



## My Thai Life

### Description

This "travel guide" is a cultural blog about Thailand. This is Chapter 1. You should always know something about the captain before boarding the ship. So let me introduce myself.

### Press Ganged (Married) Into Thai Culture

I never gave the country of Thailand a second thought until I was 42. Then one day, I was introduced to my soon-to-be Thai wife Waranya and my American life took an unanticipated path.

That was well over twenty years ago. Twenty-four as of this writing to be exact.

What I didn't quite understand at first was the simple fact that if you marry a Thai woman, you also marry her family. My wife has 9 brothers and sisters, along with a confusing assortment of aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews and cousins. That's a whole lot of Thai in-laws. Some live in the U.S.; some in Sweden, and many all over Thailand.

My wife also came with a 14-year old son. So my White American bachelor life came to an abrupt end when we were married in a Buddhist wedding ceremony in a Thai Buddhist wat.

I have one older brother who I rarely see and my mother lived in Florida while I lived on the West Coast. (She passed away a few years ago.) So my wife Waranya, her son and relatives are really the only family I have.

### Swimming in a Sea of Green Curry



*My wife Waranya and I getting married in a Thai Buddhist ceremony. Little did I understand then how*

Mexicans have a wonderful phrase: *“Una mosca en la leche”*. A fly in the milk. They use it to describe themselves living in White culture in the U.S.

I think of myself as *“swimming in a sea of green curry”* to describe my life as a White American living within Thai culture, whether in Thailand or the U.S.

Since my marriage to Waranya, I have breathed Thai culture 24/7 regardless of whether I’m in our home in Thailand or Los Angeles . Thai is commonly spoken at home. I eat more Thai food (northern Thai food) than farang food. Thai etiquette rules daily life-Don’t point with your feet! And while I’m not

religious, I do often accompany my wife and Thai family to Buddhist ceremonies either in Thailand or the U.S.

At our Buddhist wedding (I didn't understand a word of what was being chanted during the ceremony because I don't speak Sanskrit.), inside an ornate wat with 9 monks chanting, my mother's eyes were big as saucers. I'm sure she had hopes that I'd marry a White, docile mid-western girl. But at the age of 44, she was probably just relieved I was getting married.

And so I dived head-first into a sea of Thai green curry. Sink or swim. I swam.

## A Rural Thai Life

My wife was born and raised in Lamphun Province. It's about 40 kilometers from Chiang Mai in Northern Thailand in what was once the Lanna Kingdom. We live in the old family home built of teak and laterite.

Yes, I've been to Bangkok countless times (probably at least 60-70 times over the years), but what I know best is rural Thailand, especially the north and Isaan (northeastern Thailand). I know the people, the food, the traditions, the Buddhism and moral values of rural Thais. (You may be interested in my post: [Thai People: A Deep Psychological Profile](#))

## House of Thailand, LLC

Waranya and I started a Thai import business called House of Thailand years ago. (I'm now retired.) We primarily sold Thai pillows and traditional Siamese apparel such as fisherman pants, pantaloons, harem pants and sarongs.



## Modern Thai Pillow Making

ANCIENT FABRICS



MUDMEE

SILK

JOMTONG

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*Here's some of the Thai pillows our business made. Fabrics are the key to making great Thai pillows*

Our business made me an expert of Thai pillows and especially Thai fabrics. Our Thai pillows were made in rural Esaan and the Pillow Makers became close friends of my wife and I. I worked alongside Thais and learned their habits and ethics.

Year after year, I would travel the lonely roads of rural Thailand searching for silk and cotton fabrics to make pillows and apparel. I watched countless weavers producing incredibly sophisticated fabrics on their old wooden looms. Slowly, but surely, I became an expert about Thai fabrics, especially Thai silk. (See my blog posts: [A Vagabond to Essan](#) and [Confessions of an International Thai Pillow Dealer](#))

## Keep the Porch Light Burning

Time flows by like water through a broken dam.

I'm in my sixties now and have never felt better. My marriage to Waranya has only grown stronger as the years pass by. That's better than any jackpot Las Vegas could ever offer. I couldn't image life without her.

My bonds to Thailand have also grown deeper. I understand Thai people infinitely better than I did just 10 years ago. I hope to say the same thing 10 years from now.

My blog is merely an attempt to share some of my knowledge with those who wish to delve deeper into Thailand than just cavorting with bar girls or visiting a posh beach resort in the south.

Waranya and I always keep the porch light lit when we're at home in Pasang. Rural Thailand gets inky dark at night.

My blog is your "porch light" to Thailand. I'll keep it burning. Enjoy.

### Category

1. Thai Culture Wars
2. The Siamese Puzzle Box

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