

Best of Thailand

Trip Information

- **Arrival airport:** Phuket International Airport (HKT)
- **Departure airport:** Phuket International Airport (HKT)

There are three possibilities for embarkation and disembarkation for this itinerary. Please refer to your specific departure dates and be sure to confirm your embarkation/ disembarkation points when you make your booking.

Flights and Transfers

Transfer between Phuket Airport or local hotels and The Phinisi on embarkation and disembarkation day are included in the liveaboard price for all departures, regardless of embarkation and disembarkation point.

Transfers from and to hotels and resorts outside of these areas can be arranged for an additional charge.

If you are planning to make your own way to the embarkation point, please make sure you arrive before the embarkation time which is usually 18.00.

Phuket airport is about a 1 - 1.5 hours drive from the embarkation/ disembarkation points. Please allow at least 2 - 3 hours for international flight check-in and 1.5 - 2 hours for domestic flights.

Advice on International Flights

There are several airlines that offer direct international flights to Phuket International Airport, though you may need to book a short hop from another local hub such as Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, or Singapore. We recommend staying 1 night in Phuket before cruise departure, so you are well rested before the start of the cruise. Please inform us in which hotel you will stay so we can organise your transfer.

Visa and Passports

Passport holders of most western countries will be issued a single-entry visa stamp upon arrival for stays of up to 30 days in Thailand. Nationals of countries not included in Thailand's Visa Exemption scheme may need to obtain a tourist visa in advance, or apply on-line for a visa on arrival.

To check if you need a visa to enter Thailand, or if you have any queries about entry requirements, please check with the Royal Thai Embassy or Consulate General in your home country. Contact details and locations of Royal Thai Embassies and Royal Thai Consulates-General are available at www.thaiembassy.org

As visa and passport regulations for different countries are constantly in a state of flux, we always advise our guests to check regularly for updates and changes. Further information relating to Thailand visas and entry requirements can be found on the Thai Immigration Bureau's website here: <https://www.immigration.go.th/>

Please make sure that your passport has a minimum of 6 months validity from the date you will arrive in Thailand. Entry may be refused if passports are damaged or have missing pages.

You may be required to show a confirmed ticket to leave Thailand within the maximum number of days you are allowed to stay in the country. Additionally, visa-on-arrival visitors may also be asked for evidence of adequate finances for the duration of their intended stay, equivalent to 10,000 Baht per person, or 20,000 Baht per family.

Insurance

Insurance which covers scuba diving is mandatory aboard all of our vessels. All guests are also required to carry full travel and cancellation insurance, in accordance with our Terms and Conditions. We cannot be held liable for delays occurring during the cruise, nor any delays or cancellations of flights, accommodations or tours and transfers that we organise on your behalf.

Your insurance must cover all of your scuba diving and snorkelling activities, including the costs for recompression chamber treatment and emergency air evacuation. We therefore strongly recommend purchasing diving-specific insurance to cover any diving related eventuality.

Master Liveaboards act as a referrer for DiveAssure who offer dive and travel insurance policies, including short term and multiple trip policies. Their comprehensive 'Dive & Travel Plus' plan has been specifically developed for diving liveaboard holidays and covers expenses in the event of missing your liveaboard departure due to flight delays or missed connections, and also provides cover for lost diving days if for any reason the boat is required to abort the cruise; for instance, due to a guest injury, mechanical breakdown of the ship, air supply failure, inclement weather conditions, etc.

Please consult our webpage for details and direct link to DiveAssure's booking portal: www.masterliveaboards.com/insurance.

Diving Information

We are happy to welcome divers of all levels on the Phinisi for our Best of Thailand itinerary exploring the islands to the northwest and south of Phuket in the Andaman Sea; However, some of the dives offered may be challenging or unsuitable for inexperienced divers.

Due to strong currents and depths beyond the recommended maximum for entry level divers, some of the diving may not be suitable for novice or inexperienced divers. Your cruise director will be able to advise you whilst on board, and may recommend that guests who do not have the skills or experience for the expected conditions sit out certain dives.

Guests' Level of Diving

We are happy to welcome Open Water certified divers on our Best of Thailand itineraries although, to get the most out of the diving throughout the whole itinerary, we recommend that guests have a **minimum of 10 logged dives and PADI Advanced Open Water certification***, or equivalent, with experience in currents.

*Guests with the minimum number of required dives but not certified as Advanced Open Water divers, may be able to complete the course on board. Please contact our reservations team for further information.

Any guests who do not fulfil the recommended minimum requirements, or who the crew feel have insufficient experience in certain conditions, may be denied participation in some or all dives during the liveaboard.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the diving conditions please contact our reservations team directly.

Fit to Dive

All divers are responsible for ensuring that they are fit to dive, and are required to complete a medical statement prior to commencement of the liveaboard itinerary. Guests who have any symptoms that could be restrictive to diving will need to obtain a doctor's note clearing them to dive prior to embarkation, ideally before travelling. The medical statement can be found on our website at www.masterliveaboards.com/forms.

If you are unable to complete the statement as directed, or provide a current doctor's certificate (less than 1 year old) clearing you to dive, you accept that you may not be able to take part in certain aspects of the holiday you have booked with us.

Diving Safety

Guests are responsible for their own dive profiles and must stay within the limits of their certification.

For your safety, we ask all guests to always remain well within the limits of their dive computer, follow the instructions of the cruise director and guides and make a safety stop at the end of each dive.

Flying after Diving

Current studies indicate that you should wait at least 24 hours after multiple days with repetitive diving before flying. Please keep this in mind when you book your onward international or domestic flights.

Diving Emergencies

There are two recompression chambers located in Phuket that can be reached within a few hours by speedboat from anywhere within the Similan Islands and Phi Phi Islands. They provide emergency treatment for decompression illness in the unlikely event of an accident. We strongly encourage all guests to dive well within their recognised limits, carefully follow dive guides' advice, and of course, purchase specific dive insurance before their trips.

As per our [Terms & Conditions](#) adequate dive insurance and travel insurance are mandatory.

Water Temperature and Exposure Suits

The warm tropical waters of the Andaman sea are pleasant throughout the year, averaging 28°C (82°F), although it is not uncommon to encounter thermoclines at various times during the season. Most guests find that a 3mm wetsuit or shorty is suitable and many dive with just a skin-suit or rash guard. For guests who tend to get cold easily, especially after repetitive dives, we recommend you bring the wetsuit that you feel most comfortable in.

Diving Equipment

Since some of the domestic airline carriers in the regions we operate have strict check-in luggage limits, we can provide most rental equipment for an extra charge. Our rental equipment includes:

- BCD – not weight-integrated
- Regulator - complete with alternate air source and depth/pressure gauge console
- Wetsuits - 3mm shorty
- Mask
- Fins - full foot or open heel and boots depending on availability
- 12 litre tanks (15 litre tanks by special request and depending on availability)
- Weight belt and weights
- Underwater torch/flashlight
- Dive computer*

* Please note that the use of a dive computer is compulsory on The Phinisi. For your safety, we ask all guests to always dive within the limits of their dive computer and make a safety stop at the end of each dive.

Please pre-book rental equipment and cylinders at the time of confirming your liveaboard holiday, as they are subject to availability.

Underwater Photography and Videography

The Phinisi offers features for underwater photographers and videographers which include:

- Large tables that can be used for the preparation and maintenance of cameras
- Large rinsing tanks with fresh water; changed frequently

Our crew are thoroughly trained in the handling of delicate camera equipment and will provide assistance when entering and exiting the water.

General Information

Advanced Passenger Information (API)

There are certain details that we require for the airlines and our own administrative purposes prior to travel. Guests are required to submit the required information via our secure online portal at www.masterliveaboards.com/portal.

Forms

It is a requirement for all guests to complete the following forms prior to or upon arrival in resort - medical statement, liability releases, and standard safe diving practices statement, which can be found at www.masterliveaboards.com/forms.

To save some time, and to ensure you have no pre-existing conditions that could affect your diving, you can download the forms from the above link, fill in, and bring them along. By completing and signing the forms, you are confirming that you have read, understood, and agree to the conditions outlined in the forms

If you are unable to complete the forms as instructed, you accept that you may not be able to take part in certain aspects of the holiday you have booked with us.

Time Zone

The local time in Thailand is 7 hours ahead of UTC (GMT + 7).

Money Matters

The local currency is the Thai Baht (THB). The majority of established hotels and restaurants accept major credit cards, however; smaller, family-run places probably will not. There are money-changers and ATM machines located at the airport and near the meeting point for your convenience.

Health

No specific vaccinations are required unless you are coming from or passing through contaminated areas. However, we strongly advise that you ensure standard vaccinations are up-to-date (tetanus, polio, MMR, etc.) and check with your nearest travel clinic for the latest information and recommendations well in advance of travelling.

Yellow fever certificates are required for those who are coming from 14 following countries; Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Peru, Angola, Burkina Faso, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Mauritania, Mali, Nigeria, Sudan and Zaire.

Health services in Thailand are generally very good. Hospitals in major tourist destinations have modern technology and well trained doctors, including several in Phuket.

Please make sure you use insect repellent and cover exposed skin to prevent any insect borne diseases. We recommend travellers follow normal precautions with food in order to prevent stomach upsets, and be sure to drink bottled water only.

Travelling with Medication

There are certain medications, including psychotropics and painkillers containing Codeine, which are restricted or prohibited to bring into Thailand. Guidelines from the Thai FDA can be downloaded here: [Guidance For Travelers carrying personal medication](#)

If you are travelling with medication, please ensure you bring your physician's prescription with you.

Language and Religion

Thai is the language in Thailand, which remains largely incomprehensible to the casual visitor. However, nearly all Thais who work in the tourism industry speak some level of English, and Thai-English road and street signs are found nationwide.

More than 90% of all Thais are Buddhists, although they have always subscribed to the ideal of religious freedom, thus, sizeable minorities of Muslims, Christians, Hindus, and Sikhs freely pursue their respective faiths.

Safety and dive briefings on board the vessels will be provided in English. If you do not speak and understand English please let us know prior to arrival.

Climate and Weather

The average daytime temperature is around 30°C (86°F), ranging anywhere from 34°C in April to 27°C in December with slightly cooler temperatures in the evenings.

Thailand's tropical climate is influenced by the southwest and northeast monsoons. From Late May to October the southwest monsoon hits the western coast of Thailand, making the Similan and Surin Islands inaccessible. The northeast monsoon sweeps through the Gulf of Thailand (east coast) between mid-October to mid-December.

There are 3 distinct seasons: 'Summer', also referred to as the Hot Season from March through May with temperatures averaging around 33°C; 'Rainy' from June to October (still with plenty of sunshine and temperatures around 31°C) and 'Cool' from November through February.

We have chosen the best possible weather period during November to May in order to maximise passenger enjoyment.

Life on Board

The main features of The Phinisi can be viewed on the Master Liveaboards website: www.masterliveaboards.com/boats/the-phinisi

Accessibility

Due to the layout, The Phinisi may provide challenges, or be unsuitable, for guests with limited mobility. Please contact us for further details if you have any concerns.

Accommodation

The Phinisi has 5 twin and/ or double cabins and 2 quad cabins.

Reduced occupancy may be available on request for all cabin types and is subject to a supplemental charge.

Cabin Facilities

All cabins have individually controllable air-conditioning and private en-suite bathrooms with centrally heated hot water. Other facilities include hair dryer, towels, bathrobes and lockable safety boxes.

Food and Drink

Meals are provided on a full board basis including a light breakfast, full breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks with unlimited drinking water, tea, coffee, fruit juices and soft drinks.

Local lager (beer), wine, or selected spirits are also available for an additional fee.

We offer a choice of International and locally inspired cuisine and can cater to special dietary requirements with advance notice. Should you have any specific dietary needs, allergies, or special requests, please advise your sales consultant at the time of confirming your liveaboard trip to ensure we are able to make provisions for your needs.

Please note: It can be very difficult to find certain products that are common elsewhere. While we always do our best to accommodate dietary requests, please consider bringing some of your own foods if the lack thereof may constitute a health risk or seriously compromise your enjoyment of your holiday.

Clothing and Footwear

For your time on board, we recommend casual and comfortable clothing, swimwear, shorts and t-shirts. A sweater or lightweight jacket is advised for the cooler nights, particularly after multiple dives.

We request that guests respect the wishes of others by donning clothing for meal times. Most guests prefer to walk barefoot onboard our vessel; however, island visits may require sturdy sandals or cross-trainers

Electricity

On board we have 220V with 2 round pin sockets (European style) with multiple adapter sockets available. It is always advisable that you bring universal adapters with you if necessary. Electrical current in Thailand is 220 Volts.

Staying Connected

We regret that we are unable to provide wi-fi or internet access on board our Thailand liveaboard vessels. Local sims cards with data packages can be purchased at Phuket Airport and local stores throughout Thailand.

Most mobile phones that have 'roaming' will function during your cruise with the same limitations as locally purchased sim cards; the cost of calls made and data used is determined by your service provider.

However, our trips cover relatively remote locations and internet service is often intermittent at best. Service signal strength can be very weak at times and, in some areas, there may not be a signal at all.

Our out of office contact numbers can be found below, should your family need to contact you during the cruise, however this number is reserved for emergencies only.

Smoking

Smoking on board is permitted in designated outdoor areas.

Environmental considerations

Although there are recycling programs and facilities in place in Thailand, they are extremely limited. We therefore ask our guests to consider the following to help with our mission to reduce our environmental impact.

Batteries

While some batteries may be available to purchase on board, please bring extras if your personal dive equipment may require a unique size, or need a lot of replacement batteries during your trip. We kindly request that you take spent batteries home so that they can be recycled or disposed of properly. Alternatively, **consider using rechargeable batteries** as there are plenty of sockets to plug in a charger on board.

Water Bottles

We are dedicated to becoming single use plastic free across all of our fleets. Plastic straws and stirrers have been banned on all of our boats and we do not provide single use plastic bottles on board.

If you own a sports bottle, we simply ask that you bring it with you, or we can provide you with one on board for the duration of your cruise. We also have plenty of cups on board which you can use to ensure you remain well hydrated.

Plastic bags and wrappers

We do not provide plastic bags for purchases made on board, although reusable canvas bags are available for sale. Please help us minimise plastic waste by removing plastic wrappers and packaging from items before travelling. If you bring plastic bags with you, please reuse them, and take them home.

Toiletries

We kindly ask that guests consider the type and quantity of products that they are bringing with them and, where possible, to bring only environmentally friendly toiletries for use on board, and to take partially or unused products home with them.

Sunscreens

Sunscreen products with chemical compounds that are harmful to coral are prohibited from being used in Thai Marine National Parks. The banned chemical compounds are Oxybenzone (Benzophenone-3, BP-3), Octinoxate (Ethylhexyl methoxycinnamate), 4-Methylbenzylidene Camphor (4MBC) and Butylparaben.

All guests are advised to only use reef-safe sunscreen products containing mineral-based ingredients such as zinc oxide-based, which studies have found to be safe for the marine environment. Additionally, to minimise the need for sunscreen, we recommend wearing a long-sleeve rashguard in the water, and remaining in the shade on the boat.

Payments on Board

Marine and Port Fees

Please refer to your itinerary details for further information. The applicable amount will be added to your invoice to be paid on board.

Optional Extras

We offer a range of services to make your stay on board even more enjoyable. We offer beach visits during your cruise. The following are also available for an additional fee:

- Beer & Wine
- Nitrox: 10 USD per fill or 25 USD per day
- Nitrox Package
- Dive Courses
- Torch & Dive Computer Rental
- Fleet Merchandise

All prices are given on board in US dollars; however, we also accept cash payment in THB, Euro, GBP, and AUD. Moreover, we accept payments by credit card (Visa & MasterCard), for which there is a 3.5% surcharge. Guests are advised to bring additional cash to Marine Park & port fees, for any incidental expenses.

Tipping

We believe that tipping is a matter of personal choice. Should you feel that your crew has made your holiday extra special, they would certainly appreciate a tip. Please note we are only able to accept tips in cash. For this purpose, you can use the envelope provided by the cruise director. He/she will make sure the tips are divided equally amongst all crew members, including the captain and dive guides.

Safety on Board

Emergency Management & Equipment

All crew members have been extensively trained in emergency management procedures. A thorough boat safety briefing will be provided by your cruise director at the start of your trip, during which all guests will be requested to participate in a life jacket drill. Further practice scenarios may be performed during your cruise to assist our crew in keeping their skills sharp. Each yacht is equipped with modern safety features such as automated life rafts, EPIRB, satellite communication and emergency pumps.

First Aid

The Phinisi is equipped with a fully stocked medical first aid kit for treating minor injuries and ailments, as well as for assisting trained medical professionals in remote locations. It has a full complement of medical grade oxygen which can be administered to divers through DAN kits or unit specific attachments.

You will also find on board an Automated External Defibrillator (AED), which has been proven to greatly increase the survival rate in the eventuality of cardiac fibrillation. Our dive teams are all qualified emergency responders. Should you feel unwell at any point during your cruise, please seek the advice of your cruise director who will be able to assist you.

Extending your holiday

Travelling within Thailand can be made exceptionally easy when you book with Master Liveaboards. As well as a range of domestic flights, we can offer hotels, excursions and tour packages, which can be arranged for before and/or after your liveaboard.

Should you require any assistance, please contact our reservations team who will be more than happy to make reservations on your behalf.

Optional, additional Thailand package

Upon arrival into Thailand you will be met at the airport and transferred to the hotel of your choice. Spend 1-5 nights anywhere within Thailand before travelling to your vessel on the day of your trip departure. You can also take advantage of one of the many example excursions we have to offer.

Our package includes:

- Up to 5 nights of accommodation at a hotel of your choice
- Transfers throughout
- Domestic flight assistance
- One of several additional land or boat based excursions.

For further information about hotel and excursion options and costs, please contact our reservations team.

FAQs

If there are any questions that have not been answered, please visit our website at www.masterliveaboards.com or email us at dive@masterliveaboards.com.

Contact Information

Thailand Office - Master Liveboards

10/512 Moo 3,
Tambon Vichit,
Muang Phuket 83000,
Thailand

Open Monday - Friday 08:30 - 18:30 and Saturday 09:00 - 17:00 ICT (UTC / GMT +7)

Thailand Office: +66 (0) 76 367 444

UK number: +44 (0) 208 099 2230

USA (Toll Free): +1 866 258 6398

WhatsApp: +66 (0) 62 668 7136

Web: www.masterliveboards.com

Email: dive@masterliveboards.com

The Junk/ Phinisi Operations

Tel / Line / WhatsApp: +66 (0) 810 142 748

Emergency (Poan): + 66 (0) 822 753 908 (24hrs)

Master Liveboards 24hr emergency only:

In the event of an emergency, if you are unable to get a response from the numbers listed above, please call: +44 7862 126398

What to Bring

The following is a check list of items that you should ensure to bring with you for your trip aboard a Master Liveaboards vessel.

Passport

☐

6 month validity & at least 2 empty pages for visa stickers and stamps

Travel Documents

☐

Flight tickets - International & Domestic; hotel booking; excursions

Cash & Credit Card for emergencies

☐

Recommended amount (additional to park & port fees): 250 - 500 USD
Airport Departure Tax in local currency

Diving Certification & Logbook

☐

Including Nitrox Card if certified & intending to use Nitrox

Travel and Diving Insurance Documents

☐

To include emergency medical evacuation

Essential Diving Items

☐

Dive computer with full battery

Toiletries & Medications

☐

Including insect repellent and **reef-safe sunscreen**
Inform booking team of medical conditions

Essential Clothing Items

☐

Swimwear, hat and lightweight jacket

Guests are strongly advised to carry essential items in their hand luggage in case of lost or delayed luggage through International or Domestic Flights.