



THAI TOURISM
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Let's see your TRAVEL VIDEOS



Pattaya is one of the hottest beach-resort destinations in Thailand. The government's Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration is holding a video contest to promote such places.

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FOR SUSTAINABLE
TOURISM AWARDS

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THE NATION

THE LATEST trend in tourism for tourist-mad Thailand involves more than beaches and bars, embracing instead "creative" and "value-added" tourism focusing on that appealing if ephemeral concept of "Thainess".

The local lifestyle, venerable wisdom, culture and history are being promoted more than ever.

The government's Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration (Dasta), established in 2003, is in charge of fostering more-sustainable tourism in eight locations.

Koh Chang is designated the "Low-carbon Destination",



Wat Phra That Chae Haeng is the most sacred of Nan's many temples.

Pattaya the "Greenovative Tourism City", Sukhothai, Si Satchanalai and Kamphaeng Phet as "World Heritage Cities", Loei as "Leisure Loei", Nan as the "Living Old City" and Uthong as "The Origin of Suvarnabhumi".

Dasta's fourth annual Thailand Sustainable Tourism Awards are awaiting the best short videos produced in line with the theme "Thoi Lang Thiew", in other words, "Thainess Experience".

"The awards have been continuously developed and improved over the years," says Dr Chumpol Musiganont, who runs Dasta in Nan. The competition was announced last week at the Grande Centre Point Terminal 21 Hotel.



Wat Chang Lom is among the impressive attractions at Si Satchanalai Historical Park.

"This time it's a kind of 'viral video contest' aimed at encouraging sustainable tourism. Three years ago when the awards began it would have been much more difficult for people to produce short movies like this. Now, though, people are always shooting videos and sharing them online. What the judges will be looking at is the way they interpret the theme, the presentation and the composition of the scenes.

"The idea," Chumpol says, "is that when you go somewhere, you find a way of showing other tourists through a video clip what it is you appreciate about that place. We decided on the short-video format because people nowadays tend to spend only brief periods in any one place and then share their experience on the social media. It's the global trend for Generation Y in particular – young people 15 to 35 years old."

Above all, he explains, the aim is to promote travel that encompasses "the authentic Thai way of life".

"Thoi Lang Thiew" is a play on words that will hopefully get people's attention, because at first there's a negative connotation. It literally means 'travelling backwards'. In the sense we're using it, it means getting people to spend more time travelling, but at a slower pace, and 'touching' the local way of life.

"For example, Thais love visiting Japan because they have such a pleasant way of life and a strong, interesting culture. Japanese are very polite too. I'd love for Thailand and Thai people to be recognised for the same attributes."

For tourism to be truly sustainable, it has to entail society, the economy, the environment and culture, Chompol says. "These awards involve only the cultural aspect, but a video contest is one way of getting people to pay more attention to sustainable tourism."

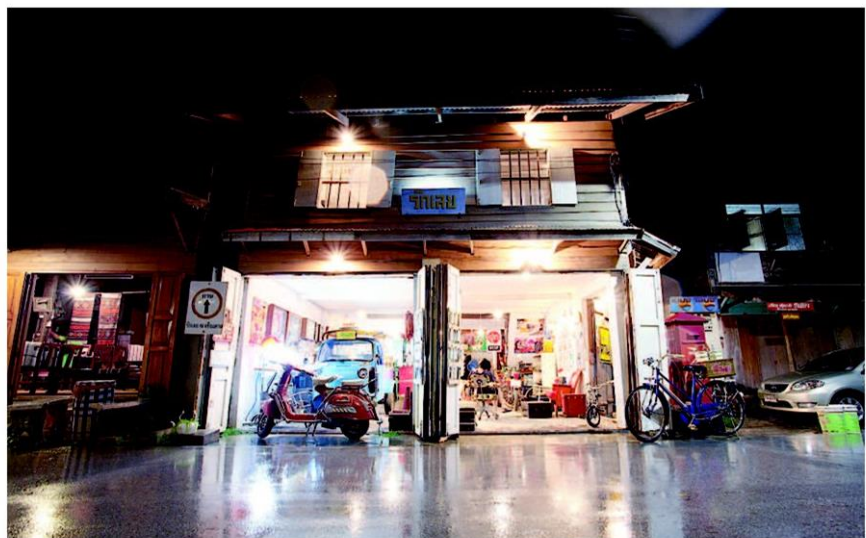
There will be four judges reviewing the clips, including film director Pisut "Joe" Soontonwan and TV travel host Thanabutt "Tommy" Seangri of VSCO Thailand. At the contest launch,



Golf Pichaya and Pango Jintanadda share their experience.



Koh Chang is Thailand's second-largest island after Phuket.



Chiang Khan on the Mekong River draws visitors to Loei.

musicians Pichaya "Golf" Nitipaisankul and Jintanadda "Pango" Lammakanont were on hand to talk about their own passion for travelling and photography.

"A short video is by definition limited in length, but you can still fit a lot of things into it," Joe says. "In fact, no matter how much time you have, you can never get everything you want into a movie. But as long as you keep the 'travelling backwards' concept in mind and understand that it's going to be seen by masses of people, that should give you enough guidelines. In my view it shouldn't be just beautiful scenery, but also have positive impact on the viewers."

Tommy points out that most smartphones now have applications and other programs with which you can edit and enhance photos and videos. "After that, it comes down to your own point of view.

"As far as sustainable tourism is concerned, I have direct experience," he says. "When I was a kid my mother asked what I wanted to do during the school break – take an extra course or go stay on a poultry farm and fruit orchard in Chanthaburi, which is what I chose.

"On my TV show I go to the destinations first to do some research before filming. I'm always really touched by the charm of local life."

Golf says he loves editing his travel videos. "I use special effects that are available through the apps you can download for your phone or computer," he says. "Before I travel, I plan everything in advance – how and where to make the video – and I take my GoPro and Canon cameras everywhere. GoPro is great for shooting underwater and big scenes

like Times Square in New York."

Pango says she picked up her interest in photography from her father. "I travelled all over with him for a few weeks and he shot 30 or 40 rolls of film. Then I got my own camera and took a photography course.

"There are all sorts of online channels where you can share your pictures, which makes the hobby a lot more enjoyable. And taking photographs in different places at different times gives you different feelings. The music video for my song 'Khojorn' was based on my travelling."

The judging will be based on three "i's" – inspired, in trend and impact. The videos should show what inspires people at a particular place and inspire other people to go, be made with in-trend equipment and techniques, and, hopefully, have an impact on the folks watching, as well as the folks being watched.

GIVE IT A TRY

■ Video submissions must be emailed with a completed application form to tstaawards2016@gmail.com so they can be uploaded to "Dasta Channel Thailand" on YouTube before Friday.

■ The judges will then choose six finalists to undergo production training at a workshop in Sukhothai run by experts from Phenomena and VSCO Cam Thailand. They'll get to create polished final submissions from that session.