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Bangkok: The Monocle Travel Guide Series



Synopsis

Bangkok is a city that welcomes visitors but is complex in both history and layout. There's a reason that people come back time and time again: this is not a place you can fully comprehend with just one trip. The Thai capital is both socially tolerant and deeply conservative; its businesses are often friendly but difficult to find. It's a city where both an old monarchy and a young creative class find common ground. In helping you navigate Bangkok's streets, Monocle will show you a city where business and design is thriving. Hidden in plain sight are great parks for running, architectural masterpieces designed by Thai firms, and hidden bars playing music you've never heard before. And, of course, Monocle will tell you where to head for the city's famous street food, spa treatments, and hotels for both business and leisure (or a mix of the two). Even if you have been to Bangkok before, you're about to find out why there's so much more to discover. Monocle reports from around the globe in print, on radio, and online. As its editors and correspondents dart from city to city, they get to know the best places to rest their heads, stretch their limbs, and kick back with a contact in a hard-to-find cocktail bar. That information is now available in Monocle's Travel Guide Series: a line-up of titles that speaks to you in an informed but informal way about everything from architecture to art, late-night bars to early-morning markets. These are books that go beyond the traditional tourist beats to make sure you get the best out of a city—no matter how short your stay. Designed to be compact and collectable, they are also discerning; Monocle's team won't list a hundred places to eat but they will tell you where's best for everything from some tasty fast food to something truly celebratory.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Terrific guide book that is filled with fun facts and good tips. I was in Bangkok for 2.5 weeks and this proved very informational. We were able to find the more "touristy" places like the Grand Palace and Jim Thompson house (Especially great if you only want a short tour and time to explore) as well as the more unique places like record stores (Prepare yourself, they are not cheap!) and bars.

This book is almost a literary masterpiece. Reviews of featured countries are written by journalists, publishers and writers. The pictures are great and concise. It shows the different highlights of the countries as well as places that are off the beaten path. Food and drink sections are awesome. It's a travel book you want to keep in your collection for a long time.

Awesomely designed, which is a big plus. However, mostly recommendations for pricey and/or expensive places and experiences. No surprise. But if that's not your thing, there are still useful tips and it's much nicer than almost every other guide. And not that pricey itself, comparatively.

Photos and essays are...okay. Essentially what you would expect from Monocle. As a guide book, pretty much useless unless you are already very familiar with the city. Imagine a guide book claiming to show recommended walking paths in a number of neighborhoods, both touristy and not. Sounds great, right? Now imagine that the maps omitted all mass transit information. Perhaps you have a cryptic "start from this station and take a taxi" or similar reference, but would it kill the editors to include markings on the map showing where the train stations are? Wouldn't that be a better "curated" experience? No, you say, the discriminating readers of this guide would prefer not to use mass transit, particularly the expensive-for-locals BTS, which would clearly mark them as tourists. Fine, I say, but anyone who has actually been to Bangkok will and should know that no taxi driver is going to understand most instructions (or addresses) in English (nor should they!). A user friendly guide book would include at least one of: the establishment name, the address, or at least the cross streets in Thai, particularly if the recommendation is to take a taxi. With Monocle, you'll need to curate this knowledge on your own. Good luck! (A small number of the places recommended are genuinely local, which is cool in a city where shopping malls are king, but this means that often their entire web presence is all in Thai, so good luck if you don't speak the language!) Most of the other

recommended spots are either not particularly special or worthwhile. Also very few details about opening times and other information you might want from a guidebook. The design is visually pleasing and will help you get your yearly quotient of hipster fluff, so if that's what you're looking for, go for it. Otherwise, skip it.

I'm a temporary Bangkok resident and I bought this book for a curated look into the city. I didn't want an exhaustive guide, just the best bits, so keep that in mind. A spread on design-centric shopping made me want to purchase this book, I hate touristy souvenirs and want my Thailand shopping to be local, beautiful and authentic. In addition to the shopping and design, we found some great walks we will be doing to explore Bangkok neighborhoods. Looking forward to doing some exploring soon!

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