

Thai food is delicious stuff, and given the variety variety of Surat Thani's local cuisine and the various Issan restaurants around town, it takes a while to try out all of the yummy options and even longer to bore of them. That said, sometimes in the expat life you have one of those days when you just need some Western food. Luckily, if you're willing to shell out a few extra baht, you won't have to suffer culinary homesickness for long. I'll rate them on a scale of one to three thumbs up.

### **Impressions Café** ☺☺

Conveniently nestled between Old and New Thida, this place is a godsend for Prathom teachers during those occasional dead spaces in the class schedule. The owner, having spent time in Portland, speaks English and understands the western coffee palette (read: not instant). He makes delicious (and beautiful) lattés, mochas, and the like for 45-60 baht. Impressions is also the only place I've seen cereal, which costs only 20 baht for a bowl with milk. To top it off, the wi-fi is fast and free. I give it 2 out of 3 only because he doesn't have much food, just cereal, cup-of-noodles, and weird Thai chips. But overall, a great spot.

### **Milano's** ☺☺



A farang favorite, you'll never be the only foreign face in this Italian pizzeria. The pizza's pretty good, and I'm told the pasta's better. But oddly enough, the way to go here is the inexplicable Mexican section of the menu. It's not quite accurate, so first give yourself a month or two to forget the glory that is Mexican food in the States. But hey, this is Asia, anything close to a taco is a pleasant surprise. The fajitas (240 baht) are the closest you'll ever find, and the sincronizada (160 baht), a chalupa sort of affair, is strange but super delicious. I give the place only 2 of 3 because it's mad expensive, and most teachers allow themselves a visit only once a month (usually right after payday).

### **Gun-et-té** ☺☺☺

In Surat's prettiest stretch, a palm-lined boulevard that runs alongside the river, you'll find this cute café-style restaurant. They've got an English menu full of western treats for surprisingly low prices. The chicken burger, although more of a sandwich than a burger, is delicious, and will

only set you back 70 baht, 80 if you spring for cheese. Order a fruit and yogurt smoothie to complement it for only 45 baht, cheaper than most coffeshops. I wouldn't quite call banana samosas western, but get them anyway. They're awesome. Three out of three.

### **Pizza Company** ☺

This place is insanely expensive (more than quadruple what you'll pay for most meals) but if you make a stop here while you still have those US dollars, you'll love it. The pizza is delicious, the menu's all in English, and it's right in the center of town near Super English, the night market, and lots of shopping. It's a good spot, just far outside your average monthly budget. Luckily, Peter has a buy one get on free card, so if you can get a hungry group together the price is easier to manage. I've only given it one out of three because it's so pricey that I've only managed to go there once, but it's on the list because that one time was glorious.

### **Coffee Heart** ☺☺☺



This place is in a weird location, tucked away on a side street, but I accidentally came across it one day and it's become one of my favorite spots in Surat. It's adorable as only Thailand can be, impeccably decorated and staffed by beautiful, fashionable girls who speak enough English to make good recommendations. Their fried rice and shrimp wonton soup are great, but it's on the western food radar because they have what I believe to be Thailand's best French fries. Seriously, better than McDonald's. And they draw hearts on the plate with ketchup. So cute. Also good coffee and fast wi-fi. Great spot.