**Beat: Lifestyle**

# Can You Afford to Retire?

**Where will you live after you retire?**

Bangkok, 24.09.2014, 11:49 Time

**USPA NEWS -** Paradise in retirement. Can you afford it? When the time comes to end your working life, you may not have the opportunity to live where you want. Income may influence where you spend your retiring years. Why struggle in the cold weather? Look east and you just might live the dream.

More and more people approaching retirement age are becoming acutely aware of the current global recession, lack of consistent revenue from investments and high inflation, all of which are making the prospect of being financially secure in old age increasingly difficult for many of us. The average retirement account balance of people in the U.S. households near retirement is very low, and many people will be dependent on Social Security benefits or will struggle on low incomes.

There is a way to reduce your cost of living and secure a better lifestyle by retiring to a lower cost country. U.S. dollars will go much further in Southeast Asia and South America than in the U.S. Thailand is a great example of a country many people contemplate as a retirement spot. Although, still considered a developing county by many while others see it as a golden opportunity to live out their lives as Thailand strives to continue it's development and be at the forefront of Asia.

Here are ten reasons to consider retirement in Thailand:

### 1. Cost of Living

Generally, the cost of living in Thailand is more affordable than in the U.S. You can buy a comfortable one bedroom condominium in the outer areas of Bangkok area for around $40,000 to $50,000 or rent one for about $400 to $500 per month. The costs of elecricity and water are much lower in the U.S. and with careful AC use can be as low as $30 to $40 a month with extra ancilliary taxes or costs negligible or non-existent, especially when renting. Even the cost of reasonably fast internet at home either by a shared WiFi or dedicated connection is cheap, and with 4G in Bangkok staying in touch with everyone back home is a breeze.

### 2. Daily Expenses and Transportation

All the necessities for a comfortable life are all more affordable here. Many expats can live a very comfortable lifestyle on $1,500 or less per month in Thailand. It is a great alternative to scraping by in the U.S. Travelling around Bangkok is safer than most American metropoles and inexpensive with a modern train transport system covering the main parts of the city starting from under $1.00 you will never need to drive a car again.

For the more adventurous taking a ride in a Tuk-Tuk, a 3 wheeled open sided motor-rickshaw, is an experience or riding on the back of one of the 100,000's of motorbike taxis will only enhance your stay in Bangkok. There are numerous clean and inexpensive AC taxis that will take you wherever you want to go with prices starting also from under $1.00. There are numerous activities to take part in from the amazing floating markets to the bright lights of the city.

### 3. Thai Food

Thai restaurants are a favorite meal for many of us. If you like Thai food, retiring in Thailand will be food heaven for you. There are 100's of different dishes that just aren´t available in the U.S. You can also take cooking classes for an affordable price to learn how to make these dishes or take a short walk from your condo to find fresh Thai food cooked at the side of road almost 24 hours a day.

Known locally as street food, this food is amazing Thai cuisine that can be found throughout the city with the average cost of a dish with rice starting from $1.00 you will spoilt for choice of food to eat and spend very little time in the tedious task of cooking on a day to

day basis. While the food is much spicier in Thailand, you can always ask the restaurants to make your food without chili peppers or choose food that is not spicy, the choice is yours.

**4. Foreign Foods**

Of course, we all like our comfort foods, so food from almost every country around the world is available in Bangkok and with 1000's of foreign owned Supermarkets throughout Bangkok you will never be far from your favorite foods. The good thing about Thailand is the availability of cheese, wine and peanut butter. The huge diversity of restaurants available from Japanese sushi, Indian curry, Korean BBQ, Mexican tortilla to pizza and pub foods are here in abundance if you ever need a taste of home. Foreign restaurants are more expensive than local places, but it can be a great comfort for expats.

**5. Warmer Climate and Exotic Setting**

There are many scenic beaches in Thailand, and the weather is tropical. It is never cold in Bangkok, day or night with average temperatures in Bangkok regularly staying above 30°C (86 ºF) throughout the year. If you are tired of dealing with snow and ice, then an umbrella drink in Phuket might be a good fit for you. Don't be discouraged by the temperatures, although it takes a little time to get used to the humidity, you will adjust, but that´s what the AC is for.

**6. Other Foreigners and the Expat Community**

Thailand had over 24.5 million foreign visitors in 2013, up from the previous year of 22 million. If you stick to the well worn paths, you will be able to meet many expats and tourists. There are many businesses that cater to foreigners including restaurants and grocery stores. There are many expat forums on the internet written in English to keep up to date with the current news or activities as well as many social clubs meeting regularly for movie or meal nights or just for socializing.

While exact numbers of expats living in Thailand are not published by the authorities, it is believed that approx 25,000 Americans and 75,000 Europeans are currently living in Thailand full time with most of those living in big cities like Bangkok or Chiang Mai in the slightly cooler area in the north of Thailand. Whether you prefer the bright lights of the city, the quiet of a beach town or a mountainous trekking area, Thailand could be the place for you.

**7. Thai hospitality - The land of Smiles**

Most local people in the big cities are used to foreigners, and don´t stare too much. Smiling back at the locals who are looking at you will result in a big genuine smile in return from the locals. The locals are very welcoming and friendly and once you get to know them they make you feel part of the family or local community. Make the effort to speak a little of the language by taking some Thai language lessons at the many schools or language centers and a whole world of kindness opens up to you.

**8. Shopping and Entertainment**

Where to start? It can be difficult to decide as the choices are endless. Head for areas with a local reputation for good shopping and great bargains. Try Chinatown, around Sampeng Lane; Pahurat Textile Market; Pratunam Market for ready to wear clothing. Hop on the Skytrain to Sukhumvit Road for antiques and handicraft shops. Siam area is abound with high-end shopping malls where sophisticated and funky clothes are available.

If you want to experience something a little more adventurous, make your way for the huge weekend market at Chatuchak on the outskirts of town. Bangkok has something for everyone to enjoy, be it when the sun is shining or long after it's gone down. Besides the fun bargaining at vibrant night markets and a delightful dinner cruise along the 'River of Kings', what could be better than spending time with your family at the city's finest cinemas, karaoke, and bowling alleys before calling it a night.

**9. Travel Headquarters**

Thailand is a great starting point for traveling to the rest of Asia. There are many discount flights to the surrounding countries. China, Japan and Vietnam are all fascinating and worth a visit. Living in Thailand for a couple years could give you an opportunity to thoroughly explore these foreign cultures. Not only can you visit the neighbors, Bangkok is the hub of travel inside of Thailand. From cheap mini-vans to huge executive coaches, trains or planes getting around is easy and they will take you to every corner of the nation.

**10. Retirement visa**

Retirement visas for Thailand are available to foreigners age 50 or older. These retirement visas are good for one year and can be renewed without leaving the country. If you can show proof of income (from a pension or other source) of about $2,100 per month or a bank account with at least $26,000, then you can apply for a retirement visa. Other types of visa are easily available from any Thai Embassy. Check out the Thai Embassy website for more details.

However, there are some downsides to retirement in Thailand. Medical care can be puzzling in Thailand, and foreigners will probably need international health insurance. The language barrier can also be difficult if you´re not open to learning something new. It's a good idea to take an extended visit before moving to be sure you can handle it. But if the culture agrees with you, retiring in a more affordable location like Thailand can significantly reduce your living costs.

**Article online:**
https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-2728/can-you-afford-to-retire.html

**Editorial office and responsibility:**
V.i.S.d.P. & Sect. 6 MDStV (German Interstate Media Services Agreement): Paul Rogers

**Exemption from liability:**
The publisher shall assume no liability for the accuracy or completeness of the published report and is merely providing space for the submission of and access to third-party content. Liability for the content of a report lies solely with the author of such report. Paul Rogers

**Editorial program service of General News Agency:**
UPA United Press Agency LTD
483 Green Lanes
UK, London N13NV 4BS
contact (at) unitedpressagency.com
Official Federal Reg. No. 7442619