

Questions & Answers on Thai Visa

Q: I would like to go to Thailand for vacation for 2 weeks. I hold American passport. Do I need a visa?

A: Nationals of the United States of America and 41 other countries are eligible to travel to Thailand, for tourism purpose, with the exemption of visa and are permitted to stay in the Kingdom for a period of not exceeding 30 days. Therefore, you do not need a visa.

However, please make sure that you are in possession of a passport valid for at least 6 months, a round-trip air ticket, and adequate finances equivalent to at least 10,000 Baht per person or 20,000 Baht per family. Otherwise, you may be inconvenienced upon entry into the country.

Furthermore, foreigners who enter the Kingdom under this Tourist Visa Exemption Scheme may re-enter and stay in Thailand for a cumulative duration of stay of not exceeding 90 days within any 6-month period from the date of first entry.

The list of the 42 countries could be found at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand's website (www.mfa.go.th).

Q: As an Australian businessman, I need to travel a lot. I have to go to Thailand very frequently on business. Is there any facility for frequent business travelers like me?

A: You can apply for a 1-year or 3-year multiple-entry business visa which would allow you to travel to Thailand as frequently as you want while the visa remains valid, and you would be permitted to stay for a period of not exceeding 90 days on each visit.

You can find more information on the basic requirements for visa application at www.mfa.go.th. To ensure that your application will be conveniently processed, kindly check with the Royal Thai Embassy or Consulate-General at which you are to submit the application for more details.

Besides, since Thailand and Australia are both members of APEC and participating in APEC Business Travel Card (ABTC) scheme, you may be eligible to apply for an ABTC which serves as a multiple-entry business visa allowing entry into 17 other APEC economies in one card. For more information, you may contact the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs of Australia which is Australia's focal authority for this scheme.

Currently, APEC Economies which participate in the ABTC scheme are Australia, Brunei, Chile, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Korea (ROK), Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Singapore, Thailand, Chinese Taipei, and Viet Nam

Q: I want to work in Thailand. I am a Malaysian, living in K.L. How should I go about getting necessary visa?

A: In order to work in Thailand, there are 2 important elements:
(1) Non-Immigrant "B" Visa and (2) Work Permit

First of all, you need to have a prospective employer in Thailand. Then you may apply for a Non-Immigrant Visa category "B" (business) at the Royal Thai Embassy in K.L. using the basic required documents and recommendation letter from your employer along with your company's business certifications as suggested in the website (www.mfa.go.th).

Once you have obtained such visa, you can enter the Kingdom and therefore apply for a Work Permit from the Department of Employment, Ministry of Labour.

In order to expedite visa issuance, your employer may, on your behalf, apply for the Work Permit in advance (with the form called Tor Thor 3). The Department of Employment will then issue a pre-approved certificate to be used in your visa application. In such case, please make sure to obtain the Work Permit (Tor Thor 2) once you arrive in Thailand.

Q: I am a Lithuanian. I want to go to Thailand for sightseeing for just a week. I understand that Lithuanian nationals have to apply for visa before entering Thailand. But there is no Thai Embassy in my country. Can you please give me some advice?

A: You have three options:

(1) Lithuanian nationals are eligible to apply for visa on arrival (VOA) at any of 24 designated checkpoints in Thailand, including, of course, all international airports.

Currently nationals of 20 countries are eligible under this scheme. You can see the list of such countries in the website (www.mfa.go.th).

With the Visa on Arrival, you would be granted a stay of a period of not exceeding 15 days. But you must have a passport valid for at least 6 months, a round-trip air ticket where date of departure from Thailand is within 15 days of the date of entry, and adequate finances equivalent to at least 10,000 Baht per person.

(2) There is a Royal Thai Honorary Consulate-General in Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania. You may apply for a Thai tourist visa there. In such case, you would be permitted to stay in Thailand for 30 days.

(3) You may also apply for Thai tourist visa at the Royal Thai Embassy in Moscow or at the nearest Royal Thai Embassy in which would also permit you to stay for 30 days.

Q: I am an Indonesian national currently working for a Company in London. My company has assigned me to attend a training course in Thailand for 6 weeks. Should I apply for visa, and where can I do that?

A: You need to obtain a Non-Immigrant Visa before entering the Kingdom. You may apply for such visa at the Royal Thai Embassy in London. Basic documents include a recommendation letter from your company verifying your status and the assignment. You will also need documents certifying that you are legally employed in Britain and confirming that you will be able to re-enter Britain without any problems.

Q: I have obtained a tourist visa from the Honorary Thai Consulate-General in Rio de Janeiro. They forgot to include a date of expiry in the visa. I had trouble at the airport but fortunately the Immigration officer allowed me to enter. Now I want to extend my stay but the Immigration Office insisted that they cannot permit the extension unless the visa is fixed. What should I do?

A: In this case, please bring your passport to the Visa Division, Department of Consular Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on Chaengwattana Road in Bangkok. If the visa is genuine, you can obtain any corrections or amendments of visa there.

Q: I am an Italian national currently staying in Koh Samui on my vacation. I entered Thailand with a tourist visa and was granted a permission to stay for 60 days until the end of this month. However, I wish to stay longer. What should I do?

A: You may apply for an extension of stay at any Immigration Office in Thailand where you may be permitted to stay for another 30-day period. You must do so before your stay permits expires, otherwise you will be fined 500 Baht for each day you overstay in Thailand.

Q: I am an Indian and I just finished my study in Bangkok. Now I want to work with a company in Chiang Mai. Do I need to do anything?

A: You need to apply for a change of visa status, and apply for a Work Permit. You are therefore recommended to consult with the Immigration Office and the Department of Employment accordingly.

Q: An NGO in Thailand has invited me to go there and work for them as a volunteer for 45 days during my school break. I will not earn any money in Thailand. I am a Belgian college student in Brussels. I understand that I do not need a visa, do I?

A: Although you will work as a volunteer, you do need a Non-Immigrant visa as well as the Work Permit. The NGO must be legally registered with the Thai authority, and that you need a recommendation letter from the NGO for your visa application and the Work Permit.

Q: Please give me some advice. I am a bit confused. I am a Moroccan and going to visit Thailand for pleasure with my family. I already got a Thai tourist visa from the Honorary Consulate-General in Casablanca. I understand from what is written in the visa stamp that the visa is valid for 3 months. Does it mean that I can stay in Thailand for 3 months?

A: That is not a correct understanding. The validity of visa and the duration of stay are not the same. The 3-month validity of the visa means that you must use the visa within 3 months from the date of issue. The duration of stay is the period in which you are permitted to stay in the Kingdom granted by the Immigration Officer once you arrive in Thailand, that is, 30 days from the date of entry.

Q: I came to Thailand with a single-entry business visa, and I have been permitted to stay for 90 days until the end of next month. I was just asked by my boss to attend an urgent meeting in Singapore for several days starting from the day after tomorrow. I still have business to do in Thailand after that though. Do I need to get another visa?

A: Before you leave Thailand for Singapore, you may apply for a re-entry permit from the Immigration Office. You are able to do that at any International Airport too. The re-entry permit will allow you to enter the Kingdom again before the end of next month. The permit will also enable you to stay until the end of next month, unless you get an extension of stay from the Immigration Office.

Q: I heard that Thailand is a nice place to stay after retirement. Is there any special kind of visa for retirees?

A: Yes, there is special visa called Non-immigrant "O-A" (Long Stay). Foreigners who are 50 years of age or older who wish to stay in Thailand for a long period and do not have any intention to work in the Kingdom may apply for such visa at the Royal Thai Embassy or Royal Thai Consulate-General in their respective country. The holder of "O-A" visa is allowed to stay in Thailand for 1 year from the date of first entry, and is also able to apply for an extension of stay afterwards. Please see the qualifications and requirements for application and relevant information in the website (www.mfa.go.th).

Q: I have been in Thailand since last week with a multiple-entry business visa. I happened to lose my passport yesterday. What should I do?

A: First, you need to go to a police station for a report of the loss. Then you need to go to your Embassy in Bangkok for an issuance of new passport or temporary travel document. Finally, you need to bring the new passport or travel document to the Immigration Office for an endorsement.

In case that your country does not have an Embassy in Bangkok, please go to the Visa and Travel Documents Division, Department of Consular Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on Chaengwattana Road in Bangkok, to apply for the Emergency Certificate (EC). You then need to bring the EC to the Immigration Office for endorsement before leaving the Kingdom.

You need to apply for a new visa on your new passport before coming to Thailand next time.