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# Sampran Riverside Resort: An Oasis full of Thai Culture, Food, and Smiles

By **Becky Horace** | Feature | Published August 19, 2014

## Venue information

### Sampran Riverside

Km 32 Pet Kasem  
Road, Sampran,  
Nakorn Pathom,  
73110 Thailand



#### Venue Type

Multi Purpose

#### Open Since

1962

## Author information

### Becky Horace

Becky is an American expat, who arrived to Bangkok in January 2013. Upon her arrival,

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Just an hour outside of Bangkok along the Ta-Chine River lies a peaceful retreat which has been sharing the many different aspects of Thai culture with its guests for the past fifty-two years, all while maintaining a beautiful family friendly resort.



## History & Overview of Sampran Riverside

Recently, my husband and I had the pleasure of visiting the Sampran Riverside

she took on the role of Chief Mommy Officer. She is a freelance writer, Editor of BAMBI News. She is documenting her adventures through her writing and photography.

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resort, previously known as the Rose Garden Riverside. Sampran has humble beginnings, as the location was going to be used as a holiday home for Dr. Chamnan Yuvapurna and Khunying Valee and their family. The couple had a love for roses and gardening and because their flowers became so popular, they always had visitors stopping by. As the years went by, the couple opened a restaurant on the grounds marking their first business venture, followed by a country resort with reconstructed Thai teakwood homes to accommodate their guests who wished to stay longer. Ten years later, the couple saw a need to share a glimpse of the Thai way of life with their visitors so they created the Thai Village, which offered the Thai cultural show. From there, the original idea for a family vacation home quickly transformed into a seventy acre, family run, riverside resort employing over 400 people.



*Sampran Riverside - Hotel*

The resort is home to botanical gardens that guests can wander in for hours, a relaxing spa, Thai teakwood homes which line the lake, a riverfront hotel, meeting facilities to accommodate any size group or occasion (be it a wedding or company team building event), several different restaurants, a Thai Village which is home to elephant demonstrations, the Thai cultural show, and the cultural workshops; and to top it all off, Sampran is home to a certified organic farm producing food and other products for the resort.

## Our adventure on the grounds

When we arrived at Sampran Riverside, we had a plan to see and do as much as possible to ensure we were able to learn something new about the Thai way of life. The resort had created a full itinerary for our weekend getaway from Bangkok. When you book your trip to visit Sampran Riverside, be sure to work with the concierge to help plan the perfect trip. Sampran offers several different packages you can choose from when you are trying to decide what activities your family would like to experience during your stay. We were so fortunate to have Khun Chorthip, an employee with Sampran for over twenty years, as our guide for the weekend. Her Thai smile lit up the room and her kind personality had us at ease when asking our (sometimes silly) questions during our tours.

We started our day with the Thai cultural show held inside the Thai Village Theatre, which can hold up to 1,000 guests. Be sure

The grounds were pristine [and the] beauty of the Thai Village were to be admired.

to arrive early to get the best seats and beat the heat as it is fully air conditioned. The show is about to start; the lights dim, the traditional Thai music starts to play as the performers make their way onto the stage that is designed as a small Thai Village full of traditional looking teakwood homes. The show describes the “Thai way of life” and has several displays of traditional Thai dance, Thai martial arts such as Muay Thai fighting and sword fighting, in addition to a reenactment of a traditional Thai wedding procession and ceremony. The best part about this learning experience was the story didn’t focus on one particular part of Thailand but instead highlighted every region with their different traditions and dress. The show concludes with the band playing “It’s a small world after all” with more traditional Thai dancing and waving of all of the international flags, which made every guest smile as they tried to pick out their country’s flag.



*Sampran Riverside - Thai dance*



*Sampran Riverside - Thai boxing*

Directly following the Thai cultural show, the narrator invites all guests to make their way outside to view the elephant demonstration. The Thai Village boasts three grown female elephants and one baby female elephant, which all look happy, healthy, and well taken care of. The elephants put on a little show with some dancing, hula hooping, and walking carefully over their handlers while the narrator shares many fun facts with the crowd - one fun fact being if you are to measure the circumference of the elephant's foot and multiply that by two you have the elephant height.



*Sampran Riverside - Elephant Show*

Once the elephant show concluded, the guests could go visit with the stars of the show, feed them some little bananas grown on their organic farm, take photos, or even go for a ride. Khun Chorthip was waiting for us with her bright smile to take us on a short stroll of the grounds near the Thai Village. During our walk, we came across a herb garden and a beautiful teak home called the Ayutthaya house where guests can arrange for a Thai cooking class. The herb garden provides the freshest ingredients such as Thai ginger, lemongrass, three different varieties of basil, and so much more. Just on the other side of the herb garden and Ayutthaya house are gardens full of flowers, the most beautiful are the organic rose gardens, the same roses grown and raised by the original owners fifty-two years ago.

The grounds were pristine; the gardeners who were working tirelessly to preserve the beauty of the Thai Village were to be admired. As we made our way to the exit of the Thai Village, there were two special “extras” for guests who were staying at the resort because it was Mother’s Day weekend. One station was set up for guests to plant a jasmine tree in a coconut that they could take home and enjoy tea from, and the other was a tea tasting station where we sampled butterfly, lemongrass, and pandan tea. I wanted to get my hands dirty and decided to plant a tree with the help of a professional; I am happy to report almost a week later my little jasmine plant is still alive.

Since we were flexing our green thumb muscle, Khun

We enjoyed dinner overlooking the river at the renowned Inn Chan

Chorthip thought it was a good time to take us to the organic farm. Sampran is

restaurant, named after Thailand's famous Siamese twins

home to a fifteen acre organic farm located on the opposite side of the river from the resort. This farm is the producer of all of the fruits, vegetables, and rice used at the resort in their restaurants and cooking programs. This was one of the first organic farms in the area and Sampran has a passion and desire to share their knowledge of growing organically with the community. Once another local farm commits to growing organically and learns all they need to from the Sampran farmers, Sampran invites them to sell their products at their weekend market.

Our full day of tours and Thai culture concluded with a fresh coconut water to help us hydrate, fruit from the farm, and a boat ride along the river back to the resort. We made it to our riverfront room on the ninth floor and the view at sunset was breathtaking. The room is large, clean, full of reading materials about the surrounding areas, and has a spacious balcony with seating. Once we were able to drop off our bags and clean up, my husband and I were in the mood for Thai massaman curry. The resort has restaurants with both international and Thai cuisine. We enjoyed dinner overlooking the river at the renowned Inn Chan restaurant, named after Thailand's famous Siamese twins. The food was authentic and plentiful. After a stroll around the gardens, we made our way to the resort's new sports and karaoke bar where we enjoyed a nice cocktail and a very competitive game of pool, which I will admit I lost but sometimes in marriage you have to let your spouse feel like a winner.

The next morning, I woke early and sat on the balcony taking in the beautiful views as the sun was rising and shimmering on the river. It was a beautiful, clear day with blue skies full of white clouds without the usual layer of smog that you will sometimes see in Bangkok. The resort has a morning breakfast buffet which offers local fair and international options to please every guest visiting. Once we finished our coffee and breakfast on the outdoor seating area, we met Khun Chorthip for the rest of our visit.

The Thai Village is open starting at 10am every day and from 10am until noon there are Thai cultural workshops. I would say that this was my favorite part of the weekend. The Thai Village has twelve stations where guests can experience the “Thai way of life” in a very hands-on way. Although the demonstrations are in Thai, you can have a guide walk you around like we did and explain everything to you in English. You can learn how to make an all-natural Thai herbal compress used in massage, traditional Thai bamboo dancing, pottery, weaving, garland making, cooking, fruit carving, fan and umbrella painting, silk processing just to name a few, but my husband’s favorites were the Muay Thai and Thai martial arts demonstrations. You have two hours to participate in any of the stations, which is enough time to focus on a few of your favorite options and make a lovely souvenir to take home.



*Sampran Riverside - Thai silk weaving*

## **Family friendly? Yes indeed!**

Sampran Riverside is a great weekend getaway for those with and without families. During our stay (without our toddler), we found Sampran was not a vacation destination overrun with unruly children or massive families, but the resort has done an amazing job of providing facilities that would accommodate families while providing many fun options to please everyone in your group regardless of their age. For the little ones, there are two playgroups that are well maintained and look like a great way to expel all of that built up little kid energy. For the older children, the lake has swan paddleboats that can be rented and taken for a couple of laps around the lake. There is also a loop

around the lake and a station where you can rent bikes of all sizes; in the evenings when it is cooler this would be a fantastic opportunity for a family bike ride. The pool attached to the riverside resort is well kept and has a kid's pool and Jacuzzi attached to the main pool. A short walk from the pool is a tennis court. In addition to the family friendly facilities, all of the workshop activities, tours, and shows can be enjoyed and tailored to a younger crowd allowing everyone to be included and have a great time, which is all parents want when trying to find a vacation destination.

## Bottom Line

With Sampran being only an hour away from Bangkok, this is an easy, fun, relaxing, and educational weekend away from home that anyone of any age with or without a family could enjoy. After this weekend, my husband and I have already decided we will be taking our friends from the States who will be visiting in December for a day trip so that they can experience all that Thailand has to offer in one place.

## Coming Event

Sampran is hosting a 2 day and 1 night "Green Family Summer Camp" in August and September. During this weekend your family can learn how to grow your own veggies organically, yoga, and Thai arts & crafts just to name a few. **Please see the flier below for more details.**



*Sampran Riverside - Clay elephants*



*Sampran Riverside - Activities*



*Sampran Riverside - Do not enter sign*



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Learn, Explore and Enjoy ... and return  
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Venue: Sampran Riverside

Sat-Sun, Every Last  
Weekend of Each Month

Dates:  
28-29 June 2014  
26-27 July 2014  
30-31 August 2014  
27-28 September 2014

Grow your own veggies organically  
and take home your planted vegetable!

Learn quick and effective herbal potions  
like preparing your own balm and lotion!

Practice basic yoga & breathwork, along  
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Thai Art & Craft Workshops like weaving,  
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Contact Dimple Arora  
081 840 0640 or email [arora@goldenawareness.com](mailto:arora@goldenawareness.com)



## Package price:

Thai Baht 3,500 per adult in twin share room

Thai Baht 1,100 per child less than 12 years sharing room with parents

*Sampran Riverside - Flier*

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