



Andaman Islands

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Best Beaches

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Why Go?

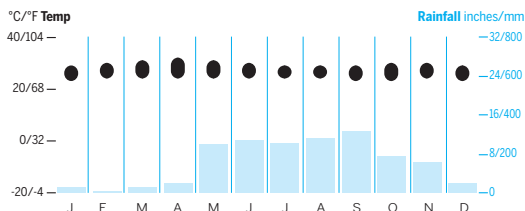
On old maps, the Andamans and Nicobars were the kind of islands whose inhabitants were depicted with dog's heads or faces in their chests, surrounded by sea serpents in a tempest-lashed sea known to Indians as Kalapani: the Black Waters. These were the islands that someone labelled, with a shaky hand, 'Here be Monsters' – probably an early traveller who didn't want to share this delightful place with the rest of us.

Lovely opaque emerald waters are surrounded by primeval jungle and mangrove forest; snow-white beaches melt under flame-and-purple sunsets; and the population is a friendly masala of South and Southeast Asian settlers, as well as Negrito ethnic groups whose arrival here still has anthropologists baffled. And geographically, the Andamans are more Southeast Asia – 150km from Indonesia and 190km from Myanmar – making them all the more intriguing.

The Nicobars are off-limits to tourists, but that still leaves hundreds of islands to explore.

When to Go

Port Blair



Dec–Apr High tourist season: perfect sunny days, optimal diving conditions.

Oct–Dec & Apr–mid-May Weather's a mixed bag, but fewer tourists and lower costs

Dec–Mar Best time to see turtles nesting

Andaman Islands Highlights

- 1 Regress to infantile laziness and happiness on **Neil Island** (p1074)
- 2 Dive, snorkel and socialise on **Havelock Island** (p1072)
- 3 Glimpse Port Blair's colonial history at **Ross Island** (p1071)
- 4 Travel through the jungle heart of the Andamans around **Mayabunder** (p1076) and **Kalipur** (p1076)
- 5 Find Butler Bay and paradise on **Little Andaman** (p1077)

