

FILM IN THAILAND

Volume 1 Issue 8 2009



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What's News ?

Around the World in 30 Days (well almost)



The Thailand Film Office, Office of Tourism Development has been busy: on the road to Korea, Tokyo the USA and Seville Spain over the last month.

First up from the 12-14 October was the Busan (Korea) International Film Commission & Industry Showcase (BIFCOM 2009) where

Thailand Film Office director Wanasiri Morakul and her team not only promoted Thailand's production services industries and spectacular locations from their booth but also participated in the 2nd Asian Film Policy Forum held by the Asian Film Commission Network (AFCnet) from the 13-14 October.



The event housed 45 booths from 15 countries including Australia, Cambodia, China, Japan, Jordan, Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Vietnam, Philippines, Taiwan, Thailand, the United States and Hong Kong.

BIFCOM and AFCnet allowed participants the opportunity to assess interest, exchange information and learn from other countries ways to improve services and operations.

From the 18 – 24 October, Thailand Film Office and Office of Tourism Development staff attended the Tokyo International Film Festival (TIFFCOM 2009) which had over 110 booths exhibiting.



Filmmakers from China Malaysia and Japan expressed an interest in filming in Thailand during 2010-2011 – with anticipated revenue at around \$500,000 U.S. dollars, or about 20 million baht.

Another team from the Thailand Film Office attended the Association of Film Commissioners International (AFCI) annual Cineposium held this year at Universal Studios in Los Angeles.

Held October 31st -November 3rd, the event drew AFCI members from more than 20 countries for issue-oriented industry discussions and workshops. Keynote address was given by Roger Corman who has produced more than 550 feature films and directed 50 others.

From the 5th November –8th November a team from the Thailand Film Office and Office of Tourism Development attended the first film location show in Europe, the Seville International Locations Expo. Thailand was the only Asian country represented.

Representatives from Thailand's booth fielded many questions about filmmaking in the Kingdom and look for increased numbers of film makers to take advantage of Thailand's lower cost production resources.

And Speaking of Lower Costs.....



You Really Do Save Money in Thailand!

We've been telling you for awhile that one of the reasons to plan your next foreign location shoot in Thailand is because you save money here.

But, don't just take our word for it!

Try listening to Swiss Bank UBS who in their "Prices and Earnings Report 2009", in which they take a look at prices and earnings from 73 cities worldwide, ranks Bangkok quite favorably in their comparison "basket of 122 services and goods".

What sets you back US \$3,172 in Geneva, costs you US \$1,742 in Bangkok. Average cost of the "basket" is US \$2,670.

The 122 products and services breakdown as follows:

- Food/groceries 14%
- Beverages/tobacco products 4%
- Hygiene and healthcare 7%
- Clothing 5%
- Household and electronic devices 7%
- Home 20%
- Heating/lighting 6%
- Transportation 15%
- Miscellaneous services 22%

Source: UBS WMR

The Prices and Earnings Report has been published every three years since 1971.

Here are the overall price comparisons

City	Ranking (New York = 100%)
Oslo	112.5
Zurich	108.4
Copenhagen	108.4
Geneva	106.8
Tokyo	102.0
Helsinki	94.5
Vienna	93.5
Paris	93.3
Dublin	92.7
Munich	92.3
Caracas	91.0
Frankfurt	90.8
Luxembourg	90.6
Los Angeles	88.1
Stockholm	87.0
Rome	86.7
Lyon	85.2
Dubai	84.9
Brussels	84.7
London	84.6

Barcelona	83.5
Amsterdam	83.0
Singapore	82.0
Chicago	82.0
Madrid	81.0
Berlin	81.0
Hong Kong	80.9
Miami	79.3
Milan	78.9
Toronto	78.9
Montreal	76.3
Istanbul	74.2
Tel Aviv	75.5
Lisbon	74.0
Athens	72.7
Nicosia	72.7
Sydney	68.5
Doha	67.6
Ljubljana	64.3
Shanghai	64.1
São Paulo	63.3
Seoul	62.9
Riga	62.7
Auckland	62.3
Taipei	61.7
Manama	59.7
Rio de Janeiro	59.6
Bratislava	59.4
Bangkok	58.7
Prague	57.5
Beijing	57.4
Tallinn	57.4
Vilnius	56.7
Warsaw	55.8
Moscow	55.6
Budapest	54.4
Sofia	52.5
Kiev	52.1
Lima	50.5
Buenos Aires	50.4
Santiago de Chile	50.0
Nairobi	49.2
Johannesburg	48.6
Jakarta	47.8
Bogotá	47.1
Bucharest	46.0
Mexico City	45.4
Cairo	45.3
Kuala Lumpur	43.2
Manila	39.3
Delhi	37.6
Mumbai	30.9



Meet Some of Our Coordinators

By now you know when foreign production crews shoot in Thailand they must hire a coordinator to help them through the process of securing permits and taking care of all ground arrangements.

We thought it would be helpful if we featured some of the best performing coordinators of 2008. We have a top ten list of performers to which a letter was sent asking them to answer a series of questions. In this and in the next couple of FIT we will feature answers of the coordinators that responded to our letters. We present them in no particular order

In today's FIT meet Mufita Na Songkla (MNS) of Legend Films.



FIT: What qualities have made you (your company) successful as a film location coordinator?

MNS: Over the past 35 years, we have worked in every corner of Thailand and

throughout SE Asia. We have the people, the relationships and know-how to find the perfect location and effectively obtain permission to shoot there.

FIT: What characteristics should a foreign producer look for when seeking a coordinator to work with in Thailand?

MNS: A foreign producer should make sure the local coordinator has international experience, a core team and a successful track record. Simply finding people who have worked on various projects will not do. They should find a coordinator who has managed international projects, finishes on-time, within budget and with high quality.

FIT: How does a foreign production find the most qualified coordinators to work with? Sometimes just looking in a directory does not tell much.

MNS: There are only a few qualified coordinators in Thailand. The easiest way is to speak directly to the Thailand Film Office as they have the most up-to-date information on the local coordinators. Additionally, each foreign producer should ask for references of previous projects. This will show them how each coordinator has performed on previous engagements. What they should be careful of is that cheapest price is not always the best option.

FIT: What are some of the more interesting locations you have shot in Thailand?

MNS: Since we have shot throughout all Thailand, as a Chiang Mai based company, we show favoritism to our local area. We shoot Rambo IV in Chiangmai. Here we have some of the most beautiful landscapes in Thailand.

FIT: What are some classic situations (problems) foreign productions have when filming in Thailand and how have you solved these situations?

MNS: V.A.T. & foreign actor taxation are questions which require government action in order to attract film makers to shoot in Thailand.

FIT: What should foreign production companies know BEFORE coming to Thailand to shoot?

MNS: They should be well aware of the process to obtain visas, work permits and permission to film in Thailand. Also, depending on the type of "shoot", they should be aware of the weather, temperatures and various seasons. This can be extremely important depending on the type of scenery needed for their filming. Lastly, they should have some knowledge of the local culture and customs. This information can go a long way if ever help is needed for locations, government or crew.

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Do You Tweet?

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Film maker/crafts/coordinator in Thailand – add yourself to our lists

Photo Correction

Photo of Blue Elephant in Issue # 6 was attributed incorrectly. It should have been a Volkswagen TVC shoot in, Samutprakarn done by A Grand Elephant Production Company Limited. Sorry for any confusion.



photo courtesy of A Grand Elephant Production

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Film Me

Thailand's Caves

Archaeology reveals that humans have used caves opportunistically as habitation, grave sites, art, and ritual sites far back into prehistory for many millennia. This helps explain the attraction, fascination, and mystery that caves hold for most people.

There are probably thousands of caves in Thailand. At least 112 Buddhist sacred caves have been identified in Thailand with some 60 described in detail by Christopher Munier in his book *Sacred Rocks and Buddhist Caves in Thailand* (Bangkok, Thailand: White Lotus Press, 1998).

According to Munier (p. 34), the earliest known use of caves by Buddhists in Thailand dates back to the 6th and 7th centuries.

The list of caves is too extensive to cover here however, below are some interesting examples:



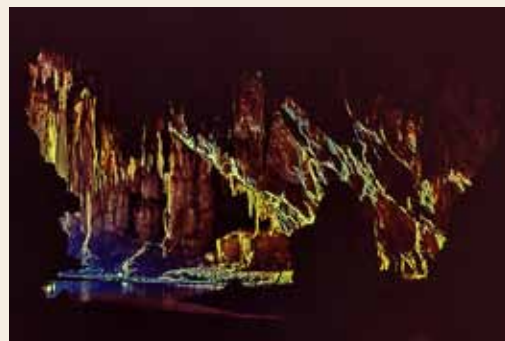
160 km south of Bangkok is the city of Phetchaburi (Phetburi). Located just outside the city is the cave temple complex known as Khao Luang. Three chambers in the complex hold numerous stalactites and Buddha statues, many of which were installed by King Rama IV. Holes in the ceiling allow filtered sunlight to light up parts of the cave

photo by Craig Ferguson, all Rights Reserved

Khao Cong Phran is a temple complex and associated cave located near the city of Ratchaburi about a two-hour drive west of Bangkok. A short cement stairway leads up to the cave. Located just inside the entrance are three large statues of the Buddha and more than a hundred smaller statues a little further into the cave. However, the odor of ammonia from the guano of some two million free-tailed bats is overwhelming. The temple allows local villagers to harvest the guano every two weeks to sell as fertilizer. The income is shared by the villagers and the temple and invested in various projects for education and development. Here in a sense is a mutual relationship between bats and villagers thanks to the sacred status of the cave.

Of all caves in Pang Mapa district, **Nam Lod Cave** is the most beautiful and the easiest to visit. Located at the kilometer marker 141 on highway 1095 (Pai-Pang Mapa Road), The cave is in the

Tham Nam Lod Nature and Wildlife Research Center. There are no electric lights in this cave to maintain natural conditions and the beauty of the cave. Nam Lod Cave means cave with a stream running through. The cave actually consists of 3 separate caves, Sao Hin Cave, Tukta Cave, and Pi Man Cave. In order to visit these caves, visitors need to board a raft through the cave.



Sao Hin Cave

Only 300 meters from the entrance is the first cave, Sao Hin Cave. Here there is a beautiful curtain of white stalactites which is made of calcite from subterranean water.

Also in the middle of this cave there is a soaring stone pillar standing 21.45 meters high, formed by stalactite and stalagmite.



Tukta Cave

From Sao Hin Cave, raft further down the stream for around 80 meters, to find Tukta Cave (meaning a cave with dolls). The most outstanding feature of this cave, as the name suggests, stalagmites that look just like dolls. Nearby there are some ancient paintings in red and black. Most paintings are of human figures, animals and plants.

Pi Man Cave

Pi man cave is the last cave in this circular course. It is located around 450 meters from Tukta Cave: here there are many ancient artifacts.

Now you know so come to Thailand and Film It!



**Have a question about filming in Thailand?
Please Visit Our Re-designed Website
www.thailandfilmoffice.org**