



# Ko Phi-Phi & the Southern Andaman Coast

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## Why Go?

Island hoppers, this is your dreamland. The south is the quieter half of the Andaman coast; even the regional star, Ko Phi-Phi, can't rival the glam and crowds of Phuket. Just slowly putter from white-sand isle to white-sand isle – and prepare for serious relaxation, outdoor fun and chummy nights at beachside bars.

Social seekers will love the developed beauties, such as Ko Phi-Phi and Ko Lanta, where you can party into the wee hours and meet plenty of fellow ramblers on the beach yet still find a peaceful strip of sand. And roads less travelled are just next door: head down through the lightly developed Trang islands to the even-less-visited Satun Province to find powder-white beaches, outrageous snorkelling and plenty of spicy southern Thai culture.

## When to Go

The weather can be a big concern for travellers in this region. The Andaman coast receives more rain than the southern gulf provinces, with May to October being the months of heaviest rainfall. During this time passenger boats to some islands, such as Ko Tarutao, are suspended. If you find the weather on the Andaman coast unpleasant, you can easily travel to the southwestern gulf coast, where you're more likely to find the sun shining.

Top daytime temperatures average 32°C year-round with high humidity during the wet season.

## Best Places to Eat

- » Trang Night Market (p334)
- » Krabi Night Market (p303)
- » Sukorn Beach Bungalows (p342)
- » Daya Resort (p351)
- » Lanta Seafood (p330)

## Best Places to Stay

- » Rayavadee (p315)
- » Costa Lanta (p328)
- » Relax Beach Resort (p322)
- » Sukorn Beach Bungalows (p342)
- » Chan Cha Lay (p301)

## KRABI PROVINCE

When travellers talk about the amazing Andaman, they are probably talking about Krabi, with its trademark karst formations curving along the coast like a giant limestone fortress. Rock climbers will find their nirvana in Railay, while castaway wannabes should head to Ko Lanta, Ko Phi-Phi or any of the other 150 islands swimming off the bleach-blond shores.

### Krabi

กระบี่

POP 30,882

Krabi Town is majestically situated among impossibly angular limestone karsts jutting from the mangroves, but mid-city you're more likely to be awe-struck by the sheer volume of guest houses and travel agencies packed into this compact, quirky little town. Western restaurants are ubiquitous, as are gift shops that all sell the same old trinkets. Yet if you hang out awhile, you'll also see that there's a very real provincial scene going on in between the cracks.

### 👁 Sights & Activities

For rock climbing (see p311), boats go from Krabi to Railay. For more activities in the area, see p307.

#### Khao Khanap Nam

CLIFFS, CAVES

(ถ้ำเขาханาน) It's possible to climb one of these two limestone massifs, just north of the town centre. A number of human skeletons were found in the caves here, thought to be the remains of people trapped during an ancient flood. To get here, charter a long-tail boat from Khong Kha pier for about 400B.

#### Sea Kayak Krabi

KAYAKING

(☎ 0 7563 0270; [www.seakayak-krabi.com](http://www.seakayak-krabi.com); 40 Th Ruen Rudee) Offers a wide variety of sea-kayaking tours, including to Ao Thalane (half/full day 900/1500B), which has looming sea cliffs; Ko Hong (full day 1800B), famed for its emerald lagoon; and Ban Bho Tho (full day 1700B), which has sea caves with 2000- to 3000-year-old cave paintings. All rates include guides, lunch, fruit and drinking water.

#### Blue Juice Divers

DIVING

(☎ 0 7563 0679; [www.bluejuicedivers.com](http://www.bluejuicedivers.com); Th Chao Fah) This place is in town and has two-dive

packages to local islands (2900B). It also runs PADI Open Water courses (13,900B) and it has a guest house.

### 👉 Tours

Various companies offer day trips to Khlong Thom, about 45km southeast of Krabi on Hwy 4, taking in some nearby hot springs and freshwater pools. Expect to pay around 1000B to 1200B, including transport, lunch and beverages; bring a swimsuit and good walking shoes. Various other 'jungle tour' itineraries are available.

### 🛏 Sleeping

Krabi has an exceptional and ever-improving guest-house scene. The midrange and top-end options leave much to be desired (go to Ao Nang if you crave luxury) but the area is developing fast, so more chic options may well open during the life of this book. In the low season, guest-house prices can plummet to as low as 150B.

#### TOP CHOICE Chan Cha Lay

GUEST HOUSE \$

(☎ 0 7562 0952; [www.chanchalay.com](http://www.chanchalay.com); 55 Th Utarakit; r 200-650B; 📞) The en-suite rooms here, all decorated in gorgeous Mediterranean blues and whites with white-pebble and polished-concrete semi-outdoor bathrooms, are Krabi's most stylish and comfortable. Shared-bathroom, fan-only rooms are plain but spotless with firm beds.

#### Pak-up Hostel

HOSTEL \$

(☎ 0 7561 1955; [www.pakuphostel.com](http://www.pakuphostel.com); 87 Th Utarakit; dm 180-200B, d 600B; 📞) The snazziest hostel on the Andaman coast features several uber-hip polished-cement 10-bed dorm rooms with big wooden bunks built into the wall, each equipped with personal lockers. There's only one double room, and it's constructed in the same style. Massive, modern shared bathrooms have cold-water stalls as well as a few hot-water rain showers. There are two on-site bars (one with nightly live music) and a young, hip, club-like vibe.

#### K Guesthouse

GUEST HOUSE \$

(☎ 0 7562 3166; [kguesthouse@yahoo.com](mailto:kguesthouse@yahoo.com); 15-25 Th Chao Fah; r 150-600B; 📞) A Wild West-looking place with varnished wooden rooms that line a second-storey veranda that overlooks the street. Cow heads on the walls and easy socialising in the downstairs cafe add to the frontier appeal.