



Yoga in Koh Phangan: Thailand's Island Paradise

Located off the Southeast coast of Thailand, the paradise island of Koh Phangan is considered one of the best-kept secret destinations for travelers worldwide. White sand beaches hug the sparkling blue ocean waters for deep relaxation & fun-filled adventures; snorkeling, diving, hiking, kayaking are but a few.

Scrumptious vegetarian & seafood cuisine & exotic fruit refreshments await your taste buds as you dine at the renowned Bamboo Huts Restaurant, overlooking the tropical Haad Yuan Bay vista.

A creative & vibrant community offers the experience of dance, spoken word, movies under the stars, drumming & chanting, and a kaleidoscope of workshop possibilities to expand your heart & horizons.

Yoga, meditation & healing is at your doorstep with the [THE LOTUS YOGA SHALA](#) being situated atop a lush jungle canopy surrounded

by the magical sounds of rare birds & creatures while overlooking the majestic ocean below.

Pamper yourself with massage therapy, and experience the amazing Healers & Therapists from a collection of traditions that are available in the area to support your healing & needs.

While remaining isolated and pristine in nature, Koh Phangan shares the benefits of Koh Samui's international airport for easy access by air and boat. Tourism, being one of Thailand's leading industries, provides you with a smooth, safe & carefree journey to Koh Phangan by either plane, train, bus & boat to meet your various budget needs. Travel agents line the streets of Bangkok and Koh Phangan, which is also conveniently located near the well sought out diving & snorkeling mecca of Koh Tao.

Nearby are all the usual amenities of bank machines, money exchange, travel agents, shops, and clinics. And just 10min away on a secluded beach in tropical paradise, you will find the Blooming Lotus on Haad Yuan bay, Thailand.

The Lotus Yoga Shala is located on in Haad Yuan Bay on the Southeast corner of Koh Phangan. The easiest way to get here is by boat or truck from Haad Rin, a major ferry port on Koh Phangan. Once you have arrived at Haad Yuan or Haad Thien ask for "Bamboo Huts" bungalows & restaurant. The Blooming Lotus Yoga Center is only a 2-minute walk up the hill from the restaurant.

To view our location on Google Maps click here: [Blooming Lotus Yoga Center in Koh Phangan, Thailand](#)

TRAVEL TO KOH PHANGAN

There are many options for routes to Koh Phangan. Most people will be arriving from their country of origin straight to Bangkok, Thailand or Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Some airlines have flights directly to Koh Samui, which is the larger, nearby island. You will most likely need to stay in Bangkok or Samui for one night (or longer if you prefer) before traveling onwards to Koh Phangan.

Traveling By Plane to Koh Phangan

Bangkok to Koh Samui:

The easiest way to get from Bangkok to Koh Phangan is to take a plane from Bangkok to the neighboring island, Koh Samui. Bangkok Airways and Thai Airways are the only airlines that currently operate on this route. Bangkok Airways provide over 20 flights daily between Bangkok and Koh Samui and flights typically range in price from \$100-\$150 USD one way. Flight departures begin at 6am thru 9pm, 7 days a week and are easy to purchase on-line. Thai Airways also operates two flights per day from Bangkok to Koh Samui, at 7:45 am and 4pm.

Bangkok Air www.bangkokair.com Thai Airways www.thaiairways.com

We recommend you book your flight from Bangkok to Samui ahead of time as flights are sold out quickly. You may also choose to fly into Koh Samui, Phuket, or Surrathani from other destinations with the affordable airline, Air Asia. You can book online with Air Asia or ask your travel agent about connecting flights.

Air Asia www.airasia.com

For those of you traveling straight into Bangkok, Suvarnabhumi Airport is Bangkok's brand new airport that services all of South East Asia and the world over. You can arrive and stay a night in Bangkok, or if your arrival time allows, you can connect to a flight directly to Koh Samui.

Bangkok to Surrat Thani

Air Asia offers 3 flights/ day to Surrat Thani, at 7am, 14:30Pm, 18:20 Pm

Kuala Lumpur (KL) to Koh Samui

Firefly airlines flies from Subang airport in Kuala Lumpur to Koh Samui, Mondays, Wednesday, Fridays and Sundays, departing at 1:35PM arriving 2:35 PM of the same day. Flights typically cost around \$150 USD one way.

FireFly <http://www.fireflyz.com.my/>

Kuala Lumpur to Surrat Thani

Air Asia operates flights from KL to Surrat Thani on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturday departing 10:35 arriving 10:50.

From Koh Samui

Once you have landed on Koh Samui, you will need to get from Big Buddha Pier, Koh Samui to Haad Rin in Koh Phangan. At the Samui airport you will be approached by the airport staff to assist you- tourism is a big industry for Thailand and they are very attentive to tourists. Let the staff at Samui airport know that you need to go to Haad Rin, Koh Phangan. It is approximately a 10 min. mini bus ride from the airport to the Big Buddha Pier, Koh Samui, and a 45 min. ferry ride from Big Buddha Pier to Haad Rin Pier, Koh Phangan. The cost for the mini bus ride & ferry is approximately 10 USD and can be purchased at the airport upon arrival.

Ferry departures from Big Buddha Pier, Koh Samui to Haad Rin Pier, Koh Phangan are at the following times:

10:30 am / 1:00 pm / 4:00 pm / 6:30 pm

Upon your return home, the ferry schedule from Haad Rin, Koh Phangan to Big Buddha, Koh Samui is as follows:

9:30 am 11:40 am 2:30 pm 5:30 pm

Traveling By Train or Bus

To travel from Bangkok or Kuala Lumpur to Koh Phangan by either train or bus, you will need to take 2 extra days to arrange tickets and for travel time. Taking either the train or bus are cheaper alternatives to flying from Bangkok and Kuala Lumpur to Koh Phangan.

To get from Bangkok to Koh Phangan, you can go by bus or train from Bangkok to Suratthani, and then from Surrat Thani you would take a ferry to Koh Phangan. The bus or train from Bangkok to Surrat Thani involves a very long overnight journey, followed by a morning ferry from Surrat Thani to Koh Phangan. Many people take this trip every day, as Koh Phangan is

a popular destination. You can easily book this journey at any travel agency in Bangkok, for example on Kao San Road, or in Kuala Lumpur by simply asking to go straight to Koh Phangan. The travel agents will arrange every step of the way- you will even be picked up directly from your hotel if you wish.

Many travelers choose to take the train over the bus from Bangkok to Koh Phangan. The train can be a much more comfortable journey than the bus if you book 2nd Class A/C (a condition), where a bed with a curtain for privacy is provided, and there is ample room to store your backpack underneath your bed. The bus, on the other hand, is more crowded, less comfortable, and has no privacy, with a large number of thefts being reported.

The cost of travel from Bangkok to Koh Phangan by either train or bus is under \$20 USD. To book a return ticket from Bangkok to Koh Phangan is also possible, and is much more affordable than flying.

From Phuket to Koh Phangan is a 7 hour bus journey costing 700 baht from the Phuket bus terminal, located on Thepkasattri Road between Mission Hospital and Supercheap shop.

From Had Rin

Once you arrive in Haad Rin, Koh Phangan, you can easily ask a taxi boat driver to take you to Haad Yuan or Haad Tien beach. You will be approached at Haad Rin Pier by many taxi boat drivers willing to take you, as well, there will often be a number of trucks parked to the left of the pier that can also take you to Haad Yuan or Haad Tien beaches by road.

Depending on whether the waters are too rough to ride straight from the pier, the taxi boat drivers may guide you to the neighboring Sunrise Beach, Haad Rin which is a 10 min. walk away in order to travel safely by taxi boat. There are times when the waters are too rough for taxi boat drivers to take you safely to Haad Yuan or Haad Tien beaches, during which times you should take any available trucks by road. The boat trip from Haad Rin to Haad Yuan or Haad Tien beaches takes approximately 10 min., while travel by road takes about 45 min.

You can get a complete list of all options for buses, trains and ferries to Haad Yuan, Koh Phangan, Thailand at www.phangan.info and <http://www.seat61.com/Thailand.html>

GENERAL INFORMATION

VISAS

You are only granted a 30-day visa upon landing by flight into Thailand. If you plan on travelling through Thailand before or after your retreat we advise our students to obtain a **Two-Month tourist visa** from your local Thai Consulate in your home country. If you intend to stay even longer you can extend this two-month visa by 30 days on Koh Samui. If you intend to stay even longer, you can obtain another two-month visa by making a trip to Penang, Malaysia or cross one of Thailand's borders.

When filling out your Thai visa application form, you can put Bamboo Huts, Koh Phangan, Thailand for your guarantor/and or place to stay in Thailand. When you apply for a 2 month tourist visa state on your application form that you are visiting as a tourist. It is best not to mention that you're doing a Yoga Retreat here, otherwise you will have to apply for a special visa that is difficult to obtain and involves so much paperwork and each Thai embassy has their own right to reject your application form if they don't feel you have the exact paperwork that they see fit!!!

MONEY, COMMUNICATIONS, LANGUAGE

The local currency is the Thai Baht and it is the only currency that is accepted in Haad Yuan, and the rest of the local bays here. **There are no ATM's, or ability to use visa or traveler's cheques here**, so each person should get whatever money they need in Thai baht beforehand (for example at the airport or Had Rin) for the entire length of the yoga retreat. You may store your cash safely, in the safety deposit at Bamboo Huts or wherever you are staying for the duration of your stay.

Of course it is both easy and possible to take a 5-10 min boat taxi to Haad Rin to take out money, but it does involve more time and money to do this exchange. In the bay area of Haad Yuan and Haad Thien, many of the places often run a tab, of which you can pay off at the end of your visit- for any extra stuff you may want to purchase during your time here.

You can exchange cash, traveler's cheques, and use your debit card and visa in Had Rin through ATM's, exchange centers, and banks or in Bangkok- I would recommend getting whatever you need for the time you are here in terms of Thai baht in Bangkok or Haad Rin.

WIFI/Internet/Laptops

There is internet and WIFI in Haad Yuan at Big Blue, Pariya Resorts, & Bamboo huts, and in Had Thien at the Sanctuary Resort. The nearest post office is in Haad Rin (the internet is also readily available there). You can make calls on Skype via the internet, at Big Blue Resort in Haad Yuan, or at the Sanctuary in Haad Thien. Also you can call with a phone card at a local telephone booth, from your cell phone or from the travel agents or internet stores in Haad Rin.

The local language is Thai, and although most people speak English, and Burmese, the Thais love it when we try and greet them in their own language.

SHOTS & VACCINATIONS

As for shots and vaccines, you can consult your local travel clinic to see what they suggest. It is really up to the individual for what they choose and what they feel comfortable with.

Water safety

There is no need to bring iodine tablets or purification liquids, the water is safe to drink in Thailand. However, the bottled water is even better and is sold everywhere. As well, you can refill your bottle at Bamboo Huts and other Resorts.

WHAT TO BRING CHECKLIST:

Backpacks: For traveling as opposed to suitcases for ease of carrying luggage up and down the beach.

Yoga Mats: Eco-Mats are available for sale, should you need a mat, otherwise it is best to bring your own **yoga mat** for energetic & sanitary purposes.

Notebook & pens

Alarm Clock/Watch

Ear Plugs: especially for the weekend parties nearby.

Water Bottle: for filtered water refills **Please help us contribute to a more plastic free paradise by bringing your own bottle.*

Sarong or Towel: for the beach and yoga practice. You can buy great inexpensive sarongs here.

Sunscreen, Sunglasses, Hat, Swim suit, Flip-flops

Camera, film/card, charger

Flashlight with battery: to get around the different bays at night

Insect repellent: Eco-friendly repellent available here.

Medical prescriptions

Toiletries

Long Sleeve or Light Sweater for cooler evenings

Outlet Adapter: There are outlets in the bungalows, so you will be able to charge any electronic devices, with an adapter for Thailand. This is available at most outdoor/travel stores. Keep in mind that the **outlets in Thailand are 220 V**, so be sure that your devices can handle that voltage by checking the indication on the charger or device. However, you should be able to charge most simple devices; ie: mp3 player, cell phone, camera etc. with an adaptor.

HELPFUL TIPS

- When traveling in Thailand, carry **toilet paper** or tissue with you. This will be handy as some washroom facilities do not provide toilet paper.
- The toilets in most of the bungalows are western, but they do not flush used toilet paper down the toilet. Instead they have a separate waste- paper basket to dispose of any used toilet paper. **THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT, AS TOILET PAPER DOWN THE PIPES WILL CAUSE A BLOCKAGE.** The sanitary system is very basic here in the jungle, so please dispose of all toilet paper in the basket provided.
- You can get your **laundry** done on the island for approx. 40 Baht per pound or you can hand wash it yourself and hang them to dry on your balcony.
- A **photocopy of your passport** should be made and kept separate from your money and credit cards. You can keep all **valuables locked up** with the place where you are staying if you so choose.
- In Thailand the head is considered to be the most revered and honoured part of the body and the feet are despised. Please do not use your feet to point to anything and do not touch people on the head, even children. If you are female, avoid touching the monks. It is considered taboo.