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THAILAND

Krabi



Hat Rai Le



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Krabi

Krabi





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Hat Tham Phra Nang

Krabi

This coastal province covers an area of 4,708 square kilometres and is located 814 kms. south of Bangkok. Krabi's major attractions are located largely along its extensive coastline, which contains several well-known beaches and bays, and numerous offshore tropical islands.

HISTORY

From archaeological discoveries, it is believed that Krabi was one of the oldest communities in Thailand dating from the prehistoric period. It is also believed that Krabi was once the town of Ban Thai Samo, one of 12 royal cities that used a monkey as the town symbol. Krabi was a dependency town of the Nakhon Si Thammarat Kingdom. Another legend indicates that the town may have taken its name after the meaning of Krabi, which means sword. This may have stemmed from a legend that says an ancient sword was unearthed prior to the city's founding. Later, the sword became a symbol of Krabi.

GEOGRAPHY

Krabi's mountainous physical geography is broken by highlands and plains on the mainland; the provincial administration also covers more than 130 large and small islands in the Andaman Sea. Natural forest cover is chiefly mangrove and Cassia trees. Krabi's sandy clay soil is perfect for a variety of agricultural produce; such as, rubber trees, palms, oranges, coconuts, and coffee. The Krabi River flows 5 kilometres through the town and empties into the Andaman Sea at Tambon Pak Nam.

ATTRACTIONS

Khao Khanap Nam

Khao Khanap Nam is regarded as the symbol of Krabi. It sits before the city and can be visited by long-tail boat from Chao Fa pier with the travelling time of about 15 minutes. From the boat, visitors can climb up a staircase to see caves with stalactites and stalagmites. A boat can be rented to visit Khao Khanap Nam, mangrove forests and the local community of Ko Klang fishing village.

Tham Sadet

This cave is located at Ban Nong Kok, 7 kms. from Krabi town. The villagers named it to mark the visit of King Rama IV (before he ascended to the throne). The cave features marvellous stalactite and stalagmite formations.

Khao Phanom Bencha National Park

Located at Ban Huai To, 20 kms. from town, the park covers a total area of 50 sq. kms. with high mountains and thick forests. Its marvelous scenery is enhanced by streams, waterfalls, and wild animals. Namtok Huai To is some 500 metres from the park office. The waterfall plunges over rocks into 11 huge pools, each with their own name; such as, Wang Thewada, Wang Sok, and Wang Chan. There is also Namtok Huai Sa-de, a 3-tier waterfall located 300 metres from the park office. Trekking to the peak of the Phanom Bencha Mountain, 1,397 metres high, is an interesting activity for adventurous tourists. Treks take at least 3 days, passing streams, waterfalls, caves and viewpoints on high cliffs. Contact the headquarters of Khao Phanom Bencha National Park, P.O. Box 26 Amphoe Mueang, Krabi 81000, Tel. +66 7585 5216, +66 1232 4901.



Wat Tham Suea

Wat Tham Suea

This temple, also known as “Tiger Cave”, is 9 kms. north of Krabi Town. The inside of this cave features tiger prints captured in stone, and it is in the middle of a lush forest, with enormous, ancient trees. As well as serving as a temple, this site is also a very significant archaeological site, as many artefacts have been found on the premises including tools, pottery, and a mould for the Buddha’s footprint. In addition, there are several other caves in the surrounding hills.

Susan Hoi or Fossil Shells Beach (Literally Seashell Graveyard)

Situated at Ban Laem Pho, 17 kilometres from town, the area was once a large freshwater swamp, home to a kind of snails that lived and died here around 40 million years ago. Even-

tually, weather changes caused the swamp’s disappearance, but by then the layer of fossilised snail shells was 40 centimetres thick, resting on 10 centimetres of lignite below which is the subsoil. Because of geographic upheavals, the fossilised shells are now distributed in great broken sheets of impressive magnitude on the seashore at Laem Pho. It is recommended to check the tide prediction before visiting Susan Hoi as the impressive magnitude of fossilised shells is only visible during the low tide, and is drowned underwater when the tide rises.

Ao Nang

Situated some 20 km. from town, Ao Nang’s white sandy beach stretches to the foot of a prominent limestone range. Beachfront accommodation is available and other facilities include diving shops, boats for rent, restaurants, tour operators and sightseeing by kayaking. From Ao Nang, tourists may hire boats to visit nearby attractions such as Hat Rai Le, Tham Phra Nang located on the land to the east of Ao Nang, as well as other offshore isles such as Ko Poda, Ko Kai, Ko Mo and Ko Thap.

Hat Rai Le

This beach is generally divided into two sections, east and west. Although it has fewer facilities to offer than Ao Nang, West Rai Le is a broad sandy beach, offering a quiet and peaceful ambience. Across the peninsula from West Rai Le is East Rai Le, which varies from the other beaches in the area. It could actually be classified as a mud flat, especially during low tide, with one end of the beach covering with mangroves. Even so, it does offer some rather remarkable views. The most convenient way to get to Hat Rai Le is to take the long-tailed boat from Ao Nang, which takes approximately 15 minutes.



Hat Rai Le

Hat Tham Phra Nang

Accessible only by boat, this sweeping beach offers fine-grained white sand and crystalline waters, as well as magnificent cliffs and caves. Although visitors flock to this beach year-round, it is still extremely pristine and considered to be the most attractive one in the area. The inner and outer Phra Nang Caves and Phra Nang Lagoon are close by and offer some truly spectacular views. Accommodation is available over a wide price range. Despite the fact that it is reachable only by boat, this area offers plenty of recreational activities.

Hat Noppharat Thara

This is a 3-km. long sandy beach located 6 kms. from Ao Nang. The beach, paved with tiny sea-shells, was formerly called “Hat Khlong Haeng” by locals, which means “dried canal beach”. The



Hat Tham Phra Nang

canal will dry up during low tide and the area turns into a long beach. The headquarters of Hat Noppharat Thara-Muko Phi Phi National Park are situated here. The park covers a large



Hat Noppharat Thara

area both onshore and offshore. Visit www.dnp.go.th for more information.

Muko Phi Phi

Phi Phi is located an equal distance of around 40 kms. from both Krabi and Phuket. Made up of six small and large isles, the main features are sheer limestone cliffs and rocks. Some have beautiful beaches and coral reefs. The best time for a visit is between November to April.

Ko Phi Phi Don covers an area of 28 sq. kms. Laem Tong in the north offers beautiful marine nature. Diving can be done as well at Laem Hua Raket, Hat Yao and Hin Phae. A number of accommodations is available.

Ko Phi Phi Le is a lovely island that covers an area of only 6.6 sq. kms. It is surrounded by Limestone Mountains and high hills with jutting cliffs. On average, the sea is 20 metres deep and the deepest point to the south of the island is

around 34 metres. Ko Phi Phi Le is blessed with scenic bays; such as Ao Pi Le, Ao Maya, and Ao Lo Sa Ma. In the northeast of the island is a large cave called Tham Viking. The cave was renamed “Tham Phaya Nak” or “Naga Serpent Cave” by His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej because of a stone resembling the mythical creature, which His Majesty noticed when he paid a visit here in 1972. The cave is considered sacred to locals who come here to collect swallows’ nests. Inside the eastern and southern parts of the cave are ancient colour paintings of elephants and various types of boats, including an Arabian sailboat, a European sailboat, a sampan, a Chinese junk, and a steamboat. It is believed the paintings were the works of sea merchants or pirates because the study of west-to-east ship routes indicates that this area may have been a stopover for boats seeking shelter from storms, transferring cargo or making repairs.

Ko Phi Phi Le



Ko Yung is situated in the north of Ko Phi Phi Don. Teeming with various kinds of colourful coral reefs, the island has a stone beach to the east and small sandy beaches amid valleys.

Ko Mai Phai is north of Ko Phi Phi Don and not far from Ko Yung. Marvellous beaches are in the north and east of the island. The bank of coral reefs with antler corals, in particular, stretches from north to south of the island.

Getting to Ko Phi Phi, visitors can take the ferries which are departing from Chao Fa Pier in Krabi town. Information, schedule and tickets can be obtained from the travel agents in the Krabi town or at the pier. Regular boats as well as a one-day trip on a speedboat from Ao Nang to Ko Phi Phi are also available. The trips can be arranged by several local tour operators located in the Ao Nang beach area. On arrival to Ko Phi Phi Don, trips to the surrounding islands can be made in a long-tail boat. Visitors travelling from Phuket can contact tour operators who organise a one-day trip to Ko Phi Phi.

Hat Thap Khaek

Hat Thap Khaek is around 25 kms. from town and is regarded as a clean and tranquil beach of Krabi. Popular amongst the tourists who prefer sunbathing activity in a private area, Hat Thap Khaek offers stunning scenery peaceful sea with Muko Hong and Muko Yao as a background. Several types of accommodation are also available.

Ao Tha Len

Located around 35 kms to the west of Krabi town, Ao Tha Len is a small bay but is known for being one of the best places for sea kayaking. The kayaking trip will take visitors to explore the fertile mangrove forests and encounter the

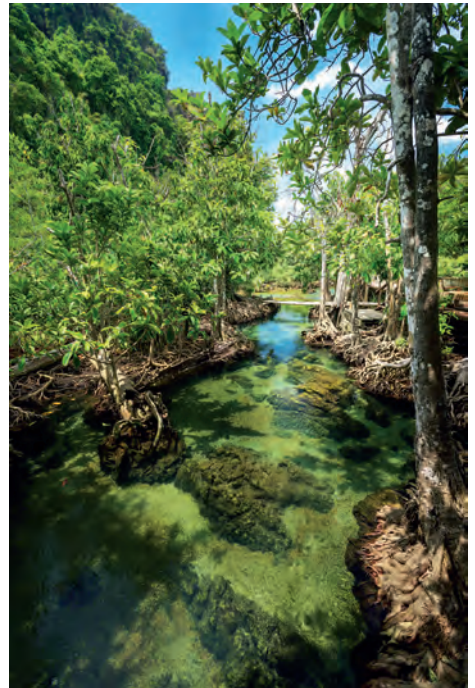
ecosystem rich in faunas. The most beautiful spot is when the kayak is sailed through the majestic limestone cliff.

Krabi Horticultural Centre

This agro-tourism attraction, supported by the Department of Agricultural Extension, is some 20 kms. from Krabi on the way to Amphoe Ao Luek. The centre covers a large area and boasts a collection of local fruits, flowers and plants.

Tha Pom Khlong Song Nam

Tha Pom Khlong Song Nam is a 5 km. long canal which is located at the point where the fresh-water meets seawater creating an astonishing ecological system. The crystal clear emerald water changes from fresh to brackish depend-



Tha Pom Khlong Song Nam



Tham Lot

ing on the tide level. Visitors can take a kayaking trip along the canal to enjoy the lush scenery of the mangrove forest and peat swamp forest on both sides of the canal.

Than Bok Khorani National Park

The park office is situated 46 kms. from town or 1 km. from Ao Luek Nuea Market. Near the park office there are several natural ponds of emerald water in a shady forested area, in which tourists can enjoy swimming in these pools. Other attractions in the park include several caves in limestone mountains, verdant mangrove forests, and beautiful islands which can be reached only by boat. Camping in the park can be done but tourists have to bring their own tents. Interesting attractions are as follows:

Tham Lot can be reached by boat from Bo Tho Pier. The pier is located 2 kms. from Amphoe Ao Luek on the way to Laem Sak, where visitors can ride a long-tail boat along a canal passing through mangrove forests for 15 minutes. Tham Lot is a tunnel under a limestone mountain where a natural stream runs through a small tunnel and charming stalactite and stalagmite formations are found. The cave can be visited only during low tide.

Tham Phi Hua To is 500 metres from Tham Lot and can be visited by boat from Bo Tho Pier. The cave is in Phi Hua To Mountain which is surrounded by mangrove swamps. There are 2 split paths inside the cave. On the left lies the shortcut to the back of the cave where the sun



Tham Phi Hua To

can shine through, and on the right is a path to a chamber hall believed to have once been a shelter for cave dwellers. Prehistoric paintings of men, animals, human organs and numerous seashells can be seen in the cave. Big human skulls were also discovered, an origin of the name, "Big-headed Ghost Cave".

Tham Chao Le is located to the west of Laem Sak in a bay surrounded by mountains and picturesque islands. It is accessible by a 10 to 15 minutes boat trip from Laem Sak pier. In the cave, there are primitive paintings featuring men, animals and geometric symbols including stalactite and stalagmite formations. It is assumed that the paintings may have been painted after those of Tham Phi Hua To.

Muko Hong is a group of limestone islands including Ko Lao or Ko Sa Ka, Ko Lao Riam,

Ko Pakka and Ko Lao La Ding. Most of them are limestone islands with fine beaches, coral reefs in both deep and shallow water, and various kinds of fish. Ko Hong or Ko Lao Pi Le is the biggest island in the south. There is a 400-metre hiking trail around the island and also area suitable for kayaking. Muko Hong is located at the edge of the Than Bok Khorani National Park, and is accessible by boat from Ao Nang, which takes around one hour.

Wat Khlong Thom Museum

This local museum in a temple compound is located 1 km. from Khlong Thom District Office, between Km. 71 and Km. 72 of Highway No. 4. The museum features various kinds of artefacts that were discovered during the excavations within an archaeological site called "Khuan Luk Pat" or "a mound of beads" behind the temple.



Than Bok Khorani National Park



Other discoveries include stone tools, earthen ornaments in the shape of animals, and the beads are about 5,000 years old.

Namtok Ron Khlong Thom

These hot springs are steaming at Ban Bang Khram. Travel some 45 km. from town to Amphoe Khlong Thom, then take Sukhaphiban 2 Road for 12 km. The area is full of hot springs in a shady forest with warm temperature of 40-50 degrees Celsius. The hot springs and cool streams converge on a slope to form lovely cascades with warm water.

Khao Pra-Bang Khram Wildlife Sanctuary

At Ban Bang Tiao, 18 kms. from Amphoe Khlong Thom, there is a 2.7-km. long nature trail through a lowland forest with the Emerald Pool and a variety of natural habitats. The forest is home to rare birds like Gurney's Pitta, Rufous-coloured Kingfisher and Black Hornbill, and various kinds of plants.

Namtok Hin Phoeng

This waterfall is situated 25 kms. from Khlong Thom District. Drive along Highway No. 4 (Krabi-Trang), and turn left for 8 kms. at Khlong Phon Market. On arrival at the lower basin, visitors must walk along the edge of a mountain for 400 metres to see the waterfall on a steep cliff.

Ko Lanta

Ko Lanta consists of two adjacent islands: Ko Lanta Yai and Ko Lanta Noi. Ko Lanta Yai is full of tourist facilities while Ko Lanta Noi is the location of the district office. Most of the beaches on Ko Lanta Yai lie in the west and offer a wide range of accommodations. These beaches include Kho Kwang, Khlong Dao, Phra Ae, Hat Khlong Khong, Hat Khlong Nin and Ba Kan Tiang, all can be reached by road. Sala

Dan Pier in the north is where tour operators, shops and banks are situated. At the south end of the island is the headquarters of Muko Lanta Marine National Park, which has a campground and beautiful views. Travelling to the east of the island, visitors can see an old community of Ko Lanta and a sea gypsy village. Some guesthouses are available. Motorbikes can be rented at Sala Dan to explore the island. The peak season to visit Ko Lanta lasts from November to April.

Getting to Ko Lanta, visitors can take air-conditioned vans from Krabi Town. The van boards a motor-raft at Ban Hua Hin and then another raft at Ko Lanta Noi. The trip takes 2 hours. For visitors who drive are advised to take the first round of ferries as the first round will be on time while the other round might be delayed especially the last round. Ferry service during the High Season (November – May): Two ferries depart daily from Chao Fa Pier in Amphoe Mueang at 10.00 am and 2.30 pm. The trip takes about 2 hrs. to reach Sala Dan pier or Ko Lanta Yai.

Muko Lanta Marine National Park

The park has an office at the south end of Ko Lanta Yai. The park covers an area of 152 sq. kms. and occupies many islands including parts of Ko Lanta Yai, Ko Lanta Noi, Ko Ta Leng Beng, Ko Ha, Ko Rok, and Ko Ngai. Camping is allowed near the park office with advance notice. Ko Rok also provides tents for tourists. Please contact Muko Lanta National Park, No.5, Tambon Ko Lanta Yai, Amphoe Ko Lanta, Krabi 81150 or www.dnp.go.th.

Ko Talabeng is a limestone island, similar to Ko Phi Phi Le, and blessed with small lovely beaches. During low tide, the cave is clearly visible. Swallows can be seen on the island.





Ko Rok

Ko Rok comprises of two islands - Ko Rok Nai and Ko Rok Nok. Ko Rok Nai is an island consisting of steep cliffs, superb beaches and unspoiled coral reefs. Ko Rok Nok has similar features, while Hat Thalu and Ao Man Sai are situated at the end of the island. Tourists can contact tour operators, resorts and bungalows on Ko Lanta Yai for an excursion to Ko Rok by speedboat. The trip by long-tail boat is not recommended.

Ko Ngai or Ko Hai is a small island that has a long sandy beach in the east and unspoiled coral reefs in shallow water at the beachfront. The island is accessible by taking a ferry and a chartered boat from Pak Meng Pier, Trang province.

Hin Daeng is a rock that poses a hazard to ships on the outer edge of the Andaman Sea. With a dazzling array of coral reefs, it is a great diving spot.

Ko Ha is an archipelago of five islands. Ko Ha Yai is where coral reefs are found in shallow water.

INTERESTING ACTIVITIES

Hot Springs

Krabi is endowed with several hot springs, both within the centre of town or the natural hot springs in the shady forest area. A visit to enjoy the natural therapy of hot spring water is a must when visiting Krabi, especially at the Namtok Ron Khlong Thom which provides a natural hallow for visitors to relax in their own natural pool. It is recommended to visit hot springs during weekdays to avoid the crowds. For more information, contact TAT Krabi Office at +66 7562 2163, +66 7561 2811-2

Kayaking

One of several ecotourism activities available in Krabi is sea-kayaking, and there are few better ways to enjoy the spectacular scenery than by drifting leisurely amongst the limestone cliffs. This is perhaps the best way to explore Krabi's countless inlets and deserted beaches, allowing travellers to discover the true magic of the area at their own pace. For kayaking, the following two trips are highly recommended. The first is kayaking through mangrove forests to Tham



Kayaking

Lot, a tunnel under a limestone mountain where captivating stalactites and stalagmites adorn the rock ceiling. Then continue to Tham Phi Hua To, also called Tham Hua Kalok, where many prehistoric paintings can be seen on the cave wall. For more details and bookings, contact: Sea Kayak Krabi, Tel. +66 7568 0382, +66 8 9724 8579 www.seakayak-krabi.net and Sea Canoe Thailand Ltd., Tel. +66 7652 8839-40, +66 8 9871 9110 (Phuket Office) www.seacanoe.net. Another trip is kayaking to Khao Karot. Surrounded by scenic mangrove swamps, the mountain is an interesting site where prehistoric paintings can also be seen.

For further information, contact Khuan O Pier at Tel: +66 8 9972 8943 (Khun Direk) Kayaking is available in the waters off Krabi and Phang-nga provinces, which boast some of the most

spectacular seascapes and marine life anywhere. The sport is accessible to beginners and veterans alike, since operators offer training at the start of the trip. The seakayaking centre is at Ao Nang, which blends the rugged appeal of rocky outcrops with the serene beauty of beaches and crystal-clear water. Off its shore lie limestone outcrops honeycombed with caves and hollows and fringed by mangrove forests. Kayak rental is available at many guesthouses in the Ao Nang area, and guides are also available to lead you through the myriad of small, deserted islands.

Snorkelling & Diving

Dive shops provide mask, snorkel and fins for hire at around 150 Baht a set per day. A deposit of around 500 Baht may be required. These shops also offer dive trips and advice about some of the most spectacular destinations in Southern Thailand to the visitors.

Biking

Mountain bikes can be found around Ao Nang. The terrain is spectacular and this is a great and healthy way to take in the most captivating scenery.

Rock Climbing

Every year thousands of climbers come to Krabi specifically to challenge themselves on the famous limestone karsts, and most agree that it is well worth the trip. There are over 150 bolted routes, concentrated primarily on the Phra Nang peninsula, between Hat Tham Phra Nang and Hat Rai Le. These routes are typically in the mid-to-high difficulty range, with numerous overhangs, and sheer limestone faces. However, there are also several beginner climbs, so that even the novice climber can experience the thrill of climbing. Equipment rentals, instruction, and guides are all available.



Rock Climbing

SHOPPING

Bird cages and mats made from Toei Panan (pandanus trees) are sold in shops on Uttarakit Road in Krabi Town. Preserved seafood products; such as, shrimp paste, dried fish and shrimp, and Shogun oranges, are also available. Shops in most tourist areas sell batik with various designs and colours.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Krabi Boek Fa Andaman Festival

The festival is held annually in November to inaugurate the province's tourist season. The festival features parades, local products contests, sea-kayak competitions and boat races.

Loi Ruea Chao Le Festival

13th day of waxing moon of the 6th lunar month

13th day of waxing moon of the 11th lunar month

This is a rare sea gypsy festival on Ko Lanta. The festival is held annually, on the full moon day in the sixth and the eleventh months of the lunar calendar. The sea gypsies on Ko Lanta and from neighbouring areas will gather at the beach near Ban Sala Dan to float boats in the sea in order to bring good luck. The Rong Ngeng, a typical southern dance, as well as traditional music, will be performed around the boats.

HOW TO GET THERE

By Car

Route A: Drive along Highway No. 4, passing Phetchaburi, Prachuap Khiri Khan, Chumphon, Ranong, Phang-nga to Krabi. The distance is 946 kms. from Bangkok.

Route B: Drive along Highway No. 4 and turn into Highway No. 41 at Chumphon via Lang Suan and Phunphin, Surat Thani. Continue driving along Highways No. 401 via Ban Ta Khun, No. 415 and No. 4 via Ao Luek to Krabi. This route is 814 kms. from Bangkok.

By Bus

Air-conditioned buses depart from Bangkok's Southern Bus Terminal to Krabi everyday. The journey takes 12 hours. For more information, contact Tel. +66 2422 4444, +66 2422 4435 or contact the Transport Company Limited at Hot line 1490 or visit home.transport.co.th.

By Rail

There is no direct train from Bangkok to Krabi. Visitors may take a train from Bangkok Railway Station to Surat Thani and then take a bus or a

taxi to Krabi. For more information, contact the State Railway of Thailand at Hotline 1690 or visit www.railway.co.th.

By Air

Thai Airways operates daily flights to Krabi. Tel. +66 2356 1111 (Bangkok Office) or 0 7570 1591-3 (Krabi Office) or visit www.thaiairways.com.

Thai AirAsia operates daily flights to Krabi. Tel. +66 2515 9999 or visit www.airasia.com.

Thai Smile operates daily flights to Krabi. Tel. +66 2118 8888 or visit www.thaismileair.com

Nok Air operates daily flights to Krabi Tel. 1318, +66 2900 9955 or visit www.nokair.com

Bangkok Airways operates daily flights to Krabi. Tel. 1771 or visit www.bangkokair.com.

Thai Lion Air operates daily flight to Krabi. Tel. +66 2529 9999 or visit www.lionairthai.com

Travel Around Krabi

Getting around the town is very convenient by local taxi (tuk tuk). Some attractions like Hat Noppharat Thara, Susan Hoi, Ao Nang, Wat Tham Suea, Namtok Huai To, and Ao Luek can be reached by local mini-bus (Song Thaeo). The mini-buses depart from Vogue Department Store on Maharat Road in Krabi Town. Trips to other attractions can be made by taxi and rental car.





Hat Tham Phra Nang



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