The Ultimate Buyer's Guide

ACQUIRING PROPERTY IN THAILAND (2026 EDITION)

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Buying a home or investment property in Thailand is an exciting milestone, but navigating a foreign legal system can feel overwhelming. As the Regional Director of REMAX Thailand, my mission is to provide you with total clarity and security throughout your purchase.

1. Understanding Ownership Laws

Thailand has specific regulations regarding what foreigners can and cannot own. Understanding these rules is your very first step before beginning your property search.

Condominiums (Freehold)

Foreigners can legally own condominium units outright (Freehold) in their own name, provided that the total foreign ownership in the building does not exceed 49% of the total sellable floor area.

Land and Villas

Foreigners cannot own land directly. To buy a villa, foreigners typically secure a 30-year registered Leasehold, or utilize a Thai Limited Company structure with strict compliance.

Key Insight: Always have your agent verify the "Foreign Quota" availability with the condo's juristic office before making an offer.

Warning: Avoid "Nominee" structures. The Thai government actively investigates companies set up purely to bypass foreign ownership laws.

2. The Step-by-Step Purchase Timeline

A standard property transaction in Thailand usually takes between 30 to 60 days from the accepted offer to the final handover.

Stage	Timeframe	Action Required
1. Reservation	Day 1	Sign a Reservation Agreement and pay a holding deposit (typically 50,000 to 200,000 THB).
2. Due Diligence	Days 2 - 14	Lawyer conducts a Title Search to ensure no hidden liens exist on the Chanote.
3. SPA Signing	Days 15 - 21	Sign the formal Sales and Purchase Agreement (SPA). Buyer typically pays 10-20% deposit.
4. Fund Transfer	Days 22 - 30	Transfer balance from overseas in foreign currency to generate FET documents.
5. Final Transfer	Day 30+	Meet at Land Office for title exchange and tax payment.

> **Legal Tip:** Your Reservation Agreement should clearly state the deposit is refundable if due diligence reveals any legal encumbrances.

3. The Golden Rule of Funding (The FET Form)

For foreigners buying Freehold Condos, proof of foreign fund origin is the most critical compliance step.

What is the FET (Foreign Exchange Transaction) Form?

The Land Department requires an FET certificate for transfers exceeding $50,000 USD. It proves the money was brought in from abroad.

Foreign Currency: Funds must arrive in foreign currency (USD, EUR, etc.) and be converted locally.

Swift Instructions: Must state: *"For the purchase of a condominium in Thailand"*.

Exact Name: The sender or receiver name must match the buyer's name on the Title Deed exactly.

Warning: Do not use local-to-local Baht transfer services (like Wise local payout). Funds must enter Thailand as a foreign currency.

Repatriation: Keep your original FET form safe. You will need it to transfer funds back out of Thailand when you sell in the future.

4. Closing Costs and Ongoing Expenses

CLOSING COSTS

Buyers typically pay **50% of the 2% Transfer Fee**. Budget for electric/water meter installation fees as well.

COMMON AREA FEES

Known as CAM fees, these maintain the building facilities. Rates range from 40 to 100+ THB per sqm.

Annual Land and Building Tax

Thailand’s property tax is remarkably low. For an investment condo valued at 10 million THB, the annual tax rate is 0.02%, totaling only ~2,000 THB per year.

> **Final Checklist:** Ensure your lawyer obtains the "Debt Free Certificate" from the building's jristic office before closing.

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