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Inside the first Middlesbrough-themed bar in Thailand with Teesside owners and parmo

A Boro-themed pub opens its doors in northeast Thailand

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By **Tommy Walker** 14:00, 6 AUG 2025

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Staff at the Red Lion Sports Bar, located in Buriram, Thailand (Image: Tommy Walker)

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journey for the inaugural event. The Red Lion Sports Bar, co-owned by two Teessider's, is donned with the famous [Middlesbrough](#) red and located in Buriram, fittingly, in the northeast of the country.

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The two owners, Michael Farley and Adam Jennings decided to build the bar over a beer. Farley from [Acklam](#), Middlesbrough, works as a rope access scaffolder in the oil and gas industry which takes him on jobs around the world. But after living in Thailand for nearly 15 years wanted a place which is more representative of his roots.

"I built the bar close to home as there is nothing like it close to me, with a view to making it a resort in the future. It took one year to build," said. Farley added he hopes to add a swimming pool and rooms to rent in the future.

Jennings is a joiner from [Easterside](#) in Middlesbrough, who has spent the best part of the last decade visiting and basing in Thailand. For him, the opening of the bar is a bittersweet moment following the tragic death of his 2-year-old son, Dominic, in 2023.

But after chat with Farley about the project took shape, the bar became a lifeline for Jennings. He also says meeting his girlfriend Sara from Thailand, helped him deal with the tragic events.

Inside The Red Lion

The opening celebrations started early after midday. We were greeted warmly by Farley and his wife Jum, who hails from the area. All members of staff were wearing locally made Middlesbrough attire, proudly representing the club which is over 7,400 miles away.

The walls are donned with the iconic Middlesbrough red lion, while there was signed memorabilia from former [Boro](#) legends like Paul Gascoigne, and locally made Middlesbrough shirts available for purchase. The prices for beer match are budget friendly with the Red Lion selling 630ml bottles of beers at 5% strength from as low as £1.73, or locally \$75 Baht. Beer brands include Singha and Leo.

The opening day even saw the bar serve the Teesside's famous own chicken [parmo](#), a delicacy that is catching on worldwide.



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 **The Red Lion Sports Bar sign, located in Buriram, Thailand, and a parmo** (Image: Tommy Walker)

Expats In Thailand

Customers were in for an extra treat as many watched the Boro live on the bar's TV screens. They watched the 2-2 draw with Deportivo la Corina at the Riverside in the final friendly of pre-season. Boro came back from 2-1 to nab a draw with Tommy Conway securing the equaliser and his second of the game after good work from Sammy Silvera from the left.

Teesside expats Andrew Storey and Stephen Osbaldeston were amongst the happy patrons at the Red Lion, as they proudly held up the official Thailand Middlesbrough Supporters Club flag, representing an online community of Middlesbrough fans visiting Thailand. The flag was provided as a gift to Farley and Jennings to hang in their spacious bar.

Both Storey and Osbaldeston also hail from Acklam but have been working in Thailand since early 2024 as oilfield consultants to the Thai National Oil Company in the capital Bangkok. They've struggled to keep up with Boro games and news during this time but are thankful there are is a place reminiscent of Teesside now in Thailand.

There are similar Boro bars in other countries such as Spain, but the Teesside expats say bar in Buriram probably the best they've seen outside of Middlesbrough.

"We all had a great day at the bar opening and it was brilliant to have a parmo before watching the Boro game against Deportivo," Storey said. "We will definitely be back to catch a few more games during the season."

"The open-air atmosphere and friendly service are excellent, with many sports available on TV. It's great to be able to call in somewhere like the Red Lion and feel immediately at home. We were promised a great night and an authentic parmo by Michael and Adam, the bar owners, and they weren't wrong," Osbaldeston added.

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 **The Red Lion Sports Bar, located in Buriram, Thailand** (Image: Tommy Walker)

Boro Battle

It also comes after a tumultuous week for Thailand, in particular for people living in Buriram and nearby areas. The Boro-themed pub opened despite concerns over border conflict in the area after Thailand and Cambodia had exchanged fire at their 500-mile borderline over disputed territory for over a week prior to the opening.

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The Red Lion staff even heard sounds of artillery and shelling during the conflict, but the fighting has eventually stopped following a ceasefire agreement was put in place from July 28 between the two Southeast Asian countries.

Disclaimer:

Tommy Walker is a foreign correspondent in Bangkok but grew up in Stockton-on-Tees. Tommy co-founded the Thailand Middlesbrough Supporters Club and also attended the opening of The Red Lion Sports Bar on Saturday. The Red Lion Sports Bar can be found in Lawia, Prakhon Chai District, Buri Ram, Thailand.

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