GUIDE

Islands of Thailand

Thirty-one islands by area, which coast for your month, and how people actually get there

By Mike Haslam · Updated 21 Nov 2026 · Prices as of November 2026

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Thailand has 936 islands by the government's count, and picking the right one comes down to your month. The two coasts have opposite rainy seasons, some of the best islands are national parks that close for months at a time, and a lot of the famous names are day trips, not places you stay.

This guide starts with which coast to pick for your dates. Then it writes up 31 islands by area, with how people actually get there, and puts them all on a map. I checked the facts in November 2026. Boats and park dates change every year, so look again before you book.



Ko Rok, south of Ko Lanta, a day trip by speedboat. Photo: dronepicr, CC BY 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons

Andaman or Gulf? Pick by month

This is the one thing to get right. A rainy month on one side is often a fine month on the other.

Coast	Islands	At its best	Hardest months
Andaman	Phuket, Krabi, Phang Nga, Trang, Satun, Ranong	November to April	June to September
Gulf, Samui group	Ko Samui, Ko Pha Ngan, Ko Tao	January to September	November, with October and December mixed
East, near Bangkok	Ko Samet, Ko Chang, Ko Kut, Ko Mak	November to April	June to September

From January to April both coasts are usually good, which is also why that's the busiest and most expensive stretch. In July and August, go to the Gulf. In November, go Andaman. Our Andaman vs Gulf page goes month by month, and the month-by-month guide covers the rest of the country.

Ko Samet is worth knowing about if your dates are stuck. It's one of the driest islands in Thailand, and even from May to September it gets far less rain than the others.

The parks that close

Many of the best islands are marine national parks, and several close every year for the monsoon. The dates move a little, so check the park's notice before you book.

Park or island	Usually closed
Similan and Surin Islands	About mid-May to mid-October
Ko Rok and Ko Lao Liang	1 June to 30 September
Ko Tarutao park services	About mid-May to mid-October
Maya Bay on Ko Phi Phi Leh	1 August to 30 September
Ang Thong	From 1 November into December

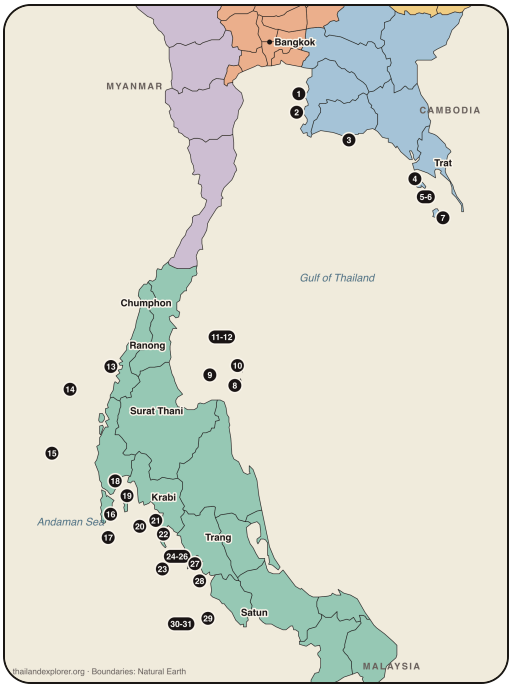
Which island is for you

If you want	Try
An easy first island trip	Ko Samui on the Gulf, or Phuket and Ko Lanta on the Andaman
Quiet, with not much to do	Ko Kut, Ko Phayam, Ko Jum, Ko Libong
To learn to dive	Ko Tao
Big-name diving	Similan and Surin, Ko Racha, Hin Daeng from Ko Lanta

If you want	Try
Snorkelling straight off the beach	Ko Kradan, Ko Ngai, Ko Wai
An island near Bangkok	Ko Sichang, Ko Lan, Ko Samet
Wildlife	Dugongs at Ko Libong, hornbills on Ko Yao and Ko Phayam, the forest on Ko Tarutao
No cars	Ko Kradan, Ko Ngai, Ko Phi Phi, Ko Phayam

Map of the islands

The numbers on the map match the numbers in this guide. Where islands sit too close together to show apart, one marker carries a range.



Tap a number to open that island's page. Thirty-one islands in this guide. Want every island we know of? See all the islands, or browse our map of Thailand.

Near Bangkok and the east coast

These are the islands you can reach without a flight. Ko Sichang and Ko Lan work as day trips, and Ko Chang, Ko Mak and Ko Kut down in Trat feel a long way from the city once you're there.

1. Ko Sichang

Ko Sichang (เกาะสีชัง) · Chonburi

The closest island to Bangkok, 12 km off Si Racha and about 40 minutes by ferry. People live and fish here, and the beaches are modest. Come for the grounds of the summer palace King Rama V built here, the hillside temples and the view over the ships at anchor.

2. Ko Lan

Ko Lan (เกาะล้าน) · Chonburi

About 7.5 km off Pattaya, hilly and forested, with a handful of beaches. Tour groups land mid-morning and leave mid-afternoon, so stay the night or come early. The reefs by the busy beaches are in poor shape, so snorkel off Ko Sak instead.

3. Ko Samet

Ko Samet (เกาะเสม็ด) · Rayong

About 220 km from Bangkok and almost all national park since 1981. Nearly every beach is on the east side, Ao Phrao is the one for sunset, and boats run out to Ko Kudi and Ko Thalu for snorkelling. It's one of the driest islands in Thailand, which makes it a good bet in the rainy months.



Ko Samet, the easy island from Bangkok. Photo: Bjørn Erik Pedersen, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons

4. Ko Chang

Ko Chang (เกาะช้าง) · Trat

A big, green island, about 70 percent rainforest, with all its sandy beaches on the west side. Day boats leave Bang Bao pier for the small islands around Ko Rang, and a lot of them finish at Ko Wai. Hike the jungle with a guide: there are no signposted trails inside the island.

5. Ko Wai

Ko Wai (เกาะหวาย) · Trat

A small island, about 3 km long, inside Mu Ko Chang National Park. A reef runs along the east side right off the beaches, and there are only a few bungalows. Most people see it as a stop on a snorkel trip from Ko Chang.

6. Ko Mak

Ko Mak (เกาะหมาก) · Trat

Small and quiet, and easiest to see by bicycle. One family has owned most of it for over a century, and their little museum by the pier tells the story. The Ko Rang marine park is close, so snorkel trips are short.

7. Ko Kut

Ko Kut (เกาะกูด) · Trat

The biggest island in its district, and sources describe it as remote and underdeveloped. Most of the beaches line the west coast, Khlong Chao is the waterfall with the big swimming pool, and the fishing village at Ao Salat stands on stilts over the bay.

Ko Samui and the Gulf

This is the side to pick from about January to September. Ko Samui is the easy base. Ko Pha Ngan is next door, and Ko Tao is where people learn to dive.

8. Ko Samui

Ko Samui (เกาะสมุย) · Surat Thani

Thailand's second biggest island after Phuket, and the one with its own airport. Chaweng and Lamai are the busy beaches, the north coast is calmer and the west quieter still. It's also the jumping-off point for Ang Thong.

9. Ang Thong

Ang Thong National Marine Park (หมู่เกาะอ่างทอง) · Surat Thani

Forty-two islands in a marine park, a boat trip from Samui. Day trips usually mix kayaking, snorkelling and the climb to the Emerald Lake lookout. The park has bungalows at Ao Phi if you want to stay after the day boats leave. It closes from about the start of November into December.

10. Ko Pha Ngan

Ko Pha Ngan (เกาะพะงัน) · Surat Thani

Known for the Full Moon Party at Haad Rin, and that's only one corner of it. Get to Bottle Beach by longtail or on foot, walk the sandbar to Ko Ma at low tide, and if you dive, go to Sail Rock, the best known site in the Gulf.

11. Ko Tao

Ko Tao (เกาะเต่า) · Surat Thani

Never dived? Start here. It's one of the busiest places in the world to learn. The name means Turtle Island, and green turtles graze in the shallows at Shark Bay. Before the dive schools it was a political prison, from 1933 to 1947.

12. Ko Nang Yuan

Ko Nang Yuan (เกาะนางยวน) · Surat Thani

Tiny islands joined by sandbars, a short boat ride from Ko Tao. Climb to the viewpoint, then snorkel off the beach. It's a day trip from Samui too, but that's a long day for an hour on the island. Plastic bottles and cans are banned, and day visitors pay an entry fee.



Ko Nang Yuan's sandbar, from the viewpoint. Photo: ferda, CC BY 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons

Phuket, Phang Nga and Ranong

The north Andaman, best from about November to April. Phuket is the hub and Khao Lak is the base for the Similan and Surin parks. Up in Ranong, the islands are quiet.

13. Ko Phayam

Ko Phayam (เกาะพยาม) · Ranong

No cars, just scooters and bicycles on narrow lanes through cashew trees. Ao Yai is the long bay with small, steady waves to learn to surf on, and hornbills fly right over the bungalows at Ao Khao Kwai. Many cafes close in the rainy months.

14. Surin Islands

Surin Islands (หมู่เกาะสุรินทร์) · Phang Nga

Five islands 55 km offshore, known for coral, turtles and the occasional whale shark. You can snorkel straight off the beach at Ao Mai Ngam, camp in a park tent, and visit the Moken village on Ko Surin Tai with respect. Most people come on a day trip from Khao Lak.

15. Similan Islands

Similan Islands (หมู่เกาะสิมิลัน) · Phang Nga

About as clear as the water gets in Thailand. Divers come for the granite boulders and swim-throughs, and everyone climbs to Sail Rock above Donald Duck Bay. There’s no staying overnight on the islands, daily visitor numbers are capped, and Ko Tachai has been closed since 2016.



The Similan Islands, open about mid-October to mid-May. Photo: No Troubles Just Bubbles, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

16. Phuket

Phuket (ภูเก็ต) · Phuket

Thailand's largest island, joined to the mainland by a bridge. Patong is the busy beach, Old Town is worth a few hours away from the sand, and the sunset spot is Promthep Cape. Phang Nga Bay, Ko Phi Phi and Ko Racha are all day trips from here. The monsoon brings big surf, so ask before you swim in those months.

17. Ko Racha

Ko Racha (เกาะราชา) · Phuket

Racha Yai and Racha Noi sit south of Phuket, about 45 minutes to an hour by speedboat from Chalong. Racha Yai has the beaches, the horseshoe bay at Patok and snorkelling at Khon Kae, and its calm bays suit first-time divers. Racha Noi is for experienced divers and is often out of reach from May to October.

18. Phang Nga Bay

Ao Phang Nga National Park (อ่าวพังงา) · Phang Nga

Steep limestone islands rising straight out of the sea, including James Bond Island. Paddle into a hong, a lagoon hidden inside an island, and have lunch at Ko Panyi, a village on stilts. For a slower day, take a longtail from Tha Dan pier near Phang Nga town instead of a big group tour.

19. Ko Yao

Ko Yao (เกาะยาว) · Phang Nga

Ko Yao Noi and Ko Yao Yai sit in the middle of Phang Nga Bay, with Muslim fishing villages and rice fields. Ko Yao Noi is made for bicycles, has at least four kinds of hornbill, and its swimming beaches are on the east side facing the limestone islands.

Krabi

The middle of the Andaman coast. Ko Phi Phi is the famous one and Ko Lanta is the easygoing base, with Ko Rok a day trip away.

20. Ko Phi Phi

Ko Phi Phi (เกาะพีพี) · Krabi

Phi Phi Don is where people stay, and Phi Phi Leh has Maya Bay, the beach from the film The Beach. Maya Bay closed in 2018 to recover and now runs with rules: boats don’t enter the bay and there’s no swimming. Climb to the viewpoint over the two bays, and walk to Long Beach when the village feels crowded. There are no cars.



Ko Phi Phi. Photo: Diego Delso, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons

21. Ko Jum

Ko Jum (เกาะจำ) · Krabi

About 25 km south of Krabi town, with three villages and about 1,500 people. People come to do nothing on the west coast, and that’s the point. Regular boats run from about November to April, many places close in the rainy months, and you’ll want cash.

22. Ko Lanta

Ko Lanta (เกาะลันตา) · Krabi

Ko Lanta Yai is the long, laid-back island where most people stay. Lanta Old Town on the east coast was once a trading port, and the national park at the southern tip has a lighthouse. The four-island trip to the Emerald Cave and the day trip to Ko Rok both leave from here, and divers head out to Hin Daeng and Hin Muang.

23. Ko Rok

Ko Rok (เกาะรอก) · Krabi

Nobody lives on these two islands, about an hour south of Ko Lanta by speedboat. The reef is shallow, often only five meters down, and the channel between the islands is full of coral. Almost everyone comes on a day tour, and you can only camp with permission from the park. Closed 1 June to 30 September.

Trang and Satun

The far south of the Andaman coast, with fewer people and some of the clearest water. Ko Lipe is the busy one. The rest are quiet.

24. Ko Ngai

Ko Ngai (เกาะไหง) · Krabi, reached from Trang

Officially part of Krabi, but the easy way in is by boat from the Trang coast. There are no roads, the reefs are close enough to swim to, and monkeys and monitor lizards come down from the hills. Most resorts run trips to the Emerald Cave.

25. Ko Muk

Ko Muk (เกาะมุก) · Trang

Home of the Emerald Cave, a sea tunnel about 80 meters long that you swim through at low tide to reach a hidden beach. The island has one fishing village and a few resorts, and Charlie Beach is the place for sunset. Most four-island tours from Ko Lanta stop here.



Ko Muk, home of the Emerald Cave. Photo: Marcin Konsek, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

26. Ko Kradan

Ko Kradan (เกาะกระดาน) · Trang

A narrow island about 10 km off the coast, with white sand and a reef you can snorkel straight off the main beach. A 2023 ranking named its beach the best in the world. No roads, no cars and no ATMs, so bring cash.

27. Ko Libong

Ko Libong (เกาะลิบง) · Trang

Trang's biggest island, about 30 minutes by longtail from Hat Yao pier. Its seagrass meadows feed around 180 dugongs, most of the ones left in Thai waters. Resorts and boatmen run early trips to look for them, with no promises. It gets fewer visitors than its neighbors.

28. Ko Lao Liang

Ko Lao Liang (เกาะหลาวเหลียง) · Trang

These steep limestone twins sit about an hour by longtail from Hat Samran pier, with snorkelling over soft and hard coral. The old climbing and tented camp are

gone, so it’s a day trip now. Closed 1 June to 30 September.

29. Ko Tarutao

Ko Tarutao (เกาะตะรุเตา) · Satun

The biggest of the 51 islands in Tarutao National Marine Park, almost all forest, with no resorts. It was a prison colony from the late 1930s to 1948. Climb Toe Boo cliff for sunset, cycle the one quiet road, and have Ao Son, a 3 km beach, nearly to yourself. Park services close from about mid-May to mid-October.

30. Ko Adang

Ko Adang (เกาะอาดัง) · Satun

The wild, hilly island right across from Ko Lipe. Climb to Pha Chado for the view back over Lipe, find the waterfall that runs all year, and sleep in a park bungalow or tent at the southern tip.

31. Ko Lipe

Ko Lipe (เกาะหลีเป๊ะ) · Satun

Small and busy, with white sand, some of Thailand’s healthiest reefs and seafood grills along Walking Street at night. Pick your beach by the sun: Sunrise Beach faces east, Sunset Beach west. Longtails run snorkel trips to the islands around it, and Ko Adang is right there. Water and rubbish are real problems here, so refill your bottle.



The view from Ko Adang, across from Ko Lipe. Photo: Vyacheslav Argenberg, CC BY 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

More islands worth knowing

We don't have full pages for these yet, so here's the short version.

- **Ko Phra Thong**, Phang Nga. Phang Nga's biggest island, reached by longtail through the mangroves from Khura Buri. It's known for its open savanna, best walked at dawn or dusk.
- **Ko Chang**, Ranong. Not the Ko Chang in Trat. Ranong's biggest island is quiet, with no big resorts, and longtails leave from the piers in Ranong town.
- **Ko Sukorn**, Trang. Trang's second biggest island after Ko Libong. Ferries link it with the Trang coast and Ko Bulon.
- **Ko Bulon Lae**, Satun. A small island in Mu Ko Phetra National Park, about 30 minutes by boat from Pak Bara. Boat schedules change by season, so check before you go.

Want every island, all the way down to the tiny ones? Our list of all the islands has each one we know of, with its Thai name, province and location.

Getting there and boats

Every island trip ends with a boat, and boats depend on the weather. Book flights and trains first, then the boat, and leave room in your plans.

For	Boats leave from
Ko Sichang	Si Racha
Ko Samet	Ban Phe, near Rayong
Ko Chang, Ko Wai, Ko Mak, Ko Kut	The Trat coast. Ko Wai and Ko Mak also link with Ko Chang
Ko Samui, Ko Pha Ngan, Ko Tao	The Surat Thani coast and Chumphon. The three islands link with each other
Ko Phayam	Ranong
Similan and Surin Islands	Khao Lak, the Thap Lamu pier for the Similans
Ko Racha	Chalong pier on Phuket
Ko Libong	Hat Yao pier, Trang
Ko Lao Liang	Hat Samran pier, Trang
Ko Lipe and Ko Bulon	Pak Bara, Satun

A few things that save a trip:

- Try to arrive early in the day, so a late or canceled boat doesn't strand you.
- Don't book the last ferry of the day straight after a train or a flight.
- Spend your last night on the mainland before an international flight. A canceled boat can cost you the flight.
- 12Go is handy for comparing combined bus and boat tickets.

Our Thailand by Train guide covers the rail side, including the trains toward Surat Thani and Chumphon for the Gulf islands.

Book it

Here's where I'd look for rooms and tours on the main islands.

Island	Stay	Tours
Ko Samui	Places to stay	Tours and day trips
Ko Pha Ngan	Places to stay	Tours and day trips
Ko Tao	Places to stay	Tours and day trips
Phuket	Places to stay	Tours and day trips
Ko Phi Phi	Places to stay	Tours and day trips
Ko Lanta	Places to stay	Tours and day trips
Ko Muk	Places to stay	Tours and day trips
Ko Lipe	Places to stay	Tours and day trips
Ko Chang	Places to stay	Tours and day trips
Ko Samet	Places to stay	Tours and day trips

Where to go from here

Pick your month, then your coast, then two or three islands at most. Every move costs you most of a day once you add the boat, so fewer islands usually means more beach. If one island has you curious, open its page for things to do, photos and tours, or look around the map of Thailand.

Hope this is helpful. Enjoy the islands.

Common questions

How many islands does Thailand have?
Thailand's Department of Marine and Coastal Resources counts 936, with 562 on the Andaman side and 374 in the Gulf of Thailand. Most are small, under 10 square kilometers.

Which side of Thailand is better for islands?
It depends on your month. The Andaman coast (Phuket, Krabi, Trang, Satun) is at its best from about November to April. The Gulf islands around Ko Samui are good for most of the year but wettest from October to December.

Which Thai islands are good in July and August?
The Gulf islands, Ko Samui, Ko Pha Ngan and Ko Tao. The Andaman side is in its rainy season, and several of its marine parks close from June to September.

What is the closest island to Bangkok?
Ko Sichang, a short ferry from Si Racha. Ko Lan off Pattaya and Ko Samet in Rayong are also easy trips from the city.

Which Thai islands have no cars?
Ko Kradan and Ko Ngai have no roads, there are no cars on Ko Phi Phi, and Ko Phayam has only scooters and bicycles.

Which island is best for learning to dive?
Ko Tao. It's one of the busiest places in the world to learn.

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