



The Thailand Pavilion is constructed in Thai temple style.

PHOTOS BY GAO ERQIANG / CHINA DAILY

## Living in the Land of Smiles

Thailand's pavilion portrays the country as a modern, open society with a rich cultural heritage, **Tang Zhihao** reports.

**T**he exciting presentations in the Thailand Pavilion are brilliant enough to entice those thinking about exploring the country to go there and see for themselves.

The huge pavilion, which is constructed in traditional Thai temple style, has become one of the must-see attractions at Expo 2010 Shanghai. The popular pavilion is getting 40,000 visitors a day at peak times.

"We are excited to see our pavilion has been visited by a large number of visitors, a much larger number than we expected during the planning stage," said Kanda Vajrabhaya, the commissioner-general of the Thailand Pavilion. "I think it will set the benchmark for the next Expo that Thailand participates in."

Located in Zone B and adjacent to the Australia Pavilion, the structure attracts visitors' attention immediately with its tiered roof painted in red and gold, which is common in Thai temple design. All buildings in a Thai temple compound share a similar roof design.

Themed at "Thainess: Sustainable Ways of Life", the pavilion demonstrates the happy-go-lucky spirit of the Thai people, combined with the tolerant values modern Thailand has embraced.

At the front of the pavilion, visitors will be welcomed by statues of Indrajit from Thailand and Lan Tan from China. Indrajit is a mythological warrior said to be invincible, while Chinese traders to Thailand once carried images of Lan Tan, also a mythical guardian-warrior, on their travels.

"These two statues symbolize the close relationships between Chinese and Thai people," said Vajrabhaya.

A tour of the pavilion takes visitors about 15 to 20 minutes. The pavilion is divided into three exhibition halls: "Journey of Harmony", "Harmony of Different Tones" and "Harmony of Thais".

The three exhibitions are designed to take visitors on an exploration of the lifestyles of the Thai people and tell of Thailand's attitude towards modern society.

By applying technologies such as a 360 degree water curtain in the first exhibition space, life-like robots in the second exhibition space and a 4D movie in the third, visitors are guaranteed to leave the pavilion impressed.

"We had a lot of ideas before building this pavilion. We wanted something clear and to deliver simple messages. We did not want to make it too obscure for people because we were not sure of the outcome," said Vajrabhaya.



The pavilion's exhibits are designed to take visitors on a journey through Thai culture and lifestyles.

"Some people say it is a 3D film but I think it is 4D, because people can smell the Jasmine," said Vajrabhaya.

"You can see, hear and touch the different aspects in Thai people's daily life," said Xu Jiehui from Jilin province. "You feel you have been integrated into the film and become one of them that enjoys life."

To entertain those waiting outside the Thailand Pavilion, organizers have arranged four dance performances, which run daily between 11 am and 5 pm. The four performances represent the different cultures of the four regions of Thailand.