

We wish you a happy New Year!

THAILAND

New Year in Central Word Square in Bangkok



Bangkok is one of the most dynamic cities to celebrate New Year. If every neighbourhood celebrate the eve at his own pace, the major animation is located near the Central Word Square, somehow the 'Times Square' of Bangkok. Thousands of people gather for the traditional countdown on a giant screen, preceded by live music and followed by a giant fire of fireworks launched on the banks of the Chao Phraya River.

Electronic cigarette in Thailand: officially illegal



This time, It's official, the users of electronic cigarettes are not welcome in the land of the smile that officially forbade the electronic cigarette in Thailand. An article of the TAT, the tourism authorities of Thailand dated of September 22nd 2017: enjoy your holiday in Thailand, but leave the electronic cigarettes at home. They are illegal here. While the electronic cigarettes or e-cigarettes are used around the world to help people quit smoking, the travellers coming to

Thailand must be aware that these devices are actually illegal in the Kingdom. Anyone who violates the law by using a cigarette electronic in Thailand can be arrested and faced a sentence of imprisonment or fines. It applies to both foreigners and Thais.

There was recently incidents of foreign travellers who ignored the ban on cigarette electronic in Thailand and who have been arrested.

Why ban the electronic cigarette in Thailand?

Many may wonder why a device designed to help people quit the habit of smoking is forbidden. A spokesman for the Government said that the ban was introduced for health reasons and that he was initially suggested because electronic cigarettes drew young people into smoking.

The ban on using the electronic cigarette in Thailand has been implemented since 2014

Thus, people who wish to travel in Thailand are invited to do not bring electronic cigarettes, or any element or material associated with such cigarettes; that liquids used in the device.

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MYANMAR

Kayin (Karen New Year)



This day is considered to be a national holiday. Karen (Pwa Ka Nyaw Po), named Kariangs, or Yang by the Thais, are a tibeto-Burmese ethnic group of 4 to 5 million people, of which approximately 10% live in Thailand and 90% in the country. In Myanmar, they are in number the second ethnic minority after the Shan. They celebrate their New Year, on December 18th, 2017. A ceremony known as the "new crop" is given in traditional costumes, and driven by songs and dances. This New Year is celebrated in

Kayin State, to Yangon (Arlein Nga Sint pagoda) and Mergui, in the South of the country.

Ananda Pagoda festival in Bagan (Pagan)



Dance and songs punctuate this kind of great fair which lasts almost a month, and the highlight is dictated by the full moon; This year from December 27th 2017 to January 1st 2018. The villagers and pilgrims flock to the Ananda pagoda, who was the cousin and one of the leading disciples of the Buddha. This event allows to discover Buddhist rites and to take the measurement of the values of the gathering. During the festival of the pagoda, the "paya pwe", pilgrims indeed come per thousand "to

earn merits", the "kusala", enabling them to improve their karma, to be reborn in a better life and finally get out of the wheel of existence to reach nirvana. During the week of festivities, many monks succeed to the microphone of the Ananda pagoda to sing psalms in Pali to the glory of Buddha. Disseminated through ancient speakers, the heady songs, mid-melody, mi-spoken, mingle with the hard rock of cheap nearby restaurants in a carnival atmosphere. Popular, the festival of Ananda is indeed also the occasion of a gigantic fair where the fervour blends with the pleasures of the world. Around the temple enclosure, dozens of shops give to the religious party an air of fait with its rides for children, its bars, its merchants of clothing, tools and other trinkets... There is a large itinerant cinema always full as well as a picture studio, "The Palace of wonders", where we rest in suit in front of painted backdrops. "For younger people, the festival is a kind of second new year. One more opportunity to have a party", explains a guide that is well-known in the area. «Everyone celebrates in its own way the festival of the treasure of Bagan.»

Probably built between 1090 and 1105 by Kyanziththa King, the Ananda pagoda, "Ananda Pahto", is indeed one of the oldest, most venerated and the most majestic of the plain of Bagan. Blinding, its arrow on the cob, golden in 1990, rises toward heaven as an affront to the Sun. Imposing, the building resembles a spacecraft placed in the middle of the acacias. Damaged by an earthquake in 1975, the temple has been completely restored to once again become the "jewel of Bagan", the flagship of an exceptional archaeological site of 42 km².

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LAOS

Hmong New Year



The Hmong, Mong or H'Mong (in Hmong of Laos: Hmoob / Moob) are a people of the mountainous areas in the South of China (mainly the province of Guizhou), as well as in the North of Vietnam and Laos from Asian. They are also called Miao (literally: "from the rice fields"). The Hmong themselves often use the name "mountaineers." The Hmong, who form a minority ethnic group located in the North of Laos, are celebrating their New Year during the new moon of December, from December 10th to 31st, 2017, and for the only time of the year, all members of

the community stop working and come together.

During this joyous holiday, the Hmong people put their multicoloured party costumes and plays music with their traditional instruments. Prayer is intended to drive away bad spirits and keep the good ones for the coming year. We attend to oxen fights and competitions in sports such as shooting the crossbow. The game between young people is to tirelessly throwing a ball (in rubber, tennis, or another of the same size), often lined up (the men on one side) and the women on the other, missing only rarely their shots in a high crowd in colours. As is the tradition, young singles should enjoy the celebrations to find the chosen one (e) of their heart and marry before next June.

Visit the province of Vientiane, Luang Prabang, Oudomxay and Xieng Khouang.

VIETNAM

A first international route to Dalat



From December 18th 2017, the Thai subsidiary specialist of cheap flight, will offer four flights a week between its base in Bangkok-Suvarnabhumi and the Dalat-Lien Khuong airport, operated by Airbus A320 with 180 seats. The flights are scheduled on Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Sunday at 10:45 to arrive at 2:15, the return flight leaving the central mountains at 12 h 45 to land at 14:30. Thai VietJet Air will be without competition on this road, the airport of Dalat arranging only

domestic's routes (provided by its parent company VietJet Air, Viet Nam Airlines and Jetstar Pacific). With this new route, the group will propose a total of six routes between Thailand and Vietnam: Bangkok will be connected to Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City, Hai Phong and Dalat, while Phuket and Chiang Mai have each a road to Ho Chi Minh City. Thai VietJet Air operates also between Bangkok and Can Tho, but only on a charter basis and she is already planning to open roads to Nha Trang, Danang or Phu Quoc. The low-cost Thai not has been re-certified beginning of November by the authorities, the twelfth on the 19 to receive a new AOC following the red card received by ICAO (and now standing). The company can also operate the road Bangkok - Haiphong rather than with those of the Vietnamese parent company with its own aircraft. Its three A320 should be joined by between eight and ten more companies by the end of next year.

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Bangkok Airways will serve Phu Quoc



Bangkok Airways Airline launched a new link between Bangkok and Phu Quoc, the South Island of Vietnam which sees his air traffic explode. The Thai private company will offer four flights a week between its base in Bangkok-Suvarnabhumi and the Phu Quoc airport, operated by ATR 72-600 of 70 passengers. Departures are scheduled Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, and Sunday at 11:30 to arrive at 13:00, the return flight leaving Vietnam at 13:50 to land at 3:35 pm. Bangkok Airways won't have

competition on this road, its second to Vietnam after the one destined for Danang. The president of the company said in a statement: " *the goal of this new launch is not only to improve the network of Bangkok Airways to cover the region of Indochina, but also to offer better connections to flight for the European, Thai and Vietnamese customers, as well as to offer regional correspondence courses to Phu Quoc Island to our code-share partners* " (among which three companies of the Gulf). " *We anticipate that the majority of our passengers will be the businessmen and tourists from both countries* ", added the leadership. Phu Quoc, nicknamed the Pearl Island, is the largest island of Vietnam. Recently ranked special economic zone by the Vietnamese Government, with economy annual growth expected until 25-30%, she drew in 2016 more than 1.45 million tourists from around the world. With a policy of 30 days without a visa for foreigners, Phu Quoc is now " *one of the most popular tourist destinations in Southeast Asia for European travellers, in particular Germany, England, France, Switzerland and Russia*", concludes Mr. Puttipong.

In addition to national Vietnam airlines company (including toward China or Cambodia) and the VietJet Air and Jetstar Pacific, the local low-cost, Phu Quoc airport hosts aircraft from China Southern Airlines and Lucky Air from China, and from this winter the direct flights of Neos since Italy and Thomson Airways from Great Britain; This last one already offers a link from Stockholm.

CAMBODIA

National holiday



It commemorates the fall of the regime of Pol Pot, following the intervention of Vietnamese army. It was on January 7th 1979. In a few days, the Pol Pot regime established in Cambodia was swept away. After two weeks, a few battles take place again in the islands of the Gulf of Thailand, in the forests of the West of the country, or on the Thai border. The F.U.N.S.K., Front of Union national for the salvation of Kampuchea, comes to install his power in Phnom Penh, but no one, not even the

Vietnamese authorities, doesn't try to really accredit the thesis of a reversal of the regime of Cambodia by the only inner forces. Besides the creation of the F.U.N.S.K. has been announced only a few weeks before the Vietnamese intervention. The facts are there: new Vietnam, who has conquered its independence against France and the United States, comes to impose militarily regime change on its neighbour Cambodia.

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At Angkor, sandstone statues have been discovered



In Cambodia, on the site of Angkor, capital of the ancient Khmer empire (IX^e- XV^e centuries), statues of sandstone have been discovered, July 31st including that of one of the two mythical guardians of the Hospital of Angkor Thom, literally the « Big city», the city built in the XII^e- XIII^e centuries by the Buddhist King Jayavarman VII (c. 1145-around 1220). This statue of a giant smiling benevolent, adorned with a Crown and a collar to four ranks in buttons of lotus (1.90 m), were found, and buried in

twenty centimetres deep, in the jungle, in good state of conservation. The head intact has been replaced; his legs and arms were falling apart at his side.

"We did not expect is, says the archaeologist who oversees the site to search for Apsara, the Cambodian authority responsible for the Archaeological Park of 400 km², class since 1992 Unesco World Heritage. It's one of the two statues traditionally erected in front of the main gate of the temple of a hospital. We were looking for the foundations of this hospital at the North of Angkor Thom, on the West Bank of the canal along the old road to Angkor. »

One of the two guardians of the chapel of the West hospital of Angkor Thom, as it was found during the search, buried under vegetation, the head separated from the body, the arms and legs broken. Ten years ago, a group of researchers of Apsara, in collaboration with a Thai team, had, as part of the operation Living Angkor Road Project (LARP), drawn a map, then identified and described the infrastructure linking, along the roads, Angkor to the empire. That is, bridges, canals, temples, step lodgings, hospital chapels, water points, etc., whose Jayavarman VII had equipped his Kingdom, until Laos and northeast of the Siam Kingdom (Thailand). *"70 hospitals were then located on the 102 referred in the inscription of Ta Prohm stele"*, this huge Angkorian monastery that Buddhist King have built in memory of his mother. A spectacular string of pavilions carved into the sandstone, prisoners of the titanic tentacles of the cheesemakers pushed on the ruined walls, as they were kept to bear witness to the destructive force of the jungle.

Victims of the monsoon and termites

Of Angkor Thom Hospital, there's nothing left: its structure was wooden, probably covered with ceramic tiles, if not flippers, like all of the public and private vernacular buildings of the Angkorian site, victims of the monsoon and termites, to the Palace of the King himself. Only survived of the old Khmer empire, the religious monuments built in sandstone, laterite or brick, such delicate temples of brick covered with stucco of the site of Sambor Prei Kuk, Angkorian capital (VI^e- IX (centuries), located 150 km to the Southeast and in the world heritage of UNESCO. The stele of the Foundation registration testifies to the existence of the building, as the three Buddha found in pieces, including Bhaisaiyaguru, a bodhisattva whose name means "master healer". One of the three Buddha, at the time of its discovery on the site of the hospital chapel, still half buried: Bhaisaiyaguru, a bodhisattva carries a vial in his hands. *"Cambodian archaeologists knew that there was a hospital chapel outside each of the four main gates of Angkor Thom"*, opened in the twelve kilometres of laterite ramparts, which locked the capital and which are still standing, says specialist in medical techniques in the ancient Khmer empire.

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“I guess, he said, that nursing homes, providing medical treatment with spiritual guidance, existed before entering the city. We found Chinese Song and Yuan ceramics of XIII^e-XII^e centuries, Khmer ceramics to the Brown glaze, pottery and various utensils. That helps us to date and to understand the uses, statutes, functions, activities, rituals. The medical industry has always been a big business and a large part of human activity.”

Claude Jacques, epigrapher specialist of Cambodia, which has translated all the inscriptions, confirms: *“Hospitals were still outside the cities, as the disease is something unclean, which doesn't have to enter into the city”*. Indeed, the four temples of four hospitals of which the steles have been found have been identified outside the four doors, at the cardinal points. *“Four-five hundred metres beyond the wall, in the forest, says Christophe Pottier, archaeologist of the French school of the far East (EFEO) who has searched, in 2006, Prasat Ta Puong hospital, West of Angkor Thom.” You can recognize them in their plan-type: a sanctuary with a stem, a pavilion to the West, a building said 'library', and a pelvis square to the northeast corner. The hospital facilities have also been highlighted with large halls, home occupations, and a Necropolis”, he added.*

At the beginning of August, in the forest, in the north of Angkor Thom, the Buddhist monks blessed the exhumed remains in front of the Khmer team who carried out the excavations. One more way to pay tribute to Jayavarman VII, the king builder, among whom two hundred figures of Buddha, lord of omnipresence, with whom he become identified, look from the top of his state temple, the Bayon, the four cardinal points, to embrace the whole empire.



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THAILAND

The full moon festivals (Full Moon Parties) on the island of Koh Phangan: every month, this party together, on the beach of Haad Rin,... young and old partygoers. Every full moon night, techno fans find themselves on the beach of Haad Rin, a famous place for having the most beautiful view on the star of the night. Tens of thousands of revellers (up to 150,000 in high season) dancing furiously until dawn, accompanied by the best DJ. In 2017, the Full Moon Parties are held February 12th, March 12th, April 11th, may 11th, June 9th, July 10th, August 7th, September 5th, October 6th, November 3rd, December 3rd, and January 1st 2018.

- Silk and Phuk Seow Festival in Khon Kaen: November-December 2017
 - National and fathers day : December 5th 2017
 - Constitution Day: December 10th 2017
 - King's Cup Regatta in Phuket: December 2017
 - Birthday of the King in Thailand: December 2017
- Thailand International Balloon Festival in Chiang Mai: December 2017
 - New Years: December 31st 2017 - January 1st 2018
 - Pimex, Phuket International Boat Show in Phuket: January 2018
 - The umbrellas Festival in Bo Sang (Chiang Mai): January 2018
 - Chinese New Year: January 2018
- Festival of the flowers in Chiang Mai: from February 3rd to 5th 2018
 - Magha Puja: February 2018
 - Saint Valentine's Day: February 14th 2018
- Thailand International Balloon Festival in Chiang Mai: March 2018
 - Earth Hour: March 2018
 - Chakri dynasty day: April 6th 2018
 - Turtles release Festival in Phuket: April 13th 2018
 - Songkran (Buddhist New Year or water festival): April 2018
 - Cricket Week in Phuket: April 2018
 - Coronation day: May 5th 2018
 - Royal ploughing ceremony in Bangkok: May 2018
 - Visakha Puja: May 2018
 - Rune Paradise, Phuket international marathon: June 2018
 - Thailand Travel Mart Plus in Chiang Mai: from June 2018
 - Phi Ta Khon Festival at Dan Sai (province of Loei): June 2018
 - Khao Phansa (Festival of the candles): July 2018
 - Asalha Puja: July (full moon) 2018
- Wan Mea Feast of the mothers and the Queen Sirikit's birthday: August 2018
- International festival of dance and music of Bangkok: September 2018
- Moon Festival, celebrating the mid-autumn in Bangkok: September 2018
- Vegetarian Festival: October 2018
- Sakon Nakhon, Festival of the wax castles: October 2018

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Ok Phansa: October 2018
Chulalongkorn day: October 2018
Loy Krathong, lantern festival: November 2018
World Film Festival in Bangkok: November 2018
Phimai Festival: November 2018
Yi Peng Festival in Chiang Mai: November 2018
Elephants Festival in Surin (Round Up Festival): November 2018
Week of the bridge on the River Kwai in Kanchanaburi: November-December 2018
Laguna Phuket Triathlon in Phuket: November 2018
Bangkok Marathon: November 2018
Lopburi monkeys feast: November 2018

MYANMAR

Pyatha (Independence day): January 4th 2018
Bagan Pagoda festival (Pagan): December 2017 - January 2018
Kachin Manaw Festival in Myikyina: January 2018
Naga New Year Festival (Kaing Bi): January 2018
The Mahamuni pagoda Festival in Mandalay: January - February 2018
Baw - Gyo Festival in Thipaw: February - March 2018
Union day: February 12th 2018
Thidingyut Festival (Festival of lights): February 2018
Kakku (Kekku) Pagoda Festival around Taunggyi: March 2018
Earth Hour: March 2018
Armed forces day: March 27th 2018
Farmer's holiday: March 2018
Full moon of Tabaung: March 2018
Thingyan Festival (water Festival): April 2018
Burmese New Year: April 2018
Labour Day: May 1st 2017
Kason: may 2018
Full moon of waso: July 2018
Martyr's day: July 19th 2018
Nat Festival in Taungbyon (Mandalay): July - August 2018
Festival of the Phaung Daw Oo to Lake Inle: September - October 2018
Festival of Kyaukdawgyi pagoda in Mandalay: October 2018
The Dance Festival of elephants to Kyaukse (Mandalay): October 2018
Thidingyut Festival (Festival of lights): October 2018
Hot Air Balloon Festival in Taunggyi: November 2018
Tazaungdaing Festival: November 2018
Feast of the pagoda at Kyaik Hti Yo (to the Golden Rock): November 2018
National day: November 16th 2018
Shan New Year: November 2018
Kayin (Karen New Year): December 2018

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Calendar days of market in the region of Inle in 2017

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JUL	AUGUST	MS	OCT	NOV	DEC
1	B	C	A	B	B	C	C	D	E	E	A	A
2	C	D	B	C	C	D	D	E	A	A	BC	BC
3	D	E	C	D	D	E	E	A	B	B		
4	E	A	D	E	E	A	A	B	CD	CD	D	D
5	A	B	E	A	A	B	B	C			E	E
6	B	C	A	B	B	C	C	OF	E	E	A	A
7	C	D	B	C	C	D	OF		A	A	B	B
8	D	E	C	D	D	EA		A	B	B	C	C
9	E	A	D	E	EA		A	B	C	C	D	D
10	A	BC	E	AB		B	B	C	D	D	E	E
11	BC		AB		B	C	C	D	E	E	A	A
12		D		C	C	D	D	E	A	A	B	B
13	D	E	C	D	D	E	E	A	B	B	C	C
14	E	A	D	E	E	A	A	B	C	C	D	D
15	A	B	E	A	A	B	B	C	D	D	E	E
16	B	C	A	B	B	C	C	D	E	E	A	AB
17	C	D	B	C	C	D	D	E	A	A	BC	
18	D	E	C	D	D	E	E	A	B	BC		C
19	E	A	D	E	E	A	A	B	CD		D	D
20	A	B	E	A	A	B	B	CD		D	E	E
21	B	C	A	B	B	C	C		E	E	A	A
22	C	D	B	C	C	OF	OF	E	A	A	B	B
23	D	E	C	D	D			A	B	B	C	C
24	E	AB	D	EA	EA	A	A	B	C	C	D	D
25	A		E			B	B	C	D	D	E	E
26	BC	C	AB	B	B	C	C	D	E	E	A	A
27		D		C	C	D	D	E	A	A	B	B
28	D	E	C	D	D	E	E	A	B	B	C	C
29	E		D	E	E	A	A	B	C	C	D	D
30	A		E	A	A	B	B	C	D	D	E	E
31	B		A		B		C	D		E		A

A = Heho, Than Taung, Kyone, Taungto (Sagar road), Nar Baung (Kakku road), Loikaw

B = Taunggyi, Aungban, floating market (Inle)

C = Pwe Hla, Mine Thauth, Phaung Daw Oo, Kyauk Tine (Sagar road), Pin Long

D = Shwe Nyaung, Kalaw, Dine, Dein, Maw Bi Khaung (Sagar road), Phe Khone

E = Nyaug Shwe, Pindaya, Nampan (Sagar road), Ham See (Kakku road), Sagar

Every Sunday and Wednesday, market day at De Maw So beside Loi Kaw.

The market of the Indein Pagoda on the edges of the Lake is very authentic but more frequent. So get there early. For every day of full moon (yellow) and dead Moon (green colour), markets are advanced one day. You have therefore 2 markets on the eve of the day of full moon and dead moon.

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VIETNAM

Tet Festival, Vietnamese New Year (Tet Nguyên Đán): January 2018
Feast of the Quan Dam procession at Dong Ky (Bac Ninh province): January 2018
Chua Huong (perfume Pagoda Festival) to Huong Son: February - April 2018
Anniversary of the Vietnamese Communist Party founding: February 3rd 2018
Lim Festival or Hội Lim festival (Bac Ninh province): February 2018
Feast of the Trang Nguyen (first winner): February 11th 2018
Festival of the fishermen in Hoi An: March 2018
Earth Hour: March 2018
Cold foods festival at Tết Han Thuc: April 2018
Thay Pagoda Festival (Province of Ha Tay): April 2018
Feast of Bach Dang (Quang Ninh province): April 2018
Khmer New Year: April 2018
Van Vi Village Festival (province of Ha Tay): April 2018
Truong Yen Festival (Ninh Binh province): April 2018
Celebration of the launch of Ba Giang kites (province of Ha Tay): April 2018
Anniversary of the Saigon fall: April 30th 2018
Buddha Birthday to Vietnam and Cambodia: May 3rd 2018
Ba Chua Xu Festival to Chau Doc: May-June 2018
Quang Lan festival (Bac Ninh province): July 2018
Thât-Tich (the dark seven or the double seven festival): August 2018
National day: September 2nd 2018
Do Son Buffalo fighting Festival: September 2018
The mid-autumn festival (children's day): September 2018
Festival of the Tran temple at Nam Dinh: September 2018
Autumn Keo pagoda Festival at Thai Binh: October 2018
Double - Nine day to Trung Cuu: October 2018
Water Festival (Or Om Boc) to Sóc Trang: November 2018

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LAOS

Hmong New year: December 2017
National holiday (Vanh Saad): December 2017
Khene national competition in Vientiane: December 2017
That Inhang Festival around Savannakhet: December 2017
Tet Festival (Vietnamese or Chinese New Year) in Cambodia and Laos: January 2018
Lao Elephant Festival in Sayabouri: February 2018
Mahakhabousa to Champasak and Wat Phou Festival: February 2018
Makha Bucha (Magha Puja) in Luang Prabang: February 2018
Boun Phavet (feast of monasteries): March 2018
Earth Hour: March 2018
Pii may or Songkran (Buddhist New Year): April 2018
Boun Bang Fai (rocket Festival): may 2018
Boun Visakhaboucha: may 2018
Khao Phansa: July 2018
Boun Khao Padabdin (Dead day): September 2018
Bun Nam or Suang Heua on Khong Island: October 2018
Boun Ok Phansa boat races on the banks of the Mekong: October 2018
Boun Ok Phansa and Boun Xouang Heua: October 2018
Festival of lights (Lai Heua Fai) in Luang Prabang: October 2018
That Luang Festival in Vientiane: November 2018

All dates are subject to change.

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