

A DAY IN CHUMPHON (เก็บไว้อ่านคนเดียว)

นำเสนอเมื่อ : 6 ธ.ค. 2551

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A day in Thailand

Current mood: high

Category: [Travel and Places](#)

I wrote this on my other blog page, but I had so much fun writing it I thought I'd share it here as well...

I truly hope that an extra day's perspective can help me conjure the wonderful events of yesterday accurately and passionately enough so that I may do them proper justice. What started as an otherwise uneventful day here in Chumphon, continued along a similar track of familiarity, and ended not unlike many other days. However, oft unperceivable subtleties, when given proper credence, can turn ordinary into extraordinary.

The morning began early, I headed downstairs with the intention of making my way toward a motor bike dealership I had visited the day before. I was pretty anxious to get that purchase under my belt, it being the last of my big investments before life really starts here. I was greeted as I am every day by my landlady, a lovely woman, probably in her mid-thirties (though it's impossible to accurately guess Thai age. Young girls look old, middle age looks young, a decrepit man begging for change? Probably twelve). I told Tan the landlady I was going to buy a bike for 12,000 baht, a very reasonable \$300+ for a secondhand machine. She then, bless her, offered to take me to a couple bike shops to compare prices - perhaps, she thought, her being a native speaker would help me land a more favorable deal. My morning turned into a whirlwind tour of bike shops, chauffeured by the lovely Ms. Tan, laughing and speaking fairly decent english with each other. Turned out my initial find of 12,000 was the best deal, but she advised me not to rush into the decision. Something might turn up, she said. And it did. Today she's taking me to see bikes for 10,000 baht. A very benign early morning greeting transformed a series of events that would have had me out 2,000 baht and confidant-less.

After returning home from the drive, I sought shelter from an afternoon rainstorm in my room (of all places). I read and drank chinese tea as the rain fell - the solitude, I'm sure you'll infer, was not at all devoid of romantic significance for me. As the rain subsided, chapters and hours later, my legs were itching for a workout. I strapped on my ipod and my running shoes and merely stepped out the front of my door which, I should mention, leads directly into the Chumphon provincial stadium, equipped with a running track, fitness center furnished with machines circa 1932, a shaded park, street vendors, and a whole mess of soccer-playing, break-dancing, group-aerobic-doin Thais.

I had myself a fully exerted exercise, a perfect sweat. I ran for almost an hour, and boy were those endorphins flowing!

Here's where it gets good... I decided to forgo a shower so that I might parlay my endorphin buzz straight into my first ever Thai massage. That impulsive decision turned out to be the proverbial straw that broke the camels back, thrusting the day well into superstar status. I've had a few massages in my life, but none of the adjectives I'd use for those would ever touch the realm of the spiritual. I was completely worked over - meticulously contorted, methodically manipulated into positions I didn't think I was capable of achieving. Before the whole thing began, my little Buddhist masseuse washed my feet, laid me down, and proceeded to pray for a solid minute before she began practicing her craft on me. The truly spiritual element of the massage for me happened in the pressure she applied to various spots all over my body. On each of my limbs, feet and hands included, she pressed on about five spots, each of which triggered a reaction in the corresponding parts of my brain. Be it the release of neuro-toxins or just synapses firing away - it was an exercise that, while seemingly physical, drifted ever so casually yet intentionally into the emotional, the spiritual. Seemingly subtle touch engendered very a palpable metaphysical reaction, evidenced by the limbered states of both body and mind. After the full hour and a half, it was capped by a head, scalp and face massage, the very place I had imagined the bulk of the work done to me had been received. The whole thing felt, well, right. Perfectly landscaped, designed, and practiced over centuries to achieve a desirable effect on the mind and body. It was an experience I shall not soon forget, nor wish to keep singular.

And if that weren't enough, I brought a delicious dinner back to my room, took a shower, and watched the curtain fall on one truly amazing day. This sunset, unlike many others, was not subtle. It was not shy, in all its violence, in portraying both the ordinary and the extraordinary simultaneously. All I had to do was watch.