GEOGRAPHY

Thailand is shaped like an elephant’s head. Narrow southern Thailand is the trunk, and the north is the head and the ear. (Can you see the elephant trunk?)

Thailand shares borders with Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia, and Malaysia. The Andaman Sea, a part of the Indian Ocean, lies to the west. The Gulf of Thailand lies to the east.
Mountains and deep river valleys cover northern Thailand. The mountains run down the western border into the south. The Chao Phraya is the country’s major river. It flows through plains in central Thailand. The northeast is a broad, flat area called the Khorat Plateau.

Plants and Animals

Bamboo, coconut palms, mangroves, ferns, and mango and papaya trees grow in Thailand. Teak and other hardwood trees grow in the rain forests of the north.

Small numbers of wild elephants, rhinoceroses, and tapirs live in Thailand. Many types of monkeys and birds live in the forests. Lizards, frogs, snakes, and crocodiles are common.
People

Thai people make up most of the population. Chinese people form a smaller group. The country also has small groups of Malays, Khmer, and others. Thai is the main language.

How To Speak Thai

Almost all the people of Thailand follow Buddhism. Some people in the south, especially Malays, practice Islam. Most people live in rural areas. (in the countryside)
Economy

Tourism is one of Thailand’s largest industries. Manufacturing is another important part of the economy. Some of the major products are clothing, computers and other electronics, cement, sugar, and jewelry. Thailand is one of the world’s largest producers of the metals tungsten and tin. The country’s mines also provide coal, natural gas, and gems.

Many Thai people work in farming. The main crops include rice, sugarcane, cassava, and corn. Thailand also produces natural rubber, pineapples,...