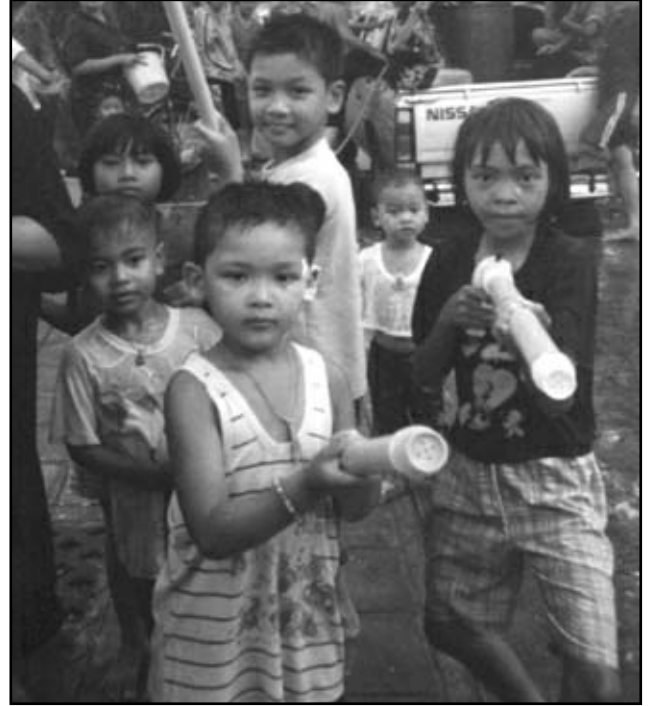


Events and Festivals

March - April 2003

Songkran

13 - 15th April



It only comes once a year and if you happen to be here at that time watch out. No one is spared from getting a dousing and consider yourself lucky if it is only water.

Songkran is the Thai New Year and coming at the hottest time of the year, traditionally gave the Thais time to let their hair down before the rains came and the rice growing season started.

As it is every year, this year's Songkran Festival will be marked by extensive travelling, with as many 500,000 people expected to be on the go around the country on any given day of the festival. It is also a time to be very careful as accidents spike around this time, over 700 people lost their lives over the period last year.

All in all it is a great time to be in Thailand, but remember to show proper respect when celebrating the festival. There are taboos in Thailand and if you follow the example given by the Thais you will enjoy the festivities without offending anyone.

Coming Up...

2nd International Thailand Temple Run

23 March 2003

Phumrinkudeethong Temple,
Ampawa, Samut Songkhram

This relatively flat area is the location for Thailand inaugural Temple Marathon 10K/21K/42K, encompassing about of these 20 temples. This is more than a race; it is a total cultural experience. Welcomed at the starting line by the traditional Thai dancers, and Monks for the Official Opening and Merit Making Ceremony. The race itself will take you along paved roads and through temple grounds.

Mae Hong Son Poi Sang Long Tradition

24 March - 5 April

Mae Hong Son

Poi Sang Long, the novice ordination ritual, is an outstanding cultural event, graceful and unique to Mae Hong Son Province. It is popularly practiced among the Thai Yai Race and has become a tradition now. This ethnic minority group is very devoted and faithful to Buddhism. In fact, they were the group of people who built the city in 1731.