



TAKE OFF!

A drive away from Phuket

KOH PHI PHI, approximately 45 km

EXPERIENCE

Just a 45-minute speedboat ride from Phuket takes you to the stunning archipelago of Phi Phi Islands surrounded by vivid turquoise waters. Despite its worldwide fame (thanks to the Leonardo DiCaprio-starrer *The Beach*), the islands have many secret beaches. Head to secluded Loh Moo Dee Bay, which is great for snorkelling or Nui Beach — framed by tall limestone cliffs, it is perfect for rock climbing. If you're adventurous, go diving among sharks at Shark Point or try rock-climbing at Tonsai Tower, a 200-metre-tall limestone tower in Koh Phi Phi Don. Visit Bamboo Island, which has stunning coral reefs and great snorkelling opportunities.



EAT



Seafood is the star attraction on Phi Phi and Tonsai Village is the place to go to for the best dining options. The beachfront Ton Sai Seafood Restaurant and Mama Resto are perfect for sundowners. Sample the grilled lobsters and fried squid. Try some home-style Pad Thai at Anna's Restaurant or brunch at Aroy Kaffeine, which also serves first-rate coffee.

STAY



Located on the tranquil Laem Tong Beach, Zeavola Resort is a sustainable luxury hideaway. The Phi Phi Long Beach Resort & Villa at Long Beach has private plunge pools, plus it's just a short walk from Ton Sai Bay. The Phi Phi Island Village Beach Resort offers secluded bungalows with Thai-styled thatched roofs.

BUY



Drop in at Namlily in Central Tonsai for vintage dresses and accessories. Pick up colourful sarongs and beachwear at Mr Rum Boutique on the Main Street or head to Tonsai East Shopping Alleyway for bargain fashion. Look out for inexpensive bohemian clothes, and trinkets and fridge magnets as souvenirs.

Photos: Courtesy Unsplash.com/Jared Rice; RM Asia/Alamy Stock Photo/Alamy.com; Zeavola Resort & Spa; Unsplash.com/Alyssa Kowalski

KHAO LAK, approximately 95 km

GoAir offers daily direct flights to Phuket from New Delhi, Mumbai and Bengaluru as well as convenient connections from Kolkata and Patna via New Delhi. The airline also offers connections to Phuket from Goa and Ahmedabad via Mumbai, and Lucknow and Pune via Bengaluru.

For more connections and bookings to Phuket, visit GoAir.in or mobile app.

EXPERIENCE

With the Andaman Sea on one side and verdant rainforests on the other, Khao Lak is the perfect escape if Phuket gets too busy. Explore the endless canopy of tropical forests at Khao Sok National Park, the oldest evergreen

rainforest in the world, with numerous waterfalls, caves and hot springs. Go sea-cave canoeing and kayaking in Phang Nga Bay. Drop in at the Wat Suwan Kuha, just 6 km outside Phang Nga Town to see the large reclining Buddha statue inside a limestone cave.

GRUB HUB

Mingle with the locals at the Khuk Khak Fresh Market and get a glimpse of local produce; later, sample barbecued seafood and meats from one of the street food stalls.

EAT

You'll be spoilt for choice. Try beachfront eateries – Kokulo Beach Club on Bang Niang or Memories Beach Bar on Khuk Khak, which serve both Thai and Western fare. Head to Klong Koo Restaurant for a dining experience set in a shallow river-bed surrounded by a lush forest; don't miss the massaman curry and som tam salad.

STAY

Just minutes from Bang Niang Beach, the boutique Bangsak Village and the luxury beach resort The Sarojin are both perfect for a couple's getaway, complete with luxurious spas and infinity pools. The sprawling La Vela Khao Lak is ideal for families, offering spacious family rooms and a dedicated kids' club with a range of activities to keep the little ones occupied.

BUY

The colourful and lively Bang Niang Market (Mon, Wed, Thurs, Sat) is the shopping destination at Khao Lak. Makeshift stalls sell everything from clothes and beachwear to accessories and handicrafts. TT Plaza in the centre of La On Village is also worth a visit for cheap clothing, electronics and toys. 

Photos: Explore_life/Shutterstock.com; adisak sofa/Shutterstock.com; Bangsak Village; Memories Beach Bar. Map not to scale

— COMPILED BY PRACHI JOSHI