SURAT THANI

Known as one the oldest cities in the southern region of Thailand, Surat Thani boasts a wealth of history that dates back more than 1,000 years. The province is believed to have been the center of the eminent Srivijaya Empire and was later made the trading hub of rubber and copper in the South.

Today, Surat Thani is famous for its magnificent attractions, both inland and offshore, and is renowned for numerous action and adventure options. The Rainforest in Khao Sok National Park is the site of world's largest lotus Bua Phut, and Namtok Tad Fa in the Tai Rom Yen National

Park are two of the exquisite attractions the province has to offer. As well as this, hundreds of scenic islands are preferred destinations for sea, sand, sun and fun lovers. Ko Samui captivates tourists from all over the world with its delightful ocean views and diverse water sports, while Ko Pha-ngan charms visitors with its monthly held full moon beach party. Ko Tao - Ko Nang Yuan have megapopular become diving sites for cookies and experts. And the Angthong National Marine Park provides magnificent panoramic views of the surrounding islands.

Prime Surat Thani



1. Ko Samui: 84 km. from the city ... M5 Thailand's third largest island, Ko Samui has been labeled a "paradise" not only for its spectacular beaches, verdant jungle, magnificent waterfalls, fresh seafood and friendly people. But it has

now become a preferred diving destination for divers from all over the world.



. Ko Pha-ngan: 100 km. from the cit

Located north of Ko Samui, this large sland still manages to preserve the lelightful serenity Samui enjoyed a decade ago. A twin island of Samui, Ko

Pha-ngan is mainly mountainous jungle encircled by pristine beaches and azure sea where beautiful coral reefs rest underneath. The most popular beach is Hat Rin, which is justly famous for being one of the world's most beautiful spots to view the full moon. The beach is where the famous "Full-Moon Party" - an event that attracts tourists from all over the world-is held.



. Khao Sok National Park: 110 km This large tropical forest is made green

by its damp climate with monsoon all vear round, as it is located between the eastern and western parts of Thailand's southern region. The park captivates tourists with its endless lists of fascinating attractions. To name but a few, "San Yang Roi Ton", one of the

country's best nature trails, is an ideal place to explore a wealth of flora and fauna while discovering Tang Nam, a split cliff sculpted by the force of water over thousands of years. Equally interesting are Chiao Lan Lake and Tham Nam Thalu, which is noteworthy for its amazing underground stream. The park is the only place in the country where the famous Wild Lotus (Bua Phut). Thailand's largest flower, can be seen in full bloom from May to December.



4. Muko Ang Thong Marine National Natural wonders of the park vary from verdant coconut groves to unspoiled beaches and a magnificent array of colorful coral reefs. An ideal trip starts

with trekking to the top of Wua Talap to witness one of the most stunningly picturesque seascapes in Thailand. Then visit Tham Bua Bok, home to the lotus-shape stalactites, before embarking on a boat trip to explore sparkling clear blue ocean surrounded by over 50 islets. The trip ends with a dive deep down to marvel at beautiful gardens of vividly colorful coral reefs and large rock arches near Ko Sam Sao. Call +66 7728 6025 or +66 7728 0222 to make a reservation for accommodation



5. Ko Tao and Ko Nang Yuan: 45 km. Rocky islands that have become a backpackers' retreat are reputed for

undisturbed natural beauty, especially

l its rich coral reefs teeming wonderful marine life. Both islands boast of having beaches perfect for swimming, snorkeling, and diving. From a scenic point on Ko Nang Yuan, you can get a panoramic view of three islands connected by sand dunes. Many visitors to the islands are attracted by the low-cost diving courses.



6. Ratchaprapha Dam: 70 km. from

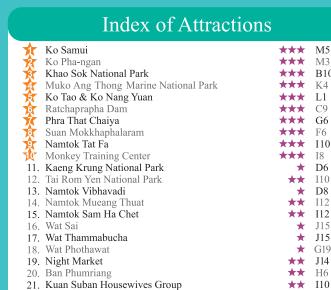
The second dam constructed in the southern region, this multi-purpose dam provides visitors with one of the most breathtaking views – limestone islands

set against a splendid backdrop of reservoir lake and myriad mountain peaks. That is why it is dubbed the "Guilin of Thailand" among travelers from all over the world. Interesting activities include staying at one of the raft houses located in the midst of tranquil and beautiful surroundings and canoeing in the lake to watch animal life at night. (call +66 7724 2560)



. Phra That Chaiya: 54 km. from the ity 8.30 a.m.- 4.00 p.m. This place tells the rich history of Surat Thani, a province that once was the center of the powerful and glorious

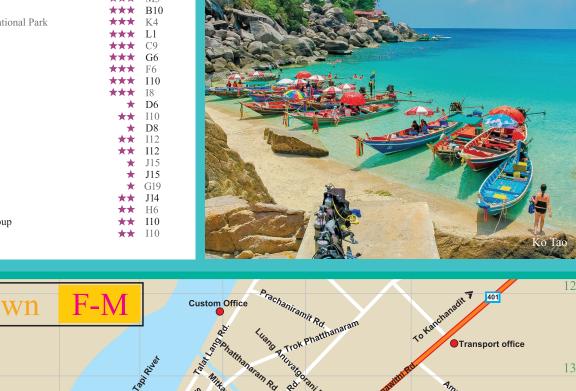
Srivijaya Empire. Phra That Chaiya is the most important ancient Buddhist stupa of the south that houses relics of the Lord Buddha. The nearby National Museum of Chaiya features a remarkable bronze statue of the Lord Buddha in one of his reincarnations as Phra Bodhisat Avalokitesavara. Call +66 7743 1066, +66 6 2202 2511 for more information on the museum.



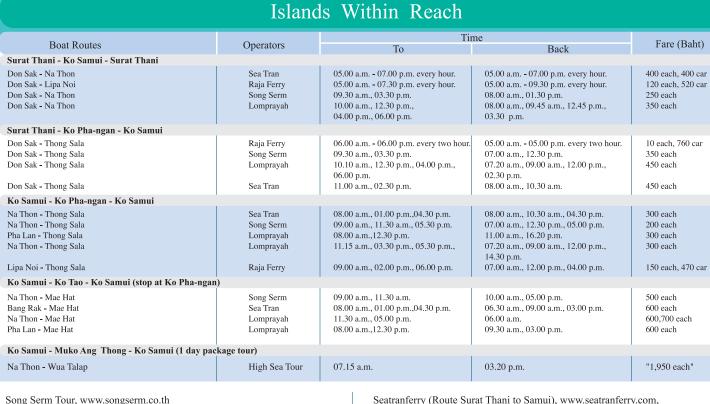
22 Tham Khamin (Tham Men)











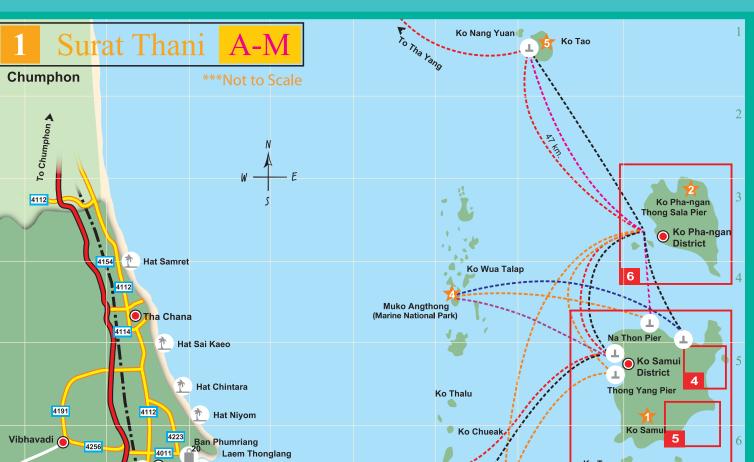
Song Serm Tour, www.songserm.co.th Tel. +66 2629 3415

Lomprayah, www.lomprayah.com, Tel. +66 7742 3761-2, +66 2629 0011

Rajaferry, www.rajaferryport.com, Tel. +66 7737 2800-2, +66 2277 4488

Seatranferry (Route Surat Thani to Samui), www.seatranferry.com, Tel. +66 7795 0559

Seatrandiscovery, www.seatrandiscovery.com, Tel. +66 7725 1555 High Sea Tour, www.highseatour.com, Tel. +66 7742 1285, +66 7742 1290





Location	Address/Tel.	Products
Ban Phumriang	Phumriang Subdistrict, Chaiya District, 7km. from the city center	Gold and silver thread woven fabric
Suan Mokkhaphalaram	Chaiya District	Chaiya salted eggs
Kuan Suban Housewives' Group	Ban Na San District Agricultural Office	Handicrafts, Rubber-leaf butterflies
O-retch Oyster	Kanchanadit Intersection	Fresh oysters
Phlap Phla Seafood	Chaiya District	Salted Kulao fish, Chaiya salted eggs



8. Wat Suan Mokkhaphalaram: a 1. Km.134, 8.30 a.m.-6.00 p.m.F6 This Buddhist temple is where one of Thailand's most revered monks, Buddhadasa Bhikkhu, spent most of his

life establishing and teaching Buddhism. Located in a beautiful forest, it is a tranquil haven perfect for meditation practice and dharma study. Besides, there's a Spiritual Theatre which is worth visiting. Inside are murals depicting poignant religious riddles which are based on Buddhist teachings.



9. Namtok Tat Fa: in the area of Ta om Yen National Park At first glance, this waterfall's remarkable height makes it seem as if it cascades down from the sky, hence the

name. It is indeed Surat Thani's tallest waterfall and it's almost one kilometer in height. Steps leading to each level of the waterfall make the climb easier. Tat Fa is at its best during the rainy



10. Monkey Training Center: In both Kanchanadit and Tha Chang18

This is a one-of-a-kind institution devoted to training wild monkeys how to pick coconuts. Visitors will find out more about training techniques which

are both entertaining and educational at the same time. Appointments should be made in advance at Kanchanadit district. Kra dae jae monkey Training Center Call +66 8 1079 7730









Glossary of Thai Terms

Group of Islands

Note: The English spellings given here try to approximate Thai pronunciation. Posted signs may be spelled differently.

Important Telephone Number

TAT CALL CENTER (8.00 a.m. - 8.00 p.m.) 1672

Tel: +66 7728 8817-9 Surat Thani Surat Thani Hospital Tel. +66 7727 8777, +66 7728 5701-5 Thaksin Hospital Tel. +66 7720 0032 Bus Terminal

Ko Samui Tel. +66 7742 0504 Tourist Police

Tel. +66 7743 0016,1155 Tel. +66 7791 3200 Samui International Hospital Tel. +66 7730 0395

Hospital Police Ban Ta Khun

Ko Pha-ngan

Hospital Police

Tel. +66 7739 7013

Getting Around Ko Samui

By Taxi

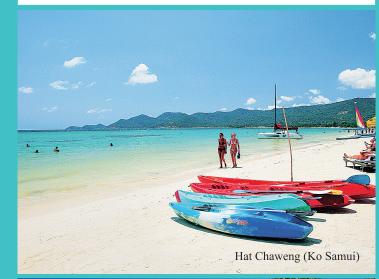
There are now quite a few taxis on Ko Samui. Make sure to negotiate the fare prior to heading out to your destination.

Red pickup trucks with benches in the back serve as 'busses' around the island, traveling fixed routes and allowing passengers to get on and off at will. It's easy to flag one down; in fact, they actively solicit passengers. Ask the fare prior to climbing aboard. It's even possible to hire one for the day if you don't mind riding in

Motorbikes can be rented in any beach town on Ko Samui. However, renting a motorbike is a risky venture. In addition to the risk of injury, a common occurrence for foreigners on the island, there are occasionally scams involving rental motorbikes. As you must typically leave your passport as a deposit for a motorbike it is best to look for a reputable motorbike dealer even if the price is slightly higher. Be aware that helmets are required by law and wearing closed toes shoes is common sense.

For getting around the beach where your resort is located a bicycle is an excellent option. Many resorts offer complimentary bicycles, although they can otherwise be hired for no more than a hundred baht a day. Make sure to wear a helmet and ride cautiously, there are many potholes and cars don't give bicycles the right of way.

There are both cars and jeeps for rent on Ko Samui. As the winding, single lane roads don't allow for much speeding. As the island is relatively small, it's also nearly impossible to get lost!





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27. Hat Mae Hat	**	U13
28. Hat Yao	*	U14
29. Hat Son	**	U14
30. Hat Thong Sala	**	V17
31. Hat Rin Nai	**	Y19
32. Hat Rin Nok	**	Y19
33. Ao Thian	**	Z18
34. Ko Fan	**	U2
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37. Ko Ma

38. Ko Tae Nai 39. Ko Tae Nok

Prime | Ko Samui



1. Hat Chaweng: ...

This is one of Ko Samui's most popular beaches, well-known for its vibrant nightlife and spectacular entertainment venues. There are plenty of resort-type accommodation options available in

various price ranges. Located nearby is Ko Mat Sum, another must-visit attraction renowned for its colorful reefs.



2. Hat Lamai: .. Second most popular beach of Ko Samui, Hat Lamai is named after its long circular stretch of powdery white beach. A nearby attraction is Hin Ta - Hin Yai, the island's most astonishing rock

formations. The best time to visit Hat Lamai is from December to April.



3. Namtok Na Mueang:

14 km. from Na Thon Pier. Apart from sea, sand and beaches, there is so much fun to enjoy when exploring on-shore attractions like Na Mueang 1 and Na Mueang 2 waterfalls.

While Na Mueang 1 is relatively more popular for its easy road access and a large pool ideal for swimming, Na Mueang 2 is famous for being Samui's tallest waterfall and it can only be reached by a 30-minute hike.



4. Ao Taling Ngam: A tranquil beach and a perfect spot to watch the island's most beautiful sunset, especially when the sun descends najestically between Ko Si and Ko Ha.



1 1

5. Hat Na Thon: Recognized as the gateway to Samui, the beach is where all ferries dock. It is also the island's seafood center known for its diverse dining choices, ranging from stylish restaurants to the cheap

seafood stalls located in the island's only night market.



1

6. Ko Taen:. This small tranquil island provides a beautiful nature trail suitable for bird watching and botany. With its crystal clear waters, the island is great for diving. Beneath the surface are

amazingly multicolored coral reefs and astonishing seascapes. Ko Taen offers value-for-money accommodation that comes with warm hospitality. There are no cars on the island which can be reached by a 15-minute boat trip from Thong Krut Bay.



7. Phra Yai (Phra Buddha Kho Dom):

Located on Samui's north coast is a 12meter high Buddha image which the temple is named after. This Buddha image is highly revered among locals



13

8. Hat Bo Phut:

If you love eating out by the sea. Hat Bo Phut is the place. This former fishing village has been modified as a famous ister of eateries on Ko Samui, The

beachfront road is lined with an array of restaurants, including pubs and bars, mostly with breezy outdoor corners along the beach.



9. Buffalo Fighting Stadium:Q8 Buffalo fighting is one of the most rarely

seen local sports in Thailand. It possesses a unique combination of excitement and danger. The fights are not arranged on routine schedules. They

are organized to celebrate such important occasions as the New Year, Chinese New Year, Songkran, the beginning of Buddhist Lent, Samui's Duean Sipsong (12th month) Festival and the Pha Pa offering. Nevertheless, there will be no fights on Buddhist holy days-the 8th and 15th days of the waxing or waning moons of each month.



U12

★ U17

★ T17

10. Samui Off-road Track:P3

Extensive adventure activities make Samui a dream destination. One of these exciting pursuits is a challenging offroad track located on the island's high

nills. Seen on both sides of the track are coconut, rambutan and durian orchards. The end of the track is where the reward is, the most breathtaking vista of the ocean.









Interesting Activities

Activities	Service Providers	Telephone Number			
Diving	Ban's Diving	+66 7745 6466			
Kayaking	Blue Star	+66 7730 0615			
Sailing	Saard's Water Sport Center	+66 7792 7194			
Go-Kart	Samui Go-Kart	+66 7742 5097			
Day Tour	Highway Travel Booking (1989)	+66 7742 1290			
Car Rentals	Budget AVIS Hertz	+66 7743 0022 +66 8 9969 8675 +66 2266 4666			

Symbols Primary Highway Map Key Admission Fee 411 Regional Highway Hill (Khad Market 4035 Local Road Temple (Wat) Cave 4034 Route Numbers Tourist village Railway Line / □ Dam Waterfall National Park Boat Route Viewpoint Post Office Amphoe/Distric Cruising Map of Hat Chaweng Scuba Diving 3 Map of City Map of Ko Samui Map of Hat Lamai Map of Pha-ngan Top Attractions Must see ★★ Worth a visit Bank / Exchange

Surat Thani can be most conveniently reached by car from Bangkok by taking Highway No. 4 through Phetchaburi and Prachuap Khiri Khan Provinces to Chumphon Province and then taking Highway No. 41 and Highway No. 401 directly to Surat Thani City.

Transportation

As many of the ferries connecting mainland Surat Thani with Ko Samui are car ferries it is possible to rent a car and drive to Ko Samui. From Bangkok to Surat Thani the trip takes from 8 to 10 hours; from Phuket or Hat Yai the journey is 5 and 6 hours respectively. Once in Surat Thani, the ferry piers are another hour from

By Bus

Air-conditioned busses depart from Bangkok's Southern Bus Terminal to Surat Thani Province everyday. For more information, Tel: 1490, +66 2422 4444, +66 2872 1777 or visit home.transport.co.th From Surat Thani there are three bus stations from which busses depart: Talat Kaset 1 - bus service for travel within Surat Thani province; Talat Kaset 2 - busses and minivans for destinations farther away, including Krabi, Phuket, and Hat Yai; and the New Station is for air-conditioned buses to Bangkok.

Trains leave Bangkok's Hua Lumphong Railway Station 10 times daily from 12 p.m. until 10.50 p.m. The trip takes approximately 12-13 hours. Ask for the train from Bangkok to Phun Phin, the closest station to Surat Thani City, located 13km away. For further details, please call 1690, +66 2621 8701, +66 2200 4334 or visit www. railway.co.th.

Thai Airways and Thai AirAsia operate daily flights connecting Bangkok and Surat Thani. The flight time is approximately 70 minutes. Many consider the budget flight on AirAsia to Surat Thani a money saving alternative to more expensive flights directly to Ko Samui. Visitors should be aware that transfering from Surat Thani Airport to the pier and riding the boat to Ko Samui can take a full

Bangkok Airways offers direct air services between Ko Samu (USM) and Bangkok, Chiang Mai, Krabi, Pattaya (U-Tapao), Phuket, Hong Kong, and Singapore. Flying time between Ko Samui and Bangkok is less than an hour; flights between Ko Samui and Phuket or Pattaya are less than 45 minutes.

Thai Airways offers limited domestic service to and from Ko Samui; Berjaya Air connects Ko Samui and Kuala Lumpur; and Firefly provides service from Penang and Kuala Lumpur to Ko

For individuals from qualifying nations, there is Visa-On-Arrival service available at Samui Airport.

