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What's News ?

Thailand Film Office Offers ATA Carnet Training

The Thailand Film Office, Office of Tourism Development arranged a training session on September 21 to explain the international customs clearance with paper-based document system under the terms of ATA Carnet and Istanbul B1 Conventions for film coordinators and related entrepreneurs.

Speakers were invited from the Thai Customs Department and the Thai Chamber of Commerce to explain the practice of customs clearance with paper-based document systems under the terms of ATA Carnet and Istanbul B1 and the procedures of preparing the documents.

International custom documents can now be issued and guaranteed by the Thai Chamber of Commerce for customs clearance procedures instead of export and import bills, re-importation certificates, boarding passes and excise guarantee documents for temporary admission of goods under the terms of ATA Carnet and Istanbul B1 Conventions. These new procedures



l to r Ms. Jidapha Thongkum, ATA Carnet Officer, Thai Chamber of Commerce, Mrs. Achara Tulalumpa, ATA Carnet Manager, Thai Chamber of Commerce, Ms. Potjanee Lerthussadeerat, Chief of Personal Effects and Privilege Goods Section, Suvarnabhumi Airport Cargo Clearance Customs Bureau, The Customs Department, Dr. Seksan Narkwong, Director General, Office of Tourism Development, Ministry of Tourism and Sports, Ms. Wanasiri Morakul, Director, Thailand Film Office

are a great benefit to foreign film businesses in Thailand and it is expected to facilitate their services to foreign productions wishing to film in Thailand.

photos courtesy Thailand Film Office



Shout Out

Emmy Award Nominees

The 61st Emmy Awards were recently given out by the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences September 12th in Los Angeles.

We in Thailand would like to give a "Shout Out" to the producers of "The Big Bang Theory" nominated this year for 3 Emmy Awards and multi- award winning "Two and a Half Men" also nominated this year for 3 Emmys.

Producers of both shows (on network CBS) continue to write Thailand into their scripts in positive ways, either as travel destinations or (especially) having show characters eating Thai food.



Thanks folks, we appreciate your support!

The Big Bang Theory photo courtesy CBS



FOX TV

Another Shout Out to the FOX Network and the producers of "House" who thoughtfully had "13" (played by Olivia Wilde) go on vacation to Thailand.

Next time, follow the character and **Film in Thailand!!**



Meet Some of Our Coordinators

By now you know when foreign production crews shoot in Thailand they must hire a coordinator to help them through the process of securing permits and taking care of all ground arrangements.

We thought it would be helpful if we featured some of the best performing coordinators of 2008. In **Fit**, we have been featuring answers of the coordinators that responded to our questionnaire.

We have been presenting them in no particular order.

In today's **Fit** meet Pak Chaisana (Pak), of **A Grand Elephant**.



on set, second from right

Fit: What qualities have made you (your company) successful as a film location coordinator?

Pak: The qualities that I feel have made us a production service company that Clients come back to is basic honesty (in its fullest definition – Frankness, Integrity and Sincerity!)

Give your clients 120 percent even if the client may be demanding. Also, remember that it is a collaborative profession – nobody, however brilliant they are, can do production alone! Respect should be given on both sides and you will produce the best possible work and hopefully happy clients!

We as a company and all our team try to maintain these qualities, as well as the professional skills, both main qualities need to be present. I am sure a few coordinators/companies will agree with me.

Fit: What characteristics should a foreign producer look for when seeking a coordinator to work with in Thailand?

Pak: Foreign producers should look for a coordinator who truly understands their needs – who has experience (or willing to find out the required information), I say this as there are a lot

of very good coordinators that have been in the business a while, as well as new coordinators who are worth given the opportunity. Also the coordinator should be able to follow up on what was agreed. A willingness to communicate is a good indication of the quality of coordinator. An initial talk or chat with the coordinator will give one a good feel of character and feel of the coordinator.

Fit: How does a foreign production find the most qualified coordinators to work with - sometimes just looking in a directory does not tell much?

Pak: Try and get references, but most of the foreign producers are already doing this anyway. Of course, finding the most qualified coordinators does not necessarily mean a happy production, one should take into account the team's needs and requirements – looking after them makes for successful results.

Fit: What are some of the more interesting locations you have shot in Thailand?

Pak: I think all locations are interesting as it involves getting to meet different types of people. The hill tribe villages in the north are always memorable for its scenery and people.

There are such a variety of locations in Thailand like the temple in Phraya Nakhorn cave for example.

Fit: What are some classic situations (problems) foreign productions have when filming in Thailand and how have you solved these situations?

Pak: One of the problems that still occurs – some foreign productions do not tell us fully what they want to shoot. This may result in not being able to shoot a particular scene as time for clearance isn't enough or it may be a sensitive subject matter which cases a lot of time wasted on not being able to shoot at all. It is better to let the coordinator know so we have time to deal or come up with a solution. Usually we have been lucky in that most of our clients keep us updated with what they want so negotiations usually solve the problem.

Fit: What should foreign production companies know BEFORE coming to Thailand to shoot?

Pak: I don't think there are specific items the production companies need to know before coming out apart from the usually homework of weather, basic culture i.e. touching of heads and so on.



What's Up Private Sector ?

“Anthony Bourdain: No Reservations” a popular television show on the Travel Channel shot an episode in Thailand with **Greenlight Films, Ltd.** recently.

Bourdain, a hard-core, 5-star, New York City chef travels to many destinations on his show searching for excellent and unusual local cuisine and experiences, whether it be street food, 5-star dining, or anything in between.

During this episode, he got more than he bargained for, with the Songkran Festival and the political unrest adding flavor to the experience. He connected with local celebrity Chef McDang as well as other locals and even brought along an American Muay Thai boxer to join him on the show.

gong@greenlight.co.th



photos courtesy of Greenlight Films



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Glory Days

De Warrenne Pictures Co. Ltd. acted as local coordinator for Roy Alfred Jr's **GLORY DAYS** feature film which filmed in Pattaya between 7th November and 12th December 2009. The story revolves around an American rock group who re-unite in Thailand. See www.glorydays-movie.com

L to R: Producer Tim Carr, UPM Gob Tangtham, Associate Producer Tom Waller, Cameraman Wade Muller, 1st AC Wattana Kuasong, DoP Jason Santelli and Writer/ Director Roy Alfred Jr.



photo courtesy De Warrenne Pictures

Gearhead Co. Ltd. provided camera crew support whilst **Lek Lighting** provided a small lighting crew and equipment.

tom@dewarrenne.com

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“Princess” Shoot at Khao Ngu, Ratchaburi

For this TVC the location had to be considered carefully: how to make Thailand look like China and not only anywhere in China, but a specific hill tribe in China. Location scouting team surveyed many locations and conditions and we ended up with a great landscape in Ratchaburi, Khao Ngu - about 2 hours from Bangkok, also known as Kui-Lin.

It was a one day shoot with a hundred crew members on a bright sunny day in 40 degree Celsius heat; everyone had their own duty to do, but with one objective in mind – to finish the day, around 24 shots - without interference from any monkeys or cows.

The Bandits

Nongpan Srisai, producer
producer@the-bandits.com



photos courtesy The Bandits

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Film maker/crafts/coordinator in Thailand – add yourself to our lists

Film Me

Thailand Underwater

Without doubt, Thailand is one of the world's great travel and film location destinations. As well as an interesting culture, Thailand has friendly people, fascinating ancient architecture and plenty of opportunities to view the local wildlife in the many national parks scattered around the country.

In addition to all these attractions, Thailand also has underwater delights that are amazing – like this beautiful white-collar butterflyfish, a member of a large family of engagingly colored and patterned fish which is scattered through the country's warm waters.



Thailand boasts some of the most beautiful dive sites in the world – the water is clear, sea life plentiful, transport and accommodation readily available and instruction (if need be) to a very high standard.

The picturesque **Similan Islands** are the most popular destination, with superb underwater scenery and excellent visibility in its aquamarine waters. Huge deep water boulder formations create daring swim-throughs as well as providing dramatic back-drops to its vibrant coral gardens and reef slopes. You can dive here by liveaboard or diving day tours.

The world famous **Richelieu Rock** is perhaps Thailand's most famous site, and it rates as one of the best places in the world for diving with whale sharks. **Koh Bon** and **Koh Tachai** are great for manta rays and white tip reef shark encounters.

Hin Daeng - Hin Muang is your best chance to see grey reef sharks, patrolling the walls. Besides that, it's also the second home in the Andaman Sea for whale sharks and mantas. Dive Hin Daeng and you'll experience the excitement of diving Thailand's highest vertical wall. Nearby caves and caverns add to the thrill of adventure.

Koh Samui is the ideal base for exploring the dive sites on the Gulf of Thailand. The diving may not be quite as varied Phuket and the Similan Islands, but there are some very good dive sites around Samui and Koh Tao.

Diving is available at all times of the year, although visibility changes according to the season. In the Andaman Sea, the best time to dive is from October to April, and in the Gulf of Thailand from May to September. At recommended dive sites in Thailand the water is so clear that the under-water world is visible from the surface: whale sharks, manta rays, marlin, flying fish, dolphins and coral reefs.

Thailand's coral reefs are some of the most magnificent and diverse ecosystems on Earth. Like many of the world's reef systems, Thailand's reefs are facing the pressures of destructive fishing practices, as well as the threats posed by global warming and coral diseases. The Thai government is aware of the problems and is working with national and international organizations to re-grow coral beds and provide means for a sustainable future for this magnificent underworld.



picture © WWF / Songpol Tippayawong

Now you know so come to Thailand and Film It!



**Have a question about filming in Thailand?
Please Visit Our Re-designed Website
www.thailandfilmoffice.org**