

AMBASSADOR'S GREETING



AMBASSADOR
RODOLPHE S. IMHOOF

Dear STCC Members,

The launching of the first newsletter in this new format delights me and I am looking forward, as we enter a new year which may potentially be problematic for all economic actors in Thailand and around the world, to a stimulating collaboration with all STCC members, for the mutual benefit of us all.

In today's globalised information society, gate-keeping - selecting what is relevant from what is not - has become as important as the gathering of information itself. This sets new standards for all those who decide to send out their printed word. The newsletter will, I trust, set landmarks in the realisation of this objective. To develop a fruitful dialogue, the Embassy's role will be to provide regular and comprehensive information from a Swiss perspective. Your feedback and suggestions will be most welcome.

As a consequence of the recent domestic upheavals in Thailand, many Swiss citizens found themselves stranded. As is evident in the article below, during this difficult period the Embassy's call centre was used by a large number of our nationals seeking guidance and advice. The crisis we have gone through leaves us with some preoccupations for the future. Nonetheless I am hopeful that for our beloved country of residence, and for all of you who do business in and with Thailand, the year 2009 may bring an improved outlook in both economy and politics.

I wish you a year of personal happiness and fulfilment and I am looking forward to the forthcoming year's challenges.

Rodolphe S. Imhoof
Ambassador of Switzerland

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



It is my pleasure to introduce the first issue of the Swiss Thai Chamber of Commerce's newsletter. The STCC's board decided some months ago that we needed better, more regular communication with our members. Our electronic newsletter was no longer really satisfying this need and so we decided to try a different format: a printed version which you now hold in your hands. Apart from informing our members of Chamber events and items of interest in the economic, business and legal scene in Thailand we will also give our members a chance to profile themselves and their businesses. Furthermore the Swiss Embassy has kindly agreed to contribute to the contents of the newsletter with news from Switzerland and issues concerning trade and investment by Swiss companies in Thailand, etc.

As this is being labelled a test "New Year" issue, the newsletter has not yet developed its final, regular format. Therefore, at this stage suggestions on how to improve the newsletter would be most welcome as would letters to the editor which will increase the awareness of the Chamber's board of the issues and concerns of the members while also providing a means of dialogue for members.

Alas, even this modest newsletter has costs to cover! Since it will be entirely self-financing and therefore reliant on the generosity of our members' advertisements and that of other interested advertisers, we encourage you to make use of this opportunity to get your commercial messages across to our readers.

Finally I would like to take this opportunity to wish all our members and their families and staff a peaceful and joyous 2009 full of good fortune and better times for us all.

Niti Meyer

President

Swiss Thai Chamber of Commerce



Veritas Graphics

12th Floor, Vanissa Building,
29 Soi Chidlom, Bangkok, 10330
Tel.: +66 (0) 2650 3450-4
Fax.: +66 (0) 2650 3455

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For advertising enquiries, contact Jim Fowler at +66 (0) 81844 7015 or jim@veritasgraphics.com.
For editorial matters, contact the Editor at toby@veritasgraphics.com.

Publisher: Jim Fowler
Director of Publications: Dean Outerson
Editor: Toby Coborn
Creative Art Director: James Nathan

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5TH OCSC INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION EXPO

29 - 30 NOVEMBER 2008 AT BANGKOK'S QUEEN SIRIKIT CENTRE

The Embassy of Switzerland, the RIS Swiss Section and eight private Swiss hotel management schools marked the Swiss presentation at Thailand's biggest annual international education expo. This fair was organized for the fifth consecutive year by the Office of the Civil Service Commission (OCSC) under the Prime Minister's Office (PMO). About 30,000 pupils, parents and students have visited the booths - of which there were in excess of 150 - from Switzerland, the EU, Australia and the USA.

Each year OCSC selects approximately

500 to 700 elite, top-of-the-class students for a fully-funded learning opportunity in universities abroad, mostly in the USA and UK. In total about 3,000 young Thais are currently studying abroad with OCSC support, nine of them in public universities in Switzerland. Additionally, 79 ODOS (One District, One Scholarship) students with OCSC support currently study in private hotel management schools in Switzerland.

About 1,000 personal discussions were counted by the Swiss Embassy staff and over 300 persons enlisted in order to receive future education updates.

Students seeking information about the twelve public universities in Switzerland were mostly interested in research, engineering, science, biotechnology and computing. The RIS Swiss Section, the only German-speaking school in Bangkok, was also represented at the Embassy booth.

For a majority of young Thais, studying in Switzerland means first and foremost acquiring solid hotel management skills. A wide variety of interesting offers was presented by César Ritz, DCT, Glion, HIM, IHTTI, IMI Luzern, Les Roches and SHMS.



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SWISS TOURISTS STRANDED IN THAILAND

With more than 120,000 Swiss tourists visiting Thailand each year it is little wonder that a substantial number of them found themselves trapped in the Land of Smiles during the days of turmoil in early December, in the midst of an internal conflict most Swiss knew nothing about.

The Embassy of Switzerland was manned around the clock during the height of the troubles and over a thousand Swiss tourists registered their details as a precautionary measure. Their respective travel agencies and airlines organised new flights from airports in Chiang Mai, Phuket and U Ta Pao back to Switzerland.



Up to 75 percent of Swiss tourists travelling to Thailand are returning visitors. They stay on average for 15 days on each visit which is more than double the international average for visitors to Thailand.

When asked by staff from the Embassy the majority of Swiss tourists said that despite all the difficulties they had faced they would definitely return to Thailand should the political situation normalise. They also expressed their gratitude for the spontaneous support of the Thai people.




chesa
Swiss Cuisine

Swiss BBQ Brunch
Every Sunday 11:00-15:00

Come and try something completely different. We bring the buffet to your table. Select as many items from the menu as you like, and as many servings as you want. Enjoy traditional raclette cheese of the wheel, carved farmers ham, rösti, capuns, swiss macaroni, air-dried meats, smoked fish, salads, BBQ and much more.

