

Ricardo's Favorite Bangkok Places

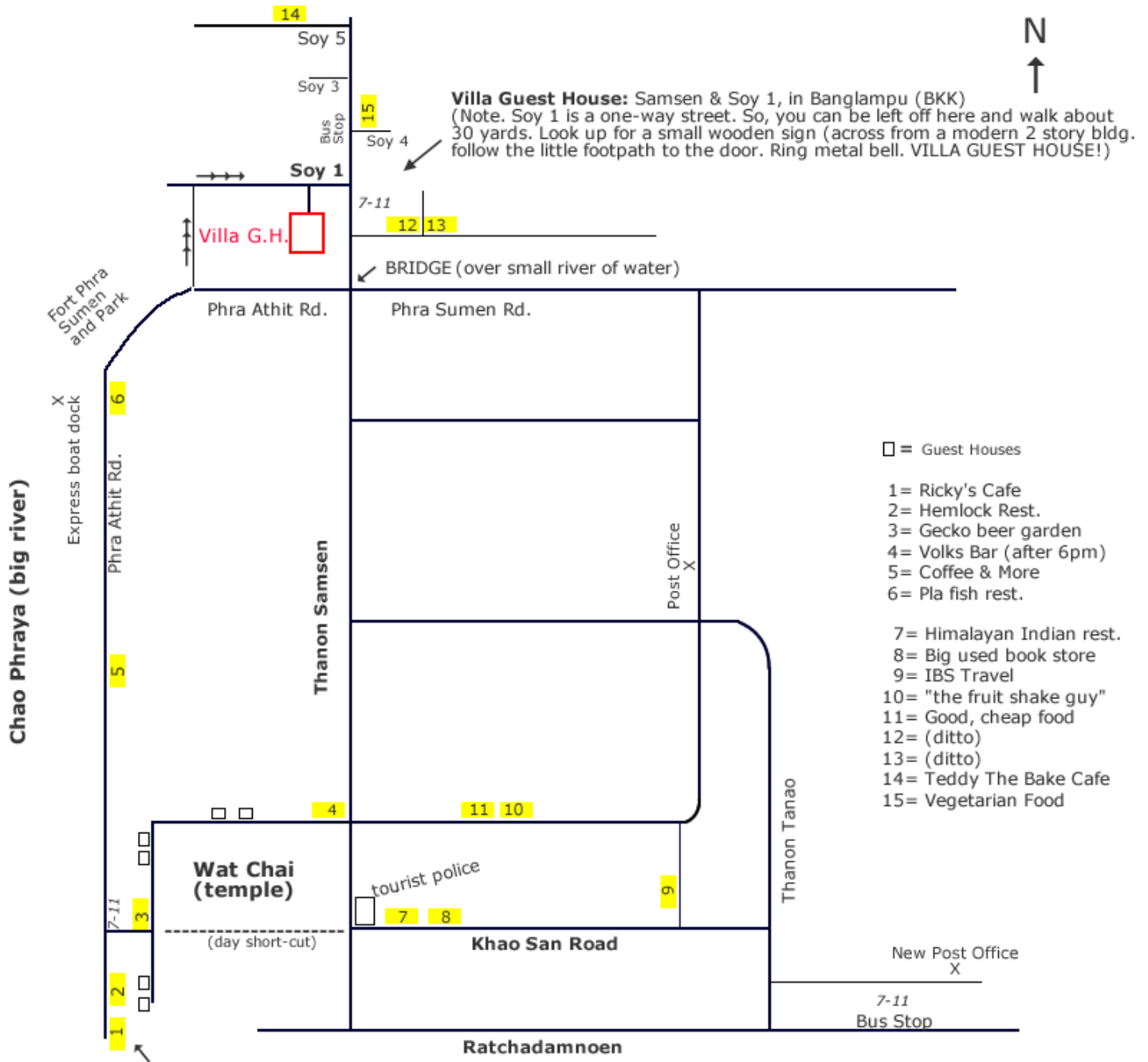
Centered within the Banglumpu District (Khao San Road area)

This document contains:

- Map of Banglumpu (not to scale, but will point you to Ricardo's favorite hang-outs.)
- Location details.



RICARDO'S MAP OF BANGLAMPU (Khao San Rd. area of BKK)



Location and Notes on Bangkok

Villa Guest House

A nice, old, teakwood house converted into a (pension-like) guest house in Banglumpu. (A short walking distance from Khao San Road.) The place has hardwood floors, antique furniture and lots of charm—but NO A/C. (Think “Casablanca.” I recommend “the big room” upstairs.) However, the owners (brother and sister) are a bit batty and don’t maintain the place to the level one would hope for. But it’s generally pretty clean and there’s a kitchen to fix small meals (no stove though) and a refrigerator. Best of all, it’s quiet, small (8 rooms) and authentic. The cost is 250B-500B. **The address is:** Samsen & Soy 1 in Banglumpu (taxi drivers should have no problem getting you there.) From Thanon Samsen, go into Soy 1 (it’s a one-way street, out of Soy 1) about 70 meters/yards. Look up to the left for a small wooden sign that will point you to the entrance. **The phone number is:** (from Thailand) 022817009; (outside of Thailand) 66-22817009. It is best to call one day ahead to reserve a room (no email.) You’ll be speaking to either “Lek” or “Tuee.” Tell them Richard (the American with the computer) sent you.

Choice Spots

1. **Ricky’s Café:** One of the few places to get a good (western) breakfast. Comfy atmosphere and A/C. (And, as with all of Ricardo’s listings, it is very affordable.)
2. **Hemlock Restaurant:** Open everyday except Sunday. Excellent Thai food in a relaxed, contemporary, environment. Best place for wine and green teas. Nice music; sometimes live.
3. **Geko Bar:** A simple beer-garden-like patio that has cheap beer and a few mixed drinks. Best place to people watch or to meet someone for a Chang beer, but without feeling like you’re on Khao San. (They allow for outside food. Vendors line the area.)
4. **Volks Bar:** After 6PM, the Volks Bar rolls in. Cheap mixed drinks and a very sociable scene. Excellent people-watching perch. (BTW, this street—winding to behind the temple—is now considered the new backpacker haunt.)
5. **Coffee & More:** Contemporary, air-conditioned, and the best cakes and pies in Bangkok. Best place for a pot of tea (herbal, black, green) while reading a book (while spying on the local office and university set.)
6. **Pla Restaurant:** Ricardo’s favorite place for seafood (pla). This is where the Thais go when they want the good stuff. Excellent view of the park. Don’t miss this place!
7. **Himalaya Restaurant:** On the second floor, close to the Tourist Police on Khao San Road, is an Indian/Nepalese restaurant. Good (non-Thai) food with A/C.
8. **The used bookstore:** Don’t know the name of the place, but it has 3 floors of used and new books. Best selection. Stock up here before going to the bush.
9. **IBS Travel:** Best place I know for airline tickets (only.) Just down the little ally off Khao San road, just next to Marco Polo Hostel. Walk-ins only.
10. **“The Fruit Shake Guy”:** Look for a dumpy, middle-age, Thai guy behind a stand of fruit and blender. He makes excellent fruit shakes, cheap and “yai” (big!)
11. **Food Stall:** Sure there’s no shortage of them in Bangkok, but this one has a buffet layout and the quality is pretty consistent. If you don’t like what you see, walk up the street toward Samsen.
12. **Cheap Thai Food:** These are the places nearest to Villa G.H. with real tasty Thai food.

13. (see above)

14. **Teddy the Bake:** A little more expensive, but a nice place for lunch. Excellent Thai meals, along with good bakery for desserts.

15. **The Vegetarian Place** (though that's not the name): Cheap, plentiful and no meat. Great from breakfast and lunch. (Use caution when choosing dishes. Some are hotter than a Thai ladyboy in leather underwear—though Ricardo is only speculating.)

Other Banglumpu Places

- **Phra Sumen Park:** This is a lovely park along the Phraya (river) with lots of trees and people-watching opportunities. (Arrive at 6PM to marvel at the daily aerobics workout.)
- **Khao San Road:** It's still a lot of fun. Night time is the best time.
- **Main Bus Stop:** on Ratchadamnoen, across from the 7-11, is where most of the public (city) buses stop. Most tourist maps (available at any bookstore) will have the bus stop noted on them. **On Samsen**, there's the bus stop for bus #53, which takes you directly to the Hualamphong (main) railway station.
- **Miscellaneous Budget Guest Houses:** □ denotes locations of some of the better budget guesthouses around Khao San Road.
- **Post Offices:** There are 2 in the Banglumpu area.
- **Phraya River Ferry Boats:** Need to get to downtown Bangkok at rush hour? Good luck! Or, take the boat—it's like a floating Bangkok bus, but mo' faster. (Get to the dock from the far left corner of Phra Sumen Park.)
- **Dentist:** Across from Soy 1, on Samsen (just to the left of 7-11—or, is it to the right?), is a good dental office. Cleaning with x-ray is only 800B.

Important Places Outside of Banglumpu

- **Mission Hospital:** A short taxi drive away, or take bus #79 from Ratchadamnoen bus stop. It's a very modern hospital where doctors are trained in western countries.
- **Panthip Plaza:** This is also called "Computer City", a 5-story building of computer products and services. This is by far the best place to go for anything computer. (Ricardo recommends going straight to the 5th floor to IT City.) Take bus #79 from the Main Bus Stop and tell the bus attendant ("I go to Panthip, okay?")
- **Hualamphong Railway Station** (pronounced "wallampong"): It's a 15-20 minute taxi ride from most places in Bangkok. To get there by bus from Villa Guest House, just take bus #53 from the bus stop on Samsen (just past Soy 1.) However, and unless you wish to see all of Bangkok on the way back, do not return on bus #53. Take a taxi. (It's very direct and cheap.)
- **The Villa Market** (not to be confused with the guest house of the same name): Sukhumvit & Soy 33. This market, though a bit out there, has anything you're looking for in the way of foreign food. (Be sure to visit the second floor wine room, the best in BKK.) Take bus #511 from the Main Bus Stop.