

# PHUKET

FALL & WINTER GUIDE 2011 – 2012



The best places to eat, sleep and play  
in Phuket this fall and winter

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planning a snap for the 50 million travelers visiting our site each month.

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# INTRODUCTION



TripAdvisor, the most trusted source for where to eat, sleep and play in thousands of destinations around the world, has collected the best insider tips from its 50 million monthly visitors to produce a unique series of travel guides. In addition to the best hotels, restaurants and attractions for every type of traveler, you'll get great advice about what to pack, how to get around and where to find the best views. Be sure to check out the guides at [www.tripadvisor.com](http://www.tripadvisor.com).



You'll find reviews for more than 520,000 hotels, 125,000 vacation rentals, 155,000 attractions and 715,000 restaurants on TripAdvisor.com. Learn from other travelers what to expect before you make your plans.



## PACKING TIPS

1. "**Pack light** and leave lots of room in your bags to take touristy stuff back home."—TripAdvisor Member
2. "Pack your **sunscreen** and a **big floppy hat** and be prepared to work on your tan."—TripAdvisor Member, Ao Chalong
3. "Pack your most blatantly **outrageous swimming suit** and prepare for some serious beach lolling."—TripAdvisor Member
4. Some of the best views are underwater. Bring a "**waterproof/shockproof water camera**. They're great for taking shots anywhere you may get wet or the camera may be dropped."—TripAdvisor Member, Melbourne, Australia

## Inside PHUKET

Thailand is known as the "Land of 1,000 Smiles" because of the renowned friendliness of the Thai people. Visit Phuket, Thailand's largest island, and you might just have the "Vacation of 1,000 Smiles." This is a destination rich in distinctive beauty (from blue lagoons to orange-robed monks), adventure (from island hopping to sea canoeing) and delectable seafood (from raw lobster to grilled black sea crabs).

The name of the island is derived from the word for "hill," and Phuket has a plethora of forested hills, mountains and limestone cliffs to explore. But long beaches are its biggest draw. The beaches of the south coast are typically crowded, while the north is far more tranquil. All the major beaches offer instruction and equipment for diving, snorkeling, wind surfing and sailing. With tropical monsoon weather year-round, most beaches offer a perfect place to take a dip any time—except when the red flag is flying! You might as well start smiling now.

# Top VIEWS



## PHUKET'S BEST VIEWS

“**Phromthep Cape**, the southernmost tip of Phuket, is a perfect place to see the sun setting on the Andaman Sea. This popular lookout point offers breathtaking views of several beaches.”—TripAdvisor Member, Toronto, Ontario

**Phromthep Cape**

“Going over the mountain from **Phuket Town to Patong Beach** is like a roller coaster with great views. A drive along the coast is bursting with spectacular scenery.”—TripAdvisor Member, Australia

**Phuket Town to Patong Beach**

Try the view from underwater. “You can find plenty of **good dive sites** all around Phuket.”—TripAdvisor Member

“...like a roller coaster with great views”

## Where to PLAY

### TOP 10 Attractions

1. Phuket Thai Cookery School, 39/4 Thepatan Road, Rasada, Muang Phuket, 76 252 354
2. The Lemongrass Spa, Soi Nanai 8, Patong, 815 379 099
3. Phuket Town, 36 212 213
4. Phromthep Cape, Southernmost point of Phuket
5. Phang Nga Bay
6. Kata Beach, Kathu
7. Koh Racha Yai, Phuket
8. Wat Chalong, Bypass Road, off Vichit, Songkram Road, Chalong
9. Bangla Road, Phuket
10. Phi Phi Islands (Koh Phi Phi)



## FAMILIES

“We had a wonderful time on our **Aloha Snuba** adventure. My boys absolutely loved the entire outing. They provided everything, including lunch and snacks, and let us go at our own pace. The staff explained everything thoroughly and helped my kids adjust to the equipment. They made them feel really safe and relaxed.”—TripAdvisor Member, Shanghai, China

**Aloha Snuba, 48/22 Moo 2, Tambon Rawai, Amphur Muang, Phuket, 81 917 6822**

“**Dino Mini Golf** has it all: food, drinks and fun. The food was good value, and the dinosaur-themed mini golf was one of a kind that all ages can play. We had a ball!”—TripAdvisor Member, Melbourne, Australia

**Dino Mini Golf, Marina Phuket Resort, Karon Beach, Phuket, 76 330 625**

“We found **Khai Island** very relaxing. It's a pretty island, with lovely, blue, calm seas that gave our children an excellent introduction to snorkeling, as well as the wonderful experience of fish eating out of our hands.”—TripAdvisor Member, Adelaide

**Khai Island, Off the East Coast of Phuket**

“A beautiful and relaxing day.”



## ROMANCE

“At **Sukko Spa Resort**, it seemed like everything was done and organized to perfection. We were truly both delighted and satisfied with the wonderful and memorable spa.”—TripAdvisor Member, Malaysia

**Sukko Cultural Spa & Wellness, 5/10 Moo 3 Chaofa Road, Muang, Phuket, 76 263 222**

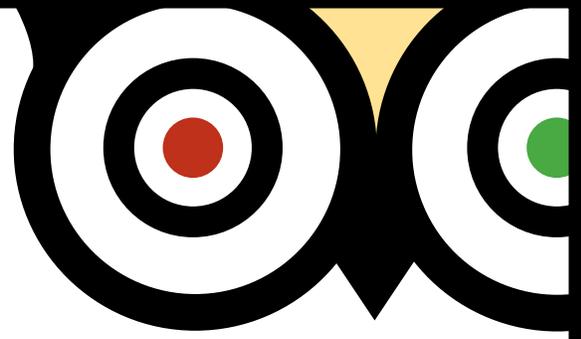
“My husband and I enjoyed a gorgeous day aboard **Phuket Sail Tours**. The pirate caves were truly magnificent, and having our own chef aboard was a real treat. A beautiful and relaxing day.”—TripAdvisor Member, Sydney, Australia

**Phuket Sail Tours, 20/8 Supamart, Ban Pakhlok, Thalang, Phuket, 87 897 0492**

Take a starlight tour with **John Gray's Sea Canoe**. “It was so good to have the Hongts to ourselves. The visit to the Hong in the dark was terrific, especially as the bioluminescent (light-emitting) organisms in the water were very active.”—TripAdvisor Member, Australia

**John Gray's Sea Canoe Ltd., 124 Soi 1 Yaowaraj Road, Taladyai, Muang Phuket, 076 254 5056**

# Where to **PLAY**



## BUDGET

**Wat Chalong** is a beautiful, important Buddhist temple, where many come to be blessed by monks. When you visit, “don’t forget to cover your arms.”—TripAdvisor Member, Australia

**Wat Chalong, Bypass Road, off Vichit Songkram Road, Chalong**

“You can in fact shop ‘til you pop in **Phuket Town**. Love it or hate it, you gotta haggle. Do not be ashamed: Divide the offered price by ten and offer that.”—TripAdvisor Member, Phuket

**Phuket Town**

Get away from the crowds and lounge beside the shallow, calm waters of **Layan Beach**. “We could not believe we were in Phuket on arrival at Layan, it’s so quiet and peaceful.”—TripAdvisor Member, Harrogate, U.K.

**Layan Beach**

“...unspoiled white sand beaches”



## ADVENTURE

**Simba Sea Trips** “was probably one of the wildest and finest sea excursions I’ve had. My wife had a great time learning to snorkel. Overall, we had a really chilled out, fun and exciting time.”—TripAdvisor Member, Mumbai, India

**Simba Sea Trips, Royal Phuket Marina, 76 289 044**

“The twin islands of **Rok Nok** offer unspoiled white sand beaches and clear blue waters. You can rent a boat to sail around the islands or go diving and snorkeling in the vivid corals.”—TripAdvisor Member, Toronto, Ontario

**Ko Rok Nok, South of Phuket**

“For a colorful adventure you can explore the limestone caverns of **Phang Nga Bay** on guided tours in inflatable canoes.”—TripAdvisor Member

**Phang Nga Bay**

TripAdvisor members have posted more than 8,000,000 traveler photos on the site. The good, the bad and the very candid. It’s almost like being there!



## EDUCATIONAL/HISTORICAL

“**River Rovers** is really a trip into natural, unspoiled Thailand. We sailed into the Mangroves and were given a kayak to explore freely. Then, we headed off to a sea village and were welcomed into one of the homes while the family cooked for us. It really was a once in a lifetime experience.”—TripAdvisor Member, Lancaster, U.K.

**River Rovers, 1/16 Moo 9, Soi Ao Chalong Chaofa Road, Phuket, 76 280 420**

Learn to cook Thai food at **Pum’s Cooking School**. “I really liked the hands-on approach. It’s a very colorful and interesting experience, with a full range of the delicious food you can taste while in Thailand.”—TripAdvisor Member, Rome, Italy

**Pum’s Restaurant and Cooking School, 204/32 Rajuthit 200 Pi, Patong Beach, Ampur Kathu, 76 346 269**

“The **Butterfly Garden & Insectarium** was full of colorful butterflies. Some were flying around, some would stop near us. It was amazing. We even saw one of them lay her eggs.”—TripAdvisor Member, Oxford, U.K.

**Butterfly Garden & Insectarium, 71/6 Samkong, Phuket Town, 76 210 861**

“A full range of delicious food.”



## RELAXATION

“If you like your beach quiet, **Kata Beach** is the place to go.”—TripAdvisor Member, New Zealand

**Kata Beach**

“**Racha Island** is an idyllic place to relax. This is also a fantastic place for snorkeling!”—TripAdvisor Member, Birmingham, England

**Racha Island**

“If you are into golf, get a round in at the **Blue Canyon Country Club**. One of the best courses I have been to.”—TripAdvisor Member, Singapore

**Blue Canyon Country Club, 165, Moo 1, Thepkasattri Road, Thalung, 76 328 088**

# What's the **TOUR**

## How to Get Around

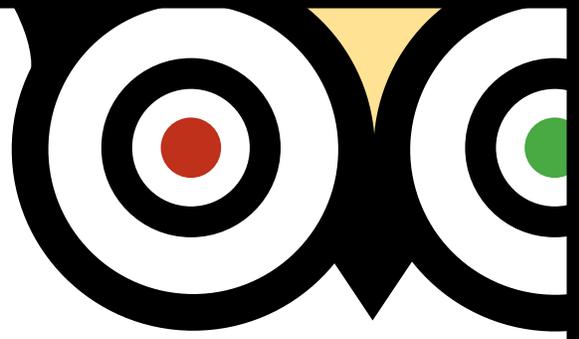


“**Motor bikes** are available for rent all over the island, a good option for extensive exploring. Make sure to inspect the bike for pre-existing damage before renting it. Remember: Driving is on the left hand side of the road throughout Thailand.”—TripAdvisor Member

“Riding on the back of a **motorbike taxi** is the most inexpensive of the transportation options, but is not always comfortable. Make sure to request a helmet before ever getting on a motorbike.”—TripAdvisor Member

“**Tuk Tuks** (three wheeled, open aired taxis), **taxis**, **buses** and **car rentals** are readily available and fairly inexpensive, with car rentals costing the most. **Long tailed boats** are the most common form of local water transportation.”—TripAdvisor Member





# WHERE to eat

## FAMILIES



"**Lucky Tom's** is a little gem with a great family feel. The seafood thai curries (Mussaman, yellow curry and chill) were very tasty. I highly recommend getting 3-4 dishes and sharing just so you can sample more!"—TripAdvisor Member, Brisbane, Australia

**Lucky Tom's, 67 Taina Road, Kata, 66 856 880**

"**The Karon Cafe** is a great place for some of the best steaks in town. Also a nice salad bar, with chef Eric's homemade soups and breads. I've been eating at the Karon Cafe regularly since we came here 10 years ago."—TripAdvisor Member, Phuket

**The Karon Cafe, 33/76 Patak Road, Moo 1, Karon Beach, 76 396 217**

"**Nicky's Handlebar** is just divine. The curries are spot on, and the filet steak was the best steak I've ever eaten. My eight-year-old son fell in love with the place!"—TripAdvisor Member, Adelaide, Australia

**Nicky's Handlebar, 41 Rat-U-Thit, 200 Year Road, Patong**

"...the best steaks in town."

Want more information on Phuket? TripAdvisor.com offers free weekly e-mail updates filled with new deals, reviews and articles for Phuket or any other destination you choose.

"Roadside stands are known for offering their customers some of the tastiest culinary creations on the island. They can be the best deals in town."—TripAdvisor Member



## ROMANCE



Take your true love to **3rd Street Café Restaurant** for a hip scene with nice music, a friendly staff and authentic Thai food. "It's very nice and quite modern."—TripAdvisor Member

**3rd Street Café Restaurant, 100/3-4 Kata Road, Karon Muang, 76 284 510**

**SILK** has "casual, candle-lit dining overlooking the ocean and an extensive menu of Thai specialties and western options. Try the tropical cocktails, served in hollowed out coconuts."—TripAdvisor Member, Hong Kong

**SILK Restaurant & Bar, 15 Moo 6, Kamala Beach, Kathu, 76 338 777**

"**Joe's Downstairs** is a wonderful, fun place for spectacular ocean views, drinks, tapas or a fabulous meal. We were there for sunset drinks and then dinner. FANTASTIC!"—TripAdvisor Member, Phuket

**Joe's Downstairs, 223/3 Prabamee Road, Phuket, 76 344 254**

"...a hip scene"

## BUDGET



"The best restaurant in Phuket is **Natural Restaurant**. They have a large selection of very good food at cheap prices and very nice waiters."—TripAdvisor Member, Norway

**Natural Restaurant, 62/5 Soi Phutorn, Bangkok Road, A. Muang, 76 224 287**

For "good, affordable Japanese food with no frills," try the **Fuji Japanese Restaurant**. "Good, quality wasabi, and the sashimi is fresh."—TripAdvisor Member, Thailand

**Fuji Japanese Restaurant, 3rd Floor Central Festival Phuket, 74-75 Wichitsongkran Road, Amphur Muang, Phuket, 76 249 861-2**

"I am a food writer and editor, so am very into food! I'd highly recommend the street food at the **night markets** in Phuket Town."—TripAdvisor Member, London, England

**Night Markets, Phuket Town**

# WHERE to eat



## HEALTH-CONSCIOUS

**Bon Island Restaurant** is “a fantastic beachside restaurant. The owner goes to huge efforts to make all her visitors feel extremely welcome. And the food! What a great menu. Fresh fish straight out of the sea caught daily and prepared in whatever way you prefer. We can’t recommend it highly enough!”—TripAdvisor Member, Phuket

**Bon Island Restaurant, Rawai, Amphoe Muang, 81 892 1156**

“The quality of food at **Sea Hag** is amazing. They do only Thai and do it well. You can see that the ingredients are all fresh. This is definitely our new favorite restaurant in Patong.”—TripAdvisor Member, Brisbane, Australia

**Sea Hag, 78/5 Permpong Soi III, Soi Wattana Clinic Road, Patong Beach, Patong, Phuket, 76 341 111**

Vegetarians can find myriad options at an Indian restaurant. “If you like Indian food, try **Baluchi**. It is really good.”—TripAdvisor Member, Perth, Australia

**Baluchi, Horizon Beach Resort, 64/39 Thaweewong Road, Soi Kep Sap, Patong, 76 292 526**

## HIDDEN GEMS

**C @ Nai Yang** is the most distinctive restaurant in Thailand. The unusual layout consists of jazz paintings and instruments on the walls, odd and mismatched furniture and little personal touches at each table. The menu itself is small, but you will not be disappointed. A magical dining experience.”—TripAdvisor Member, Blackrock, Ireland

**C @ Nai Yang, Nai Yang Beach Road, Nai Yang**

“**Tik** should be packed every night! Fabulous beachfront position, rustic decor, friendly staff and delicious, inexpensive food. The massaman curry, the Thai style noodles with shrimps, the kale in oyster sauce. I could go on and on!”—TripAdvisor Member, Sheffield, U.K.

**Tik, Bang Tao Beach**

“**Sawasdee** is excellent—very authentic, but not too spicy. We all enjoyed their spring rolls, green chicken curry, massaman curry, noodles, rice, etc.”—TripAdvisor Member, London

**Sawasdee, Patak Road, Kata Beach, 76 330 979**

## SPECIAL EVENTS



Experience the beauty of Thai tradition during **Loi Krathong**, a festival of “colorful water” held during the November full moon and celebrated throughout the entire country. (November 10 – 11)

**Loi Krathong, various venues, <http://www.loikrathong.net>, 022 505 500 (Tourist Info line)**

Soccer fans should check out the **Phuket International Soccer 7s**, one of the largest invitational tournaments in Asia. (November 26 – 27)

**Phuket International Soccer 7s, Various venues, <http://www.thai7s.com>**

The **Laguna Phuket Triathlon**, hosted by the Sheraton Grande Laguna Phuket Resort, is an internationally recognized event that attracts top athletes and local enthusiasts alike. The triathlon also includes a children’s course for ages eight to 17. (November 27)

**Laguna Phuket Triathlon, Sheraton Grande Laguna Phuket, <http://www.lagunaphukettriathlon.com>**

Enjoy the most popular sailing event in Asia during the **Phuket King’s Cup Regatta**. Yachts from all over the world participate in the weeklong event held in the waters of the Andaman Sea. (December 3 – 10)

**Phuket King’s Cup Regatta, Kata Beach Resort, 76 273 380, <http://www.kingscup.com>**

Colorful street parades, sporting events and stage shows are just some of what you will experience at the **Patong Carnival**, an annual celebration that marks the beginning of the tourist season in Phuket. (mid-December)

**Patong Carnival, Patong, 022 505 500 (Tourist Info line)**

Rock out to the blues at the **Phuket International Blues Rock Festival**, a two-day event that features both local and internationally known musicians. (February 23 – 26)

**Phuket International Blues Rock Festival 2011, Hilton Arcadia, 86 682 2639, <http://www.phuketbluesfestival.com>**

# Where to STAY



## FAMILIES

"If you're looking for a one-of-a-kind location and HUGE pools and ramps available all over, then your search is over." **Le Meridien Phuket Beach Resort** is "Phuket's best resort for families with small children, and for anyone else, for that matter."—TripAdvisor Member, Stockholm, Sweden

**Le Meridien Phuket Beach Resort, 29 Soi Karon Nui, Tambon Karon, Amphur Muang, 76 340 480**

The **Holiday Inn** is "a peaceful hotel right on Patong beach. So if you want animation, just step outside the hotel front gates! If you want peace, just lounge around at the pool. Super family holiday. 5-star, for sure!"—TripAdvisor Member, Paris, France

**Holiday Inn Resort Phuket, 52 Thaweewong Road, Patong Beach, 76 340 608**

"The **Katathani Phuket Beach Resort** was just fantastic! My wife had a great treatment at the spa, and my son loved the frog racing. We stayed in a junior suite on the ground floor, which was great for accessing the pool and beach."—TripAdvisor Member

**Katathani Phuket Beach Resort, 14 Kata Noi Road, Kata Beach, Kata, 76 330 124**

"Your search is over."



Have questions about Phuket? Get insider advice from local experts in our forums. The majority of questions are answered within 24 hours.

## ROMANCE

**Indigo Pearl** is "a pearl of a place and a real sanctuary—romantic, revitalizing, refreshing and relaxing. Soak up the ambiance and relax. It is a rejuvenating place!!"—TripAdvisor Member, Dubai, U.A.E.

**Indigo Pearl, Nai Yang Beach and National Park, 76 327 006**

"From the moment we arrived at **The Sarojin**, we had a sense that we'd been welcomed into something special, something beyond the normal resort and yet something inviting, comforting and welcoming. It was truly like having good friends excited to see us visiting their home. A very nice and sprawling, luxurious home."—TripAdvisor Member, Singapore

**The Sarojin, 60 Moo 2, Kukkak, Takuapa, Phang Nga, 76 427 900**

**The Royal Phuket Yacht Club** "is an absolutely beautiful hotel in perfect surroundings. All picture-perfect views and a terrace overlooking the bay and beach—it could not have been more romantic."—TripAdvisor Member, Shijiazhuang, China

**The Royal Phuket Yacht Club, 23/3 Vises Road, Naiharn Beach, 76 380 200**

## BUDGET

"The service was the BEST. The meals were absolutely delicious; the spa is not to be missed. But the selling point for **Amari Coral Beach Resort** must be the ocean views from EVERY hotel room. This is paradise at an affordable price."—TripAdvisor Member, San Francisco, Calif.

**Amari Coral Beach Resort, 2 Meun-Ngern Road, Patong Beach, 76 340 106**

"If you're looking for a nice, quiet place to stay, you found it." **Pacific Club Resort** "is a small hotel where the staff gives you a feeling of being at home, the feeling of being on a honeymoon each day. Heaven on Earth."—TripAdvisor Member, Germany

**Pacific Club Resort, 16 Soi 24 Patak Road, Karon Beach, 76 398 350**

"Sitting on out our balcony watching the sunset over Kata Beach was one of the best experiences we had. If you're looking for a relaxed place with a private atmosphere, a few minutes' walk from the beaches and the main tourist action, **Boomerang Village** is an excellent choice."—TripAdvisor Member, Munich, Germany

**Boomerang Village Cottages, 9/11-13 soi 10 Patak Road, Kata, 76 284 480**

"Heaven on Earth"

## LUXURY

"The design of **Twinpalms** is fabulous—we never ceased to admire the gardens and our hotel room. The service is excellent, and the staff cater to your every need. Very friendly. The private beach is by far the best on Surin Beach."—TripAdvisor Member, Paris, France

**Twinpalms Resort, 106/46 Moo 3, Surin Beach Road, Cherngtalay, 76 316 500**

**Ayara Hilltops** "was so lovely that it was hard to leave. The reasons are many: the staff, the suite, the beautiful view, the garden and the surroundings, the breakfast and the beaches close by. We have never experienced such incredible service before."—TripAdvisor Member, Norway

**Ayara Hilltops Resort, 125 Moo 3 Srisoonthorn Road, Tambol Cherngtalay, 76 271 271**

Waking up at the **Banyan Tree** "is a real show opening for you: the sun, the water and the vegetation. You feel like a prince, you are struck by such beauty."—TripAdvisor Member, Paris, France

**Banyan Tree Phuket, 33 Moo 4, Srisoonthorn Road, Cherngtalay, Amphur Talang, 76 324 374**

# Where to **STAY**



## HIDDEN GEMS

**Casa Brazil** is a “gem of a guest house situated on a quiet road, just two-minutes’ walk from the south end of Karon Beach and an easy walk to Kata Beach, too. The staff were wonderful and very welcoming. Nothing seemed too much for them.”—TripAdvisor Member, Munich, Germany

**Casa Brazil Homestay & Gallery, 9 Luangpochuan Soi 1, Karon Beach, 76 396 317**

**Phuket Baan Chang** is “a real find. This is what staying in Phuket is at its best, all at a reasonable price. Your host acts as a first-class concierge, making this an ideal first step for seeing Thailand and its people from a very comfortable base.”—Cambridgeshire, U.K.

**Phuket Baan Chang, 23/6 Moo 6, Soi Koktanod 8, Baan-Don, Chergntalay, Thalang, 8 78934 636**

**Golden Buddha Resort** is a little gem of luxury and quiet. All houses have beautiful architecture and are tastefully decorated. Since this is the only resort on the island, you’ll have plenty of room on the 10 kilometers of sandy beach.”—TripAdvisor Member, Denmark

**Golden Buddha Beach Resort, 131 Moo 2, T. Ko Phra Thong, Kuraburi, Phangnga, 08 1892 2208**

“...a little gem of luxury and quiet.”

## About **TRIPADVISOR**

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