



## THE PENINSULA BANGKOK: REFINED ELEGANCE AT A PRIME LOCATION

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HOTELS & SPAS

0 COMMENTS

When I learned about the Kadoorie brothers during a Jewish tour of Shanghai, I added a stay at a Peninsula Hotel to my bucket travel list. These hotels are known worldwide for their superb white glove service and dazzling structures. They can be found in Hong Kong, Shanghai, Beijing, Tokyo, New York City, Beverly Hills, Chicago, Paris, Bangkok, and Manila.

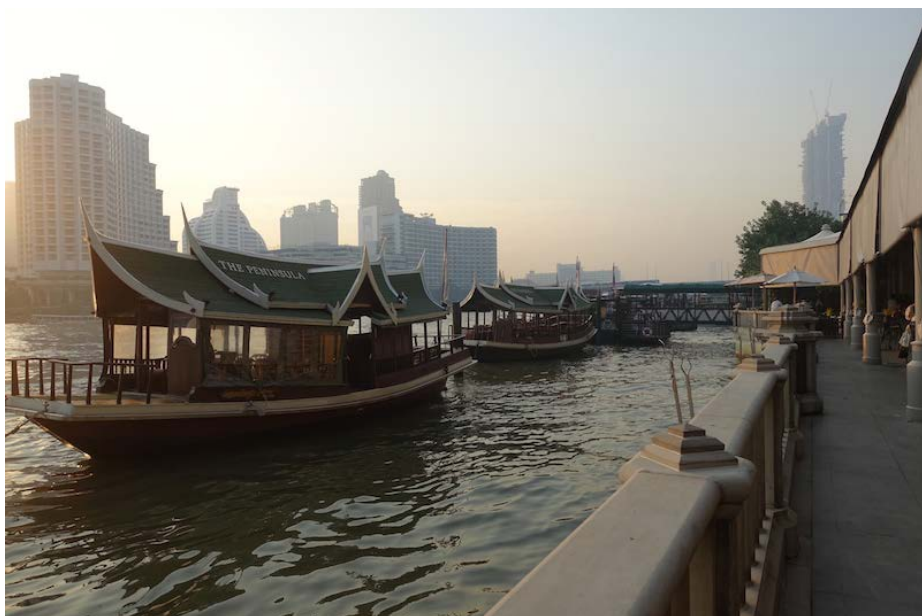
### The backstory

In the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Ellis and Elly Kadoorie became affluent entrepreneurs who invested in companies and hotels in Hong Kong and Shanghai. After acquiring great wealth, they set up philanthropic agencies in Asia, the Middle East and other places around the world.

After World War II, the Kadoorie family helped Shanghai's Jewish

refugees find safe passage through Hong Kong. They sheltered these individuals temporarily in The Peninsula Hotel Hong Kong (which first opened in 1928) before repatriation to other countries. The family also expanded their post-war philanthropic work to assist vulnerable people in other locations.

My first Peninsula Hotel experience was booked through [Celebrity Cruises](#) as part of a multi-day shore excursion package during an [immersion cruise](#) that stopped in Laem Chabang, [Thailand](#) as well as Hong Kong, Vietnam, Thailand, and Singapore.



*Peninsula Bangkok river boats*

## Understated elegance at The Peninsula Bangkok

*Our elegant room resembled a small urban apartment, detailed with vaulted ceilings and trimmed with cove molding.*

The wood planked floor in the entryway led to the main room designed in a neoclassic tradition. Three sets of oversized windows encased in wooden paneling provided panoramic views of the Chao Phraya River and the surrounding area.

This spacious room, decorated in earth tones, included a comfortable two-

cushioned upholstered sofa, a full-sized desk and chair, and a king-sized bed. Down the interior hallway were: a small bar with a tea set; an alcove that included a cushioned daybed area above a set of drawers; a closet; and a black and cream-colored marble bathroom with two vanities, a toilet, deep tub, and walk-in shower.

Due to the hotel's configuration, guestroom windows offer awesome city views.



*Panoramic view from our room in the Peninsula Bangkok*

## **Delectable multicultural cuisine**

Our full-day touring schedule called for an early start. This allowed us to catch the sun rising across the river as we selected items at the bountiful buffet in the hotel's River Café & Terrace.

The exquisite surroundings matched the impressive selection of Thai and

continental foods displayed in multiple rooms. Standard homemade breakfast items were complemented with a wide array of lunchtime entrees prepared at cooking stations overseen by a team of multinational chefs.

The Asian station offered three types of buns and dumplings, three vegetarian entrees and three noodle dishes. The wait staff quickly removed empty plates and kept the coffee topped off.



*Breakfast station with hot entrees at Peninsula Bangkok*

*Best of all, we and other guests could savor every morsel of our breakfasts while watching the boats zip back and forth on the river, or gaze at the serene garden nearby.*

Our tour package also included a Thai lunch with a set menu, served on traditional blue and white china in the multistory, Thai-inspired lobby facing the riverfront. The first course was *tom kha gai*, a citrus-flavored coconut chicken soup with *galangal* (a root in the ginger family). The kitchen accommodated my request for a vegetarian version.





*Phad Thai Goong lunch entree at Peninsula Bangkok*

For the main course, I indulged in a generous portion of *Phad Thai Goong*, a stir-fried dish with Thai rice noodles, prawns, tofu, and bean sprouts. The meal was concluded with a *Pol La Mai Ruam*, an assortment of freshly-sliced exotic fruits with coffee and tea.



*Exotic fruits in the Lobby Dining Room of the Peninsula Bangkok*

Had we not been relegated to a tight schedule, we would have reserved a

table at Mei Jiang, a Cantonese restaurant in the hotel, where we could taste Executive Chef Ball Yau's masterpieces. The *Michelin Guide* recommends the dim sum and the health set menu.

## Places to relax and unwind

Indigenous trees, plants and flowers grace the garden surrounding a long, narrow, multi-level outdoor pool that almost reaches to the riverfront railing. Individuals seeking a healthy lifestyle can visit the hotel's 19,000-square foot fitness center and a full-service spa that offers European, Oriental and Ayurvedic treatments.

*If I ever return, I would certainly start my day at the fitness center and indulge in a spa treatment.*



*Poolside at the Bangkok Peninsula*

## A prime location

*In a city known for excessive traffic, it's essential to select a hotel with a convenient location. In Bangkok, that is synonymous with access to the river transportation system.*

The Peninsula Bangkok sits beside the Chao Phraya River, close to the Sathorn Bridge. This location makes it easy for business travelers as well

as tourists to visit some of the city's main attractions: The Grand Palace; Wat Arun, the Temple of Dawn; Wat Pho, the Reclining Buddha; and the Royal Barges Museum.



*Evening View of Chao Phraya River*

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## What's appealing to the over-50 luxury traveler?

- The well-trained, multilingual staff and concierge are extremely responsive to guest requests.
- The property is conveniently located on the western side of the Chao Phraya River, a short boat ride away from the main historical sites and shopping.
- In-room technology controls the multi-layered window coverings, sophisticated lighting system, and electronics.
- A fruit basket with Asian fruits and a pamphlet describing exotic ones are delivered daily.
- The Peninsula Academy offers historical, cultural, and lifestyle programs for adults and children that can enhance sophisticated travelers' experiences.

## Take note

- Guests are asked to abide by the hotel's dress code, which discourages the wearing of flip-flops, slippers, beach sandals, sport shorts, sleeveless T-shirts, and bathrobes in all restaurants.
- Bangkok has three seasons. Hot season runs from March to June. Rainy season is usually between July and October. The coolest temperatures (88 to 90 degrees Fahrenheit) are from November to February. Travelers should anticipate excessive levels of humidity from April to October. The Peninsula offers special deals during the low season.
- Guests who cannot handle hot, humid climates should avoid visiting between April and October.
- The hotel provides unlimited complimentary international phone calls via high-speed internet access and Voice over Internet Protocols.
- Luxury has no boundaries: Transportation options include Rolls Royce cars, BMW Series 7 vehicles, helicopter rides from the roof, and The Peninsula boat.
- Guests interested in experiencing other cultures should make a reservation during Loy Krathong (Festival of Lights). This celebration happens during the full moon of the twelfth lunar month.

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### Disclosure:

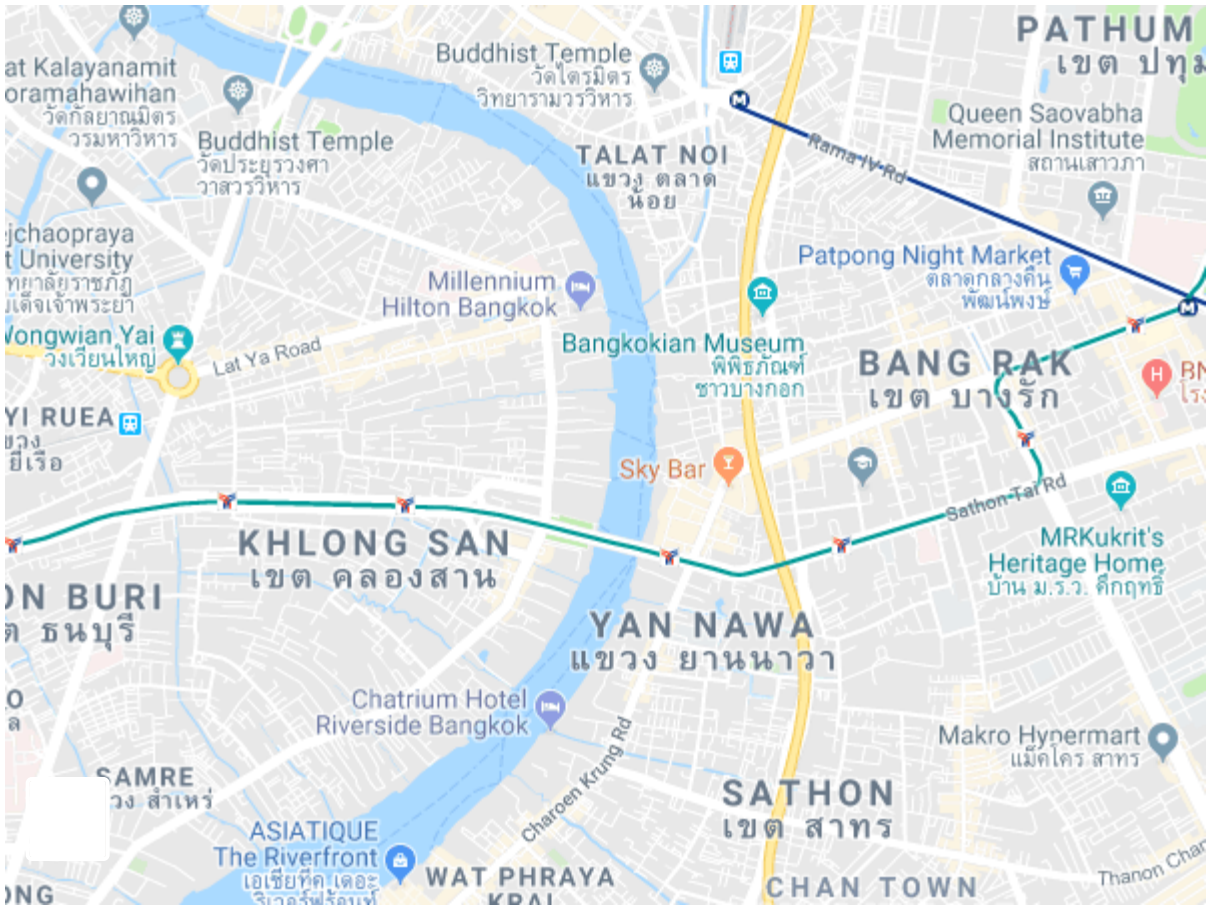
The authors received a media discount for their shore excursion package.

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## IF YOU GO

- [The Bangkok Peninsula Hotel](#)
- [Celebrity Cruises](#)
- [Dvir Bar-Gal's Half-Day Tour of Jewish Shanghai](#)





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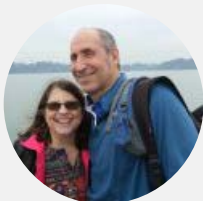
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## **SANDY & IRA BORNSTEIN**

Sandy and Ira split their time between skiing and trekking in the Colorado Rockies and traveling. They have visited more than 40 countries. Sandy lived as an international teacher in India and wrote an award-winning book, "May This Be the Best Year of Your Life," as a resource for people contemplating an expat lifestyle and living outside their comfort zone. Their travel stories focus on active midlife and intergenerational adventures, food, historical places, and Jewish cultural sites. Ira assists with photos and edits Sandy's stories before publication.