

## Thailand welcomes 20 thousand foreign tourists in October

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Thailand attracted over 20,000 foreign tourists in October, up from 1,201 foreign arrivals in the same period a year earlier, tourism ministry revealed on Tuesday (Nov 23), due to a pilot tourism programme on the islands of Phuket and Samui. The scheme was launched ahead of the Southeast Asian country's wider quarantine-free reopening on Nov 1, aimed at restarting its important tourism sector that has been devastated by the coronavirus pandemic.

In January to October period, there were 106,117 foreign tourists, but still a sharp drop from 6.7 million recorded in early 2020 before strict entry restrictions were imposed in a bid to curb infections.

The planning agency predicted there would be only 200,000 foreign tourists this year, and five million visitors next year. That compared with 40 million foreign arrivals who spent 1.91 trillion baht (US\$58 billion) in 2019.