

Culinary Masterpieces

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The culinary scene in Thailand, especially Bangkok and Phuket, will lure even the most demanding palate. We list Thailand's 10 world-class dining destinations



Thailand has two significant dining hubs Bangkok and Phuket, but each has a different dining scene. Generally businesses drive top class dining because they have the expense accounts to afford the higher price tag. Bangkok being the capital, and where business is done, has the greater concentration of top restaurants while in Phuket the dining scene is more leisure based despite the island being home to a wealth expatriate community. This is why nine of our top 10 are in Bangkok, with just one in Phuket.

Bangkok is one of five top Asian dining hubs alongside Hong Kong, Shanghai, Singapore and Tokyo. It has become a magnet for Michelin star chefs, six of our ten are under the culinary direction of either a current or former Michelin star chef. Two of them were rated No.1 by Asia's 50 Best: Nahm in 2014 and Gaggan in 2015, and five of them are in the Top 50 list 2015.

World-class dining is chef focused. Customers are drawn by the cooking style of specific celebrity chefs, even though they know that the cooking will most likely be done by their kitchen team. The restaurants listed below are all chef-driven.



L'Atelier de Joël Robuchon

L'Atelier's casual elegant dining concept is new to Bangkok. A professional interaction between chefs and diners in a convivial atmosphere lets diners relax and enjoy the experience, seated around the open kitchen watching as chefs experiment and create, work on new ideas and fuse different concepts, right in front of them.

The culinary opera's stage is set in classic black and red with the open kitchen dominating. Conducting the performance is Executive Chef Olivier Limousin who has worked with 'The Master', Joël Robuchon, for the past 12 years starting in Paris, then London, and now here in Bangkok for the past years. He is the gatekeeper, meticulously controlling the flow of dishes from the kitchen to the counter. He never stops reminding his team that the core of this business is to give pleasure to their guests.

The place settings are simple and modern, yet elegant. Just a simple dark brown place mat, cutlery which is replaced before the serving of the next dish, a water and a wine glass, the benchmarks of today's comfortably elegant dining. There is no formal dress code just that it should be appropriate.

This is an enchanting dining experience that awoke all the senses playing some of the best music. A new generation of dining that left us feeling invigorated

www.robuchon-bangkok.com



He was sensitive to many Asians feeling uncomfortable with the traditional way French cuisine is eaten, so he made the radical decision to serve his food Asian family style with zero compromise on its authentic French taste. Individual dishes for each course are placed in the middle of a rotating glass 'lazy susan'. This gives guests the option to either put an individual portion on their plate or share collectively. Another gesture he made was to add a pair of black lacquer chopsticks; the silverware is replaced course by course. This was done so that his style of French cuisine would be more accepted in Asia. He doesn't make the same concession at his flagship in Burgundy. The interior is also unique with its 'upside down' concept including a grand piano hanging from the ceiling. This Asian friendly, classical French dining experience is serving their style of food in a way that is appropriate to its location.

www.jaime-bangkok.com

J'aime by Jean-Michael Lorain

In 1986, Jean-Michel Lorain of Cote Saint Jacques in Joigny, Burgundy, France, was the youngest chef in France to be awarded the coveted three Michelin stars.

When he opened J'Aime at U Sathorn to ensure the authenticity of his food he put his protégé Amerigo Sesti in charge of the kitchen and his daughter Marine Lorain front of house as Maitre d'.



Aziamendi

Once in a lifetime dining experience created by Eneko Atxa Spain's youngest recipient of the coveted three Michelin stars at Aziamendi in Bilbao Spain. It's located 20 minutes north of Phuket International Airport at Inalia Beach House on the shores of Natal Beach, the home of Mark Weingard, a former derivatives trader turned hotelier.

The restaurant designed by A-cero is inspired by the nature surrounding it. Undulating timber waves on the ceiling symbolize the beauty of the Andaman Sea. The tropical landscape is represented through the natural tree like forms of the tables and the lush foliage is reflected in the green velvet of the chairs.

Chef de Cuisine Alexander Burger previously worked with Daniel Boulud at Daniel in New York for five years. This talented young chef shares Eneko's culinary passion to ensure uncompromising consistency. Pouring the wines is Fabian Etienne, Head Sommelier whose wine lists recently won Best National, Restaurant & Wine Bar and Phuket & region categories of Wine list of the Year 2014 Thailand.

www.aziamendi.com



Savelberg

Dutch Chef Henk Savelberg has the distinction of having had four restaurants across the Netherlands that were each recognized with a Michelin star. Having previously delighted with his exquisite culinary creations as a visiting chef he decided to open Restaurant Savelberg Thailand, his first overseas, in front of the main Oriental Residence building on Wireless Road, opposite All Seasons Place. A gourmet, modern French restaurant with a Dutch touch, that strives to serve the absolute in quality dining focusing on luxury details.

What distinguishes the best from the rest lies in the details, the little things that most guests won't even notice. It's his meticulous attention to those tiny details that built Henk Savelberg's reputation. Every detail was made to measure and custom fitted, every wine poured is served in the finest Riedel Crystal, the culinary creations are presented on specially designed German tableware finished with platinum, the first of its kind in Asia. And orange, the national colour of the Netherlands, is subtly incorporated into the design a reminder of where they are coming from.

It's a warm friendly and accommodating experience, modern comfortable luxury rather than the stiff fine dining. The service has a classic European approach, engaging with the guest to give a rewarding and memorable dining experience. They use the finest imported ingredients and is the first restaurant in Thailand with a Michelin heritage to use Marou chocolate from Vietnam. A delightful destination.

www.savelbergth.com



Nahm

Australian born David Thompson is globally recognised as the Master of Thai cuisine. In 2010 he was the first chef of a Thai restaurant to be awarded a Michelin star with Nahm in London. Nahm in Bangkok was the first restaurant in Thailand to be listed in the World's 50.

David didn't re-invent Thai cuisine, rather he painstakingly researched the cook books of Thai matriarchs and then set out to source which regions produce the best of each of the ingredients he needs to paint authentic flavours on the plate. Currently this is arguably the world's best Thai dining experience.

All of his dishes respect the perfect authentic balance of sour, sweet, salt, and spice flavours; true to Thai culinary heritage. The meal is served Asian style: all the main course dishes served to share at the same time. The art of Thai dining is to balance the four flavours by picking from each of the bowls.

www.comohotels.com/metropolitanbangkok/dining/nahm





Gaggan



Chef Gaggan Anand was the first Indian and second Asian to study molecular gastronomy in Catalonia with Ferran Adria at El Bulli. "This is the first restaurant in the world to serve this style of cooking," says Gaggan, "it's not just Indian... it's a totally new style of cooking."

His temple of gastronomy is located in a 70-year-old house off Langsuan in Bangkok's shopping district. The most popular seat is at the Chef's Table for ten, to get that book at least two weeks ahead and you may be lucky. From here at the flick of a switch the smoked windows clear with a unique view into the laboratory and the kitchen. The three tasting menus are inspired by seasonal ingredients, fresh produce, amazing diversity of India's regional cuisine and his childhood street food memories. It is a culinary journey of 10 exquisitely plated dishes that create an intense yet perfectly balanced taste explosions in the mouth. His obsessive commitment to culinary perfection has Asia's 50 Best Restaurants 2015 rating this restaurant at no 1.

www.eatatgaggan.com



Le Normandie

For the past 40 years Le Normandie with its sparkling chandeliers, antique furnishings and floor-to-ceiling windows has been Bangkok's culinary hub. Occupying the entire fifth floor of Mandarin Oriental Bangkok's Garden Wing it has the most stunning view looking out over the Chao Praya River. This 12-table restaurant, the culinary playground of Chef Arnaud Dunand Sauthier, has worked for renowned chefs such as Georges Blanc of Vonnas, Marc Veyrat of L'Auberge de L'Eridan, and Emile Jung of Crocodile and has welcomed countless Michelin- starred chefs including the likes of Michel Roux and Christian Bau. It's an institution with old-fashioned values that have evolved. Dining at Le Normandie is a special occasion to be celebrated and dress up for as if attending your best friend's wedding, which is why gentlemen are required to wear a jacket for dinner.

The food is the hardware, the software is their flawless service, it just happens without notice. It's all in the detail from fresh flowers on the table to the stool beside the chair so that a valuable bag doesn't have to sit on the floor. And an attentive eye that misses nothing that anticipates what has yet to be thought.

www.mandarinoriental.com/bangkok





Water Library Chamchuri Square



Water Library Chamchuri Square has recently undergone some cosmetic renovation and the new look employs a few subtle shades of grey. Ironically this fine dining restaurant was originally intended just to be a water bar and coffee shop. That changed when Pote Lee the founder of Water Library tasted the culinary creations of Singaporean celebrity chef Haikal Johari at the former Ember Restaurant; Lee offered him the position of the Executive Chef to found the Water Library dynasty.

Haikal is now Water Library's Group Executive Chef, the current Chef de Cuisine is German-born Mirco Keller with a lifetime passion for cooking and a Michelin star background. Mirco gave the burger legitimacy aiming to make "the most yummy version on the planet with an Australian Wagyu Beef that's exclusive to Water Library, roasted shallots and the rare pungent Cambodian AOC black Kampot pepper". His three times cooked fries made with US potatoes have a soft interior enveloped in a crisp case served in a ceramic paper bag.

www.waterlibrary.com



Vogue Lounge

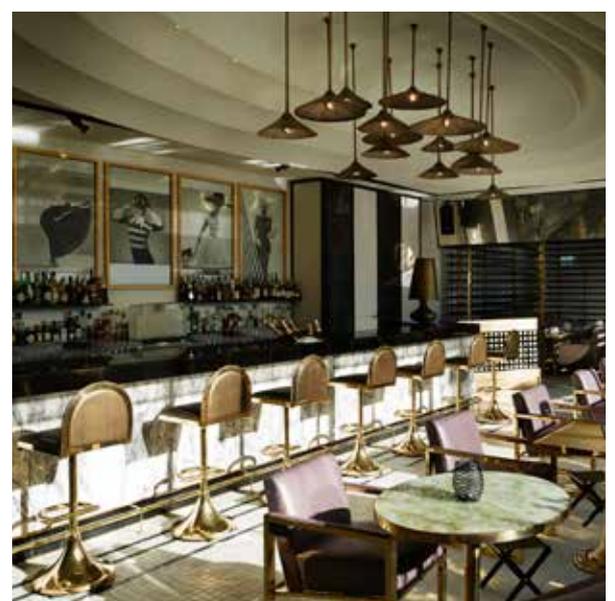
Vogue Lounge on the 6th floor of Mahanakorn CUBE adjacent to Chongnongsri BTS station Bangkok is licensed by Conde Naste International Restaurants. Earlier editions in Moscow, Dubai and Kiev were cafés, here in Bangkok it's a lounge; all serve food for the fashionable. Conde Naste and David Collins Studio worked together to create a concept that mirrored the core values of Vogue, the world's most influential fashion magazine

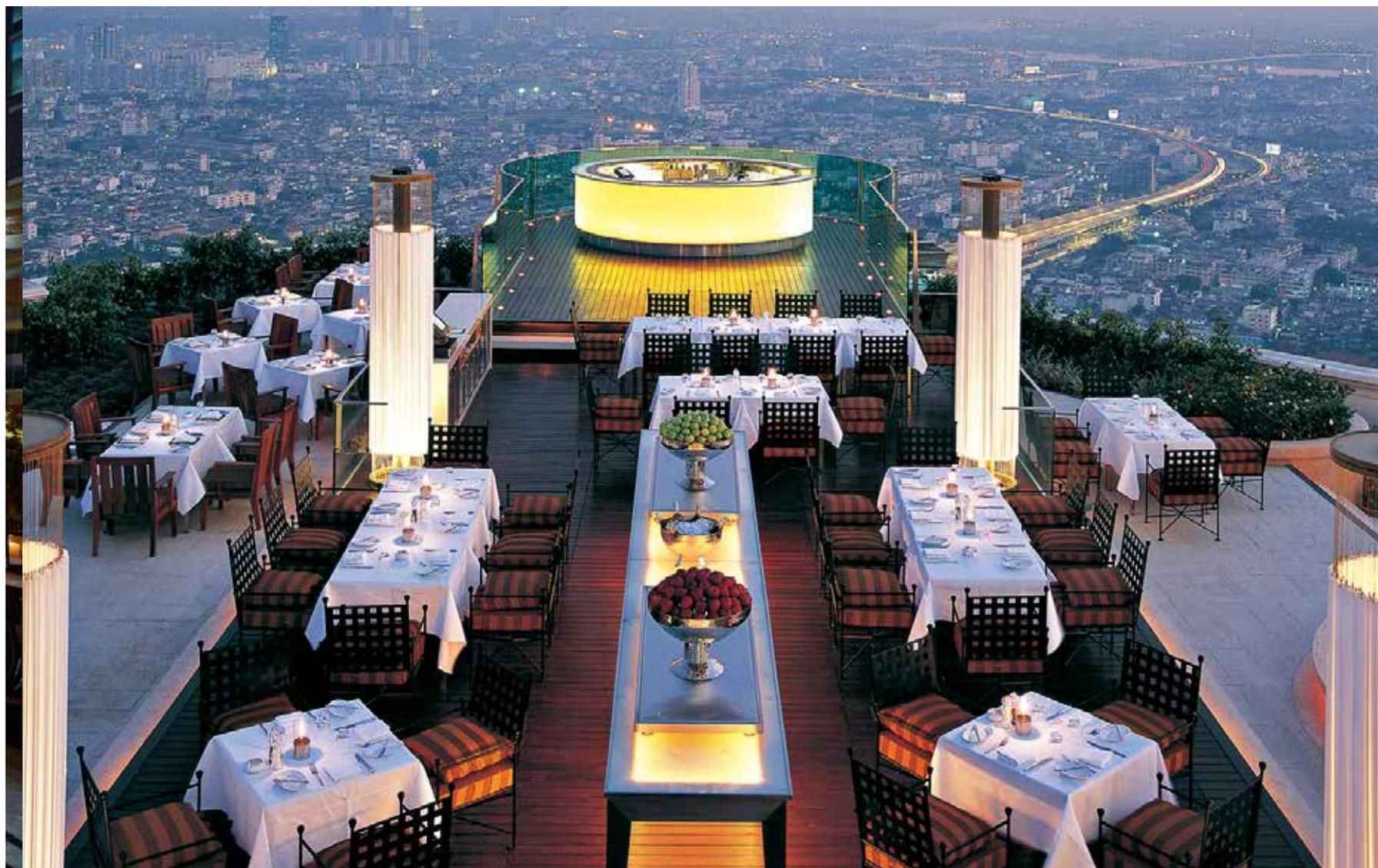
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Vogue Lounge cuisine is exquisite bite size servings created by Vincent Thierry the former Executive Chef at the two Michelin starred Caprice at Four Seasons Hong Kong. Their cocktail philosophy is based on classic cocktails shaken or stirred by Japanese Mixologist Hideyuki Saito. Each invented for a reason, with a story to tell. Music entertainment is directed by famed Hong Kong DJ Maarten Goetheer.

The small interior is inspired by 1920s art deco movement with rich plum leather seating, gleaming bronze bar stools and Italian marble. Two Andy Warhol originals grace the walls. The outdoor air conditioned area in black and white is the most comfortable roof terrace in Bangkok.

www.voguelounge.com





Sirocco



Having arrived at the 63rd floor Lebua at State tower the dining experience starts with the ceremonial descent down the artistically lit stone staircase to the soothing strains of the jazz band resonating through the warm breeze.

Sirocco was The Dome's first restaurant and the world's highest alfresco restaurant, Lebua's signature Mediterranean dining venue set against possibly the most exhilarating views in the city. Impeccably delivered by an unobtrusive and knowledgeable wait staff, Sirocco's clean and uncomplicated cuisine is the product of a continuous quest by the culinary team for the pick of the seasonal harvest, which often includes rare ingredients never before seen in Thailand.

The restaurant's new chef, Gonzalo Ruiz, guides his customer on a culinary journey to discover both his personal and Sirocco's roots in Mediterranean cuisine with "The 2003 Heritage Collection". Dishes such as Carabinero Red Prawns with Parsley emulsion, baby Octopus and Portuguese Cod with Pilaf rice and, Sirocco Bouillabaisse for two made of Catalan Monkfish, Brittany lobster, red mullet, rockfish, mussels and a homemade rouille.

www.lebua.com/sirocco