

Wat Phra Si Sanphet

Wat Phra Si Sanphet is the largest temple in Ayutthaya, known for its row of chedis (Thai-style stupas). Housed within the grounds of the former royal palace. If you want to entrance the fee is 30 baths. The royal palace was located here from the establishment of Ayutthaya in the reign of King Ramathibodi 1 (1350) to the reign of King Sam Phraya (1448). Later King Borommatrailokanat ordered a wat to be built on this site in 1448 to be used as a monastic area.

After the reign of King Borommatrailokanat, his son King Ramathibodi II, ordered the construction for two chedis, one of which was kept the ashes of his father and the other those of his brother, King Borom-marachathirat III. Another chedi was built by order of King Borom-rachanophuttangkun. It was similarly used to house royal remains those of King Ramathibodi II.

In 1499, a principal viharn was built. The following year, in 1500, King Ramathibodi II commanded the casting of a standing Buddha image 16 meters high and covered with gold. This image, Phra Buddha Chao Si Sanphet was the main object of veneration in the royal viranra . After that time the ashes of members of the royal family other than the kings were placed in small chedis constructed at the site.

Wat Phra Si Sanphet was the royal chapel and no monks here. It was used for royal ceremonies.

When Ayutthaya was sacked in 1767 the gold which covered was taken by the invaders. During his reign King Rama I (1782 -1809) of the Ratanakosin Period ordered the transfer of the inner core of Phra Buddha Chao Si Sanphet from Ayutthaya to Wat Phra Chetuphon in Bangkok, and had it placed in a chedi specially built for the purpose. Another Buddha image of importance called Phralokanat was also brought to this wat at about the same time.

Picture of Wat Phra Si Sanphet



A venerated site where a Buddha image once sat.



Foreground: ruins of the viharn.
The three chedi (the spired objects)
were the only survivors of the Burmese sack of 1767.



The right chedi contains the ashes of King Trailokanath (r. 1448-1488).



Between the chedi are the ruined remains of the mondop buildings (square structures that contained relics).



Remains of the Prasat Phra Narai cruciform



The entry vestibules on each side of the chedi are derived from the manapa vestibules of Khmer architecture. A good example of a Khmer mandapa can be seen at Banteay Srei temple, also on this website. In that case, the mandapa is the rectangular building connected to the shrine.