

PHANG-NGA

A small yet tranquil province, Phang-nga is nestled among majestic mountains and the beautiful blue waters of the Andaman Sea. Located on the western coast of the Malay peninsular, the province has evolved from a small prehistoric settlement to a major trading port. In its heyday, the city was a tin mining town generating an annual revenue of over ten thousands million baht. Today, Phang-nga has become one of the world's most popular tourist destinations offering spectacular natural beauty both onshore and underwater. What fascinates most of the tourists is the scene of limestone Mountains covered with lush tropical forests-natural formations created by the forces of winds and rains over the years.

Phang-nga's underwater world also has a lot to offer. Unspoiled seascapes and islands on both coasts of Phang-nga are recognized as Thailand's most beautiful sea terrain. Aside from captivating blue waters and white sandy beaches, the province is also blessed with stunning rock formations, colorful corals and fish. It is truly a diver's paradise where two world-class national parks, the Similan and Surin archipelagoes are located. Besides, the world-famous Ao Phang-nga is home to islets of various sizes and shapes and is an important breeding ground for all kinds of marine lives.

Despite its endless list of natural wonders to be explored, Pang-nga still manages to preserve most of its simple but charming lifestyles, a factor that will help make your visit an idyllic retreat from the stress of urban life.

Phang-nga

**1. Ao Phang-nga:**  
*6 km. from the city.....G15*  
Ao (Bay) Phang-nga boasts a wealth of natural heritage that makes it one of Thailand's most frequently visited marine parks. It commands a breathtaking view of emerald water sea dotted by over 40 islands of different shapes and sizes-a unique seascape hardly found elsewhere in the country. Most of the islands' cliffs are well known for caverns that house magnificent stalagmite and stalactite formations. Besides distinctive rock formations, the bay is also renowned for its vast mangrove forests and abundance of exotic marine creatures. Recommended fun-filled activities include canoeing and boat cruises. Call Ao Phang-nga National Marine Park Office at tel. +66 7648 1188, +66 7648 1163 for more information. www.dnp.go.th

**2. Muko Similan:**  
*56 km. from Thap Lamu Pier .....A11*  
Perfectly located in the Andaman Sea, Muko Similan is an archipelago of nine islands highly praised for its picturesque settings, both underwater and onshore. The archipelago enjoys a globe-sapping reputation as one of the world's most beautiful diving spots for both snorkeling and scuba diving. Diverse marine life, including more than ten species of dolphins, can be found along a valley of coral reefs. Lush forest, home to many bird species, offer fascinating trails for nature enthusiasts. Visitors should notify Similan National Park Officer before embarking on their trips. Call tel. +66 7645 3272 for more details. www.dnp.go.th

**3. Muko Surin:**  
*70 km. from Khura Buri Pier .....A2*  
Catch a glimpse of Thailand's largest and most perfect shallow water coral beds at Muko Surin, group of five islands in the Andaman Sea. Over an area of square kilometers, colorful soft and hard corals can be found alongside many fish and crabs. Additionally, Richellu Rock, the world-renowned diveng spot, is a must-not-miss underwater destination for divers. Onshore, a trip to a Moken (Sea Gypsy Village) may prove to be quite memorable as you can explore their traditional culture and learn their ways of life. Please contact Muko Surin National Park Office at tel. +66 7647 2145-6 peior to taking the trip.

**4. Khao Chang:**  
*2 km. from the City Hall .....F12*  
An official symbol of Phang-nga, Khao Chang is a large mountain that resembles a crouching elephant. Found inside the mountain is Tham Phung Chang (Elephant Belly Cave), a cavern adorned by glittering stalagmite and stalactite formations. Nearby attractions include an old city hall situated in front of the cave. The Unique Western architectural heritage of King Rama VII's period is reflected through the hall's terrace, pediment, and Baroque-style balustrades.

**5. Ko Yao Noi:**  
*138 km. from the city .....G16*  
The island is an ideal paradise for those seeking to explore unspoilt natural beauty in a spectacular environment: long stretches of white sandy beaches dotted by multi-colored pebbles and a spectacular view of Krabi's shoreline on the east. Cycling, trekking, swimming and canoeing are popular activities. Other leisurely pursuits include home-stay programs that offers such interesting activities as harvesting rubber plants and fishing in a small boat.

**6. Hat Khao Lak:**  
*25 km. from Takua Pa .....C10*  
Part of Khao Lak-Lam Ru National Park, Phang-nga's largest tourist destination, Khao Lak offers sandy beaches and supreme tranquility. A waterfall nearby, Lam Ru Waterfall, offers scenic views of a 5-tiered cascade set against the backdrop of lush forests. As Khao Lak has come into its own among tourists around the world, a large variety of high-class accommodations and restaurants are available. Khao Lak is where a diving trip to the famous Muko Similan is started.

Shopping & Souvenirs	
<b>Downtown</b>	
Phang-nga Market	Shrimp paste, Dried shrimp, Preserved seafood
Ban Tham Nam Phut	Nutmeg in syrup, Preserved mangosteen and durian
<b>Takua Pa</b>	
Talat Yai Takua Pa Market	Preserved seafood, Khanom Tao So
Mu Ban Sanambin	Cashew nut
<b>Thai Mueang</b>	
Near Sarasin Bridge	Phuket pineapples
<b>Takua Thung</b>	
Stalls along Takua Thung-Thai Mueang Rd.	Preserved seafood
Kra Som Market	Shrimp paste, Preserved seafood
<b>Ko Pan Yi</b>	
Ko Pan Yi Market	Shrimp paste, Dried shrimp, Preserved seafood, Tabun tree's root
<b>Ko Yao Noi</b>	
Ko Yao Noi Market	Dried shrimp, Preserved seafood



**7. Namtok Tam Nang:**  
*35 km. from Takua Pa .....E6*  
Situated among a lush tropical forest is Si Phang-nga National Park's largest waterfall, called Namtok Tam Nang. It cascades 60 metres down a steep cliff, passes many tiers before making its last splash in Wang Pla Phent, a large basin that is home to Pheng or Phlung fish (brook carp). The Unspoilt natural environment of the waterfall can be studied through 10 different information signs located throughout the area. For more information, contact Si Phang-nga National Park Office at +66 8 6952 5246 www.park.dnp.go.th

**8. Ko Hong-Ko Phanak:**  
*South of Ao Phang-nga .....F15*  
A unique limestone island, Ko Hong possesses an inland lagoon that serves as a natural residence for various bird species. Once in the lagoon, which is enclosed by high cliffs on all sides, you will feel as if you are in a spacious hall of water. For those addicted to adventurous activities, canoeing through the islands' many small grottos is definitely a challenge. Ko Phanak, on the other hand, boasts caverns that house splendid stalagmite and stalactite formations. Tham Kaeo, for instance, is famous for its fabulous glistening interior. Some of the caves even have their own small but beautiful waterfalls or lagoons.

**9. Khao Lam Pi-Hat Thai Mueang National Park:**  
*57 km. from the city .....C13*  
This 13-kilometres long white sandy beach dotted by rows of pine trees is a perfect spot to captivate a romantic at sunset. But what's special about the beach is its regular visitor. Each year, from November to February, sea turtles crawl up on the beach to lay their eggs. When the eggs hatch, there is an annual Sea Turtle Festival held in March to release them into the sea. Located next to the middle of the beach is a 240-acre grassland locally referred to as Thung Samet Khao, a place where most inhabitants are local and migratory birds. Nearby are two beautiful waterfalls, Lam Pi and Ton Phrai.

**10. Old Sino-Portuguese Building at Takua Pa:**  
*9 km. from Takua Pa .....D8*  
Takua Pa or Takola used to be a major trading port situated on the western coast of the Malay Peninsula. The port reached its apex in the reign of King Rama VII when the tin-mining industry was booming. These days, we can witness part of its glorified history through the Sino-Portuguese style buildings located along Si Takua Pa Road. Most of them are two-storey buildings with arched doorways similar to those built in Phuket. Some buildings feature rectangular posts decorated with colored glass, wood carvings or plastered motifs. Others display the architectural influence of Greece or Rome, with columns and colored glass windows.



Index of Attractions	
★ Ao Phang-nga	★★★ G15
★ Muko Similan	★★★★ A11
★ Muko Surin	★★★★ A2
★ Khao Chang	★★★★ F12
★ Ko Yao Noi	★★★★ G16
★ Hat Khao Lak	★★★★ C10
★ Namtok Tam Nang	★★★★ E6
★ Ko Hong - Ko Phanak	★★★★ F15
★ Khao Lam Pi-Hat Thai Mueang National Park	★★★★ C13
★ Sino-Portuguese Building	★★★★ D8
11. Ko Ra	★★ C3
12. Ko Phra Thong	★★ C5
13. Ko Kho Khao	★★ C6
14. Ko Yao Yai	★ G18
15. Laem Pakarang	★ C9
16. The Princess Chulabhorn Marine Park Project	★★ C11
17. Hat Khao Pi Lai	★★ C15
18. Hat Tha Nun	★★ C16
19. Namtok Sai Rung	★★ C9
20. Namtok Ton Chong Fa	★★ C10
21. Namtok Lam Pi	★★ D12
22. Namtok Ton Phrai	★★ D13
23. Namtok Sa Nang Manora	★★ G12
24. Namtok Lam Ru	★★ F11
25. Wat Tham Suwan Khuha	★★ F13
26. Wat Narai Nikaram	★ E9
27. Ton Pariwat Wildlife Sanctuary	★ G11

Getting There

By Car

From Bangkok, there are two driving routes to Phang-nga, which is located 788 kilometres from Bangkok, an approximately 12 hour drive.

1: Take Highway No. 4 through the provinces of Prachuap Khiri Khan, Chumphon, and Ranong directly to Phang-nga.

2: Take Highway No.4 to Chumphon and then Highway No. 41 to Amphoe Tha Chang, turning right onto Highway No. 401. Keep driving to Amphoe Ban Ta Khun (about 50 kilometres) and then take Highway No. 415 for the final 30 kilometres to Phang-nga town.

Visitors traveling from Phuket should take Highway No. 402, over the Sarasin Bridge. Highway No.4 north (left) leads towards Khao Lak, while Highway No.4 "south" (right, but still in a northerly direction) leads to Phang-nga town. Both Khao Lak and Phang-nga town are around 90 kilometres from Phuket, a journey of around 1 hour and 30 minutes.

By Bus

There are daily bus services from Bangkok to Phang-nga departing in the morning and evening. Traveling time is around 12 hours. For more information call the Southern Bus Terminal at tel.+66 2872 1777, or the Phang-nga Bus Terminal at +66 7641 2014 or visit www.transport.co.th, www.thairoute.com

By Air

The nearest airport to Phang-nga is Phuket, which is serviced by numorational Thai and international carriers from destinations within Thailand and abroad. From Phuket, visitors can take a bus, rent a car, or take a taxi to Phang-nga, around 90 kilometres away.

It is also possible to fly to Krabi, where it is then possible to rent a car or get mini-bus transportation to Phang-nga, an approximately 2 hour trip.

By Rental Car

The best way to get around Phang-nga is in a rental car. The attractions around the province are quite spread out, even around Khao Lak, which covers an enormous stretch of coastline. Cars can be rented in Phuket or Krabi.

It is possible to get around the more densely populated areas via songtaew, pickup trucks with benches in the rear, that pick up and drop off passengers at any location along a fixed route.

Motorbike-taxis can also be found in the town areas and are convenient for very short distances.

To get to the Similan Islands from the Khao Lak area, Thap Lamu Pier is located 70 kilometres north of Phang-nga town at Amphoe Thai Mueang. A boat trip by speedboat takes around 2 hours. However, there is no regular boat services to the Similan Islands; boats are only available through group tours or via private boat rental, the latter of which can cost upwards of 3,200-9,000 baht. Jack Similan Travel(www.jack-similan.com), Thap Lamu Andaman Tour (www.toursimilan.com), and South Siam Divers (www.southsiamdivers.com) are several companies that can arrange for you to book passage on a boat to the islands, even if you are planning to camp on one of the islands.

A boat trip from Patong Beach, Phuket takes around four hours. These are typically day trips or multi-day live-boards for snorkelers and scuba divers.

To get to the Surin Islands there is ferry that leaves the dock on Highway No.4, six kilometres north of Khura Buri town, between Takua Pa and Kapoe. The ferry takes around 4 hours to get to the islands.

Mini-bus and ordinary bus services operate between Phang-nga and other districts. Mini-buses normally leave Phang-nga Market every 15-30 minutes while ordinary buses leave Phang-nga Bus Teminal every hour.

Getting Around Phang-nga



Glossary of Thai Terms	
Amphoe	: District
Ao	: Bay
Ban	: Village
Hat	: Beach
Khao	: Mountain
Khlong	: Canal
Ko	: Island
Laem	: Cape
Muko	: Group of Islands
Mueang	: Town or City
Namtok	: Waterfall
Tham	: Cave
Tambon	: Sub-district
Wat	: Temple

**Note:** English spellings given here try to approximate Thai pronunciation. Posted signs may be spelled differently.

Important Telephone Number

TAT CONTACT CENTER (8.00-20.00 hrs.)	Tel.1672
TAT Phang-nga	Tel.+66 648 1900-2
Phuket International Airport	Tel.+66 7635 1122
Phang-nga Hospital	Tel.+66 7641 1616
Takua Pa Hospital	Tel.+66 7658 4250
Bus Terminal (Phang-nga Town)	Tel.+66 7641 2014
Bus Terminal (Takua Pa)	Tel.+66 7647 1098
Police Station	Tel.+66 7641 1328
Provincial Hall	Tel.+66 7648 1421
Provincial Public Relations Office	Tel.+66 7648 1456



