

The diverse excitement of Bangkok, Thailand

I have been in Bangkok, Thailand during August 28 to September 15 in 2012 for urban regeneration workshop. Since it was my first visit and I had limited knowledge on the financial crisis in 1997 and the heavy flood last year, I might have had a somewhat negative image of the city. However, my expectation had changed entirely upon arrived in Bangkok. Bangkok has numerous interesting aspects. Traditional shop houses, new high rise buildings, lots of green in vacant land and canals are all mixed making a dynamic and unique scenery of the city.

According to a research, Bangkok is the third on global 20 destination cities by international visitors. What is attracting tourists to the city? One thing is a unique atmosphere with openness from mixture of diverse ethnic cultures. During the workshop, I learned that Bangkok was formed based on trading with advantage of river. Foreigners came to the city for their living and made their community. . I also found out that there are a mosque, Thai temples, and Chinese temples for their own community and had a chance to witness a community meeting which was mixed with Chinese, Vietnamese, and other ethnicities. You can find lots of ethnic area not only for commercial purposes but also for local communities such as China town, Muslim areas and so on. I'd like to recommend you to visit not only to experience the well known 'night life' of the city but to enjoy the diverse local culture.

Street vendors are very common on the street everywhere in Bangkok. Basically they sell everything such as food, fruits, clothes, and any kind of fancy goods. I was able to enjoy many kinds of tropical fruits, Thai noodles and fried food with cheap price. Street vendors may be reflected negatively to a city governor because it make city environment unclean. However, it clearly shows Thai people's life style; many people do not have kitchen facilities in their houses and enjoy meals several times a day outside.

Lastly, Bangkok is still water friendly, even though the city has recently been developed toward inland and experienced flood damage. There is the Chao Phraya River crossing from north to south of the city and canals connecting inland to the river. You can take a water boat to get to the other part of the city and visit many kinds of temples, markets, and traditional housing, which helps you feel the water-based Thai culture.



Asiatique. Riverside Commercial Facility renovated old warehouse.



Temple and river, which are common scenery in Bangkok riverside



An Old shop house, dominating building type in Bangkok, protesting against Bridge construction