

General Information

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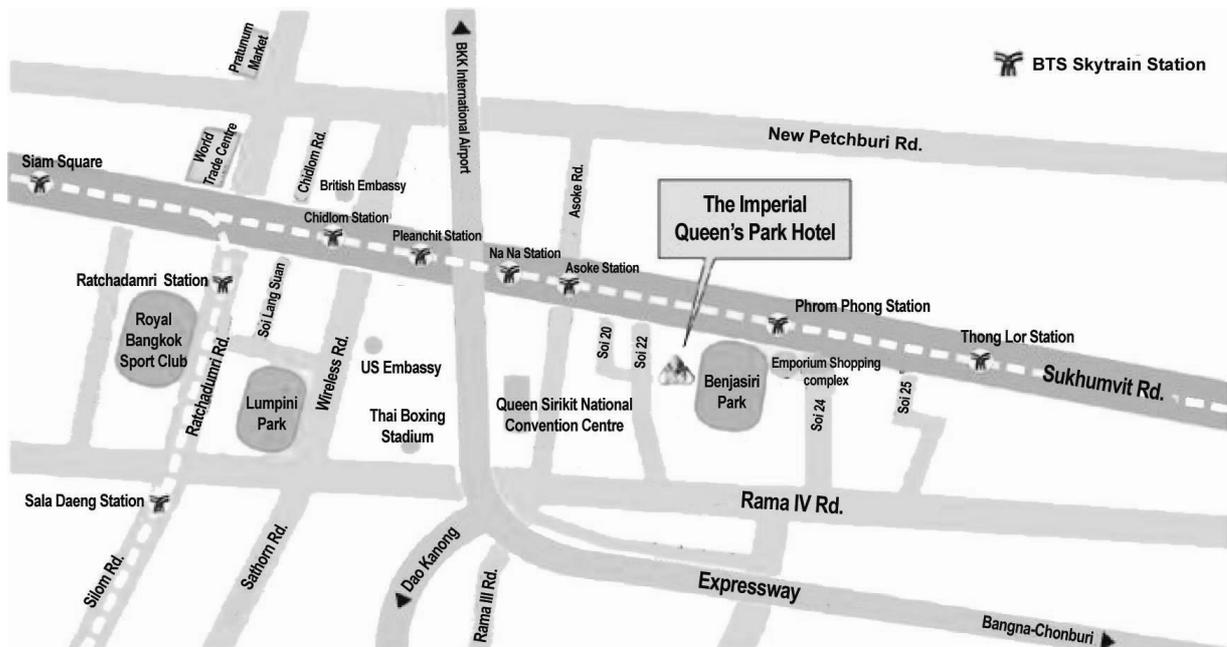
ISCAS 2003 Secretariat
1471 Town in Town, Soi 3/2, Soi Ladprao 94,
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Email: secretariat@iscas2003.org

Symposium Website:

<http://www.iscas2003.org>

Map Showing Conference Center Location



Official Hotel and Venue for the Symposium and Side Meetings

The ISCAS 2003 Conference will be held from Sunday May 25 to Wednesday May 28 in the Imperial Queen's Park Hotel which is superbly located in the city's most fashionable district, with easy access to the Bangkok Skytrain.

The Imperial Queen's Park Hotel
199 Sukhumvit Soi 22, Bangkok 10110 Thailand
Tel. (66 2) 261- 9000 Fax. (66 2) 261- 9530

The hotel overlooks beautiful Benjasiri Park. Within walking distance are excellent shopping and entertainment venues. You can check out the hotel and its features on <http://www.imperialhotels.com/queenspark>.

Registration Desk

The Registration Desk will be located in the Imperial Queen's Park Hotel Foyer.

The Symposium Secretariat will be on-site for enquiries.

A Tours Desk will operate during the Symposium to advise on tours within Bangkok.

Entrance To Symposium

Each member of the Symposium will receive a name badge on registration.

The badge will be your official pass and must be worn to obtain entry to all sessions and to social functions.

Insurance

Registration fees do not include insurance of any kind.

It is strongly recommended that at the time you register for the Symposium and book your travel you take out an insurance policy of your choice.

This policy should include:

- loss of fees / deposit through cancellation of your participation in the Symposium, or through cancellation of the Symposium,
- loss of international / domestic air fares through cancellation for any reason,
- loss of tour monies through cancellation for any reason including airline or related services strikes within Thailand, failure to utilise tours or pre-booked arrangements due to airline delay, Force Majeure or any other reason,
- medical expenses and loss or damage to personal property,
- additional expenses and repatriation should travel plans have to be altered.

The Symposium Secretariat cannot take any responsibility for any participant failing to arrange their own insurance. This insurance is to be purchased in your country of origin.

Airport Transport:

Choices for the trip from the airport to the city are:

Limousines (booked at a desk, *INSIDE* the terminal).

Cost about 650 baht (\$US16), paid when you book.

Meter-Taxis (booked on the roadside, *OUTSIDE* the terminal)

Cost is the meter reading plus 50 baht (ie about 300 baht) paid at destination.

Airport Bus AB-3 (booked on the road, *OUTSIDE* the terminal)

This bus stops at Soi 24, Sukhumvit Rd, which is only about 500m from the conference hotel (in Soi 22). The fare is 100 baht per person.

Note: Cheaper taxis (sold by agents who will approach you) are often unsafe.

Taxi drivers rarely have change of anything bigger than 100 Baht.

Taxis and Limousines meet every flight no matter how late you arrive.

Currency:

To get better rates, change your money here in Thailand. Rates at the airport are the same as the rates at city banks and city money exchange centers.

Note that hotel exchange rates always favour the hotel!

Credit Cards, Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs), etc:

Major credit cards are accepted at many shops, hotels and entertainment places but never in taxis or at food stalls. Visa is the most popular credit card followed by American Express and Mastercard.

Most ATM machines in Thailand accept Cirrus and will give cash advances on major credit cards.

Check with your home bank before you leave.

Business Hours:

Most offices open from 9 am to 5 pm, Monday to Friday, except on public holidays. General banking hours are Monday to Friday 9.30 am to 3.30 pm. Many stores open 12 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Health:

Most medications (even antibiotics) are readily available over the counter in Bangkok, *usually without any need for a prescription.*

No special injections are required or recommended for Bangkok.

Malaria medicines are not recommended for Thailand.

Bangkok has many first class doctors and many first class hospitals.

Dental care in private dental clinics (and most hospitals) is excellent and low cost.

Language:

Most hotel staff, some shop assistants and a few cab drivers understand English. Many don't. BUT Thais are wonderful at getting the message across. Communication will not be a problem no matter what language you speak. (Thailand is not called the Land of Smiles by accident!)

Religion:

Buddhism is the prevailing religion in Thailand and around 95% of the population are Buddhists. Muslims constitute around four percent of the population and live mostly in the southern provinces bordering Malaysia. There are also small Hindu and Christian communities. Since Buddha statues and images represent the Buddha, visitors are asked to behave respectfully to all statues and images so as not to cause offence to local people.

Electricity:

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

Travellers with shavers, tape recorders, computers and other appliances may need to carry a plug-adaptor kit.

If your appliances are 110V, check if there is a 110/240V switch. If not, you will need a voltage converter.

(See more on socket details on <http://www.iscas2003.org/asp/faq.asp#15>)

Getting Around:

- **Traffic** usually moves consistently (though quite slowly in peak hours). It is chaotic at times but usually quite manageable. So you needn't worry when you leave the hotel to explore around!
- Bangkok **buses** are cheap and frequent but often crowded and not always air-conditioned. They are recommended only for short trips or for those on extremely tight budgets. During peak hours they are highly recommended for thrill seekers!
- **Meter-Taxis** are air-conditioned, extremely plentiful (24 hours) and very cheap. They can be hailed anywhere, anytime but need small notes (100s, 20s) and coins as drivers rarely have change.
- **Tuk-tuks** (3 wheeled taxis) also exist and work off a bartering system – so agree to a fare before you jump in. Prices should be a little less than taxis (but if you bargain badly they can be more!).
- The **Skytrain** is ideal for travel between the bigger shopping centres. And the Skytrain is a good way to see Bangkok. It is recommended at any time (6am to midnight) but especially during peak hours!

Driving:

Thais drive on the lefthand side of the road (ie the English system).

Local Time:

GMT+ 7 hours.

Climate:

Bangkok in May is usually very warm (a little over 30°C) with a chance of rain. (But if it does rain it will be warm rain and it won't last long!)

What to Wear:

Light, loose cotton clothing is best. Nylon should be avoided as it makes you perspire. Neat clothes are required for entering temples or palaces. Shirts and ties (no coats) are normal for business meetings. Almost all shops, taxis and hotels are fully air-conditioned. **Sweaters are only needed if you are visiting mountainous areas or some national parks.** Remember: it is always hot in Bangkok ... it is never less than 20 degrees C and rarely below 24 degrees C, even at night.

Internet Access / Email:

During the conference there will be stations reserved for attendees to check their email, view conference related websites and use the ISCAS 2003 CD-ROM to print selected publications.

Most hotels provide internet access, as do the many internet cafes. All Thai tourist areas have numerous excellent internet cafes, typically charging around USD1.5 per hour. (The more remote centres – eg the Thai islands – all have satellite internet access! Thailand is very internet aware.)

Tipping:

In Thailand tips are not expected but are always appreciated: so tip when you want to. All major hotels and restaurants exact a 10% service charge, and it is almost always included in the bill. Taxi drivers appreciate but don't expect a tip, though passengers often round up the meter fare to the nearest 5 or 10 baht.

More Questions?

If you want more information (eg what, where, when, how much) about activities or availabilities or have other questions then check the **FAQ** on the ISCAS 2003 website at <http://www.iscas2003.org>. If what you want is not there then **ASK DAVE** by emailing to davidw@mut.ac.th. All enquiries will be answered and will be treated anonymously so feel free to ask *anything*. There will be an "Ask Dave" Office established at the conference as well.

Social Events

The Welcome Reception

When: Sunday, 25 May 2003

Where: Close to the Imperial Queen's Park Hotel (follow the signs)

When: 1800 onwards

Dress: Smart Casual

The Welcome Reception will be held outdoors with a background of live classical Thai music accompanying authentic Thai cocktails.

This will be a wonderful chance to mix, to meet old friends and new and to be introduced to the delights of Thailand.

Food and drink will be **free** for all and in large supply.

The Conference Banquet

When: Tuesday, 27 May 2003

Where: The Impact Arena in Muangthong Thani

How: Buses will leave from the Imperial Queen's Park Hotel

When: The dinner will run from 1900 onwards

Dress: Semi-formal or Business Attire

The ISCAS 2003 Banquet will be a major happening. It will be held in an elegant specially setup Thai atmosphere in a major Bangkok function centre.

Buses will take participants there (and back) from the Imperial Queen's Park Hotel.

Delicate Thai and Chinese cuisine will be served and a specially prepared live Thai cultural performance will be presented. Live music for dancing will follow the meal.

ISCAS 2003 will provide a banquet (and a conference) to remember!

Social Program Information

(Things To Do When You Are Not At The Conference)

When you are not attending ISCAS 2003 events, you can shop, explore, tour, wine and dine, be entertained, play internet or just simply relax.

Bangkok is a wonderful, vibrant city, a virtual gold mine of unmatched sights and experiences, of indigenous culture, of street scenes, stalls and traditional festivities, of open displays of foods, music and dances ... and all of these are juxtaposed with modern boutiques and stores selling local and international goods.

If ever there was an ISCAS Symposium to bring spouses and partners to, this is it! There are so many options. Thailand really is a tourist's paradise.

Bangkok is not only one of the world's most tourist friendly big cities, it is also one of the world's safest. You can wander around even well after dark with no worries.

So what can you expect at Bangkok and ISCAS 2003?

Well, what follows is only a small sampling. To read more about what it is like to live in Bangkok check the specially written **FAQ** on the ISCAS 2003 website at <http://www.iscas2003.org> or search the internet. There are many, many sites describing and showing the charms of this truly amazing city.

The ISCAS 2003 Venue

The ISCAS 2003 venue (the Imperial Queen's Park Hotel) is situated in the Sukhumvit area, a prime business and shopping area. Just a few minutes very easy walk away are quality shopping, food and entertainment venues, a major city park and a Skytrain station (Phrom-Phong).

As well there are lots of safe, very cheap taxis available around the clock. (Some visitors call Bangkok "the city of taxis"!)

So getting around is easy. Yes, yes, Bangkok has a reputation for bad traffic but it's no longer deserved; the Skytrain and the many new expressways have changed all that.

Shopping

Bangkok is a shopper's paradise. All sorts of goods from cheap to chic are available from a wide range of shopping locations. A huge array of world class department stores, shopping centers, boutiques, specialty shops, bargain bazaars and street stalls sit side by side, most open daily from 10am to 9pm (and often beyond), awaiting your inspection.

Bangkok shops are famous for Thai handicrafts and decorative items, inexpensive quality clothing (eg you can have suits tailor-made in 48 hours), souvenirs, antiques, low cost videos and CDs. You name it and Bangkok will almost certainly have it for sale. There are many, many excellent tailors and jewelry stores all over the city.

The ISCAS 2003 venue is situated in the midst of all this prime shopping. Within easy walking distance of the hotel and conference venue is a shopping and entertainment complex called *The Emporium*, an upmarket mall with a department store, designer boutiques, bookstores, restaurants, food center, cinema complex and supermarket.

Other easily accessible shopping experiences awaiting you in Bangkok are:

- **Central Department Store:** A large, well-known department store containing a wide variety of merchandise, brand name boutiques, restaurants and supermarkets.

- **The World Trade Center:** A modern shopping complex including Isetan and Zen department stores as well as specialty shops, restaurants, a large cineplex and an ice-skating hall.
- **Narayana Phand:** A multistory shopping center purposely built to display and sell Thai crafts, decorative items and souvenirs. It is just opposite the World Trade Center.
- **Siam Center:** A mall with a big variety of shops, restaurants, fast food outlets and a Cineplex.
- **Siam Square:** An area of many parallel lanes containing a variety of boutiques and shops selling clothing, books, jewelry, etc. Several cinemas lie within the complex along with a large number of restaurants. The amazing Mah Boon Krong (MBK) building is here too with its floors and floors of interesting stalls.
- **Siam Discovery Center:** This new very popular centre includes a large collection of stores and specialty shops selling a wide range of products including fashion, house wares and children's toys and clothes.
- **MBK Center / Tokyu Department Store:** A multistory shopping center featuring clothing, mobile phones and accessories, jewelry, music, furniture, leather goods, shoes etc. This complex contains many restaurants and fast food outlets.
- **Pantip Plaza:** A multistory mall for computer hardware, software and accessories at very reasonable prices. Bargain hard and get a receipt. This is an excellent place to go for computer related items.
- **Sogo and Amarin Plaza:** A shopping mall with a Sogo Department Store and several restaurants, specialty shops and fast food outlets. A supermarket is on the 4th floor.
- **Peninsula Plaza:** An upmarket shopping plaza with various designer brand shops, jewelry stores, airline offices, bookstores, and restaurants.
- **Pratunam Market / Bai Yok Tower:** Located along a warren of alleys and stalls, this area is famous for low cost clothing, watches, fabrics, towels, bedding, etc.
- **Chatuchak (Jadjujak) Weekend Market: One of the great bazaars of Asia** (but fully open on Saturdays and Sundays only). Chatuchak provides shoppers with a huge selection ranging from Tshirts & souvenirs to tribal goods and antiques. Be prepared to bargain. A layout plan of this market is available at bookstores. (There are over 10,000 stalls here!)
- **Silom / Patpong Night Market:** Each evening starting from 6.00pm, Soi Patpong and the sidewalks along Silom Road fill up with merchants selling souvenirs, clothing, videos, etc. This area is also famous for clubs & nightlife (though it is not the only such area, nor is it the best).
- **River City:** On the Chao Phraya river this complex is home to lots of arts and crafts shops including many of Asia's best antique shops. A whole floor is devoted to antique shops – walking it is like wandering in a museum!
- **Silom Village:** A complex in Silom Road devoted to tourist souvenirs and food.
- **Chinatown (Yaowarat):** The distinctively Chinese area of the city, a sprawling mass of many, many interesting lanes selling a myriad of wares.

There are many, many more shopping areas and street markets. You could shop for months in Bangkok and never visit the same shop twice!

Exploring

Bangkok is a wonderful city to explore by foot, car, train or even boat.

Wide main roads and narrow lanes (sois) and a variety of canals (klongs) snake all over this metropolis offering a seemingly unending mix of sights, sounds and smells from the colorful stalls, shops, temples, homes and people. It is always hot and windless but on every sidewalk there is plenty of shade and plenty of food and drink. And when you tire of walking you can easily hail one of the seemingly ever-present taxis or hop on the air-conditioned Skytrain. There is nowhere quite like Bangkok!

Touring

Tours are a big part of any city and Bangkok has first class ones. The half day and full day tours you will find listed at your hotel can usually be booked up till 7pm the night before – though often you can book and go immediately! (Bangkok is VERY tourist friendly.)

There are evening tours and, for pre and post ISCAS 2003, a range of longer tours.

Typical regular tours departing from your hotel involve:

- Temples (eg The Emerald Buddha, Wat Pho)
- Palaces (eg The Grand Palace, Vin Man Mek Palace, Suan Pakkard Palace)
- Museums (eg The National Museum, Jim Thompson's House)
- Cultural Displays (eg Rose Garden, Muan Boran (the ancient city), Thai puppet shows)
- Shopping Markets (eg Night Markets, the Day Markets, Chatuchak Weekend Market)
- Other Localities (eg the Floating Market, Ayutthaya, River Kwai, Pattaya, Hua Hin)
- Cruises (eg on the Chao Phraya or along some of the many klongs)

More details can be found in the "Some of the Optional Tours Available" section below and at <http://www.iscas2003.org/sightseeing.html> . Colour brochures and photo albums on these (and others) will be freely available at your hotel. For pictures and extra information right now you can also check the Tourist Authority of Thailand website page about Bangkok at <http://www.tat.or.th/do/pdf/bkk.pdf>.

Thailand has many world famous holiday locations: Bangkok, Pattaya, Phuket, Chiang Mai, Hua Hin, Krabi, Koh Samui, Koh Phi Phi and many, many others.

Thailand really is a tourist's dream. It is impressive, exciting, different and surprisingly inexpensive. Look on the internet and at travel brochures (there are way too many options to list them all here!).

You can arrange **pre or post conference tours** very easily from here in Thailand. Thailand is highly tourist friendly and you do not need to book way in advance (but you can if you want)... usually a day ahead is enough!

Some possibilities to tempt you include:

- Elephant trekking
- Bamboo raft riding
- Hilltribe visiting
- Hiking
- Arts and crafts manufacturing centres
- Diving and snorkelling
- Tropical islands
- Wonderful, warm, sandy beaches

For pictures and details on many of these check the websites <http://www.tat.or.th> and <http://www.iscas2003.org/sightseeing.html> .

Wining and Dining

If you are a food fancier then Bangkok is the city for you. Literally thousands of street stalls, cafes and restaurants offer wonderful Thai food as well as international dishes and the occasional specialist fare.

Unique theme restaurants abound. Nearby examples include

Cabbages and Condoms, (Sukhumvit Soi 12), is the Thai Family Planning Association's restaurant and offers very good Thai food in a quite unusual setting.

The Seafood Market, (Sukhumvit Soi 24), is a huge supermarket of fresh seafood which you select then have cooked to perfection on the spot.

There are many, many wonderful food experiences to be had all over Bangkok.

Entertainment

There is much to do round the clock in Bangkok, but the city really comes alive at night. Bangkok nightlife runs till at least 2am every night. **Bangkok nightlife is legendary – and for good reason!**

Entertainment offerings include:

- music
- discos
- pubs
- beer bars
- hostess clubs
- night bazaars
- clubs
- cultural shows
- movies
- tenpin bowling
- ice skating
- Thai Boxing

And of course there are the many, many night markets and evening department stores.

Internet

Most hotels have internet access and there are many internet cafés open around the clock. Access is easy, fast and reliable. Internet café rates are typically about 1 baht a minute (about USD 1.5 per hour).

More Information

If you want more information (eg what, where, when, how much) about activities or availabilities (eg specific entertainment details, medical services, etc) check both **FAQ** and **Sightseeing** on the ISCAS 2003 website at <http://www.iscas2003.org>.

If what you want is not there then **ASK DAVE** by sending an email to davidw@mut.ac.th. All enquiries will be answered and will be treated anonymously so feel free to ask *anything*. (There will be an “Ask Dave” Office established at the conference as well.)

Optional Tours Available

Our local arrangement staff and the tour officers at the registration desk of ISCAS 2003 will happily provide more information on any of these tours. Each will be easy to book from your hotel, typically before 7pm the night before you want to go on it. Typical prices can be seen at <http://www.iscas2003.org/sightseeing.html>.

MORNING or AFTERNOON:

Bangkok City & Temples Tour

Every Morning and Afternoon (08.30 / 13.30)

Temples include “The Marble Temple” which represents an outstanding marriage between marble from Italy and classical Thai architecture, “Wat Pho” with its huge reclining Buddha and Wat Traimit with its golden Buddha.

Grand Palace & Emerald Buddha Temple Tour

Every Morning and Afternoon (08.30 /13.30)

Half-day tours visit the Royal Grand Palace and Wat Pra Kaew with its revered Emerald Buddha image, Golden Chedi, Pantheon of the Chakri Kings and the Eight Colors Towers.

MORNING:

Klong Tour & Temple of Dawn

Every Morning (08.00)

A half-day boat trip along the Chao Phraya River.

Enjoy scenes of life by the water, including a stop at the Temple of Dawn ("Wat Arun"), though not actually at dawn.

Crocodile Farm Tour

Every Morning (08.00)

A half day visit to the biggest Crocodile Farm in the world with over 30,000 crocodiles in all sizes and a special show between men and crocodiles.

AFTERNOON:

Rose Garden Tour

Every afternoon (12.30)

An afternoon excursion to the Rose Garden Resort to see a Thai cultural show including a simulation of a colourful Buddhist ordination procession, a 'bent fingers/long fingernails' dance show, some Thai Boxing, Thai music and lots more.

EVENING:

Calypso Cabaret Show

Every Evening (19.00)

A night out at a transvestite cabaret stage show.

Notes:

- (a) These dancing girls really were born boys, though you may find this hard to believe!
- (b) There are no equivalent 'real girl' shows in Bangkok. There are many, many small bars and clubs displaying various grades of costuming (from lots to hardly any!), but these (and the equivalent 'real boy' shows) are best visited in small wandering groups, not in organized busloads! For information Ask Dave on davidw@mut.ac.th or ask him live at ISCAS 2003.

FULL DAY:

Damnoensaduak Floating Market & Rose Garden

Every morning (07.00)

A full day trip which goes out of Bangkok to see the famous Floating Market at Damnoensaduak, with a short stop at the largest Chedi in Thailand "Pra Prathom Chedi" and then a lunch at a local restaurant.

After the lunch there is a visit to the Rose Garden Resort to see a Thai cultural show which includes a simulation of a colourful Buddhist ordination procession, a 'bent fingers/long fingernails' dance show, some Thai Boxing, Thai music and lots more.

River Kwai Visit

Every Morning (07.00)

A full day trip out of Bangkok to Kanchanaburi. Visit the the war museum, the well known "Bridge on the River Kwai" and the cemetery of the allied war soldiers who perished while building the death railway. Take a short train ride on the railway (over the River Kwai).

River Cruise to Ayutthaya

Every Morning (06.30)

A full day trip involving a cruise up the Chao Phraya River with a buffet lunch on board on the way to the Bang Pa-In Summer Palace of the late King Rama V. After inspecting the impressive palace, there is a walk through the ruins of the ancient capital of Ayutthaya before a return to Bangkok by coach.

Summary

These are only **SOME** of the possible activities, **there are many, many more**. You can choose and book when you get here – your hotel will have brochures, pictures and specially trained travel assistants to help you and to arrange everything for you. Thailand (and especially Bangkok) is very tourist oriented and extremely well organised. You can be as flexible as you like!