

FREE CHAPTER · A DEGENERATE'S GUIDE

The 10 Commandments of Pattaya

*From A Degenerate's Guide to Pattaya: How Not
to Get Played*

Josh

A Degenerate's Guide · Produced by Hood Box Office
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CHAPTER 2

The 10 Commandments of Pattaya

"These are not tourist tips. These are survival laws."

And lo, a man got off the airport bus on Second Road with a rolling suitcase, a fresh haircut and eleven days of vacation. He looked upon Pattaya, and Pattaya looked back at him, and Pattaya smiled. Because Pattaya had seen him before. Pattaya has seen him every day for thirty years.

I'm Josh, and this is A Degenerate's Guide to the only rules that matter in this town.

I've watched men come here with a plan and a budget and go home with neither. I've watched them sell motorbikes, cancel flights, buy gold for women they met on Tuesday and send rent money to a phone number from the other side of the planet. And almost none of them got robbed. They got *charged*. One polite, smiling, agreed-upon charge at a time, while their brain was on vacation with the rest of them.

So here are the ten. Every one of them was paid for by somebody. Most of them by somebody who was sure he was the exception.

At the end of each one, you're going to repeat after me. Out loud. I don't care if you're on the plane. The man next to you probably needs it too.

I. Thou shalt not marry thy holiday.

Let's start with the big one, because it's the one that costs a house.

You're going to meet somebody. She's going to laugh at your jokes, remember your drink, walk beside you on Beach Road and make you feel like the most interesting man in Chonburi province. And by day four, a voice in your head is going to say, *this one's different*.

Brother. Every man in this town has heard that voice. It said the same thing to the guy who bought the condo. It said it to the guy who bought the scooter, and the gold chain, and the second scooter after her cousin crashed the first one. The condo is in her name, by the way. Foreigners can't own the land it sits on. Look it up after you've finished crying.

I'm not telling you nobody finds anything real here. People do. I'm telling you that something real doesn't need to be decided in your first week, on your vacation money, in a town built to make you feel exactly the way you feel right now. If it's real, it'll still be real on your second trip. If it can't survive you flying home and coming back, it wasn't a relationship. It was a very good week.

Enjoy the trip. Don't buy the town.

REPEAT AFTER ME

I am on vacation. Vacations end. I will not make a life decision with a sunburn.

II. Thou shalt obey the three-day rule.

This is the commandment the channel is famous for, so let me give it to you plain.

Day one is exciting. Day two is affectionate. Day three, it starts feeling like a routine. And routine is the most expensive thing in Pattaya. Not the bars, not the clubs. Routine. Because on day four, the stories start. The phone that broke. The rent that's late. The mother who isn't feeling well. Nobody planned it. It's just what happens when a holiday turns into a habit, and the habit starts to feel like a relationship, and a relationship comes with bills.

So the rule is simple. Three days, and then you step back. You don't have to be cold about it. You don't have to disappear. You just don't let three days become three weeks by accident, and you don't make a single promise, pay a single bill, or move anybody into your room inside those three days.

I'll be honest with you, the way I've been honest on stream: it's more of a guideline than a law. Men break it. I've broken it. But every man who's broken it and regretted it will tell you the same thing: he knew on day three, and he didn't listen.

Three days is for pleasure. Anything more is pressure.

REPEAT AFTER ME

Nothing gets decided, promised or paid for in the first seventy-two hours.

III. Thou shalt wrap it up.

I'm not going to be cute about this one and I'm not going to be graphic about it either.

Protection. Every time. No exceptions, no "she said she's clean," no "just this once because it's the last night." Bring your own from home or buy a brand you recognise at a pharmacy, and don't keep them folded in your wallet in thirty-five-degree heat for a week.

Testing here is cheap and fast. Get tested when you get home, even if you were careful. Some of what's out there goes away with a pill. Some of it doesn't go away at all. The men who learn that lesson learn it permanently.

REPEAT AFTER ME

Every time. No exceptions. Tested when I get home.

IV. Thou shalt respect the SangSom.

SangSom is Thai rum. It's cheap, it's everywhere, it comes in buckets, and it has ended more nights in this city than the police ever have.

Here's the problem. It's hot. There's no last call worth mentioning. The pours are generous, the mixers are sweet, and you've been drinking since the pool at two in the afternoon because you're on holiday and that's what holidays are for. By midnight you're not drinking, you're being drunk. That's when the wallet goes, the phone goes, and the part of your brain that does maths goes first.

I say this as a man who drinks it. I'm not your priest. I'm the guy telling you what I've seen. Drink water between rounds. Eat something, even if it's a 7-Eleven toastie at one in the morning, especially if it's a 7-Eleven toastie at one in the morning. Watch your drink get poured, and if you didn't see where it came from, don't drink it. Men wake up at noon with no phone, no watch and no memory, and it wasn't a stranger in an alley. It was a glass.

REPEAT AFTER ME

I drink it. It does not drink me.

V. Thou shalt carry small bills.

This one is boring and it'll save you more money than the other nine combined.

Break your big notes at a 7-Eleven or the hotel as soon as you land. Front pocket: twenties, fifties, hundreds. That's your spending money for the night. Back pocket, or better yet the room safe: the thousands, the cards, the passport.

Why? Because the moment you pull out a thousand-baht note for a ninety-baht beer, two things happen. First, there's suddenly "no change." Or the change comes back slow, on a little tray, while everyone waits to see if you'll just wave it off. Second, everybody in the room just watched you open your wallet, and now they know what's in it.

Small bills keep you anonymous, keep the change honest, and keep the night the size you planned. And take only what you're willing to lose tonight. Anything in your pocket at midnight, assume it's gone by sunrise. If it matters, it stays in the safe.

Cash flow isn't money. It's survival.

REPEAT AFTER ME

Small bills in front. Big money in the safe. Only take what I can lose.

VI. Thou shalt not negotiate drunk.

Every money decision you make in this town, make it early and make it sober.

The tab. The tour. The taxi to Bangkok. The "special price" on the table at the club. The loan to the friend you made four hours ago. The deal with anybody for anything. Settle it before the second

drink, while you can still count, and while you still care what things cost.

Because after the fifth drink you're not negotiating. You're donating. The drunk version of you is generous, he's lonely, he wants everybody to like him, and he has your PIN.

Booze is for courage, not contracts.

REPEAT AFTER ME

If it costs money, I decide it sober and I decide it first.

VII. Thou shalt set thine own pace.

"Just one drink first." Famous last words.

In this town, whoever sets the pace sets the price. If somebody else picks the bar, the next bar, the restaurant, the hotel, the tour, the taxi, the jewellery shop, understand that there's a real chance somebody's earning a commission on your choice. That's not a crime. That's business. It's just not *your* business, and you're the one paying for it.

So you pick. You pick where you drink, how long you stay, when you leave. You pick your own hotel before you land. You check your own bill, and if there's a drink on it you didn't order, you point at it, politely, before you pay. You move when you're ready to move, not when somebody else's cup is empty.

Control the pace, control the price.

REPEAT AFTER ME

I choose where I go, how long I stay, and what's on my bill.

VIII. Thou shalt not be a Cheap Charlie.

Now, before you take all of this and turn into the guy who counts the ice cubes, let me stop you.

There's a name in Thailand for the foreigner who wants everything and pays for nothing. Cheap Charlie. He haggles over twenty baht with a woman selling mango on the street. He sits in a bar for three hours on one beer and complains that nobody's talking to him. He tells the girl at the massage place he'll tip "next time." He's the guy who makes the rest of us look bad, and everybody in the soi knows his face by Wednesday.

These people are working. The waitress, the bartender, the driver, the woman at the massage shop. Their time is their money. Pay what you ordered. Pay what you agreed. Tip for good service, even a little. Don't waste somebody's working night because you're lonely and don't want to spend.

The balance is the whole game. Don't be the walking ATM, and don't be Cheap Charlie. Be the man who pays fair, tips decent, says thank you, and leaves. That man gets remembered well in a town where being remembered well is worth more than money.

REPEAT AFTER ME

I pay what I owe, I tip what's fair, and I don't waste anybody's time.

IX. Thou shalt let the buffalo die.

Sooner or later, the buffalo gets sick.

In this town, "my buffalo is sick" is the joke name for every money request that comes wrapped in a family emergency. Mama's in hospital. The motorbike crashed. The school needs fees. The roof

is leaking. The buffalo, God rest it, has a condition that only your bank transfer can cure. And it always seems to come late at night, right after a good day together, right when you're relaxed and warm and feeling like a good man.

Here's the part the Hall of Fools never figures out: the first payment is never the real payment. It's the test. A small amount, a couple of thousand baht, to see if you're the kind of man who pays. If you are, you've just been promoted. The buffalo recovers. And then the cousin crashes into a rice field.

Now, hear me. Supporting family is normal here. Grown children send money home to their parents all over Thailand, and there's nothing shady about it. Some of those emergencies are real. That's exactly why it works. But it is not your job, as a man she met last week, to fund a family you've never met in a village you couldn't find on a map.

So when the buffalo gets sick, you don't argue. You don't lecture. You don't play detective and ask for vet bills. You say "I'm sorry to hear that," you change the subject, and you keep your wallet where it is. If whatever you had disappears when the money stops, then now you know what you had. That's the cheapest lesson in this book.

Her crisis is not your cause.

REPEAT AFTER ME

When the buffalo gets sick, I wish it well and keep my wallet in my pocket.

X. Thou shalt remember there's always another night.

Last one, and it's the one that holds the other nine together.

Pattaya is infinite. There's another bar two metres away. Another club. Another island. Another sunset on Jomtien. Another trip, next year, when you've saved up again. Whatever you're about to blow your whole budget on tonight, there will be another one tomorrow, and there'll be another one after that.

Your money is not infinite. Your vacation days are not infinite. Your liver is definitely not infinite.

I've watched men max out a credit card on one night because they thought it was the best night of their lives. I've watched them cancel their flight home for a woman they'd known six days, sell the bike they came to ride, and call their brother for a loan. Every one of them was sure this night was special. Every one of them was wrong, not because the night wasn't good, but because they forgot there'd be another.

The calm man eats better. The desperate man gets taxed. Be calm.

REPEAT AFTER ME

Pattaya is infinite. My money is not.



All ten, one more time

Put this on your phone. Screenshot it. Read it at the airport.

1. I will not marry my holiday.
2. Nothing gets decided, promised or paid for in the first seventy-two hours.
3. Protection, every time.
4. I drink the SangSom. It does not drink me.
5. Small bills in front, big money in the safe.

6. If it costs money, I decide it sober and I decide it first.
7. I set my own pace, and I check my own bill.
8. I am not a Cheap Charlie, and I am not an ATM.
9. When the buffalo gets sick, I let it die.
10. Pattaya is infinite. My money is not.

Notice something? Not one of these rules is about her. Not one. The women in this town aren't the villains of your story. They're doing a job, and most of them do it well. Every commandment here is about you: your drinking, your ego, your loneliness, your wallet. Pattaya doesn't corrupt men. It reveals them. These ten rules just make sure you like what it shows you.

The rest of the book goes deep: the bar machine and the mamasan's five plays, the sick-buffalo scam from the tutorial level to the half-built house, the Simp Hall of Shame, Simp Rehab, how to get out of town and see the real Thailand, and how to stay on the right side of the law when you're a guest in somebody else's country.

Get the full guide at **pattayathailand.org** and watch the channel at **hoodboxoffice.com/a-degenerates-guide**.

And if you only take one thing with you on the plane, take this. In an emergency, the Tourist Police speak English, and the number is **1155**.

Stay reckless, stay unapologetic, and I'll see you in the next mess.

Cheers, you degenerates.