

# Miracle Year

## amazing THAILAND

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# Amazing Thailand Grand Sale 2012



**FAMILY** entertainment, competitions, beauty and medical treatments, just to name a few. These all can be found at great discounts during the Amazing Thailand Grand Sale 2012, from June 15 to August 15.

It will feature Thailand's largest collection of travel packages, family entertainment, competitions and the most amazing bargains across retail, dining, leisure and hospitality as well as health, beauty and medical treatments.

The grand sale will be held in Thailand's leading tourism cities and provinces of Bangkok, Pattaya, Hua Hin, Chiang Mai, Koh Samui, Phuket and Hat Yai.

More than 10,000 companies will offer attractive discounts to attract tourists from across the world. Participating outlets of the festival will include Thailand's leading shopping malls, wholesale outlets and some of the most famous *Shopping, Dining and Walking Streets* providing visitors with an overall Thai festival experience.

This year sees the participation of two of Thailand's most famous shopping malls - Central World and Siam Paragon. And Malaysians would be happy to note that MBK and the Chatuchak Weekend Market with more than 5,000 stores would also be involved.

The sale will also provide a showcase for new stores and shopping malls including Central Plaza Rama 9, a seven-story shopping plaza; and Terminal 21, a nine-floor shopping complex designed to transport shoppers to some of the most famous shopping cities in the world.

Also participating in the event will be a cross section of Thailand's hotels from boutique and beach hotels to luxury resorts and villas.

For every Baht 500 spent, you get a coupon to enter the prize draw which includes a return tickets.

The winner will enjoy five-star accommodation with complimentary meals, free admission to all attractions, a private guide and escort as well as training courses on the *Thai way of life and culture*.



## Director's Message

### SAWATDI KHRAP.

IT is again the time of the year when the much-awaited Amazing Thailand Grand Sale takes place from June 15 to August 15. This year it would involve 15,000 participating retailers in well-known shopping destinations such as Bangkok, Chiang Mai, Pattaya, Hua Hin, Koh Samui, Hat Yai and Phuket.

The most preferred merchant categories would be department stores and shopping complexes, duty free shops, hotels, airlines, jewellery, spas, golf courses, dining, Thai handicrafts, on-line travel agencies and hospitals.

This year there would be more additional shopping destinations like the newly-opened Terminal 21, a shopping mall with a difference. It's styled like an airport and patterned after market streets from all around the world. Apart from Terminal 21, there are also the Central Plaza Rama 9. Visitors would also be happy to note the opening of an open-air mall called Asiatique The Riverfront in Bangkok. It lets you combine shopping and dining in a colonial-style atmosphere.

We have also launched the *Miracle Year of Amazing Thailand 2012* campaign, which is to celebrate three special Royal occasions – the 84th birthday of HM the King on December 5, 2011; the 80th birthday of HM the Queen on August 12, 2012; and the 60th Birthday of HRH Crown Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn on July 28, 2012.

In conjunction with this, a Miracle Thailand Card, a special debit card for foreign visitors to Thailand would be issued by Krungthai Bank. The card reduces the need for travellers to carry cash during their holiday in the Kingdom. It also offers extra value in the form of discounts at leading shopping malls and tourist spots as well as medical and life insurance coverage in case of accidents.

Travellers can use the Miracle Thailand Card to buy goods and withdraw cash from ATMs anywhere in Thailand without any charges as well as special discounts at leading shopping malls and tourist spots.

In the meantime, as most of you are already aware, the start of direct flights by Bangkok Airways to Koh Samui and AirAsia to Surat Thani had opened up a new destination for Malaysians to visit. Koh Samui and the surroundings offer some of the most spectacular group of islands which had attracted visitors from all over the world.

We are also happy to announce that the Tourism Authority of Thailand had won three PATA awards – the PATA Grand Awards 2012 for Environment; the PATA Gold Awards for Ecotourism; and the PATA Gold Awards for Heritage & Culture.

Numerous events and festivals await visitors to Thailand during this period including the Phitakon Festival in Loei, Surin Ordination Ceremony and the Bun Bang Fai rocket festival.

There's no shortage of events and festivals for you to enjoy and see. See you soon in Thailand.

MR WIBOON NIMITRWANICH  
Director  
Malaysia & Brunei



## 7 Miracles of Thailand exhibition

**THE** Tourism Authority of Thailand officially unveiled the *Miracle Year of Amazing Thailand* initiative, a mega-campaign to celebrate the birthdays of members of the Thai Royal Family, highlighting the many aspects that make Thailand such an appealing destination for foreign visitors.

The event was launched by Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra at the IMPACT Muang Thong Thani that also featured the *7 Miracles of Thailand* Exhibition.

It was part of the *Miracle Year of Amazing Thailand 2012* campaign and showcased the Royal Projects, Thai cultural events, traditional celebra-

tions, popular tourist destinations, Thai cuisine, Muay Thai, and Thai massage.

This event commemorates the three special Royal occasions that make up the Miracle Year: the 7th Cycle of HM the King's Birthday (5 December 2011); HM the Queen's 80th Birthday (12 August 2012); and HRH Crown Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn's 60th Birthday (28 July 2012).

This event kicked off the *Miracle Year of Amazing Thailand 2012* campaign, which will also include more trade events and new tourism products to offer innovative travel experiences to visitors to Thailand.

## TAT wins PATA Grand Award

**THE** Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) picked up three awards at the PATA ceremony in Kuala Lumpur recently. This year, the awards recognise the achievements of 21 separate organisations and individuals. The PATA Grand Awards are presented to outstanding entries in four principal categories: Marketing; Education and Training; Environment; and Heritage and Culture.

This year, the TAT received the Grand Awards for Environment (7 Green Concepts); and Gold Awards for Environment – Ecotourism Project (Organic Agriculture Project, Sukhothai Airport); and for Heritage and Culture – Heritage (Ban Na Ton Chan Community).







## Cable car starts operation

**ANOTHER** new attraction for those visiting the city of Hat Yai is the cable car ride on Khao Khor Hong, the hill overlooking the city.

Located near the Municipal Park, the cable car

began operations on December 5 last year, which coincided with HM The King's Birthday.

The cable car is in service daily from 8.00am to 8.00pm. Tickets are priced at Baht 200 per

person.

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## Boon Luang and Phi Ta Khon festival

*Dan Sai District, Loei District and Province  
June - July 2012*

**THE** Phi Ta Khon festival is unique to the Dan Sai district in Loei Province and reflects the local Isan belief in ghosts and spirits. Held once a year, it is part of a grand merit-making festival known as the *Boon Luang* festival.

The origins of the Phi Ta Khon Festival can be found in the tale of Lord Buddha's last great incarnation before attaining Enlightenment. In Buddhist accounts, it is said that when Prince Vessandara, the Buddha's penultimate incarnation, returned to his city, it was such a joyous occasion that the village spirits came forth to join the welcoming parade.

In a lively re-enactment of the tale, the young men of the community dress up as *spirits* wearing long trailing costumes made from colourful strips of cloth sewn together.

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## Asiatique The Riverfront open-air mall



**FOR** those who love to do their shopping with a difference, head to Asiatique The Riverfront, an open-air mall on the bank of the Chao Phraya River. It is a market that lets you combine shopping, dining, and culture amidst colonial-style architecture, and offers a pleasant experience for those in search of style and sophistication.

It is located on Chareonkrung Road, Bangkok's first and oldest paved road and was once a flourishing trade centre during King Rama V's reign (1868-1910). These bustling activities brought trade to new heights, and foreign influence became evident in the building's architecture.

Asiatique The Riverfront reflects this cultural heritage adding a modern twist to it through its architecture and selection of shops and restaurants. It is set to be Bangkok's first large-scale riverside project combining shopping, dining, sight-seeing, activities and events under one roof.

Opening Hours : 16:00 – midnight

Location : Chareonkrung Soi 74-76, Bangkok.



# Novice ordination procession on elephant-back

*At Wat Chaeng Sawang temple and the Ban Ta Klang Elephant Village and Study Centre, Tha Tum district, Surin Province  
May 3 - 5, 2012*

**BAN** Ta Klang village in Surin province is home to the legendary Kui elephant herders who are descendants of an ancient tribespeople noted for their expertise in capturing, domesticating and training wild elephants in times past.

The villagers continue to keep ancient tribal customs and traditions alive and have passed this knowledge on from generation to generation.

Rituals and ceremonies, including the wedding procession on elephant back, the mass ordination ceremony and the novice ordination procession on elephant back, are still being performed in accordance with ancient customs and traditions.

The novice ordination procession on elephant back is part of a mass ordination ceremony. The Kui believe that in order to gain fame or be besto-



wed with much merit, male members of the family should take part in a mass ordination ceremony that involves at least 1,000 novices riding on elephant back over long distances.

The mass ordination ceremony and ordination procession is held during the 13th - 15th day of the waxing moon in the sixth month before the beginning of Buddhist Lent every year.

The annual Ban Ta Klang mass ordination pro-

cession features over 100 novices. Each rides on the back of an elaborately-adorned elephant as the procession makes its way from the Ban Ta Klang Elephant Study Centre to Wang Talu, a site where the Chi River converges with the Mun River. The ordination ceremony is performed at Don Buat, an island in the middle of the river.

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## Koh Samui Road Show

**THE** Travel Association of Koh Samui recently had a road show in Kuala Lumpur to introduce the resort island and its surroundings to buyers from Malaysia.

A total of 30 sellers, made up of resorts, hotels, travel agents and Bangkok Airways took part in the event. Some 300 travel agents from Malaysia joined the event and took part in the buyer-meet-seller sessions.



## TAT takes part in MATA Fair

**THE** Tourism Authority of Thailand took part in the recently concluded MATA International Travel Fair at the Putra World Trade Centre (PWTC) in Kuala Lumpur.

The Thai booth was represented by TAT offices from Hat Yai and Koh Samui as well as travel agents and hotel operators from Koh Samui, Hat Yai and Satun.

## MITM Fair in JB

**THE** Tourism Authority of Thailand took the opportunity to introduce more destinations in Thailand to those living in the south by taking part in the MITM Fair in Johor Bahru.

The fair, which is beginning to gain popularity among the public, attracted more than 11,000 visitors.







## Journalists visit Surat Thani

IN conjunction with AirAsia's flight to Surat Thani, a media trip was organised to introduce the destination to Malaysian journalists.

The five-day trip enabled the group to sample some of the tourism products available in the area. These included a visit to Koh Samui, Koh Nang Yuan and Koh Tao.

On the mainland, they also had a chance to visit the Rajjaphrappa Dam, home to the *Guilin of Thailand* in the Khao Sok National Park.

They also visited a renowned meditation centre in the south, Wat Suan Mokh in Chaiya.

## Miracle Thailand Card: Debit card for tourists

**THE** Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Krungthai Bank to issue the Miracle Thailand Card, a special debit card for foreign visitors to Thailand.

The card reduces the need for travellers to carry cash during their holiday in the Kingdom. It also offers extra value in the form of discounts at leading shopping malls and tourist spots, as well as medical and life insurance coverage.

"The *Miracle Year of Amazing Thailand 2012* is a special campaign to celebrate three special Royal occasions, which are the 7th Cycle of HM the King's Birthday on 5 December 2011; HM the Queen's 80th Birthday on 12 August 2012 and HRH Crown Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn's 60th

Birthday on 28 July 2012.

The card will help ensure visitors to Thailand during this auspicious year enjoy greater convenience and have fewer worries while they are here," said TAT Governor Mr Suraphon Svetasreni.

Travellers can use the card to buy goods and withdraw cash from ATMs anywhere in Thailand. Special discounts are offered when using the Miracle Thailand Card at leading shopping malls and tourist spots such as The Mall, Emporium, Siam Paragon, Paradise Park, MBK Center, King Power Duty Free, Siam Park, Siam Niramit and Safari World.

The Miracle Thailand Card is an electronic cash card similar to a debit card. International travel-

lers can buy the card when they arrive at Suvarnabhumi Airport at the ATTA counter, or at any Krungthai Bank Currency Exchange booth.

The basic card costs 100 Baht, which includes 7-day personal accident insurance of up to 10,000 Baht for outpatient treatment, 500,000 Baht for inpatient treatment and 1 million Baht life insurance. The card can be topped up anytime and up to a maximum value of 30,000 Baht.

Details about the Miracle Thailand Card are available from Krungthai Bank at [www.ktb.co.th](http://www.ktb.co.th) or by calling Krungthai Bank at 0-2208-8280.

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## Bun Bang Fai rocket festival

IN a country where agriculture and farming sustains the livelihood of over 70 per cent of the population, the festivals and ceremonies associated with a bountiful harvest are central elements of the way of life in the rural communities.

Born of the traditional beliefs of the I-san people, the sprightly *Bun Bang Fai* Rocket Festival, the most celebrated of I-san's merit-making rituals, has been strictly observed by the residents of I-san for generations.

Highlights of this annual celebrations include a procession of old-style rockets mounted on traditional carts, beauty pageant, cheerleader contests, and a traditional *Palaeng* I-san style dinner.

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# Bangkok Airways inaugural flight



**THAI** airline, Bangkok Airways, together with the Tourism Authority of Thailand organised a media and agent familiarisation trip to Koh Samui recently.

It was in conjunction with the airline's inaugural flight from KLIA to the island resort beginning in April. The airline is flying daily between the two destinations.

The media and travel agents had a chance to visit some of the most popular areas in and around Koh Samui such as Koh Tao and Koh Nang Yuan.

In addition they also had a chance to sample some of the resort-style living as well as the health and wellness resorts.

## Travel agents & journalists celebrate Songkran

**A GROUP** of travel agents and journalists in two groups had a chance to sample the Thai New Year in Chiang Mai, Bangkok and Hat Yai recently.

The Thai New Year, which is synonymous with the Songkran or water festival was celebrated nationwide from April 13-15.

Hat Yai, which had become well-known for the Midnight Songkran, attracted thousands of Malaysians who helped make the celebration truly spectacular.

For most of the Malaysian journalists, who were experiencing the festival for the first time, it proved to be a great way to cool down during the hot weather.

While there, the journalists also visited the seaside city of Songkhla, its famous aquarium and the Naga Head at Samila Beach.



## MCTA raises money for Thai flood victims

**THE** Malaysian Chinese Travel Association (MCTA) raised some RM23,100 to be donated to the Chaipattana Foundation for the purpose of helping the victims of the flood in Thailand last year.

The cheque was handed over to Tourism Authority of Thailand Director, Mr Wiboon Nimitrwanich, at the MCTA office in Kuala Lumpur recently.

The money were proceeds from the sale of tickets and rental of booths during the MCTA Fair in October last year.

On behalf of the Thai people, TAT wishes to thank MCTA for its generosity.