

THAILAND, PATTAYA / JOMTIEN FROM AUTUMN 2010 UNTIL SPRING 2011

The 5th of February we went by the local taxi to Bangkok. We were going to meet Svein Erik and Torunn Lindstad, the parents to Tor Erik Lindstad, of whom we are renting the apartment in Gran.



The red area shows where Bangkok lies in Thailand.



Flag



Seal

Bangkok, usually called Krung Thep – “city of angels”, is the capital and the biggest city in Thailand.

The city is situated on both sides of the river Chao Phraya. Bangkok has officially 8,160,522 registered inhabitants (1. July 2007), while the Big-Bangkok area has about 10 millions. In day time this number can rise to as much as 15 millions, because of day commuters who travel to the city to work.

Bangkok is one of the fastest growing cities in the world and has 1000 registered sky scrapers. Bangkok's economy has the last years been almost at the same level as Singapore's, and is one of the most important financial cities of South East Asia. Bangkok is one of the worlds most popular tourist destinations with about 15 million tourists every year.

Bangkok was made capital in 1782 after the former capital, Ayutthaya, was demolished by army forces from Burma. The capital was founded by Rama I, who was the first king in the Chakri dynasty. Bangkok lies 40 km from the outlet of the Chao Praya river. The modernizing of the city was done mainly from about the 1950's when most of the canals in the city were filled and western inspired buildings were erected. Because of all the canals, the city was earlier called “Venice of the East”.

A big problem is that the city is sinking 10 cm a year. It has been said that together with the rising of the sea level and the sinking of the ground, the city will lie 50 cm to one meter below sea level before 2025. The reason is that the city is built on swamp land and the population's water consumption of water. The subsoil water reservoirs are emptied and the soil is pressed down by the weight of all the buildings. Other problems are the air pollution and long queues by over 5 million registered cars and other vehicles in the city. Sometimes it can take an hour to move 1 km.



The entrance to the hotel, where we stayed.



The reception.



The room.



The pool area.

The restaurant, Ruen Urai, lies in the brown house.



The view from the room. A mixture of big, high and spectacular in the background and lower, less spectacular in the foreground.



There is obviously not much spare money for maintenance.



It is common to live under corrugated roofs, even in Bangkok.



The umbrella is hanging there, ready for the next rainy season.

After having installed ourselves at the hotel, we ordered a taxi in the reception. We had planned to go to the temple area, Grand Palace. We had planned to walk around there for the rest of the day.



Here we are sitting in the car, taking a picture of the main railway station.



Chinese lamps in China Town.



China Town.



An entrance.



Food wagons are to be seen everywhere.



It is quite common to go by tuk-tuk in Bangkok.



Here we have arrived.



Ready to go in.



Here they tell us that because of the celebration of Chinese new year, 3.-5. February, only Thai people are admitted.



The gates are strict guarded.



Here is some of the life outside the walls.



Lots of buses and taxis.



Kjell is trying to «discuss us inside», but in vain.



We give up to get inside.



What do we do now? We agree that either the staff at the reception in the hotel or the taxi driver should have told us about this.



We took a picture of a monument in front of the entrance. While standing there we got a lot of offers of sightseeing trips around in the city with tuk-tuk. We didn't want that. We agreed to stop a taxi and let him take us to a restaurant to have a beer. Where we were standing there we no in sight.



We stopped this guy. We drove away, but we had not assured that he had switched on the taximeter. He took us for a long drive and he wanted 300 Baht. He got 240.



He took us to this fish restaurant, which proved to be quite OK.



Kjell ordered fish here.



Anne Berit had fish too.



The front page of the menu.



Here crabs are put in rows.



The fish is swimming in tanks, so it is very fresh when it is served at the table in prepared condition.



The same way with the crawfish.



Here we are on our way out after having eaten.



Outside the restaurant.



The fence to the street was decorated with light diodes. One is shaped as a crab.



Here we are sitting at a corner cafe near our hotel.



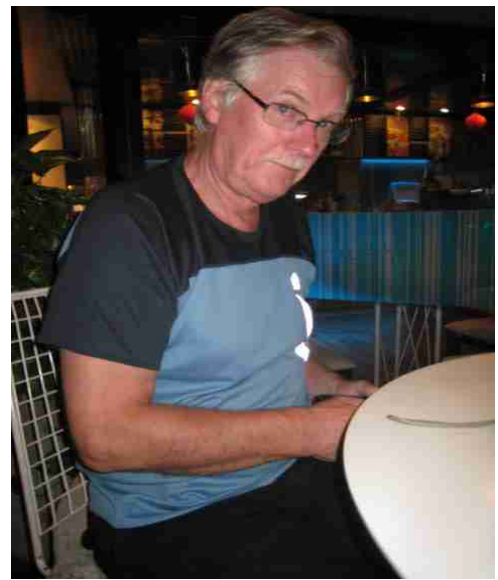
At the cafe.



A street vendor came along and wanted to sell hats and other merchandise. Here Anne Berit is trying one of the hats.



It came to a purchase while sitting there.



Will this go well? Do we have enough money??



Turunn wanted to buy too.



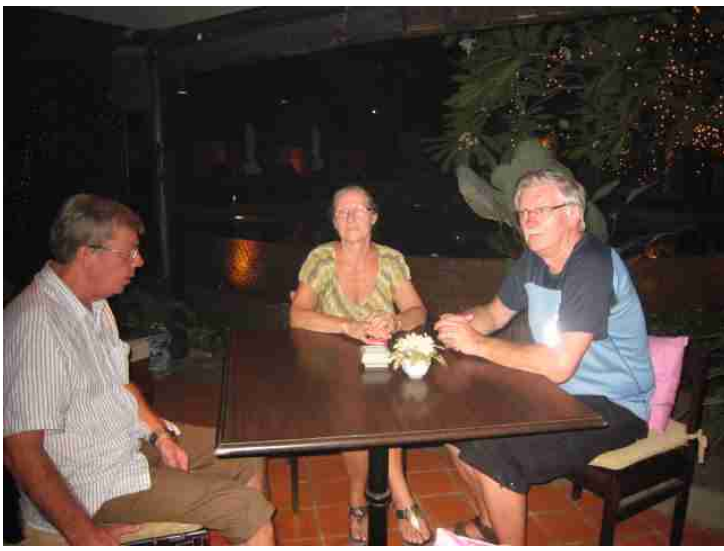
The sellers was lined up, but the other were too late.



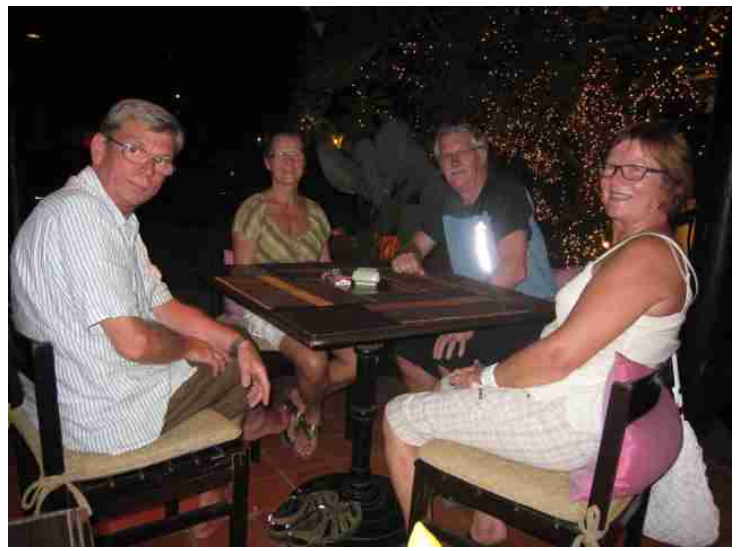
Torunn and Anne Berit with new hats!



Svein Erik with new cap!



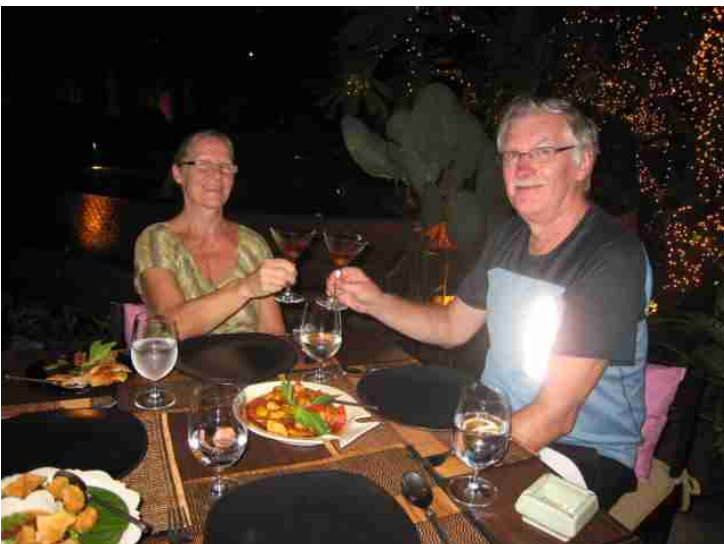
Later on we need some more food and we go in to the restaurant that belongs to the hotel. Its name is Ruen Urai and it lies at the back of the hotel in connection with the pool.



We asked the waiter to take a picture of all of us at the table.



Here we have ordered and we are waiting for food and beverage.



The food is on the table. It was very decorated and tasted very good. Anne Berit and Kjell are toasting in Martini Rosso.



The next morning Torunn and Svein Erik had finished the breakfast when we came down to the breakfast room.



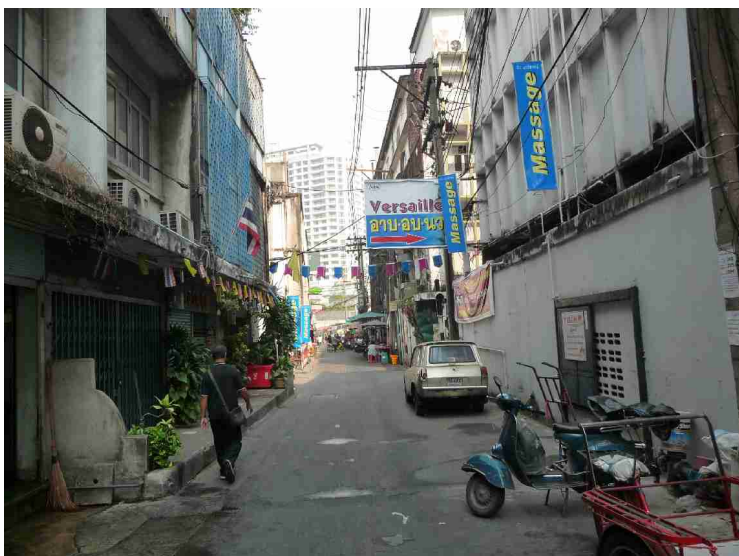
Excellent breakfast.



There was a gecko in the lounge. He had lost his tail.



There were good chairs to sit in.



After breakfast we went down an alley-way to get to a temple that we had noticed the day before when we went with the taxi.



Svein Erik found the moped, which he always had wanted.



There is no need to go hungry anywhere in Thailand. There is sold fresh food almost everywhere.



Kjell and Anne Berit is waiting for the rear party. Svein Erik don't want to leave the moped.



Here Svein Erik has managed to separate himself from the moped. We can also see some art paintings along the wall.



More art.



Here we are passing by one of the buildings belonging to the temple.



One of the gates into the temple.



Two of the main buildings.



Now we are inside looking out through the gate. A skyscraper in the background.



Anne Berit and Torunn are looking forward to have a look at what is inside.



Anne Berit is ready to go.



It is like a small town with parked cars all over.



A scene where there for sure will be some arrangements.



We are approaching the main building.



There is sold offerings and it is also possible to give money as a donation to the monks.



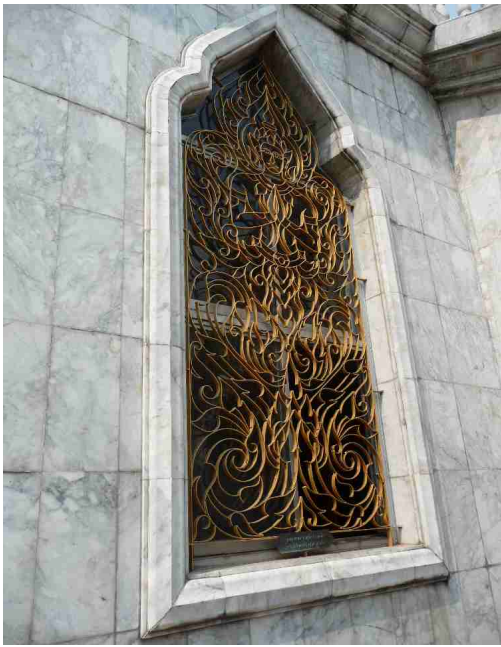
A small Buddha figure is watching it all.



Here are two people going inside to worship Buddha.



Here we are peeping inside.



Many elaborate details.



A small pagoda.



We need more cash.



Nice decorations.



Bunch of flowers are bought to be put on the altar in front of Buddha.



This is a decoration, which is repaired. There is lacking some leaf gold here and there.



A close-up of the leaf gold decoration.



There are beggars here as well.



Up to the top level.



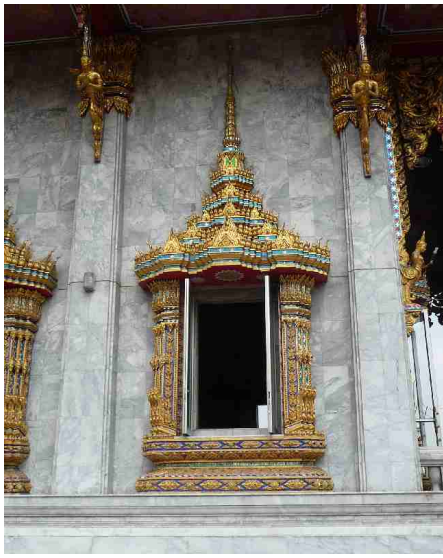
A small pagoda.



This is another part of the temple.



A row of bells along the railing.



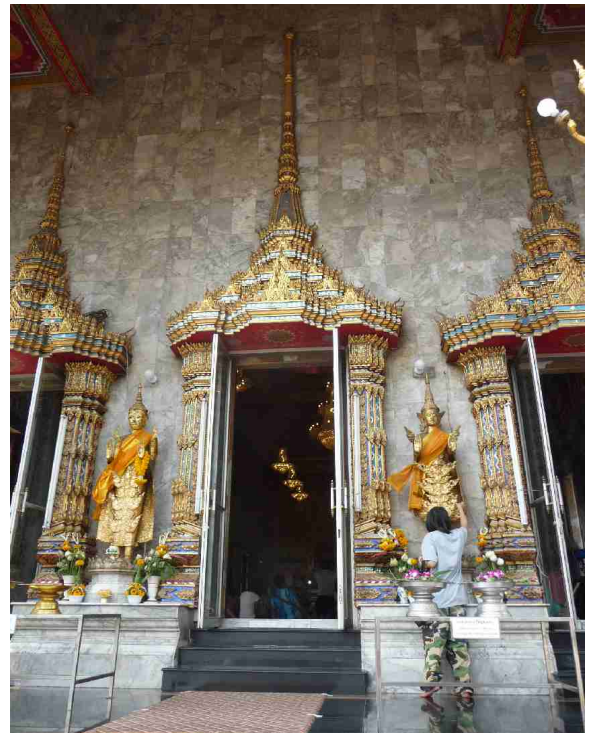
Details from a window.



Details from a roof.



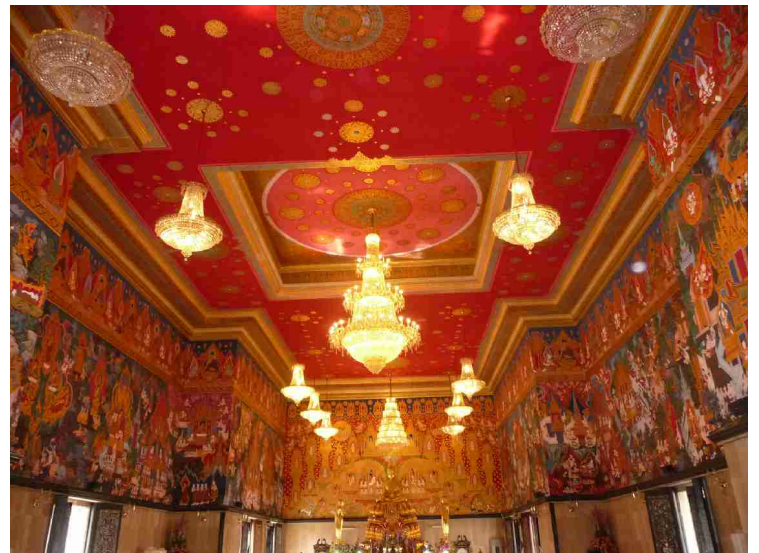
A lamp with an economy bulb.



A detail from a door.



Inside the temple.



Details from the ceiling. Lots of prisms.



Offerings.



A view back to the entrance.



Lots of people everywhere.



A view back on the main buildings.



There are also sales booths of various kinds in here.



Here is sold food and beverages.



On our way out again.



Out again.



Outside the temple area.



A horse statue outside the entrance.



The horse again. Perhaps this is the horse (Kathanka) that Siddharta (Buddha) rode on when he left the castle to start his wanderings and left the life as a prince.



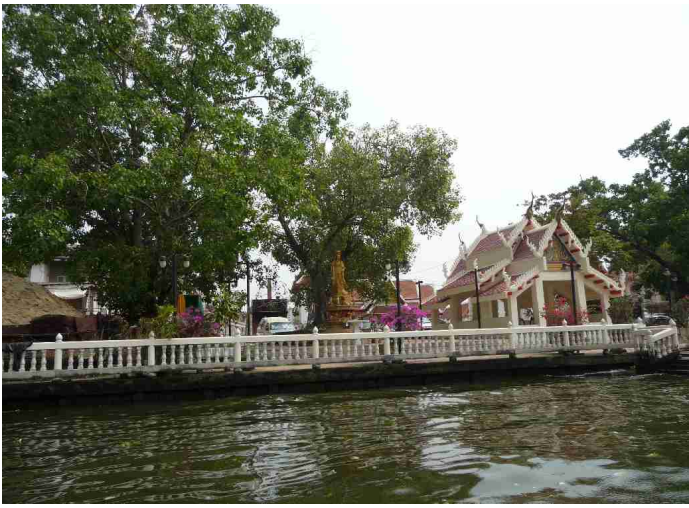
When coming back at the hotel we booked a boat trip on the river (Chao Phraya) and the canals. Here we are out on the river. Below is a series of picture without comments.













This is our boatman.



Here he goes away.



The first item on the agenda was smoking.



Back at the hotel it was time for food before we were leaving, we back to Jomtien and Torunn and Svein Erik Back to Norway. We agreed to go to the same restaurant as the day before, Ruen Urai.



Here is "our" corner



The pool just beside.



The pool with the skyscraper in the background.



Inside the gate.



Torunn got a menu with pictures, so she could just point at what she wanted.



She got pretty food.



So got Svein Erik too.



Kjell got a nice rose.



Anne Berit's food.



Kjell wanted a cigar after the food, but he burnt his finger and could not find anything colder than the beer to cool it in.



There was a cat there too and he got some leftovers. He liked that.



The waiter.



Kaffe and Sambucca as a finish.