



21. The Flavours of Thailand

Find Thailand in the given map.

Little Doi Swan welcomed us at the gate of the neat looking guesthouse with folded hands. This standard Thai gesture of greeting is called the 'Wai'. Flowers, colourful dresses, beautiful Buddha statues and temples introduce us to this unique country in South East Asia.

Thai people are warm-hearted, courteous, ever smiling and their hardworking nature is inspiring. Our stay in Thailand was enriching and very exciting.

Thailand is bordered by Laos and Cambodia on the East, the Gulf of Thailand and Malaysia on the South and the Andaman Sea on the West. In 'Thai' language, the word 'Thai' means 'freedom'. Thailand's official



name till May 11, 1949 was 'Siam', which is still used by many Thais, especially the Chinese-speaking minority.

We sat in the open terrace of the guesthouse in the morning sun. Being a November morning, the weather was quite cold. Chui Bahadwe, our caretaker at the guesthouse brought us hot coffee and spiced potato chips. He was very busy but we managed to pull him to a chair, to sit with us and tell us about the history of Thailand.

Chui Bahadwe then took us to small and rather old museum a furlong away from the guesthouse where many coins, vessels, metal weapons and records of history were kept. My father pointed at the Thai official calendar on the wall based on the Buddhist era. Interestingly, the Thai calendar is 543 years ahead of the western calendar. This means the year 2005 A.D. will be considered as 2548 A.D. according to the Buddhist calendar.

We had planned to go out and see the riverbanks of Mekong and the flowers of the Chao Praya river valley, but suddenly it started raining. We were disappointed because we had to cancel our trip but Chui Bahadwe kept us engaged. He showed us photographs of the lovely Khorat Plateau and the highest peak of





The History of Thailand

- Originated from the Sukhothai kingdom founded in 1238
- Next larger kingdom 'Ayuthaya', established in mid 14th century
- Culture greatly influenced by India and China
- Never colonized by any European power



Thailand 'Doi Intharion' which is 2576 metres high situated in the North of the country. The beautiful Chao Praya River runs into the Gulf of Thailand and the narrower Kra Isthmus flows into the Malay Peninsula.

By that time, the delicious Thai cuisine cooked for us had made us feel hungry indeed. Thai cuisine is known for its balance of five basic flavours in every dish - hot (spicy), sour, sweet, salty and bitter tastes. One of the

important ingredient is the "Nampla" - very aromatic and strong tasting fish sauce.



- Thailand's climate is tropical with frequent rains.
- Southern Thailand is hotter and more humid.
- May and September-warm and cloudy.
- November to mid-March-cool, dry and pleasant.
- North-East monsoon always prevails.

A typical meal consists of sweet-smelling Jasmine rice (quite costly!). Lovely smelling curries, stir-fried items and other dishes cooked with large quantities of chilly, lime juice and lemon grass.

Bahadwe also talked about noodles that made my mouth water. But at lunch, I realized that the Thais call it “Pad Thai”. I insisted that I must have some in the evening.

Mummy was happy to collect Thai specialities for her kitchen such as basil, galangas, ginger, Thai eggplant, tamarind, palm, coconut milk and coconut sugar.

In the afternoon we travelled to Bangkok, the capital city. My brother noted the names of other important cities from the tourist guide - Nakhon, Rat Chasima, Udon Thai, Kakhon Sawan, Chiang Mai, Surat Thani, Phuket, Hat Yai (songkhla)... such difficult names!

Chui Bahadwe suggested that we go and see the Loikrathang Festival, held usually in the month of November in which candle-lit floats are cast into running water to bring good fortune for the coming year. We were lucky to see the ‘Elephant Round Up’ in Surin where Pachyderms (thick skinned animals) play football (soccer). Wasn't that great!



-Writers group

Word Meanings

| | |
|--------------|--|
| enriching | to improve quality by adding something |
| caretaker | a person whose job is to look after a property |
| minority | section of people who are small in number compared to total population |
| frequent | to happen at regular intervals |
| aromatic | smell of fruits, flowers, food |
| tropical | climate which is hot and humid |
| humid | hot weather which results in sweating |
| cuisine | food |
| ingredients | items that go into making a special food |
| basil | tulsi |
| standard | uniform |
| disappointed | feeling when task is not achieved. |

Reading Comprehension

A. Answer the following questions:

1. Where is Thailand situated?
2. What is interesting about the Thai Calendar?
3. Write about some famous places in Thailand?
4. What is unique about ‘Thai’ food?

5. What does a 'Thai' meal consist of?
6. Name some of the important towns in Thailand?
7. What happens during the Elephant Round-up?
8. Who was Little Doi Swan?

B. Solve the quiz:

1. Four letter word which means 'freedom' in Thai
2. Thai greeting
3. The year 2006 according to Buddhist Calendar would be 2006 + =
4. The river that runs into gulf of Thailand
5. Another name for Intharion Mountain of
6. Kra Isthmus flows into peninsula.
7. Elephants are also called
 in Surin.



Vocabulary

A. Look at the following phrases and frame 10 more phrases:

neat looking guesthouse
ever smiling nature

B. Use the following words in your own sentences:

courteous, managed, riverbanks, disappointed, aromatic, museum.

Grammar

A. Use the information given below in box 'A' and 'B' and complete the sentences. Use (had + III verb):

One is done for you.

Example: The children had left the class before the teacher came.

| A |
|--|
| reach, leave, finish, make start, set, take, cut, steal, tear |

| B |
|---|
| station, the class room, home work, a doll, lunch, the trees, purse, the sun, the newspaper, bath |



1. The children before the teacher came.
2. The train at the before we arrived there.
3. We our before our father came home.
4. My daughter before we came back home.
5. They before we joined them.
6. The before she returned home.
7. My father before I got up.
8. Someone before the forest guard arrived.
9. Someone before the passenger came back.
10. The baby before his grand father read it.

B. Complete the table:

| Regular verbs | | | Irregular verbs | | |
|---------------|----------|---------|-----------------|-------|-------|
| I | II | III | I | II | III |
| reach | reached | reached | leave | left | left |
| finish | finished | ..... | make | ..... | ..... |
| ..... | started | ..... | set | ..... | set |
| look | ..... | looked | read | ..... | ..... |
| ..... | climbed | ..... | steal | stole | ..... |
| hear | ..... | ..... | tear | tore | ..... |
| listen | ..... | ..... | eat | ate | ..... |
| ..... | touched | ..... | weep | ..... | wept |
| play | ..... | ..... | fall | fell | ..... |
| ..... | ..... | looked | drink | drank | ..... |
| clean | ..... | ..... | ..... | spoke | ..... |
| ..... | painted | ..... | ..... | saw | ..... |
| ..... | washed | ..... | ..... | ..... | risen |

Writing

- A. Look at the pictures given below and the title. Explain in your own words what dish requires the ingredient:**



Basil



Eggplant



Tamarind



Ginger

- B. Think of some favourite dish that you like. List the ingredients that go into making the dish. List some instructions on how to prepare the dish. Name your dish:**

| Ingredients | Instructions. |
|-------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. | Step1 |
| 2. | Step2 |
| 3. .... | ..... ..... |
| 4. | Step3 |
| 5. | Step4 |
| 6. .... | ..... ..... |
| 7. | Step5 |
| 8. | Step 6 |

- C. Consult a dictionary to find out the Hindi word or the words in the local language for the following words:**

- | | | | |
|-----------------|-------|-------------|-------|
| (1) cucumber | खीरा | (2) garlic | ..... |
| (3) ginger | ..... | (4) brinjal | ..... |
| (5) coconut | ..... | (6) fig | ..... |
| (7) chillies | ..... | (8) lime | ..... |
| (9) cumin seeds | ..... | (10) tomato | ..... |

- D. Find from a dictionary the English word for the following Hindi words:**

- | | | | |
|-------------------|-------|----------------|-------|
| (1) jeera | ..... | (2) haldi | ..... |
| (3) dhaniya | ..... | (4) kalimirsch | ..... |
| (5) methi | ..... | (6) rai/sarson | ..... |
| (7) chhoti elachi | ..... | (8) long | ..... |
| (9) kesar | ..... | (10) dalchini | ..... |

Activity

- A. Listen to the passage and complete the task:
See Appendix-1 Lesson-21

| Year | What happened |
|------|---------------|
| | |

- B. Tell the class what you like the most about Thailand. You can use sentences like:

1. I like the most.
2. What I like the most is
3. impresses me the most.

Project

Make a list of describing words occurring in the lesson.

Example: neat

