

maid of Copenhagen," is preferred. Shoes are similarly scorned and must be removed on entering most homes and all temples. When removed, they must be stored in low places.

Thai people like to please others and will always avoid unnecessary arguing or discord. Consequently, if a sincere reply is sought, it is best to avoid leading questions such as "Don't you agree . . ." or otherwise seeking confirmation of one's views because the Thais will always oblige with a positive reply which may be mistaken for agreement.

Dividing a restaurant or taxi bill, what Canadians call "Dutch Treat," is considered unsophisticated. The Thais call this behaviour "American share" and seldom practise it. When receiving gifts, it is not necessary to open them immediately, as this would appear greedy.

One should try to keep one's head at a lower level than the heads of one's social superiors when approaching them closely. While this is often difficult, as the height of the average Canadian exceeds that of the average Thai, towering unnecessarily over senior or elderly people should be avoided.

The handshake is accepted in business circles as a concession to Westerners, but should not be practised excessively. Thais generally prefer the "wai" gesture of greeting, that is, bringing both hands together in the prayer position. In general, the younger and more junior person "wai's" the older, more senior person who then returns the "wai."

In Thai, the prefix "Khun" is used to show respect. "Khun" denotes "person" but indicates neither sex nor marital status. It is the English equivalent of "Mr., Mrs., Miss or Ms." In day-to-day contact, Thais are usually referred to by their first names, which can be used formally. Thus, Mrs. Pichitra Ratanaphanikorn would be referred to as Khun Pichitra, saving the visitor the often difficult task of coping with Thai last names. It is important to keep track of Thai family names as extensive family connections in Thai business circles are not evident when using only first names. Note, however, that the full name should be used in addressing letters.

General Information

Climate. The climate is monsoon-tropical, with slight variations from north to south. There are three identifiable seasons: the cool and dry, from November to