

## Obtaining a Visa



Visas for Thailand are usually obtained from a Royal Thai Consulate or Embassy. If you are not applying from your home country, the Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs suggests you may want to contact the Thai Consulate or Embassy beforehand as Thailand requires the citizens of some countries to obtain a visa only in their home country (the Ministry does not provide a list, but to our knowledge, it does not apply to citizens of countries that are also permitted a visa exemption). Some will allow an application by mail whereas others require a personal visit - again, check with the Embassy where you plan to apply.

A visa application can often be obtained (downloaded) from the Embassy/Consul's web site or you may use the **visa application form**, which is from the Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Embassy/Consul website will provide information on procedures and documents needed for a visa. They may also list Honorary Consuls who are also authorized to issue visas; the USA and UK have such honorary consuls. For Thai Embassies and Consulates around the world visit <http://www.thaiembassy.org/> for links to their web sites.

### **Entry and period of stay**

There is often confusion between the Visa validity period and the Permitted to stay period.

- Most Visas that are not multiple entry and will be valid for entry into Thailand for a period of 90 days. The date the visa expires will be shown on the visa.
- When you enter Thailand, even if it is a day or two before the visa expiration date, you will still receive the maximum number of days permitted by the type of visa you are using. For example, if you have a tourist visa that expires on August 31, 2010 and you enter Thailand on August 30, 2010, Immigration will still grant you a stay till October 28, 2010 (60 days from the date of entry).

Multiple entry visas:

- If you have a double entry Tourist Visa, the permitted stay upon arrival in Thailand will be 60 days, which can be extended for another 30 days within Thailand. The holder will then need to leave Thailand. They may then use the 2<sup>nd</sup> permitted entry at anytime thereafter for another 60 day stay. As with the first entry, the 2<sup>nd</sup> stay can be extended for another 30 days.
- In the case of a one-year multiple entry Non-Immigrant Visa, the holder may enter Thailand as many times as they wish during the one year validity period of the visa. Upon each entry they will be permitted to stay only 90 days, at which point they must depart Thailand and reenter to start another 90 day stay. If the holder enters a day or two before the one year visa expiration date, they will still receive the full 90 day stay.

### **Documents required for obtaining any type of visa:**

1. Passport or travel document with validity not less than 6 months
2. Photocopies of the passport identifying information pages (the number of copies will be prescribed by the Thai Embassy/Consulate where you are making the application)
3. Visa application form completely filled out
4. Recent( 4 x 6 cm.) photograph(s) of the applicant (as with photocopies, the number will be prescribed by the Thai/Embassy where you are making the application)

For Non-Immigrant visas, additional documentation will usually be required in support of the purpose of travel (business, education, other). Most Royal Thai Embassy/Consulate web sites describe the documentation needed; however, please note that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs web site states that the Consular staff has the discretion to ask for more documentation.

**TIP.** Thai Consular staff can be very strict on the extent and nature of supporting documentation they require for a Non-Immigrant visa. However, some people have reported that they have had success in obtaining such visas from Honorary Consuls, if available, with little or no hassle.

### **Currency Requirements**

Some Thai Embassy/Consulates will note that you must have the equivalent of 20,000 Baht per person or 40,000 Baht per family for entry. This is rarely, if ever, checked at Thai Immigration checkpoints at International Airports. At land border crossings, Immigration officials may ask you to show evidence you meet this requirement (reports indicate that as a rule, it is not a standard practice).