



When plans go wrong, just not the way you thought

## Description

A few days ago we arrived in Bangkok once again, for the fourth time in our journey. This time it was a forced arrival. We've already been in North Thailand, a night train distance from Bangkok, and had to go back for some paperwork arrangements we were sure that we were already done with in Singapore. We were really pissed off. It's so annoying to go backwards. Especially since we've been into this marvelous place (a moment!) in Northern Thailand and were already planning our next stop in Chiang Mai, rent a house and settle down for a month.

And then I said, if we've already reached that far why won't I get radical and bought myself Reef rubber sandals. I mean a copycat of Reef rubber sandals for 400 baht (after bargaining). I mean I'm already going down as far as buying myself rubber sandals at least they cost me 10\$. And yet, rubber sandals are like small death. The end. As low as it gets. And it has something liberating.

Well, Bangkok. We're in Bangkok but our heart is in North Thailand. We're already eager to get to our next nesting phase, find us a nice home in Chiang Mai, spend an easy month, without thinking of visas and exits and entries to the country we're in, and trains and planes and buses and taxis and changing currency rates.

After eight months of rather intense movement, I'm a little tired. It's true we had some nesting locations on the road but the last of them was in Hoi An, Vietnam almost four months ago. It's already four months that we're moving quite a lot from one place to another. Staying in places for periods that are between one night to one week top, and now I'm a little tired. I want to rest a little and think of nothing.

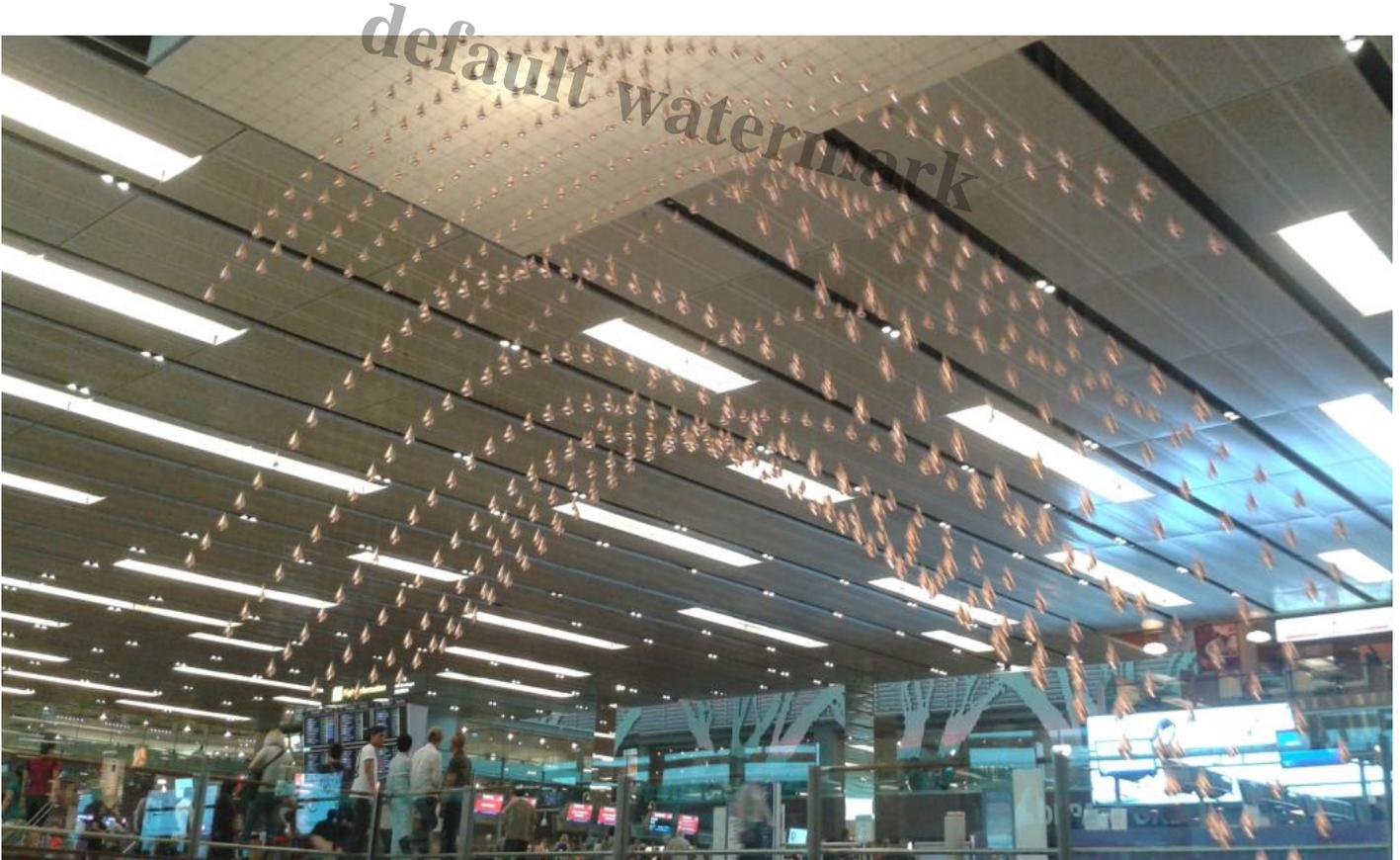
It sounds a bit whiny, I know. But honestly, I am tired. Exhausted.

I feel an urge to say a nice farewell to the Philippines. We had great months there and it turned out that I didn't say any farewell words in the blog. There was no country in our journey that we were so sorry to leave. Did I say sorry? I meant actual tears. Seriously. I had tears in my eyes when we left Cebu City and flew to Singapore.



It is hard to say goodbye to the Philippines. The colorful jeepneys of Cebu City.

Our journey up until the Philippines was quite structured and organized. You should know because you're following it. Geography poses its constraints, the visa period poses its constraints and the countries' entry procedures sometimes dictate the exit time table. In the Philippines for example we received a free visa for 60 days, but we had to present an outgoing flight ticket during our boarding. It means that we knew even before we entered the Philippines the exact date of our departure and where would be our next destination. In this case it was to Singapore because that was the cheapest flight we've found. But that's not the point. The point is that we pretty much knew that after a first phase in Southern Thailand we will move to Cambodia overland and from there we knew that we will continue to Vietnam. Once we decided to get a long visa in Vietnam (90 days and we need to declare upon the request) we knew that we will use it up and move on to Laos and then over again to Thailand from where we will take our flight to the Philippines. And from there we knew that we'll continue to Singapore and then Bangkok, because Singapore is expensive and cannot just stay there for unlimited time. It's a few days stop and nothing more.



The gorgeous "Kinetic Rain" sculpture in the gorgeous Singapore airport.

It's a little exhausting to know in such a journey all the time a couple of months ahead what's exactly going to happen! It even a bit feels like missing some of the whole point. In some sense I am longing to a feeling of not knowing, of facing the unplanned, of switching to a more relaxed phase of the journey, with longer staying and mostly less planning. Taking a nice house, not moving a lot, being together, taking some courses for the kids and perhaps for mommy and daddy too. A relaxed phase of the journey. We chose our next stops since they seemed to fit this phase "Chiang Mai and Koh Pangan.

Now when I come to think of it I think I realize that it's been two weeks that we have advanced

lessons in plans vs reality.

We landed in Bangkok after Singapore dragging along with us a small girl with fever, a boy with some skin infection that resulted with antibiotics and a boy with a wound that failed to heal for months since he stepped on a sea urchin in Vietnam.

We said, okay, Bangkok is not the best place to recover and anyway we are on our way to rest in Chiang Mai. Are we not? Excellent! But on our way we have an invitation to be hosted in a place in North Thailand near Phrae, a city located about two and a half hours of car ride from Chiang Mai. We don't accept this invitation now while we are on the road, there's a good chance we'll never do. So! we decided to go for a day or two, maybe three, to this place near Phrae in the north and from there to continue to Chiang Mai. Peace and rest. Remember? We got on the night train from Bangkok northward.

At 7:30 in the morning we found John awaiting us in the railway station of Den Chai, a small town in North Thailand. A tall man, blue eyes, tanned, with a handshake of a Viking. Loaded us and our backpacks onto his van and after a lush beautiful green road in the rural north we reached the children's home that is run by John and Sharon, his wife. It's not an orphanage, they insist. Most of the Thai kids in Sharon and John's house are not orphans but they definitely do not have another place to live. Some of them grow up there from the early age of few weeks and sometimes even few days old. No less than forty cute little Thai children call Sharon and John, a Christian Australian couple, mommy and daddy.

Sharon and John are a rare and wonderful couple who for more than a decade literally build with their own hands their blessed place with endless giving. Sharon's parents also live in Thailand for more than twenty years, running their own children's home in another town, so it turns that Sharon is a second generation of people who except for giving so much to children in Thailand are true devoted friends of Israel. For them hosting a Jewish Israeli family is a great blessing. We felt of course that we were those who were blessed to meet those dear people who immediately found their way to our hearts. We were privileged with the opportunity to meet Sharon's parents who arrived for a weekend visit. It was very exciting.



Friday night, a huge yeast cake, Sharon, John and Sharon's wonderful parents

So we came for a day or two, maybe three, and we stayed for 8 days.

The kids healed slowly but surely after Sharon took us to a hospital in Phrae, the nearest town, where we received a first class treatment.

Every evening The One and John shared a Chang, the local Thai beer, talking about this and that, while I tried to take over Sharon's kitchen and cook as much as possible, including baking a rose cake on Friday evening, which turned out to be a great success since apparently not only The Natives and The One think I cook great. Just imagine. The Aussie manners. It's just a pleasure I tell you. These were eight magical days, one of the best experiences of our journey. Good thing we didn't pass it.

Luckily for Sharon and John this unexpected annoying call arrived that forced us to return to Bangkok.



We even had some tours in Bangkok. Or Tor Kor market.



## Category

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## Tags

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