



THE LIMESTONE CLIFFS OF THAILAND

THE ANDAMAN SEA IS A SEEMINGLY ENDLESS COASTLINE THAT STRETCHES FROM MYANMAR DOWN TO MALAYSIA. BETWEEN THE ISLAND OF PHUKET AND KRABI, HOWEVER, IS A TUCKED AWAY PARADISE WITH VERDANT CLIFFS AND TURQUOISE WATERS.

Referred to by residents as “the Kingdom,” Thailand is enchanting. Sail this fairy-tale coast and you’ll discover jungles enveloping otherworldly rock formations, wildlife on both the sea and land, and welcoming people, who love this region with all their heart. Bursting with flavors and powerful scenery, life is friendly and people are gracious. The coastline is endless, with over 1,000 nautical miles of shore in the Gulf of Thailand and along the Malay Peninsula, where you’ll find the Andaman Sea, home to some of the most interesting sailing anywhere in the world. The most established yachting center is located on Phuket Island, a location not foreign to hospitality and tourism.

Thai people often describe their country as looking like the head of a smiling elephant: Bangkok sits in the elephant’s open mouth and Phuket is down at the curve in the trunk. East of Phuket is Phang Nga Bay—a dimple in the wise old elephant’s rough skin.

This vibrant itinerary takes on different forms and color palettes from Phang Nga Bay down into the Andaman Sea, even in the tone of the water. Cruising from north to south, you see the slow change of water clarity over the course of a long day’s sail: one starts the morning in cloudy, caramel-colored river water flowing out of the mangrove channels, and anchors in clear blues and greens in the evening. An enormous river delta at the head

of Phang Nga Bay is what makes the water rich in sediment and dark in color. In the south, the sediment has settled out, leaving you in the clarity of the Andaman, with all of its colorful reefs and abundant marine life visible as you sail and swim.

PHANG NGA BAY

Phang Nga Bay is the enchanting home to hundreds of islands and rock formations that rise from the shallow bay, reaching high into the sky. The northern islands are a surrealist masterpiece, with towering limestone pillars that balance on slender foundations and are topped with funny bouffants of vegetation. Ocean swell doesn’t make it through the maze of islands to the north and you’ll have fair conditions as the wind pushes you along. The bay is wide but unexpectedly shallow for such a vast expanse of water; if you don’t keep a close eye on the charts and stay in the many natural channels, you’ll see your depth sounder display some uncomfortably low numbers.

