

## Sailing Thailand

**Overview:** whichever you prefer between the wilderness of Mergui and the lively Phi-Ph Island, the Western coast of Thailand have it all. Calm seas, Turquoise waters, amazing nature and a lot to do before and after your cruise. Did I mention Thai food and fresh fish?

**The top places to visit:** Krabi, Phi phi Island, Phang Nga Bay



**Our rating:**

Wind and Sea: easy

Kids friendly: yes

Lifestyle: relax with nice surprises

Gourmet: surprisingly good

**Mileage** (approx) : 90

**Cruise length:** at least 7 days

**When to go:** year round

**Harbours and marinas:** good

**Our top 3 SAILPRO anchorages**

1. Maya Bay
2. Koh Phi Phi Don
3. Butang Islands

**Our Sailing notes**

Gastronomy: Thai cuisine needs no introduction. Curries of any colour, fresh fish and chicken, amazing prawns in coconut milk, all in a rice-lover extravaganza. Most of our vessels propose a mix of Thai and western cuisine, but the best will always be the fresh fish caught during the cruise.

**Recommended restaurants**

Joy! On our favourite catamaran....

**Weather and navigation**

The entire area has typical tropical climate, with a dry season from Dec to April, and a monsoon season from May to October. While even in the dry season one should expect evening thunderstorms, it must be said that the Thai coast is not as humid as others, so that even sailing in the raint season is not bad in the least.

## Harbours and marinas

Mostly anchorages in wilderness, so a boat with a generator and watermaker is a must.

## Our itinerary

**Ko Racha Yai** is a very popular anchorage with an excellent beach, crystal clear water and a new resort with restaurants. Racha is also a popular snorkel, kayak and dive destination near Phuket.

**Map Racha Island** These twin islands are separated by narrow channel. Anchorage is in the channel with gin-clear clear water, good snorkeling, plenty of beaches to explore by kayak, a trek ashore to a lookout and diving. There is a shrine on the shore surrounded by phallus effigies. You will find minimal facilities at the National Parks station. Expect to see some day tourist boats with the place to yourselves early morning and later afternoon and over night. Pure Relaxation.

### **Koh Phi Phi Lee**

Here we find Maya Bay made famous by the movie "The Beach". Phi Phi Le lays 20 miles east of Phuket Island. Maya Bay is a picturesque bay with majestic limestone cliffs. Phi Phi Lee makes a pleasant stopover before Phi Phi Don.

Phi Phi is a great place to partake in a traditional Thai massage.

**Koh Phi Phi Don** is an excellent anchorage in most if not all conditions and is protected by huge limestone cliffs. Facilities ashore include numerous restaurants catering for all tastes, low- key nightclubs and the mandatory clothes and souvenir shops. There are an abundance of activities ashore to keep one occupied. One of the most pleasant walks in the area can be found here, to a lookout above the two bays, Tonsai Bay and Yongkasem Bay. Picture postcard quality photos can be taken here.

**Phang Nga Bay** is 30 miles NE of Phuket with 220sq miles of breathtaking surroundings. Here you will find numerous limestone formations rising vertically up from the seabed to as high as 350 m (1150 ft) make up scenery that is unique in the world.

Several of the pinnacles shaped islands feature hong (Thai for room). A Hong is a large space inside, such an island with a chimney -like opening to the sky. Try to imagine being inside the crater of a long-dead volcano.

Access to hong is mostly by kayak or dinghy at certain heights of the tide. The atmosphere inside a Hong is one of a strange tranquility and sheer beauty Phang Nga Bay's limestone islands and cliffs are riddled with caves, many of which can be safely explored on foot or again by kayak or dinghy.

**Koh Lanta / Koh Po** Is a short sail from Phi Phi Don. Here is found a much more relaxed, layback atmosphere without the bustle of the heavily traveled tourist path. A waterfall can be found about 15 minutes walk from the anchorage passing through a tropical rainforest.

Koh Lanta provides a secure anchorage for the night with restaurants ashore for eating out. Is an interesting island with its fabulous inland lagoon (Hong) known locally as "The Emerald Cave". A Hong is a hollow center to an island or room in Thai. Swim through a cave and find your own private oasis with a beach and sheer cliffs protruding from all sides. Koh Muk is a unique experience and not to be missed. Koh Muk has a protected coastline for exploration by kayak with typical bays, caves and sandy beaches.

**Koh Ha Yai** In Thai "Ha" means five islands. It is a good day stopover with a small beach and a shallow bay facilitating easy snorkeling and kayaking in crystal clear waters with excellent coral formations.

### **Koh Rok Nok & Koh Rok Nai**

Is a group of two islands within easy sailing distance of Koh Ha Yai. A number of excellent beaches with crystal clear waters are found here in a protected channel between the islands. Rok Nok is a great place for drift dive or snorkel in the protected channel between the islands. A local ranger station occupies a small area on Koh Rok Nai otherwise there are no occupants other than other visiting yachts and Thai fishing boats.

## **Butang Islands**

This group of islands forms part of the Tarutao National Park and is the most southern group of Thai islands just on the border of Thailand and Malaysia. The Butang Group of islands lay southwest of Rok Nok some 40 nautical miles. Most of the islands are uninhabited. Koh Lipe has a small Sea Gypsy fishing village on its northeastern side and

a few low-key resorts and restaurants on its southern side. A mountain stream that is fed by mountain run off provides crystal clear drinking water for most of the year on Koh Adang. The Butang Islands are a picturesque and tranquil location to spend a day or two. An interesting walk ashore on Koh Lipe. There is a local dive shop Canadian owned and run. Barry the owner is famous on the islands not only for diving but his freshly baked Brownies cooked at their island bakery. If you wish a dive can be organized here with Barry.

### **Ko Tarutao**

On the Malaysian border. On the Malaysian border about 30 miles east north east of the Butang Islands. Koh Tarutao has a distant history as pirate's nest, later penal colony from World War Two of which remains can still be found. Koh Tarutao now forms part of the Tarutao National Park. In the north a river can be navigated upstream by dinghy deep into the mangrove forest. You will find several hiking trails, a chance to bathe under a waterfall, a number of excellent anchorages, one small restaurant at the national parks station. Koh Tarutao recently hosted the "Survivor" series.