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GUIDE

YOUR DESTINATION

Everything you need to know about your destination



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STUDY DESTINATION

THAILAND

1. ARRIVAL IN THAILAND

We recommend traveling to Thailand at least a few days before the start of the study program, if possible. This will give you a chance to get to know the surroundings and recover from possible jetlag before the beginning of your semester. However, we don't recommend arriving in Thailand too early, especially with a tourist visa. Please let us know if you for some reason are unable to arrive in Thailand in time.

Once you arrive at Suvarnabhumi Airport or Don Muang Airport, go through the Immigration and Customs control. Present your passport and other documents when asked to the immigration officers. Please be polite to all the officials at the airport. After the inspection, go to the luggage pick-up area to collect your luggage. There is also a possibility to purchase a local SIM card from the airport, but you can also do it later after being settled to your destination.



There are different options for transport from the airport. Find out more about transportation in Thailand from below.

1.1. Documents you need when arriving

Please have the following document at hand when arriving in Phuket:

- A valid passport and non-immigrant visa ED.
- Certificate of international travel insurance.
- Make sure to receive the correct stamp and date base on your visa type.
- Register your address:
 - 1.This MUST be done within 24 hours of returning to Bangkok. Normally, all international students have their registered address in Bangkok.
 - 2.If you go and stay in a hotel, even for one night, the hotel will send this information to the immigration office. o If you have NOT re-registered upon returning to Bangkok, your visa extension may be rejected when you go to the immigration office.
 - 3.You might also have problems at the airport, when you leave the country.

1.2. Registering with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

We recommend that all students register their trip at their home country's embassy or Ministry for Foreign Affairs before the start of the study abroad program. Once you have a local cell phone subscription, you can give the number to your local embassy. Most countries offer citizens the possibility of registering online.

Registration includes giving out your personal data, contact information for the duration of your trip and information about your stay abroad to the ministry in case of emergencies or crises.

All independent travelers are advised to register their trips.

2. HOST UNIVERSITY – KASETSART UNIVERSITY (KU)

The state-owned Kasetsart University (KU) is both internationally and locally known for its academic excellence. KU is in the top five among Thailand's 150 universities and ranks very well regionally as well: Webometrics, for example, ranked KU fourth in South East Asia in 2011. The university was established in 1943 and hosts 55,000 students.

KU was the first agricultural university in Thailand and it is the third oldest university in Thailand. The university has revised its curricula and expanded the subject areas to cover science, business, economics, arts, social sciences, humanities, education, engineering, and architecture. KU has seven campuses in various regions of Thailand.

Your semester will be arranged in the Bangkhen Campus, which is the main campus of KU. KU has modern facilities and the large campus is very welcoming with stores, restaurants, banks, a post office and even its own bus lines!



3. WORKING IN THAILAND

An international student can work 20 hours a week after getting a work permit from the Thai Ministry of Labor and paying 1,900 baht, or approximately 60 USD.

4. CONTACTS

The international office at KU provides support for exchange students for academic issues, assistance and information. It is responsible for the documents required for scholarships, the issuing of certificates, courses and accommodation. The person that is responsible for the International Office is Mr. Krishna Parntang, International Student Coordinator and KUSEP Program Manager.

Mr. Krishna Parntang

krishna.p@ku.th

5. MONEY

5.1. Cash withdrawing money, and credit cards

We recommend exchanging some of your national currency into Baht before leaving home so that you'll have some cash with you when you arrive. Try not to only have large bills on you as e.g., the taxi drivers may not have enough change for you. The most affordable way of buying Baht is bringing some cash in your national currency with you and exchanging it at a currency exchange on location. Remember to compare the exchange rates first and be attentive during the actual exchange. Some unofficial exchange offices may offer good exchange rates but there is a bigger risk of getting tricked. Exchange rates at airports are typically the worst. We recommend taking at least a VISA Electron and/or a credit card with you. Don't wait until you're all out of cash to withdraw more money because sometimes you may face technical difficulties when using the ATMs. Withdrawing cash with a foreign credit or debit card usually costs approximately 3 Euro + 2.5 % of the sum you are withdrawing.

5.2. Tipping and Bargaining

Like all over Asia, bargaining is a common habit in Thailand. At first, it might feel a bit stressful but you will get used to it. Don't take bargaining too seriously. You will get the best price with a sense of humor and some words in Thai.

We recommend you to start communicating in Thai as soon as possible. A few words are enough to show respect towards the locals and their culture and people are happy to reward it by giving you better service and lower prices. Bargaining can be a pleasant experience for you and for the seller.

6. PHONE CALL AND CELL PHONE SUBSCRIPTION

Getting a Thai SIM card

When arriving in Bangkok, we advise you to get a local pre-paid SIM card from e.g. a 7eleven store. The most popular connections are "Happy", "1-2-Call" and "True". A local cell phone subscription is the most affordable way of making calls in Thailand as well as staying in touch with your friends and family back home (apart from making calls with Skype which can be free of charge). Different data packages for internet use are readily available; the prices and registration processes vary a little and you should consider a few different possibilities based on your individual needs. "Line" is a popular phone app widely used in Thailand. The main idea is similar to Whatsapp: calls and texts through Line are free.

Calling home from your Thai number

Ask Thai phone operators or use Google to find the most affordable ways of calling abroad. Most operators offer international discount codes (e.g., 001, 005, 007 or 008) that are dialed before the actual phone number. The international discount code is placed before the country code, so for instance a phone call to Germany would begin with 008 49 instead of the usual +49.

Before calling home, remember to find out which international rates apply to your home country and with which discount codes. If you call without a discount code, the price can be over 2 €/min but with a discount code, the prices drop dramatically. Find international rates for code 008 [online](#).

Calling your local Thai number from your home country

E.g. from Finland it is possible to call to a Thai number with less than 10 cents per minute with using a discount code. Companies in Finland offering discount calls are e.g. Call99577 and [TeleAle](#) For making the discount calls your friends and

family need to dial the discount code + country code + your Thai number (e.g. 99577 66 12345678). The discount codes are usually not valid when sending text messages.

7. TRANSPORTATION IN PHUKET, THAILAND

The traffic culture in Bangkok, as well as in other parts of Asia, may seem quite hectic compared to the traffic culture of your home country. It might seem like there aren't any traffic regulations, or at least people don't seem to abide by them. Despite all this, the traffic seems to flow according to its own rules. Just memorize some bus and SkyTrain routes, and avoid the rush hour.

Taxis

Being in an air-conditioned taxi on a sunny day is most often a relief. The prices are very affordable; just remember to make sure that the driver turns the meter on! The taxi drivers don't always speak or read English so it is useful to have any address you're going to on paper written in Thai.

Buses

Bangkok has a good internal bus network. A ticket for a non-air-conditioned bus is approx. 7 THB, and a ticket for an air-conditioned one 12 – 30 THB. Bangkok has good and affordable bus connections to all parts of the country. Use the air-conditioned buses for longer journeys. Buses are most often faster than trains, even when traveling to cities that are a long distance away.

THE BUSES THAT PASS KASETSART UNIVERSITY ARE:

Phaholyothin Gate: 26, 34, 39, 51, 59, 107, 114, 126, 129, 503, 522, 524

Ngamwongwan Gate: 51, 63, 104, 114, 177, 206, 522, 545

Vibhavadi Rangsit Gate: 29, 52, 504, 510, 555

Kasetsart University's bus stop: Mo Kaset

BTS Skytrain

There are two SkyTrain (BTS) tracks that run over the busy streets of the city center every few minutes from 6 a.m. to midnight. The airconditioned SkyTrain is a comfortable and ecological way to travel long distances fast. A single ticket costs 20 – 45 THB, depending on the length of the journey, and a day ticket costs

120 THB. You can also buy inexpensive 20, 30 and 40 trip series tickets which are recommended if you plan on using the SkyTrain often. The Mo Chit station is the closest to Kasetsart University. The buses to the university leave from the Chatuchak Market.

Tuk-tuk

Tuk-tuks i.e. three-wheeled, open-ended, motorized rickshaws are a very common sight in the streets of Bangkok. Due to the amount of traffic pollution, riding in a tuk-tuk can sometimes feel uncomfortable – but it is fun! Tuk-tuks are not as safe as taxis. Remember to agree on the price before getting in. The prices vary from 40 – 100 THB, depending on the length of the trip. Tuk-tuks are not usually used for regular travel but for spending a night out on the town.

River Boat (Chao Phraya Express)

The riverboat operates on the Chao Phraya River from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. It's a fast way to get to the Chinese part of Bangkok, for instance. The fare is 6 – 20 THB (tourist boats are more expensive) and it is paid to the conductor once on board. There are several stops along the way

7.1. Making your way to the airport

TAXI

If you take a taxi, remember to insist that the driver turns on the meter because drivers will otherwise charge more than the meter price! It's a good idea to exchange some of your national currency into Baht before leaving home.

FROM SUVARNABHUMI AIRPORT:

It's easy to take a taxi from the airport to your desired address. There will be sales persons offering limousine rides in the airport lobby but it's much better to just walk directly to the official taxis situated outside the airport (level 1, follow the "Public Taxi" signs). Don't forget to find out the street address of your destination in advance because a clerk will ask you for it and write it down for the taxi driver. In general, the taxi drivers don't always speak or read English so it is useful to have any address you're going to on paper written in Thai. A taxi ride to the city center or to KU usually costs approximately 500-600 THB depending on the traffic. Be

Be prepared to pay additional Bahts to cover toll fees if you use an expressway (high way). There is also a train connection from the airport (lowest floor) to Bangkok city and SkyTrain. This is a very good and cheap alternative for a taxi ride. When you arrive at Phaya Thai Station, please change to SkyTrain at BTS Phaya Thai and the direction should be heading north to Mo Chit SkyTrain station. After getting off at Mo Chit station, you can catch a taxi from there to KU. Taxi fare from Mochit BTS station to Kasetsart University is usually around 100 THB.

FROM DON MUANG AIRPORT:

When you approach the airport exit you will see public taxi queue. These taxis' cost calculates from the meter reading plus airport taxi service charge for 50 TBH. The taxi will take you by normal road. It normally takes you from Don Muang Airport to KU around 30 minutes and should cost you approximately 150-200 TBH depending on the traffic.

Alternatively, you can consider using the Grab app (formerly known as GrabTaxi) if you buy a local SIM card already at the airport and have internet connection on your phone. Grab is a very useful app to have on your phone in Thailand and it's a good idea to download it even before departure. When you need a taxi drive, you open the app and Grab locates you. You type the drop-off location, and Grab calculates the fee. Then Grab finds you the nearest driver. Usually it takes the driver approximately 2-10 minutes to arrive and pick you up. You can see the location of the driver all the time on your phone. Afterwards, you will automatically get a receipt of the ride to your email.



YOUR WAY ABROAD

The world has an interesting way of giving great experiences
to the ones who are passionate about their dreams.

Miia Muukkonen, Asia Exchange student

