

# Riverside, Silom & Lumpini

## Neighbourhood Top Five

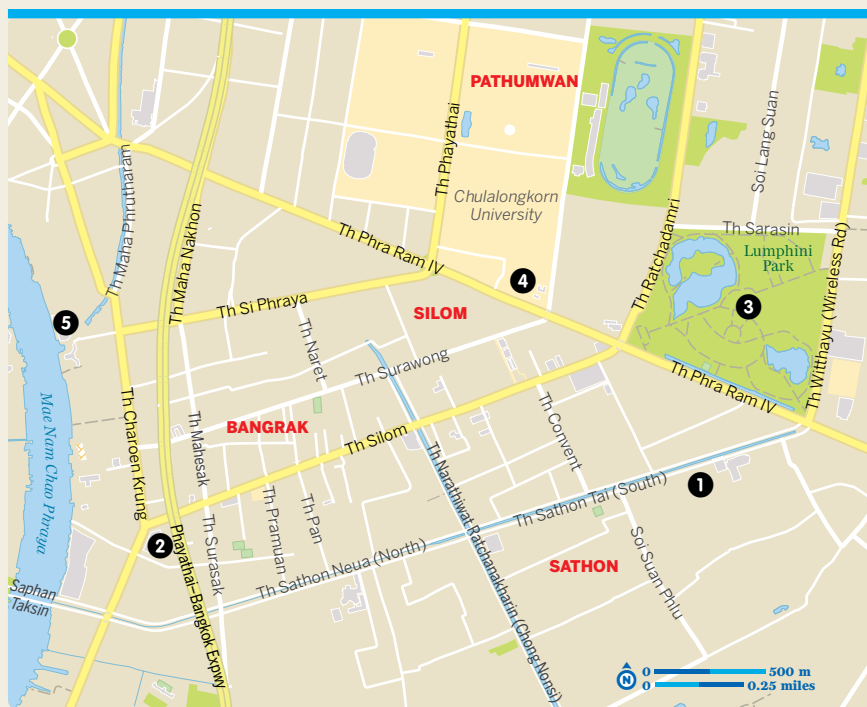
**1** Dining at **nahm** (p127), quite possibly the best Thai restaurant in the city, and as of 2014, the best restaurant in Asia.

**2** Soaking up the views at one of Bangkok's most famous tower-top bars, **Sky Bar** (p128).

**3** Relaxing Bangkok-style among the exercisers and exercise-observers in **Lumphini Park** (p122), the 'lungs of the city'.

**4** Confronting your fear of snakes at **Queen Saovabha Memorial Institute** (p121).

**5** Ending the day (or starting the night) with a **dinner cruise** (p125) on Mae Nam Chao Phraya.



For more detail of this area see Map p264, p266 and p268 →

## Explore: Riverside, Silom & Lumpini

Th Silom, with its towering hotels and office buildings, is Bangkok's de facto financial district, while Th Sathon is home to many of the city's embassies. Incongruously, lower Th 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 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 Th 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 (Chao Phraya River) 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 is 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 the numerous art galleries and antique shops around Th Silom.

## 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 27.

## 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 (p127)
- ➔ Eat Me (p126)
- ➔ Muslim Restaurant (p122)
- ➔ Kai Thort Jay Kee (p126)
- ➔ Chennai Kitchen (p124)
- ➔ Never Ending Summer (p122)

For reviews, see p122. ➔

## Best Places to Drink

- ➔ Moon Bar (p128)
- ➔ Sky Bar (p128)
- ➔ Viva & Aviv (p128)

For reviews, see p128. ➔

## Best Places to Shop

- ➔ Asiatique (p130)
- ➔ River City (p130)
- ➔ Jim Thompson (p130)

For reviews, see p130. ➔