

Bangkok to Ayutthaya River Cruise



Highlights

Cruise down the Chao Phraya river from the modern capital of Bangkok to the ancient capital of Ayutthaya. Pass by the Grand Palace and the Temple of Dawn. Explore the Summer Palace in Ayutthaya. Drift away aboard the Mekhala, a beautifully restored teak boat, on this two-day, one-night cruise.

Chao Phraya River, also known as “The River of Kings”, is one of Thailand’s major rivers. It was a major transport and trade route between the cities that grew up along its banks, including the modern capital, Bangkok, and its ancient predecessor, Ayutthaya, from which the former took the title in 1768. Some of the city’s most spectacular architectural achievements were built along the banks of the river - most notably the Grand Palace and the extraordinary Temple of Dawn. From the water they can be seen to greatest effect, as the river’s breadth allows welcome breathing space from the bustling chaos of the city streets.

This two-day, one-night slow boat cruise takes you from Thailand’s current capital, Bangkok to Ayutthaya, its ancient capital. This trip takes you right past the Grand Palace complex, with its enormous golden chedi, or stupa. It also passes the spectacular Temple of The Emerald Buddha. You’ll have a close-up of the looming, Wat Arun, the Temple of Dawn, which reflects the morning sun so vividly. The prang is the name for the Khmer-style tower that is a component of temples throughout South East Asia. The 80-metre high central prang represents the mythical Mount Meru, symbolic centre of the universe, itself the focal point for the huge stone mandala that comprises the temple itself.

Just after sunset, when you have left the city lights behind, the boat will dock at Wat Kai Tia, a small, exquisitely beautiful rural temple right on the riverbank, where you will dine onboard before retiring to the air-conditioned haven of your private cabin.

Breakfast is served on board the following morning, after which the boat continues on to the old capital city of Ayutthaya, where you will disembark at Bang-Pa-In, a 17th Century summer palace, with its pavilions and ponds set out in mandala-like fashion in imitation of far more ancient temple layouts in the region.

Is it for me?

This is a cruise for those who want to sample the vibrant life and historic architecture of Thailand’s “River of Kings” in lavish and effortless style. Everything is taken care of for the duration of the cruise; all you have to do is sit back and lap up the sights, sounds and smells as you glide slowly past. The boats themselves are truly beautiful, and in perfect keeping with the scenery along the banks of the river, where royalty both ancient and modern have chosen to build lasting monuments celebrating their gods, their cosmologies, and, inevitably and perhaps inadvertently, themselves.

Accommodation

Accommodation is on board the Mekhala, a fleet of three twenty metre, hundred-year-old solid teak barges, now converted into luxurious cruise boats. All have air-conditioned double cabins, each with private bathroom and western toilets, sun deck, library, audio entertainment, indoor games, telephone, fully stocked bar and all are fully equipped with modern safety features including lifejackets.

Food is served on deck, comprising mouth-watering traditional Thai cuisine cooked using only the freshest

Prices from

136 GBP (2 days) per person

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ingredients.

Itinerary

The boat trip runs either upstream from Bangkok or downstream from Ayutthaya.

Programme Upstream - Bangkok to Ayutthaya:

Daily departure at 14h30 (except on Sunday).

Day 1: Bangkok - Mekhala

Start cruising up the Chao Phraya River with spectacular views of the Grand Palace and the Temple of Dawn. Just after sunset, the boat docks at Wat Kai Tia, a Thai temple set in a tranquil rural village. An exquisite candlelit dinner of mouth-watering Thai cuisine is served on the deck. Overnight on board in your air-conditioned cabin.
(Dinner)

Day 2: Mekhala - Ayutthaya

An option for alms offering to a monastery can be made prior to a delicious breakfast served on board. Then depart for Bang-Pa-In Summer Palace where you will disembark nearby at approx. 10h00.
(Breakfast)

Programme Downstream - Ayutthaya to Bangkok:

Daily departure at 14h30 (except on Sunday).

Day 1: Ayutthaya - Mekhala

Start cruising downstream from the pier near Bang - Pa - In Palace, taking in the spectacular views of rural life along the "River of Kings". Just after the sunset, the Mekhala docks at Wat Kai Tia, a Thai temple set in a tranquil rural village. An exquisite candlelit dinner of mouth-watering Thai cuisine is served on the deck. Overnight on board in your air-conditioned cabin.
(Dinner)

Day 2: Mekhala - Bangkok

An option for alms offering to a monastery can be made prior to a delicious breakfast on board. Cruise down the river to Bangkok, passing spectacular views of the Grand Palace and the Temple of Dawn. Arrive Bangkok in the late morning.
(Breakfast)

Details

Getting there

You need to get to the pier in front of Wat Yannawa on Charoen Krung Road, Bangkok. The Taksin Bridge Skytrain station is only about 200m north of the pier.

Price includes

Two day cruise with stops and visits as described, accommodation for one night in double air-conditioned cabin, dinner and breakfast; coffee, tea and water on board and during breakfast, coffee, tea, water and soft drink on board during dinner, qualified crew, group insurance.

Price details

Price quoted is the price for the downstream Ayutthaya - Bangkok cruise in low season.

High Season:

1 Nov 2010 - 31 March 2011

Bangkok - Ayutthaya

10,450 Baht per person in a double cabin

13,100 Baht for a single cabin

Ayutthaya - Bangkok

8,400 Baht per person in a double cabin

10,500 Baht for a single cabin

Low Season:

1 April 2011 - 31 Oct 2011

Bangkok - Ayutthaya

8,050 Baht per person in a double cabin

10,600 Baht for a single cabin

Ayutthaya - Bangkok

6,450 Baht per person in a double cabin

8,500 Baht for a single cabin

When is best

Boat departure timetable

Upstream (Bangkok - Ayutthaya)

Monday, Wednesday and Friday: guaranteed departure with a minimum of four confirmed adults on a join tour

basis.

Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday: departure with a minimum booking of five people on joined tour basis with confirmation up to six weeks before departure.

Downstream (Ayutthaya - Bangkok)

Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday: guaranteed departure with a minimum of four confirmed adults on a join tour basis.

Monday, Wednesday and Friday: departure with a minimum booking of five people on joined tour basis with confirmation up to six weeks before departure.

Sunday: no scheduled departures operate.

Private charters available any day.

Available

Jan—Dec

Typical Duration

2 days

Comfort level

Refined (boutique or luxury accommodation and food)

Experience required

A reasonable interest is all that is needed