

The Phinisi - The Best of Thailand

10 Nights - Itinerary

Join The Phinisi on this unique itinerary exploring the very best diving that Thailand has to offer, taking in the highlights of Hin Daeng, Hin Muang, Koh Haa, Koh Phi Phi, King Cruiser, the Similan Islands and, Koh Bon, Koh Tachai and Richelieu Rock.

Schedule

Your Cruise Director will schedule up to 4 dives per day; 3 day dives and either a sunset or a night dive. The diving day has a typical schedule as follows:

- Light Breakfast followed by a briefing & Dive 1
- Full Breakfast, relaxation followed by briefing & Dive 2
- Lunch, relaxation followed by briefing & Dive 3
- Snack, relaxation, followed by briefing & Dive 4
- Dinner (if Night Dive, it will be after dinner)

For your final day aboard we schedule 3 dives to allow plenty of time for off-gassing before disembarkation and your flight home. The Cruise Director is happy to listen to requests from guests to visit or remain at certain sites and providing it is possible and the schedule allows, then guest's requests are respected.

Itinerary

Please note: we wish to show you the very best diving possible but a number of factors can determine where we visit. Weather, tides, currents and how busy a site is with other dive vessels all play a part in the Cruise Director's decision of which route the yacht takes. Whilst we attempt to ensure the number of dives we have scheduled is fulfilled, bad weather can hinder the yacht's ability to reach a specified dive site in good time. The safety of all on board is paramount and we always do our best in offering diving at alternate locations should we be unable to visit those sites listed below:

Southern Thailand

Koh Phi Phi

With mini-walls and shallow coral gardens predominating, there are a host of dive sites to choose from around the Phi Phi national Park. Hin Bida, Koh Bida Nok, Koh Bida Nai, Pilay Wall, and Hin Dot all offer something special.

Wildlife is hugely varied across the sites with black tip reef sharks common, tigertail seahorses, ornate ghost pipefish, cornet fish, octopus, scorpion fish, blue fin trevally, barracudas and more.

King Cruiser

The King Cruiser was a car ferry that used to travel between Phi Phi and Phuket. In 1997, 'the cruiser' hit Anemone Reef on her crossing and sank a short distance away. No lives were lost, but divers were left with a great wreck dive! While she is largely broken up now, she is covered with soft corals and hides some wonderful gems, as well as being home to several large schools of snapper. While currents can be strong and visibility sometimes challenging, this is a great site to dive as part of an Advanced Open Water course.

Shark Point and Anemone Reef

These pinnacles are part of the same reef system and are only a very short distance apart from each other. Both sites are covered with colourful soft corals and anemones with a variety of fish to suit all divers. From barracuda to seahorses and for the lucky ones of course, the iconic leopard shark!

Koh Haa

Possibly some of the most underrated diving in the whole of Thailand, Moo Koh Haa (literally 'five island group') sits almost halfway between Hin Daeng and Phi Phi and is part of the Ko Lanta National Marine Park. There are actually several dive sites around Ko Haa but the highlights are Ko Haa Lagoon, Ko Haa Neua, and Ko Haa Yai.

Around these amazing islands you can see pinnacles, walls, boulders, caverns, and swim-throughs. Ko Haa lagoon is ideal for night dives, courses, and snorkelling, while The Chimney and The Cathedral offer things that you cannot see on other Thailand liveaboard itineraries with caverns, swim-throughs and chambers littering the sites. Ko Haa has varied marine life too, with ornate ghost pipefish, morays eels, octopus, hawksbill turtles, sea horses, marble rays, and sometimes even leopard sharks.

Hin Daeng & Hin Muang

These two sites are pinnacles (translating directly as Red Rock and Purple Rock) in open ocean, reaching down to over 70m, and are best known for manta ray and whale shark encounters but, whether they are sighted or not, the sites also offer giant moray eels, pharaoh cuttlefish, schooling rainbow runners and

snappers, barracudas, groupers, fusiliers and blue fin trevally. On the pinnacles, there are fields of Magnificent Anemones, walls of Hemprics soft corals, and huge gorgonian sea fans.

Almost perpetual good visibility and dramatic topography combined with huge fish number makes for excellent liveaboard diving.

Similan and Surin Islands

Similan Islands

The above water scenery will provide stunningly beautiful white sandy beaches with small forested areas. Dive some of the following sites; **Boulder City, Sharkfin Reef, Anita's Reef and Honeymoon Bay**. Under the surface you may see: Leopard (zebra) shark, blue spotted stingrays, clown trigger fish, rabbit fish, scorpion fish, snappers, emperor fish, giant trevally and angelfish. The coral gardens, bommies and boulder formations are wonderful to dive.

Elephant Head Rock, visible from the surface, this is the biggest pinnacle in the Similans and has some fantastic swim-throughs. White tip reef sharks, batfish, trevally and barracuda can often be seen on the perimeter of the boulders.

If you look closely in the cracks and in the rubble you can see smashing mantis shrimp, porcelain crab, moray eels and cleaner shrimp.

Koh Bon

Often, this the most likely place to see manta rays on this itinerary. You are likely to see Napoleon wrasse, sweetlips, octopus, blue fin trevally, giant moray eels, great barracudas, fire dart goby, spiny lobster and nudibranchs of many types. The dive sites vary from wall diving to gently sloping reefs and from submerged boulders to coral gardens.

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Koh Tachai

This island is famous for its pinnacle dive site and more relaxed reef diving. Normally, turtles, barracuda, pipe fish, and nudibranchs can be found here. There is also a chance to see bigger species in this area like manta rays and whale sharks, especially by late January until April.

Richelieu Rock

This limestone pinnacle was named by Jacques Cousteau after General Richelieu, who was an important Danish officer in the Thai Navy. There are gorgeous purple dendronephthya soft corals covering most of the pinnacle and other areas covered in magnificent sea anemones as well. Barely breaking the surface at low tide, this horseshoe-shaped outcropping, slopes steeply to a sandy bottom at 18 to 35 meters (60-120 Ft). This site offers great diversity for such a small and isolated spot. It also offers excellent multi-level diving and, because it's a high-profile reef, there's always sheltered areas to hide from current.

The marine life is prolific and includes amongst, many other things; Pharaoh cuttlefish, large octopi, all 5 varieties of anemone fish of the Andaman Sea, variety of moray eels, ornate ghost pipefish, smashing mantis shrimps, harlequin shrimps, tiger tail sea horses, Spanish mackerel, frog fish, many schooling snapper and occasional sightings of manta rays and whale sharks.

Surin Islands

Topside scenery of Koh Surin with evergreen forests, mangroves and small beaches, surpasses even that of the picturesque Similan Islands. Under water the reefs of Surin have the greatest hard coral diversity in Thailand. You are likely to see Napoleon wrasse, yellow-masked angelfish, bumphead parrotfish, tomato anemonefish and barramundi, as well as lots of turtles that still come ashore in this area to lay their eggs. Because of the remoteness not many liveaboard boats visit these islands and you will be able to enjoy the dive sites without sharing it with tourist hordes.

Khao Lak Wrecks

Before disembarking in Khao Lak, if conditions and timing are favourable there is a choice of easily diveable wrecks between the Similan Islands and the port of Tap Lamu. The **Boonsung** and the **Premchai** are old tin miners that were sank 25 or so years ago and are a treat for underwater photographers as well as lovers of life of all kinds!!

Only in 18m of water they are covered in nudibranchs and various kinds of shrimps. Many quite unusual honeycomb morays also made these wrecks home. There are also huge numbers of schooling fish as well as rays and sharks that can occasionally be seen. **Sea Chart 1** is a slightly more challenging dive and lies between 40 and 25 metres. Sunk during a storm in 2009 with a full load of teak, she is relatively new but already hosts an abundance of schooling fish.

Top Side

Along the route there are some incredible views from the boat including verdant forests, deserted beaches, and limestone karsts climbing vertically from the ocean. There will be several opportunities to leave the boat and take a walk on the islands. A walk up the trail to Sail Rock is definitely time well spent! You can even be entertained by marine life while relaxing on board with The Phinisi with dolphins cruising along with the boat not an unusual sight.



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Trip Information

Arrival Airport: Phuket International Airport (HKT)

Departure Airport: Phuket International Airport (HKT)

Embarkation: Tap Lamu Pier, Khao Lak @ 18:00pm

Disembarkation: Chalong Pier, Phuket @ 10:00am or v.v.

Flights, Hotels, Transfers & Excursions

Travelling within Thailand is exceptionally easy when you book with The Phinisi. From booking domestic flights and hotel accommodation to land tours, we can arrange everything you need before and after your cruise. Prices for these add-ons vary dependent on the time of booking – please contact our reservations team for more information.

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/Khao Lak 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. If you make your own way to the embarkation point, embarkation time is 18.00pm.

When you fly in on embarkation day, you can book our free transfer from Phuket Airport at 15.30hr. Please ensure that you arrive on time for this transfer. For the final day aboard we schedule 3 dives to allow plenty of time for off-gassing before disembarkation and your flight home. Disembarkation at the end of the cruise will be just before 10.00am. Phuket airport is about a 1 hour drive from the embarkation and disembarkation point. Please allow at least 2-3 hours for international flight check-in and 1.5-2 hours for domestic flights.

Insurance

The Phinisi strongly recommends that all guests carry full travel and cancellation insurance as we cannot be held liable for delays which occur during the cruise, nor any delays or cancellations of the flights, accommodation, tours & transfers we organise on your behalf.

The Phinisi works in partnership with DiveAssure and can offer you a selection of competitively priced dive and travel insurance policies, including short term and multiple trip policies. These policies can also be purchased with a 'Liveaboard Rider' that covers you in the event of missing your liveaboard departure due to missed connection, lost diving days due to a number of reasons (including accident to another passenger) requiring the boat to abort diving, mechanical breakdown, air supply failure, changes or cancellations due to weather and more.

General Information

Visas and Passports

Passport holders of most western countries will be issued a visa upon arrival for stays of up to 30 days in Thailand. Please make sure that your passport has validity for the duration of your stay in Thailand (6 months validity upon arrival is advisable). 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.

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, please visit the Thai Embassy website at www.thaiembassyuk.org.uk/visa_exemption.html for more information.

Time Zone

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

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 inoculations or vaccinations are required unless you are coming from or passing through contaminated areas, 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 that travelers follow normal precautions with food in order to prevent stomach upsets, and be sure to drink bottled water only. Please consult your doctor or nearest health authorities for up-to-date medical travel information well before departure.

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.

Climate and Weather

There are 3 distinct seasons – “summer” from March through May, “rainy” (still with plenty of sunshine) from June to September and “cool” from October through February. The average annual temperature is 28°C (83°F), ranging anywhere from 30°C in April to 25°C in December. 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 Myanmar and Thailand, and the northeast monsoon sweeps the Gulf of Thailand (east coast) between mid-October to mid-December. The Phinisi has chosen the best possible weather period during November to May in order to maximise passenger enjoyment.

Water Temperature and Exposure Suits

Water temperatures in Thailand average around 27°C (80F), although sometimes you may experience thermoclines. Most guests find that a 3mm shorty and possibly a rash vest are suitable for the water temperature in the warmer months, when we will be diving. However, for guests who feel the cold easily, especially with repeated diving, then we recommend to bring an extra vest/hood. In short, bring what you feel most comfortable in.

Life on Board

Food and Drink

Guests will be offered a choice of international and Asian cuisine served buffet style in the indoor dining area. We cater to special dietary requirements; please simply inform our reservations team prior to your trip to ensure that we have plenty of dishes to suit your needs. A range of carbonated soft drinks, fruit juices, black, green and herbal teas are available, as well as some 'naughty' treats should you feel hungry between meal times. Guests may also select beer, wine or spirits from our cocktail bar for an additional fee.

Clothing and Footwear

Dress code on board The Phinisi is very casual and most guests feel comfortable in little more than swim wear, shorts and t-shirts. A sweater is advised for cooler nights, particularly after multiple dives. Most guests prefer bare feet on board the yacht; however island visits may require sturdy sandals or cross-trainers.

Electricity

On board The Phinisi we have 2 round pin sockets (European style). Please make sure you bring universal adapters with you if necessary. Electrical current in Thailand is 220 Volts.

Smoking

Smoking onboard is permitted in designated (outdoor) areas.

Safety on Board

A thorough yacht safety briefing will be provided by your cruise director at the start of your trip. **Emergency Equipment and First Aid**

The Phinisi is equipped with modern safety features such as an automated life raft and emergency pumps. Moreover, she 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. There is also a full complement of medical grade oxygen which can be administered to divers through DAN kits or unit specific attachments.

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.

Staying Connected

We are unable to provide internet service on board The Phinisi. Our trips are in relatively remote locations and internet service is intermittent at best. Most mobile phones that have 'roaming' will function at some points during your cruise. However; service signal strength can be very weak and in some areas of your cruise there may not be a signal at all. The cost of calls made is determined by your service provider.

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.

Payments on Board

Marine Park and Port Fees

The marine park and port fees are 115 USD, which will be added to your final cruise invoice in advance of your cruise. Alternatively, it can be paid on board. There is a marine park flat fee of 70 USD for non-divers. Note that these fees are liable to change without notice.

Optional Extras

The Phinisi offers 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
- Dive Courses
- Torch & Dive Computer Rental
- The Phinisi Merchandise

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

Tipping

At The Phinisi we believe that tipping is a matter of personal choice. Should you feel that your crew has made your holiday extra special then a tip is always appreciated. On the day of disembarkation, a tip box is provided for your convenience; all gratuities are divided equally amongst the crew, including the captain and dive guides. Please note that we can accept tips in cash only.

Diving Information

Guests' Level of Diving

The Phinisi welcomes everyone from non-divers to seasoned divers. This itinerary has different diving conditions based on the time of the trip. Whilst all of our trips are suitable for each and every experience level, there may be some dives offered that are not suitable for beginners. Your cruise director will be able to advise you whilst on board however if you have concerns regarding the conditions of the destination you wish to visit then please contact your agent or our reservations team.

Scuba 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.

Diving Health

Flying after diving

Current studies show that you should wait at least 24 hours after multiple repetitive dives before you fly. Please bear this in mind before you book your onward international or domestic flights.

Diving Insurance

Diving insurance is mandatory aboard The Phinisi. Your insurance must cover all of your scuba diving and snorkeling activities, including the costs for recompression chamber treatment and emergency air evacuation. Whilst many general travel insurance companies will cover scuba diving activities, they often fall short on recompression treatment or evacuation. The Phinisi strongly recommends purchasing diving-specific insurance and is working with Dive Assure to offer policies that cover everything our guests need.

The Phinisi can offer short-term diving insurance coverage (1-4 weeks) though we advise that requests must be made to our reservations team at least 1 week prior to your cruise departure date to ensure adequate time for arrangements.

Diving Emergencies

There are two recompression chambers located in Phuket, that can be reached within several hours by speedboat from anywhere within the Similan and Surin Islands. They provide emergency treatment for decompression illness in the unlikely event of an accident. We require that all guests dive well within recreational dive limits and follow dive guides' instructions.

What to Bring

Below you will find a checklist of items that you will need to bring with you on your liveaboard cruise on The Phinisi:

Passport

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

Travel Documents

Flight tickets- International & Domestic; hotel bookings; excursions

Cash & Credit Card for emergencies

Recommended amount (additional to marine park fees): 250-500 USD

Diving Certification & Logbook

Including Nitrox Card if certified & intending to use Nitrox

Travel and Diving Insurance Documents

To include in case of emergency medical evacuation

Essential Diving Items

Dive computer with full batteries

Toiletries & Medications

Including sunscreen & insect repellent

Inform booking team of pre-existing medical conditions

Essential Clothing Items

Swim wear, 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.



THE PHINISI
C H E N G I S A O

The Phinisi – Mergui Archipelago, Myanmar

7 Nights – Itinerary

The following is a sample itinerary of where you might dive during your holiday with us. We wish to show you the very best diving but a number of factors can determine where we visit. Weather, tides, how busy a site is with other dive vessels all play a part in the Cruise Director's decision of which route the yacht takes. The safety of all on board is paramount and we always do our best in offering diving at alternate locations.

Schedule

Your Cruise Director will schedule up to 4 dives per day; 3 day dives and either a sunset or a night dive. The diving day has a typical schedule as follows:

- Light Breakfast followed by a briefing & Dive 1
- Full Breakfast, relaxation followed by briefing & Dive 2
- Lunch, relaxation followed by briefing & Dive 3
- Snack, relaxation, followed by briefing & Dive 4

Generally, we schedule 2 dives on your final dive day in order to allow enough time for off-gassing. To remain on the safe side, we kindly request our guests to check their own flight times and ensure that they leave a minimum of 24 hours between their final dive and their return flight. Guests are welcome to suggest preferred dive sites to the Cruise Director. He/she will be happy to accommodate guests' wishes, providing it is possible and the schedule allows for it.

Dive sites we visit include but are not limited to:

High Rock

This is a tiny islet with a lonely tree growing on the top. Underwater, you will find a steep rocky reef with lots of tube and fan corals. Lots of critters hang around the cracks including nudibranchs, pipe fish and seahorses. Visibility and currents can sometimes be challenging but it is a rewarding site.

North and South Twin & Captain's Rock

Strong currents bring with them teams of schooling fish and with superb visibility the atmosphere on the reef at North Twin is breathtaking. Hard corals have seen damage from the rise in water temperature but soft corals adorn the reef and bring vibrancy.

In South Twin we can expect to see an abundance of moray eels, harlequin sweetlips and cuttlefish.

Captain's Rock, otherwise known as Bowie Rock, is a sloping reef with huge soft coral covered boulders. Sweetlips, barracuda, a variety of angel fish and many smaller creatures including devil scorpion fish, pipe fish, shrimps and flabellina nudibranchs can be found all over the reef. Mantas may also be seen here.

Black Rock

Black Rock stands alone in the Andaman Sea 100 miles northwest of the Thai-Burmese border town of Kawthaung. The rock acts as a natural magnet for fish and other marine life. An excellent multi-level site, you can start your dive anywhere around the perimeter, depending on currents.

Underwater terrain on the south side consists of vertical wall down to roughly 27m, where it becomes a more gradual slope. Just off the south-west corner is a particularly interesting area, where a



detached rock formation rises from very deep water to about 24m. These rocks are covered with small, vibrant soft corals, and often attract schooling snappers and rainbow runners.

Back at the main islet, deeper sections are decorated with orange gorgonian fans, along with fields of corallimorpharians (they look like stony corals) on the sloping west and north sides. At the eastern tip, watch for vast numbers of magnificent anemones, especially at dawn and dusk when they show off their colourful bases. A wide range of invertebrate life can be found at Black Rock, including smashing and spearing mantis shrimp, spiny lobsters, hermit crabs, sea stars, cowrie shells, harlequin shrimp, octopus and cuttlefish.



During safety stops, move slowly along the eastern and western ends of the south wall to find brilliantly coloured elegant hermit crabs and a variety of nudibranchs, as well as golden wentletrap snails that feed on the orange cup coral. Fish life is also abundant and varied, with a chance to see almost anything from scorpion fish and giant morays to marbled sting rays. Mantas and even whale sharks are also sometimes visitors of this site.

Shark Cave aka Three Islets

All around this site, marine life is extremely rich and diverse. There are three different rocky islets with vertical walls as well as sloping reef. Many areas are populated with fields of anemones, which are home to five different species of anemone fish. Elsewhere, large tubastrea coral trees sprout from the rocky terrain, accompanied by crinoids, gorgonian fans and pastel green rope sponge. Tiger tail sea horses are often encountered on the deep edges of the slope, as are many varieties of morays - often several species in the same hole.

Cuttlefish may be found at nearly any depth, sometimes courting and mating. Ornate ghost pipe fish, cowrie shells, octopus, reef squid, jaw fish, porcelain crabs, long nose pipe fish, and mantis shrimps are often seen at this site. Scorpion fish are very abundant, so be careful where you place your hands! Between the three pinnacles and surrounding bottom, Shark Cave easily lends itself to several dives to enjoy the diversity of the reef and to marvel in the chasm of the Shark Cave! Nurse sharks can be found lurking inside the cavern along with marble rays, ghost pipefish and plenty of other fascinating creatures, including blue ribbon eels.

Fan Forest & Western Rocky

As the name Fan Forest Pinnacle suggests, it is a submerged pinnacle famous for the amount of gorgonian sea-fans. The biggest gorgonians are in deeper waters around 20 m and below.

They are very healthy and support a large variety of marine life including feather stars, cowries, hawk fish and shrimps. Schooling fish include snapper, trevally, rainbow runners and fusiliers. Moray eels and scorpion fish are also numerous.

A short trip south of Sea Fan, Western Rocky is the scene of dramatic underwater terrain on this excellent dive site, which consists of a main islet plus several detached pinnacles. Among the more striking features of the main islet is a huge underwater archway where schooling snapper often hang out.



The soft limestone island is riddled with holes and crevices, providing hiding places for hinge-beak, saron and harlequin shrimps, thorny oysters, cowrie shells, nudibranchs, spiny lobsters and moray eels.

Large gorgonian fans and lush soft corals populate many of the deeper areas, while shallow portions of the south side wall are covered with orange cup corals and colourful encrusting sponges. Fish life can include almost anything from ornate ghost pipefish to frog fish to schooling batfish. Western Rocky pinnacle is shaped like a cheese wedge covered by both hard and soft corals, lots of trevally and tuna, and if you are lucky, the elusive bow mouth guitarfish.



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A wide range of invertebrate life can be found at Black Rock, including smashing and spearing mantis shrimp, spiny lobsters, hermit crabs, sea stars, cowrie shells, harlequin shrimp, octopus and cuttlefish. During safety stops, move slowly along the eastern and western ends of the south wall to find brilliantly coloured elegant hermit crabs and a variety of nudibranchs, as well as golden wentletrap snails that feed on the orange cup coral. Fish life is also abundant and varied, with a chance to see almost anything from scorpion fish and giant morays to marbled sting rays. Mantas and even whale sharks are also sometimes visitors of this site.

Shark Cave aka Three Islets

All around this site, marine life is extremely rich and diverse. There are three different rocky islets with vertical walls as well as sloping reef. Many areas are populated with fields of anemones, which are home to five different species of anemone fish. Elsewhere, large tubastrea coral trees sprout from the rocky terrain, accompanied by crinoids, gorgonian fans and pastel green rope sponge. Tiger tail sea horses are often encountered on the deep edges of the slope, as are many varieties of morays - often several species in the same hole.

Cuttlefish may be found at nearly any depth, sometimes courting and mating. Ornate ghost pipe fish, cowrie shells, octopus, reef squid, jaw fish, porcelain crabs, long nose pipe fish, and mantis shrimps are often seen at this site. Scorpion fish are very abundant, so be careful where you place your hands! Between the three pinnacles and surrounding bottom, Shark Cave easily lends itself to several dives to enjoy the diversity of the reef and to marvel in the chasm of the Shark Cave! Nurse sharks can be found lurking inside the cavern along with marble rays, ghost pipefish and plenty of other fascinating creatures, including blue ribbon eels.

Little Torres Island

Due to its remote location this is a good dive site for appreciating the a kaleidoscope of colours from the hundreds of corals types in abundance such as table corals, mosaic corals and red whip corals to name a few. The corals are surrounded by healthy reef life and huge submerged boulders, as well as the occasional sting ray and the rare leopard sharks on the sea bed nearby. There is also a good chance of seeing black banded sea snakes here. Chances of spotting sharks, whale sharks and mantas. The "Sea Fan Forest" is an enchanting patch where lionfish, moorish idols and several cowries are present.

Tower Rock

As its name suggests, this is a magical dive site with towering walls descending into the depths. Below the past.

water you will find a lunar site of boulders, made up from the taller reaches of Tower Rock in years



The walls are laced with whip corals and sea fans, oysters and clams. White banded cleaner shrimp and ornate spiny lobster hide amongst the crags, whilst blue faced angelfish and yellow striped fusiliers dance their way up the walls.

Larger visitors include manta rays and mobula rays, as well as blacktip and whitetip reef sharks. Moray eels, bearded scorpionfish, schools of snappers and fusiliers are among the usual suspects.

Fan Forest & Western Rocky

As the name Fan Forest Pinnacle suggests, it is a submerged pinnacle famous for the amount of gorgonian sea-fans. The biggest gorgonians are in deeper waters around 20 m and below.

They are very healthy and support a large variety of marine life including feather stars, cowries, hawk fish and shrimps. Schooling fish include snapper, trevally, rainbow runners and fusiliers. Moray eels and scorpion fish are also numerous.

A short trip south of Sea Fan, Western Rocky is the scene of dramatic underwater terrain on this excellent dive site, which consists of a main islet plus several detached pinnacles. Among the more striking features of the main islet is a huge underwater archway where schooling snapper often hang out. The soft limestone island is riddled with holes and crevices, providing hiding places for hinge-beak, saron and harlequin shrimps, thorny oysters, cowrie shells, nudibranchs, spiny lobsters and moray eels.

Large gorgonian fans and lush soft corals populate many of the deeper areas, while shallow portions of the south side wall are covered with orange cup corals and colourful encrusting sponges. Fish life can include almost anything from ornate ghost pipefish to frog fish to schooling batfish. Western Rocky pinnacle is shaped like a cheese wedge covered by both hard and soft corals, lots of trevally and tuna, and if you are lucky, the elusive bow mouth guitarfish.

The Phinisi – Mergui Archipelago, Myanmar

Trip Information

Arrival Airport: Ranong Airport (UNN) or Phuket International Airport (HKT)

Departure Airport: Ranong Airport (UNN) or Phuket International Airport (HKT)

Embarkation: Ranong Pier @ 12:00 noon

Disembarkation: Ranong Pier @ 11:00 am

Flights, Hotels, Transfers & Excursions

Travelling within Thailand is exceptionally easy when you book with The Phinisi. From booking domestic flights and hotel accommodation to land tours, we can arrange everything you need before and after your cruise. Prices for these add-ons vary dependent on the time of booking – please contact our reservations team for more information.

Advice on international flights

Ranong Airport is exclusively served from Bangkok and is located about 25 minutes south of Ranong town. 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. Phuket to Ranong is a 5 hour transfer by taxi or minivan. Transfers are not included in the cruise price. We recommend staying 1 night in a hotel before cruise departure, so you are well rested before the start of the cruise. Embarkation time is 12.00 noon and disembarkation at the end of the cruise will be at 11.00am. Please allow at least 2-3 hours for international flight check-in and 1.5-2 hours for domestic flights.

Insurance

The Phinisi strongly recommends that all guests carry full travel and cancellation insurance as we cannot be held liable for delays which occur during the cruise, nor any delays or cancellations of the flights, accommodation, tours & transfers we organise on your behalf. The Phinisi works in partnership with DiveAssure and can offer you a selection of competitively priced dive and travel insurance policies, including short term and multiple trip policies.

These policies can also be purchased with a 'Liveaboard Rider' that covers you in the event of missing your liveaboard departure due to missed connection, lost diving days due to a number of reasons (including accident to another passenger) requiring the boat to abort diving, mechanical breakdown, air supply failure, changes or cancellations due to weather and more.



General Information

Visas and Passports

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 in to Thailand. Passport holders of most western countries will be issued a visa upon arrival for stays of up to 30 days in Thailand. However, upon re-entry to Thailand from Myanmar 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 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. Please make sure that your passport is valid for at least 6 months after 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.

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, please visit the Thai Embassy website at www.thaiembassyuk.org.uk/visa_exemption.html for more information.

Time Zone

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

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 inoculations or vaccinations are required unless you are coming from or passing through contaminated areas, 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 that travelers follow normal precautions with food in order to prevent stomach upsets, and be sure to drink bottled water only. Please consult your doctor or nearest health authorities for up-to-date medical travel information well before departure.

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.

Mergui Archipelago is home to a not so well-known tribe called the Moken. They are a shy, peace-loving tribe also known as the 'Sea-Gypsies'. These people, numbering just under 3000, are the indigenous people of the Mergui Archipelago. They speak their own language: Moken and have been sustaining themselves of the land and sea in the same way they have done for centuries. They have an unprecedented sense of the sea. In 2004, the Moken read the sea correctly just before the deadly Indian Ocean tsunami swept in. They headed for higher ground and hardly any of them were killed when elsewhere the monster wave took over a hundred thousand lives. Most of them still live on their boat and continue to roam around the archipelago but some have established themselves in a village on Lampi Island.

Climate and Weather

There are 3 distinct seasons – “summer” from March through May, “rainy” (still with plenty of sunshine) from June to September and “cool” from October through February. The average annual temperature is 28°C (83°F), ranging anywhere from 30°C in April to 25°C in December. Myanmar’s tropical climate is influenced by the southwest and northeast monsoons. From Late May to October, the southwest monsoon hits the coast of Thailand and Myanmar, while the northeast monsoon sweeps the Gulf of Thailand (east coast) between mid-October to mid-December. The Phinisi has chosen the best possible weather period during November to May in order to maximise passenger enjoyment.

Water Temperature and Exposure Suits

Water temperatures in Myanmar average around 27°C (80F), although sometimes you may experience thermoclines. Most guests find that a 3mm shorty and possibly a rash vest are suitable for the water temperature in the warmer months, when we will be diving. However, for guests who feel the cold easily, especially with repeated diving, then we recommend to bring an extra vest/hood. In short, bring what you feel most comfortable in.

Life on Board

Food and Drink

Guests will be offered a choice of international and Asian cuisine served buffet style in the indoor dining area. We cater to special dietary requirements; please simply inform our reservations team prior to your trip to ensure that we have plenty of dishes to suit your needs. A range of carbonated soft drinks, fruit juices, black, green and herbal teas are available, as well as some 'naughty' treats should you feel hungry between meal times. Guests may also select beer, wine or spirits from our cocktail bar for an additional fee.

Clothing and Footwear

Dress code on board The Phinisi is very casual and most guests feel comfortable in little more than swim wear, shorts and t-shirts. A sweater is advised for cooler nights, particularly after multiple dives. Most guests prefer bare feet on board the yacht; however island visits may require sturdy sandals or cross-trainers.

Electricity

On board The Phinisi we have 2 round pin sockets (European style). Please make sure you bring universal adapters with you if necessary. Electrical current in Thailand is 220 Volts.

Smoking

Smoking onboard is permitted in designated (outdoor) areas.

Safety on Board

A thorough yacht safety briefing will be provided by your cruise director at the start of your trip.

Emergency Equipment

The Phinisi is equipped with modern safety features such as an automated life raft 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. She has a full complement of medical grade oxygen which can be administered to divers through DAN kits or unit specific attachments.

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.

Staying Connected

We are unable to provide internet service on board The Phinisi. Our trips are in relatively remote locations and internet service is intermittent at best. Most mobile phones that have 'roaming' will function at some points during your cruise. However; service signal strength can be very weak and in some areas of your cruise there may not be a signal at all. The cost of calls made is determined by your service provider.

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.

Payments on Board

Marine Park and Port Fees

The marine park and port & visa fees are 280 USD for 7 nights and 350 USD for 10 nights, which will be added to your final cruise invoice in advance of your cruise. Alternatively, it can be paid on board. Note that these fees are liable to change without notice.

Optional Extras

The Phinisi offers 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
- Dive Courses
- Torch & Dive Computer Rental
- The Phinisi Merchandise

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

Tipping

At The Phinisi we believe that tipping is a matter of personal choice. Should you feel that your crew has made your holiday extra special then a tip is always appreciated. On the day of disembarkation, a tip box is provided for your convenience; all gratuities are divided equally amongst the crew, including the captain and dive guides. Please note that we can accept tips in cash only.

Diving Information

Guests' Level of Diving

The Phinisi welcomes everyone from non-divers to seasoned divers; however, there may be strong currents on this itinerary. We therefore recommend our guests be AOW certified preferably with experience with diving in currents. Your cruise director will be able to advise you while on board, however if you have concerns regarding the conditions of the destination you wish to visit then please contact your agent or our reservations team.

Scuba 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.

Diving Health

Flying after diving

Current studies show that you should wait at least 24 hours after multiple repetitive dives before you fly. Please bear this in mind before you book your onward international or domestic flights.

Diving Insurance

Diving insurance is mandatory aboard The Phinisi. Your insurance must cover all of your scuba diving and snorkeling activities, including the costs for recompression chamber treatment and emergency air evacuation. Whilst many general travel insurance companies will cover scuba diving activities, they often fall short on recompression treatment or evacuation. The Phinisi strongly recommends purchasing diving-specific insurance and is working with Dive Assure to offer policies that cover everything our guests need.

The Phinisi can offer short-term diving insurance coverage (1-4 weeks) though we advise that requests must be made to our reservations team at least 1 week prior to your cruise departure date to ensure adequate time for arrangements.

Diving Emergencies

There are two recompression chambers located in Phuket, that can be reached within several hours by speedboat from anywhere within the Similan and Surin Islands. They provide emergency treatment for decompression illness in the unlikely event of an accident. We require that all guests dive well within recreational dive limits and follow dive guides' instructions.

What to Bring

Below you will find a checklist of items that you will need to bring with you on your liveaboard cruise on The Phinisi:

Passport

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

Travel Documents

Flight tickets- International & Domestic; hotel bookings; excursions

Cash & Credit Card for emergencies

Recommended amount (additional to marine park fees): 250-500 USD

Diving Certification & Logbook

Including Nitrox Card if certified & intending to use Nitrox

Travel and Diving Insurance Documents

To include in case of emergency medical evacuation

Essential Diving Items

Dive computer with full batteries

Toiletries & Medications

Including sunscreen & insect repellent

Inform booking team of pre-existing medical conditions

Essential Clothing Items

Swim wear, 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.

The Phinisi - Similan & Surin Islands

6 Nights - Itinerary

The following is a sample itinerary of where you might dive during your holiday with us. We wish to show you the very best diving but a number of factors can determine where we visit. Weather, tides, how busy a site is with other dive vessels all play a part in the Cruise Director's decision of which route the yacht takes. The safety of all on board is paramount and we always do our best in offering diving at alternate locations. The Cruise Director is happy to listen to requests from guests to visit or remain at certain sites and providing it is possible and the schedule allows, then guest's requests are respected.

Schedule

Your Cruise Director will schedule up to 4 dives per day; 3 day dives and either a sunset or a night dive. The diving day has a typical schedule as follows:

- Light Breakfast followed by a briefing & Dive 1
- Full Breakfast, relaxation followed by briefing & Dive 2
- Lunch, relaxation followed by briefing & Dive 3
- Snack, relaxation, followed by briefing & Dive 4
- Dinner (if Night Dive, it will be after dinner)

Day 1 and Day 7 are reserved for embarkation and disembarkation; there will be no diving on these days. For the final day aboard we schedule 3 dives to allow plenty of time for off-gassing before disembarkation and your flight home. The Cruise Director is happy to listen to requests from guests to visit or remain at certain sites and providing it is possible and the schedule allows, then guest's requests are respected.

Similan Islands

The above water scenery will provide stunningly beautiful white sandy beaches with small forested areas. Dive some of the following sites; Boulder City, Sharkfin Reef, and Honeymoon Bay. Under the surface you may see: Leopard (zebra) shark, blue spotted stingrays, clown trigger fish, rabbit fish, scorpion fish, snappers, emperor fish, giant trevally and angelfish. The coral gardens, bommies and boulder formations are wonderful to dive.

Elephant Head Rock, visible from the surface, this is the biggest pinnacle in the Similans and has some fantastic swim-throughs. If lucky, you might see some white tip reef sharks, batfish; trevally and barracuda can often be seen on the perimeter of the boulders. If you look closely in the cracks and in the rubble you can see smashing mantis shrimp, porcelain crab, moray eels and cleaner shrimp.

Koh Bon

Koh Bon is a dive site where manta rays may be seen. You are likely to see Napoleon wrasse, sweetlips, octopus, blue fin trevally, giant moray eels, great barracudas, fire dart goby, popcorn shrimp, spiny lobster and nudibranchs of many types. The dive sites vary from wall diving to gently sloping reefs and from submerged boulders to coral gardens.

Koh Tachai

Koh Tachai is famous for its pinnacle dive site and more relaxed reef diving. Normally, leopard sharks, marbled whip rays, turtles, barracuda, pipe fish, and nudibranchs can be found here. There is also a chance to see bigger species in this area like manta rays and whale sharks, especially by late January till April.

Richelieu Rock

This limestone pinnacle was named by Jacques Cousteau after General Richelieu, who was an important Danish officer in the Thai Navy. There are gorgeous purple dendronephthya soft corals covering most of the pinnacle and other areas covered in magnificent sea anemones as well.

Barely breaking the surface at low tide, this horseshoe-shaped outcropping, slopes steeply to a sandy bottom at 18 to 35 meters (60-120 Ft). This site offers great diversity for such a small and isolated spot. It also offers excellent multi-level diving and, because it is a high-profile reef, there are always sheltered areas to hide from current.

The marine life is prolific and includes amongst, many other things; Pharaoh cuttlefish, large octopi, all 5 varieties of anemone fish of the Andaman Sea, variety of moray eels, ornate ghost pipefish, smashing mantis shrimps, harlequin shrimps, tiger tail sea horses, Spanish mackerel, frog fish, many schooling snapper and occasional sightings of manta rays and whale sharks.

Surin Islands

Topside scenery of Koh Surin with evergreen forests, mangroves and small beaches, surpasses even that of the picturesque Similan Islands. Under water the reefs of Surin have the greatest hard coral diversity in Thailand. You are likely to see Napoleon wrasse, yellow-masked angelfish, bumphead parrotfish, tomato anemonefish and barramundi, as well as lots of turtles that still come ashore in this area to lay their eggs. Because of the remoteness not many liveaboard boats visit these islands and you will be able to enjoy the dive sites without sharing it with tourist hordes.

Khao Lak Wrecks

There is a choice of easily diveable wrecks between The Similan Islands and Khao Lak. The **Boonsung** and the **Premchai** are old tin miners that were sank 25 or so years ago and are a treat for underwater photographers as well as lovers of life of all kinds!! Only in 18m of water they are covered in nudibranchs and shrimps as well as large numbers of the unusual honeycomb moray.

There are also huge numbers of schooling fish as well as rays that can occasionally be seen. **Sea Chart 1** is a slightly more challenging dive and lies between 40 and 25 metres. Sunk during a storm in 2009 with a full load of teak, she is relatively new but already hosts an abundance of schooling fish.

The Phinisi – Similan & Surin Islands

Trip Information

Arrival Airport: Phuket International Airport (HKT)

Departure Airport: Phuket International Airport (HKT)

Embarkation: Chalong Pier, Phuket @ 18:00pm

Disembarkation: Tab Lamu Pier, Khao Lak @ 10:00am or v.v.

Flights, Hotels, Transfers & Excursions

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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/Khao Lak 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. If you make your own way to the embarkation point, embarkation time is 18.00 pm.

When you fly in on embarkation day, you can book our free transfer from Phuket Airport at 15.30 hr. Please ensure that you arrive on time for this transfer. For the final day aboard we schedule 3 dives to allow plenty of time for off-gassing before disembarkation and your flight home. Disembarkation at the end of the cruise will be just before 10.00am. Phuket airport is about a 1 hour drive from the embarkation and disembarkation point. Please allow at least 2-3 hours for international flight check-in and 1.5-2 hours for domestic flights.

Insurance

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General Information

Visas and Passports

Passport holders of most western countries will be issued a visa upon arrival for stays of up to 30 days in Thailand. Please make sure that your passport has validity for the duration of your stay in Thailand (6 months validity upon arrival is advisable). 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.

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, please visit the Thai Embassy website at www.thaiembassyuk.org.uk/visa_exemption.html for more information.

Time Zone

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Money Matters

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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 that travelers follow normal precautions with food in order to prevent stomach upsets, and be sure to drink bottled water only. Please consult your doctor or nearest health authorities for up-to-date medical travel information well before departure.

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.

Climate and Weather

There are 3 distinct seasons – “summer” from March through May, “rainy” (still with plenty of sunshine) from June to September and “cool” from October through February. The average annual temperature is 28°C (83°F), ranging anywhere from 30°C in April to 25°C in December. 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, and the northeast monsoon sweeps the Gulf of Thailand (east coast) between mid-October to mid-December. The Phinisi has chosen the best possible weather period during November to May in order to maximise passenger enjoyment.

Water Temperature and Exposure Suits

Water temperatures in Thailand average around 27°C (80F), although sometimes you may experience thermoclines. Most guests find that a 3mm shorty and possibly a rash vest are suitable for the water temperature in the warmer months, when we will be diving. However, for guests who feel the cold easily, especially with repeated diving, then we recommend to bring an extra vest/hood. In short, bring what you feel most comfortable in.

Life on Board

Food and Drink

Guests will be offered a choice of international and Asian cuisine served buffet style in the indoor dining area. We cater to special dietary requirements; please simply inform our reservations team prior to your trip to ensure that we have plenty of dishes to suit your needs. A range of carbonated soft drinks, fruit juices, black, green and herbal teas are available, as well as some 'naughty' treats should you feel hungry between meal times. Guests may also select beer, wine or spirits from our cocktail bar for an additional fee.

Clothing and Footwear

Dress code on board The Phinisi is very casual and most guests feel comfortable in little more than swim wear, shorts and t-shirts. A sweater is advised for cooler nights, particularly after multiple dives. Most guests prefer bare feet on board the yacht; however island visits may require sturdy sandals or cross-trainers.

Electricity

On board The Phinisi we have 2 round pin sockets (European style). Please make sure you bring universal adapters with you if necessary. Electrical current in Thailand is 220 Volts.

Smoking

Smoking onboard is permitted in designated (outdoor) areas.

Safety on Board

A thorough yacht safety briefing will be provided by your cruise director at the start of your trip. **Emergency Equipment and First Aid**

The Phinisi is equipped with modern safety features such as an automated life raft and emergency pumps. Moreover, she 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. There is also a full complement of medical grade oxygen which can be administered to divers through DAN kits or unit specific attachments.

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.

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We are unable to provide an internet service on board The Phinisi. Our trips are in relatively remote locations and internet service is intermittent at best. Most mobile phones that have 'roaming' will function at some points during your cruise. However; service signal strength can be very weak and in some areas of your cruise there may not be a signal at all. The cost of calls made is determined by your service provider.

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.



THE PHINISI
C H E N G I S A O

Payments on Board

Marine Park and Port Fees

The marine park and port fees are 65 USD, which will be added to your final cruise invoice in advance of your cruise. Alternatively, it can be paid on board. There is a marine park flat fee of 35 USD for non-divers. Note that these fees are liable to change without notice.

Optional Extras

The Phinisi offers 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
- Dive Courses
- Torch & Dive Computer Rental
- The Phinisi Merchandise

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

Tipping

At The Phinisi we believe that tipping is a matter of personal choice. Should you feel that your crew has made your holiday extra special then a tip is always appreciated. On the day of disembarkation, a tip box is provided for your convenience; all gratuities are divided equally amongst the crew, including the captain and dive guides. Please note that we can accept tips in cash only.

Diving Information

Guests' Level of Diving

The Phinisi welcomes everyone from non-divers to seasoned divers. This itinerary has different diving conditions based on the time of the trip. Whilst all of our trips are suitable for each and every experience level, there may be some dives offered that are not suitable for beginners. Your cruise director will be able to advise you whilst on board however if you have concerns regarding the conditions of the destination you wish to visit then please contact your agent or our reservations team.

Scuba 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.

Diving Health

Flying after diving

Current studies show that you should wait at least 24 hours after multiple repetitive dives before you fly. Please bear this in mind before you book your onward international or domestic flights.

Diving Insurance

Diving insurance is mandatory aboard The Phinisi. Your insurance must cover all of your scuba diving and snorkeling activities, including the costs for recompression chamber treatment and emergency air evacuation. Whilst many general travel insurance companies will cover scuba diving activities, they often fall short on recompression treatment or evacuation. The Phinisi strongly recommends purchasing diving-specific insurance and is working with Dive Assure to offer policies that cover everything our guests need.

The Phinisi can offer short-term diving insurance coverage (1-4 weeks) though we advise that requests must be made to our reservations team at least 1 week prior to your cruise departure date to ensure adequate time for arrangements.

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There are two recompression chambers located in Phuket, that can be reached within several hours by speedboat from anywhere within the Similan and Surin Islands. They provide emergency treatment for decompression illness in the unlikely event of an accident. We require that all guests dive well within recreational dive limits and follow dive guides' instructions.

What to Bring

Below you will find a checklist of items that you will need to bring with you on your liveaboard cruise on The Phinisi:

Passport

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

Travel Documents

Flight tickets- International & Domestic; hotel bookings; excursions

Cash & Credit Card for emergencies

Recommended amount (additional to marine park fees): 250-500 USD

Diving Certification & Logbook

Including Nitrox Card if certified & intending to use Nitrox

Travel and Diving Insurance Documents

To include in case of emergency medical evacuation

Essential Diving Items

Dive computer with full batteries

Toiletries & Medications

Including sunscreen & insect repellent

Inform booking team of pre-existing medical conditions

Essential Clothing Items

Swim wear, 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.

The Phinisi – Southern Thailand

4 Nights Itinerary

The following is a sample itinerary of where you might dive during your holiday with us. We wish to show you the very best diving but a number of factors can determine where we visit. Weather, tides, how busy a site is with other dive vessels all play a part in the Cruise Director's decision of which route the yacht takes. Whilst we attempt to ensure the number of dives we have scheduled is fulfilled, bad weather can hinder the yacht's ability to reach a specified dive site in good time. The safety of all on board is paramount and we always do our best in offering diving at alternate locations. The Cruise Director is happy to listen to requests from guests to visit or remain at certain sites and providing it is possible and the schedule allows, then guest's requests are respected.

Schedule

Your Cruise Director will schedule up to 4 dives per day; 3 day dives and either a sunset or night dive. The diving day has a typical schedule as follows:

- Light Breakfast followed by a briefing & Dive 1
- Full Breakfast, relaxation followed by briefing & Dive 2
- Lunch, relaxation followed by briefing & Dive 3
- Snack, relaxation, followed by briefing & Dive 4
- Dinner (if Night Dive, it will be after dinner)

For your final day aboard, we schedule 2 morning dives and a single dive after lunch to allow plenty of time for off-gassing before disembarkation.

Itinerary

Koh Phi Phi With mini-walls and shallow coral gardens predominating, there are a host of dive sites to choose from around the Phi Phi national Park. Hin Bida, Koh Bida Nok, Koh Bida Nai, Pilay Wall, Hin Dot and Ao Maya all offer something special. Wildlife is hugely varied across the sites with black tip reef sharks common, tigertail seahorses, ornate ghost pipefish, cornet fish, octopus, scorpion fish, blue fin trevally, barracudas and more.

King Cruiser

The King Cruiser was a car ferry that used to travel between Phi Phi and Phuket. In 1997, 'the cruiser' hit Anemone Reef on her crossing and sank a short distance away. No lives were lost, but divers were left with a great wreck dive! While she is largely broken up now, she is covered with soft corals and hides some wonderful gems, as well as being home to several large schools of snapper. While currents can be strong and visibility sometimes challenging, this is a great site to dive.

Shark Point and Anemone Reef

These pinnacles are part of the same reef system and are only a very short distance apart from each other. Both sites are covered with colourful soft corals and anemones with a variety of fish to suit all

divers. From barracuda to seahorses and for the lucky ones of course, the iconic leopard shark! **Koh Doc Mai**

'Flower Island' is a tiny piece of sheer rock sat between Shark point and Phuket but, although it is tiny, dives here can provide divers with amazing memories! From a spacious cavern to frog fish, ornate ghost pipe fish and even bamboo sharks, Koh Doc Mai never fails to surprise.



Racha Yai & Racha Noi

Racha Yai is an excellent trip for beginners and those that have not dived for a while. Indeed for any guests aboard carrying out Advanced Open Water courses on-board, Racha Yai offers the perfect opportunity for course dives, with sloping hard coral reefs, white sandy bottoms and a choice of wrecks on the west coast.



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Racha Noi has some of the best visibility of all sites in the area. Often described as a 'mini Similans' the granite boulder topography is also unique compared to other sites. It offers a choice of hard coral reefs, boulders with large swim throughs and the beautiful pinnacle on the south point of this island.

Strong currents can make the southern sites challenging, however, with a year round chance to see manta rays, it is worth the effort to dive here.

Koh Haa

Possibly some of the most underrated diving in the whole of Thailand, Moo Koh Haa (literally 'five island group') sits almost halfway between Hin Daeng and Phi Phi and is part of the Ko Lanta National Marine Park. There are actually several dive sites around Ko Haa but the highlights are Ko Haa Lagoon, Ko Haa Neua, and Ko Haa Yai. Around these amazing islands you can see

pinnacles, walls, boulders, caverns, and swim-throughs. Ko Haa lagoon is ideal for night dives, courses, and snorkeling, while The Chimney and The Cathedral offer things that you cannot see on other Thailand liveaboard itineraries with caverns, swim-throughs and chambers littering the sites. Ko Haa has varied marine life too, with ornate ghost pipefish, morays eels, octopus, hawksbill turtles, sea horses, marble rays, and sometimes even leopard sharks.

Hin Daeng & Hin Muang

These two sites are pinnacles (translating directly as Red Rock and Purple Rock) in open ocean, reaching down to over 70m, and are best known for manta ray and whale shark encounters but, whether they are sighted or not, the sites also offer giant moray eels, pharaoh cuttlefish, schooling rainbow runners and snappers, barracudas, groupers, fusiliers and blue fin trevally. On the pinnacles, there are fields of magnificent anemones, walls of Hemprics soft corals, and huge gorgonian sea fans.

Top Side

Along the route there are some incredible views from the boat including Phi Phi's famous beaches and limestone karsts climbing vertically from the ocean. There will be opportunities to leave the boat and take a sight-seeing trip on the dinghy.

The Phinisi – South Andaman

Trip Information

Arrival Airport: Phuket International Airport (HKT)

Departure Airport: Phuket International Airport (HKT)

Embarkation: Chalong Pier, Phuket @ 18:00pm

Disembarkation: Chalong Pier, Phuket @ 14:00pm or v.v.

Flights, Hotels, Transfers & Excursions

Travelling within Thailand is exceptionally easy when you book with The Phinisi. From booking domestic flights and hotel accommodation to land tours, we can arrange everything you need before and after your cruise. Prices for these add-ons vary dependent on the time of booking – please contact our reservations team for more information.

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/Khao Lak 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. If you make your own way to the embarkation point, embarkation time is 18.00 pm.

When you fly in on embarkation day, you can book our free transfer from Phuket Airport at 15.30 hr. Please ensure that you arrive on time for this transfer. For the final day aboard we schedule 2 dives. Disembarkation at the end of the cruise will be just before 14.00pm. Phuket airport is about a 1.5 hour's drive from the embarkation and disembarkation point. Please allow at least 2-3 hours for international flight check-in and 1.5-2 hours for domestic flights.

Insurance

The Phinisi strongly recommends that all guests carry full travel and cancellation insurance as we cannot be held liable for delays which occur during the cruise, nor any delays or cancellations of the flights, accommodation, tours & transfers we organise on your behalf.

The Phinisi works in partnership with DiveAssure and can offer you a selection of competitively priced dive and travel insurance policies, including short term and multiple trip policies. These policies can also be purchased with a 'Liveaboard Rider' that covers you in the event of missing your liveaboard departure due to missed connection, lost diving days due to a number of reasons (including accident to another passenger) requiring the boat to abort diving, mechanical breakdown, air supply failure, changes or cancellations due to weather and more.

General Information

Visas and Passports

Passport holders of most western countries will be issued a visa upon arrival for stays of up to 30 days in Thailand. Please make sure that your passport has validity for the duration of your stay in Thailand (6 months validity upon arrival is advisable). 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.

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, please visit the Thai Embassy website at www.thaiembassyuk.org.uk/visa_exemption.html for more information.

Time Zone

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

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 inoculations or vaccinations are required unless you are coming from or passing through contaminated areas, 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 that travelers follow normal precautions with food in order to prevent stomach upsets, and be sure to drink bottled water only. Please consult your doctor or nearest health authorities for up-to-date medical travel information well before departure.

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.

Climate and Weather

There are 3 distinct seasons – “summer” from March through May, “rainy” (still with plenty of sunshine) from June to September and “cool” from October through February. The average annual temperature is 28°C (83°F), ranging anywhere from 30°C in April to 25°C in December. 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, and the northeast monsoon sweeps the Gulf of Thailand (east coast) between mid-October to mid-December. The Phinisi has chosen the best possible weather period during November to May in order to maximise passenger enjoyment.

Water Temperature and Exposure Suits

Water temperatures in Thailand average around 27°C (80F), although sometimes you may experience thermoclines. Most guests find that a 3mm shorty and possibly a rash vest are suitable for the water temperature in the warmer months, when we will be diving. However, for guests who feel the cold easily, especially with repeated diving, then we recommend to bring an extra vest/hood. In short, bring what you feel most comfortable in.



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Life on Board

Food and Drink

Guests will be offered a choice of international and Asian cuisine served buffet style in the indoor dining area. We cater to special dietary requirements; please simply inform our reservations team prior to your trip to ensure that we have plenty of dishes to suit your needs. A range of carbonated soft drinks, fruit juices, black, green and herbal teas are available, as well as some 'naughty' treats should you feel hungry between meal times. Guests may also select beer, wine or spirits from our cocktail bar for an additional fee.

Clothing and Footwear

Dress code on board The Phinisi is very casual and most guests feel comfortable in little more than swim wear, shorts and t-shirts. A sweater is advised for cooler nights, particularly after multiple dives. Most guests prefer bare feet on board the yacht; however island visits may require sturdy sandals or cross-trainers.

Electricity

On board The Phinisi we have **2 round pin sockets (European style)**. Please make sure you bring universal adapters with you if necessary. Electrical current in Thailand is 220 Volts.

Smoking

Smoking onboard is permitted in designated (outdoor) areas.

Safety on Board

A thorough yacht safety briefing will be provided by your cruise director at the start of your trip.

Emergency Equipment

The Phinisi is equipped with modern safety features such as an automated life raft 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. She has a full complement of medical grade oxygen which can be administered to divers through DAN kits or unit specific attachments.

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.

Staying Connected

We regret that we are unable to provide an internet service on board The Phinisi. Our trips are in relatively remote locations and internet service is intermittent at best. Most mobile phones that have 'roaming' will function at some points during your cruise. However; service signal strength can be very weak and in some areas of your cruise there may not be a signal at all. The cost of calls made is determined by your service provider.

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.

Payments on Board

Marine Park and Port Fees

The marine park and port fees are 50 USD, which will be added to your final cruise invoice in advance of your cruise. Alternatively, it can be paid on board. There is a marine park flat fee of 35 USD for non-divers. Note that these fees are liable to change without notice.

Optional Extras

The Phinisi offers 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
- Dive Courses
- Torch & Dive Computer Rental
- The Phinisi Merchandise

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

Tipping

At The Phinisi we believe that tipping is a matter of personal choice. Should you feel that your crew has made your holiday extra special then a tip is always appreciated. On the day of disembarkation, a tip box is provided for your convenience; all gratuities are divided equally amongst the crew, including the captain and dive guides. Please note that we can accept tips in cash only.

Diving Information

Guests' Level of Diving

The Phinisi welcomes everyone from non-divers to seasoned divers. This itinerary has different diving conditions based on the time of the trip. Whilst all of our trips are suitable for each and every experience level, there may be some dives offered that are not suitable for beginners. Your cruise director will be able to advise you whilst on board however if you have concerns regarding the conditions of the destination you wish to visit then please contact your agent or our reservations team.

Scuba 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.

Diving Health

Flying after diving

Current studies show that you should wait at least 24 hours after multiple repetitive dives before you fly. Please bear this in mind before you book your onward international or domestic flights.

Diving Insurance

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