



THE BANGKOK CONSULTANT

How do I use Google Maps when travelling?

For those of you who are familiar with the Google Maps App on your phones and tablets; this article probably won't interest you. However, for travellers who are unsure of the benefits of using such a fantastic tool, here is a short guide on how to use it to your advantage.

Before the smartphone and tablet, we had to make do with trying to remember landmarks to find our way back to the hotel and endless walks trying to find somewhere to stay in our price range. Now we have so much technology within our grasp, we can use it to make travelling so much easier; it truly is a travellers dream. Sure, the sense of adventure is still there. But, of course, we can still hire a car and go where the wind takes us, but it's so reassuring to know we have a device in the car that lets us know exactly where we are, and how to get out of trouble should we need to.

Google Maps is without a doubt a traveller's best friend. Of course, there are other Apps which can do a similar job or have other useful functions, but Google Maps is the McDaddy, and all other apps are based on Google Maps.

How to research a place on a PC.

Researching a place before you arrive isn't paramount, but it's always worth taking a look to see what's available. In any case, it can only help to fuel the excitement of your trip!

We are going to use Bangkok as an example to show you a few ideas to plan your trip. Quite often if you have spent a long time looking at places of interest on Google Maps, you'll have a much better feel of a place when you arrive. You will have to sign into Google with your account username, which is the same as your Gmail or YouTube log in etc. If you don't have one of these accounts, you will need to sign up for one. This will become useful at a later date if you have a smartphone or tablet.

So let's say we have been online or phoned a travel company and have booked our flight, train or bus to Bangkok. So now we are logged into Google Maps on our PC and search for Bangkok. Now we have it on our screen; we can begin a more localised search.

Let's start with a search for an airport. We are flying into Suvarnabhumi, which we can see in the list that appears on the left. There is lots of information that could be useful such as an address or reviews that people have left. These can be helpful when looking for hotels and tourist attractions, but we will get to that later. Notice that there is a small blue star under the word 'save' on our list. We click the star for Suvarnabhumi Airport so that it turns yellow and HEY PRESTO! We have marked off our first location.

Now let's say we are going to get a train to the Phaya Thai station. Again we search for the Phaya Thai station. Sometimes you will have to state the city you want; other times it's not necessary.

So now we have marked (or starred) the Phaya Thai station on our map. It's time to see what there is in the local area. If we zoom in close enough, we can see that there are lots of hotels and hostels in the vicinity of the station.

We can also search for specific hotels or hostels near the station that we may want to stay at. This is a huge benefit when you are travelling on a budget because you can avoid having to pay out for a taxi to get you to your hotel. Also when you want to travel around the city by public transport, you can make sure you book somewhere within walking distance to the nearest train station or metro link, etc.

To the right of the Phaya Thai station, there is a hotel called Florida Hotel Bangkok. Click on it to reveal some information about the hotel. On the left are our options. We can save it, find out what's nearby, send it to our device, or share this particular map with friends, via a very specific website address. There is all manner of information available in the panel from the address, photos and useful reviews that can help you decide on whether this is the right place for you.

As you can see, aside from hotels there are other places of interest such as restaurants, bars, hospitals, etc. If you right click on any location on the map, you'll get a side menu popup. Click on "What's here" and you'll get the address and a photo of the location that you have selected.

The "Street View" is a fantastic tool. It can be used for fun, but you can also use it to take a virtual tour of a place before you arrive. You will know you are in the right place because you have already walked it once before - virtually anyway. I did this on a trip to Japan, and it was a lifesaver when trying to find my hotel.

Let's say we have saved the Florida Hotel Bangkok and the Into the Woods Cafe, and we want to get some directions between the two. This is a simple set of instructions, but as you become familiar with the tools of Google Maps, you will be able to use them for much bigger tasks. Click on the Florida Hotel Bangkok (Notice there is some booking information in the advertisement at the bottom) and then click "Directions". On the left-hand side, you can then enter the locations you wish to get from A to B. To the right of the destinations; there is an Up/Down arrow for switching from A to B. Enter the location you wish to go, in this case, the Into the Woods Cafe. You can choose whether you want driving, public transport or walking directions. For this example, we shall be walking. Note: transit routes are not always available. Click on "Details;" these can then be printed out for later use.

Why not try to find the Grand Palace? Try to get directions to it from Phaya Thai. As you can see there are some helpful train suggestions; click on the one that will get you there the quickest, and your away. If you want, you can leave a review yourself for others to read.

Let's take a virtual tour and get an idea of some of the shops and recognisable features on the road we want. Click on Florida Hotel Bangkok, then click on street view at the bottom right of the screen. It will give you the option to see photos or street view. You can now play around and become familiar with how to use 'Google Street View', mostly you just point and click to move around and up and down the road. You can travel around Bangkok using this method, just click up the path, and you will go in that direction. Click on shop fronts to get a better view, which is helpful to recognise your places of interest.

Hold the left mouse button and move around the screen and see what Bangkok has to offer. In our case, we want to go up the road to find the Into the Woods Cafe restaurant.

Using Google maps on your device

Using your tablet as a map is by far the best piece of equipment there is for helping you to get around, once you have marked off your places of interest on Google Maps.

You can search for places on your tablet and 'star them off' just as before, but using a PC is a much more laid back approach, especially if you are going to be researching for an extended period. Once you have saved your places of interest, you can log into Google Maps on your phone or tablet, using the same login information. By doing this, you will be able to access your starred places.

The only constraint with using your tablet will be that you will need either a Wifi connection or a SIM Card that gives you mobile internet. In Thailand, A Dtac or Happy Tourist SIM is easy to use, and getting mobile data is pretty cheap.

Another way of getting around without mobile internet is to use your hotel's Wifi and save a map to your device for offline use. Then you just use the device's GPS to guide you to your places of interest. Unfortunately, offline maps are unavailable in Thailand. Places like Vietnam and other parts of Asia, and the world, are fine. The only drawback to this method is you will not be able to get directions on the move because this requires internet. To save an offline map, just tap the three lines on the top left of your map. Tap on offline areas and choose the area of the map you need. It only works on local areas rather country-wide maps.

Most devices come with the Google Maps App, which is just called "Maps." Some smartphones have less accurate GPS, but you can still use the maps effectively. The beauty of using a GPS-guided map is that depending on how accurate your device is; you will know exactly where you are on the map at all times. And, if you zoom in close enough you will actually be able to see the blue cursor (which is you) moving around on the map, much the same as a Sat Nav in a car. Again, we need to be signed into Google so that we can retrieve our 'starred' places of interest. It is a much better to relax in front of your home (or library) computer and do your research while having better access to Google at the click of a button. As soon as you have fired up your tablet, all of the information is there for you.

Let's say we have just arrived at the Phaya Thai station and have opened up "Maps" on our device. Straight away we can see ourselves depicted on the map as a blue cursor. Gone are the days of hoarding large sheets that have to be taken out every two minutes to figure out what road you are on and wondering if you are going in the right direction or stopping to ask everyone and anyone. Now we have the freedom to leave our hotel and wander freely for hours if we wish, not having to worry about remembering our way back or leaving a trail of breadcrumbs!

So with a little practise and messing around you will be able to make the most of using Google Maps abroad. It is a great tool if you need to take a taxi and suspect the driver is taking the scenic route. You can track where you are going every step of the way, so you know if he/she is 'TAKING YOU FOR A RIDE!'

Songthaews are cheap transport in Thailand, but you don't always know where you're going when you get into them, so being able to check the map is crucial. Using Google Maps on your device is the same as searching for places on your PC, except now you have the bonus of knowing exactly where you are all of the time. You can follow yourself as you get closer to your destination.

You could just select any destination you want and then press the little arrow for directions. The short and long of it is that you can go anywhere you like with minimal effort, and discover things you would never have done before!

[See online article with map images.](#)

Just for fun!

Why not research a place you are planning on going to shortly. Find a bar or restaurant on the street view map that you've never heard of, and make plans to have a drink or a meal in that place when you arrive.



THE FACTORY



Benefitting the Local Community
in Chiang Rai

4 Palms Resort



Come as a guest, leave as a friend

CLICK HERE TO
BOOK NOW

Are you looking for travelled writers for your project?

All projects considered, long or short term.
From articles to hotels reviews. Including all
outsourced written content for travel agencies



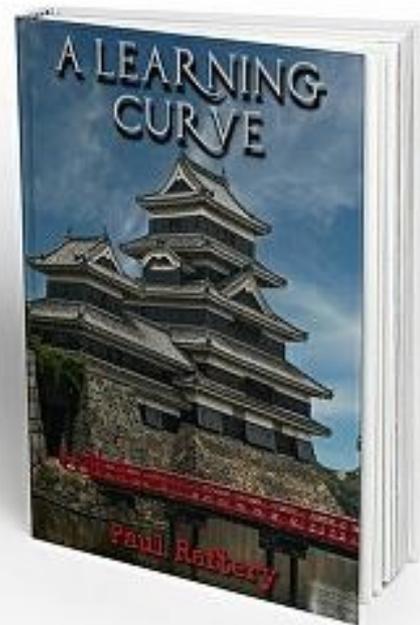
Experienced Travel Writers -

- Articles
- Blogs
- Websites
- Online Content
- Print
- Sales Letters and Emails
- Personal experiences
- Website population
- Promotions
- Reviews
- Travelogues
- New Discoveries



NW

www.Noblewordsmiths.com
For more information [click here](#)



Tales of conspiracy and adventure in this down to
earth view of Asia, and how Western influence
has played its part.

Noble Wordsmiths Copywriting Services



NW

Online Markets - Websites, Blogs, Marketing Emails — Print Products - Advertising, Brochures, Sales Letters

Public Relations - E-Books - E-commerce - Manuals - Recruitment Materials - Letter Writing - Newsletters - Email Services

Contact Noblewordsmiths.com for more info or [Click Here](#)