



Café Considerations for a Wandering Workforce

Digital nomads love Thailand, even if Thai immigration doesn't always love them

By Micaela Marini Higgs

With the amount of co-working spaces sprouting up across Bangkok it's easy for **Digital Nomads**—those clever individuals who leverage technology in order to work remotely and live an independent and nomadic lifestyle—to buy a monthly membership and settle in. But working in the same place each day kind of defeats one of the greatest joys of being a digital nomad. However, even though there seems to be new cafes opening in Bangkok each day, almost all tempting passers by with free Wi-Fi, finding a great place to actually work is deceptively difficult.

With this in mind we've collected some of the best places where you can spend a few hours without having to listen to bad cover music, or risk people sticking their elbows in your face as they try to take the 50th photo of their latte. We've taken into account the boring practical stuff like decent internet, electrical outlets, and relative proximity to the BTS, and narrowed that list to include the kinds of places where the staff—and seats—make it comfortable to hang out and get some work done.

EASE CAFE & CO-WORKING SPACE

Hidden down a dead-end soi, **Ease Cafe & Co-Working Space** (Soi Chua Chit) is just a five-minute walk from the Ari BTS station, and a stone's throw from all the action. Easily accessible and close enough to the neighbourhood's street food, shophouses, and restaurants that you can quickly slip away for lunch, the café sits far enough away from the main street that the noise level rarely rises beyond a low murmur.



With complimentary water, fast internet, and extension cords everywhere, the café is designed with freelancers and students in mind. But unlike other co-working spaces, they don't charge an entry fee. With a standard range of drinks, we'd recommend their strong and nutty Americano (B70), milky Cappuccino (B80), or one of their sweeter staples, like the Ease Honey (B100), a mix of espresso, foamed milk, and a generous amount of honey, all served over ice. Open late and filled with a studious mix of foreigners and locals, it's easy to spend a whole day working in this bright and comfortable space. Open daily from 10am to 10pm.

ARAN BICICLETTA

Far removed from Ari's foot traffic, to get to **Aran Bicicletta** (Soi Phaholyothin 2) you have to wind your way past police housing and through residential streets. Your reward will be a quiet and cozy café with walls covered in bicycles, a large window looking out onto the road, and few distractions or disruptions. With only a handful of tables, if you visit during the week there's a good





chance you'll only see one or two other customers. Their coffee is more subtle than strong, making their Cappuccino (B60) and Americano (B55)

great options. With electrical outlets, great internet, and an eclectic mix of music, it's easy for the hours to fly by.

If you're feeling peckish, head through the glass doors in the back where you'll find a patio flanked by a small restaurant serving up Thai food to people on their lunch breaks. To satisfy your sweet tooth, the café also serves a small selection of homemade desserts and ice cream.

Open daily from 9am to 9pm.

IWANE GOES NATURE

If you're sick of spending all your time indoors, **Iwane Goes Nature** (14, Sukhumvit Soi 23) offers a large covered deck that includes electrical outlets and plenty of seating. Grab one of the sofas or tables and plug in. The internet is reliable and with shade and fans you can spend time in the outdoors without overheating. And since most customers prefer the air-conditioned interior of the café, you'll often have the deck to yourself.

With a full menu of salads, sandwiches, and desserts, it's easy to spend the whole day here, and the staff doesn't seem to mind how long you hang around. It's also open late into the evening, so you can head here when the city's other cafés have closed but your workday hasn't finished. The atmosphere outweighs the coffee, which isn't terrible but is definitely not up to snob standards.



Drinks like their cold Americano (B70) and Cappuccino (B80) are typically accompanied by bite-sized pieces of brownie or other treats from their bakery, and the menu includes real fruit Smoothies (B100) along with a variety of teas and milkshakes.

Open daily from 7:30am to midnight.

HOLEY ARTISAN BAKERY

Besides selling some of the best fresh bread in Bangkok, **Holey Artisan Bakery** (245/12, Sukhumvit Soi 31) is one of those seemingly rare cafes where you can order—and actually receive—a Cappuccino (B100) that arrives topped



with a generous amount of foamed milk. With power outlets next to many of their tables, reliable internet, muted music, and a tempting array of pastries to treat yourself with once you've met your deadline, this is one of the city's most comfortable cafés to work from.

Since the few tables on the ground floor are usually occupied by families with children, or friends catching up, order a drink at the counter and head upstairs. The coffee here is as good as the fresh-baked bread, so if you're not in the mood for a cappuccino, try a slightly bitter Espresso (B80) or strongly brewed Drip Coffee (B80). With floor-to-ceiling windows the 2nd floor is spacious and rarely busy—popular among people who

want room to spread out and work in peace. Because of their range of sandwiches and vegetarian options, with prices ranging from B200 to B350, it's also a great place to meet collaborators for informal meetings.

Open weekdays from 7am to 5pm, and Saturday to Sunday from 7am to 7pm.

TRIPLE THE COFFEE HOUSE

In a renovated house that sits down a quiet soi directly between Ekkamai and Thong Lor, **Triple The Coffee House** (41, Sukhumvit Soi 59) offers a cozy industrial space removed from the bustle of Sukhumvit. With a serious focus on coffee, they brew using blends from Thai roaster **Pacamara**, focussing on medium and light roasts. You can



surrounded by shrubbery, making this an easy spot to spend a few hours away from the rest of Bangkok. If you get hungry, the menu offers a wide selection of breakfast staples, freshly baked breads, sandwiches, pizzas, and seafood, with prices for meals ranging from B130 to B450.

Open Tuesday to Saturday from 8am to 8pm, and Sunday from 9am to 8pm.



pick which single-origin bean to have as a Drip Coffee (B110), and we enjoyed the light and citric Honduran brew. A 100 percent Arabica coffee is always used for their espresso offerings, giving their Espresso Shot (B95) a buttery and tangy finish. If you don't like your coffee black, try the rich Piccolo Latte (B90) for a pleasantly caffeinated buzz.

With a steady stream of people popping in for a quick coffee throughout the day, it's easy to score one of the handful of tables with access to an outlet. There's comfortable seats, plenty of natural light, and a patio



THE BOX

The Thailand Creative & Design Center (TCDC) found a new home in the old Grand Postal Office building earlier this year, offering one of the city's best co-working spaces with the cheapest annual memberships (B1,200). With bright lighting, subdued classical music, large tables, and an electrical outlet available at every turn, this space has quickly become popular among students as well as freelancers, many of whom can be seen nursing a drink from **The Box** (5F, TCDC, 1160 Charoen Krung Rd).

Located on the 5th floor, beside the library entrance, this café offers a variety of cheap drinks—nothing costs more than B75—of which we'd recommend their sweet and silky Matcha Latte (B65) or the milky Cappuccino (B60). With a cluster of sofas and tables located in front of the cafe, there's plenty of space for you to set up for free if you decide not to pay for entrance into the library. If you do pony up for membership, or the daily fee (B100), carry your drink into the spacious work areas and during your breaks browse the wide selection of international magazines and books for inspiration.

Open Tuesday to Sunday from 10:30am to 9pm. ■

