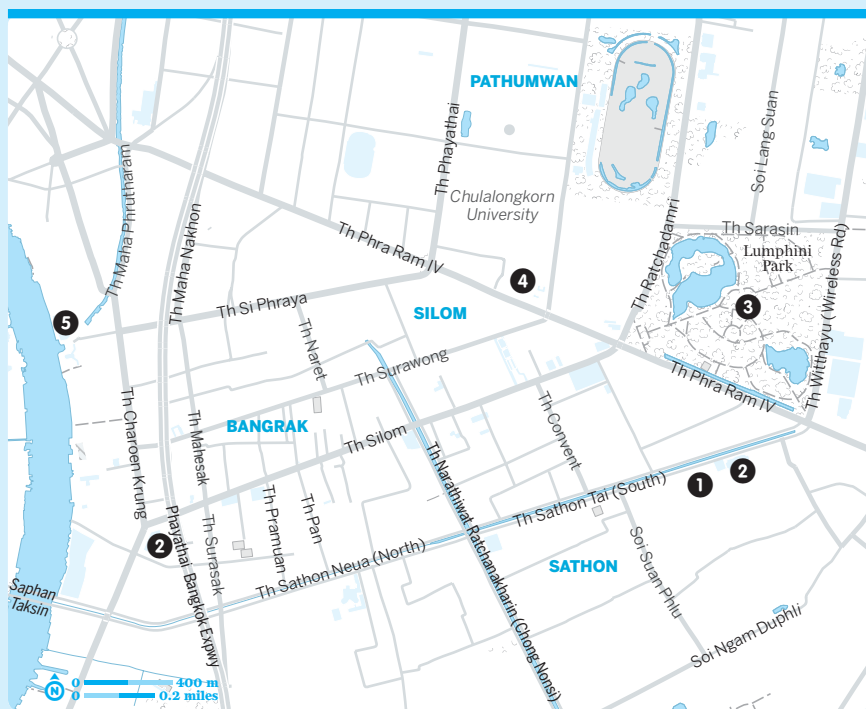


Riverside, Silom & Lumpini

RIVERSIDE | THANON SILOM | LUMPHINI & AROUND

Neighbourhood Top Five

- 1 Dining at **nahm** (p122), quite possibly the best Thai restaurant in the city.
- 2 Soaking up the views at Bangkok's tower-top bars, **Moon Bar** (p124) and **Sirocco Sky Bar** (p123).
- 3 Relaxing Bangkok-style among the exercisers and exercise-observers in **Lumphini Park** (p118), the 'lungs of the city'.
- 4 Confronting your fear of snakes at **Queen Saovabha Memorial Institute** (p118).
- 5 Ending the day (or starting the night) with a **dinner cruise** (p121) on Mae Nam Chao Phraya.



For more detail of this area, see Map p264, p266 & p268 ➔

Explore: Riverside, Silom & Lumpini

Th Silom, with its towering hotels and office buildings, is Bangkok's de facto financial district, while adjacent Th Sathon is home to many of the city's embassies. Incongruously, lower Silom functions as Bangkok's lush gaybourhood. There's a dearth of sights in this part of town, so unless you're heading to Lumpini Park – at its best in the early morning – take advantage of the area's street stalls and upscale restaurants and combine your visit with lunch or dinner. The BTS stop at Sala Daeng and the MRT stop at Si Lom put you at lower Silom, perfect jumping-off points for either Lumpini Park or the area's restaurants and sights.

The Riverside area is significantly less flashy, and is a great area for an aimless wander among old buildings. This stretch of Mae Nam Chao Phraya was formerly Bangkok's international zone, but today boasts a particularly Chinese and Muslim feel. Most of the sights in this area can be seen in a morning; the BTS stop at Saphan Taksin is a good starting point.

Local Life

- ➔ **Halal 'hood** The intersection of Th Silom and Th Charoen Krung is home to several Muslim-Thai and Indian restaurants.
- ➔ **Rainbow Flag** Lower Th Silom, particularly the strip from Soi 2 to Soi 4, is Bangkok's pinkest district and popular with both local and visiting gay men.
- ➔ **Good Morning** Pretend you're Thai-Chinese by getting up at 5am and taking part in the early-morning stretching rituals at Lumpini Park. Or you can just show up at a slightly saner hour and watch.
- ➔ **Art Attack** Those looking for a painting by a contemporary Burmese artist, or an Ayuthaya-era Buddhist manuscript cabinet, will undoubtedly find something interesting in one of Th Silom area's numerous art galleries and antique shops.

Getting There & Away

- ➔ **BTS** To Riverside: Saphan Taksin. To Silom: Sala Daeng (interchange with MRT Si Lom). To Lumpini: Ratchadamri, Sala Daeng, Chong Nonsi, Surasak and Saphan Taksin.
- ➔ **MRT** To Silom: Si Lom (interchange with BTS Sala Daeng). To Lumpini: Lumpini.
- ➔ **River boat** To Riverside: Tha Si Phraya, Tha Oriental and Tha Sathon. To Lumpini: Tha Sathon.
- ➔ **Bus** To Silom: air-con 76 and 77; ordinary 1, 15, 33 and 7.

Lonely Planet's Top Tip

Getting out on Mae Nam Chao Phraya is a great way to escape the Bangkok traffic and experience the city's maritime past. So it's fortunate that the city's riverside hotels also have some of the most attractive boats shuttling along the river (technically for hotel guests, but staff don't check). In most cases these free services run from Tha Sathon (also known as Central Pier) to their mother hotel, departing every 10 or 15 minutes. There's no squeeze, no charge and a uniformed crew to help you on and off.

Best Places to Eat

- ➔ nahm (p119)
- ➔ D'sens (p119)
- ➔ Zanotti (p122)
- ➔ Le Normandie (p119)
- ➔ Muslim Restaurant (p119)
- ➔ Kai Thort Jay Kee (p123)

For reviews, see p119 ➔

Best Places to Drink

- ➔ Moon Bar (p124)
- ➔ Sirocco Sky Bar (p123)
- ➔ viva aviv (p123)

For reviews, see p123 ➔

Best Places to Shop

- ➔ River City (p126)
- ➔ Jim Thompson (p127)
- ➔ House of Chao (p127)

For reviews, see p126 ➔