

The National Museum Bangkok



HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE NATIONAL MUSEUM BANGKOK

The history of the National Museum Bangkok dates back to 1874 when His Majesty, King Rama V opened the first public "museum" to exhibit the royal collection of King Rama IV, and other objects of general interest, at the Concordia Pavilion inside the Grand Palace. Later, the Museum was transferred to its present site, the "Wang Na", or "Palace to the Front" which had been the palace of the Prince Successor. In 1926, it was named the "Bangkok Museum" and subsequently developed into the National Museum Bangkok, when it came under the direction of the Department of Fine Arts in 1934.



His Majesty the King presided over the opening ceremony of the South Wing Building (The Mahasurasinghanat Building) and the North Wing Building (The Praphatphiphitaphan Building) on 25 May, 1967

His majesty King Prajadhidpok (Rama VII) presides over the opening ceremony of the National Museum Bangkok in 1926.



The Exhibition Galleries In the National Museum Bangkok

The National Museum Bangkok currently houses three permanent exhibition galleries :

1. The Thai History Gallery

The first building in the museum compound contains the Thai History Gallery, which outlines the history of the Thai people. Inside this building there is also a museum shop selling souvenirs, books on the museum and other Thai cultures, and handicrafts. It is located in the front of the Siwamokhaphiman Hall, a ceremonial building.

2. The Archaeological and Art History Collections which are divided in two parts:

(i) The Prehistory Gallery, located in the back of the Siwanmokhaphiman Hall, and Gallery No. S6 on the upper floor of the South Wing Building.

(ii) The Art History Gallery, located in the North Wing Building, which displays sculptures and exhibits from the Dvaravati, Srivijaya and Lopburi periods, (before 1257 AD) up to the Bangkok period (1782)

3. The Decorative Arts and Ethnological Collection which is displayed in the old central palace buildings. This collection contains a variety of artistic, cultural and ethnographic exhibits such as gold treasures and precious stones, mother of pearl inlay, royal emblems and insignia, costumes and textiles, ceramics, carved ivory, old royal transportation, old weapons and musical instruments.

Other exhibits of interest in the Museum grounds include:

The Royal Funeral Chairots built for Royal cremation ceremonies,

1.) The Buddhaisawan Chapel, housing the Phra Buddhasihing, an important sacred Buddha image. The paintings inside this chapel are the oldest murals in Bangkok.



Phra Buddha Sihing image and very old beautiful paintings inside.



The Living Room, European style, decorated with the painting of George Washington

2.) Issares Rajanusorn, was built in the reign of King Rama IV and the rooms on the upper floor were royal living quarters and are still furnished in the European style (circa 1854).

3.) The Red House, originally one of the private living quarters of Queen Sri Suriyen, wife of King Rama II. It is a traditional teak house made of interlocking panels. The furnishings, including an impressive Chinese carved bed, date from the early 18th to mid-19th centuries. Many items belonged to the Royal family.



In addition, there are several minor pavilions which were once used for ceremonial occasions. Each one is an example of Thai architecture of the Bangkok period and include the Sala Longsong Pavilion, the Samranmukhamat Pavilion, the Mangkhalaphisek Pavilion and the Patihantasanai Pavilion.