Chatuchak Weekend Market

Chatuchak market, held every Saturday and Sunday, is the biggest market in Thailand. An estimated quarter of a million people visit this veritable shopaholic’s paradise each day. The vast site has over 15,000 stalls but products are grouped into sections making it easy to find specific items.

Top 10 Features

1. Antiques
2. Crafts
3. Clothing and Accessories
4. Home Decor
5. Books
6. Food and Drink Stalls
7. Central Clock Tower
8. Chatuchak Park
9. Plants
10. Artists

Antiques

Located in section 26 of the market, antiques on sale in Chatuchak include furniture, paintings, Buddha images (right), lamps, jewelry, clocks, and carvings. However, take care when considering a purchase, because first of all genuine antiques need documentation for customs clearance, and secondly, Thai craftsmen are highly skilled in creating fakes.

Crafts

Thailand is renowned all over the world for its handicrafts, including woodcarvings, basketware, lacquerware, ceramics, silk, silverware, and musical instruments. Such items can be found in section 8 of the market, where, with a little bit of luck, all the gifts you may need for friends and family can be bought in one go.

Clothing and Accessories

Around 5,000 stalls sell either clothes (below) or fashion accessories. Most of them are in sections 12, 14, 16, 18, and 20. With rock-bottom prices, these are some of the most popular and crowded sections of the market.
Home Decor
Items to beautify your home (above) can be found in sections 2 to 7. If you wish to buy bulky items, you can ship them home via a number of shipping companies in the market.

Books
Bibliophiles will love section 1 which has remaindered art books stacked beside collectible first editions and back issues of magazines. It is best visited last as the weight of purchases may discourage farther exploration of the market.

Food and Drink Stalls
More than 400 food and drink stalls (above) are scattered throughout the market. Many of these stalls sell only one dish in which they are experts, so snacking here can be a gourmet experience.

Plants
In this section of the market you can pick up a young fruit tree or a rose bush, a sweet-smelling jasmine plant or a delicate orchid. They also sell fertilizer, flower pots, and gardening tools.

Artists
There is an excellent art market, located in section 7, with small studios producing good-value paintings as well as higher-end pieces of art. Artists can be viewed at work on original pieces, and it is also possible to commission reproductions.

Chatuchak Park
If you need a break from the crowds, take a stroll in the adjacent Chatuchak Park, just north of the market. Opened in December 1980, the park has a lot of open space and shaded areas. Running the length of the park is an artificial lake with a number of bridges crossing it. Inside the park is the Hall of Railway Heritage. The large exhibition hall of the museum showcases old steam locomotives and rail carriages. Miniature trains of different sizes are also displayed.

Central Clock Tower
The tall clocktower (above) in the heart of the market is a useful landmark because it is visible from many areas. If you get lost, head for this clocktower, from where it should be easy to find your way.

Endangered Species
Unfortunately, Thailand is a major conduit for the sale of endangered species from neighboring countries. Several raids on dealers in Chatuchak Weekend Market have revealed animals being kept in awful conditions, and while casual visitors are never likely to see them, this illegal trade still continues out of sight.