

Spot the fakes

Nothing is what it seems in this display

Published: [17/05/2011](#) at 12:00 AM

Newspaper section: [Life](#)

While most museums display real, rare and precious items, there is one museum that showcases fake items instead. With more than a thousand of fake items displayed next to their genuine counterparts, the Tilleke & Gibbins Museum of Counterfeit Goods reveals how easily you can be fooled into thinking some fake items that are widely sold across Thailand and Southeast Asia are the real thing.

0

Share



A counterfeit automotive part on display.

A counterfeit automotive part on display.

The collection of counterfeit items covers 14 categories, including clothing, watches and eyewear, drugs, food, cosmetics and perfumes, mobile phones and accessories, automotive parts, and even motorcycles. Some companies commit an infringement of intellectual property rights by copying a genuine trademark only, but there are some fake items where you can hardly notice any difference to the genuine article, even when they are compared side-by-side.

Though it is just a one-room museum, there were so many fake goods on display that the first thing that came to my mind while stepping inside was: "Do I have any fake goods with me?"

One of the museum's walls is dedicated to clothing items, where hundreds of famous brand-name shirts are on exhibit.

"There are quite a lot of counterfeit shirts and other clothing items. Seizures of these kinds of products are made every day," Parichart Monaiyakul, attorney-at-law at the Bangkok office of Tilleke & Gibbins, explained, while walking me through each area of the small, but very interesting museum.

The museum was established in 1989 by Tilleke & Gibbins, a law firm that handles many intellectual property cases. The firm created the museum with the aim of educating people about the problem of counterfeit goods and intellectual property violation. The items showcased in the museum represent just a tiny percentage of all the seized counterfeit goods.



"You can often identify counterfeit goods based on their quality, the place where they are being sold, as well as the price and the packaging. Genuine products should be well-packaged. So, if you find it at a street stall on the footpath without packaging, you can be quite sure that it is a fake. As you may know, brand name clothes cost more than a thousand baht apiece, while luxury bags are generally priced above 10,000 baht each."

At first, I thought counterfeit goods meant the fake clothing and accessories easily found along Sukhumvit Road and Silom Road. But after visiting the museum, I became more aware about fake goods - that they can be found everywhere and that it involves a lot of people. The museum displays fake drugs, powdered milk, shampoos, automotive parts, tools, books, toys and more.

"Fake shampoo and other household products can be found at flea markets in the outer provinces. These products sometimes come with trademarks quite similar to the real ones, which makes it rather difficult for many consumers to discern any differences, especially if they do not take notice or cannot read the labels printed in English," Parichart said.

One of the most difficult counterfeit items to spot is a mobile phone battery. The fake battery displayed in the museum is quite similar to the genuine one. But if you plan on buying a cheap battery for your mobile phone, be extra careful. Fake ones have been known to explode, since they are so poorly made and are not fused properly, causing them to overheat quite easily.



Although occupying only a single small room, the Tilleke & Gibbins Museum of Counterfeit Goods is packed with thousands of exhibits of fake merchandise.

There are many other fake goods you should think twice before buying, such as automotive parts. The museum displays several such fakes, ranging from ignition wires and spark plugs to various motorcycle parts.

Although occupying only a single small room, the Tilleke & Gibbins Museum of Counterfeit Goods is packed with thousands of exhibits of fake merchandise.

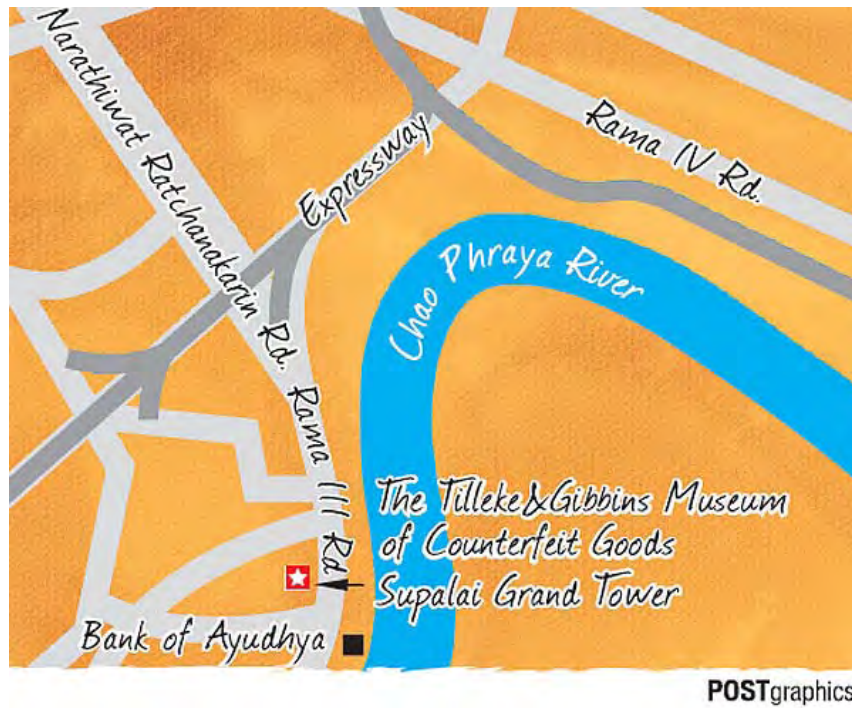
Fake merchandise may be a bargain compared to the pricey genuine ones, however, Parichart thinks otherwise.

"If you want to save money, it's better to buy a cheaper brand than a fake one of a famous brand," she reasoned. "Buying new products that are genuine encourages innovation, as producers will invest more in creating new and better products. On the other hand, if you buy fake goods, this creation will not happen."

Who knew that the collection of fake items at this small museum would mirror the huge effect it has on our lives and the economy - and how it will never stop if the problem of counterfeit goods continues to be ignored.



Fake mobile phone accessories that were confiscated.



MORE INFO

- The Tilleke & Gibbins Museum of Counterfeit Goods is located on the 26th floor of Supalai Grand Tower on Rama III Road in Yannawa district of Bangkok, and opens Mon- Fri from 10am-4pm (appointments must be made a minimum of 24 hours in advance). Call 02-653-5555 for details.

Did you know?

You can subscribe to free e-newsletters and receive e-mail alerts when other people leave comments in articles after you did. [Click here](#) to take full advantage of the alerts!

About the author



Writer:
Peerawat
Jarivasombat
Position:
Reporter

Keep this article in your social bookmark:

[Delicious](#) [Digg](#) [Reddit](#) [Stumbleupon](#)
[Technorati](#) [Twitter](#) [Republishing permission](#)
[Print this](#) [E-mail this](#)

Bangkok Post : News | Business | Opinion | Travel | Leisure | Tech | Entertainment | Auto | Life | Teen | Guru Bangkok
 Services : Article search | Job search | Forum | Classified | SMS news | Read e-paper | Digital print page | Read Bangkok Post
 Post Today : Home | Local news | Finance | Investment | Leisure | Business | International | Sports
 Post Publishing PCL : Corporate info download | Subscribe newspaper | Online advertising | Web suggestion | Corporate contact
 © Copyright 1996-2008 The Post Publishing Public Company Limited | Privacy policy | Help | Sitemap