



AYUTTHAYA - WESTERN BICYCLE TRACK  
(The Thung Prachet and Pak Kran Loop)

from the late-Ayutthaya period, but were incorporated into the temple's design in modern times. Some portions of the temple's outer walls still exist. However, the most significant structure in site is an old memorial chedi reflecting the Burmese-Mon style. This was built in the Mid-Ayutthaya period for Burmese soldiers that had died in battle. In the latter years of the Ayutthaya Kingdom, a monastery was founded on the site.

- ❖ *Go back to the main road and continue in the eastern direction. You will arrive at an active temple beside Khlong Takhian and the Chao Phraya River. In front of the temple's entrance are two distinctive Taksa guarding the entrance gate.*

Wat Klang Khlong Takhian is situated at the confluence of the Chao Phraya River and Khlong Takhian. There are all the standard monastic structures providing services by Buddhist clergy. The ordination hall was built in the Late Ayutthaya style (1629-1767). Some of the current attractions include a large piece of Takhian wood that is believed to have a female ghost residing in it. There is also a merry-go-round structure that involves replicators of Buddhist monks proceeding in a circle with begging bowls in hand for alms giving.

- ❖ *The next reference point is a ruin located directly across from the exit of previous site. It can be spotted on the right-hand side of the road.*

Wat Klang is an ancient monastery lying adjacent to the active temple Wat Klang Khlong Takhian. In situ is a brick mound with a damaged Buddhist image. Near Wat Klang was a ferry crossing across the Chao Phraya River, linking the monasteries with Tha Wang Chai. The marine vessel dockyard was situated near the mouth of Khlong Takhian and housed 30 marine warships and over 100 smaller fighting vessels under the supervision of the Phraya Rachawangsan.

- ❖ *Return route: Continue on the same road. It will bypass a school with several astrological symbols at its gate - rabbits, tigers, oxen, snakes, etc. Shortly afterward, you will arrive at an intersection leading to a bridge. This will link you back to Bike Route #6. Once you have crossed over the bridge, you will have finished with the official Western loop. Bike east from this point onward.*

- ❖ *Continue heading east on the same road. This will lead you near an old Christian church that is still active and partially viewable from the road. To see it, you will have to turn left and go down a small side road towards the Chao Phraya River. However, on this particular route, this site serves only as a reference point for an upcoming turn in the road.*

St. Joseph's Church is situated on the south bank of the Chao Phraya River beside Khlong Takhian. In 1665, the Siamese King granted the French bishops a spot near the Chao Phraya River in the Cochin Chinese quarter called "Ban Pia Hie". In 1665-1666 they built the Seminary of Saint Joseph, later renamed the "Seminary of the Holy Angels". Between 1665 and 1695 the original wooden church was rebuilt in bricks in European style. In March 1767

©2009 – 2010 Ayutthaya Historical Research  
All rights reserved. 10

AYUTTHAYA - WESTERN BICYCLE TRACK  
(The Thung Prachet and Pak Kran Loop)

the Portuguese settlement and the St Joseph seminary were isolated and surrounded by attacking Burmese. After parlaying with the Burmese General and being promised safety and protection for all persons and property, the bishop surrendered on 23 March. The church and seminary, as well as the Jesuit and Dominican churches, were nevertheless plundered. The houses near the church were burned down, and the fire spread to the church and seminary, which were both reduced to ashes. In 1831 Father Jean-Baptist Pallegrix began restoration of the church, which was completed in 1847.

- ❖ *Continue going east for a few more minutes. On the left hand side of the road, you will be able to see a large white prang (khmer-style chedi) from a distance away. This is the next reference point. Many cyclists may enjoy a stop at this active temple, but it is not listed as a Point of Interest on this particular route.*

Wat Phuttasawan faces east and is bordered on the north by the Chao Phraya River. The temple was built in 1353 AD by King Ramathibodi I at the royal residence of "Wiang Lek", the site where he first settled before establishing Ayutthaya as the capital city in 1350. The temple was constructed after his elder brother defeated the Khmers and brought them back under the control of Ayutthaya in 1352. The monastery was one of the first temples constructed in the Ayutthaya kingdom. This area has been regularly part of a war theatre. The Royal Chronicles of Ayutthaya mention that the army of the King of Ava invading Ayutthaya in 1549 and setting up a stockade in this area.

- ❖ *Continue biking east from Wat Phuttasawan. You will bypass Chao Kun Khu Cham Cemetery, which you have already seen earlier, only this time it will be on the right hand side of the road. Keep back tracking east until you arrive at the turn off for Wat Khun Phrom. This is the location of the ferry boat that you have already used.*

- ❖ *The ferry boat will deliver you to the opposite side of the Chao Phraya River, back on the main island. The best return route is to turn right on U-Thong Road and continue east. This route will bypass Pom Phet, which will be situated on the right hand side of the road.*

**Pom Phet** or the Diamond Fortress was one of the sixteen fortresses along the city walls of Ayutthaya. Situated in the southeast, at the confluence of the Pa Sak River and the Chao Phraya River in Bang Kaja area and on the east bank of the Nai Kai canal, Pom Phet was the most important fortress, protecting the harbour where foreign ships were forced to anchor for inspection and unloading. No foreign ships travelling up the Chao Phraya River before were allowed beyond this point. Pom Phet is the one of the two remnants of old fortresses and now a public park. The site has been recently renovated, since serious damage occurred from water erosion to the river banks.

- ❖ *Keep heading east along U-Thong Road. It will shortly turn past an active temple named Wat Ratanaachat, or Wat Jin, on your right hand side. On the opposite side of the road, to your left, you will see a small side road for entering Wat Suwan Dararam.*

©2009 – 2010 Ayutthaya Historical Research  
All rights reserved. 11

AYUTTHAYA - WESTERN BICYCLE TRACK  
(The Thung Prachet and Pak Kran Loop)

**Wat Ratanachai** is more commonly known under the name of Wat Jin today, because many Teochiu Chinese migrated to this part of the city in the latest century. As an active monastery, Wat Ratanachai has all the basic architecture structures of a Buddhist temple: sermon hall, bell tower, monk quarters, crematory furnace, and a number of chedi. Nearly all of these architectural structures date to the Ratanakosin period. The highlight of this monastery is its central bell shaped chedi, which has been painted white. A well-preserved pointed vault gate (Pratu Chang Kud) can be seen next to Wat Ratanachai. To visit it, you must enter the school west of this temple.

- ❖ *U-Thong road will turn with the natural contours of the island and go north, parallel to the Pa Sak River. You will pass underneath the Pridi Banomyong Bridge and see traces of old city walls to your right. Continue to Chao Phrom Market and go one block past it. Make a left onto Pa Maprao Road; then take the first road on your left. This will return you to the starting point.*



*Disclaimer*  
AHR will not be held liable for any loss or damage whatsoever for any suggestions made in relation to the site's promotion of ecotourism. It is the responsibility of the user of the site to take the necessary precautions to avoid any physical injury, traffic incident, animal attack, theft, and damage to equipment. Any reliance on the site's information is therefore strictly at your own risk. Read our disclaimer at website www.ayutthaya-history.com.

©2009 – 2010 Ayutthaya Historical Research  
All rights reserved. 12

AYUTTHAYA - WESTERN BICYCLE TRACK  
(The Thung Prachet and Pak Kran Loop)

Traces of restoration include the bell-shaped chedis inside the arches, which earlier contained Buddha images. The temple was renovated in the first reign of the Ratanakosin Period (1782-1809) by Prince Khrom Khan Isanurak, a nephew of King Rama I. The renovation was in essence a complete overhaul of the temple. The temple at that time changed names from Wat Kasatri to Wat Kasatriharat.

- ❖ *Continue biking south until you reach Highway 3263 once again. Turn left and head toward the bridge. However, go underneath the bridge instead of crossing it. There is a small side road on the left that will lead you safely under and around the bridge to the opposite side of Highway 3263. You will have to take the left hand turn and continue in the direction south. (a 7-11 convenience store will be near the corner). This new road parallels the Chao Phraya River.*

- ❖ *You will soon pass the front side of Wat Lat Chong, when you have already seen from its rear entrance. Stay with the natural flow of the road and it will lead you to one of the greater sites in the city. Wat Chai Watthanaram. If you are lucky, you may see the "love sock" used by King Prasat Thong during the construction of this temple.*

**Wat Chai Watthanaram** was built in the 1630 by King Prasat Thong, who believed that the Khmer-style Prang would reflect Ayutthaya's historical significance at the end of a Buddhist millennium year. This temple is unique as it has a unique fusion of Khmer and Burmese design in the city. One theory is that Wat Chai Watthanaram was built on the spot of King Prasat Thong's former home, and that it was constructed to make merit for his mother - or possibly his depository. Popular folklore suggests King Prasat Thong had a childhood dream in which a golden tower was buried inside an anthill at this location. When the anthill was later excavated it proved the dream a prophetic revelation. Another theory is that Buddha monks predicted the establishment of Ayutthaya at the end of the Buddhist millennium year enough merit had been accumulated, so King Prasat Thong launched a massive campaign to build and renovate temples across the city. Whatever the reason, the turn of the Khmer-style Prang marked a new era of architecture in Ayutthaya.

Like other temples in the west, Wat Chai Watthanaram ultimately fell the burden of war. Burmese besieged this monastery in 1767 and used it as an army camp while staging attacks on the main island. Excavations revealed evidence of damage by cannon balls. After 1767, Wat Chai Watthanaram was abandoned and looted for decades afterward. The Fine Arts Department renovated Wat Chai Watthanaram between 1987 and 1992. It remains one of the most breathtaking tourist sites today.

- ❖ *Continue on the main road. Make the next left hand turn to the next Point of Interest.*

**Wat Suwan Chai** is an active temple located beside the Chao Phraya River in close proximity to Wat Chai Watthanaram. A number of ceramic plates from China decorate the front entrance of its western hall. According to monks at this temple, these plates originated from the Chao Phraya River in close proximity to Wat Chai Watthanaram. A number of ceramic plates from China decorate the front entrance of its western hall. According to monks at this temple, these plates originated from the Chao Phraya River in close proximity to Wat Chai Watthanaram.

©2009 – 2010 Ayutthaya Historical Research  
All rights reserved. 9