

IN AND AROUND KHON KAEN



Khon Kaen is situated in the heart of Northeastern Thailand, approximately 440 kilometres from Bangkok. The recorded history of the city began in the reign of King Rama I in 1797 although archaeological evidence suggests that the area was occupied a thousand years earlier during the Dvaravati period. Nevertheless, the city represents Esan heritage until nowadays.

Today the number of inhabitants in the Muang district (including the city and its immediate suburbs) is approximately 352,000. Indeed, Khon Kaen is currently one of the fastest growing cities in the Northeast due, not only to its central position, but also to a government initiative to promote the city as a gateway to Indochina.

Khon Kaen has been promoted as a regional institutional centre, as well as one of the nine industrial cities of Thailand. The province is also a hometown to more than 200 government administrative agencies and state enterprises that operate at the regional level.



Transportation

If you want to go to downtown from campus, you can take a blue "songthaew" (mini-bus) #8, red songthaew #16 and air-conditioning yellow bus #15 in front of Food & Service Center, which is located opposite to the Instructional Resources Center or Central Library, or anywhere on campus just know the direction of the "songthaew" or bus route and on which side of the road to wait for it.

A green songthaew #4 opposite the Srinagarind Hospital on the Friendship (Mitraparp) Highway is another choice to downtown. However, beware of the time, as they all stop coming onto the campus around 7:00 or 8:00 pm. After this time, you have to find your own way back on to campus. Usually this means

taking a "tuk-tuk" (motorized three-wheel vehicle). The price should be around 60-80 Baht. The "tuk tuk" will drive you everywhere, as far as the airport. Within downtown, you can take "songthaew" to go from one place to another, with its cost of 8 Baht.

Sensing traditional life of Khon Kaen, you may choose a "samlor", a non-motorized three-wheel vehicle, costing around 20 Baht (but you can always bargain) to wander around the downtown.

For those who would like to go to the Big C supermarket, free buses take you there from the ordinary bus station, and from the food & service university complex on campus at 11:30 am and 4:30 pm .

Song Taew



Song Taew (also known as baht buses) are privately owned, government endorsed pickup trucks that have two bench-style seats in the back and are covered in an attempt to keep out the elements. It is the cheapest form of transportation in Khon Kaen, with at least 18 different routes (probably more) servicing the city. Song Taew are distinguished by their color, being green, red, yellow, white & blue (yes, there are more, discover by yourself). They can be waved to stop at ANY point along their route, and they can be stopped at ANY points as you press its bell button. Getting off at the junction or road corner is very dangerous. It is really unrecommended to do so (do not follow some Khon Kaen people who did it) if you don't want to be

charged by the police. Song taew drivers generally have a total disregard for traffic laws, that it can be very interesting to ride on them. Also at "rush hour" (7-8 AM, 5-6 PM) the trucks tend to be so over-loaded that the front wheels bounce off the ground. Song taew runs from 5:00 AM until 9:00 PM.

Song taew routes are very confusing. Passengers should look for a number on various parts of the bus (such as the door or its top) to determine their route. The number can be placed in more than one location, so finding the route number can be difficult.

TUK TUK



The "TUK TUK" is a small car with three wheels. The engine is a two stroke engine, petrol or gas powered. "TUK TUK" are really a tourist attraction. Sometimes provincial "TUK TUK" have a different look that Bangkok TUK TUK, and few women are driving "TUK TUK". When buses reach their destination, "TUK TUK" drivers surround the passengers in order to convince them to sit in their car. Sometimes they even take the bags into their "TUK TUK" before any agreement.

Often tourists can be seen inside. Before sitting inside, one should negotiate the price. The price for a TUK TUK in Khon Kaen is quite reasonable. A trip from downtown to Khon Kaen Airport is supposed to be lower than 80 Baht, and for a trip from downtown to Khon Kaen University is less than 70 Baht. Riding on a TUK TUK in Khon Kaen is quite comfortable, convenient, and faster than a shuttle bus, it is more expensive as it is direct and does

not stop on route. However, it is one of the interesting choices for sightseeing in Khon Kaen, and a fantastic experience. Price is of course higher for foreign tourists. It can be up to 2 or 3 times the price for short distances, so haggle. Another tricky thing to get 10 more Baht is for the driver to claim to have no small change.

Sam Lor (Three wheels)

Sam lors are three-wheeled tricycles with a covered seat in the back that are powered by the individual driving them. Years ago, before the development of tuk-tuks, they were the only way to get around town.



Nowadays they tend to be a nuisance and very dangerous weaving in and out of modern day traffic. Their prices tend to be slightly lower than tuk-tuk's, and really are not feasible transportation in the ever-growing community. They should be avoided unless a photographic opportunity presents itself, or you are very sure of your destination. For those driving at night in Khon Kaen be aware that Sam lors are quite common and have no lights or reflective objects so they are extremely difficult to see.

Driving in Khon Kaen

If you choose to drive a car or motorcycle, it would be the best to have a license. An International Drivers License is valid for 1 year only. You can drive as a tourist on many foreign drivers licenses, but if you are staying longer you should get a Thai license. You can transfer an International License (and many others) to a Thai one at the licensing office (on Soonrachakan Road, just along from City Hall) for 60 Baht and an hour or so wait.

Needed documents include two passport-sized photographs, two copies of your passport and entry VISA (a street vendor outside provides a photocopying machine and polaroid camera), proof of your residence, and a certificate of health. A certificate of health can be obtained from a doctor. You can probably get one for free if you queue at a public hospital. However, if you go to a private clinic and pay for 60 Baht you will get it without waiting. The doctor will not even test your eyesight! Make a copy of the certificate of good-health for you may need it again.



Proof of residence is best as a letter from the University. Licenses for car and motorcycle are separated! The drivers license is very useful as it is the main identification and can be used instead of your passport on various matters. If you can not transfer an existing license, do not be worried 'cause the test is very easy anyway.

It is unrecommend to drive a car or motorcycle without registration and taxation. Because when you have an accident, you will end up paying all your own medical expenses and those of anyone you hit. The police regularly have random check for helmet wearing for riders (both riders and passengers), as well as drinking excess alcohol and safety belt. So be warned!



Accommodation

Accommodations in city are largely provided for visitors, variously from save economical guesthouses to 5 star luxurious hotels. Accommodations in Khon Kaen are quite sufficient, but reservation is recommended especially during public holidays or festival.

Online reservation is not largely available. However, many private travel agencies also giving online reservation service with a 3-4 times charge from the normal rate. So it is suggested to contact hotel directly or walk-in.

Accommodation Name	Rate	Contact and Address
Hotel Sofitel Raja Orchid	Superior Room Single/Twin 2,500 Baht/night	9/9 Prachasumran Road, Amphur Muang, Khon Kaen Tel. +66 4332 2155 Fax. +66 4332-2150 http://www.sofitelkhonkaen.com
Charoen Thani Princess Hotel	Single/Twin room 1,600 Baht/night	260 Si Chan Road, Amphur Muang, Khon Kaen Tel. +66 4322-0400(-14) Fax. +66 4322-0438 http://khonkaen.royalprincess.com
Kosa Hotel	Single room 1,150 Baht/night Twin room 1,250 Baht/night	250-252 Srichan Road, Khon Kaen Tel. +66 4322-5014(-18) Fax. +66 4322-5013 http://www.kosahotel.com/
Kaen Inn Hotel	Deluxe Room Single 850 Baht/night Deluxe Room Twin 950 Baht/night	56 Klang Muang Road, Muang, Khon Kaen Tel. +66 4324-5420(-31) Fax. +66 4323-9457
Bussarakam Hotel	Standard Room Single/Twin 900 Baht /night	Pimpasut Road, Muang, Khon Kaen Tel. +66 4333-3666 http://www.bussarakamhotel.com
Rosesukon Hotel	Deluxe Room Single/Twin 600-700 Baht/night	1/10 Klang Muang Road Tel. +66 4323-8576(-9) Fax. +66 4323-8579

Accommodation Name	Rate	Contact and Address
Chaipat Hotel	Single Room 370 Baht/night Twin Room 480 Baht/night	106/3 Namuang Rd. Muang, Khon Kaen Tel. +66 4333-3055 Fax. +66 4323-6860
Roma Hotel	Standard Room Single/Twin 450-500 Baht/night	50/2 Klang Muang Road Tel. +66 4323-6276, +66 4323-7206
Kaen Nakhon Hotel	Standard Room 390 Baht/night Delux Room 460 Baht/night	690 Si Chan Road Tel. +66 4322-4268(-71)
Amarin Hotel	Standard Room Single 350 Baht/night Standard Room Twin 370 Baht/night	181 Rob Muang Road Tel. + 66 4332-1660, +66 4332-1661
Sawaddee Hotel	Standard Twin Room 400 Baht/night VIP Room 560-890 Baht/night + Internet	177/9 Na Muang Road Tel. +66 4322-1600, +66 4322-2433
Europe Guesthouse	150-490 Baht/night (without breakfast) 170-520 Baht/night (with breakfast)	23/5 Nikon Samran Road, Amphur Muang, Khon Kaen Tel. +66 4327-1083 http://www.europe-khonkaen.com
Sansamran Hotel	150-200 Baht/night	55-9 Klang Muang Road Tel. +66 4323-9611



Food and Restaurant

Khon Kaen has various array of restaurants, mostly regional and ethnic cuisine but you can always find the franchises and fast food in the department store. Western food is quite difficult to be found. Motsly, eating places in Khon Kaen is an A la carte serving individual dishes and Thai food in which you order such as Fried Rice, Kaprao, Rad Na, or Tom Yam. The A la carte diners is inexpensive (around 20-30 Baht per dish) and it can be found everywhere even on the pavement.

The list below represents the diverse restaurants in Khon Kaen, which have been recommended as reasonable price and good taste.

Name of Restaurant	Type	Address
New Aladin	Chinese Food/ Dim Sam/ Noodle	Srichan Soi 11/3 Srichan Rd. Open 9.00-20.00 hrs. (close on Sunday)
Ta Kiang	Thai Food/ Bakery	Na Muang Rd. (near My House Hotel) Tel. +66 4322-2478 Open 10.00-22.00

Riem Rimbung	Thai/ Esan Food	Robbung Kaennakhon Rd. Tel. +66 4322-1095 Open 10.00-22.00 hrs.
Amporn Nam Nuang	Vietnam Food	87/14-15 Klang Muang Rd. Tel. 0 4324 3373 Open 10.00-14.30 hrs.
Kraya Thip	Thai Food/ Bakery	Klang Muang Rd. (near the market) Open 9.30-19.00 hrs.
Pa Ouan JC	Esan Food	Robbung Kaennakhon Rd. Tel. +66 4332-0182 Open 9.30-21.00 hrs.
Nong Lak	Noodle (Pork)	Soi Si Paendinthong. Na Muang Rd. Open 9.00-14.00 hrs.
First Choice	Western/ American Food	18/8 Pimpasut Rd. Tel. +66 4324-1283 Open 11.00-22.30 hrs.
Pizza & Bake	Western/ Pizza/ Italian	Maliwan Rd. +66 4324-3170, +66 4323-8883 Oepn 8.00-23.00 hrs.
Em Oat	Breakfast	Klang Muang Rd. (opposite Roma Hotel) Tel. +66 4324-1382 Open 4.00-14.00
T-Bone Steak House	Steak Buffet	Friendship Highway. Tel. +66 4334-8260 Open 16.30-22.00

To Rung (night market) is one of the most favourite dining place of Khon Kaen people, located on Klang Muang Rd. near the city market. To Rung is not a restaurant but a night market with various food and things to shop. You can find every kinds of regional food and desert, and its price is generally inexpensive. The market will set from 16.30 – 3.00 hrs.

Insight Khon Kaen

Police Station



The local district police station of Amphur Muang Khon Kaen located on Klang Muang Rd., center of city opposite Centosa Department Store and Bang Lamphu market. Informer can get there by almost every buses (see bus lines in Directory). Nevertheless, KKU has a police sub-station in campus (located opposite Faculty of Agriculture) that the students can inform at general cases.

The emergency call for police is 191 (free call). You can see the location of Khon Kaen police station on the map in Directory (Marked **A**)

Bus Station

Located on Prachasamosorn Rd. under control of Khon Kaen Land Transportation Authority office. It is a place where intercity buses stop to pick up and drop off passengers. In case of traveling to the district area within Khon Kaen province or to neighboring provinces, traveler could take the buses here which service many times daily and run from very early to very late at night. The bus rate is depending on destination.

You can see the location of Khon Kaen police station on the map in Directory (Marked **B**)

Air Conditioned Bus Station

Air conditioned buses in Khon Kaen usually provide service from 7.00-24.30 hrs., carry passengers from Khon Kaen to major provinces in the region and Thailand including Bangkok. The bus rate is depending on touring agency or the class of the bus.

Air Conditioned Bus Station located on Klang Muang Rd. opposite Khon Kaen Wittayayon School. (Marked **C** on the map in Directory)

Post Office

The main post office is located on the corner of Sri Chan and Klang Muang Roads. It is open weekdays from 8.30 am to 4.30 pm, and on Saturdays from 9.00 am to noon, and there is a CAT international phone office attached.

Khon Kaen's post code is 40000. Look for its location in Directory map (Marked **D**)

Fairy Department Store

The central shopping center and meeting point of Khon Kaen, located on Klang Muang and Na Muang Road. It is open daily from 11.00 – 21.30 hrs. You can buy anything you want here, as well as finding fast food or a franchise restaurant to eat. For its location, see the map Directory (Marked **F**)



Local Attraction

Khon Kaen National Museum

Kaen National Museum was officially opened by His Majesty King Bhumiphol Adulyadej on the 20th of December, 1972. Most of the exhibitions are concerned with geography, history, archaeology, culture, and ethnology.

The entrance fee is 10 Baht for Thai citizen and 30 Baht for others. The museum close on Monday, Tuesday, and public holiday with operating hours 9.00-16.00 hrs.

Phu Wiang National Park

Located 90 km northwest of Khon Kaen. Phu wiang is the name of mountain and district in Khon Kean. Royal Forest Department declared this national park on December 8, 1991, becoming the 71th national park of Thailand. The Park covers an area of 325 km, with the most famous 2 Dinosaurs' skeletons and steps are found in this park. Beside this, human skeletons, Iron equipment, the sleep Lord Bhuddha in Thawarawadee Period and also point in before history. The topography on mountain is a big hold of a volcano peak, which covered by dipteracarp and dry evergreen forest.



Ubonrat Dam

Also know as Pattaya Song (2), a good place for relaxation and sightseeing. You can take a boat ride, or even better get on the banana boat for joy. Numerous food stalls line the shore of the reservoir, umbrellas and ground mats can be rented to sit on the ground and for shade from the sun. You can get there by Friendship Highway head forward to Udon Thani around 25 km. Turn left with the large sign of dam, and follow the road for a further 25 km.



Bat Cave at Phu Pha Man National Park

Located at Phu Pha Man district. There are astounding 10,000,000 bats living in the cave on the mountain. Visitors can enjoy the spectacle of the bats leaving their roost and flying from the cave everyday at down.

Kingcobra Village

A well-known snake show in Thailand, located at Khoksnga village, Amphur Nampong, around 40 km north of Khon Kaen. The visitors will see challenge of life between human and snakes here. One of the most exciting performance is snake-kissing, which become a Guinness Book Record in 1991 and 2006.

Pratat Kham Kaen

The most venerable religious place where the relic of the Lord Buddha is kept, was located more than 200 years, and nowadays located in Wat Chetiyaphum, Ban Kham, Nampong District. The pagoda was built as the history goes after the dead tamarind which resurrected after being cut for many years. Visitors will also see the paddyfield in different seasons and villagers there.



Kaennakhon Lake

Known as Bung Kaennakhon. Located south of city on Robbung Road. The good place for relaxation that you can enjoy various activities from aerobics dance to waterside picnic. You can moreover pleasantly have dinner at the restaurants around the lake viewing the most beautiful 9 series Pagoda of Nongwaeng Temple that settle west side of the lake.

Credit: Thank you for www.khonkaenview.com and www.khonkaenlink.com for beautiful photos

