

# Myanmar (Mergui Archipelago)

## Trip Information

- **Arrival airport:** Phuket International Airport (HKT) or Ranong Airport (UNN)
- **Departure airport:** Phuket International Airport (HKT) or Ranong Airport (UNN)
- **Embarkation:** Ranong
- **Disembarkation:** Ranong

## Flights and Transfers

**Phuket to Ranong** is a distance of approximately 280 km which is a 5 hour transfer by minivan. We provide a free transfer from Phuket to Ranong with two specific pick up locations and times in Phuket to arrive in Ranong at 11:00 on embarkation day. Please contact our reservations team for details and bookings.

Transfers between Ranong Airport or a Ranong hotel and The Phinisi are also included in the liveaboard price.

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

## Advice on Flights

### To / From Phuket

There are several airlines that operate international flights to Phuket International Airport, with even more possibilities via Bangkok, Singapore or Kuala Lumpur. We advise guests flying into Phuket to arrive at least 1 day before the start of their liveaboard and arrange hotel accommodation in Phuket.

Due to the distance and transfer times from Phuket to Ranong, ***it is not recommended to fly into Phuket on embarkation day.***

Guests who are departing from Phuket Airport on the day of disembarkation should arrange a flight that departs no earlier than 18:00.

## To / From Ranong

Ranong is the closest airport to the embarkation point and is exclusively served by a limited number of flights from Bangkok.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Flights to Ranong depart from the DMK airport in Bangkok (Don Mueang Airport) not Suvarnabhumi (BKK). The airports are NOT close to each other but there is a free shuttle service between the two.

The distance from BKK to DMK is 48 km (30 miles) and transfer time can be anywhere from 50 minutes to 2 hours depending on time of day and traffic.

If flying into Ranong on embarkation day, ***it is imperative that you arrive in Ranong before 11:00*** for embarkation.

*It is highly recommended that guests either spend a night in Bangkok in order to take the earliest flight to Ranong, or fly into Phuket or Ranong at least one day before embarkation.*

Due to the unknown length of time at both Myanmar and Thai immigration, we recommend that guests flying out from Ranong Airport on disembarkation day book flights later than 12:00 noon.

## Visa and Passports

**Thailand:** Passport holders of most western countries will be issued a visa upon arrival for a single stay of up to 30 days in Thailand. However, *upon re-entry from Myanmar to Thailand, guests will only be issued with a 15 day visa.* Please ensure your onward departure from Thailand is no longer than 15 days after disembarkation, or apply for a multiple entry visa with your nearest Thai embassy or consulate.

Guests who need to apply for a visa for Thailand in advance must ensure that they request a **MULTIPLE ENTRY visa**, otherwise they are not allowed back into Thailand.

To check if you need a visa to enter Thailand, or if you have any queries about entry requirements and limitations, 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](http://www.thaiembassy.org)

As visa and passport regulations for different nationalities 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/>

**Myanmar:** Guests are not required to obtain a visa for Myanmar prior to boarding; our Cruise Director and local agent will make the arrangements on your behalf. Please bring 2x photocopies of your passport ID page and 2x passport sized photographs together with **280 USD cash in crisp new bills** for the Myanmar visa application.

Please make sure that your passport is valid for at least 6 months beyond the duration of your stay in Thailand. 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.

## 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 emergency medical evacuation and recompression chamber treatment. 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](http://www.masterliveaboards.com/insurance).

## Diving Information

We are happy to welcome divers of all levels on The Phinisi in the Andaman Sea although the diving in and around the Mergui Archipelago can be challenging and therefore unsuitable for novice or inexperienced divers.

Due to depths and strong currents, some of the diving in the area may not be suitable for divers who do not have experience diving in similar conditions. Your cruise director will be able to advise you whilst on board, and may recommend that guests with insufficient experience sit out certain dives.

### Guests' Level of Diving

It is recommended that guests wishing to get the most out of diving in the area have **PADI Advanced Open Water certification\***, or equivalent, with **a minimum of 30 logged dives**.

\*Guests with the required minimum number of 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.

## 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 Safety

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

## 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](http://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.

## 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

The closest recompression chambers are located in Phuket and can only be reached by road from Ranong, once Myanmar and Thailand immigration formalities are completed, even in the event of an emergency. For this reason we strongly encourage all guests to always dive conservatively and 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.

## Diving Equipment

Since some of the domestic airline carriers in Thailand 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.

***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](http://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](http://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 with you. 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 Myanmar is the same as Thailand, i.e. 7 hours ahead UTC (GMT +7).

## Money Matters

The local currency used on the vessel 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.

The Mergui Archipelago is home to the not so well-known Moken who are a shy, peace-loving Austronesian people also known as the 'Sea-Gypsies'. Numbering just under 3,000, they are indigenous people of the Mergui Archipelago, speak their own language and have been sustaining themselves off the land and sea in the same way for centuries.

The semi-nomadic, hunter-gatherer lifestyle of the Moken means they have an unprecedented knowledge of the sea; In 2004, being keenly attuned to the ocean, they were able to read the sea correctly and headed for higher ground just before the deadly Indian Ocean tsunami swept in so preserving many lives that would otherwise have been lost when elsewhere the monster wave took over a hundred thousand lives. Most of the Moken still live on their boats and continue to roam around the archipelago although some have established themselves in a village on Lampi Island.

## Climate and Weather

Thailand's and Myanmar'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.

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.

We have chosen the best possible weather period for diving in Myanmar 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](http://www.masterliveaboards.com/boats/the-phinisi)

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

## 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, and 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 some 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 sojourning on our yacht, we recommend guests bring casual and comfortable clothes; swimwear, shorts and t-shirts. A sweater is advised for cooler nights, particularly after multiple dives.

We do 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 The Phinsi. Our Mergui Archipelago trips cover relatively remote locations and internet service is intermittent at best and non-existent for large portions of the itinerary.

Most mobile phones that have 'roaming' will function where a signal is available although service signal strength will be very weak. The cost of calls made is determined by your service provider.

Thailand sims cards with data packages can be purchased at Bangkok or Phuket Airport and numerous local stores although the same signal and connectivity limitations will apply for much of the itinerary.

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 and are non-existent in the places we visit in Myanmar. 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, please **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

In Thailand, ***sunscreen products with chemical compounds that are harmful to coral are prohibited from being used in marine national parks.*** The specific ingredients that are banned are Oxybenzone (Benzophenone-3, BP-3), Octinoxate (Ethylhexyl methoxycinnamate), 4-Methylbenzylidene Camphor (4MBC) and Butylparaben.

Guests joining a Mergui Archipelago itinerary on The Phinisi are encouraged 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 Park and Port Fees

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

### Optional Extras

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

- Equipment Rental
- Nitrox
- Dive Courses
- Beer & Wine
- Fleet Merchandise
- Laundry

All prices are given on board in US dollars; however, we also accept cash payment in THB, Euro, GBP, and AUD. We can also accept payments by credit card (Visa & MasterCard), for which there is a 3.5% surcharge.

***Items booked and paid for in advance do not incur any additional charges.***

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 the 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 who 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.

Additionally, there is a full complement of medical grade oxygen which can be administered to divers through DAN kits or unit specific attachments in the event of suspected DCI.

## First Aid

Our dive teams are all qualified emergency responders and 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. 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.

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.

### Optional additional Myanmar package

Our package includes:

- Transfer from Ranong or Phuket International Airport
- 1 night hotel prior to your cruise
- Transfer to and from S/Y Phinisi
- 1 night hotel post cruise
- Transfer to Ranong or Phuket International Airport for your international flight

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](http://www.masterliveaboards.com) or email us at [dive@masterliveaboards.com](mailto: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](http://www.masterliveboards.com)

Email: [dive@masterliveboards.com](mailto:dive@masterliveboards.com)

### The 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 Liveboards 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

### 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.*