

Baan Klang Nam

3792/106 Soi 14, Rama III Road, near the Montien Riverside hotel

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A friend told me not to write this review. He is afraid Baan Klang Nam will become inundated with tourists and evolve into a tourist trap like many of Bangkok's other seafood restaurants. I suppose the possibility exists, but this place is too good to be kept a secret. In addition, finding it is like looking for a needle in a haystack, and it is a bit too rustic to ever appeal to the tour bus crowd. Baan Klang Nam is for those who really love seafood.

There are two outlets of this restaurant, but we find the original much more appealing than the modern up market version. Located at the end of an obscure soi on two short piers extending into the Chao Phraya River, the restaurant provides interesting views



and a refreshing breeze in addition to food. The tables are of weathered wood and there is a small house on one of the piers that houses musicians in the evening and provides indoor dining for those who don't enjoy the great outdoors.

Several factors make what Baan Klang Nam dishes up stand out from the crowd. The quality of the seafood itself is much higher than is typical. The manager of the restaurant once told me several suppliers save their

best products for Baan Klang Nam. When I asked why, he said that they were old customers and were willing to pay more. In addition, the variety of items on offer is larger at Baan Klang Nam than in most places and includes things like scallops, mantis prawns and several varieties of fish.

The most important distinguishing factor is the care with which the seafood is prepared. This care is exemplified by that fact that there are employees whose only job is to bring food from the kitchen to the dining area. There is none of this nonsense where food remains on a counter in the kitchen until the server arrives to pick it up, making this one of the few large restaurants I have encountered in Bangkok that serves food that is actually hot. It is amazing what a difference this makes, particularly with seafood.

Everyone has a favorite seafood dish at Baan Klang Nam. Mine is the soft-shell crab that has been battered and fried along with chips of garlic. Order this and you will receive a platter of five crabs covered with a mound of crisp garlic. I eat the whole thing myself! I am also enamored with the fried white fish. Served piping hot, it reminds me of momma's home cooking.

Prices at Baan Klang Nam aren't cheap, but neither are they higher than any other seafood restaurant in town. At this point I haven't found better tasting seafood in Bangkok. I highly recommend this restaurant.