

## Day One: Bangkok – Temples

We are finally in Bangkok, the largest city in Thailand after a long, long LONG journey including 3 flights over 2 days, 5 hours to LA from FLA when we arrived at midnight, got a room. We were back at the airport by 7am in time to check in 3 hours in advance for our 14 hour flight to Seoul, South Korea with a 2 hour layover before catching a five hour (turned to 7 hour) flight to Bangkok.



Here we are (left) in the bus at 1:30 AM *finally* headed to our hotel.

The longest flight was in a brand new Airbus A380 which is state-of-the-art. Even in economy you have your own private 15 inch flat screen HD TV with over 60 latest movies on demand. Loads of TV shows, audio channels, gaming and casino channels and even 3 video cams outside the plane looking forward, rear and down! Pretty cool!

The food was ....um...errr....to ensure your belly growling didn't wake the person beside you. Booze was extremely limited – good thing we bought a bottle of duty-free Capt. Morgan's!



Our hotel room with two full size beds, not queens (and we're used to a KING!). This was OK because after traveling non-stop 43 hours there was NO CHANCE of cuddling.

We both enjoyed the "his" and "hers" beds! ☺



Looking the other way, note the window that opens onto the bathroom, talk about full disclosure! Even the door was slightly frosted glass. Also, see how the sink is in the main room. We had the same situation in China, must be an Asian thing!

The bathroom has no wash cloths, just towels and soap. The hotel is a Ramada (OMG! Really??!!), but in a class way higher than the Ramada's in the US. It is a 4-Star meaning we have 24 hour room service, pool, spa, 4 restaurants, 3 bars and sadly an empty mini-bar (Seriously!!??). Dammit, you know how difficult it is to find a beer at 4 AM in the morning! However, the best part of our room is the view!





A partial few from our picture window



Our hotel seen from the river



The pool and Jacuzzi at the hotel.



Sunset view from our hotel room.

**DAY ONE in THAILAND** started with full buffet breakfast, a small briefing from our amazing tour guide and then off to see the city!



Lots of slums in Bangkok, all over and then regular buildings and houses in the same neighborhood.



See here in the foreground is a "Tuk-Tuk" a scooter type taxi that is very cheap. Named after the sound they make (small 2 stroke engine, going tuk tuk tuk





Traffic in Bangkok is crazy! Sometimes it flows and other times you can sit in a “parking lot” for hours. Taxis are very cheap, an average ride of 10 miles is only \$4.00. And that is in a REAL taxi, the tuk-tuks are a fraction of that price. And if you even want cheaper, there are licensed motor cycle cabs where you jump on the back behind the driver – they even provide you a helmet. BUT... judging by the way they drive I would pass on that option. Street food is everywhere and looks good! But not always hygienic.



We visited 3 different Buddhist temples which were simply unbelievably beautiful.



The entire courtyard was covered in joined



The roofs are extremely ornate with a multitude of



strings with other strings hanging. This is for New Year's Day where people will hold the strings (which are connected to Buddhas) and pray.



hand carvings and intricate detail. Most are well over 300 years old, but some of the statues inside date back to the 13<sup>th</sup> Century.



The above "Reclining Buddha" is an unbelievable 120 feet long and 45 feet high. It was Built in 1820 from brick and concrete and then overlaid with 5 carat gold. The detailed carvings in the feet and toes were made from mother of pearl.

The day culminated in a river boat tour from the last temple right to our hotel on the water.



Why is this still floating?



The boats made famous in the James Bond movie.



Low bridge – everybody down!



Your friendly Thai Coast Guard!

And then some pictures that make you go hmmmm....



Don't shoot me with that machine gun, man!



But I really want to get those 500 channels!!





Even monks have to go shopping sometimes!



Planters Peanut Man – Thai style!

For the folks in Florida, we have exactly a 12 hour time difference –1pm in FL it's 1am in Thailand (but we got here first! LOL). This also means that we are at the furthestmost possible point we can be away from home. So no matter if we travelled west or east from Florida it would make no different at all as either way the distance travelled is exactly the same. We are literally on the opposite side of the world.

That's it for now, we're looking forward to New Year's Eve from our hotel when they have a fireworks display up and down the entire river.

Cheers,

Bruce and Wendy