





EXPERIENCE REAL MUAY THAI,
ONE OF THE MOST UNIQUE MARTIAL ARTS OF THE WORLD
THAT CAN ONLY REALLY BE EXPERIENCED IN THAILAND!

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# philosophy MUAY THAI

# Love x Respect x Believe

Muay Thai is the national martial art of Thailand that helps strengthen the body and mind to be fit and healthy. It also provides benefits as a form of exercise in one's free time. Besides this, practicing Muay Thai provides trainees to have more self-confidence and greater discipline. As such, in learning Muay Thai, trainees will study and learn about the defense mechanisms of this martial art: punch, kick, knee, elbow, and it can also be learned by both males, females and kids.

#### INTRODUCTION

#### THE ART OF MUAY THAI

Muay Thai is a form of close combat fighting with unique characteristics in the utilization of nine body parts as weapons called the "Nine Weapons", which comprise the use of the head, two hands, two elbows, two knees and two feet. There are 108 fighting methods for defense and offense divided into six methods for the head, 24 for the hands, 30 for both elbows, 12 for the knees and 36 for the feet. The striking of the nine weapons is based on the principles of physics from centrifugal force, momentum, flexibility, to angling as well as shielding and attacking with the toughest part of the body to absorb impact and to achieve the most vicious results, which may result in a fatal blow to the opponents.



Apart from being a vicious fighting principle, Muay Thai is also considered an art form, a martial art that combines grace and flow, accompanied by rhythmic music from musical instruments; namely, Javanese clarinets, double-headed drums, and cymbals.



The most distinct characteristic of Muay Thai is the Wai Khru ritual prior to a fight. This is considered a Thai identity, which is rarely found in martial arts of any other countries. This is performed to show gratitude to the Thai boxing masters while, on the other hand, it is an attempt to prevent the misuses of Thai boxing knowledge. This corresponds with the belief of Thai society from ancient times that the masters and students shared a special bond similar to the bond with parents. From the moment students requested to be taught, they must serve and remain humble until being accepted and follow the teaching of their masters while upholding the Buddhist virtues.



#### MUAY THAI, WARRIOR, BOXER

Muay Thai or Thai boxing is a cultural heritage of the Thais, which has been passed down over the centuries. It was supposedly prevalent in the land of Suvarnabhumi or the Southeast Asian region before the emergence of various kingdoms like Lavo, Ayothaya, Lanna to Sukhothai, as Thai boxing was one of the 18 social sciences learned by the kings and the ruling elite. Thai boxing, therefore, concurred with the establishment of a number of cities.





Written evidence addressing Thai boxing was found dating back to the 13-\* century. The historical annals of the North and the Mangrai Law, which are the oldest laws of Thailand, as well as the stone inscriptions from the Sukhothai period (1238-1438) not only mention about Muay Thai as training for warfare or self-defense skills, but also for its recreational aspect as a social activity in important festivals.

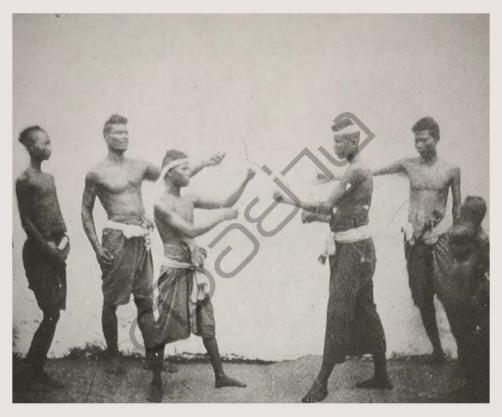




Throughout the Ayutthaya period (1350-1767), Muay Thai also played a major role. In the early Ayutthaya period, a recruitment unit called the Custodian Recruitment Division or Royal Boxer Department was established, which was responsible for recruiting people with potential and training them to become martial arts experts to protect the King, the Royal Family and high-ranking civil servants. The selection process involved matches in the palace on various occasions.



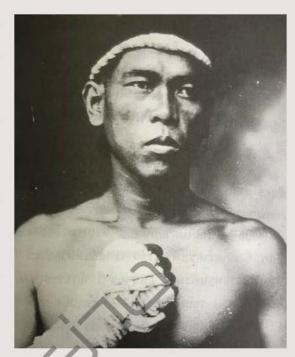
In terms of its contribution to the efficiency of the military, Thai boxing training was provided in sword fighting schools, as it supported sword fighting techniques. In the war for independence of King Naresuan the Great, a special force named wild Daboia siamensis, an intelligence force and guerrilla unit, was selected from people with good sword fighting skills as well as Thai boxing skills.



Some detailed records of Thai boxing have been found in the reign of King Narai the Great. Rope-binding boxing was the Thai boxing style of the period with matches held inside a circle roped ring on rammed earth. Powder coated unbleached cotton thread or tar were used to wrap the boxers' hands while a blessed headband or Mongkhon was worn and a blessed cloth or Phra Chiat wrapped over the upper arms, similar to soldiers going to war. It was believed that the items could provide strength and increase elusiveness for the boxers.

From the Burmese-Siamese War in 1767 until the Thon Buri period (1767-1782), Muay Thai was a skill of the warriors who fought alongside King Taksin the Great in the war of independence and the defeat of various factions. A Thai prisoner named Nai Khanom Tom is said to have defeated dozens of Burmese boxers in the presence of King Hsinbyushin of Burma (present-day Myanmar).

Thai boxing as a recreational activity shared popularity with kite flying and rowing in the Thon Buri period until the beginning of the Rattanakosin period (1782-present) due to its simplicity, entertainment and excitement, which was consistent with the state of the newly restored city after the war.





The importance of Thai boxing in national security continued in the early Rattanakosin period and received royal support from the Kings. The Custodian Recruitment Division or the Royal Boxer Department played a bigger role in providing Thai boxing lessons and recruiting skilled people. A boxing field was designated at the back of the Temple of the Emerald

Buddha. This was because the wars with Burma were still ongoing during the reigns of King Rama I and II as well as preparation for wars with Vietnam during the reign of King Rama III.

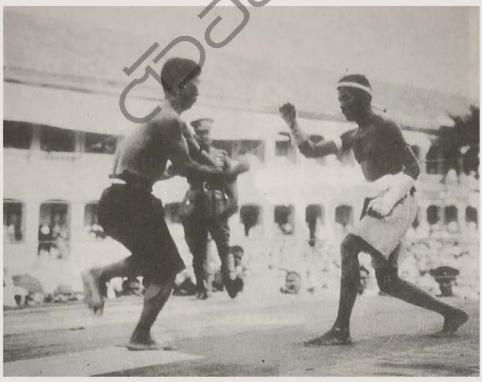


#### STANDARDIZATION OF MUAY THAI

That boxing matches were organized in the royal court for various royal ceremonies during the reign of King Rama IV, especially the royal cremation ceremony for which photo records by Westerners were found. It was also popular among the public to organize boxing matches for various festive celebrations throughout the country.

During the reign of King Rama V the Great, Thai boxing became even more accepted and was considered as a type of sport instead of a recreational activity. Properly structured boxing practices emerged as well as boxing for wins and climbing up the rankings with the biggest and most coveted events being royal events at Sanam Luang (Royal Ground). Also, during this reign, the Ministry of Public Instruction (present-day Ministry of Education) was established, and Thai boxing was registered as one of the subjects under physical education vocational schools and the Chulachomklao Royal Military Academy.





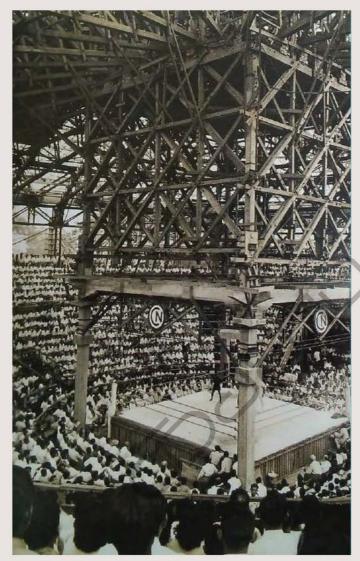






A standard for modern Muay Thai was later developed in the reign of King Rama VI during which a permanent boxing stadium where boxing matches were held regularly was founded for the first time in 1920. The boxing field was named the Suankularb Boxing Field and situated within the compound of Suankularb Wittayalai School. Matches were held on a courtyard or in a field with a post in four corners, forming a square shape. There were also large-scale events with sponsored prizes from the elite, wealthy, and sports lovers.

In the reign of King Rama VII, another new boxing stadium named Suan Sanook Boxing Stadium was established near Lumphini Park at the corner of Wireless Road. The Stadium featured a raised canvas ring with one post in each of the four corners and three tightly stretched ropes in accordance with the standard boxing ring size, as well as red and blue corners, a timing bell, a referee and scoring judges.



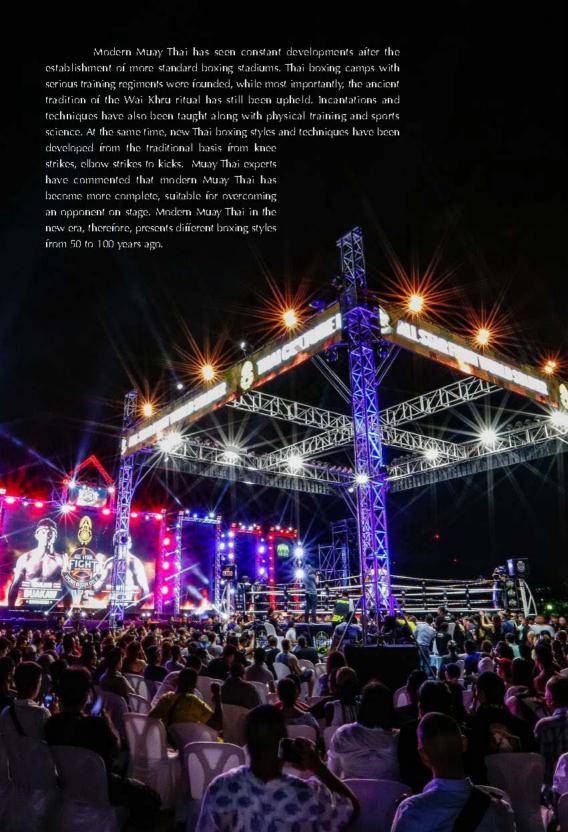


Ratchadamnoen Boxing Stadium hosted both Thai boxing and international boxing with dozens of legendary boxers and world boxing champions making their names in this stadium. Another well-known standard boxing stadium is Lumphini Boxing Stadium, which opened in 1956. The Stadium also featured Thai boxing and international boxing title fights. Title fights in weight classes similar to those at the Ratchadamnoen Boxing Stadium were regularly held.

With the extensive popularity of Thai boxing as a sport, in 1937, the Department of Physical Education set additional standards for Thai boxing with the requirement of four-ounce gloves, shorts, and jockstraps. Matches were required to feature five rounds, three minutes each, with two minutes of rest between rounds as well as one referee on the stage and two scoring judges. This was considered a new era where standard rules were set for Muay Thai.

At the end of World War 2, Prime Minister Field Marshal Plack Phibunsongkhram initiated a plan to create a first-class standard boxing ring in Thailand to be located on Ratchadamnoen Nok Road under the patronage of the Crown Property Bureau. The ring was initially built outdoors with grandstands circling the ring with Wat Somanas Rajavaravihara as the background. Later, a building was constructed to cover the ring and air conditioners installed.











Additionally, live broadcasts of Thai boxing matches on television have propelled the popularity of Thai boxing throughout the country. This has enabled people to watch matches from home without traveling to boxing stadiums.

Muay Thai as a sport has also gained interest among foreigners. In terms of tourism, the Ratchadamnoen and Lumphini Boxing Stadiums are usually densely packed with tourists who come to watch Thai boxing matches. Organization of Muay Thai exhibition matches in tourist destination cities has also received a lot of interest.

Nowadays, thanks to the numerous Muay Thai gyms and camps, more and more foreigners have become interested in learning the techniques of this martial art for the purpose as a sport or just for general exercise.



#### MUAY THAI ONLY!!

Slowly over the decades, Muay Thai began to gain popularity in the Western world in small circles until the first decade of 2000 when there was the establishment of the World Boxing Council Muaythai (WBC) to regulate, supervise and oversee professional Muay Thai fights under standard rules. This led to the general adoption of professional Muay Thai and Muay Thai training among Westerners together with creating a new perspective to make Muay Thai become a world heritage and seriously take it to the international level.

Later, the International Federation of Muaythai Amateur (IFMA) attempted to enlist Muay Thai into one of the sports in the Olympic Games and in 2014 the United Nations certified Muay Thai as a "Sport of the Global Community".

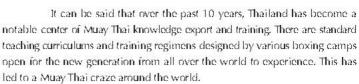
The past perception of Muay Thai as a violent and dangerous sport has gradually faded away into a sport that promotes physical fitness through beautiful and fluid movements, yet strong and powerful at the same time which entice the new generation.

At the same time, Muay Thai in standard boxing rings has become a tourist attraction. A large number of tourists have bought tickets to experience the true Muay Thai atmosphere at the Ratchadamnoen or Lumphini Boxing Stadiums while numerous foreigners have serious interest in Muay Thai training, not simply to learn the martial art for exercise only, but rather to have an in-depth learning of the Muay Thai essence. Certain individuals also yearn for Muay Thai fights in standard boxing rings, if opportunities present. As a result, an increasing number of Muay Thai gyms can be found with Muay Thai training courses provided in Bangkok, Pattaya, Chiang Mai, Phuket and various major tourist cities in each region, both short- and long-term courses.









This phenomenon has led to the transformation of old-fashioned Muay Thai camps to modern gyms. It is considered one of the modern sports businesses with the highest growth rate. It is an opportunity not only for boxers to generate revenue outside of the boxing ring as a trainer or specialist, but it is rather linked to the growth of other related businesses and, more importantly, it is the new face of Thailand's tourism that focuses on the image and atmosphere of Muay Thai training in the most suitable environment for Muay Thai where Muay Thai was born.



### The Fastest Way to Learn Muaythai

iMAES: iGLA Muaythai Animation Education System is the latest development and an extension of the Project Muaythai iGLA.

Muaythai iGLA" consists of 4 components:

i- stands for Intellectual Property

G- stands for Game

L- stands for Library

A- stands for Animation

IMAES curriculum is intended to complement Khru Muaythai (instructors) to teach and train their students in their facilitiesThe objective is to set the standard of learning Muaythai which all Muaythai camps, sport gyms, sporting schools can adopt and use it as a guide tool for training their students, with ease and simplicity.

Project Muaythai iGLA is the education project under the World Muaythai Council (WMC), determined to promote Muaythai by using digital media and multimedia such as animation or games to attract the young generation. These new media are easy to access, understand and remember. Moreover, it will help Muaythai to have a great impact on young people today. Also the interactive media will allow them to explore the fun of Muaythai and develop their body and brain skills at the same time. Using digital data and animation from the iGLA project, combined with sophisticated technology to capture the most accurate and precise movements from Khru Muaythai. The 172 movements were then selected and categorized into 9 khans (levels) from basic, intermediate, to advanced techniques. Qualification, standards guide and certificate system were added to complete the curriculum for on-line e-certificates with traceability. iMAES became the world first standard curriculum to teach Muaythai to the global community.

www.imaes.net







# 5 STYLES

There are 5 styles of Muay Thai that all share the same principles in the combinations of punches, kicks, elbowing, and using the head that have created hundreds of techniques. Each region has developed its own boxing variations and expertise, reflected in different tactics and techniques as most evident in the rope-binding boxing style. There is a phrase comparing each regional boxing style, which goes like: "Korat heavy hands, smart Lop Buri, beautiful Chaiya, faster Tha Sao, and complete Physical Education".

1

#### Muay Lop Buri

Originating in the Central Region of Thailand, it is recognized as a smart boxing style with speedy defensive and offensive movements and accurate straight punches. This is called Muay Kiao meaning a boxing style that emphasizes on luring and tricking the opponents with constant movements, fake jabs, ducking, good eyesight, and fast offensive and defensive punches, kicks, knees, and elbows.

2

#### Muay Korat

Originating from the Northeastern region, this boxing style features unique boxing gear and rope-binding process, which runs from the knuckles up to the elbows. Muay Korat is unique in its stance, training, boxing dance, and boxing style, especially heavy over-the-shoulder punches called a "Buffalo Throw Punch".



3

#### Muay Chaiya

This is the boxing style of Amphoe Chaiya, Surat Thani province, Southern Thailand. The style has been well-known since the reign of King Rama V the Great. Apart from the use of punches, kicks, knees, and elbows, the style also features other martial arts techniques; such as, "throwing, grappling, locking, and breaking". The teaching starts from the defensive scheme of "guarding, warding off, closing, and opening" to other techniques, so it is different from other boxing styles, which emphasize on offense.

5

#### Muay Tha Sao

- Phraya Phichai Dap Hak (Lord Phichai of the Broken Sword)

Originating from the Lower North, this boxing style is unique in its wide stance with the weight on the back foot and front foot gently touching the floor enabling long distance, fast and heavy strikes. The lead hand is positioned away from the face above the shoulder line and the back hand low. The Phraya Phichai Dap Hak boxing style is both offensive and defensive depending on the circumstances. Boxers must be aware of defense before offense, and how to handle situations before attacking as well as learning the strengths of oneself and the opponent.



#### Muay Physical Education

This is an accumulation of other boxing styles before being continued for learning boxing at the Physical Education Institution for additional tactics. The style is headlined by Achan Kimseng Taveesith, a renowned boxing master, who specialized in boxing learned from 11S11 Vibulsawasdiwong Sawasdikul who studied Thai boxing and is known as the father of Thai boxing. It not only focuses on the style of boxing, but also on speed and in and out agility. As a result, Muay Physical Education is considered a complete boxing style.





# MONGKHON, SPELL, BOXING RING AND PRAJEAD

Mongkhon is a head band from the supernatural belief of the Thai people. It is considered as an auspicious amulet that can prevent danger. In the past, it was knitted from holy cotton and had a spell cast on it by the boxing instructors. Fighters must wear it throughout a fight. Teachers or seniors are the people who can put on or take off a Mongkhon from the boxers while those who take a Mongkhon off have to say the incantation every time.

At present, boxers only wear a Mongkhon in the ring during the Wai Khru ritual. A Mongkhon in the present day is knitted from nylon and worn by Muay Thai students, both Thais and foreigners. All are cultivated and provide information on the Mongkhon. When wearing a Mongkhon, boxers will not go through the boxing ring's ropes, but they have to jump over the ropes based on the belief that they will not bow to anyone.

Prajead is a piece of cloth with a yant or cast with a spell. It is strapped to the boxers' arms and believed that it will toughen the boxers' skin so that punching or elbowing will not cause any harm as well as prevent various other dangers.

Both the Mongkhon and Prajead must be cast with a spell through an attentive and unwavering mind; otherwise, the spell will not work. Both boxers and mentors have numerous spells and beliefs. Even though it is deemed superstition for Westerners, once the Westerners train in Muay Thai, they will have to embrace it in some way. It is to remind them of the boxing instructors and express

them or the boxing instructors and express gratitude in accordance with the Thai custom.









#### **Experience real Muay Thai,**

one of the most unique martial arts of the world that can only really be experienced in Thailand!

#### **Tourism Authority of Thailand**