



Bangkok tourist attractions

1. Grand Palace and the Temple of the Emerald Buddha



The Grand Palace

The Grand Palace has an area of 218,400 sq. metres and is surrounded by walls built in 1782. The length of the four walls is 1,900 metres. Within these walls are situated government offices and the Chapel Royal of the Emerald Buddha besides the royal residences. When Siam restored law and order after the fall of Ayutthaya the monarch lived in Thonburi on the west side of the river. Rama I, on ascending the throne, moved the centre of administration to this side of the Chao Phraya; and, after erecting public monuments such as fortifications and monasteries, built a palace to serve not only as his residence but also his offices--the various ministries, only one of which remains in the palace walls. This palace came to be known as the Grand Palace, in which the earliest edifices contemporary with the foundation of Bangkok were the two groups of residences named the Dusit Maha Prasat and the Phra Maha Monthian.

The Chapel Royal of The Emerald Buddha

Just north of the Royal Residence of the Maha Monthian from which there is a connecting gate lies The Chapel Royal of The Emerald Buddha. It consists of all the architectural features of the monastery without however the residential quarter, for monks do not live here. The Assembly Hall, or Ubosoth, serves as the monarch's private chapel. Hence the partition on either side of the main altar intended as a retiring room, which is never to be found anywhere else but the only other chapel royal, that of the King of Thonburi, which serves now as the Assembly Hall of the monastery of Arun within the former grounds of the palace of that king. The "Emerald Buddha" is carved from a block of jade. It is an object of national veneration

and crowds come to pay respect to the memory of the Buddha and His Teachings on certain days of the weeks when it is open to the public.

2. The Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall



The Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall is a former reception hall within Dusit Palace in Bangkok, Thailand. It now serves as a museum and is from time to time employed for certain state occasions. One year after the completion of the Amphorn Satharn Villa within the Dusit Palace in 1906, King Chulalongkorn (Rama V) commissioned the construction of a reception hall to replace the one built during the reign of King Mongkut (Rama IV.). The building in Italian Renaissance and Neo Classic style was commissioned to the architects Mario Tamagno and Annibale Rigotti. Marble from Carrara, Italy, and other foreign materials were used. Italian sculptor Vittorio Novi, who would later also work on the Mahaiudthit Bridge, was employed with his nephew Rudolfo Nolli.

The Throne Hall is a two storey construction with a large dome (49.5m high) in the centre, surrounded by six smaller domes. The domes and walls are covered with paintings by Professor Galileo Chini and Carlo Riguli depicting the history of the Chakri Dynasty, from the first to the sixth reign.

King Chulalongkorn died in 1910 and the building was finally completed in 1915. It was used as the headquarters of the People's Party during the four days of the 1932

Revolution (June 24-27), which transformed the country's political system from an absolute monarchy to a constitutional one. The first National People's Assembly convened on June 28, 1932 in this throne hall. After that, it was used as the Parliament House until 1974 when the new Parliament House was opened to the north. However, the old Parliament House is still used for the State Opening of Parliament marking the first assembly in consequence of a general election for the House of Representatives. Otherwise it is open to the public every day except on Chulalongkorn Day (23 October), the King's birthday (5 December) and the Queen's birthday (12 August). In front of the Hall is the Royal Plaza with the equestrian statue of King Chulalongkorn (Rama V).

3. Vimanmek Mansion



Located on Ratchawithi Road behind the National Assembly, Vimanmek Royal Mansion is the world's largest building made entirely of golden teak. Removed from Ko Sichang in Chonburi province, it was rebuilt in the Dusit Palace in 1900 by the command of King Rama V. It was recently renovated by HM Queen Sirikit, and made into a museum paying homage to the late King.

As well as antique furniture, there's glassware, porcelain, old photographs and memorabilia from the late King's reign (1868 - 1910). Many rooms currently maintain the atmosphere of the past.

A guided tour is provided to visitors. Most of the building in the same compound are now used as museums. The outstanding one is Abhisek Dusit Hall, which exhibits HM Queen Sirikit's collection of handicraft masterpieces created by rural people. The other displays of various items and art objects including HM King Bhumibol's photography, paraphernalia of rank and portraits, ancient cloth, clocks, and royal carriages. Parts of Vimanmek are still used for

various state functions and receptions for visiting royalty when the buildings are closed to the public. Traditional Thai dancing commences daily at 10:30 and 14:00.

4. Jim Thompson House



The Jim Thompson House is the home of **James H.W. Thompson**, a self-made American entrepreneur who was the founder of the world renowned Jim Thompson Thai Silk Company. Thompson's achievements during his 25 year stay in the Kingdom of Thailand have won him much fame as the "Legendary American of Thailand".

For his contribution to the development of the Thai Silk industry, Jim Thompson was awarded the Order of the White Elephant, a decoration bestowed upon foreigners for having rendered exceptional service to Thailand. Thompson's success story in Thailand has become one of the most popular postwar legends of Asia.

In 1967, Jim Thompson went on holiday with friends to the Cameron Highlands in Malaysia. There he set out for a walk in the surrounding jungle but never returned. Thus began the Jim Thompson legend.

Since his disappearance in 1967, little has changed in the home that was the 'talk of the town' and the 'city's most celebrated social center'. Even today, the charming Thai style house continues to be a key stop for visitors to Bangkok.

5. Queen Sirikit Museum of Textiles



In 2003, Her Majesty Queen Sirikit requested permission to use a then-vacant building on the grounds of the Grand Palace to house a new museum of textiles. The 1870 Ratsadakorn-bhibhathana Building was graciously granted for this purpose by His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej. The office building—for many decades the Ministry of Finance—was completely renovated and turned into a state-of-the-art museum; its modern facilities include a new lobby, galleries, storage, an education studio, library, lecture hall, and Thailand’s first dedicated textile conservation laboratory. Nonetheless, its past is still very much present, in the preservation of its original façade and many internal architectural details.