8th Evaluation Meeting:
Pre-Service Student Teacher Exchange
in Southeast Asia
(SEA-Teacher Project)
Guide Book
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8th Evaluation Meeting: Pre-Service Student Teacher Exchange in Southeast Asia (SEA-Teacher Project)

Date: 8-10 November 2019
Convention Hall, Teepawich Building,
Pibulsongkram Rajabhat University
Phitsanulok, Thailand

CONCEPT NOTE

I. Background Information

In October 2014, the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education through the SEAMEO Council had issued seven priority areas for SEAMEO to work together to improve the quality of education in Southeast Asia. “Revitalizing Teacher Education” is one of the priority areas in achieving quality education in the region. To fulfill this mandate, SEAMEO Secretariat has embarked on a project titled “Pre-Service Student Teacher Exchange in Southeast Asia (SEA-Teacher Project).”

The project is designed mainly for the 3rd or 4th year of pre-service student teachers whose major are in Mathematics, Science, English, and Pre-school to have the opportunity to conduct their practicum within Southeast Asian countries. The practicum period is for one month. The students’ roles and responsibilities are assigned weekly during the one month (observation, assist in teaching, creating a lesson plan, teaching and reflection). The host universities will select the schools for the pre-service student teachers and provide mentors to supervise and monitor the students throughout the practicum period. The project is based on a cost-sharing basis.

II. Objectives of the Project

1. To enable pre-service student teachers to develop their teaching skills and pedagogy.
2. To encourage pre-service student teachers to practice their English skills.
3. To allow the pre-service student teachers to gain a broader regional and world view.
4. To expose future teachers to diverse teaching and learning situations and opportunities and the value of flexibility.

Following the completion of the 8th batch of the Pre-Service Student Teacher Exchange in Southeast Asia (SEA-Teacher Project), SEAMEO Secretariat in collaboration with Pibulsongkram Rajabhat University will host the evaluation meeting in Phitsanulok, Thailand from 8th to 10th of November 2019. This meeting aims to ensure that important lessons learned could be shared with the existing and future participating universities for further improvement.

In addition to the evaluation meeting, an International Seminar will be held on the second day of the meeting. The seminar provides a platform for all participants to share their research and programmes on Teacher Education.
III. Objectives of the 8th Evaluation Meeting

1. To review and evaluate the implementation of the 8th batch of pre-service student-teacher exchange, taking into account best practices and lessons learned.
2. To discuss and plan for the 9th batch of pre-service student exchange.

IV. Participants

1. Representatives from 90 participating universities in the 8th batch of SEA-Teacher programme.
2. Representatives from Teacher Education Institutes in Southeast Asia.

V. Expected Outcomes

1. Experiences and lessons learned from the 8th batch shared for future improvement.
2. Letter of Agreement of the 9th batch will be signed.
3. Compendium of the paper presentation from the Seminar.

VI. Correspondence

For further information or any inquiries, please contact any of the following staff:

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Assistant to the President for International Affairs Faculty of Education
Pilbulsongkram Rajabhat University
Tel: +66956304630
E-mail: buncha2510@gmail.com

Ms Pitchayawadi Arreenich
SEA-Teacher Project Coordinator
SEAMEO Secretariat
Tel: +66982364535
E-mail: seateacher@seameo.org
8th Evaluation Meeting: Pre-Service Student Teacher Exchange in Southeast Asia (SEA-Teacher Project)

Date: 8-10 November 2019
Convention Hall, Teepawich Building
Pibulsongkram Rajabhat University
Phitsanulok, Thailand

(Organized by SEAMEO Secretariat and Pibulsongkram Rajabhat University)

Administrative Note

Dear Participants,

We look forward to welcoming you at the 8th Evaluation Meeting: Pre-Service Student Teacher Exchange in Southeast Asia (SEA-Teacher Project) on 8-10 November 2019 at Convention Hall, Teepawich Building, Pibulsongkram Rajabhat University, Phitsanulok, Thailand.

Further information related to the logistics of the event can be found below. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the organizing team with details provided at the end of this document.

Preparations prior to the meeting

Please confirm your participation at http://pste.psrual.ac.th/on or before 21 October 2019.

Meeting documents

The meeting documents can be downloaded from SEA-Teacher website.

Meeting Venue

The meeting will be held at Convention Hall, Teepawich Building, Pibulsongkram Rajabhat University.

Fees and Accommodation

The committee will make hotel reservation at Wangchan River View Hotel, Hansanan Hotel, and OU Hotel for all participants from 8-10 November 2019. Please indicate your preferable room type at http://pste.psrual.ac.th/. Free breakfast is included in all types of the room.

Option 1: Wangchan Riverview Hotel
https://wangchanriverviewphitsanulok.com/
- Deluxe Room Single (900 Baht/1 night/room)
- Deluxe Room Double (900 Baht/1 night/room)

Option 2: Hansanan Hotel
http://hansananhotel.com/contact.php
- Deluxe Room Single (900 Baht/1 night/room)
- Deluxe Room Double (900 Baht/1 night/room)
Option 3: OU Hotel

https://www.facebook.com/347781085899100/

- Deluxe Room Single (800 Baht/1 night/room)
- Deluxe Room Double (800 Baht/1 night/room)

Other additional costs incurred (i.e. laundry charges, telephone calls or other requested service) are the responsibility of the participants.

In addition to the accommodation fee, 1,500 Baht/person will be charged as a registration fee. This is to cover food, local transportation, and meeting package.

The fees do NOT include the tour package.

**Payment Method**

You can select any of the following methods of payment for accommodation fee, registration fee, and tour package.

**Option 1:** Cash on site (Thai Baht only)

**Option 2:** Telegraphic Transfer. It should be made to the following account:

- Account Name: PIBULSONGKRAM RAJABHAT UNIVERSITY
- Account No.: 6600006222
- Bank Name: BANGKOK BANK
- SWIFT CODE: BKKBTHBK

Please include in your payment:

1) The total registration fees; wire transfer fees are the responsibility of the registrant (Registrants are required to bear the processing fee charged by their own bank and a third party agent (if any).
2) Your organization’s name as it appears in the reference section of your transfer
3) Please write a remark "REGISTRATION FEES SEATEACHER 2019"

**Kindly note that international cheque and credit card are not accepted.**

Please forward a scanned copy for proof of payment of the telegraphic transfer receipt to International@psru.ac.th with cc to Ykongthupthai@gmail.com for us to verify the transaction. Please kindly write down the participant's name, date & time of the transfer and country & city of origin. Official Receipt of the participant payment will be issued by PSRU during registration.

PSRU provides all participants a transportation service from airport-hotel-airport and between the hotels and the meeting venue. Please fill in your flight details at http://pste.psru.ac.th/.

PSRU provides a transportation service to and from Phitsanulok Airport (PHS) only.

The participants are suggested to get a connecting flight from Don Mueang International Airport (DMK). There are three airlines - Nok air, Air Asia, and Thai Lion Air with 12 daily flights each day to and from DMK-PHS.
Nok Air: Flight Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Donmueang to Phitsanulok</th>
<th>Phitsanulok to Donmueang</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Departure</strong></td>
<td><strong>Arrival</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06:20 am</td>
<td>07:15 am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01:25 pm</td>
<td>02:15 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07:05 pm</td>
<td>08:15 pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Air Asia: Flight Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Donmueang to Phitsanulok</th>
<th>Phitsanulok to Donmueang</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Departure</strong></td>
<td><strong>Arrival</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08:10 am</td>
<td>09:10 am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05:10 pm</td>
<td>06:10 pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thai Lion Air: Flight Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Donmueang to Phitsanulok</th>
<th>Phitsanulok to Donmueang</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Departure</strong></td>
<td><strong>Arrival</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08:45 am</td>
<td>09:45 am</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Vans/buses that will be fetching the participants at the airport will be parked in arrival hall at the airport. PSRU staff wearing PSRU shirt with PSRU banner will be at the arrival area waiting for the participants to assist them and transport them to the hotels. The same vans/buses will transport the participants back to Phitsanulok Airport for their departure.

NOTE: PSRU vans/buses are AVAILABLE at the following schedule ONLY.

Schedule of Pick-up:

**DATE:** 7 November 2019  
**TIME:** 08:30 AM, 10:30 AM, 12 NOON, 03:00 PM, 05:30 PM, 7:30 PM

Meals

On the meeting day (8-9 November 2019), PSRU will host lunches, coffee/tea breaks, and welcome diner (8 November 2019). Free breakfast is included in the hotel from 07:00 am – 10:00 am.

Certificate of Participation

The participants shall receive a copy of certificate of participation issued by SEAMEO Secretariat on 9 November 2019 at the meeting venue. We reserve the right to rely on the list of participants updated as of **21 October 2019** those who are not on the mentioned list but attend the meeting, will receive the e-Certificate via e-mail after the meeting within two weeks.

1-Day Tour

On November 10 is the 1-day tour in Phitsanulok or Sukhothai (please select only one route). It is arranged by the PSRU committee and local travel agent. Those who want to join, kindly contact the PSRU committee on site. (Tour price is **400 Baht/Person for Phitsanulok** and **600 Baht/Person for Sukhothai** which includes Professional Tour Guide, Transportation, Lunch, Admission fee, Tram and Amenities).
**10th November 2019**

**Route 1: Phitsanulok Wat Yai and Chan Palace** (400 Baht/Person)

09:00 am. Meet Up  
09:00 - 10:30 am Visit Wat Phra Si Rattana Mahathat (Wat Yai), and see “Buddha Chinaraj” the Buddha image that most beautiful in Thailand. And see historical heritages culture and souvenir market.  
10:45 - 12:00 (noon) Chan Royal Palace historical culture.  
12:00 (noon) Lunch

**Route 2: Sukhothai Historical Park** (600 Baht/Person)

09:00 am Meet up at Hotel lobby, and then go to Sukhothai province  
10:00 - 12:00 (noon) Visit Sukhothai Historical Park, the World Heritage Site WAT Mahathat, WAT Sri Sawai, WAT Sra si, WAT Tra Pang Ngern  
12:00 (noon) Lunch (Set menu) at Ban Jun Shine  
01:00 - 03:00 pm WAT Sri Chum WAT Pra Prai Luang, then go back Phitsanulok.

**Contact details**

For further clarifications or emergency, please contact any of the following PSRU staff:

**DR. BUNCHA SAMRUAYRUEN**  
Vice President  
Contact No: +66 956 304630  
E-mail: buncha2510@gmail.com

**MISS NIPHA CHUENTONGMON**  
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**MISS LADDA PINSAGUL**  
Senior International Relations  
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E-mail: sagulrat@hotmail.com

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Educator  
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E-mail: ykongthupthai@gmail.com
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Date: 8-10 November 2019
Convention Hall, Teepawich Building,
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Phitsanulok, Thailand

TENTATIVE MEETING PROGRAMME

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thursday 7 Nov 2019</th>
<th>The arrival of participants and check-in at Wangchan Riverview Hotel, Hansanan Hotel, and OU Hotel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friday 8 Nov 2019</td>
<td>Evaluation Meeting of 8th Batch of Pre-Service Student Teacher Exchange in Southeast Asia (SEA-Teacher Project) at Convention Hall, Teepawich Building, Pibulsongkram Rajabhat University, Phitsanulok, Thailand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0800 – 0830 hrs</td>
<td>Registration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0830 – 0900 hrs</td>
<td>SEAMEO Colours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SEAMEO Song</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cultural Performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0900 – 0930 hrs</td>
<td>Opening Ceremony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Welcome Remarks by Asst Prof Dr Usanee Sengpanich, Dean of Faculty of Management Science, Acting President (PSRU)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Opening Remarks by Dr Ethel Agnes P Valenzuela, Director of SEAMEO Secretariat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Presentation of Token Appreciation from SEAMEO Secretariat to Pibulsongkram Rajabhat University, Phitsanulok, Thailand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0930 - 1000 hrs</td>
<td>• Introduction of the Participants by Ms Pitchayawadi Arreenich, SEA-Teacher Project Coordinator, SEAMEO Secretariat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000 - 1030 hrs</td>
<td>Refreshment / Photo session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1030-1200 hrs</td>
<td>Session 1: Overview of the SEA-Teacher Project and Programme Evaluation of 8th Batch (VDO Presentation) by SEAMEO Secretariat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1200 - 1330 hrs</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Event</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 1330 - 1500 hrs | **Session 2:** Panel Presentation: 8\textsuperscript{th} Batch of SEA-Teacher Student Exchange: Good Practices and Lesson Learned  
- **Indonesia:** Dr Dwi Winarsih, Coordinator, UNTIDAR  
- **Philippines:** Angelica O Cortez, Ed D, Dean of College of Education, NEUST  
- **Thailand:** Dr Nathaphon Santhi, Assistant to President, CRRU  
- **Thailand:** Dr Narongdech Rattananonsathien, President, KRU  

Moderator by: Ms Anti Rismayanti, Programme Officer III, SEAMEO Secretariat |
| 1500 - 1530 hrs | Refreshment                                                          |
| 1530 - 1630 hrs | **Workshop 1:** Country Coordination Meeting  
Objective: to discuss the arrangement for the 9\textsuperscript{th} batch  
**Facilitators from SEAMEO Secretariat:**  
- **Indonesia:** Ms Anti Rismayanti, Programme Officer III  
- **Philippines and Vietnam:** Dr Ethel Agnes P Valenzuela, Director  
- **Thailand and Japan:** Ms Pitchayawadi Arreenich, SEA-Teacher Project Coordinator |
| 1630 - 1800 hrs | **Session 3:** Signing Agreement Ceremony                              |
| 1800 – 2000 hrs | Welcome Dinner by PSRU                                               |
| Saturday 9 Nov 2019 | Registration                                                                 |
| 0830 – 0900 hrs | Recap of Day 1  
by Ms Anti Rismayanti, Programme Officer III, SEAMEO Secretariat |
| 0900 – 0930 hrs | **Panel: Plenary Session 1:** Education in Industry 4.0: Innovation and Transition  
- **Philippines:** Dr Jestoni P Babia, Dean of College and Graduate School of Education, USJ-R  
- **Philippines:** Mrs Nelia A Britanico, Social Science Instructor, College of Teacher Education, University of Saint Anthony  

Moderator by: Dr Christine Ferrer, Director of External Linkages and International Affairs, TAU, Philippines |
<p>| 1000 – 1030 hrs | Refreshment                                                          |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
- **Japan:** Dr Nakao Nomura, Director of South East Asia and Taiwan offices, University of Tsukuba  
- **Indonesia:** Dr Hartono, M A, Vice Dean of Academic Affairs, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, UNSRI  
- **Philippines:** Dr Christine Ferrer, Director of External Linkages and International Affairs, TAU  
- **Indonesia:** Prof Dr Diana Arfianti, Director for Brawijaya Smart School  
Moderator by: Dr Cristina E Sayoto, Practicum Supervisor, Program Coordinator – SEAMEO, DLSU-D, Philippines |
| 1130 – 1200 hrs | Wrap Up and Closing                           |
| 1200 - 1330 hrs | Lunch                                        |
| 1400 - 1800 hrs | Cultural visit to Phitsanulok (Optional) / Departure of participants |
| **Sunday 10 Nov 2019** |                                               |
| 0900 - 1600 hrs | Cultural visit to Sukhothai (Optional) / Departure of participant |
About Bangkok

Welcome to the magnificent city of Angels. Bangkok offers every foreign visitor with a very unique holiday experience. Founded more than 200 years ago, Bangkok was fertile township gently nestled alongside the Chao Phraya River Delta.

As Bangkok confidently step forth alongside international cities as a dynamic metropolis in any present terms, great aspects of the old is still well preserved and cherished. Nowhere else will you find such as great age-old civilization and a people that is genuinely proud, gentle and ready to please all at the same time.

Below are some useful facts:

Business hours: private sector office hours are 9:00 to 5:00, Monday to Friday, except on public holidays, Civil service office hours are 8:30 am to 4:230 pm. General banking hours are 8.30 am to 3.30 pm Monday to Friday.

Currency: The rate of exchange is approximately US$ 1 = Bhat 30.00. Notes are in denominations of Bt.1,000 (gray), Bt. 500 (purple), (Bt.100 (red). Bt.50(blue), Bt. 20 (green). There are 10,5,1, baht coins, and 50 and 25 satang. Foreign currencies can be exchanged at the airport, hotels and banks.

Electricity: The electric system is 220 Volt AC (50 cycles).

Making an international call: Operator-assisted calls, dial 100; direct dialling, dial 001, follow by country, area codes and telephone number International phone cards are available widely.

Language: Thai is the national language while English is widely understood in Bangkok and other major cities.

Taxis: Available 24 hours within the city. Metered fare is the norm. Flag down rate is started from Bt.35.00. Expressway tolls are paid by passengers.

BTS Sky Trains: The BTS has stations in major commercial areas. It is an ideal transport above the traffic from 6:00 am to midnight. Fare starts from Bt.15.00 to Bt.42.00 per person.

VAT Refund for Tourists: All tourists from overseas are eligible to apply the “VAT refunds” as follows:
Shop at the store displaying “VAT Refund for Tourists” sign and as for the from P.P 10 and original tax invoice when you purchase is at least 2,000 Baht.
Total purchases have to be 5,000 Baht/person (VAT included) or more, to qualify for the VAT refund. Before checking in at the airport, show your purchases, completed P.P 10’s and tax invoices to the Custom Officer for inspection at the Custom Office.
Hand-Carried luxury goods such as jewellery, gold ornament, watches must be re inspected at the VAT refund Office after the passport control at the airport.

Tourist-information

Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) head office:
1600 New Pheburi Road,
Bangkok 10310, Thailand
Tel: +66 (0) 250 5500 (120 Lines)
Fax: +66 (0) 250 5511 (2 Lines)
URL: www.tourismthailand.org

Tourist Police Division
999 Moo.1 Nongprue, Bangpli,
Samutprakarn 10504, Thailand
Call Center:1155
Email: tourist@police.go.th
URL: www.thaitouristpolice.com

The useful websites for the information on Thailand are:
www.thaiway.com
www.tourismthailand.org
www.bangkoktourist.com
### Useful Phrases in Thai

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Thai</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thank You</td>
<td>Khob khun krub/kha*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never mind</td>
<td>Mai pen rai krub/kha*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sorry, execute me</td>
<td>Kho thot krub/kha*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How are you?</td>
<td>Sabai dee mai?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine, thank you.</td>
<td>Sabai dee, knob khun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I cannot speak Thai</td>
<td>Chan phood Thai mai dai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please speak slowly</td>
<td>Karuna phood chaa chaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t understand</td>
<td>Mai Kao Jai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you understand</td>
<td>Kao Jai Mai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where is the restroom</td>
<td>Hong Nam yoo nai?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much does it cost?</td>
<td>Ra-ka thao rai?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is this?</td>
<td>Nee khue a-rai?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Chai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Mai Chai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Luck</td>
<td>Choke dee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good bye</td>
<td>La-kon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>See you again</td>
<td>Laew phob kan mai</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Direction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Thai</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Turn right</td>
<td>Liew khwaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turn left</td>
<td>Liew saai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go Straight</td>
<td>Throng-pai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want to go</td>
<td>Yaak Ja Pai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stop here</td>
<td>Yut tong nee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slow down</td>
<td>Cha Cha Noi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Kha” is for female.
“Krub” is for male.
About Phitsanulok Province

Phitsanulok is a province situated in the lower part of North Thailand. The Phitsanulok landscape is mushroomed with farms, waterfalls, caves and several national parks. The provincial seal depicts the Phra Buddha Chinnarat, one of Thailand’s most beautiful Buddha images. The Nan river flows through the provincial capital, and the town is known for the houseboats on both banks of the river.

History of Phitsanulok

Phitsanulok has a long history. In the 11th century, the town was a small outpost of the Khmer empire. Phitsanulok became an important town in the Sukhothai Kingdom. In the second half of the 15th century, Phitsanulok was the capital of the Ayutthaya Kingdom for a period of 25 years. The town is the birthplace of King Naresuan who liberated the area from Burmese occupation and expanded the Ayutthaya Kingdom with parts of Burma and Cambodia. Unfortunately, much of the old town was destroyed by a fire in 1955.

To do & see in Phitsanulok

Phitsanulok province houses many natural, historical and cultural attractions that are worth a visit.

Wat Phra Si Rattana Mahathat: Regarded as the most important temple in the province. A Royal temple founded in the 14th century is famous for the Phra Buddha Chinnarat Buddha image, considered by many to be the most beautiful Buddha image in Thailand. The Sukhothai style image measuring 375 centimeters tall was molded around 1357. Wat Phra Si Rattana Mahathat also features a 36 meter tall Ayutthaya style stupa that enshrines Buddha relics and a large standing Buddha image in front of it.

Wat Chulamani: The oldest temple in Phitsanulok; it was founded in the 13th or 14th century during the Sukhothai era. King Boromma Trailokkanat, King of Ayutthaya in the second half of the 15th century ordered a Vihara to be built. In 1464, the King and over 2,300 of his attendants ordained as monks. The King stayed in the temple for over 8 months. Highlights of the temple are a laterite Khmer stupa built on a rectangular platform and the roofless mandapa that enshrines a Buddha footprint as well as a stone inscription made during the reign of King Narai the Great. Wat Chulamani is located off Highway 1063 on the East bank of the Nan river, about 6 kilometers South of Phitsanulok downtown.

Chan Palace: Chan Palace or “Wang Chan,” believed to have been built during the first half of the 15th century, was the residence of several Ayutthaya Kings. King Naresuan, who ruled the Ayutthaya Kingdom from 1590 until 1605, was born in the Palace. The site has been excavated by the Thai Fine Arts Department. Little more than brick foundations of the Palace buildings, walls and gates remain today. Among the artifacts that have been excavated are pottery, roof tiles and fine porcelains from several Chinese dynasties, including Ming. On the site of the ancient palace are the remains of two much better preserved Buddhist temples, Wat Sri Sukhot and Wat Wihan Thong, which were probably Royal temples used by Ayutthaya Kings. Chan Palace is located on the West bank of the Nan river.

Ref: https://www.renown-travel.com/north/phitsanulok.html

About Sukhothai

Sukhothai Historical Park covers an area of about 70sqkm and contains more than 190 historical
ruins. Inside the city wall and moat, Wat Mahathat stands at its epicentre, as the spiritual centre of the kingdom, and the royal palace (now collapsed) lies to its northwest. To the city’s immediate north is a small contained area, housing Wat Phra Pai Luang, believed to be the original foundation site of the Sukhothai Kingdom. Strolling through the grounds of the historical park, you will encounter at least three architectural styles.

Early Sukhothai people shared the same beliefs in the system of the universe with the Khmer. Temples were laid out according to the Mount Meru concept with the central prang being the tallest and most significant structure. Only after Theravada Buddhism entered the kingdom did the Ceylonese bell-shaped chedis replace the corn-shaped prangs. Sukhothai craftsmen also developed their own style, known as the lotus-bud chedi. About 60km from Sukhothai Historical Park is its sister city Si Satchanalai, a flourishing centre for trade with China at the time. If you have time, definitely pay Si Satchanalai a visit in order to get a complete picture of the Sukhothai Kingdom.

History

Much of what constitutes modern Thailand can be traced back to the Sukhothai Kingdom, although some history dating back to this ancient period remains pretty much unclear and debatable. Before the rise of Sukhothai, Siam was made up of small fiefdoms, subject to the ancient Khmer Empire’s rule. Sukhothai’s founding monarch was able to consolidate power and succeed the Khmer as the ruler of newfound Siam.

As well as in the realms of government and religion, the short-lived Sukhothai Kingdom marked a golden period for art and architecture. King Ramkhamhaeng the Great (1239 – 1317), the second ruling monarch of the Phra Ruang dynasty, established the Ceylonese school of Theravada Buddhism as the state religion, set up an administrative system and documented Thai alphabets from ancient Khmer scripts. Ceylonese style, bell-shaped stupas grew to become a common sight at Buddhist temples across the kingdom. Sukhothai temple craftsmen also developed their own style, known as the Sukhothai style, the most notable being the ‘lotus-bud’ chedis, brick-over-stucco construction technique and Buddha images with a signature graceful form.

After King Ramkhamhaeng, Sukhothai slowly entered a period of decline, beginning 1378 onwards. By the mid-fifteenth century, Sukhothai was fully annexed by the Ayutthaya Kingdom.

Highlights and Features

Wat Mahathat: This is the epicentre – and spiritual centre – of the Sukhothai Kingdom, following the ancient Khmer’s concept of the centre of the universe. The temple architecture, however, is resolutely Sukhothai, with the lotus-bud principal chedi, instead of the Khmer corn-shaped prang, surrounded by smaller bell-shaped chedis built on square bases (Khmer style). Wat Mahathat is perhaps the most photographed temple in Sukhothai Historical Park, often depicted from its eastern front, with its giant seated Buddha image behind rows of half-collapsed columns.

Wat Phra Pai Luang: Set on the original site where the Sukhothai Kingdom was founded, this temple showcases a combination of Khmer and Lopburi architecture, dating back to the early 13th century, when Sukhothai was undergoing transformations from ancient Khmer-Hinduism to Theravada Buddhism. All but one of the three centrepiece corn-shaped prangs have long collapsed. The prang showcases elaborate stucco decorations, an art unique to Sukhothai’s craftsmen. East of the prangs is the square-based chedi, believed to have served a highly significant spiritual role.

Wat Sri Sawai: Built at about the same time as Wat Phra Pai Luang, Wat Sri Sawai was originally located outside the city wall until the city was moved slightly southwards from the site of Wat Phra Pai Luang. It features heavy Khmer architectural influences, with three corn-shaped prangs but decorative stuccos that are unique to Sukhothai’s craftsmen, e.g. apsaras donning Lopburi-style costumes, floral-designed stucco reliefs and elongated tiers for the prangs. All three prangs are still standing, although some of the details in the decorations may have fallen off.
**Wat Sri Chum:** Perhaps the second most photographed temple after Wat Mahathat, Wat Sri Chum holds a mystery behind its giant seated Buddha image (15m tall, 11m wide) known as ‘Phra Atjana’, or immovable Buddha, housed inside the sole-standing mandapa. Upon approaching the structure, you see the Buddha’s massive chest and benevolent gaze from the vertical opening just wide enough to allow two persons to enter at a time. The lingering mystery about the temple is the double-layer mandapa walls, which contain a passage that leads up to the Buddha’s head. No one knows what this secret passage was used for. The walls feature the country’s oldest murals, drawn on slate and most of which are no longer visible.

**Wat Chetupon:** While not much is left standing at this temple, the remains are very impressive. Notable is the gigantic square-based mandapa showcasing stucco-over-brick Buddha images in sitting, standing, walking, and reclining postures. The partially collapsed outer wall surrounding the mandapa, made of extra-thick slate, features pillar-balcony windows, another architectural highlight unique to this temple.

**Wat Trapang Thonglang:** This temple boasts three intricate stucco relief images of the Buddha performing three miracles. These reliefs can be found on each side of the outer mandapa wall, the only structure left standing in the temple grounds. Note that much of the relief images have eroded with time.

**Wat Saphan Hin:** Situated atop a low hill west of the city wall, this temple has a slate-paved pathway that leads to the main temple structure. The 300-metre hike up serves the purpose of a pilgrimage. Much of the main pavilion has collapsed, leaving the 12.5-metre-tall Buddha image in a standing posture, exposed to the elements.

**Ramkhamhaeng National Museum:** Opened in 1964, this two-storey museum houses archaeological finds from the Sukhothai Historical Park, Si Satchanalai, Kamphaeng Phet and Petchabun. The collection includes stucco relief images, Buddha images, inscribed stones, Hindu bronze deities and sangkhalok ceramics. Open: 09:00 – 16:00 (Wed – Sun)

**Turiang Kiln:** Along the northern outer wall surrounding Wat Phra Pai Luang is the ancient production site of the sangkhalok ware. Fired inside the specially designed cross-draft kilns called ‘Turiang’, sangkhalok ceramic was Sukhothai’s major trade commodity with China. Remnants of the kiln can still be seen at the site.

**Tips and What Not to Miss**

- The best time to visit the park is early morning, as it can be very hot at midday
- For photographers, go just before the sunset hours to capture the image of the bright orange sun setting behind the giant seated Buddha at Wat Mahathat.
- Drink lots of water, apply sunscreen as well as wear light clothing and comfortable shoes
- Better to rent a motorcycle than a bicycle if you plan to cover the entire historical park
- Too lazy to walk? Try the guided tram tour that hits all major sites in the park. Hop on for a small fee.