



# thai honeymoon

*When we were considering a tropical destination to celebrate our marriage, Thailand with its culture and beauty stood out from the crowd, writes Bride to Be's Natasha Shaw*

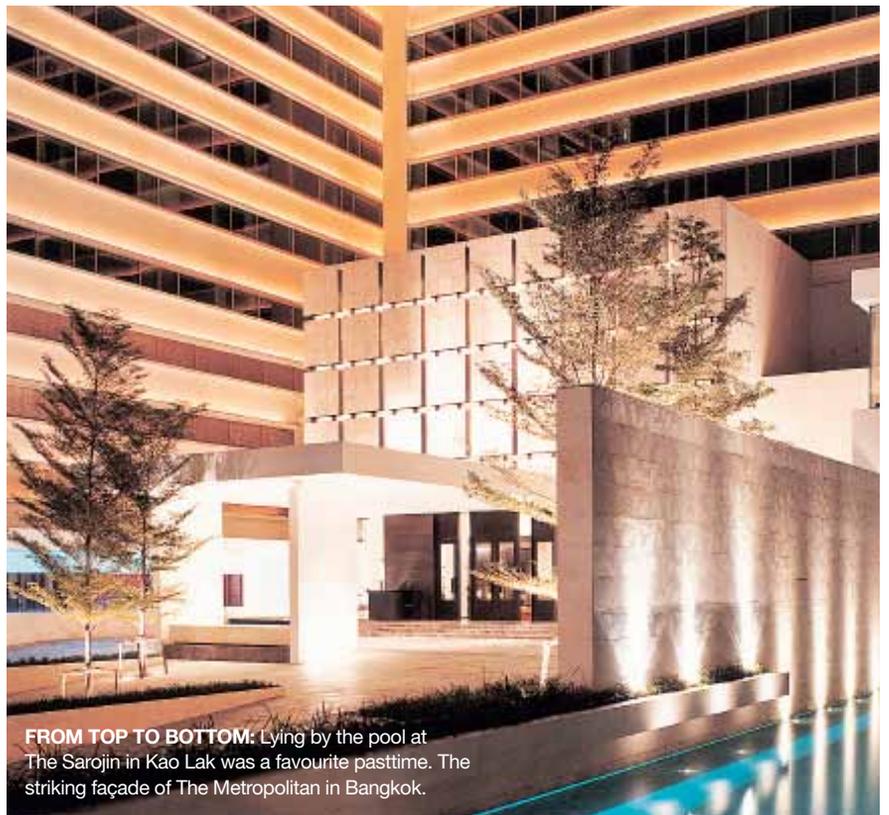
Bangkok was bustling as we arrived late in the afternoon, following a 24-hour flight. My new husband Murray and I decided to take a limo to our hotel in Sathorn. It was our honeymoon after all and, realistically, it was cheaper than a cab.

An hour and a half later (you've got to love peak hour in Bangkok) we arrived at the stunning white Metropolitan hotel ([metropolitan.bangkok.com.bz](http://metropolitan.bangkok.com.bz)). Inside, the décor was a combination of inviting neutrals and fresh orchids. No wonder stars, such as Mariah Carey and Kylie Minogue, stay here. We were shown to our room where, after our long flight, it was a pleasure to shower in the enormous bathroom and fall asleep in our king size bed.

The following day we concentrated on shopping, which honestly isn't hard to do in a city like Bangkok. The nearby MBK Centre was like five Westfields piled on top of each other with a market atmosphere. We left hours later, via a hair-raising tuk-tuk ride, with arms laden with clothing and handbags.

During our stay we were treated to a massage at the hotel. Slathered in aromatic oils of our choosing, we were so relaxed Murray fell asleep for 20 minutes, much to his embarrassment! We floated back to our room to change for dinner in the hotel's then not-quite-yet opened Nahm restaurant. We were happy to be guinea pigs as award-winning chef David Thompson and his team served dish after dish of the most extraordinary Thai food we have ever tasted.

Bangkok 



**FROM TOP TO BOTTOM:** Lying by the pool at The Sarojin in Kao Lak was a favourite pasttime. The striking façade of The Metropolitan in Bangkok.

Flying from Bangkok to Koh Samui on Bangkok Airways ([bangkokair.com](http://bangkokair.com)) was quite pleasant, despite the fact I'm not particularly a fan of small planes. I had my face plastered to the window admiring the view until we arrived 40 minutes later at an airport consisting of open huts. Here, a resort driver picked us up and took us to the Sareeraya resort ([sareeraya.com](http://sareeraya.com)), where we were shown to our lovely villa, complete with plunge pool.

Literally a hop and a skip to busy Chaweng Beach, we went for a walk and saw tourists aplenty indulging in beachfront massages every 100m or so along the sand (later, we were two of them!), buying sarongs and jewellery from the many hawkers, and swimming in the cool water. Further down the beach was a series of hut bars, spilling over with thirsty customers. That evening we relaxed and enjoyed our surroundings, as well as a yummy massage that began on a platform near the pool, but was moved to our villa when it began raining heavily. Despite the relocation, it was toe-curling.

The next day I left Murray by the pool while I strolled for about 5km, poring over items in market stalls and shops, and buying up a kaftan, two dresses and a pair of shoes. Ahhh retail therapy! Murray later joined me for 'fish therapy' at one of the shops. You literally put your legs into a tank filled with hundreds of little fish that nibble away at dead skin cells. It tickles a bit, but you walk away with the silkiest skin. Back at our resort, we were a little disappointed when our romantic beach dinner was moved to the restaurant as it was bucketing again! But it was still a memorable final evening in Koh Samui.

*Koh Samui* 



The Sareeraya resort is right on Chaweng beach in Koh Samui. Note the massage pavilion in the background where you can delight in massages while overlooking the water.

*Khao Lak* 



**FROM TOP TO BOTTOM:** Mmmm, a massage at The Sarojin's Pathways spa is simply unforgettable. Indulge in the secluded, open-air therapies and couple's baths...

Another Bangkok Airways flight and we found ourselves at Phuket International Airport where a driver from our resort was waiting to take us to Khao Lak, a town on the coast about an hour and a half north of Phuket. We loved The Sarojin ([sarojin.com](http://sarojin.com)) – The GM Leisa Kenny, an Aussie, and Paul Counihan, the head of sales, and the rest of the staff were just so charming. It was literally like being at Disneyland, 'the happiest place on earth'. We were even welcomed to our room by a beautiful display of flowers on our bed spelling 'Happy honeymoon'. Speaking of the rooms, they were as big as an apartment and the bathroom was stunning – a free-standing egg bath on pebbles and a no-door shower that drained into the pebbles. We were even spoiled by a tub on our balcony.

During our visit, we were taken on a full-day tour with a guide from The Sarojin – it began with a drive to temples and a rubber tree farm. Next we boarded pleat boats for a ride through the mangroves, followed by a delicious Sarojin lunch on the riverbank. After our meal we were driven to memorials of the 2004 tsunami, which were incredibly moving, and finally, we went on an adventurous elephant ride through the jungle – an amazing day we'll never forget!

At the resort, we couldn't get enough of the food – with two restaurants and talented chefs that are more than pleased to recommend dishes from their extensive menu, we ate ourselves into a state of bliss. All too soon it was time to leave. A parting befitting the 'happiest place on earth', about 15 staff all lined up and continuously waved goodbye until our car rolled out of the gates...