



Mondo - Sendi Grilli, from Montemarciano to Pattaya, catering, entrepreneurship, via literary experiences

Dal nostro corrispondente a Bangkok - 17 set 2022 (Prima Pagina News) More than a manager in the entrepreneurial field, in the field of catering and venues designed to welcome international tourism, Sendi Grilli is a magic box full of surprises.

Clear eyes, open and sincere gaze, illuminated by a beautiful smile, which reminds me of a famous popular Chinese motto: "The best salesman is the one with the best smile." This is Sendi Grilli, 47, from Montemarciano (AN), who after much wandering and traveling around the world, especially in Asia, decided to settle in Thailand, living and working in Pattaya. A populous city that "tells" so much notorious oleography about his way of being and thinking. What made you decide to move to Thailand and specifically to Pattaya? I first came to Thailand as a tourist in 2002, it was my first time in the East, actually. I had been abroad before, in the U.S. in Central America, in various countries in Europe. My first dream was really to go and live in the United States, somewhat driven also by my studies in Sociology, studies that however, I later abandoned. In America, in a small town in the state of New Jersey, I had my first work experience in the restaurant industry, an Italian restaurant run by a Sicilian gentleman. I was fascinated by the United States, every opportunity was good to visit new places: Hawaii, Miami, San Francisco, Las Vegas and more. Then, it was the turn of trips to the East: Thailand, Laos, Japan, Malaysia, Cambodia, Vietnam, Singapore and China. Thailand, at that time was a kind of "hub" where I stayed before moving on later to visit nations in the area. It was about 10 years of travel where I was able to experience important existential experiences as well, and that contributed to the formation of the current way of thinking and being. I also had a few locales in Italy, two in the last year of my stay, then, my decision to come to live and work here. In the time frame of your stay in Pattaya, let's say from the perspective of your personal and business experience, do you find that Pattaya has changed a lot over Time? Pattaya is a bizarre city, not coincidentally, it is the setting for my latest novel, "Giusto per non lasciarci come dei cani", where the main character is a writer who decides to give himself a period of rest and reflection and which contains within it a language deeply mediated by the context of film, another passion of mine that goes hand in hand with that of reading. I previously published "Midnight Cowgirl" and "Un club molto privato". So much has changed in Pattaya, from lifestyle to urban profile, from customs and mores to quality of life. The whole landscape has been reshaped by several factors, changes in international tourism flows, for example. Given the gradually declining purchasing power of Western countries, Tourism is now characterized more by Indians, Chinese, Russians, and more recently Turks. This could be a subject for serious reflection, in the Italian case, about how much purchasing power Italians have lost in recent decades. An Italian retiree -who



once lived decently in Thailand and here in Pattaya specifically- today struggles to live on the same amount of money that once guaranteed him a peaceful stay. This means that the long-term resident and retiree today frequents venues less, spends more wisely, of course, and tries to save wherever possible. Another factor of change, more recently, has been introduced by Covid. A sad and dismal time, characterized by ancestral fears and severe limitations. It was precisely the limitations imposed to protect public health, such as reduced hours to the sale of alcohol and its availability in the few hours allowed to the restaurant industry, that were among the reasons why I myself and my partners decided to leave the establishment, "Il Peccatore." I went back to work in Italy, recapitalized and then returned again to Thailand as anti-Covid restrictions allowed. Here in Pattaya, Ruggiero Papeo, who has been living in Thailand for ten years, a personal friend of mine, offered me the opportunity to join him in the management of Frankie's Inn in Pattaya, an opportunity I welcomed with great pleasure and which is now my daily profession. Pattaya, I said, is a bizarre city and often difficult to decipher, while at other times, it appears clearly in its essence. Unlike the capital city Bangkok, a vast megalopolis, Pattaya is also different in terms of accommodating those who want to work there. Especially in certain areas of work that are -for many- the core business of this city. Typically, girls who come from depressed parts of the country, to take one example, experience the world of the sex market with less moralistic pressure than in Italy, where the Catholic-inspired cultural system is often inclined to demonize this. For these girls who come to Pattaya to do work akin to sensuality and its commodification, however, it is simply a matter of performing the function of supporting their families of origin, since there is no form of social support in Thailand at an older age or livelihood in times of crisis, as sadly happened in the worst moments of the lockdown from Covid. On the other hand, they are the family pension fund. Let's say there is a different moral approach. All of this, appears-in different forms-also in the world of social and inter-personal relations. But this is too complex a subject and deserves a separate discussion.

di Francesco Tortora Sabato 17 Settembre 2022