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An Extract from 'Thailand4Kids – A Guide to a Family Holiday in Thailand'

Baby Foods

The use of bottled or canned baby foods is a western practice that Thais do not follow, they have their own traditional methods of feeding very young children, for this reason the availability and variety of western baby foods in Thailand is somewhat restricted. You will not find western baby foods outside of the main tourist destinations.

As with all foreign imported foods it is always advisable to check the sell-by dates. This is of course especially important with baby food.

Tip: The cap to food bottles must be concave (bowing inwards). A lid that is flat or convex (bowing outwards) is an indication that the seals are damaged and/or the food inside contaminated.

My advice is, if you are using baby foods take a small selection with you, enough to last perhaps three or four days until you familiarise yourselves with food and restaurants in Thailand. Thereafter feed your child from your own plate, or perhaps any of the foods I have listed below.

To put your mind at rest, I am happy to be able to tell you our children have never been ill with the food in Thailand – but do watch out for those chillies!

Formula Milk

International brands of formula milk are available throughout Thailand.

Water and Ice

All bottled water is safe and there is no need to buy the most expensive brands. The Singha brand of bottled water meets the highest standards and is widely recommended. All ice in Thailand is safe, you'll hear all sorts of recommendations such as 'only eat ice with a hole in the middle', this rang true ten years ago but more recently hotels and restaurants have installed their own ice making machines that produce cubes or squares of ice. Don't worry, the ice and bottled water are safe.

Tap water is chlorinated, but I don't recommend that you drink it; I once drank a whole jug of the stuff that my wife had left out after watering the flowers - I remained unmoved but perhaps I think I was lucky.

We have always used tap water for cooking and making tea or coffee drinks, so do all the restaurants that you will eat in. Again don't worry, you would have to be extremely unlucky to get anything other than a mild stomach upset from water and ice served in Thai restaurants.

Recommended Thai Foods For Children

Description (English and Thai)	Where to buy	Age from
Grilled Chicken with Sticky Rice <i>Gai Yarng Koaw Niowe</i>	Beach Stalls/Side of the Road	2Yrs +
Steamed Crab <i>Boo Nung</i>	Beach Stalls/Side of the Road Stalls/Restaurants	4Yrs +
Steamed Crab Legs <i>Gan Jian Boo Nung</i>	Beach Stalls/Side of the Road Stalls /Restaurants	2 Yrs +
Plain Rice <i>Koaw Ploaw</i>	Beach Stalls/Side of the Road Stalls/Restaurants	2 Yrs +
Egg Fried Rice <i>Koaw Pat Kai</i>	Beach Stalls/Side of the Road Stalls/Restaurants	2 Yrs +
Chicken Fried Rice <i>Koaw Pad Gai</i>	Beach Stalls/Side of the Road Stalls/Restaurants	2 Yrs +
Crab Fried Rice <i>Koaw Pat Boo</i>	Beach Stalls/Side of the Road/Stalls/Restaurants	2 Yrs +
Chicken with Cashew Nuts <i>Gai Pad Met Ma-Muang</i>	Beach Stalls/Side of the Road Stalls/Restaurants	3 Yrs +
Fried Mixed Vegetables <i>Pad Pak Ruem</i>	Restaurants	2 Yrs +
Fried Chicken in Fragrant Leaves <i>Gai Hor Bai Tuaey</i>	Restaurants	2 Yrs +
Fried Mixed Noodle/Shrimp and Bean Sprout Omelette with Prawns. <i>Pad Thai Gung</i>	Beach Stalls/Side of the Road Stalls/Restaurants	4 Yrs +
Plain Omelette <i>Kai Jiow</i>	Restaurants	1 Yrs +

The above list is not meant to be exhaustive, rather a safe starting point.

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Drinks

All the main brands, of soft drinks are available (I'm not going to advertise them here until I get the contract signed). There are also numerous other drinks that you and your children might want to try, my favourites are:

<i>Nam Ma Noaw</i>	A sharp fresh lemon juice.
<i>Deng Mho Pahn</i>	Liquidised water melon
<i>Nam Ma Proaw</i>	Coconut milk
<i>Nam Som Pahn</i>	Fresh orange juice

Bottled water, tea and coffee are widely available.

Get the Guide 'Thailand4Kids – A Guide to A Family Holiday in Thailand' for all the information you need on:

- Planning Your Trip – Things to consider
- Money In Thailand – Cash to Credit Cards, its all here
- That Long Haul Flight – 10,000 meters up with the little ones
- Getting Around Thailand – Planes, Trains, Busses and Boats
- Accommodation – Choosing where to stay and getting the right deal
- Safety and Security – Advice on managing the risks in Thailand
- Single Parent families visiting Thailand – Real help, not a lecture
- Health and Health Care – From firsthand experience
- Culture, and language – Those important things to help you along
- Things to do and things to see – Ideas to get you started
- The 'Must Haves' packing list – We found out the hard way
- Getting help if you need it – Practical advice on getting the right help at the right time

And much more besides: Advice written exclusively for families from my own experience of living working and raising two children in Thailand.