

General Trip info

Map

Trip Code: ITSSZC

Trip Length: 7

Trip starts in: Phuket

Trip ends in: Phuket

Meals: 6 Breakfasts included

4 Lunches included

4 Dinners included

Accommodation: Overnight boat (6 nights)

Transport: Boat, dinghy

Daily Itinerary

Day 1

Phuket

Sa-wat dee! Welcome to Phuket, arguably Thailand's best known island, and certainly its largest. Phuket is an island of modern pizzazz mixed with sunshine exotica. At 1pm today you'll meet your skipper and other group members at the Bullship Bar, Chalong Bay, ready to board. As the space on board the Cataleya is limited, it's recommended to bring a small soft-sided bag or a backpack. If you are travelling with a larger bag or suitcase, you can leave your luggage at our base in Chalong and take a small overnight or daypack on board. After an orientation of the yacht and collection of your important insurance and next of kin information, begin your journey across the Andaman Sea with a sail towards Ko Rang Yai Island, where the boat will drop anchor in front of a private beach. This is the perfect place to ease in to life on board with a dip in the water, dinner on board and a beautiful sunset. Notes: The beauty of sailing is that each day is unique and, while we have a destination to reach, if the weather changes or something takes the group's fancy, we are flexible on the day's itinerary. The itinerary is subject to change and may vary depending on weather and berth availability. Your skipper will make the final call to ensure your safety at all times.

Day 2 - 6

Phang Nga Bay

After breakfast, start to explore by cruising into famous Phang Nga Bay, where the James Bond movie 'Man with the Golden Gun' was made. This is a stunning landscape of sheer limestone karsts that jut dramatically out of the green water. Enjoy lunch in remote islands, and have the opportunity to explore – the hardest decision you'll have to make is whether to swim or kayak around this gorgeous spot. Surrounded by towering karst formations and many small offshore islands, you can kayak slowly through the bays and canyons that are like passageways, discovering inlets, caves and hidden lagoons, and checking out the local wildlife up-close – the birds overhead and monkeys in the trees. Tonight you'll anchor in an isolated spot in the north-east part of the bay between Ko Klui and Ko Chang. Spend the evening comfortably slumped in a bean bag, reading, eating and drinking, surrounded by turquoise blue water, and watch the sun dip beneath the waves. Set sail this morning towards the lonely island of Ko Hong. Half way between the island of Ko Yao Noi and Krabi, Ko Hong is truly desert island destination, uninhabited except for gibbons, birds, and lizards, where two powdery white sand beaches line twin bays. The name translates to 'Room', and this might refer to the tranquil lagoon hidden inside the island. Here you'll take out the dinghy and explore the sea caves before stopping on the quintessential image of a tropical beach for swimming and snorkelling. Strap on a mask or perhaps chill out on deck with a good book and a bowl of fresh fruit. Your sailing day ends in Railay, a paradise with sheer-sided limestone mountains around the beach. After viewing a stunning sunset, have dinner ashore amid the cluster of lively restaurants and bars. Back on the boat you can choose to spend another night of this fabulously relaxing Thailand sailing adventure sleeping out on the deck under the stars. Spend an early morning on Railay Beach (before everyone arrives), then sail to the most talked about place in Thailand – the island group of Ko Phi Phi. For many, this is the iconic image of the country – two islands connected by a great arc of pure white sand, striking limestone cliffs, and water that's an unbelievably inviting shade of turquoise green. The island draws people through its fame as the location of Leonardo Di Caprio's 'The Beach', but also for its colourful marine life, shops, bars, restaurants and fire spectacles on the beach. Try to spot schools of brightly coloured fish off the coast of Phi Phi before sailing on to Phi Phi Don. In free time, hike to Phi Phi viewpoint, go fishing or just enjoy the beaches and buzzing nightlife. Pull up the anchor early this morning and sail north, before stopping at Monkey Bay for some snorkelling. Just outside Loh Dalum Bay to the west, Monkey Bay's beach is one of the most beautiful in the whole of Thailand, not just Phi Phi, which is really saying something in a country blessed with endless gorgeous sands. The bay gets its name from the monkeys who cavort around on the beach – keep an eye on any of your possessions as they are pretty cheeky! The water is clear and the coral is just below the surface – brightly coloured fish dart here and there, inches from your mask. After lunch, in the afternoon continue northwest to the undeveloped, unspoilt island of Ko Yao Yai. Here you'll find lovely lonely beaches surrounded by mangroves. Around the beautiful bays there's excellent snorkelling, leafy forest trails and sea kayaking to choose from. It's a great place to relax away from the tourist trail and absorb the natural wonders, somewhere where glimpses of traditional island culture are still seen. Later this evening, head out to the beach to cap off another unforgettable day with a night beach BBQ, maybe grilling up some fresh fish caught earlier today. Relax the night away beside a fire pit, and watch the sun sink beneath the waves. Set sail across a postcard landscape of shimmering azure waters and island-studded bays southwest to Ko Racha. Known for the clearest blue water in the area, these islands are a great destination for snorkelling, and are mainly home to farmers and fishermen. Enjoy these fine powder white sandy beaches, get active in the warm and inviting water with activities like kayaking or paddle boarding, or head ashore to take a walk across the island, passing coconut groves and the occasional water buffalo grazing, and be treated to some spectacular views. Maybe strap on a mask and head underwater with great visibility and clarity, where you can mingle with a wealth of curious marine life in a protected cove, or perhaps simply chill out on deck and enjoy the view. Spend your last evening on the boat soaking up this unique location and view. Don't forget to make the most of your wonderful surroundings by choosing to sleep out on deck under the stars.

Day 7

Phuket

A smooth sail brings you to your final destination of Phuket Island around 12 noon. Stop for your last chance to paddle, swim and snorkel in the waters of the Andaman Sea, spotting schools of brightly coloured fish off the coast before docking in Phuket. It has some excellent beaches and a huge array of restaurants, hotels, bars and shopping, so perhaps take a couple of extra days here to check it all out. This is where your Andaman seafaring odyssey comes to an end. Afterwards you are free to explore all that Phuket has to offer, or to continue your onward journey.

Additional Information

Notes for Thailand

Lying deep in the heart of South East Asia, Thailand is a country brimming with culture. A firm favourite with travellers for many years thanks to the welcoming nature of its people, the country boasts a wonderful blend of the exotic and the familiar. Visit incredible Buddhist temples, atmospheric markets and buzzing cities, perfectly juxtaposed with rural villages, forests, jungles and the beautiful islands of the Gulf of Thailand. Enjoy the perfect amalgamation of ancient and modern as you experience the wealth of activities on offer throughout this fascinating 'land of smiles'.

Citizens of the UK, USA, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Russia, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia will not require a visa to enter Thailand as a tourist for up to 30 days. Citizens of Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and most 'western' EU countries will not require a visa to enter as a tourist for up to 30 days if arriving by air, or up to 15 days if arriving through a land border. In all cases, this may be extended for 30 days at the immigration department in Bangkok once in the country. Citizens of other countries should check with the relevant consulates as to whether a visa is required. Please note that certain Eastern European nationalities (whether members of the EU or not) will need a visa, but some nationalities can obtain the visa on arrival while others will need to obtain it in advance – please check carefully what the situation is for your nationality. A valid yellow fever vaccination certificate is required from travellers coming from areas with risk of yellow fever transmission (including transiting through an airport in an area of risk).

Important Notes

The routes, activities and places visited as described in these trip notes are intentions and are meant as a rough guide only.

These trip notes have been compiled to help you prepare for your journey once you have booked. They include the full itinerary and dates, and information about kit lists, meeting hotels, insurance, vaccinations, visas, and other information that will help you get ready for your trip.

These notes are updated regularly, so please ensure you have an up-to-date version of these trip notes.

The planned route and itinerary is the intention, but exact night stops and inclusions cannot be guaranteed. It occasionally happens that there must be a change to our planned itinerary - this may be for a variety of reasons, such as climatic, road or bureaucratic conditions. By their very nature, adventure travel needs to be approached flexibly and some regions can be unpredictable. Some Imaginative Traveller journeys go through off the beaten track areas, which often have poor infrastructure and less stringent safety standards than we are used to at home.

Our Groups

Our groups are made up of people from around the world and are usually an interesting mix of nationalities and ages. On average there is a pretty even split, males to females and between solo travellers, couples and small groups of friends. We believe that adventure travel should be open to as many people as possible and so although some trips have a minimum age limit, as long as you are fit, healthy and passionate about travel, we are happy to take you. One of the highlights of group travel is the camaraderie and friendships that are formed along the way, and as well as the variety of people that you will meet.

The maximum group size depends on the operator and the style of transport, but will usually be a maximum of 15-16 or up to 21-22 on our overland journeys.

Accommodation

Imaginative Traveller trips are designed for shared accommodation, whether staying in hotels, hostels, homestays or campsites, and therefore do not involve a single supplement. Single travellers will share with people of the same sex for the duration of the trip and those that book together will usually be able to share accommodation.

The type, variety and standard of accommodation will vary greatly depending on what options are available in the region you are travelling; hotels can vary from very basic rooms without electricity or running water to high standard hotels with good facilities! Generally in hotels most rooms will be twin-share. Hostels, gers and yurts are nearly always multi-share.

Many trips will feature a stay in a local homestay or community tourism initiative, allowing us to experience a slice of local life in the areas we travel through. On our overland trips, we will sometimes camp in campsites ranging from rather basic or even wild camps to those with excellent facilities, including swimming pools, restaurants and bars.

Dietary Requirements

If you have any dietary requirements please tell us at the time of booking and also remind your leader at your welcome meeting. Our crew will try to cater for any particular dietary requirement or food intolerance whenever possible.

Health

You need to be in good physical health in order to participate fully in our trips. When selecting your trip

please make sure you have read through the itinerary carefully and assessed your ability to cope with the style of travel on that trip. We are always happy to give extra advice if you have additional concerns. Please note that if, in the opinion of our leader, you are unable to complete the itinerary without undue risk to yourself and/or the rest of the group, Imaginative Traveller or our partner operators reserve the right to exclude you from all or part of the trip.

You should consult your doctor for up-to-date medical travel information prior to travel, particularly if you have a pre-existing medical condition. We also advise you to declare any pre-existing medical conditions to your travel insurers upon purchase.

Altitude

Imaginative Traveller offers some trips that travel to above 2,800m altitude above sea level - it is imperative at high altitudes to drink lots of water to stay hydrated, be careful not to get burned by the sun, and try not to exert yourself too much. Some pre-existing medical conditions are known to severely worsen at high altitude and be difficult to adequately treat on the ground, leading to more serious consequences. It is imperative that you discuss your pre-existing medical condition/s with your doctor. We understand certain medications are reported to aid acclimatising to high altitude; please discuss these options with your doctor.

Yellow Fever

A valid international certificate of vaccination against Yellow Fever is required in many countries. You may need to present this on arrival at the airport or border crossing. Some countries will refuse entry if you are unable to present your certificate - please see each country's note above for details. It's also quite common for your home country to request a Yellow Fever certificate on your arrival back home.

It is your responsibility to check with your doctor well in advance of leaving home about the Yellow Fever requirements for the countries you'll be visiting.

Malaria and other mosquito-borne diseases

Some areas we travel to have the risk of contracting malaria. If this applies to your trip, please get expert advice before travelling about types of malaria pills and take them as instructed. Recommended types do change from time to time and from area to area. Consult your GP / travel clinic for the most up-to-date requirements and to find the right option for you. If advised by your doctor to take a course of anti-malarial tablets, please complete the course as instructed as malaria can often manifest itself upon your return home if the course is not followed.

Other mosquito-borne diseases such as Dengue Fever, Chikungunya and Zika are continuing to spread and becoming a bigger problem around the world. Bite prevention is vital to avoid contracting any of these diseases as there are no vaccines or specific treatments available. Health professionals have issued warnings for pregnant women travelling to areas affected by the Zika virus.

The mosquito usually bites between the hours of dusk and dawn and so covering up by wearing long-legged and long-sleeved clothing, preferably light coloured and buttoned at the wrists, can help. Do not sleep without closing windows, use a mosquito net where possible and use mosquito repellent applied directly to your skin or soaked into your clothing.

Vaccinations

Recommended vaccinations and other health protection vary according to different regions and recent bulletins issued by health authorities. It is essential to get the latest advice on the region(s) you are planning to travel in so please check with either your doctor or travel clinic in good time before you travel.

We also recommend you check out any specific health advice for the country you are travelling to either via your GP or the following websites: www.nathnac.org or www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk

In the UK, we have been working with Nomad Travel for many years and their website has comprehensive,

up-to-date vaccination and health information. You will receive a 10% discount off all vaccinations given at Nomad Travel clinics.

Activities

Included activities are listed in the day-to-day itinerary, all other activities are optional and at your own expense. If you choose not to participate in the included activities on this itinerary, the cost will not necessarily be refunded; this is something you will need to check with your leader.

A selection of optional activities is listed in the day-to-day itinerary. This list is designed to be a helpful guide as to what is commonly available in each location, and is neither an exhaustive list, a guarantee that the activity is available, or an endorsement or recommendation. Please note that certain activities may not be available on your particular visit if they are overbooked, underbooked, out of season, or for any other reason - the list of activities is made according to our latest information and in the best faith, but please be aware that things may change between our last visit and your arrival. Please also note that it may not be possible to do all the activities listed in the time available at each destination, and it is recommended to give yourself extra time in your joining or ending city if you would like to participate in some optional activities there.

If you do any optional activities, you do so at your own risk and it must be clearly understood that your participation is your own decision and does not form part of your contract with Dragoman. You may be required to sign/complete a waiver form or optional activity form for some optional activities.

Insurance

It is a condition of booking that you have comprehensive travel insurance. Without evidence of valid travel insurance you will not be allowed to start the trip. This can be arranged by Imaginative Traveller through our website or by contacting our team of travel consultants.

If you prefer to arrange your insurance independently, it should have a minimum medical (including repatriation) cover of £2,000,000. We recommend that any policy also has a minimum level of cover for Personal Liability of £2,000,000 and for Cancellation and Curtailment of £5,000. Cover for loss of baggage, personal effects, money and other inclusions are down to personal choice although please bear in mind that personal effects are more likely to go missing whilst travelling and you should ensure that your policy is adequate to cover the value of your personal effects e.g. cameras, tablets, phones etc. Please note that Imaginative Traveller and our partner operators are not responsible for your personal effects and are not insured for their loss.

If you prefer to arrange your insurance independently, it should cover you for any activities that you may wish to participate in, such as white-water rafting, trekking, horse-riding, etc. and the 24-hour Emergency Assistance Company must be experienced in handling situations in developing countries if applicable (e.g. they have the ability to arrange repatriation from remote areas such as the Sahara or trekking in the Andes). If you are travelling to high altitude (such as embarking on a trek to the summit of Kilimanjaro), please make sure that this is also covered.

Please double check if you have annual travel and/or credit card policies to ensure they have the cover you require, as many of these policies are not suitable with adventure travel to remote areas. Many credit card medical insurance policies are not valid for travelling outside your country of residence or outside the EU.

Please also check the age limits on any policy you wish to take out and make sure that you thoroughly inform the insurance company of any pre-existing conditions.

Passports

Check that your passport will still be valid for 6 months after the end of the trip - this is important as some countries WILL refuse entry to anyone whose passport is due to expire. A temporary or emergency passport is not valid on our trips. You will need to provide us with your passport details prior to departing for your trip. If you change your passport please remember to inform us.

Pre and Post Trip Accommodation and Transfers

At Imaginative Traveller we believe you should make the most of the places you visit, so if you would like to see more of the joining or finishing point cities, why not book additional accommodation to extend your stay? We can take away the hassle of time zones and language barriers by making the booking for you. This accommodation is only available at the joining or finishing city of your trip, immediately before or after the trip you are travelling on. Please note our rates do not reflect last minute walk-in rates or internet specials.

We can also book arrival airport transfers for you as long as we have your flight arrival details. These are normally payable in cash upon arrival; however we do have pre paid transfers in a few destinations.

Please contact our reservations team for details of the accommodation and transfers that we can offer, as not all hotels offer this service.

Responsible Tourism

Imaginative Traveller is committed to ensuring that we have a positive impact on local communities and that we implement policies to minimise any negative impact on the local environment. We recognise that we are guests of local communities and strive to make them benefit directly from our visit. You can find full details of Imaginative Traveller's responsible tourism policy on our website.

Issues on the trip

While we always endeavour to provide the best possible holiday experience, due to the nature of travel and the areas we visit sometimes things can and do go wrong. Should any issue occur while you are on your trip, it is imperative that you discuss this with your group leader or our local partner straight away so that they can do their best to rectify the problem and save any potential negative impact on the rest of your trip.

We recognise that there may be times when your group leader may not be able to resolve a situation to your satisfaction. If this is the case please contact our customer relations department on

customer-relations@imtrav.net

You may also choose to provide details in your feedback questionnaire which we ask you to complete at the end of your trip, but we do ask you to be aware that it is very difficult for us to provide any practical help after the trip is complete.

Feedback

After your travels, we want to hear from you! We rely on your feedback. We read it carefully. Feedback helps us to understand what we are doing well and what we could be doing better, and it allows us to make improvements for future travellers.