



Global Gallowanting Guides

KOH PHI PHI

THE COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE
WRITTEN BY REAL TRAVELLERS

Preview

Preview

Global Gallivanting Guides

KOH PHI PHI

IMPORTANT NOTE FOR READERS

Though every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained within this guide, it may change at any time and for any reason. The authors and publisher accept no responsibility for any loss or inconvenience sustained by anyone using this guide. If you discover any out-of-date or incorrect information in this guide, please let us know via our website, www.global-gallivanting.com/contact.

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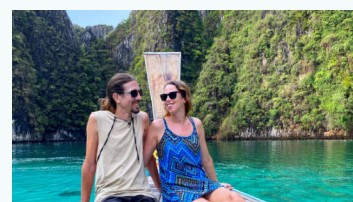


Preview

The Authors

Anna Phipps and Damien
Tuite run Global
Gallivanting Travel Blog.

Originally from the UK
and now based in
Thailand, their first-hand
experience was used to
shape this guidebook.



How To Use This Guide

This guide is designed to be simple to use, with information grouped into chapters.

Chapter colours

By using the colour guide on the right you can quickly find the chapter you need by referring to the colour in the top corner on every page.

Interactivity

This guide uses clickable hyperlinks that [look like this](#). Clicking a hyperlink will open your web browser and navigate to the selected website.

Scannable QR codes are also provided for resources you may wish to access from another device.

Maps

All maps in this guidebook are shown with north at the top and use these symbols:

-  Accommodation  Airport  ATM
-  Bar  Beach  Bus station  Café
-  Ferry terminal  Hospital / Medical
-  Groceries  Landmark  Market
-  Parking  Pharmacy  Police
-  Restaurant  Shopping  Taxi rank
-  Toilet  Train station  Viewpoint

We recommend partnering this guidebook with [Global Gallivanting's Phi Phi Islands Google Map](#) for easier navigation.

Introduction

Before You Go

Getting Oriented

Attractions

Food & Drink

Where To Stay

Local Life

Practical Information

Quick Reference

Recommendations

Everything you'll find recommended in this guide was chosen based on the author's personal experiences. Affiliate links may be used in some sections, but these have not influenced the author's recommendations.

Listings are grouped by category and aren't ranked in any particular order. Since businesses change, what you find may differ from what the author experienced, so it's always worth checking recent reviews before booking.

Price guide:

-  Budget
-   Regular
-    Premium

Koh Phi Phi Don

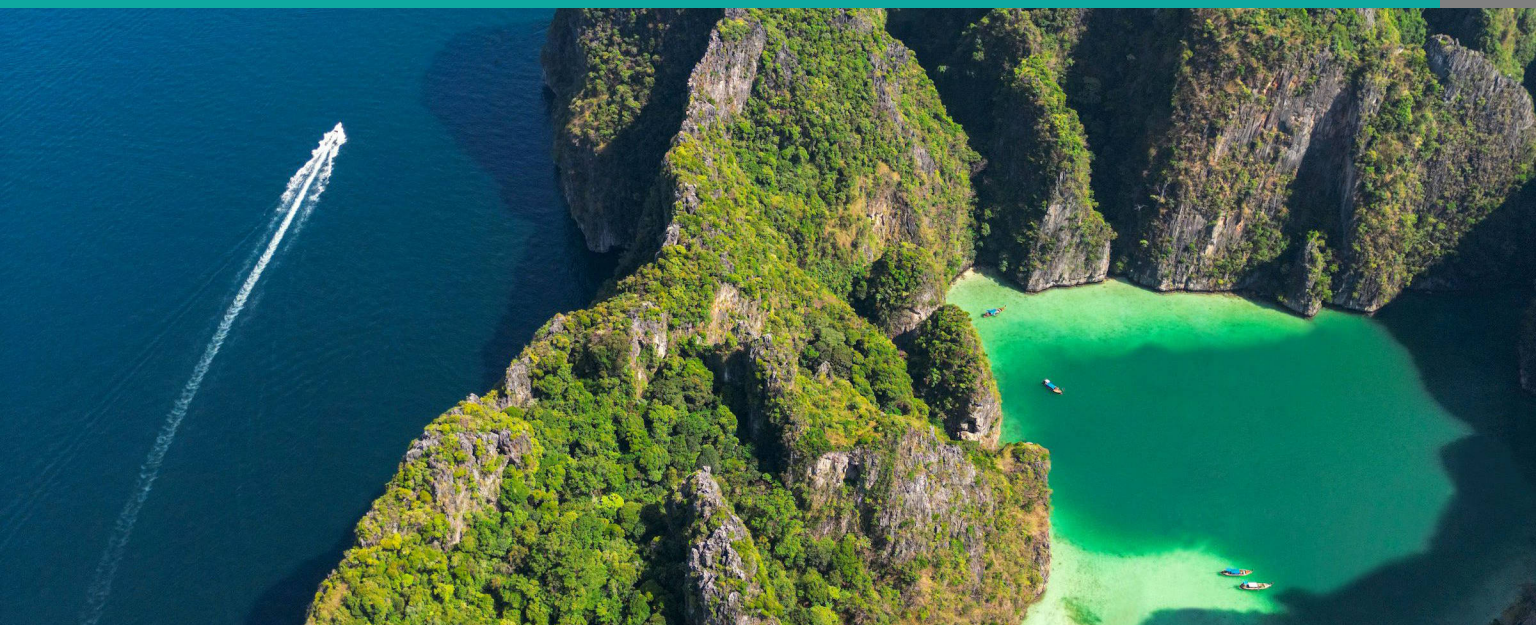


Koh Phi Phi Leh

Preview



500 m 



THE PHI PHI ISLANDS

Hello, Welcome!

Ever since Leonardo DiCaprio found paradise on Maya Bay's pure shores in the 2000 movie *The Beach*, Koh Phi Phi has come to represent the pinnacle of tropical Thailand's enduring appeal. Over a million visitors each year come to see the famous limestone karsts towering out from the unbelievably turquoise water of the Andaman sea in the hope of capturing a flicker of that same feeling the movie portrayed so vividly.

That popularity is both a blessing and a curse, depending on your point of view. Some say that the Phi Phi islands are overcrowded, overpriced and overrated, while others see them as one of the most iconic travel destinations ever and worth the effort of exploring for themselves.

Most tourists will only see the two larger islands as they rush through on day trips from Krabi or Phuket, hurrying to photograph the signature views before disappearing off again back to the mainland.

Those, however, who come with a little more time, and spend a few days straying a little further off the beaten path will find that the Phi Phi islands are so much more than a pretty scene. These are the people that this guidebook was written for.

Over the following pages you'll discover how to explore the Phi Phi islands on a deeper level, with chapters covering the essential information for longer stays, tips on hidden gems, the stunning natural beauty, and the history of this special archipelago and its people.

Preview

Why Visit Koh Phi Phi?

Koh Phi Phi (*pron. Ko Pee Pee*) boast some of the most unique and spectacular scenery, not just in Thailand, but in the world.

Forested limestone karsts tower up from the crystal clear, turquoise waters which are home to a colourful array of tropical fish and marine life.

Out of the six Phi Phi islands, only the largest, Koh Phi Phi Don, is inhabited. The rest are part of the Hat Noppharat Thara - Mu Koh Phi Phi National Park and are protected from development.

To the south of Koh Phi Phi Don is Koh Phi Phi Leh, an uninhabited, rocky, forested outcrop that is home to the stunning Phi Leh Lagoon and the iconic Maya Bay, made famous by 'The Beach' movie. Most visitors don't venture further than this, but the other Phi Phi islands are also worth exploring.

To the north there's tiny Koh Phai (Bamboo Island) with its castaway feel, and Koh Yung (mosquito Island) which attracts many colourful fish just off its beach and is amazing for snorkelling.

The two other islets to the south of Koh Phi Phi Leh, are the sister islands of Koh Bida Nok and Koh Bida Nai. Both have

great diving and snorkelling where you might be able to spot leopard sharks.

Koh Phi Phi Don is the main hub and there's no roads or cars here. Instead, little paths wind down alleyways of guesthouses and eateries, while all manner of watercraft bob in the picturesque Ton Sai Bay, protected from the elements by the forested curves of the island's towering cliffs.

Down by the pier traditional wooden longtail boats, garlanded with colourful ribbons, ferry everything from sacks of rice to tour groups around the island. While up in the hills, steep paths lead to some of the most iconic viewpoints in Thailand.

And beneath the waters, marine life thrives, baby reef sharks dart through the shallows, schools of colourful fish encircle divers, turtles feed on reefs, and manta rays swim through the depths.

There's nowhere in the world quite like the Phi Phi islands and once you see it for yourself you'll understand why they choose to film *The Beach* here.

It's no secret that Koh Phi Phi is far from an undiscovered gem, but even in the busiest areas this tropical paradise still blows away even the most jaded traveller.





Before You Go

The Best Time To Visit

The Phi Phi Islands sit in the Andaman Sea which means they follow the southwest monsoon pattern. They witness a distinct dry season from around November to April, and a wetter, windier, rainier season from May to October.

Dry season

The dry season is when Koh Phi Phi is at its most dazzling. The skies are a clear, deep blue, the sea is glassy flat, and the turquoise waters are so transparent you can watch fish darting about beneath you.

Conditions for diving and snorkelling are at their finest too. Underwater visibility peaks, the currents settle, and

In this chapter

- Best Time To Visit
- Budget Planning
- What To Pack
- Entry Requirements
- Getting To Koh Phi Phi

Seasons at a glance

Dry Season: Nov - Apr

Wet Season: May - Oct

Peak season runs from December to February, which is when you'll find the best weather, but also, higher prices and larger crowds.

Preview

the marine life is at its most vivid. If the photos that pulled you here were all sun-soaked limestone cliffs and bright blue water, this is the season that delivers them.

High season for tourism falls roughly between mid-December and early February. The island is bustling and busy, accommodation fills up fast and prices rise to match. If you're visiting over Christmas or New Year, book as far in advance as you can and come prepared for company.

Shoulder season

If the sound of packed streets and sold out tours is a little off-putting, consider visiting in the shoulder seasons between the two main seasons.

Later in March or April can still be a good time to visit. While the heat can be intense, with temperatures pushing 35°C by midday, the islands are over the full holiday hordes and are far more serene. It's also when Thailand celebrates Songkran, the Thai New Year water festival, which falls on the 13th - 15th of April. It's a joyful, chaotic affair with water fights happening throughout the village, and well worth experiencing if you don't mind getting soaked.

Diving enthusiasts especially should visit at this time for the best chances of spotting sharks and manta rays.

November and early December are worth serious consideration too. The rains typically ease off by November and you get windows of decent weather and can enjoy lower prices and cooler weather compared to April.

Wet season

From May to October, the southwest monsoon rolls in. Expect regular downpours, overcast days, and seas that can turn choppy enough to ground the boat tours. The ferries run less often, some businesses close entirely, and visiting Maya Bay can be off the table for days at a stretch.

It's worth knowing that Maya Bay closes completely each year in August and September for environmental restoration, so if seeing the famous beach is top of your list, factor that in when planning your trip.

July through September are the most unpredictable months weatherwise but the low season has its own appeal. The crowds evaporate, prices drop dramatically and the island returns to something closer to its everyday self.

The bottom line

December to March for the Phi Phi islands at their best. November and April if you want the sunny weather without the peak season chaos.