

PHUKET GUIDE



Known as the 'Pearl of the Andaman', Phuket is the largest island of Thailand. It is approximately the size of Singapore of 540 square kilometres and is surrounded by additional 32 islands.

Phuket formerly derived its wealth from tin and rubber. The island was on one of the major trading routes between India and China. The region now derives much of its income from tourism.

Phuket is truly a tropical wonderland and offers something for just about everyone. Spectacular scenery, stunning tropical sunsets and warm blue sea awaits you at Asia's most popular beach destination.

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How to Get to Phuket

From Overseas

■ Air

There are several direct flights between Phuket and international destinations e.g. Kuala Lumpur, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Sydney. Dragon Air, Malaysia Airlines, Silk Air & Singapore Airlines operates international flights connecting Phuket with these destinations. Please call airline offices for more details.

From Bangkok

■ Air

Domestic airlines operate several flights daily between Bangkok and Phuket. Some flights go to Phuket via Samui Island with a 40-minute stopover. List of airlines are as follows:

Phuket Air, Bangkok Airways, Thai Airways International, One-to-Go & Air Asia.



■ Car

Take Highway No.4 through Phetchaburi, Prachuap Khiri Khan, Chumphon, Surat Thani and Phang-nga Provinces, then cross the Thap Krasattri Bridge or Sarasin Bridge to Phuket Island. The total distance is 862 kilometres and the travel time is approximately 12 hours.

■ Train

A sleeper train leaves from Hua Lumphong Railway station in Bangkok to Surat Thani, and then transfer to a bus across to Phuket. This is an exhausting journey, though very scenic. The train journey takes about 12 hours from Bangkok with another 4 hours from Surat to Phuket by road.



Weather



There are only two seasons in a year - the rainy season (May to October) and the hot season (November to April). The low season of Phuket is between September and October as they are the wettest months. Average temperatures ranges between 23°C and 33°C.



Getting around Phuket

■ Songthaews



Songthaew is local open-air bright blue bus, running normally between Phuket town and the popular beaches from 7.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m. The fare for one-way trip is about 20-30 Baht.

■ Tuk Tuk

For trips of any duration at any time of day, a tuk tuk is often the most efficient. A trip within a beach area or town shouldn't cost more than 50 Baht, but for trips further afield, anything up to 400 Baht can be expected, depending on the distance, the weather and your bargaining skills!

■ Motorcycle Taxi

Not the safest way to travel but they are a convenient option for short trips. You will see them on street corners all over Phuket. The drivers wear red or green vests. Agree the price before you start the journey. Short trips around town should cost 20-40 baht.

■ Bicycle/Motorcycle Car Rental

They are available for hire all over the island. Costing for a rent is about 50-100 Baht for a bicycle, 200-800 a day for motorcycle, 900-2,000 Baht for a car. Just make sure to bargain and recheck the prices before rental.

■ Longtail boats

A voyage in a longtail boat is an interesting experience and a great way to take short sightseeing trips. Rental prices average 400 baht per hour for short trips and up to 1200 baht for a roundtrip to a neighbour beach.



Places of Interest

■ Phromthep Cape



A famous location in Phuket as well as the most photographed for tourists to see the spectacular view of the Andaman Sea and the sunset. A destination that should not be missed!

■ Phuket Zoo

A fun place to see a large collection of more than 600 species of birds, 100 species of reptiles and amphibians, and 45 species of mammals. Crocodile wrestling performances and elephant & monkey shows occur throughout the day, and elephant rides are bound to amuse the kids.



Entry fee: - 500 Baht - adults & 300 Baht (Kids).

Please visit <http://www.phuketzoo.com> for timings of the shows of your choice!

■ Khao Phra Thaeo National Park



Located in the north of Phuket, this park contains the only remaining virgin rainforest on the island. The park trails offer visitors a chance to explore and to enjoy the sights and sounds of the jungle. Watch out for the beautiful waterfalls and the gibbon rehabilitation centre.

■ **The Phuket Butterfly Garden & Aquarium**

One of the world's best butterfly gardens, with a large open-air enclosure, landscaped with waterfalls, houses thousands of vivid butterflies and lush greenery. The aquarium provides a wide range of different kinds of marine life, colourful corals and dozens of extraordinary-looking fishes.



Entry fee: - 300 Bht (Adults) & 150 Bht (Child below 10yrs).
Open daily: - 9.00 am to 5.30 pm



■ **Wat Chalong Temple**

Wat Chalong, situated 8 kms southeast of Phuket town, is the most well-known temple in Phuket. Many Thais travel long distances to visit this temple to be blessed by the monks and receives a good luck charm in the form of a string tied around the wrist, which they believe protects them from injury and illness. Wat Chalong is a must visit unique tourist destination of Phuket.

Opening Hours: - 7.00am to 5.00pm.

■ **Patong Beach**

The most famous beach resort on Phuket, Patong's 3,000 metre beach offers a great place to relax and enjoy the good life. Many of Phuket's best hotels can be found directly across the road from the beach. The town has a bustling nightlife which includes hundreds of restaurants, chic lounge bars, beer bars and of course discos.



■ **Phi Phi Island**

Seen in Hollywood movies such as 'The Beach', Phi Phi Island is approximately 50 minutes away from Phuket by speedboats. The island consist of 2 small islands: Phi Phi Don is without roads and Phi Phi Leh is

completely free of human inhabitants. It is also a popular place for diving and snorkelling, kayaking and other marine recreational activities. Even with all the hype, it doesn't disappoint.

Shopping

Phuket is a shopaholic's paradise! The island has a great variety of shopping, from open-air village food markets, noisy night markets, street stalls and local shops to western style department stores.

■ **Central Festival Phuket**

Central Festival Phuket is the newest and largest shopping centre that Phuket has to offer. The mall is an air-conditioned, fully equipped shopping mall lying just outside of Phuket Town. The mall is also home to a multi screen cinema and there are plenty of food and beverage outlets from which shoppers can choose.



■ **Jungceylon**

A mega-mall devoted to shopping and entertainment, whose entire basement filled with a great range of local handicrafts from all over Thailand. Jungceylon, also hosts some of the popular teenager label boutiques, sport shops, fast food, and fashions, as well as popular Asian brands. It's a much more relaxed and hassle-free shopping experience than most here.

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■ **Patong Night Bazaar**

Patong Beach transforms into a large night bazaar every evening, when all the main roads become clogged with stalls selling handicrafts, silk scarves, sarongs and a variety of beach clothes, leisure wear, leather goods and luggage, movie



DVDs, CDs, computer games, electronic gadgets and much more!

■ **Phuket Jatujak Market**

A weekend market and probably the best place on the island to find clothes, accessories, shoes and other items at rock-bottom prices. It's quite crowded in the evenings, but this is the best time to go to avoid the heat during the day.

Open on Saturdays and Sundays from mid-afternoon to around 9pm.

After Dark

■ **Phuket Fantasea**



Inspired by Thailand's rich and exotic heritage, Phuket Fantasea is a stunning 140-acre theme complex, packed with a multitude of activities & entertainment. It also offers a 4,000-seater buffet featuring Thai & international cuisine and a breathtaking Las Vegas-style theatrical show.

Please visit <http://www.phuket-fantasea.com> for more information.

■ **Simon Cabaret**

One of Southeast Asia's entertainment attractions drawing a thousand enthused visitors from around the world each evening. The show consists of a number of highly entertaining acts. This is a must see during your stay at Phuket.



Daily Show times: - 7.30pm and 9.30pm.

Prices: - 700Bht (Adults) & 500Bht (Children).

■ **Tiger Discotheque**



Tiger Disco is the only international class discotheque in the world

built inside a tropical cave with a real waterfall. Tiger Disco is one of the most popular disco's in Patong.

Restaurants & Bars & Pubs

■ **9th Floor**



A fully renovated restaurant now features sliding floor-to-ceiling glass windows make The 9th Floor the hippest and highest open air

restaurant in Phuket. Unwind with a bottle of wine in pleasant surroundings with an international food menu. Select from a range of 150 different wines and a large Cuban cigar selection. Amazing view of the bay and sea makes the 9th floor a great experience.

Open: Daily 4pm until late.

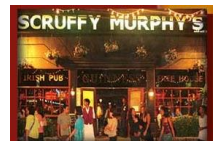
■ **Coyote restaurant**



A large outdoor wooden deck & 2-story full height glass walls give spectacular sunset views over Patong Bay. Coyote brings well-known and authentic Mexican dishes and Southwest Grill to Phuket. Classic dishes include quesadillas, burritos and enchiladas. More than 75 margaritas are available some having such exotic names and flavours as Black forest Margarita and Firecracker Margarita.

Open daily from 11:30am till late.

■ **Scruffy Murphy's Irish Pub**



An Irish-themed pub right in the heart of

Patong's liveliest nightlife area is most famous for its large sized food portions and the happy hour draught beer pints from 100 baht. There is also free Wi-Fi and a live band on every night.

Open Daily: - 10.00am - 2.00am.

■ Joy's Cafe

Relax with a cup of fresh coffee, and a slice of one of Joy's "Island Famous" homemade pies. Choose from a wide-range of foods such as pizza, pasta, steaks, meat pies and delicious Thai food. Home-baked cookies, fresh bread and a Saturday night BBQ are other enticing features.

Open Daily: - 7:00am - 2:00am.

■ The Two Black Sheep Bar and Restaurant

An Aussie owned pub offers full day dining and is one of the few 'family friendly' bars in Patong. A premier live music venue featuring bands playing a wide variety of music from the 60s through to today. Live sport is also heavily featured in the bar with 4 big screen TVs covering all of the current action be it Soccer, Cricket, Tennis, Golf, F1, Moto GP and anything else that happens to be on.

Open Daily: - 9am - 2am

Calendar

■ 23rd January – Chinese New Year

There will be celebration with elaborate ceremonies by the people in Thailand. You will be able to catch sight of stunning fireworks and traditional Chinese new year performances especially the lion and dragon dances.

■ 24th – 25th February Phuket International Blues Festivals

The 2010 Phuket International Blues Rock Festival is a charity event with funds donated to organisations dedicated to Phuket's local children's education. This Festival promises to be the best in its five



year history with top international as well as Thai artists performing.

For more information please see <http://www.phuketbluesfestival.com>

■ March - Phuket Gay Festival



Taking place in Patong, the festival runs over four days with many parties, a volleyball tournament and a street parade that is the highlight of the festival.

■ Mid March - The Thao Thep Krasatri - Thao Sri Sunporn Festival

This event is held annually in mid-March to honour Phuket's the two heroines who defended the island of Phuket at the end of the 18th century. There is a fun-fair, food stalls and stage performances throughout the week.

■ April – Songkran

It is also known as Thai New Year. The youngsters will sprinkle water over elders' hands to show respect to them. There will also be vivid parades, customary ceremonies, and lots of fun.

■ Mid April - Turtle Releasing Festival

The festivities include releasing of turtles into the sea at beaches in the north of the island.

■ 18th – 22nd July – Phuket Race Week

A full week of international-standard yacht racing for a wide range of yachts — from the highly competitive top racers all the way to live aboard cruisers and charter boats.



■ September - October Phuket Vegetarian Festival

An event with clear Chinese origins, where many locals choose to eat only vegetarian food for nine days. Phuket's Vegetarian Festival also features a range of street entertainment, parades and even walking on hot coals.

■ August – Por Tor Festival

Often known as the 'Hungry Ghosts' festival, with offers of local delicacies, turtle-shaped cakes, flowers and gifts to ghosts, held each year in Phuket City.

■ November - Phuket Carnival

Featuring a range of live music (including jazz), art exhibitions, sporting events and sumptuous Thai cuisine.

■ December - King's Cup Regatta

Sailing enthusiasts from around the world come to Phuket every year to take part in the event, which not only involve lots of sailing but plenty of parties in the evenings. <http://www.kingscup.com/>

■ December – Phuket Triathlon

This annual competition takes place in the Laguna Resort complex at Bang Tao Beach. It attracts professional and amateur triathletes from around the world, who come to Phuket to compete in this combination of swimming, cycling and long-distance running. <http://www.lagunaphuket.com/triathlon/>

Things to Know

- Thai people greet each other using the



term "Sawasdee" along with both palms and hands united to form a *wai*.

The *wai* is equivalent to the Western handshake.

- Always show your respect toward the King and members of the Royal Family, monks and elders, as well as all religious statues.
- Thailand is famous for cheap and nice goods; however you may still need to bargain especially in tourist areas.
- Everyday at 8am and 6pm the National Anthem is played in a show of patriotism, and as a sign of respect all Thais will come to a standstill.

Currency

Thai Baht (THB) is used in the country with the below exchange rates (approximate only)

1 EUR =49.35 THB	1 SGD =23.91 THB
1 USD =33.47 THB	1 JPY =0.37 THB
1 AUD =30.25 THB	1 GBP =54.99 THB

Please visit www.xe.com/ucc for updated daily rates.

Important Information

- Language : Thai and English
- Electricity : 220 Volts
- Religion : Buddhist (90%)
- Area Code : +66 (Thailand)
- City Code : 07 (Phuket)
- Time Zone : UTC/GMT +7

Emergency Calls

- Tourist Police: 1555
- Police : 191
- Ambulance : 1646
- Information : 1133