

#TRAVEL

VISITING BANGKOK: BEYOND SOI 11



Bangkok has long been a favorite destination for Bangladeshis seeking respite from the bustle of Dhaka life, especially during the Eid vacation. While once renowned for its affordability compared to home, recent currency fluctuations have transformed it into a more exclusive yet accessible getaway, costing around USD 1,500 per person for a short 5-day stay.

For decades, Dhaka residents and their subcontinental counterparts have gravitated towards the lively streets surrounding Soi 11, Soi 3, and Soi 8 near Sukhumvit, colloquially dubbed "Gulshan 3!"

Some relish the familiar company of fellow Bangladeshis abroad, while others seek comfort in the taste of home provided by the *deshi* food stalls. However, with diverse demographics now travelling more frequently, it's worth venturing beyond Soi 11 to embrace a different facet of Bangkok.

CHINATOWN

The very mention of Bangkok conjures up myriad emotions and images, and Chinatown embodies the city's unruly, exotic, and timeless essence. It has become the playground for Bangkok's cool kids, Instagram models, and paparazzi driven by a social media-driven quest for the extraordinary. This frenzy has fuelled a café renaissance, making



neighbourhoods like Talad Noi, Soi Nana, and Saphan Han household names among cultural creatives and those seeking an escape from urban life.

Chinatown's essence revolves around shopping and eating, promising a culinary journey that will continue to linger on your taste buds.

THONGLOR

Also known as Thong Lo, Thonglor has garnered attention as one of Asia's trendiest districts, attracting tourists with its top-notch cuisine and vibrant nightlife. With an influx of

bohemians and artists, this area boasts diverse experiences, from fine dining to clubbing.

Renowned for its Japanese cuisine, Thonglor boasts the largest concentration of Japanese expats outside Japan. "Nihonmura" or "Japantown" in Thonglor offers an authentic Japanese culinary adventure. Notable establishments like Uomasa and Nirai Kanai serve unique specialities, providing a taste of Japan in the heart of Bangkok.

LANGSUAN

Langsuan epitomises chic urban living in Bangkok, offering boutique stores, diverse eateries, and vibrant nightlife. Nestled near iconic malls like Central Embassy and Central World, Langsuan is a gateway to Bangkok's renowned attractions, street food zones, 'top of the line' cafes and bougie bars. Langsuan continue to evolve!

In conclusion, while Soi 11 may hold sentimental value for many Bangladeshis, exploring beyond its confines reveals a tapestry of experiences waiting to be unravelled. Whether delving into the chaotic charm of Chinatown, indulging in Thonglor's culinary delights, or immersing oneself in Langsuan's urban energy, Bangkok offers a myriad of treasures for the adventurous traveller. So, you plan your Eid getaway, step off the beaten path and embrace the magic of Bangkok beyond Soi 11.

By Taskin Rahman, founder of The Food Talk

Photo: Collected / Unsplash; Taskin Rahman



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