

EUROPE & THAILAND

From the middle of the 16th century, Europe looked increasingly to Asia for expansion of its trade, seeking new trading partners and goods like precious metals, spices and other exotic wares. The first Europeans to develop regular relations with Siam were Portuguese and the Dutch. During the reign of King Rama Thibodi II (1491-1529) the Portuguese diplomat Duarte Fernandes was the first European Ambassador to Siam. In 1585 King Ram IV built the first paved road in Bangkok, Charoen Krung (meaning "New Road"), which became the main settlement of foreigners in Bangkok.

Throughout the 17th century Ayutthaya was in regular contact with the West, as trade with Europe flourished. King Narai (1656-1688), acting on the advice of his Greek advisor Constantine Phaulkon, developed strong relations with France. In 1680, France was granted an exclusive concession for the spice trade and King created a new city inspired by European urban design with wide shaded boulevards lined with government buildings, offices and villas. Europeans took an active part in the modernisation of Siam at this time. Danes and Belgians helped develop an electric tramway network, the British and Germans applied their expertise to a rail system, the Dutch designed canals and sluices, while numerous French religious missions worked in Bangkok. King created a new city Europe - Germans and Britons but, above all, Italians - lent a European style to many buildings constructed in Bangkok around this time.

The policy to open up the Kingdom to foreign missions continued under the reign of King Rama III (1824-1851) and reached new heights under King Rama IV (1851-1868). Studying and understanding Western culture, Rama IV signed a treaty with England in 1855, granting extraterritorial privileges to the British. Treaties with most of Europe to develop regular relations with Siam were developed by King Rama IV. The diplomatic skill of Thai monarchs, combined with a modernisation of Thailand's government, helped Siam to remain the only country in Southeast Asia to avoid being colonised. In 1863 King Rama V built the first paved road in Bangkok, Charoen Krung (meaning "New Road"), which became the main settlement of foreigners in Bangkok.

Rama V, also known as King Chulalongkorn (1868-1910), was a great admirer of Western culture. He visited the continent twice, in 1897 and 1907, and it was Rama V who transformed Bangkok into a modern metropolis. He constructed roads, canals, railways, schools and universities, and around the Grand Palace he created a new city inspired by European urban design with wide shaded boulevards lined with government buildings, offices and villas. Europeans took an active part in the modernisation of Siam at this time. Danes and Belgians helped develop an electric tramway network, the British and Germans applied their expertise to a rail system, the Dutch designed canals and sluices, while numerous French religious missions worked in Bangkok. King created a new city Europe - Germans and Britons but, above all, Italians - lent a European style to many buildings constructed in Bangkok around this time.

Europe's strong presence in Thailand is still evident today, and not only in architecture. Over the years, our diplomatic, commercial and cultural relations have gone from strength to strength.

- Nineteen of the European Union's 28 member states have embassies here and the European Union has had a diplomatic presence in Bangkok since 1979. www.eas.europa.eu/delegations/thailand/eu_travel/embassies
- The EU is one of Thailand's most important business partners. Many member states have bilateral chambers of commerce in Thailand and the European ASEAN Business Centre (EABC) promotes trade and investment with Thailand at a European level. www.eabc-thailand.eu
- EU cultural institutes in Thailand work together under the name 'EUNIC Thailand', in a common framework to promote European-Thai cultural dialogue and exchange. www.eunic-online.eu/thailand

รายการรายชื่อประเทศที่มีสถานทูตในประเทศไทย แบ่งเป็น 2 ประเภทตามจำนวนสถานทูตในประเทศไทย การค้าและวัฒนธรรมที่เชื่อมโยง

- ประเทศสมาชิกภาพยุโรปจำนวน 19 ประเทศตาม 28 ประเทศที่ตามไปประเทศไทย และสหภาพยุโรปได้มีสำนักงานใหญ่ในกรุงเทพมหานครตั้งแต่ปี ค.ศ. 1979 เป็นต้น www.eas.europa.eu/delegations/thailand/eu_travel/embassies
- สหภาพยุโรปเป็นหน่วยงานทางธุรกิจที่สำคัญที่สุดของสหภาพยุโรปในประเทศไทย ประเทศสมาชิกจำนวนมากมีสถานทูตในประเทศไทย นอกจากนี้ยังมีสถานทูตของสหภาพยุโรปเป็นจำนวนมากโดยมีศูนย์กลางที่กรุงเทพมหานคร www.eabc-thailand.eu
- สถาบันวัฒนธรรมต่างๆของสหภาพยุโรปในประเทศไทยมีหน้าที่ดำเนินการในลักษณะของเจ้าหน้าที่วัฒนธรรมวิชาชีพด้านศิลปวัฒนธรรมของชาติสหภาพยุโรปใน EUNIC Thailand ซึ่งส่งเสริมการแลกเปลี่ยนทางวัฒนธรรมระหว่างยุโรปและประเทศไทย www.eunic-online.eu/thailand

AYUTTHAYA

6- BAAN HOLLANDA
Open to the public, Wed-Sun 9am-5pm
www.baanholland.nl ☎ 02-672 2000

Baan Holland was announced in 2004 during the state visit of King Rama IX (1809-1824). In 1820 Portugal became the first European nation with a diplomatic residence in the new capital Bangkok, located on land gifted by King Rama I.

64- BANG PA-IN SUMMER PALACE
Open to the public, Sun-5pm ☎ 051-261 548

During King Rama V's reign, the Summer Palace was transformed from a residence to a museum. It became a curious blend of European, Thai and Chinese architecture. The various buildings composing the palace are inspired by French, German, Greek, Italian or Portuguese architecture. Among the European style residences is Phra Thiang Ubosath Rajabhat Hall. Built in 1877 from wood as a two-storey Swiss chalet, the mansion contained artwork, Napoleon III furniture. The palace burned down in 1938 and was replaced in 1996, adopting a Victorian style.

65- FRENCH SETTLEMENT
Open to the public

The French settlement in Ayutthaya was visited by King Narai to French missionaries in 1662. At the request of Vietnamese missionaries, headed by Bishop Lambert de la Motte, the settlement was built. It adopted the style of a European gothic church. St. Joseph's church was destroyed in 1767 but rebuilt in 1831 by French Priest Jean Baptiste Pallagou. A third church for Franciscans, St. Joachim Grass designed during the reign of King Rama V in neo-Roman style.

66- PORTUGUESE SETTLEMENT
Open to the public

Portugal was the first Western nation to be granted the right of staying at the Ayutthaya court in 1516. Some 300 Portuguese settled south of the city along the Chao Phraya River. The village had three Catholic churches, San Pedro for the Dominicans, San Paulo and a third church for Franciscans. Ruins are still visible today but are under restoration following the 2011 floods.

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PHRA NAKHON AROUND THE GRAND PALACE

1- CHAKRI MAHA PRASAT, Grand Palace
Open to the public, Wed-Sun 9am-5pm
www.palace.thai.net ☎ 02-632 5500

The Grand Palace captures not only the essence of Thai culture and its monarchy but also the change in taste. From 1805, Siam Monarchs were highly influenced by European architecture, a sign of modernity. The palace was started on May 9, 1876 to celebrate the centenary of the Chakri Dynasty. It is a perfect example of the blend between Thai and Western architecture.

2- PHRA THINANG BORMPHIMAN
Visible to the public, 8.00am-5.00pm daily ☎ 02-625 5000

The structure was built between 1897 and 1903 by German architect C. Sandreckl, inspired by Napoleon III's Tuileries Palace in Paris. Interiors are more inspired by Italian baroque and classical style. The palace is located within Swival gardens.

3- SARANROM PALACE
Visible but not open to the public

Saranrom Palace was built in 1866 by German architect Egon Müller and later restored by King Rama V. In 1948, King Rama V gave the palace successfully to his two brothers.

4- MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
Visible but not open to the public

It was built by Thailand's first Prime Minister, King Rama I, in 1824.

5- SARANROM PALACE
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Saranrom Palace was built in 1866 by German architect Egon Müller and later restored by King Rama V. In 1948, King Rama V gave the palace successfully to his two brothers.

6- HOK BRIDGE
Open to the public

Standing in front of Saranrom Park, this design was inspired by a traditional Dutch lift bridge.

7- WAT RATCHABOPHIT
Open to the public, Sun-5pm ☎ 022-222 2222

Built in 1869-70, Wat Ratchabophit was established by King Rama V. It is the only temple in Bangkok that is decorated with a clock tower. The Ordination Hall (Usoth) was designed by Venetian gothics. Around the temple, funeral monuments were built in gothic and renaissance style by Carlo Allegri.

ANANTA SAMAKHOM THAI HALL
Open to the public, 10am-5pm ☎ 02-283 9421

Located next to Dust Gardens, Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall was constructed in 1909. While its exterior style is distinctly gothic, its interior is in pure medieval Roman style and adorned with frescoes on its ceiling. Nearly, the Assumption Convent School was created in 1904 and managed by the Sisters of St Paul de Chartres, a French congregation.

24- IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CHURCH
Visible but only open to the public during religious observances. www.catholic.or.th ☎ 02-243 2677

Expelled from Ayutthaya in the late 17th century, a Portuguese community was granted the right to settle near to the Chao Phraya River. In 1673, they built the first Immaculate Conception Church, which became Bangkok's oldest Catholic church. In the 19th century, the Portuguese clergy was replaced by French Priests of the Missions Etrangères. The church was reconstructed in simple gothic style in 1834 by French priest Mgr. Jean-Baptiste Pallagou and was further renovated around 1847.

25- WAT RATCHATHIWAIS
Open to the public, Sun-5pm. www.watratthiwa.com

Wat Ratchathais was first built around 1820 by French architect Nicolas Moulin de ADP.

26- EQUESTRIAN STATUE KING RAMA V
In front of Ananta Samakhom Hall, King Rama V Equestrian Monument was built to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the coronation of the King and was completed in 1908. It was cast in Paris by French sculptor C. Mason.

27- PARUSAWAN PALACE
Open to the public, Wed-Sun 10am-5pm ☎ 02-283 9077

Phra Tamnak Suan Chitlada is part of Parusawan Palace complex. The baroque stucco facade contrasts with Art Nouveau elements such as the verandah, arches and doors. It was built in 1906 by Mario Tamagno. The palace reopened in February 2013 as the Royal Thai Police Museum.

28- WAT BENJAMINOPHIT
Open to the public, Sun-5pm

The temple is an admirable fusion of Thai and Western architecture. In 1879 by King Rama V to Ecole Marifed. It was built with Carrara marble and has intricate stained-glass windows making it a royal masterpiece. Nearby, Wat Benjaminghol was built and Italian master.

29- MAHADTHAI UTHIT BRIDGE
Next to the Art Nouveau Phan Fa Leela Bridge (1906), architect Ecole Marifed. It was built with Carrara marble and has intricate stained-glass windows making it a royal masterpiece. Nearby, Wat Benjaminghol was built and Italian master.

30- KING PRAJADHOPK (RAMA VII) MUSEUM
Open to the public, Tue-Sun 9am-5pm ☎ 02-286 4313

Constructed in neo-renaissance style in 1906 by French-Swiss architect Charles Beugnot, the building was first the John Sampson Emporium and then a store for construction material. It became the Public Works Department in 1933 before being converted into a museum in 2002.

31- UNIFORMS AT THE ROYAL THAI ARMY MUSEUM
Open to the public, Mon-Fri 9am-5pm but request must be sent three weeks in advance with a passport copy for approval. ☎ 02-292 8780

Grand Palace uniforms were designed by Polish tailor Stanislaw Dost, coming from Szczecin. Uniforms can be seen at the Royal Thai Army Museum, located within the Royal Thai Army headquarters or inside the Grand Palace.

32- BAAN NORASINGH (Government House)
Visible but not open to the public except on Children's Day in January.

A former private residence, Baan Norasingh was built by architect Mario Tamagno and Annibale Riggotti in 1916. The current structure is in pure neo-gothic style and was built in 1898. There is a magnificent wooden sculpture of Jesus dated back to the Ayutthaya period but it is visible only during special festivities.

33- HUA LAMPHONG RAILWAY STATION
Open to the public

Royal State Railways of Siam were conceived by the British company Puncnar M.T. Gargat and Co. In 1887, while the first line to Korat was constructed by British engineer J. Murray Campbell. The first railway started in 1894. Bangkok's main station was opened later as it was built from 1910 to 1916. A masterpiece of Mario Tamagno and Alfredo Rigazzi, its neo-Renaissance design is served by the Ayutthaya period but it is visible only during special festivities.

34- FACULTY OF ARTS BUILDING, CHULALONGKORN UNIVERSITY
Open to the public, 9am-7pm

Originally opened as a school for Civil Servants, the building is a mix of Thai and Western styles. Roofs, gables and porches are distinctively Thai while galleries and windows take their inspiration from a distance.

EUNIC THAILAND

On behalf of the EUNIC Thailand (European Union National Institutes for Culture in Thailand), which was created in Bangkok one year ago by five European countries, I am very proud to introduce to you the first European Heritage Map of Bangkok and Ayutthaya, an initiative of EUNIC Thailand, the Delegation of the European Union, and the Embassies of France, Denmark, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, and the UK.

Bangkok is a fascinating, vibrant and cosmopolitan capital, with a rich history dating back more than 250 years. In even earlier times, the Siamese Kingdom centered on Thonburi and its upstream predecessor as capital, Ayutthaya. European nations were among the first to establish diplomatic, commercial and cultural relations with Siam. Over the centuries many European traders and officials, architects and artists, engineers and clergymen visited, lived and worked in the Kingdom, leaving a heritage in all three successive capitals. On this map, it may surprise you to find palaces designed by Italian and German architects, churches established by the French and Portuguese, trading posts left by Danish and Dutch businessmen, bridges of Belgian and British make, and even military uniforms of Polish design.

Our shared heritage forms a strong foundation for the excellent relations that exist today between Thailand and the European Union and its Member States. At the same time it inspires us to continue adding new chapters to the history of our relations, through close European-Thai cooperation. Whether it makes you discover new sites or helps you see them in a new light, perhaps this European Heritage Map can also inspire you to contribute, even in small ways, to the heritage of European-Thai relations.

Thierry Viteau
President EUNIC Thailand
French Ambassador to Thailand

ในนามของเครือข่ายสถาบันวัฒนธรรมชาติสหภาพยุโรปในประเทศไทย ผมดีใจมากที่ได้เห็นงานแผนที่มรดกวัฒนธรรมยุโรปในกรุงเทพมหานครและอยุธยา ซึ่งเป็นการรวมกันของมรดกทางวัฒนธรรมและมรดกทางสถาปัตยกรรม และสถาปัตยกรรมของประเทศไทยสมัยใหม่ รวมทั้งสะพานมิตรภาพไทย-ฝรั่งเศสและสะพานมิตรภาพไทย-เดนมาร์ก

กรุงเทพฯ เป็นเมืองที่มีชีวิตชีวาและน่าหลงใหล ซึ่งเต็มไปด้วยมรดกทางวัฒนธรรมอันหลากหลายและมรดกทางสถาปัตยกรรมที่งดงาม การค้าและวัฒนธรรมที่เชื่อมโยงกันระหว่างกรุงเทพฯ และอยุธยาเป็นจุดเริ่มต้นของความสัมพันธ์ที่ดียิ่งขึ้นกับยุโรปและอเมริกาเหนือ ซึ่งนำไปสู่การตั้งถิ่นฐานของพ่อค้า นักสถาปนิก วิศวกร นักธุรกิจ นักเขียน นักดนตรี และนักเขียนบทชาวต่างชาติในกรุงเทพฯ

สิ่งที่ยากที่สุดของเมืองนี้ก็คือการที่มรดกทางวัฒนธรรมอันหลากหลายนี้ยังคงมีอยู่ท่ามกลางกรุงเทพฯ ในประเทศไทยและอยุธยา ซึ่งเป็นการรวมกันของมรดกทางวัฒนธรรมและมรดกทางสถาปัตยกรรม และสถาปัตยกรรมของประเทศไทยสมัยใหม่ รวมทั้งสะพานมิตรภาพไทย-ฝรั่งเศสและสะพานมิตรภาพไทย-เดนมาร์ก

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35- ASSUMPTION CATHEDRAL
Open to the public, 6am-6pm, until 10.00am, restricted opening due to renovation works. www.assumption-cathedral.com ☎ 02-282 8966

Established in September 1912, the Alliance Française is the oldest European cultural institution in Bangkok with a purpose of promoting French language to Siam. The alliance moved to its present location on Sathorn and stayed there until September 2013, when it relocated near to Lumpini Park in a new structure designed by French architects Dominique Chavanne and Nicolas Moulin de ADP.

36- BRITISH EMBASSY
Open to the public, not open to the public ☎ 02-205 8333

United on Wireless Road, Embassy compound buildings consist of the Ambassador's Residence and staff accommodation. Vice Consul William Alfred Poe Wood visited the UK in 1923. The police residency at the Embassy Residence. The construction of the Ambassador's residence was completed in 1926 in tropical colonial style. The structure of the residence was moved from the old location on the river. The monument is now located in the rear gardens of the Ambassador's Residence.

37- PHAYA THAI PALACE
Open to the public daily, with free tours offered on the weekends.

With its distinctive facade, Phaya Thai Palace looks more like some German romantic castle than an Italian palazzo, despite being conceived by Mario Tamagno. Finished in 1909 as a royal countryside resort, the palace was converted by King Rama V into a deluxe hotel in 1926 before being turned into a military hospital in 1933. The palace offers beautiful frescoes and murals.

38- SIAM COMMERCIAL BANK (Thai Noi Branch)
Compound opened to the public during bank hours ☎ 02-291 9000

Located on the Eastern bank of the Chao Phraya River, the building of the Siam Commercial Bank was the first of its kind in Bangkok. It was constructed by Italian architect Annibale Riggotti in 1914 in a majestic neo-Renaissance style. It served as SCSB's first headquarters. The top floor used to be the residence of the bank manager.

39- HOLY ROSARY CHURCH
Open to the public, Mon-Fri 4pm or during the weekend ☎ 02-234 3146

Portuguese residents from Kudi Chin across the river settled here in 1673. The church was built by a former war veteran (fotiora) and the current residence. The latter replaced a former structure made of bamboo and wood. The new neoclassical style (inspired from houses in Phuket) from 1860 to 1875 including a long interruption. It was inaugurated in 1875 by Consul Antonio Feliciano Marques Pereira.

40- UNIFORMS AT THE ROYAL THAI ARMY MUSEUM
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Grand Palace uniforms were designed by Polish tailor Stanislaw Dost, coming from Szczecin. Uniforms can be seen at the Royal Thai Army Museum, located within the Royal Thai Army headquarters or inside the Grand Palace.

41- MISSIUN OZ SVALI
Open to the public, 9am-5pm ☎ 02-277 2222

Another similar Venetian-style late-gothic style of Venice was built in 1916. The current structure is in pure neo-gothic style and was built in 1898. There is a magnificent wooden sculpture of Jesus dated back to the Ayutthaya period but it is visible only during special festivities.

42- BAAN NORASINGH (Government House)
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43- MANANGKASILA HOUSE
Visible but not open to the public

Built by British Edward Heath in 1868, the mansion reproduces a half of the original Venetian style in traditional English.

44- STATUE OF POPE JOHN PAUL II
Visible but only open to the public during religious observances. www.catholic.or.th ☎ 02-243 2677

Poland's most famous native Karol Wojtyła became Pope John Paul II in 1978. His statue stands in front of Assumption Cathedral remembering the Pope's visit to Thailand on 10 and 11 May 1984. More than 40,000 people attended mass in the National Stadium.

45- ALLIANCE FRANCAISE
Open to the public, 6am-7pm. www.alliancefrancaise.org ☎ 02-292 4200

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47- CHRIST CHURCH
Open to the public, 7am-6pm ☎ 02-234 3634

Opened in 1905 by American missionaries for Protestants, the church was the work of German architect Karl Döhring. Achieved in 1900, it was destroyed during WWI and rebuilt in 1950. The station was recently transformed into a museum belonging to Siriraj Hospital.

48- SAINT LOUIS HOSPITAL
Visible to the public, www.saintlouis.or.th ☎ 02-675 5000

Saint Louis Hospital is a non-profitable private institution that was established by French Archbishop Louis Vey, Apostolic Vicar of the Roman Catholic Mission in Siam, back to 1898. The Sisters of Saint Paul de Chartres were assigned to manage the hospital. A bronze statue of King Louis IX (Saint Louis la Mare. He came with the French embassy of Chevalier de Chaumont and Chevalier de Forbin, who headed the garrison at Wichai Prasit Fort in Ayutthaya from 1687 to 1688. The garrison consisted of 1,000 men of Siamese, Portuguese and French origin. The fort is now part of the Royal Thai Navy Headquarters.

49- RESIDENCE OF THE AMBASSADOR OF BELGIUM
Not visible and not open to the public. ☎ 02-288 8000

Originally built by Italian architect Mario Tamagno for the Belgian Embassy in 1927 because it was already equipped with all the latest technology, such as a telephone connection. The building was restored in 2000 and converted into the Belgian Ambassador's Residence.

50- NELSON HAYS LIBRARY
Open to the public, Tue-Sun 9am-5pm ☎ 02-232 1731

Initially a small library for the Bangkok Branch of the British Association Reading group, the building was replaced in 1921 by the current neo-classical building with its elegant rotunda and columns. The Mario Tamagno building retains its function as a library and gallery open to any visitor.

51- BRITISH CLUB
Visible but open only to members. www.britishclubbangkok.org ☎ 02-234 0247

This majestic Georgian building is the second British Club. Built in 1910, it replaced a first structure dating from 1903, which quickly proved too small.

52- FORMER CUSTOMS HOUSE
Visible (and currently accessible) during the day.

Italian Joachim Grass designed the next Customs House, elegant to the Chao Phraya River in the former expatriates' enclave along New Road (Charoen Krung). The facade was in the part decorated with stucco. The imposing building welcomed King Rama V on his way back to Europe. Neglected for many years, the crumbling structure is currently being refren and awaits a new purpose.

53- RESIDENCE OF THE AMBASSADOR OF THE NETHERLANDS
Not visible. Restricted opening to the public. ☎ 02-209 2000

Built around 1911, the current Embassy of the Netherlands first belonged to Prince Sappas (Sapak) and then Prince Boreward. It was acquired in 1949 by the Dutch Government for its new embassy. Architecture of late 19th century with neo-geometric motifs.

54- FORMER OFFICE OF EAST ASIATIC TRADING COMPANY
Visible but not open to the public

The East Asiatic Trading Company was created in 1848 in Danish by Captain H.N. Andersen and used the neo-Renaissance style building (architect Annibale Riggotti) as its headquarters from 1900 until 1995.

55- FORMER BANQUE D'INDOCHINE/INDOSUE
Visible but not open to the public.

Created back in 1897, the Banque d'Indochine moved its headquarters from the British concession to premises along the Chao Phraya River in 1897. The building with its distinctive neo-classical facade is the work of architect company Howart Eskine Ltd from Singapore. The building is now used by the Catholic Centre.

56- THAI-BELGIAN BRIDGE
The Thai-Belgian Bridge is the first ever by-constructed in Bangkok. The elements came from a by-outer built in Brussels in the 1920s. During their visit to Bangkok in March 2013, Prince Philippe and Princess Mathilde of Belgium opened an exhibition on the bridge's 25th anniversary and unveiled a new emblem.

57- RESIDENCE OF THE EMBASSY OF PORTUGAL
Visible to the public, Chao Phraya River. ☎ 02-234 2123

First European diplomatic mission to be opened in Bangkok, it was currently premises along Chao Phraya River have been in Portuguese possession since 1820. Historical buildings at the embassy consist of a former war veteran (fotiora) and the current residence. The latter replaced a former structure made of bamboo and wood. The new neoclassical style (inspired from houses in Phuket) from 1860 to 1875 including a long interruption. It was inaugurated in 1875 by Consul Antonio Feliciano Marques Pereira.

58- MANDARIN ORIENTAL BANGKOK (former Oriental Hotel)
Open to the public

Bangkok's most famous hotel shares a long history among many European nations. It was originally created by Danish captain back to 1876 as the first hotel in Siam. In 1881, Danish Hans Niels Andersen bought the hotel with his partners and reconstructed it, designed by Italian architects Stefano Rossi & Rossi. On its opening day on May 19, 1887 the hotel was the most luxurious in Bangkok. The only original structure - suites carry the names of the literary figures who have been guests, including Polish writer Joseph Conrad (Jozef Konrad Kozelowski).

59- O.P. PLACE
Open to the public, 10am-7pm ☎ 02-266 0366-95

The grand structure was opened in 1908 as Faick & Bekdel, Denmark Store. Created in 1878, Faick & Bekdel was a German company which lasted until the end of World War I. It was, at the time, Bangkok's most luxurious department store. It is today Europe's largest centre specialising mostly in antiques and art.

60- BNH HOSPITAL
Open to the public ☎ 02-686 2000

Formerly known as the Bangkok Nursing Home Hospital, it is Bangkok's oldest hospital for expatriates. The facility was opened in 1898 under the auspices of the British legation.

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63- ASSUMPTION CATHEDRAL
Open to the public, 6am-6pm, until 10.00am, restricted opening due to renovation works. www.assumption-cathedral.com ☎ 02-282 8966

Established in September 1912, the Alliance Française is the oldest European cultural institution in Bangkok with a purpose of promoting French language to Siam. The alliance moved to its present location on Sathorn and stayed there until September 2013, when it relocated near to Lumpini Park in a new structure designed by French architects Dominique Chavanne and Nicolas Moulin de ADP.

64- FORMER CUSTOMS HOUSE
Visible (and currently accessible) during the day.

Italian Joachim Grass designed the next Customs House, elegant to the Chao Phraya River in the former expatriates' enclave along New Road (Charoen Krung). The facade was in the part decorated with stucco. The imposing building welcomed King Rama V on his way back to Europe. Neglected for many years, the crumbling structure is currently being refren and awaits a new purpose.

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