

TRAVEL TITBITS ■ KARNJANA KARNJANATAWE

PHOTO: CHULALONGKORN UNIVERSITY

Urban agriculture centre opens

Chulalongkorn University has invested about 5.6 million baht to turn the 1 rai rooftop space of the seven-storey Siam Square One shopping mall into an urban agriculture learning centre.

Called "Siam Green Sky", the garden is the pilot green project of the university, which aims to take advantage of space in and outside of buildings to create green zones, according to Assoc Prof Dr Permyot Kosolbhand, vice-president of the Property Management Office of Chulalongkorn University.

The rooftop garden is not only an outdoor classroom and a relaxed corner for city people, but it can also help reduce the temperature about 3-4C inside the building, he added.

The garden is expected to help reduce an electricity bill up to 2,000 baht per year, per square metre.

"We will expand the green project to cover a total of 28 rai of space in and outside buildings belonging to the university in the future," he said. Siam Green Sky is segmented into three zones. First is an innovative area consisting of a solar cell system for farming, a demonstration room showing how to produce fertiliser from organic waste and gardening plots for growing herbal, decorative plants and rice.

The second zone shows plants from many countries while the last zone is an easy-care garden for those who do not have much time, but want to plant vegetables.

There will also be an exhibition to show works of popular Thai artists. Workshops will be held on Saturdays on how to grow hydroponic vegetables, grow rice in a garden and vertical gardens for those who live in a condominium.

Siam Green Sky.

A green market will soon be opened. Siam Green Sky will be officially opened on May 22 and only open for advance booking, which can be done today, but not for walk-in visitors. One-hour tours are available on Wednesdays and Saturdays. Choices of visiting times are at 10.30am, 2.30pm and 4.30pm. There is no entrance fee.

For booking, call Siam Green Sky at 099-001-8514, email siamgreensky@gmail.com or visit its Facebook Fanpage at www.facebook.com/siamgreensky.

Visitor numbers rise

The Airports of Thailand expects the total passengers at Don Mueang International Airport will reach 27.6 million, up 31.8%, in the year 2015.

According to Don Mueang general manager Songsak Tongtang, the airport will soon open Terminal 2 to serve the increasing demand. Don Mueang will have a capacity to handle about 30 million passengers.

There are 15 commercial airlines linking passengers to 24 provinces in Thailand and 33 cities in 14 countries. More airlines will launch their services at Don Mueang this year including NokScoot Airlines, the long-haul and low cost airline of Nok Air, and Singapore's Scoot, and Maldivian of the Maldives.

Meanwhile, Suvarnabhumi International Airport has been voted 47th in the World's Top 100 Airports in 2015 by Skytrax's Passengers Choice Awards.

The airport has shot up one position from 48th last year.

The top five World Best Airports are

Singapore Changi, followed by Seoul Incheon, Munich, Hong Kong and Tokyo Haneda airports.

Suvarnabhumi Airport ranked fifth in World's Best Airports with a capacity to serve 40-50 million passengers a year. The best in this category is Seoul Incheon, followed by Kuala Lumpur, Madrid and San Francisco airports.

Visit www.worldairportawards.com for more details.

Marketing Pattaya to Thais

Pattaya City Hall has launched the "Happiness in Pattaya for 365 days" campaign to offer special packages for Thais.

The aim is to attract Thais to revisit Pattaya all year round, said Pattaya Mayor Itthiphol Kunplome.

Pattaya City joined hands with the Tourism Authority of Thailand, Visa International and Thai Hotel Associations in the Eastern Region and local service providers to offer Thai Visa card holders special privileges when booking a room from the participating 42 hotels. Room rates start at 999 baht, 1,499 baht and 2,499 baht a night depending on types of hotels and rooms.

In addition, those Visa card holders can get up to 50% on discounts when purchasing entrance tickets at many well-known attractions in Pattaya.

This 10-month campaign will last until the end of December.

"We expect the campaign will generate at least 2 billion baht for Pattaya," he added.

For more details, call Pattaya Call Centre at 1337 or visit www.pattaya.go.th.

Airline updates

• Scoot, the Singapore-based low cost, long-haul airline, has announced plans to increase flights between Singapore and Bangkok in July.

• The airline flies daily to Don Mueang Airport in the evening. It will add three morning flights a week at 8.25am on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday. The service will be started on July 8. For Monday, Thursday and Saturday, the airline will depart from Bangkok at 3.30am. The service will begin on July 9.

• The airline plans to operate the new services with Scoot's Boeing 787 Dreamliner, which offers in-flight Wi-Fi service and in-seat power station for each passenger.

• Visit FlyScoot.com or Facebook.com/FlyScoot for more details.

Hotel updates

• The Minor Hotel Group has opened Banana Island Resort Doha by Anantara in Qatar. The resort offers 141 guest rooms, suites and water villas, restaurants, a 100m lagoon pool, a female-only hydro pool, spa, an entertainment centre, a diving centre, two lane surf pool, clubs for kids and teenagers and a private marina with 30 boats.

• The hotel is a 20 minute ferry ride from Al Shuyoukh Terminal located in the city's downtown area or a 10-minute helicopter ride directly from the Hamad International Airport in Doha.

• Visit doha.anantara.com for more.

• Email karnjanak@bangkokpost.co.th if you have any comments to share.