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Mmmm.. Fillet Steak

Although Thai cuisine is exemplary, there still comes a time when one pines for a taste of the old country, even if it is just the way food is prepared.

One such resident expat here had one of those pangs recently, and after searching the island, found just what he was looking for, a big piece of juicy fillet steak. Not your emaciated buffalo carcass that seems to pass for meat here, but your genuine, one hundred percent, imported to boot, juicy steak.

Carefully wrapped to protect it from the ravages of the local climate, and from prying hungry eyes, he carted it home, and as if a great hunter returning with his prey, showed the juicy morsel to his wife. She was delighted and offered to do her bit by preparing such a fine selection just the right way.

Our hunter sat back and dreamed what the first bite would taste like, it had been a long time since such tender flesh had passed his lips, this was going to be a treat indeed.

His dear wife dutifully delivered all the accompanying condiments to the table and then bought out the piece de resistance.

On seeing all the work and effort that had gone into preparing this feast, his eyes dilated as he recoiled in horror. Even the

neighbours could hear his screams of Noooooooo, for his wife had taken this prime example of young calf flesh, chopped it up into little pieces and made a Tom Yum Fillet soup out of it. Welcome to Thailand!!

In an Internet Poll taken by Thai News over the past month, the question was asked "What Is Stopping You Visiting Thailand At This Time?"

The answer choices included 'Terrorism', 'SARS', 'Can't afford it', 'No changes in travel plans', etc.

But in a surprise twist, and regardless of the SARS and terrorism threats, 45 percent of respondents cited the main cause of why they would not visit Thailand at this time was because of the Thais double pricing policy towards foreigners.

Although dual pricing goes on to some extent in many countries, it is blatantly obvious in Thailand and an ongoing irritant to tourists and resident expats alike. It doesn't matter how much the TAT spends trying to woo tourists here if they feel they are being ripped off once they arrive. An old business adage says; A happy customer MAY tell one person, an unhappy customer WILL tell ten people.

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