

Choose a Way



Bangkok

Chris Backe

Introduction

Welcome to the SAMPLE Choose a Way™ book! Much like the Choose Your Own Adventure® books you might have read as a kid, the full guide lets you design your own itinerary through *thirty-five possible stops* across Bangkok. The full guide is designed for 2 to 5 days of exploring in Bangkok – after reaching the end of a day, you get some secret superpowers to help you get even more out of the book.

Pick up the full guide:
on [Amazon](#) or [as a PDF](#).

Warning!

Do NOT read this book straight through! Not only will you end up confused, you'll be missing out on all the fun! **Click the links or follow the instructions to advance your adventure.**

Instructions!

You are a new explorer to Bangkok, and you've been told navigation can be tricky. You'll be given several tools to guide you to a destination, however. Use any of these tools to help you, and see below for more details:

- A link to Google Maps (internet connection required)
- A QR code for another device to scan
- The address and GPS coordinates
- Precise directions from a landmark or public transportation

[Go to the next page.](#)

The tools



This QR code will take you a general Google map of Bangkok. To scan these QR codes, simply download a free app to scan or read them on your phone or tablet. The app reads the picture like a bar code, and opens up Google Maps on your device. These apps are all free, and simply recommendations – plenty of others are out there.

For iOS: [QR Code Reader by Scan](#), [Quick Scan – QR Code Reader](#)

For Android: [QR Code Reader](#), [QR Code Scan & Barcode Scanner](#)

For Windows: [Scanner](#), [QR Code Scanner](#)

For Blackberry: [QR Code Scanner Pro - Free](#)

Don't have a smartphone? No worries – it's not required. Use the address or directions for each destination to arrive.

GPS coordinates

GPS is short for Global Positioning System – the same system you might have telling you which way to turn while driving. This pair of numbers indicates latitude and longitude, and identifies a point on the Earth down to a few centimeters. Much like how a phone number can identify a single *phone*, a set of GPS coordinates identify a single *location*. Simply put, knowing the GPS coordinates to a place means knowing exactly where to go, regardless of the street address. Simply type the numbers into Google Maps or click the link to make GPS coordinates work for you.

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Disclaimer

As with all traveling, use common sense and be aware of your surroundings to ensure your safety. The author has made extensive efforts to ensure information is up-to-date when the book was published, but the author can't predict the future. Attractions may close or change prices. This book and the Choose Your Own Destination™ series are not affiliated or associated with the Choose Your Own Adventure® books in any way.

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Introduction to Bangkok

Bangkok is a city of extremes.

Extreme heat in the summer, extreme air-conditioning in the malls and buses, extreme luxury, extreme poverty, and for many visitors, extreme culture shock. It may well take a day to acclimate to these extremes – especially the heat and the poverty.

Thailand's capital contains only a fraction of the country's history, but being the capital for the past couple centuries means there's plenty to see and do. Bangkokians are friendly and easy-going enough, although the city has had plenty of time to acclimate to the masses of tourists. This means you'll want to be on your guard from rip-off artists, often in the form of tuk-tuk drivers and taxi drivers.

Bangkok features the two-line BTS (also called the Skytrain) and the MRT (Bangkok's one-line subway). Purchase one-trip tickets from automated machines for each system, or pick-up a pre-paid card per traveler for a small discount on the BTS. There's also an unlimited day-pass card for the BTS – either card will definitely save you from having to pay one-trip tickets each time.

Bangkok's bus routes are free or very cheap (6 to 24 baht, depending on distance and whether it's an air-con bus), but the timing can be unpredictable. Taxis are fine if they use the meter, but only consider a tuk-tuk as a last resort.

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Four quick protips to making the most of Bangkok

- Duck into any convenience store or mall for a quick burst of air-conditioning. Whether you need some bottled water or just need to 'look', heat stroke is nobody's idea of fun.
- At 8am and 6pm, the Thai national anthem and another patriotic song are played over every speaker, and everyone will come to a halt. Stand respectfully for the couple minutes it plays, and rise if you are seated – basically, follow the crowd.
- If you decide to see a movie, stand respectfully for the King's Anthem before the movie starts (a message in English will precede the royal song).
- All points in this itinerary can be reached by walking or using Bangkok's many public transportation options – by all means, feel free to jump into a taxi if you like, but it's not required.

What to bring?

Plenty of shorts and t-shirts! Women, you'll want at least one pair of longer pants (or long skirt) and a shirt with sleeves to be properly modest at Buddhist temples. A smartphone is helpful for plenty of reasons (buy a SIM card at the airport or most any convenience store). If it's the rainy season (May to October), ensure a poncho is always in your bag – an umbrella just isn't as effective.

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You just woke up in Bangkok.

Whether you're staying in a five-star hotel or a cheap hostel, you arise out of bed and put on some clothes. You get through some version of your morning routine and are ready to take on Bangkok. Whether you decide to enjoy breakfast at your hotel or venture elsewhere, you've dressed and packed a small bag for the day with your camera, a bottle of water, and room for the device you're holding right now.

What time is it right now?

8:00am-9:00am

9:00am-10:00am

10:00am-11:00am

11:00am-12 noon

It's, erm, after noon

8:00am-9:00am

You're a morning person, after all, and you're ready to get the adventure started. Bangkok doesn't really get going until after 9:00am, but there are a few places to check out.

Would you rather:

Head to a palace

Head to a park

9:00am-10:00am

A good time to get going! Bangkok's main tourist attractions – and some of the offbeat destinations – are now open and ready for your entertainment.

Choose to:

Go shopping for fashion!

Go see a famous Bangkok resident's house

10:00am-11:00am

You don't mind sleeping in a bit on your first day – perhaps there's still a touch of jet lag you're fighting off.

Make your choice based on what day it is:

If it's Saturday or Sunday, go see some snakes!

If it's a weekday, go see a famous Bangkok resident's house

11:00am-12 noon

You're not much of a morning person, or perhaps you slept well enough to block out the light. In any case, choose one!

Head to a downtown temple (closed on Mondays)

Go to one of Bangkok's biggest markets (weekends only)

It's, erm, after noon

You're not much of a morning person, or last night kept you out really late. Either way, you'll be skipping a morning place in favor of starting your day in the early afternoon.

Choose to:

Go offbeat (not for kids, closed on Tuesdays)

Go mainstream to a museum



Jim Thompson's house

6 Soi Kasemsan 2, Rama 1 Road, Bangkok
(GPS: 13.74915,100.528426 – [link to Google Maps](#))



Admission: 100 baht – open 9am-5pm everyday



It was on March 26th, 1967 that Jim Thompson disappeared. Call this the Amelia Earhart story of the east - at least one book (available in the bookstore) has been written about what could have happened. To this day it remains an unsolved mystery – however, it's the house and everything inside that's worth focusing on. In 1948, Jim Thompson founded the Thai Silk Company, and created a home for himself.

Six teak buildings were joined to one fairly cohesive unit, complete with a nice blend of east Asian style and some comforts from the Western world. The guided tour is the only option, so take in the overpriced souvenir shop if time allows.

Directions

From the National Stadium BTS station: Take exit 1 to street level, make a U-turn, and look for the green signs pointing you down a side street to the right. The street dead-ends after about 200 meters; look left just before the dead end.

What's next?

Head to Bangkok's best-known medical museum (not for kids, closed on Tuesdays, furthest away)

Check out a temple squished in-between two malls (closest)

Head to a kid-friendly museum with plenty of sights for the adults too



Siriraj Medical Museum

Adulayadejvikrom building, 2 Prannok Rd, Siriraj Hospital
(GPS: 13.758956,100.485031 – [link to Google Maps](#))



Admission: 200 baht – open 10am-5pm everyday but Tuesday

Ostensibly used as a fundraiser for the Siriraj hospital, the museum features some of the more unusual oddities to enter the world of the living. It presents a rather gruesome look at what might happen to *your* body if your body stands out in some extraordinary way. This is NOT for the kids or the squeamish, but it is an awesome look at the human body you never got in biology class. Several rooms with different themes are around, but all have plenty of intrigue. Pictures not officially allowed inside.

Directions

You'll find it easier to take a taxi here from National Stadium BTS – ask to go to the Siriraj Hospital (*see-lee-rahj*, like the second syllable of 'garage'). If you're gung-ho about public transportation, exit National Stadium BTS heading east down Rama I. Jump on bus 15 or 47 and ride for about 20-25 minutes. Get off a couple stops after the Democracy Monument, then transfer to bus 157. This bus crosses the river, then turns left – get off in front of the hospital. From the bus stop, walk into the hospital, turn left at the T and walk 150 meters. Look for the third right (traffic will go one-way in the same direction you're going), then walk 25 meters and look right.

What's next?

Bangkok's most notorious
electronic market

Check out an offbeat market
(closest)

Take refuge in an air-conditioned
mall (furthest)



Chatuchak Market

Kamphaeng Phet 4 Rd, Lat Yao, Chatuchak, Bangkok
(GPS: 13.799282,100.548653 – [link to Google Maps](#))



*Admission: free, only open Friday 6pm-midnight,
Saturday and Sunday 9am-6pm*

Also spelled Jatujak Market or JJ Market, the market is (mostly) covered and fairly easy to navigate makes this a great place to come on one of the hotter days of the year. The variety astounds, no matter who you are – Halloween costumes, toilet signs, massage oils, tie-dyed clothes, jewelry, framed art, mannequins with eyes closed blowing kisses, Thai boxing gear, and plenty of street food – this is a fine place to get some lunch, by the way.

WARNING: Keep your party together – this market is huge, and it's difficult to find someone if you've lost them!

Directions

From Kamphaeng Phet MRT Station: take exit 2 to street level and you're basically surrounded by the market.

What's next?

Check out a temple in the heart of downtown Bangkok

Opt for one of Bangkok's largest malls (an easy ride via BTS / Skytrain)

Go offbeat and see a vintage market (closest)



Papaya Vintage Market

306/1 Soi Lat Phrao 55/2, Lat Phrao Rd, Wang Thonglang
(GPS: 13.794239,100.597225 – [link to Google Maps](#))



Admission: free – open 9:30am-6pm everyday

Yes, that is in fact eight Jar-Jar Binks doing the conga in the photo above. It's just a taste of what you'll find here – while most of what you see is indeed for sale, the market is better thought of a display area for the oddball offerings. It's clear the place has been well kept-up – and well organized, despite the size. Some local pro photographers use this three-story indoor market as a place for their photo shoots. As you'd expect, the selection changes daily.

Directions

From Lat Phrao MRT Station: Take exit 4 to street level, then look right for the bus stop. Jump on any bus but 151 or 156. Watch closely along the left side of the road for the blue street signs, and get off as soon as you see Lat Phrao 55/2. Get back to 55/2, then turn down the side street. Walk about 100 meters and look for the entrance around the corner to the right.

What's next?

Take in an offbeat museum (an easy bus ride)

Feeling brave? Head to a snake show! (weekdays only, furthest)

Enjoy the outdoors and relax at a park (right next to a BTS station)



Bangkok Snake Farm

1871 Rama IV Rd (Thai Red Cross Institute), Bangkok
(GPS: 13.732131, 100.532769 – [link to Google Maps](#))



Admission: 200 baht - the show you're coming to see is at 11am on weekends.

Thailand has a history with using animals as tourist attractions, and Bangkok's snake farm is perhaps one of the best places to get up close with the non-legged. The main attraction is a snake show, where a bilingual speaker gleefully tells you about all the things that'll happen when this particular kind of snake bites. Afterwards, a photo op is available if you want your picture with a giant snake, and the two-story museum is a great chance to take in some air-conditioning.

Directions

From Silom MRT: exit 2 to street level, then U-turn towards the intersection and cross to the opposite corner. Once there, head left (west) on Rama IV. Walk about 500 meters and look right for the Red Cross. When you enter, look across the roundabout for the entrance, or just follow the signs to the ticket booth.

What's next?

Check out a museum dedicated to human bodies (not for kids, closed on Tuesdays)

Continue to an offbeat vintage market (furthest away)

Continue to an excellent air-conditioned mall (closest and easiest to reach)



Bangkok Seashell Museum

Silom Road, next to Soi Silom 23, Bangkok

(GPS: 13.722523,100.518285 – [link to Google Maps](#))



Admission: 150 baht – open 10am-6:30pm everyday

There are times when you're walking through a metropolitan, cosmopolitan city – and you find something you didn't realize was under your nose all along. Allow, of course, that Bangkok is some distance from the nearest beach, and that the seashells come from all around the world. Spanning three stories of a surprisingly large collection, it's a kid-friendly look at all things seashells – and all within a wonderfully air-conditioned museum.

Directions

From Surasak BTS (on the Silom line): take exit 1, make a U-turn, then head west towards the toll road / expressway. Walk about 150 meters, then turn right. Walk along this road (Silom soi 21) for about 500 meters, then take a left onto Silom and look left. Alternatively, buses 76, 164, 504, 514, and 547 all stop along Silom road, really close to the museum.

What's next?

Travel to a more offbeat museum – all about Batman! (furthest)

Learn about Thailand's history through an interactive museum (closest)

Get a little offbeat to find a traditional Thai market



Temple of the Golden Buddha

Thanon Mittaphap Thai-China Talat Noi, Samphanthawong,
(GPS: 13.737896, 100.513732 - [link to Google Maps](#))



Admission fee: 40 baht for the Golden Buddha, 100 baht for the museum – open 8am-5pm everyday except Mondays

Home to Bangkok's Golden Buddha, this temple is home to the **world's largest solid gold statue**, which weighs 5.5 tons. Yep, you read that right. Possibly made in the 13th-14th century, the egg-shaped head is a hint of its Sukhothai-era construction.

A great way to hide something of value is to make it look less valuable. At some point in the past, this Buddha image was encased in plaster, then decorated with inlaid glass. It was still a Buddha image, just not a valuable one. Some of the plaster chipped off during a move in 1955 - by one account a rope broke, causing the image to crash to the ground. In time, the plaster was chipped away, and the gold statue was discovered. The building you see today dates from 2010, and receives hundreds of visitors every day.

Directions

From Hua Lamphong MRT station: take exit 1 to street level and head straight (west) on Rama IV. The roads here are messed up since a new line of the MRT is under construction, so keep a close eye both ways when crossing the road. The road curves right, then left – stay on it until you see the temple on the right. In all, it's about a 350 meter walk from the MRT exit.

[Go to the next page to see your options.](#)

What's next?

Ready for another temple? Check out this one in the heart of downtown (easy to reach)

Enjoy Bangkok's best zoo (further out, but an easy taxi ride)

Get offbeat at an unusual shrine (not for kids)



Grand Palace

Na Phra Lan Rd, Phra Nakhon, Bangkok
(GPS: 13.749749, 100.493834 – [link to Google Maps](#))



Admission: 500 baht – open 8:30am-3:30pm everyday, but may be closed during special occasions

The official residence of Siam's and Thailand's kings from 1782 to 1925, it's still used for official functions, royal ceremonies, and some state functions. That means the palace *does* close on occasion – but not nearly as often as the nearby touts or tuk-tuk drivers would have you believe. It should be noted, of course, that the dress code for the Grand Palace is official and legitimate – and that guards with guns enforce it. Essentially, no shorts, miniskirts, sleeveless shirts, flip flops, or pajamas can be worn. Aim for jeans and a non-controversial t-shirt and you'll be fine.

Directions

While a taxi would be easiest, it's also likely to be an inflated quote based on your destination. Start from Saphan Taksin BTS, on the Silom line and take exit 2 down to street level. From here, transfer to a Chao Praya Express Boat and ride to the Tha Chang Pier. Once at the pier, walk straight (away from the river, or east) and look for the Grand Palace's entrance.

What's next?

Visit a most unusual museum (not for kids, closest, closed on Tuesdays)

Get to some air-conditioning and a kid-friendly mall

Head to Thailand's best zoo (fairly close, an easy taxi ride)



Chatuchak Park

Phahonyothin road (route 1) near the intersection with route 31
(GPS: 13.803940, 100.554294 – [link to Google Maps](#))



Admission: free – open 4:30am-9pm everyday

This park gives the area its name, yet is overshadowed by the nearby Chatuchak Market and less visited by tourists. That's a shame, since there's easy access to three different parks (Chatuchak Park, Queen Sirikit Park, and Wachira Benthath Park) along with a Butterfly Garden and Insectarium. If it's a nice day outside and you're simply looking to take it easy, the Chatuchak Park area can't be beat. Rent a bike inside the park for a nominal fee, or focus on the playground if your kids are along.

Directions

From Chatuchak Park MRT Station: exit 2 puts you in the park straightaway.

What's next?

Ready to get offbeat? Head to a medical museum (not for kids, closed Tuesdays, further away)

Go see some animals at Bangkok's biggest zoo (closest)

Head to a temple in the heart of downtown Bangkok (easily reached via BTS)



Platinum Fashion Mall

92 Phetchaburi Rd, Ratchathewi, Bangkok
(GPS: 13.750328, 100.539402 – [link to Google Maps](#))



*Admission: free – open 9:00am-8:00pm on weekdays,
8:00am-8:00pm on weekends*

Close to Pantip Plaza and a number of outdoor shopping areas offering clothes, the Platinum Fashion Mall claims the title as the country's largest wholesale fashion mall. Women, consider this your chance to stock up on fashion, both outrageous and subtle. Men, there are ample options for you as well, but you're in the minority as far as the shops go.

Directions

From Chit Lom BTS station: take exit 1, make a U-turn, and head west down the main road. Turn right onto Ratchadamri road (before Central World Plaza) and walk 550 meters to Phetchaburi road. Turn left, then walk 200 meters and look left.

What's next?

Head to a kid-friendly museum

Get offbeat at a weird shrine (not for kids, a slightly longer walk)

More shopping? Head to another air-conditioned mall (within walking distance)



Dusit Zoo (Khao Din Wana)

IBT No.71, Rama 5 Road, Dusit, Bangkok

(GPS: 13.774129, 100.517445 – [link to Google Maps](#))



Admission: 100 baht – open 8am-6pm everyday

Plenty of animals await in one of Bangkok's oldest zoos. It's been Bangkok's mainstream home for animals since 1938, but was originally a nature preserve. Thank King Rama V, however - during his foreign visits he became impressed with botanical gardens as a place for people to relax. It was 1895 when he gave permission to build 'Khao Din Wana'. A lake was dug, and the dirt made a mountain in the middle of the

garden, thus the name 'Khao Din' (earth mountain), and 'Wana' (forest).

During King Rama VII's reign, the garden opened to the general public. When that happened, Thailand could then showcase their own animals: axis deer from Suan Umporn, crocodiles and monkeys from Suan Saranrom, and some royal elephants to boot.

Directions

From Victory Monument BTS station: take exit 3 to street level and walk towards the Victory Monument. Head around the monument to the left and look for buses 18, 28, 108, 125, 164, or 515. It's only a couple kilometers worth of a ride - look for the giant peacocks on your right.

What's next?

One of Bangkok's biggest electronic markets (closest)

An interactive history museum (closed Mondays)

Relax around Bangkok's 'green lung' park (furthest away)



Wat Pathumwanaram

969 Rama 1 Rd, Pathumwan, Bangkok
(GPS: 13.745236, 100.537031 – [link to Google Maps](#))



Admission: free – open 6:00am-9:00pm everyday

Founded in 1857 by King Mongkut (Rama IV), this temple was a place of worship near the Sa Pathum Palace. While you're unlikely to see them for yourself, the ashes of royalty are interred here. Prince Mahidol Adulyadej's is the father of Rama VIII and IX, the current king, and is considered the father of modern medicine in Thailand. One of the open pavilions (called a *sala* in Thailand) has been partially reconstructed from the crematorium of the late Princess Mother of Thailand.

Directions

From Siam BTS station: take exit 5 to street level and begin looking left immediately for the temple entrance. It's between the much larger Siam Paragon and Central World.

What's next?

Head to one of Bangkok's trendier, kid-friendly malls (connected to the BTS)

Go see some snakes at Bangkok's best snake show (weekdays only, closest)

Take an kid-friendly interactive tour of Thailand's history (furthest away)



Chao Mae Tuptim

On Swissotel Nai Lert Park Hotel property, 2 Wireless Rd
(GPS: 13.748182, 100.54692 - [link to Google Maps](#))



Admission: free – open 24 hours everyday, but best visited during daylight hours

Behind and to the right side of the Swissotel Nai Lert Hotel is a spirit who purportedly resides in the large ficus tree. This spirit is Chao Mae Tuptim, a female fertility Hindu tree spirit, and the shrine dates back to the early 20th century. Women visit this shrine when they are trying to conceive, leaving offerings of lotus and jasmine – and over the years, hundreds of wooden phallic statues.

Also called *lingam*, the belief originates from the Hindu god Shiva. Smaller ones can be purchased in a number of souvenir shops around the city (no souvenirs to buy at the shrine, though). If the rumors and stories are to be believed, the women's prayers at the shrine have a good success rate.

Note: don't touch or disturb the items around the site. Despite its unusual looks it is rightly considered a religious site. Stay quiet to avoid disrupting someone else's prayers at the shrine.

Directions

From Phloen Chit / Ploenchit BTS station: take exit 1 to street level and walk 100 meters. Turn right onto Wireless road and walk 350 meters to the hotel on your left. As you face the hotel, look around the side to the right and go around for the shrine.

[Go to the next page to see your choices.](#)

What's next?

Head to Bangkok's 'green lung', an excellent park to meander through (easily reached via BTS)

Get some shopping done at Bangkok's electronics market (closest and walkable)

Check out the kid-friendly interactive museum that covers Thai history (closed on Mondays, furthest away)



Central World

Intersection of Ratchadamri and Rama I Road, Pathumwan
(GPS: 13.745042, 100.539783 – [link to Google Maps](#))



Admission: free – open everyday from 10:00am-10:00pm

Easily the biggest shopping center, Siam Central World offers up more than a half-million square meters of shopping. Also around is an ice-skating rink, a theater, and a kids' edutainment center. In short, it's a perfect place to bring your kids when it gets too hot outside. **While here**, cross to the opposite corner to take in the Erawan Shrine (also called the Thao Mahaprom Shrine) for one of downtown **Bangkok's most revered shrines**.

Directions

From Siam BTS Station: Central World is directly connected to the Skywalk between Siam and Chit Lom station. Alternatively, take exit 5 to street level and look left for the entrance.

What's next?

Check out the Amulet Market
[pretty far away]

You want another mall? OK – go
there [easy to reach via the BTS]

Head to an offbeat museum
dedicated to Batman [furthest
away]

End of the sample.

There's plenty more in the full book, as you'd expect.

Pick up the full guide:
on [Amazon](#) or [as a PDF](#).

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