

Next Gen GM

**NEW JOB,
NEW LIFE,
NEW WORLD**



Having accepted a role in Bangkok last October 2019, my family and I have settled into our new life nicely.

The kids are at school and my wife has landed herself a job at an international school. Finding your own school when you are paying the fees yourself is a very different experience to the expats whose company covers the fees on their behalf!

Beyond the school, I have found a cricket club and consequently established an expat network who have helped us to settle into Bangkok. One of their best pieces of advice was where to get good sausages, never underestimate how much you will miss a good English breakfast! They have also given us some “hidden gems” which have not been exposed to mass tourism so we are looking forward to exploring the beaches and islands in due course

Despite Thailand being the first country outside of China to record a case of Covid-19 the number of cases and deaths has not escalated like they have across Europe and the US.

Various reasons have been cited for this, including the virus dying quicker in hot weather and some of the older generation in the provinces saying the virus fears their cooking! The number of new cases here has been steady at about thirty per day for about a week now so maybe there is some truth to those theories!

I am just starting week 6 of working from home, having started off as a “one day stress test of our systems”.

It is safe to say I will be glad when things return to normal, particularly when the schools open again and my two- and three-year olds burn off their energy there, instead of running riot in our condo. My daughter’s school has said they are reopening on 1 June, so fingers crossed that happens.



Pretty much everyone wears face masks here, hand sanitizer is available everywhere and temperatures are checked upon entry to buildings.

That being said some of the temperature readings are not accurate, for example when entering the shopping centre our office is located in, my temperature for a week solid was between 29.4C and 30.6C...I think Toys R Us had a good week that week! Thankfully, my temperature has been within the normal range elsewhere.

On the work front things are beginning to quieten down having been hectic following the announcement of the emergency decree back in March.

We had some requests for employees to return home which we have tried to accommodate where possible, plus a more interesting case of a non-EEA national wanting to go to the UK to get married. Thankfully sense prevailed and that did not happen, for now anyway! We have been well looked after with our CEO hosting a live Q&A every week and being as honest as he can in his responses. They have allowed us to take work equipment home to make the adjustment as smooth as can be too.

The government has closed all parks, playgrounds, bars and restaurants, unless they provide take-away, the beaches in popular resorts to prevent gatherings and a curfew from 10PM to 4AM.

Whenever I walk around our condo all I see now is food delivery drivers! We are lucky that there are a lot of other kids in our condo who are of a similar age to ours. This has been great at tiring them out in the evenings but also provides some sanity for my wife who can speak to other mothers and not just having to put up with me all the time.



There has not been as much panic buying or stock piling here compared to the UK, although toilet paper was hard to get for a few days. I am struggling to understand the toilet paper one as everywhere has “bum guns” (this might not be the proper name, but it sounds cool) so you could do without if you had to. For those who are unsure what a “bum gun” is it’s a hose which is next to the toilet which you use to clean yourself instead of toilet paper, they also make good water pistols as my kids have discovered.

There was panic buying the other week after the governor of Bangkok announced a ban on the sale of alcohol for ten days, effective for about five hours after the announcement. Being stuck indoors with two kids I decided to take my chances and stock up. Shelves were stripped bare and as soon as more beer came out it was gone before the staff had a chance to put it on the shelves. Thankfully, I managed to get hold of enough Beer Lao to keep me going for a while. If you see a spike in Covid-19 cases in Bangkok in about a weeks’ time, then you know why!

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