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50th Anniversary

LONG LIVE THE KING

HIS Majesty's name, Bhumibol Adulyadej, means Strength of the Land with Incomparable Power.

Born on December 5, 1927, HM the King had travelled the length and breadth of the country to give hope and bring development to his subjects.

At a very young age, he had demonstrated his remarkable talents, which ranged from sports to music, science and technology, carpentry and art.

After ascending to the throne on June 9, 1946 following the untimely death of King Ananda, he became Rama IX. And for more than 60 years, the King, who is the longest reigning monarch in the world had served his subjects in many ways.

Among the most outstanding is the initiation of the Royal Projects. In the field of agriculture, the projects were mostly aimed at getting the farmers away from opium cultivation to other forms of cultivation such as flowers. Most of these projects were, and are successful. As an example, when you fly Thai Airways International, the coffee and tea you get on board has been grown in the North of Thailand, in one of these Royal Projects.

Another Royal Project in the Agricultural Field is the so called Royal Rain. Farmers in Thailand, and especially those in the North, are very poor. When there is no rain for a long time, there will be a very limited harvest or no harvest at all, which means no income at all.

Therefore, as an initiative of HM The King, in very dry times small crystals are spread over clouds by planes and as a result rain will fall. These cloud seeding projects had been adopted in many countries in the region.

Royal Projects are not only projects in the Agricultural field. There are also Royal Projects on the field of health care.

The King had initiated several centres for fighting against diseases that plagued the people, like leprosy. He has financed these centres often from his private funds.

And when visiting the countryside, he always takes a team of doctors and nurses with him, to be able to give medical assistance to the people he meets there. It seems that he writes down all the names of people he helped in this way, in order to



have a personal remembrance to them.

Also in other respects HM has been busy intensively with agriculture. Having had a technical education and always having had a lively interest in technical matters, he has invented the Chai Pattana Water Aerator that is helpful for small farmers.

He had applied for a patent and it was granted and now the aerator can be used by Thai farmers free of charge.

In the words of His Majesty, "...The development of the country must be fostered in stages. It must start with the construction of infrastructure,

that is, the provision of food and basic necessities for the people by methods which are economic, cautious and conforming with principles. Once the foundation is firmly established, progress can be continually, carefully and economically promoted. This approach will prevent incurring mistakes and failures, and lead to the certain and complete achievement of the objectives..."

On the occasion of the King's birthday, we join millions of Thais in wishing His Majesty a happy birthday.

LONG LIVE THE KING.

Director's Message

Sawatdi khrap.

It is that time of the year again, when we send out greetings and best wishes – Merry Christmas and Happy New Year and may 2011 brings you much joy, happiness and prosperity. Of course, I should also wish our Hindu friends a Happy Deepavali.

You may know that the Deepavali celebrations have much in common with the Thai festival of Loy Krathong, celebrated nationwide for over 700 years since its beginning in Sukhothai. Many legends are associated with the festival, but of course, the most important reason is that it allows the people to offer thanks and gratitude to Mae Khong Kha or the Mother of Water for giving sustenance throughout the year. Anyway, Loy Krathong Festival is held on the full moon night which this year falls on Nov 21. So if you are anywhere in Thailand during that period, head to any waterway, river or stream. You would witness one of the most beautiful and colourful celebrations in Thailand.

In early December, it's the Thai National Day, which is actually His Majesty the King's Birthday. This is another colourful event with parades and performances galore as the nation offers good wishes and long live to HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej.

There are a few other festivals that should interest you if you are in Thailand during these two months such as the Phimai Festival, Ayutthaya World Heritage Fair, River Kwai Bridge Week and Ice Dome & Lantern Festival.

For the sportsmen, runners especially, you should give the Khon Kaen International Marathon a try. It is actually in January, but the registration is open now.

There are many new attractions coming up as well such as the Amazon Falls Water Theme Park in Pattaya and Chiang Mai CNXWood.

You would also be happy to note that two new air services just started. The first is between Bangkok and the seaside resort of Hua Hin and the other is between Kuala Lumpur and Phuket.

We are also happy to say that our commercial recently won the PATA Golf Award. And on another note, four Malaysians were named Friends of Thailand for their contributions to the Thai tourism industry through their work.

Of course, the year end brings with it a lot of unfinished business, and we would like to implore those of you who had been working hard throughout the year without a break. Give yourselves a treat. Come and enjoy a couple of days with us in Thailand. You would return home refreshed to face the various new challenges of 2011.

See you in Thailand soon.

MR WIBOON NIMITRWANICH
Director
Malaysia & Brunei



LIKE most festivals in Thailand, the Loi Krathong Festival or the Festival of Lights had its origin in a legend.

In Sukhothai more than 700 years ago a court lady named Nang Nophamas, the daughter of a Brahmin priest, made a decorative float and presented it to the ruler of the Kingdom of Sukhothai. It was around the time Deepavali is celebrated by the Hindus worldwide.

Seeing the beauty of the festival, courtiers and lay people alike followed suit, and the people with them. Since then the festival had been celebrated by Thais annually all over the country and to a certain extent by Malaysians of Thai origin in the states of Kedah, Perlis, Perak and Kelantan.

In Thailand the biggest celebrations are held in Sukhothai, Chiang Mai, Ayutthaya and Bangkok. Krathongs or floats decorated with flowers, incense sticks and candles in various shapes and sizes are float down rivers.

The anthropologists will sternly tell you it's a rite to persuade the local serpent-ruler: PHYA NAK as he is known in Thailand to halt the monsoon rains, dispel the floods and return the rivers to their normal tranquil ways.

As late as the 19th century, they inform us that the Tai people in North Vietnam were sacrificing children with that aim in mind. Some had declared and believe that Phya Nak or Dragon King is still around and can be seen at certain times in the Mekong River.

On the other hand, a more credible belief is that Krathong floating is an act of respect and a form of thanks to the Mother of the Waters, Mae Kongkha. Then again, in somewhat intermediate explanation, we are said to be paying our respect to the Nguak or female water spirits or alternatively to the Phra Maha Uppakut – a monk-like being who spends his time meditating in the river, coming out on his alms rounds on the Wednesday mornings when the moon is full and generously rewarding those giving food to him.

It is also believed that when you float your Krathong away, you are getting rid of the year's bad luck – be careful not to upset your vessel or let it come back to you or you will start your new year with the old bad luck as an extra burden.

The Loi Krathong Festival is celebrated on the full moon night of November annually and this year it falls on Nov 21.

If you happen to be in any part of Thailand at this time, head to any main river in the town. Wat-

ching and taking part in the festival is an experience you would not soon forget.

Some of the major loi krathong events taking part are as follows:

Loi Krathong Festival

Date : Nov 21, 2010

Venue : Chao Phraya River, Bangkok

View illuminated boat procession, Loi Krathong activities as well as illuminated buildings and historical sites one both sides of the river.

Bang Sai Loi Krathong Tam Prathip Festival

Date : Nov 20-21, 2010

Venue : Bang Sai Royal Folk Arts and Crafts Centre under the Royal patronage of H.M. Queen Sirikit, Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya.

Relive the glorious past of Ayutthaya on this atmospheric night. Enjoy the traditional procession of beauty queens from all four regions and experience the relaxing surroundings of a floating market demonstration.

Sukhothai Loi Krathong & Candle Festival

Date : Nov 19-21, 2010

Venue : Sukhothai Historical Park, Sukhothai

Be enchanted by the worshipping ceremonies to Phra Mae Ya and King Ramkhamhaeng the Great, the cultural arts and traditional Thai musical performances, Nang Noppamas Beauty Contest, lighting of lanterns, Khao Khwan Wan Len Fai ceremony, as well as a light and sound presentation at Wat Mahathat.

Chiang Mai Yi Peng Festival

Date : Nov 16-21, 2010

Venue : Chiang Mai

Participate in the launching of lanterns to worship Phrathat Chulamani, and take in the competition of a Yi Peng procession, as well as Lanna cultural performances and various forms of entertainment

Tak Loi Krathong Sai Festival

Date : Nov 16-21, 2010

Venue : Along Ping River, Tak

This festival involves Royal lamps, and a light and sound spectacular on a water screen. Other attractions include a beauty pageant a bazaar of local handicrafts.

TAT honours Friends of Thailand

LONG-standing friends and supporters of the Thai tourism industry, as well as some of its best products and tour guides, were conferred well-deserved awards at a cocktail reception organised by the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) in Bangkok in September.

Winning for Malaysia were Tourism Food Ambassador of Malaysia, celebrity chef Dato' Redzuan Ismail (Chef Wan); Golden Deluxe Travel Service Agency Sdn Bhd; freelance journalist Mr Kee Hua Chee; and Lufthansa German Airline.

The 8th Thailand Tourism Awards, 7th Friends of Thailand Awards, and 6th Tourist Guide Awards were conferred on a total of 283 recipients at the

function organised at the Centara Grand Hotel.

The event was simultaneously organised to commemorate World Tourism Day as well as being held in the year marking the 50th Anniversary of the founding of TAT.

All three awards are designed to promote the professionalism, standards, and image of the Thai tourism industry, recognised as one of the country's most important contributors to economic and social development.

The Friends of Thailand Awards honour foreign individuals and companies worldwide, who have contributed to the success of the tourism industry.



The 2010 Phimai Festival

THE province of Nakhon Ratchasima, in collaboration with the TAT Nakhon Ratchasima Office, the Fine Arts Department, as well as, other related agencies, is organizing the annual 2010 Phimai Festival, scheduled to be held during November 10-14, 2010, at the Phrommathat Ground of the Phimai Historical Park and banks of the Chakkarat River, Amphoe Phimai, Nakhon Ratchasima province.

The highlights of the event will include a light and sound presentation *Dances beyond the Mun River* that will tell the story of the glorious

period of King Jayavarman VII, November 12-14, 2010.

The event will also comprise traditional long-boat races during 13-14 November, 2010, on the banks of the Chakkarat River and Mun River.

For further information, please contact the Phimai District Office, Tel: 044-471617, Phimai Municipal Office, Tel: 044-471121 (ticket reservation), or TAT Nakhon Ratchasima Office, Tel: 044-213030, 044-213666, Website: www.tat.or.th/nakhonratchasima; E-mail: tatsima@tat.or.th



CNXWood to open in 2012

CREATIVE Kingdom Inc expects to complete the first phase of its US\$650-million movie town project in Chiang Mai in 2012, says chairman and CEO Eduardo A Robles.

Chiang Mai CNXWood Movie World, officially launched last June, is supported by the Board of Investment and the US Embassy.

The first phase in San Kamphaeng District, is expected to generate more than 4,000 jobs and \$245



Ayutthaya World Heritage Fair

ONCE the glorious capital of Siam, it was a centre of trade and government and possessed a long period of prosperity.

Come watch the light and sound show, the exhibitions on Ayutthaya as a World Heritage Site, as well as cultural performances.

Visitors can also spend their time shopping for a variety of OPTP products.

The fair will be from Dec 12-21, 2010.

For more information, contact: TAT Ayutthaya at 035-246076/7 or 035-322730/1.

Calling all runners

CALLING all runners. The 8th Khon Kaen International Marathon is now open for registration. All race divisions start and finish at the Golden Jubilee Convention Hall, Khon Kaen University, Khon Kaen Province.

The race would be held on Sunday, January 23, 2011 and is divided into four categories – Marathon, Half-Marathon, Mini Marathon and Walk & Fun Run.

The race is open to both Thai and non-Thais. Non-Thai residents who register before December 31 only need to pay US\$40 to enter the marathon. All on-line applications must be received before Jan 18, 2011.

For more information and to download entry forms, go to <http://www.khonkaenmarathon.com/en/>.



million in revenue a year.

The White House Studio Complex will comprise movie studios, media offices and post-production facilities. The company expects the development will attract representative offices from the major Hollywood studios.

In December, Creative Kingdom Inc plans to add new infrastructure for the production of computer games, dubbed *Metaverse Valley*.

Thailand Travel Mart 2010 Plus

THE Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) held the Thailand Travel Mart Plus Amazing Gateway to the Greater Mekong Subregion (TTM+ 2010) in September at the IMPACT Convention Center (Hall 9), Muang Thong Thani.

The Thailand Travel Mart Plus is the country's premier annual trade event designed to promote travel and tourism to Thailand and its neighbours in the Greater Mekong Subregion. More than 300 from 49 countries registered.

Apart from India, the other large buyer delegates are from the USA (26), United Kingdom (24), Russia (22), and Korea (16).

TAT will invite new buyers from Brazil, Mexico, UAE, Turkey, Lithuania, and Kazakhstan to test the

tourism products of Thailand.

The buyers met with 428 sellers from various business categories such as hotels and resorts, tour operators and travel agents, eco and adventure, wellness and spa, airlines, entertainment/theme parks/culture products, golf courses, associations, other travel services and the Greater Mekong Subregion/NTOs.

One of the primary objectives of the TTM Plus is to provide a platform for Thailand's small and medium sized entrepreneurs (SMEs) to find a market for their products and services on the international stage.

This is because many of them cannot afford to go to foreign trade shows to improve their profile.



Private plane service to Hua Hin launched

THE luxurious InterContinental Hua Hin Resort has become the first hotel in Hua Hin to launch its own private air service to shuttle guests from Bangkok to the beachside city.

The exclusive service departs from either Suvarnabhumi International Airport or Don Mueang Airport direct to Hua Hin before a resort limousine whisks guests away for the ten-minute drive for check in.

General Manager, Pattama Yoshimura, said the eight-seat Cessna Grand Caravan would raise the bar in Thailand towards opulent, yet convenient, services.

The plane has a full-time crew on permanent standby to make the 35-minute flight between Bangkok and Hua Hin at a moment's notice.

She said the service had been popular since its recent launch and the resort was also combining accommodation and flight packages, which are in demand.

Flights can be either one-way on the Cessna or return and packages combining the shuttle service and accommodation are available from the InterContinental Hua Hin Resort.

Contact information:

InterContinental Hua Hin Resort

Tel: +66 (0) 3261 6999; Fax: +66 (0) 3261 6555

Web site: <http://www.ichotelsgroup.com/intercontinental/en/gb/locations/huahin>



MATTA Fair attracts a crowd

THE year-end MATTA International Travel Fair in early September brought a stream of visitors to the Thai booth, made up of sellers from various parts of Thailand.

In addition TAT also brought in umbrella paint-

ers from Chiang Mai to give a demonstration of how the beautiful parasols associated with the province are painted. Chiang Mai also provided the cultural dancers to entertain the crowd which came to the hall during the three-day event.

New Year countdown

IT'S that time of the year when locals and foreigners gather in Bangkok and most major cities like Phuket, Hat Yai, Chiang Mai and Pattaya to usher in the New Year.

If you happen to be in these places during that time, head out to the city and join in the revelry and celebrations. You can expect a lot of fun with Thai pop performances, pyrotechnic and laser shows.

It is a great time to end the old year with a bang and welcome the new year with new resolutions. We look forward to welcoming you and together let's usher in 2011.



FAM Trip to Bangkok & beyond

TO familiarise travel agents and journalists from Penang with Bangkok and its surroundings, TAT organised an educational trip for a group to visit the Thai capital and beyond in early October.

They had a chance to see new tourism products that helped enriched their experience and knowledge so that they could come up with new products to sell.

TAT TV commercial wins PATA gold award

THE Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) won the prestigious PATA Gold Award 2010 for its advertising clip, *Thailand Talks to the World* in the Marketing Media – Travel Advertisement Broadcast Media category.

The Award was presented in a ceremony on 17 September 2010, during the PATA Travel Mart 2010 in Macau.

TAT Governor Mr Suraphon Svetasreni stated that the TV advertisement was undertaken as part of the country's image restoration programme designed to regain the confidence of foreign tourists in the aftermath of the April-May 2010 domestic political crisis.

"This 60-second advertisement presents the country's identity with a focus on art and culture as well as traditional festivals. The most attractive aspect of this ad is the smile of the Thai people that always impresses all visitors. The advertisement will

be broadcast on international channels particularly in Europe; such as, EuroNews, CNN (Asia), BBC Worldnews, Eurosport, and local channels in Germany, France, and the Scandinavian countries," the TAT Governor added.

To view the *Thailand Talks to the World-Europe* TV commercial, please check out <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7VQ6tw37UTc>

In addition, Thailand won another 3 PATA awards this year as follows:

- Gold Award for Marketing Hospitality: Outrigger Laguna Phuket Resort and Villas Opening Campaign
- Gold Award for Culture: Ban Mae Kampong in Chiang Mai
- Grand Award for Education and Training: Banyan Tree Spa Academy.

The Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) presented its Grand and Gold Awards 2010 to



recognise the achievements of 24 organisations and individuals during the PATA Travel Mart 2010.

The 33rd PATA Travel Mart this year was attended by 303 buyers from 269 organisations of 53 countries, 530 sellers from 295 organisations of 38 countries, and 152 media from 13 countries.



FAM Trip to Ample Moon Party

A group of media and travel agents recently visited Khanom Beach in Nakhon Sri Thammarat for a taste of beach party at the monthly Ample Moon Party.

Organised on the night after the full moon, the Ample Moon Party brings together people from the surrounding areas and foreigners alike to enjoy food in an atmosphere of entertaining music on the beach of Khanom.

The group also had a chance to visit several tourist spots such as fish spa and got a chance to see pink dolphins offshore.

Amazon Falls Theme Park opens

DUBBED the first full scale water theme park, the Amazon Falls Water Theme Park would be opened to the public in March 2011.

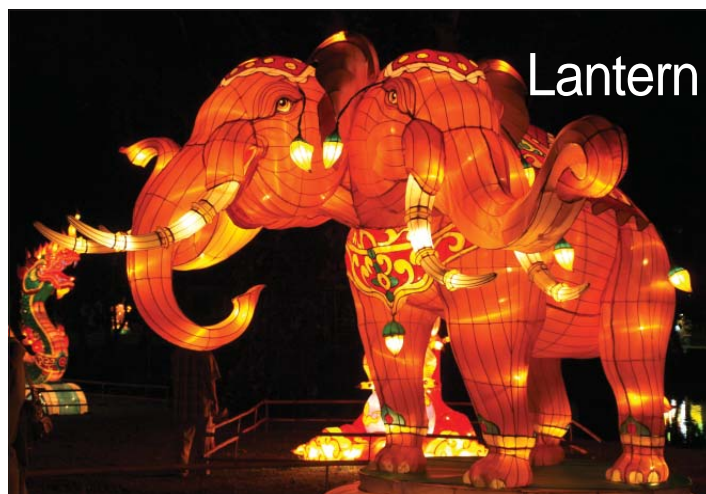
The park features over 17 exhilarating rides and the country's first wave pool capable of accommodating up to 1200 people at any one time. These state of the art technology rides will be operated to the highest international standards.

Amazon Falls Water Theme Park is located near Bang Saray, 15 min-

utes from Pattaya town. It is conveniently accessible from major cities through highways.

Be it families, adults or children, Amazon Falls Water Theme Park will definitely provide excitement and fun for everyone through non-stop entertainment and activities.

Amazon Falls Water Theme Park is expected to be Thailand's latest tourist destination and hopes to attract both the local and international visitors.



Lantern Festival & Ice Dome in Haad Yai

THE Haadyai Municipality together with the Tourism Authority of Thailand are again bringing the best of Chinese lanterns and ice carving to Haad Yai again next month.

This would be at the 2nd World-Class Handicraft from Harbin, China, beginning in November. It would be held together with the 5th Lantern Festival and Color of the South. There would also be a demonstration of the Ice Lantern Haad Yai Ice Dome, located at the Municipality Park.

There would be 11 Amazing Lanterns from China while there would also be shows of winter flowers.

Tickets can be booked in advance from: Call Centre (Information Center of Nakhon Hatyai Municipality): +66-(0)74-200-200; Hatyai Ice Dome: +66 (0)74-219-333.

Ticket sales: Ms. Weenar Jongvilakasem (+66(0)81-841-6481); <http://www.hatyaicedome.com>; bkksales@hatyaicedome.com; weena2004@hotmail.com.

Madame Tussauds to open in December

GLOBAL visitor attraction operator, Merlin Entertainments Group, is set to open its newest attraction, Madame Tussauds Bangkok in December 4th 2010.

The 500-million baht attraction is the tenth Madame Tussauds to open worldwide, third in Asia joining sister attractions in Hong Kong and Shanghai, and first in South East Asia.

Located on the 6th Floor of Siam Discovery, Madame Tussauds Bangkok is destined to be the 'must do' attraction for all visitors to the area.

With its brand new facade and striking contemporary architecture, the building provides an iconic new landmark for the Siam area.

With His Majesty the King Bhumibol Adulyadej's patronage, Madame Tussauds Bangkok features a royal room where wax figures of Somdej Pramahitathibej Adulyadej-vikrom Prabarommarajanok and Somdej Phra Srinagarindra Boromrajajonani are displayed.

Reflecting local culture and Thai loyalty to the monarchy, the Royal room allows visitors to not only learn about the life of His Majesty's parents but also the history of the Chakri dynasty.

As with its sister attractions, Madame Tussauds Bangkok offers the ultimate celebrity experience, where visi-

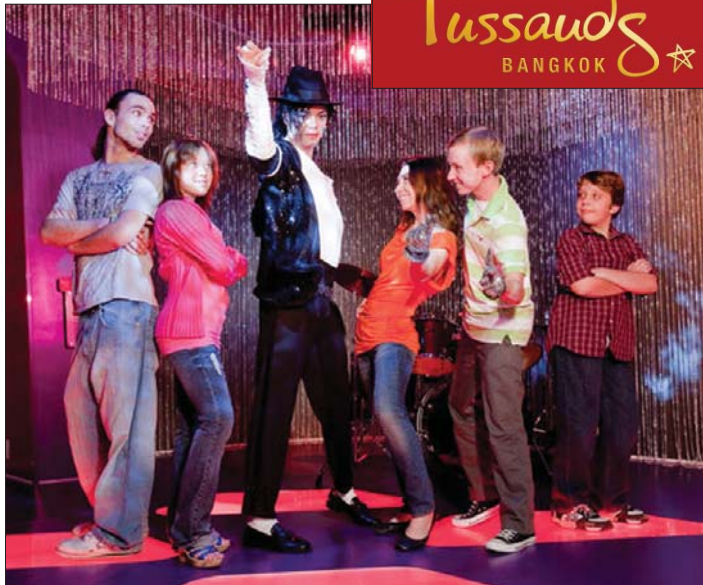
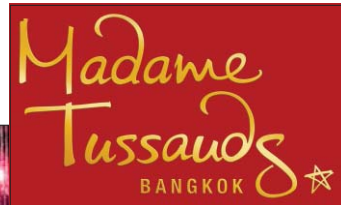
tors can get up close and personal with over 70 international and local celebrities from historic figures and world leaders like Princess Diana, Queen Elizabeth, and Field Marshall Plaek Pibulsonggram to arts and science personalities like Beethoven, Einstein and Sunthorn Phu.

They will be joined by world's famous movie stars and singers, sports heroes as well as international Hollywood 'A' listers such as Michael Jackson, David Beckham, George Clooney, Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie.

Madame Tussauds Bangkok is a fully interactive unique visitor experience, using state of the art technology, clever interactives and dramatic backdrops to showcase a range of incredibly lifelike wax figures.

It offers a host of fun ways to interact with the stars—be photographed with President Obama in the oval office; penalty shoot with Steven Gerrard; get into your favourite scene with Ann Thongprasom; take a journey with Dr. Pornthip Rojanasunan on her wall of discovery... and much more.

Full details at www.madametussauds.com/bangkok.



River Kwai Bridge Week

FOR a 12-days, the Bridge Over the River Kwai in Kanchanaburi would come alight at night for the River Kwai Bridge Week, from Nov 24 to Dec 5.

Watch the light and sound show, held in remembrance of the bridge and the construction of the "Death Railway" during

World War II.

In addition there would be a wealth of entertainment and exhibitions.

For more information, contact:

TAT Kanchanaburi (034-511200/034-512500) or visit www.tourismthailand.org.

Dansa II shoots in Thailand

TV9's Dansa programme was shot in Nakhon Ratchasima and Nakhon Pathom recently.

The 11-day shooting was for two segments of Dansa II, which would be screened over TV9 next year.

While in Nakhon Ratchasima, the crew also visited the Petrified Wood Museum and Phimai Historical Park.

Shooting was also done at the Ancient City in Samut Prakan and Khao San Road in Bangkok.



Qatar Airlines flies to Phuket from Kuala Lumpur

ANOTHER airline had begun service between Kuala Lumpur and Phuket: Qatar Airlines effective October.

On Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday the flight is at 2200 hrs (Phuket-KL at 2359 hrs) and on

Wednesday, Friday and Saturday at 1600 hrs (Phuket-KL at 1735 hrs). The flight time is one hour 15 minutes.

To make bookings, visit <http://www.qatarairways.com>.