

# LANGUAGE

## LANGUAGES

- ✚ The official national language, spoken by almost 100 per cent of the population is **Thai**. The Thai language is liberally sprinkled with words from Pali and Sanskrit (the classical languages, respectively, of Theravada Buddhism and Indian Hinduism). Written Thai employs an alphabet of 44 consonants and 32 vowels that combine to form syllabic sounds. Thai is a tonal monosyllabic language. The same word can be said in five different ways - normal or middle tone, high, low, rising and falling. In Thai the meaning of single syllable may be alter in five different tones.
- ✚ The most widely spoken language is Thai. English and some European languages are spoken in most hotels, shops and restaurants in major tourist destinations, and Thai-English road and street signs are found nationwide.

## DIALECTS

Some parts of Thailand have dialects of Thai which are nearly incomprehensible to speakers of standard Thai, though most people in these areas will be able to converse in standard Thai if needed.

## COMMON PHRASES

✚ Hello	sa-wat-dii, khráp (speaker is man)/ sa-wat-dii, khâ (speaker is woman)
✚ Goodbye	laa kon
✚ Thank you	khop khun
✚ I (don't) understand	mai khao jai
✚ I understand	kâo jai
✚ Please!	karunaa
✚ Yes	chai
✚ No	mai chai
✚ Do you speak English?	phuut phaasaa ang-krit dai mai?
✚ Sorry	kho thot