

# A study on bangkok tourism essay



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## **Abstract**

This project “ A study on Bangkok tourism- The Future of Bangkok tourism” puts forward a detail study on tourism in Thailand especially Bangkok as a tourist destination. This study is made at the appropriate time because the tourism sector plays an important role in tourism industry and in the recession period right when people are thinking that tourism industry in down.

This paper aims to provide a light on how tourism has made the economy to boost over the past three years. Research was conducted to understand about the efforts taken by the government to boost tourism in Bangkok. Finally recommendations are also provided at the end of the research which would help in the further development of the tourism in Bangkok. The analysis and the discussions based on the questionnaire is also given in detail.

## **Introduction**

### **About Bangkok**

Bangkok is a famous tourist destination in south East Asia. It is one of the most cosmopolitan, contrasting and, above all, compelling of Asian cities. More than ten million reside here and it is a steamy and pulsating metropolis there is no dull moment in Bangkok city. Whether you're a spectator, looking for an entertainment or physically active, you'll be surprised with the vast choices the city has to offer.

Bangkok's modern, multi-storey shopping malls are a shopaholic's paradise... you will find the city's finest fashion stores, global brands, book

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shops, specialty stores, accessories stands and all kinds of luxury designer lifestyle goods. There are two important malls in particular which attracts more people than others.

According to a leading tourism site, The Emporium “ is like a glossy magazine come to life. Behold the seven layers of shopper’s paradise, where the first three floors are dedicated solely to fashion. Exclusive world-class brand names dominate the ground floor, hot international designer items, leather and jewellery the first floor, and glamorous garb for the young and trendy, the second. Fashionist as, this is your playground”.

And here is another mall under this review,

‘ From a sporty yellow Ferrari to a pair of Jimmy Choo shoes, Siam Paragon is a shopping mall without rival in Southeast Asia when it comes to luxury goods. This shopping and entertainment complex is an up market, five-storey colossus with 500, 000 square metres of retail space. The gleaming, modern mall opened in December 2005 at a cost of 15 billion baht (US\$ 375 million), and is home to more than 250 famed international and local luxury brands...’

## **Tourism Industry in Bangkok**

Over all Bangkok is a mix of old and new, classic yet trendy and very traditional yet modern. Visitors from all over the world visit Bangkok to experience the beauty of the Buddha’s smile.

Thailand’s tourism industry makes up about 6. 5 percent of the country’s GDP. When seeing the number of tourists, and the number of tourist

destinations and hotels, one would actually expect a more substantial portion of GDP. But Thailand's tourism industry, while very visible, brings in much less money than other service industries, and certainly less than its manufacturing industry.

Nevertheless, international visitors spent more than 547 billion baht (something like 16 billion U. S. Dollars) in 2008. The average length of stay per tourist in 2007 was 9 days.

### **Impact of the Regional**

Interestingly, the tourism sector does not only depend on foreign visitors. The number of domestic tourists actually dwarfs the number of foreign tourists. But domestic tourists (mostly Thais) do spend much less per day and their trips are shorter, on average two days and a half. In 2007 there were reportedly more than 83 million in-country travel trips. This created 380 billion baht in revenue.

Average daily expenditure was around 1770 baht per person in 2007 (as compared to 4120 baht per person for international tourism).

In 2008, 52.37 % of international tourists were East Asian, with Malaysia and Japan providing the most visitors. Close to two million Malaysians visited Thailand. I assume they take short trips over the Thai-Malaysian border, and I think the number of Malaysian visitors, excessively inflates the total number of international visitors.

Europeans provided close to 4 million visitors in 2008, about 27.22 % of the total. The number of visitors from the Americas, South Asia and Africa, is

much smaller. However, close to 700, 000 Australians visited Thailand, which is actually an enormous number, when taking the total population of Australia into account.

The number of foreign tourists visiting Thailand over the first eight months of this year (2009) dropped 14. 1 per cent from the same period last year to only 8. 9 million, according to deputy spokesman of the Democrat Party, Atthawit Suwanphakdee,

Mr Athhawit attributed the declining to impacts of the Songkran riots by the anti-government red-shirts in April and the pandemic of the A (H1N1) flu virus.

However, he was confident that the situation of the tourism sector will improve in the fourth quarter of the year as the number of foreign arrivals is increasing.

The graph below shows the number of tourist arrivals in the first quarter and second quarter of 2009 were 3, 64 million and 2, 96 million respectively. These figures were lower than during the first 2 quarters of 2007 or 2008. In the third quarter of 2009 we see that the number of visitors is similar to the number of visitors in both 2007 and 2009, suggesting that the worst is over. Preliminary data for October 2009 show an increase in visitors as compared to October 2008.

Based on these reports the aim of this project is to find the shopping experience of people visiting two malls namely, the Emporium shopping Mall and Siam Paragon Shopping Mall. We planned according and executed this

survey successfully and hence we submit our report, analysis and discussions based on the survey results.

Source: ThaiWebsites. com

## **Literature review**

Trying to get information from books I went to the library and local book stores to get books on Thailand and to know about Bangkok, its history, culture, religion and traditions etc. one book which I found was ‘ Eyewitness Travel Guide to Thailand’. This travel guide was written by Philip Cornwel and the book is published by the Dorling Kindersley Publishing. It had 504 pages and was priced at \$17. 50. it offers easy access to Thai history, politics, music, festivals, sports and culture. It also has lists of hotels and restaurants, shopping places, golf, diving, white water rafting and several pictures and maps related to the information provided. It was a very practical guide overall.

The next book I took for reference is ‘ Lonely Planet Thailand’, written by Joe Cummings, Sandra Bao, China Williams and Steven Martin. I got it from Amazon books and it was priced \$18. 19. it was more like a survival guide with in depth information on Thai spa, resorts, culture and some important phrases and words to remember etc. it has nearly 148 maps which were very easy to follow and I found this particular book very helpful.

Lonely planet is a series of books focused on specify locations in Thailand such as, lonely planet Thailand’s Islands and Beaches, Lonely Planet Chiang Mai Northern Thailand, Lonely Planet Bangkok etc. As I was to go to Bangkok I ordered the “ Lonely Planet Bangkok”, from Amazon for \$14. 00 it was

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authored and published by Michelin Publications. This book had a 4 star review in Amazon and true to this fact this book was a tourist marvel.

It is recommended to everyone traveling to Bangkok as it is a treasure house of information's on all aspects of the city and overall about Thailand. The food, night markets, day bazaars etc which no travel guide will take you in real can be seen reviewed here in this book. A total and complete guide to the shopping festivals and other celebrations in Bangkok and the right time to visit, places to see and other attractions in around the city is all focused and explained very well. Many more online resources are also helpful but nothing can be more comfortable than having a travel guide in hand with maps to read.

It is not always possible to carry your laptops and work on them for details. I carried all the books with me during the trip and found them to be very useful. I learned some common phrases and I used them. Local people were very delighted to see a foreign student speaking their language. Thus these books made my trip more memorable and lively. My experiences were enhanced through these books.

## **Methodology**

When we decided to conduct a survey the first thing we did was plan. We first prepared the questionnaire as per our requirement and choose two famous shopping malls as our target for this survey. Once the questions were ready we decided how many people we should target. We set the number as 60. We took print outs of the 60 copies of the questionnaire and set out on our educational tour to Bangkok.

We successfully finished the survey in the two malls, Emporium shopping Mall and Siam Paragon Shopping Mall. It was a great experience interacting with tourist from different nations. They were very co-operative and were happy to help us by answering the questionnaire.

Based on the questionnaire we prepared an analysis and discussion below. We found out why people visit Bangkok and why they loved to shop in the malls. We also found some online data about the tourist flow in Bangkok over the period of years. The local residents were not that co operative as foreigners. They were very serious and some refused to take the survey.

The staff of the mall and many shop owners was very friendly and they asked us about why we were conducting survey and what we were doing. It was great experience to interact with local businessman. We even asked them about how foreigners come to the mall and what exactly attracts them in their stores. They agreed that economic slowdown has affected tourism in Bangkok as fewer tourists turned up this year.

This indeed had effect on their own business they said very sadly. Overall it was a great exposure to us as we knew how to interact and communicate with people. We were able to balance between the good and bad aspects that we encountered in the malls. We learned to address all types of people and we learned how to communicate politely.

## **Analysis and discussion**

### **Analysis of the Questionnaire**

Emporium Shopping Mall



In the above graph you see the first question from the questionnaire asking “ Are you resident of Bangkok? Almost 80% of people who took the survey were residents. And among the 20% who were non residents answered the second question which was “ is this your first visit to Bangkok?” almost 90% tourist were first time visitors.

The third question was how they knew about the mall. In this question we did find one major factor that travel sites helped lesser in finding the best shopping malls in the city. People found out more from friends, online forums and social media networks. Next coming to the main topic about what they liked about the Emporium mall many answered that they like the service and the ambience more. The cost they felt was bit costly yet they found it worth the money they spend. The food wasn't very impressive in the food court in the mall. Overall service was the leading force for the malls success.

The overall rating was GREAT as against good (30%), bad and not bad (1%) the same feedback was also noted about the shopping experience.

Many liked the interiors and the ambience. The huge area and space attracted others and they were not very attracted by the food and other things. Almost 95% wanted to come back again for the same experince.

Almost 95% felt they can relate this mall to that they show in other countries. This is alarming as this means this mall is not as unique as it looks like. Similarities do exist between others and this mall. 90% of the people felt that they got what they wanted or found things which were very impressive.

Another astonishing fact was that people felt that it was a mix of west and east. Not many felt it was old fashioned, eastern or western in particular. Some people felt irritated by the huge crowd but many others loved and had no irritations.

The mode of transport to and from the mall was by Taxi mostly and the next important mode of transport was the public transport like bus, metros etc. many people like the tuktuk ride across the city. Many people who stayed nearby walked to the mall. Most of them felt that reaching the mall was very easy.

Many visitors felt that this mall was a one stop place for all their needs. But many felt they had other options. They visited the place for specify items alone. People in the age group of 20-30 visited the malls very often and the next was people from age group 40-59. Youngsters below 20 were the next in lead and not many silvers above 60 were seen around.

Almost without any gender bias men and women were seen coming to the mall. There was no big difference. Married people seem to come her more than singles. It is more sophisticated and hence singles don't prefer coming here. It is also very crowed and not a preferred hangout for singles.

Among the visitors almost 90% were Asian and closely following were Americans. Other nationalities counted less. Many were into private sector jobs or owned their own business establishments. Students also visited these malls more than the government employees. The occupation mostly of the visitors was public sector.

## Siam Paragon Shopping Mall

In the above graph you see the first question from the questionnaire asking “ Are you resident of Bangkok? 10% of people who took the survey were residents. And almost 90% who were not residents answered the second question which was “ is this your first visit to Bangkok?” almost 90% tourist were first time visitors.

The third question was how they knew about the mall. In this question we did find one major factor that online information and travel sites helped a lot in finding the best shopping malls in the city. People found out from friends, online forums and social media networks. Next coming to the main topic about what they liked about the Emporium mall many answered that they like the service and the ambience more. The cost they felt was bit costly yet they found it worth the money they spend. The food wasn't very impressive in the food court in the mall. Overall ambience was the leading force for the malls success.

The overall rating was Good as against great(60%), and not bad (1%) the feedback was just the opposite about the shopping experience. People found it Great to shop here and many felt it was not bad.

Many liked the ambience, interiors and the huge area. The food attracted others. Almost 90% wanted to come back again for the same experince

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like. Similarities do exist between others and this mall. 90% of the people felt that they got what they wanted or found things which were very impressive.

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The mode of transport to and from the mall was by Taxi mostly and the next important mode of transport was the public transport like bus, metros etc. many people like the tuktuk ride across the city. Many people who stayed nearby walked to the mall. Most of them felt that reaching the mall was very easy.

Many visitors felt that this mall was a one stop place for all their needs. But many felt they had other options. They visited the place for specify items alone. People in the age group of 20-30 visited the malls very often and the next was people from age group 40-59. Youngsters below 20 were the next in lead and not many silvers above 60 were seen around.

Almost without any gender bias men and women were seen coming to the mall. But men were seen slightly more than women. There was no big difference though. Married people seem to come less than singles. It is a heaven for singles to hang out.

Asians visited this mall most followed by other nationals like Americans, Africans, Latino and others. As for the occupation of the visitors who visited the mall, it was found that students came here the most. They liked the

place very well and it was their favorite hangout with friends. People working in government and public sector jobs came lesser and business people visited lesser.

### **Discussions:**

When comparing the shopping experience in both the malls we found a vast difference in the data we collected through the questionnaire. The results were totally in contrast in some areas and in some fields both were almost the same. We found that more residents visited the Emporium Mall while more foreigners visited the Siam Paragon Shopping Mall. Most of the visitors were first timers.

Both places people liked the ambience and the services. The cost in the malls was high in both malls and the type of people visiting the malls also varied a lot. Many young people and single people preferred visiting the Siam Paragon Shopping Mall. It was a best hangout for youngsters and students in particular. Senior people preferred the Emporium mall. We were able to find this out through questions like their age and occupation.

Next comes the source of information. Many people found information about the city online through forums, social media networking sites and travel sites. This shows how online media is helping tourism a lot. And as for the ethnicity we find Asians visiting the place more than the westerners. Which means this area is still to be tapped by the tourism industry. By promoting Bangkok in the western world there are greater chances of attracting people from European and American countries. Overall the goal to find out the

shopping experience in the two malls was achieved and very important details were analyzed.

## **Limitation**

We faced certain limitations and problems when we started our survey at the two malls. First was the reluctance from the individuals to spend few minutes to fill up the questionnaire. Many westerns were too obliged to help and they even spend some time to ask us about our education. They were very friendly and concerned. But local residents were irritated when we stopped them and most of them refused to stop.

After the survey we found out that unique websites must be created to promote Bangkok tourism. A best tourism promotion strategy must be developed by the tourism depart to invite foreigners to Bangkok. We also saw places which were not well maintained. Government should take steps to maintain its rich tradition and culture. Moreover the fees for entering historic places and Buddha temples were very high. This also must be reduced.

## **Conclusion**

My trip to Bangkok was a great success as I was not only enjoying with my friends I was also learning new things that was enriching my knowledge. The city of Bangkok is thronged by tourists from all nations who come here for many varied reasons. Our plan was to find out what made Bangkok a preferred tourist destination in the eyes of the tourists. We planned to conduct a survey in two famous shopping malls in Bangkok. We prepared the questionnaire accordingly and finished the survey successfully. After

analyzing the report we have discussed certain issues and limitations.

Overall this entire trip was very useful for my studies. It gave me self confidence and the courage to go to new countries and converse and relate to people who come from many nations.

Bangkok is a great city rich in culture, religion, tradition etc and is also a very modern city with a touch of western culture too. So foreigners prefer this city and they come here to see the eastern tradition, to know more about Buddhism, to visit all historic places in and around Bangkok, and also to experience the exotic Thai food which is world famous. The aim of this project was to find the shopping experience of people visiting the two malls, namely the Emporium shopping Mall and Siam Paragon Shopping Mall. Our goal was achieved successfully and we are now confident enough to conduct more studies and surveys in future.

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