has also opened Wat Phra Si Sanphet and several other sites on Friday to Sunday evenings, lit up, roughly 4:30pm to 9:30pm; check whether it's running when you go.

Common questions

How far is Ayutthaya from Pattaya? About 3 to 3.5 hours by car each way, depending on Bangkok traffic. By bus and van via Bangkok it's about five hours.

Is there a direct bus from Pattaya to Ayutthaya? Not a reliable one. Take a bus to Mo Chit in Bangkok, then a van to Ayutthaya, or go with a private car or tour.

How much are the Ayutthaya temple tickets? For foreigners, about ฿50 or ฿80 per major temple; 2026 sources disagree. Combined tickets are reported at ฿220 or ฿300. Bring cash.

What should I wear in Ayutthaya? Light clothes covering shoulders and knees, slip-off shoes and a hat.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Ayutthaya Day Trip, costs 2026 (prices verified August 2026) (temple fees, combined ticket, bikes, tuk-tuks, Bang Pa-In); Visit Thailand Today, Wat Phra Si Sanphet (updated October 2026) (฿80 fee, ฿300 ticket, hours, evening openings); Visit Thailand Today, Bangkok to Ayutthaya (October 2026) (trains, Bangkok Connex, Mo Chit vans, river ferry); Ayutthaya Historical Research, admission fees (undated, ฿80 and ฿300). Bus fares follow our buses page. Fees change; check at the booth.

More trips

See day trips from Pattaya and Bangkok day trip.

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Khao Yai Trip from Pattaya

Khao Yai National Park from Pattaya: about 3 hours by road, the ฿400 foreigner fee, what is closed after the September 2026 floods, waterfalls, trails, wild elephants and road safety, the cool season and where to stay.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/khao-yai-trip/

Distance	**About 3 hours by car from Pattaya**
Fee	**฿400 foreign adults, ฿200 children, plus a small vehicle fee**
Open	**6am to 6pm**
Closed (Nov 2026)	**Haew Narok, Khao Khiao road, Pha Diao Dai, Pha Trom Jai**
Best time	**November to February, cool and dry**
Best as	**One or two nights**

Quick answer: Khao Yai is Thailand's oldest national park and part of a UNESCO World Heritage forest, with waterfalls, grassland, gibbons, hornbills and wild elephants. From Pattaya it is about 3 hours by car, so one or two nights is better than a day trip. Foreign adults pay ฿400 (children ฿200), plus a small vehicle fee, and the park is open 6am to 6pm. In late September 2026 flash floods destroyed the bridge to Haew Narok waterfall; the park reopened on 6 October, but Haew Narok, the whole Khao Khiao road and several viewpoints were still closed in our latest check. Wild elephants walk the park roads and the main road outside, especially after dark: never approach them, stay in your car and give them space.

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
From Pattaya	About 3 hours by car; no simple public transport
Entry fee	฿400 foreign adults, ฿200 children; Thai adults ฿40
Vehicles	About ฿30 a car, ฿20 a motorbike, on the park's fee list
Hours	6am to 6pm
Best months	November to February: dry, cool days, cold nights
Wettest month	September; trails muddy, some sites close
Closed in Nov 2026	Haew Narok, Khao Khiao road and viewpoints, Pha Diao Dai, Pha Trom Jai, Kaeng Hin Phoeng
Still open	Most attractions and camping areas; Haew Suwat was not listed as closed

Getting there

- **By car**: about 3 hours from Pattaya. A car gives you the most freedom inside the park, where sights are spread out along long roads. Drive slowly and be extra careful after dark. See car rental and Thai driving licence.
- **Tour**: two-day tours from Pattaya usually include transport, a guide, a night's stay and a wildlife drive. See tours from Pattaya.
- **Public transport**: there is no easy direct route. You would go to Bangkok, then take a train, van or bus to Pak Chong (about 2.5 to 3.5 hours), and you still need a car or tour to get round the park.

What's closed after the 2026 floods

Heavy rain from 25 September 2026 caused flash floods, and on the night of 26 September the bridge to the Haew Narok waterfall viewpoint was washed away. The park closed to visitors and campers, then reopened most attractions and camping areas on 6 October. Still closed when we checked:

- Haew Narok waterfall.
- The Khao Khiao road along its whole length, because parts of it subsided, and with it the high viewpoints.
- Pha Diao Dai, Pha Trom Jai and Kaeng Hin Phoeng.

No reopening dates had been given. Pha Diao Dai also closes every year from 1 June to 30 September. Check the park's website or Facebook page, or call the visitor centre, before you travel.

What to do

- **Haew Suwat waterfall**: the best-known open waterfall. The park lists a 3 km trail from Pha Kluai Mai campground that needs no guide, and a longer 8 km trail from the visitor centre that requires a guide.
- **Wildlife watching**: sambar deer are seen almost every visit, around the campsite and the Nong Phak Chi watchtower. Hornbills are often around the visitor centre, and gibbons are usually heard before they are seen. Wild elephants are luck, not guaranteed.
- **Night safari**: a spotlight drive in an open truck, booked at the visitor centre before 6pm. One 2026 guide lists ฿600 per truck for up to eight people.
- **Short trails**: stay on marked trails. Longer trails need a park-approved guide.

- **Outside the park**: the area around Pak Chong and Thanarat Road has cafés, farms, vineyards and resorts that are popular with Thai visitors at weekends.

Wild elephants and road safety

Khao Yai's elephants regularly come out onto roads inside the park and along Thanarat Road outside it. In January 2026 the park warned drivers after a pickup hit an elephant at night, and asked for extra care between 7pm and 6am, when some stretches are unlit. Officials ask visitors not to approach elephants, not to block traffic around them and not to take close-up photos.

- If an elephant is on the road, stop well back without blocking other traffic, stay in the car and wait for it to move off. Don't try to squeeze past.
- Never get out to take photos, and never feed elephants or any other animal.
- Keep food sealed away from monkeys.
- On wet-season trails, long socks help against leeches.

If you want to see elephants, the wild ones here are the best option. For venues closer to Pattaya and how to choose an ethical one, see elephant sanctuaries.

Weather

Khao Yai is much cooler than the coast. From November to February days are dry and mild, around 22°C, and nights can drop to about 9 to 10°C, so bring a warm layer, especially for a night safari. March and April are hot. May to October is the rainy season, when waterfalls are fullest but trails are muddy and sites can close. See weather by month.

Where to stay

- Most people stay at resorts and guesthouses outside the park, along Thanarat Road and around Pak Chong.
- Inside the park there is camping at Lam Ta Khong and Pha Kluai Mai and simple park lodges, booked through the national parks system.
- Book ahead for weekends and Thai holidays, when the park gets very busy. See Thai public holidays.

Common questions

How far is Khao Yai from Pattaya? About 3 hours by car. Two-day trips are the most popular way to go.

How much is the Khao Yai entrance fee for foreigners? ฿400 for adults and ฿200 for children, plus a small vehicle fee. Some websites quote other figures, so carry cash.

Is Khao Yai open after the 2026 floods? Most of it, since 6 October 2026. Haew Narok, the Khao Khiao road, Pha Diao Dai, Pha Trom Jai and Kaeng Hin Phoeng were still closed when we checked.

Will I see wild elephants at Khao Yai? Possibly, but it isn't guaranteed. They are most often seen on roads and grassland, early or late in the day. Watch from your car at a safe distance.

Can I do Khao Yai as a day trip from Pattaya? It is possible but means about 6 hours of driving for a few hours in the park. One night lets you visit at the best wildlife times.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: The Nation, Khao Yai reopens, three sites stay closed (6 October 2026); The Nation, Khao Yai extends closure after bridge destroyed (27 September 2026); Khao Yai National Park, entry fees and nature trails; Visit Thailand Today, Khao Yai guide (updated 27 October 2026); Khaosod English, wildlife crossing warning (January 2026). Fees and closures change; check the park before you go.

More trips

See day trips from Pattaya and outdoor activities.

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Kanchanaburi and the River Kwai

Kanchanaburi and the River Kwai from Pattaya: getting there via Bangkok or on a tour, the bridge, war cemeteries and Hellfire Pass, riding the Death Railway, Erawan waterfalls, River Kwai Bridge Week, and how long to stay.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/kanchanaburi-trip/

Travel time	**4 to 5 hours by road, 5 to 7 by public transport via Bangkok**
Tours from Pattaya	**From about ฿3,000 to ฿4,000**
Death Railway train	**About ฿100 for foreigners on ordinary trains**
Erawan National Park	**About ฿300 for foreign adults**
Hellfire Pass museum	**Free, 9am to 4pm daily**
Best as	**Two or three days**

Quick answer: Kanchanaburi, west of Bangkok, is where prisoners of war and Asian labourers built the Thailand to Burma "Death Railway" in the Second World War, and it has the famous bridge over the River Kwai, beautifully kept war cemeteries, the Hellfire Pass memorial and the turquoise Erawan waterfalls. From Pattaya it is 4 to 5 hours each way by road, so it is a very long day on a tour and much better as two or three days. Tours from Pattaya start from about ฿3,000 to ฿4,000. There is no regular direct bus: on your own, go via Bangkok and take a van or bus from Mo Chit, or a train from Thonburi. Cemeteries and memorials are places of remembrance, so dress and behave respectfully.

At a glance

SIGHT	WHAT IT IS	COST	GOOD TO KNOW
Bridge over the River Kwai	The rebuilt railway bridge in town	Free to walk	Step aside for trains; busy at midday
Kanchanaburi War Cemetery	Allied war graves in the town centre	Free	Next to the Thailand-Burma Railway Centre museum
Chungkai War Cemetery	A quieter riverside war cemetery	Free	South of town, by the river
Death Railway train	Ordinary trains over the bridge and Wang Pho viaduct	About ฿100	Few trains a day; check times
Hellfire Pass	Memorial museum and walking trail on the old cutting	Free	About 80 km from town; open 9am to 4pm
Erawan National Park	Seven-tier waterfall with swimming pools	About ฿300 foreign adults	About 70 km from town; last entry 3:30pm

Getting there from Pattaya

- **Tour**: the easiest way for a first visit. Day tours leave very early and get back late; one or two-night tours are more relaxed and usually include the bridge, a cemetery, a train ride and Erawan. Compare what is included. See tours from Pattaya.
- **Private car**: transfer sites list about 3 to 4.5 hours, going round Bangkok, at about ฿4,000 to ฿6,800 a vehicle. Add time for traffic and stops. Good value for a group, and you choose the stops. See car rental.
- **Public transport via Bangkok**: bus from Pattaya to Bangkok, then a van or bus from Mo Chit (about 3 hours or more), or a train from Thonburi station. Allow 5 to 7 hours in total. See buses to Pattaya.

The bridge and the war history

The railway was built in 1942 and 1943 by Allied prisoners of war and conscripted Asian labourers, and tens of thousands died from overwork, disease and starvation. Kanchanaburi's sights tell that story.

- **The bridge**: you can walk across it. Trains still use it a few times a day, so listen for them and step into the side bays.
- **Kanchanaburi War Cemetery**: thousands of Allied prisoners of war are buried here, in neat rows kept by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. Chungkai War Cemetery, by the river south of town, is smaller and quieter.
- **Museums**: the Thailand-Burma Railway Centre next to the town cemetery explains the railway and the lives of the people who built it. There are smaller museums near the bridge.
- **Hellfire Pass**: a rock cutting dug largely by hand, about 80 km from town beyond the end of the line. The Australian Government's Hellfire Pass Interpretive Centre is free, open daily from 9am to 4pm, and closes for about three weeks each May for maintenance (4 to 24 May in 2026). A walking trail follows part of the old track bed.
- At cemeteries and memorials, dress modestly, keep your voice down and don't climb on graves or monuments.

Riding the Death Railway

Ordinary trains run from Bangkok's Thonburi station through Kanchanaburi and over the bridge to Nam Tok, crossing the wooden Wang Pho viaduct along a cliff above the river on the way.

- Listed departures from Thonburi are 07:45 and 13:55, reaching Kanchanaburi about 2.5 to 3 hours later and Nam Tok about 4 to 4.5 hours after leaving Bangkok.
- Foreigners pay about ฿100 a ride on these trains, and you don't need to book.
- At weekends and on public holidays, a special excursion train from Bangkok's Hua Lamphong station includes stops at the bridge and Nam Tok. It must be booked ahead through the State Railway of Thailand's D-Ticket site and often sells out.
- If you only want the scenic part, ride from Kanchanaburi or River Kwai Bridge station to Nam Tok.
- Timetables change, so check with the State Railway of Thailand before you plan around a train.

Erawan waterfalls

- Erawan National Park has a waterfall in seven main tiers, with turquoise pools you can swim in. It is about 70 km from town, so most people go with a tour, a hired driver or a local bus.
- Foreign adults pay a national park fee of about ฿300, and children about ฿150, though some sources give a different child fee. The park is listed as open from 8am, with last entry at 3:30pm.
- Arrive early to beat crowds and heat. The upper tiers are a steep climb.
- Wear shoes with grip, because the rocks are slippery.
- Parks can close at short notice for flooding in the rainy season or fire risk in the dry season.

River Kwai Bridge Week

Each year Kanchanaburi holds the River Kwai Bridge Week and Red Cross Fair, with a light and sound show at the bridge. In 2025 it ran from 27 November to 7 December, with nightly shows. The 2026 dates had not been confirmed when we checked, so look for the provincial announcement. Hotels fill up during the festival.

Staying there

- Riverside guesthouses and floating raft rooms are popular, from simple to comfortable.
- The town is relaxed, with night markets and riverside restaurants.

Tips

- November to February is the most comfortable time. See weather by month.
- Bring water, a hat and sun cream. See heat and sun safety.
- See day trips from Pattaya for closer options.

Common questions

Can you do Kanchanaburi as a day trip from Pattaya? Only on a tour, and it is a very long day: 4 to 5 hours each way. An overnight trip is much more relaxed.

Is there a direct bus from Pattaya to Kanchanaburi? No regular one: booking sites list only private transfers for the direct route. Most people go via Bangkok, then take a van or bus from Mo Chit, or the train from Thonburi.

How much does the Death Railway train cost? About ฿100 for foreigners on the ordinary trains. The weekend excursion train costs more and must be booked ahead.

How much is Erawan National Park? About ฿300 for foreign adults. Fees change, so carry cash.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Seat61, the River Kwai and Death Railway trains; Hellfire Pass Interpretive Centre (Australian Government), visitor FAQ and its DVA page; Pattaya Mail, River Kwai Bridge Week 2025; GoAsia, Pattaya to Kanchanaburi (updated October 2026); Thai National Parks, Erawan National Park. Train times differ between sources and the Erawan child fee is reported differently; check with the State Railway of Thailand and the park.

Related guides

- Muay Thai in Pattaya
- Pattaya Floating Market
- Adventure Activities
- Art in Paradise and Mini Siam

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Hua Hin Trip from Pattaya

Getting from Pattaya to Hua Hin in 2026: the direct bus, private cars, the new small-plane flights from U-Tapao and why the old ferry is gone, plus beaches, markets, how Hua Hin compares and how long to stay.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/hua-hin-trip/

Direct bus	**One a day, about 5 hours, around ฿526**
Private car	**About 3.5 to 5 hours, from around ฿3,300**
Flight	**Small-plane service from U-Tapao since autumn 2026**
Ferry	**Not running since 2020**
Best as	**Two or three nights**

Quick answer: Hua Hin is about 107 km from Pattaya across the Gulf of Thailand but about 323 km by road, because you have to go round the top of the gulf past Bangkok. The Pattaya to Hua Hin ferry stopped in 2020 and has not come back, so in 2026 your choices are the one direct bus a day (about 5 hours, around ฿526 on the operator's site), a private car or van (about 3.5 to 5 hours, from around ฿3,300), or the small-plane flights that started between U-Tapao and Hua Hin in autumn 2026. Hua Hin is calmer than Pattaya, with a long beach, weekend markets and a royal seaside history. It works best as two or three nights, not a day trip.

Getting there at a glance

OPTION	TIME	ROUGH COST	GOOD TO KNOW
Direct bus (Roong Reuang Coach, sold as Bell Travel)	About 5 hours	About ฿526 on the operator's site, more through booking sites	One a day each way; leaves Pattaya mid-afternoon
Buses via Bangkok	About 6 to 7 hours	About ฿380 to ฿520 in total	Change at Suvarnabhumi or Ekkamai
Private car or van	About 3.5 to 5 hours	From about ฿3,300 a car, about ฿4,500 a van	Door to door; good value for a group
Flight from U-Tapao	About 40 minutes in the air	About ฿2,500 one way reported	Small Cessna plane, limited days and seats
Ferry	Not running	None	Stopped in 2020; the pier contract was cancelled in 2021

Times and prices are from late October 2026 listings and change often. Bangkok traffic can add an hour or more.

What happened to the ferry?

A passenger catamaran ran between Bali Hai pier in Pattaya and Khao Takiab near Hua Hin from January 2017, cutting the trip to a few hours across the gulf. It was often paused for monsoon weather, then stopped in 2020 under Covid rules. In August 2021 the operator cancelled its pier contract and Pattaya's mayor said there were no plans to restart the route. We found no 2025 or 2026 news of a new service. Some booking sites still show old ferry pages, so check before you pay. For boats you can actually take from Pattaya, see Bali Hai pier.

By bus

- The only direct bus is run by Roong Reuang Coach under the Bell Travel name. 2026 listings show one departure a day from the Pattaya bus terminal on North Pattaya Road at 15:30, arriving in Hua Hin in the evening. The return leaves Hua Hin at 09:00 from the company's station just north of Hua Hin airport.
- Book a day or two ahead in high season. Tickets bought through booking sites cost more because of fees, and are often non-refundable.
- If the direct bus is full, go to Bangkok first and change: the airport bus via Suvarnabhumi, or a bus to Ekkamai and a minibus on to Hua Hin. Allow 6 to 7 hours. See buses to Pattaya and Bangkok to Pattaya.

By private car

The most comfortable way, and for three or four people about the same per person as flying. Agree the price, tolls and drop-off first, and avoid Friday afternoons and long-weekend departures around Bangkok. Driving yourself? Check your licence. See car rental and international driving permit.

By air from U-Tapao

Ezy Airlines started flights between U-Tapao and Hua Hin in autumn 2026, after a first flight at the end of September, using a small Cessna Caravan with 10 to 12 seats. The flight is about 40 minutes. Reported schedules differ on which days it flies, and luggage limits on small planes are tight, so check the airline's own timetable and baggage rules before you plan around it. U-Tapao is about 45 minutes to an hour south of Pattaya by road. See U-Tapao airport.

What to do in Hua Hin

- **Hua Hin Beach**: long and good for walks, with Khao Takiab hill and its temple at the southern end.
- **The old railway station**: the wooden station from the 1920s, with its royal waiting room, is kept as a heritage site. Trains have used a new elevated station next to it since December 2023, but you can still walk round the old one.

- **Night markets**: the main night market in the town centre is a short walk from the old station. Cicada Market is an arts and crafts market open on weekend evenings, generally Friday to Sunday from about 4pm; check before you go. See night markets.
- **Seafood**: from market stalls to restaurants on piers over the water. See seafood restaurants.

Hua Hin or Pattaya?

WHAT	HUA HIN	PATTAYA
Pace	Quiet and slower, popular with Thai families and retirees	Busy, lots to do day and night
Evenings	Markets and restaurants, an early night	Bars, clubs, shows and late food
Beach	One long main beach	Several beaches plus Koh Larn

Many people enjoy a few days in each. If you want a quieter base on Pattaya's side of the gulf, look at Jomtien or Bang Saray first.

How long to stay

With about 5 hours each way, two or three nights is the minimum that feels worth it. Weekends and Thai holidays are busy with visitors from Bangkok, and hotel prices rise. See Thai public holidays.

Common questions

Is there a ferry from Pattaya to Hua Hin in 2026? No. The catamaran stopped in 2020 and the operator gave up its pier contract in 2021. No new service had started when we checked in November 2026.

How long does it take to get from Pattaya to Hua Hin? About 5 hours on the direct bus, 3.5 to 5 hours by private car depending on Bangkok traffic, or 6 to 7 hours if you change buses in Bangkok.

Is there a direct bus from Pattaya to Hua Hin? Yes, one a day, run by Roong Reuang Coach (Bell Travel). It leaves Pattaya in the afternoon and costs about ฿526 on the operator's site.

Can I fly from Pattaya to Hua Hin? Since autumn 2026, yes, on Ezy Airlines' small planes from U-Tapao. Seats and days are limited, so check the airline's schedule.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: The Pattaya News, ferry service officially ends (August 2021); Visit Thailand Today, Hua Hin to Pattaya (updated 29 October 2026) for bus, car and flight times and prices; Pattaya Mail, new Hua Hin to U-Tapao flights (2 October 2026); 12Go, Pattaya to Hua Hin bus listings; Thai Holiday Guide, Hua Hin railway station; Thai Holiday Guide, Cicada Market. Sources differ on bus fares and on which days the flight runs; confirm with the operator before you travel.

Tips

- Book hotels ahead for long weekends.
- See day trips from Pattaya and Koh Chang trip for other getaways.

THINGS TO DO & TOURS

Wat Yansangwararam

Wat Yansangwararam (Wat Yan), the royal temple complex about 20 km south of Pattaya: its history, the Bodh Gaya chedi, Buddha footprint hall and lakeside international pavilions, free entry, hours, dress code, getting there and pairing it with Khao Chi Chan.

Verified November 2026 · https://wjonnyjames.com/guide/things-to-do/wat-yansangwararam/

Where	**Huai Yai, about 20 km south of central Pattaya**
Hours	**About 8am to 5pm (one listing says 7am to 10pm)**
Entry	**Free; donations welcome**
Dress	**Shoulders and knees covered**
Time needed	**About 1.5 to 2 hours**
Next door	**Khao Chi Chan and Viharn Sien**

Quick answer: Wat Yansangwararam, usually shortened to Wat Yan, is a large royal temple complex in Huai Yai, about 20 km south of central Pattaya. It was built in 1976 to honour the monk who later became Thailand's 19th Supreme Patriarch, under the patronage of King Rama IX, and it covers about 58 hectares of lawns, lakes and halls. Entry is free, the grounds are generally open about 8am to 5pm, and you need covered shoulders and knees. Allow one and a half to two hours, and pair it with Khao Chi Chan, the gold Buddha cliff on the same road.

At a glance

WHAT	DETAIL
Full name	Wat Yansangwararam Woramahawihan (Wat Yan)
Built	1976, under royal patronage
Size	About 58 hectares (around 145 acres)
Where	999 Moo 11, Huai Yai, Bang Lamung, about 20 km south of central Pattaya
Hours	About 8am to 5pm in most listings; the DASTA tourism listing says 7am to 10pm
Entry	Free; donation boxes on site
Dress	Shoulders and knees covered, no beachwear
Facilities	Parking, toilets, food and a souvenir shop (DASTA listing)
Nearby	Khao Chi Chan, Viharn Sien, Silverlake vineyard

What it is

Wat Yan was founded in 1976 in honour of Somdet Phra Nyanasamvara, the monk who went on to become the 19th Supreme Patriarch of Thailand. It belongs to the Dhammayut order and is a working monastery and meditation centre, not just a sight. A royal decree in 1980 confirmed its royal status, and most of its buildings honour members of the Thai royal family. The complex is split into zones for worship, monks' quarters and lay practitioners, so some areas are off limits to visitors.

Planned as a whole, it has wide lawns, a big reservoir and buildings spread far apart. Expect to walk.

What to see

- **The Bodh Gaya chedi:** a replica of the Mahabodhi Temple in Bodh Gaya, India, where the Buddha is said to have reached enlightenment.
- **Phra Maha Mondop:** a hall housing a replica of the Buddha's footprint, built to honour King Rama IX and Queen Sirikit.
- **Phra Borommathat Chedi Maha Chakri Phiphat:** the main chedi, which the DASTA listing says holds Buddha relics.
- **The ordination hall**, built in tribute to King Taksin the Great, plus a scripture hall and bell and drum towers.
- **The international pavilions:** eight pavilions on the banks of the reservoir, in Lanna and Isan Thai styles, two Chinese styles, and Japanese, Indian and Western (Swiss) styles. They are the most photographed part of the complex.
- **Royal monuments**, including statues of King Rama IX and his mother, Princess Srinagarindra.

Planning your visit

- **Hours:** most listings say about 8am to 5pm. The government DASTA listing says 7am to 10pm, but visiting the halls in the evening isn't practical. Go in daylight.
- **Cost:** entry is free. One 2026 guide says some inner areas suggest a small donation and that wraps can be borrowed at the entrances for about ฿20 to ฿50 in donations, so carry some small notes.
- **Time:** about 1.5 to 2 hours to see the main buildings and pavilions, longer if you walk the whole lake.
- **Best time:** early morning or late afternoon. Much of the walking is in full sun. See heat and sun safety.
- **Shoes:** wear ones you can slip off quickly, as you remove them at every indoor hall.

Dress and etiquette

- Cover your shoulders and knees. Tank tops, short shorts and swimwear aren't suitable. Long trousers or a long skirt are the safe choice.
- Take off your shoes before entering halls, keep your voice down and don't point your feet at Buddha images.
- Ask before photographing monks or people praying.
- Women should not touch monks or hand things directly to them.
- More on this in temple customs and Thai etiquette.

Getting there

Wat Yan is south of Pattaya off Sukhumvit Road, towards Sattahip. You turn inland at the Wat Yansangwararam junction; the same road leads to Khao Chi Chan.

- **Bolt or Grab:** one 2026 guide estimates about ฿350 to ฿550 one way from Pattaya. Getting a car back can be slow out here, so agree a wait-and-return price or book your ride home before you start walking. See Bolt and Grab.
- **Scooter:** about 30 to 40 minutes from central Pattaya, mostly on busy Sukhumvit Road. See renting a scooter and scooter rides around Pattaya.
- **Baht bus:** there is no regular songthaew route to the temple, so don't rely on one for the trip back. See baht bus routes and fares.
- **Tours:** many half-day tours combine Wat Yan, Khao Chi Chan and Viharn Sien. See tours from Pattaya.

Combine it with

- Khao Chi Chan (Buddha Mountain), the giant gold Buddha outline laser-cut into a cliff, a few minutes down the same road. It's free and takes 20 to 45 minutes, so the two fit easily into one morning.
- **Viharn Sien**, a Chinese art museum and temple next door. It charges its own ticket, about ฿50 to ฿60 depending on the source.
- **Silverlake vineyard**, below Khao Chi Chan, for a coffee and a walk in the gardens.
- Nong Nooch Tropical Garden, further south on Sukhumvit, if you want a full day.
- Huay Yai countryside and Bang Saray for seafood by the sea on the way back.
- More sights in town: temples and viewpoints, the Big Buddha viewpoint and the Sanctuary of Truth.

Common questions

Is Wat Yansangwararam free? Yes. Entry and parking are free. Donations are welcome, and Viharn Sien next door has its own small ticket.

How far is Wat Yan from Pattaya? About 20 km south of central Pattaya, roughly 30 to 40 minutes by road depending on traffic.

What should I wear to Wat Yan? Clothes that cover your shoulders and knees, and shoes that are easy to take off. Beachwear isn't suitable.

How long do I need? About one and a half to two hours for the main buildings and pavilions. Add 20 to 45 minutes for Khao Chi Chan and about half an hour for Viharn Sien.

Can I get a ride back? Yes, but cars can be scarce this far out. Agree a return trip with your driver or book one before you finish.

Sources

Checked 13 November 2026: Wikipedia, Wat Yansangwararam (founding, size, buildings, pavilions; the article notes it leans on temple sources); DASTA tourism app listing (royal decree 1980, relics, 7am to 10pm, address, facilities); Thai Holiday Guide (8am to 5pm, free entry, dress, Viharn Sien about ฿50); Lorenzigo temple guide (dress, donations for wraps, ride-app estimate, Viharn Sien about ฿60). Hours differ between listings and we couldn't open an official visitor page, so treat them as a guide.

Ride along

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