
Surge in US Investors Seeking Thai Residence

For immediate release: London, Tuesday 12 May 2020

Thailand's sought-after [Thailand Elite Residence Program](#) has seen a significant increase in applications from US citizens since the start of the year and the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. The latest sales figures reveal that the number of US applicants in just the first three months of 2020 is already more than 50% of the total US applicants for the whole of 2019. This is due in part to coronavirus-induced travel restrictions, with US citizens currently in Thailand opting to stay and enjoy the benefits of living in Thailand on a more permanent basis. However, US application numbers from outside the country have also spiked, with Q1 2020 recording a 100% increase in US applicants compared to both Q1 2019 and Q4 2019.

[Dominic Volek](#), Managing Partner and Head of Southeast Asia at leading international residence and citizenship advisory firm [Henley & Partners](#), says Thailand continues to be the destination of choice for entrepreneurs and investors. "Entrepreneur investors remain the largest category of applicants for the [Thailand Elite Residence Program](#) thanks to Thailand's excellent global reputation as a business center and innovation hub."

A similar recent surge in demand to reside in Thailand can be seen in applicants from Australia, afflicted this summer by both devastating bush fires and the coronavirus. [Henley & Partners](#) reports that the total number of Australian applicants for the [Thailand Elite Residence Program](#) in Q1 2020 was more than half the number of Australian applicants for the whole of 2019. Compared to Q1 2019, there was a staggering increase of 228% in Australian applicants in Q1 2020, and 130% when compared to Q4 2019.

The [Thailand Elite Residence Program](#) has gone from strength to strength since the Thailand Privilege Card Co., Ltd appointed [Henley & Partners](#) as global concessionaire in 2017, with sales increasing by 70% over the past three years. According to Mr. Somchai Soongswang, President of [Thailand Privilege Card Co., Ltd.](#), the operator of Thailand Elite Card, "Henley & Partners has contributed a tremendous effort to promote the program, and Thailand is seeing the benefits."

Since [Henley & Partners](#) became the official global concessionaire, the [Thailand Elite Residence Program](#) has expanded considerably and now has over 8,600 members — a figure that is expected to cross the 10,000 mark this year. Over the past three years there has been significant uptake by certain nationalities in particular; the numbers of British and French applicants have increased by 75% and 73%, respectively, while the number of Japanese applicants has risen by a remarkable 161%.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has triggered a significant spike in general interest in investment migration among wealthy individuals and their families who consider it a unique and powerful hedge against volatility and wider value destruction. As Volek explains, “The uncertainty and instability caused by the COVID-19 pandemic are driving more wealthy individuals to reevaluate their priorities and seek alternative options for residence, and the [Thailand Elite Residence Program](#) is the perfect choice. Investing in the program enables them to transition to a new life in one of the world’s most desirable destinations, which offers an excellent and very affordable quality of life, and where they feel more comfortable and secure.”

One of Thailand’s drawcards is its excellent universal healthcare system, which was ranked as 6th-best in the world last year by CEOWORLD Magazine. Thailand has world-class, international-standard hospitals in its larger urban centers, and the country has been praised for having one of the lowest rates of transmission and fatalities of COVID-19 in the world.

[Henley & Partners](#) CEO [Dr. Juerg Steffen](#) says alternative residence or citizenship not only provides wealthy individuals with a range of alternatives for places to live and conduct their business, but the programs also contribute significantly to the economic well-being of the countries that host them. “Investment migration is a win-win solution for global investors and sovereign states alike. Over and above the obvious benefit of providing a home in a different and possibly safer location of their choice, it also helps individuals and their families secure access to new markets, top educational institutions, better healthcare systems, and a suite of investment and personal opportunities for both present and future generations.”

The first of its kind worldwide, the [Thailand Elite Residence Program](#) is managed by [Thailand Privilege Card Co., Ltd.](#), and offers applicants privilege entry visas that include a wide range of VIP benefits. The program grants multiple-entry visas to qualified applicants, which allows them to visit and reside in Thailand for periods of between five and twenty years, at a one-time cost of between THB 500,000 (approximately USD 16,000) and THB 2.14 million (approximately USD 68,000) depending on the option chosen. Benefits include airport limousine services and lounge access, expedited immigration formalities, access to world-class healthcare services, a dedicated concierge, and various privileges across hotels, shopping centers, golf courses, and more.

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Notes to Editors

About Henley & Partners

Henley & Partners is the global leader in residence and citizenship planning. Each year, hundreds of wealthy individuals and their advisors rely on our expertise and experience in this area. The firm’s highly qualified professionals work together as one team in over 30 offices worldwide.

The concept of residence and citizenship planning was created by Henley & Partners in the 1990s. As globalization has expanded, residence and citizenship have become topics of significant interest among the increasing number of internationally mobile entrepreneurs and investors whom we proudly serve every day.

The firm also runs a leading government advisory practice that has raised more than USD 8 billion in foreign direct investment. Trusted by governments, the firm has been involved in strategic consulting and in the design, set-up, and operation of the world's most successful residence and citizenship programs.

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