Krabi Province is situated along southern Thailand’s Andaman seaboard and receives thousands of visitors each year, who come for its beauty, beaches and greenery.

Krabi features idyllic palm-fringed beaches, sparkling waters dotted with exotic islands, elephant trekking, prolific rock climbing, good dive sites, a wide range of accommodation, both Thai and western dining and friendly locals. In terms of a travel destination in Thailand Krabi is fairly new, and this works to its advantage. Not many people know that the iconic Phi Phi Islands are within Krabi Province’s jurisdiction. Hardly needing introduction, Phi Phi offers not only breathtaking beauty, but hedonistic nightlife, and great scuba diving and snorkeling as well.

**WEATHER**

Krabi has a tropical monsoon climate and, located close to the equator; it is both hot and humid in equal measure and doesn’t cool significantly at night.

April and May are the steamiest months (avg. 25-35°C). The South-west monsoons arrive between May and October, and with them pouring rain and thunderstorms - for many, though, this is a welcome respite.

**Best time to go:** December to January, for a cooler and drier climate (avg. 22-30°C).

[http://www.krabi-hotels.com/info/weather.htm](http://www.krabi-hotels.com/info/weather.htm)

**SIM CARDS AND DIALING PREFIXES**

Pre-paid SIM cards are available for purchase at most convenience stores (you will find 7-Elevens everywhere) as well as at the service operators’ shops – DTAC, AIS and TRUE – located inside shopping malls. To make a call to a landline within Krabi, dial 075 then the six-digit number. Making a call outside Krabi requires a three-digit area code (with the exception of Bangkok 02), starting with 0, the area code, then the six-digit number. Calls between mobile phones require a three-digit prefix (08x), followed by the seven-digit subscriber number.


**GETTING AROUND**

Driving in Krabi Province is a whole lot more relaxed than in Phuket or Bangkok. The roads are quiet and no one seems to be in a hurry. There’s a fixed-price policy between Ao Nang and Railey Beach when taking a long-tail boat, although you’ll have to bargain for other nautical destinations. If arriving or leaving by sea it’s important to note that certain services cease in the monsoon season from May to October. If you really want to experience getting around Thai-style then try a local song taew – a converted pickup truck; these can also be rented for the day. Both motorcycle and saloon taxis ply these roads.

[http://www.krabi-hotels.com/info/getting-there.htm](http://www.krabi-hotels.com/info/getting-there.htm)

**CURRENCY**

Thai baht (THB). US$1 = approximately THB 30.00

**TIME ZONE**

GMT+7 (the same as Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam).

**ELECTRICITY**

Voltage is 220 Volts with either two flat blades (NEMA 1-15 or JIS C 8303) or round two pin plugs (Europlug CEE 7/16).

**IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS**

- Ambulance 1699
- Police 075-611222 or 191
- Ao Nang Tourist Police 075-637208
- Immigration 075-611097
- Krabi Airport 075-636541-9
- Krabi Town Hospital 075-631768-9
- Fire Brigade 075-611111 or 191
- Bus Terminal 075-611804
- Phi Phi Hospital 075-622151

**AIRPORT TRANSFERS**

You’ll find a taxi rank at Krabi Airport, but don’t expect the cabbie to turn his meter on – you’ll need to bargain for the best price. Once on the main road you can flag a passing song taew down, but this is impractical if you have a lot of luggage. If you want a hassle-free airport transfer, you can book a variety of vehicles at [http://www.krabi-travel.com/destination/transfer-services.htm](http://www.krabi-travel.com/destination/transfer-services.htm) and travel in style.

[http://www.krabi-hotels.com/info/getting-there.htm](http://www.krabi-hotels.com/info/getting-there.htm)
With tree-lined roads, beautiful sandy beaches, rugged limestone rock formations and exotic islands, Krabi Province is a traveller’s dream destination. The 160km coastline is a veritable treasure trove of natural delights, and even Krabi Town itself has a quirky attraction to it. Ao Nang and Koh Phi Phi stand out as major nightlife attractions, while Railay Beach is a must-visit experience.

1. Krabi Town
Krabi, a modest-sized town of about 20,000 inhabitants, is one of the oldest settlements in Thailand, with roots going back thousands of years to when it was a ‘kraal’ containing mainly elephants. Of course the only reminders of this rich history are natural sites such as Tiger Cave, but the town itself retains an undeniable, almost timeless rural charm. The Krabi River, running through the town, also adds to the allure with a riverside market, guesthouses, restaurants and atmospheric cafés. For shopping, Krabi Town does not particularly shine, but it does have interesting textile shops, fresh markets and several large stores on its outskirts. An early evening relaxing stroll through its streets will reveal its laid-back and unassuming personality.

2. Ao Nang
Beachside, bustling and directly aimed at the tourist market, Ao Nang is changing monthly. By road, Ao Nang is 20 minutes from Krabi Town and Klong Muang Beach, and a minute or two from Noppharat Thara Beach. Via the sea, Railay’s beaches (including Ton Sai) and a grab bag of small intimate islands are mere minutes away. Ao Nang has a decent nightlife and quite a few reputable restaurants, and it’s possible to walk from one end of town to the other. Several clusters of bars provide different ambience, with the newly renovated Center Point on Beach Road at the town’s nightlife nexus. Shopping is a relaxed affair here, with good boutiques lining the road out to Noppharat Thara Beach.

3. Railay Beach
One of the most famous beaches in Thailand, Railay’s distinct craggy and striking appearance is etched on many a visitors’ memory. The distinctive limestone cliffs that form the boundaries of the beach are excellent for rock climbing and the area plays host to many climbing schools. In just one small peninsula, you’ll find gorgeous white-sand beaches, soaring limestone cliffs, viewpoints, caves and a lagoon hidden inside the cliffs, shaped and fed by the changing tides. And all within walking distance. Because it is only accessible from the sea, the area has a mysterious allure that is only heightened come sunset. Railay is not a shopping destination and the only vehicles you’ll encounter there are bicycles and hotel golf buggies.

4. Koh Phi Phi
Iconic, unique and an idyllic party hub, Koh Phi Phi is a love-it-or-hate-it sort of place. Its undeniable beauty belies the fact that the place turns into party central at night, with groups of inebriated (and usually young) visitors on noisy pub crawls. By day, however, its beaches are iconic, with nodding palms providing shade, by turquoise waters and talcum-white sand. The island’s many day visitors tend to lend the illusion that the place is busier than it really is and at night, away from the nightlife areas, Phi Phi is a place where you could be tempted to spend the rest of your days. A major scuba diving departure point, and featuring good restaurants and colourful shopping, Phi Phi is certainly an unforgettable holiday experience.

5. Nopparat Thara Beach
Nopparat Thara Beach is located 18km west of Krabi Town and is adjacent to Ao Nang. This quiet beach lies within the Hat Noppharat Thara-Koh Phi Phi National Park and features a three-kilometre long sandy stretch lined by casuarina trees. Like most of Krabi’s beaches, you won’t find miles of deckchairs and beach umbrellas, so buy a beach mat and find the perfect spot. It’s also possible at low tide to walk from the beach across to Koh Kao Pak Klong Island in the bay. It’s popular with local Thai picnickers and those who like to swim eat and laze in the sun. The northern end has good seafood restaurants, while the southern extreme, bordering Ao Nang, has some nightlife.

6. Klong Muang and Tubkaak Beaches
Klong Muang Beach is situated 12km north of Ao Nang and is, to say the least, a tranquil hideaway. Its natural rustic beauty marries well with the tranquility of the area, and for a slice of ‘real’ Thailand it is hard to beat. Shopping, dining and nightlife here are all decidedly modest but that’s the very charm of the place. Tubkaak Beach, a 20-minute drive from Ao Nang and 30km from Krabi Town, is even more remote and enjoys soft white sand and a sense of peacefulness that is hard to imagine without actually experiencing it. The islands that make up the fantastic Koh Hong archipelago can be seen from the beach. You can get a closer look on a daytrip around the islands. There is no nightlife or shopping at Tubkaak Beach.

BEST LUXURY HOTELS

1. Rayavadee Resort, Railay Beach ★★★★★
Rayavadee is set in the heart of a peninsula on the edge of Krabi National Marine Park. It's surrounded by lush foliage, limestone cliffs, three beaches and the warm, emerald waters of the Andaman Sea. The resort has 98 two-story pavilions, some with private gardens, hydro-pools and Jacuzzis with four beachfront villas spread over 26 acres. Its award-winning architecture and tropical landscapes are inspired by the atmosphere of a southern Thai village, while the pavilions' spacious interiors and décor provide luxurious comfort.
http://www.krabi-hotels.com/rayavadeeresort/

2. Outrigger Phi Phi Island Resort & Spa ★★★★★
Outrigger Phi Phi Island Resort and Spa is in Loh Ba Gao Bay on the northeast coast of Koh Phi Phi Don. This resort’s seclusion is definitely its allure, set in 70 acres of swaying coconut palms, fragrant gardens, and a half-mile of sparkling shoreline. Spacious thatched-roof bungalows enjoy coastal vistas and cool sea breezes. Guests can choose a Hillside Villa with a private swimming pool and free Wi-Fi, Beachfront Suite, Superior Bungalow, or Deluxe Garden Bungalow with a sun deck.
http://www.krabi-hotels.com/outrigger-phi-phi-island-resort/

3. Crown Lanta Resort & Spa, Koh Lanta ★★★★★
Crown Lanta Resort and Spa is located on the west coast of Koh Lanta and for accommodation choices it has Ocean Private Pool Villas, Ocean Sunset Villas, Elegance Deluxe Rooms, and Holiday Deluxe Gazebo Pool Rooms. Overlooking and near to several great beaches and the Andaman Sea, Crown Lanta offers easy-going beach relaxation in a supremely natural setting with a 24-hour reception, banqueting service, laundry service, great cuisine, and friendly staff members who go the extra mile.
http://www.krabi-hotels.com/crown-lanta/

BEST BOUTIQUE HOTELS

1. Red Ginger Chic Resort, Ao Nang ★★★★★
Red Ginger has a contemporary Oriental style. It’s a low-rise building divided into Garden and Pool Wings with an outdoor swimming pool and sun deck area, and is ideal for relaxing and sunbathing. Red Ginger is conveniently located a short walk away from Ao Nang Beach, its centre has shopping, dining, entertainment and gateways to the natural wonders of nearby islands. It is also nearby peaceful Nopparat Thara Beach.
http://www.krabi-hotels.com/redginger-krabi/

2. The Tubkaak Krabi Boutique Resort, Tubkaak Beach ★★★★★
Tubkaak Krabi is an award-winning boutique resort that blends distinctive southern Thai architecture with the natural beauty of Krabi’s landscape. Villa-style accommodation combines elements of east and west, with stylish interiors and ‘open-sky’ oriental bathrooms. Overlooking the sea with inspiring views of the magnificent Hong Islands, Tubkaak Beach translates as ‘Visitors Cove’, and local hospitality is legendary. Tubkaak offers a gourmet restaurant, a gorgeous spa with plunge pool, a tropical garden where hammocks gently sway with the onshore breeze, a freeform pool.
http://www.krabi-hotels.com/tubkaak/

3. Aonang Phu Petra Resort, Ao Nang ★★★★★
Aonang Phu Petra Resort is a collection of 25 Villas set on a generous parcel of land in Ao Nang Beach. Accommodation is made up of 54sqm Gloriyo Hillside Villas, Gloriyo Poolside Villas, Majestic Suite Poolside Villas, and two 122sqm Family Grand Poolside Villas. Tasteful, spacious and well located, Aonang Phu Petra Resort is ideal for families and groups of people who appreciate the natural beauty of Krabi and its surrounding countryside and islands.
http://www.krabi-hotels.com/aonang-phu-petra-resort/

## BEST BEACHSIDE HOTELS

1. **Sheraton Krabi Beach Resort, Klong Muang Beach ★★★★★**
   Sheraton Krabi is a class act and enjoys a beachfront location on Klong Muang Beach. Only 30 minutes from Krabi Airport, it nevertheless sits in a beautifully tranquil location. All 246 comfortable guestrooms, including 30 Zen Rooms and six Executive Suites, featuring refined Thai design influences, give a unique urban resort feel. The natural appeal of the surroundings with tropical trees, lush foliage, and stunning views coupled with world-class restaurants and facilities make Sheraton Krabi a popular choice.

2. **Twin Lotus, Koh Lanta ★★★★★**
   The Twin Lotus Resort Koh Lanta has undergone a comprehensive renovation and has added One- and Two-Bedroom Villas with all their accompanying facilities and amenities. Twin Lotus sits on a three-kilometre white-sand beach and enjoys 12 spacious acres of verdant gardens with a picturesque canal running through the grounds. Also new to the resort are a Spa and Wellness Centre, offering a variety of relaxation therapies and treatments, in addition to the Beachfront Bar and Restaurant.

3. **Railay Bay Resort & Spa, Railay Beach ★★★★★**
   Railay Bay Resort & Spa is located in a truly beautiful spot on one of Thailand’s most prolific beaches. Designed in southern-Thai style, you’ll find the accommodation here: Railay Suite Beach Front; Railay Garden Pool Villas, and Suite Cottages are all located strategically so that guests can enjoy maximum beach and sunset views and are within strolling distance of everything that Railay Beach has to offer such as its rich natural attractions and nightlife.

## BEST BUDGET HOTELS

1. **Best Western Ao Nang Bay Resort, Ao Nang ★★★**
   Best Western Ao Nang Bay Resort is a cluster of 65 contemporary Thai pavilions, located just 200 metres from the sea. All rooms feature air conditioning, hot/cold showers, mini-bar, colour television, IDD telephone service, refrigerator, and in-room safety deposit boxes. They also have tea and coffee-making facilities and a spacious balcony from which you can enjoy a gorgeous view of the lush green gardens. Make the most of this beautiful spot with Best Western Ao Nang Resort.

2. **Sand Sea Resort, Railay Beach ★★★**
   Sand Sea Resort is located on impressive Railay Beach where towering cliffs meet the sea in one of Thailand’s most beautiful locations. Here you can rent Superior Air-Conditioned Bungalows, Deluxe Fan Bungalows, Deluxe Air-Conditioned Bungalows, and Sweet Cottages – all with great amenities and facilities and all spotlessly clean and within minutes of all Railay Beach has to offer by way of natural attractions and dining plus nightlife.

3. **Buri Tara, Ao Nang ★★★**
   Buri Tara, a four-star resort, features 70 rooms of 32sqm including 18 Superior Rooms, 47 Deluxe Rooms and five Deluxe Pool Access Rooms – all surrounding the resort’s swimming pool. Rooms enjoy individually controlled air conditioning, a private balcony, a separate private bathtub and shower with hot and cold water, satellite television, IDD telephone, safety deposit box, hairdryer, refrigerator/mini-bar and coffee and tea-making facilities. The resort is located in Ao Nang Beach and is within walking distance of all that you will need there.

What to See in Krabi

With lush, green interiors, exotic beaches, enticing islands within minutes and a growing infrastructure, Krabi provides a great vacation full of attractive memories. And there’s so much to see: Wildlife sanctuaries, National Parks, hot springs and ice-cold waterfalls (very welcome in the tropics) are all close by, while one of the world’s most beautiful islands - Koh Phi Phi - is only 45 minutes away.

1. Railay Beaches & Caves

Now on every savvy traveller’s list, Railay is nevertheless one of Thailand’s most sought-after beach areas. Just south of Ao Nang Beach, around a rocky headland and accessible only by boat, Railay presents a tranquil world. In just one small peninsula you’ll find gorgeous white sand beaches, soaring limestone cliffs, viewpoints, caves and a lagoon hidden inside the cliffs, shaped and fed by the changing tides.

**How to get there:** Fixed-price long-tail boats leave from Krabi (150 baht) and Ao Nang (100 baht)

2. Krabi Islands (Koh Poda, Chicken Island, and more...)

Just eight kilometres from Ao Nang, Koh Poda is a small island covered in palm and casuarina trees and almost entirely encircled by a soft white-sand beach, with a coral reef 20 metres from the beach. The combination of excellent snorkelling, scenery and soft sand make the island a popular choice, but surprisingly, it’s not crowded. Chicken Island is named after its strange rock formation that looks like the head and neck of a chicken. One end of the island consists of steep cliffs, while the other has attractive beaches. Good snorkelling.

**How to get there:** Long-tail also boats operate from Ao Nang Pier - [Book now], call +66 2694 5770

3. Emerald Pond

Also known as Crystal Lagoon (‘Sra Morakot’ in Thai) Emerald Pond is located in the area of Khao Pra-Bang Khram, east of Khlong Thom hot springs, about 50 km south-east of Krabi Town. You can visit the Crystal Lagoon and the Thung Teao waterfall on the same day – keep your National Park entry ticket stubs so you don’t have to pay twice. The Emerald Pond is a popular (and somewhat crowded) destination on Thai national holidays.

**How to get there:** 50 km south-east of Krabi Town on Route # 4 by taxi or song teow

4. Wat Tham Sua (Tiger Cave)

Wat Tham Sua or “Tiger Cave” is one of the most famous caves in the area, and is part of a temple where monks live and worship within a maze of natural caves. Inside one of the caves are what appears to be tiger paw prints embedded in the stone. The main attraction, however, is the 1,272 step-climb to see the “footprint of the Buddha”. It’s not an easy climb, but you will be rewarded at the top with 360° views of the countryside and sea.

**Location:** Nine kilometres south of Krabi Town - [How to get there]: Song teow or taxi

5. Phi Phi Islands

The Phi Phi Islands have been immortalised by Hollywood to the extent that their charismatic beauty is further enhanced. Day trippers will pass by emerald-green Maya Bay and the Viking Cave on uninhabited Phi Phi Leh. Phi Phi Don is a hive of activity during the day and takes a short break after the last of the ferries depart before exploding into party central later at night. Still, Phi Phi is the King of Cool and is always laid-back and comfortable with its quasi-hippy image, yet does feature some up-market restaurants and hotels. **How to get there:** Ferries run from both Phuket and Krabi on a 90-minute crossing. - [Book now], call +66 2694 5770

6. Khao Kanab Nam

Khao Kanab Nam is the two precipitous limestone hills that many people regard as the symbol of the province. Located just outside Krabi Town and easily spotted from the road, it is such an amazing sight to see these pinnacles standing almost side by side with the Krabi River flowing in between them. Each is about 100 metres high. The hill on the right-hand side is worth a visit as there is a cave with stalactites and stalagmites.

**How to get there:** Long-tail boat from Krabi Pier (300 baht)

7. Koh Lanta & Nearby Islands

Koh Lanta consists of 52 islands including the largest, Koh Lanta Yai. It’s located approximately 70km from Krabi Town. Koh Lanta’s scenic beauty may not quite compete with some other areas in the province. However, if you’re looking for complete peace and quiet away from tourist areas, with a few home comforts, head for the island of Koh Lanta. Low key development and unspoiled nature are Lanta’s main attractions.

WHAT TO DO IN KRABI

Compared to Phuket or Samui islands, Krabi is a rural backwater and that’s exactly how many visitors want it to stay. Idyllic beaches and islands, swaths of lowland jungle and simple, uncomplicated tourist destinations characterise this province. It’s not so much “What to Do in Krabi” as “What Krabi Does to You”. Still, there are several options for those who like to get out and about in this beautiful province.

1. Rock Climbing

Rock climbing in Krabi is world standard, and with more professionals coming in to blaze trails, the higher standards rise. The routes are all bolted, sport climbing routes using the French grading system. The limestone you see lining Railay Beach is part of the world’s largest coral reef, stretching from China to New Guinea. With wonderful views, a real sense of achievement, good company and a great physical workout, the sport is tempting to all. But first you’ll have to learn the safety rules and the best techniques. Book now, call +66 2694 5770

2. Island-Hopping

Whether you choose to hire a long-tail boat or to head out to sea on a speedboat, the islands along the Krabi coastline will be there patiently waiting for you in all their palm-fronded glory. Chicken-head shaped islands, calm oases of tropical tranquillity, and great snorkelling locations - Krabi Province’s coastline is home to many ideal exploration spots. Going on an organised tour ensures you’ll have a good lunch provided, good English-speaking guides with a fount of knowledge about the region, insurance, National Park entry fees and free use of snorkelling equipment.

3. Speedboat Day Trip to the Phi Phi Islands

Phi Phi Island lies 45 minutes west of Krabi and a day trip there is definitely worth it. First stop will be Bamboo Island, where you can snorkel and explore the gin-clear waters. Then you’ll whizz over to Hin Klang for more underwater discovery. Monkey Island is next, followed by a buffet lunch at Phi Phi Don’s Ton Sai Bay. See where bird’s nest soup originates at Phi Phi Leh’s Viking Cave. There’s more snorkeling, followed by a visit to Maya Bay, where the famous Hollywood movie The Beach was shot. At 16:00 the speedboat heads back to Krabi.

4. Kayaking

Krabi’s coastline is incredibly varied, taking in sandy coves, exotic islands and atmospheric caves as well as mangrove swamps. To best explore these natural wonders, a kayak comes in handy as it is relaxing, safe and easy to operate. The beauty of kayaking in Krabi is that participants can witness nature first-hand without leaving a carbon footprint, and without disturbing local flora and fauna in the slightest. Typically, small groups of kayaks are led by English-speaking guides, who point out otherwise undetectable sights, animals and natural phenomena. It’s a great day out.

5. Krabi Rainforest National Park

Enjoy an educational and fun day out at the Khao Nor Chu Chi National Park where you will discover natural wonders such as the Emerald Pond, the Blue Pool and the Krabi Hot Springs. Walk along a shaded wooden platform through the rainforest and bathe in the pure water of the Emerald Pond. Observe rubber tapping with locals who will show you the techniques used to produce rubber, used in the production of latex. Later on, visit Krabi’s most famous temple: Wat Tum Seua or Tiger Cave Temple.

6. Elephant Trekking

Riding on the back of an elephant through rubber plantations and jungle is an experience you’re not going to forget in a hurry. These gentle creatures – which can grow to four metres high – are adept at balance and poise, even in the muddiest conditions and on the steepest of inclines. So go for a ride and find out what it’s really like to ride a creature that actually enjoys getting out and around as much as you do! You’ll be able to experience an easy trek, have a swim, see local wildlife, have a Thai-style lunch and even bathe ‘your’ elephant afterwards!

7. Krabi Town Sightseeing

Discover Krabi Town and its surroundings. This charming provincial city has a lot to offer when it comes to sightseeing and will give you a slice of local Thai life. Visit Tiger Cave (Wat Tham Sua), a huge temple with a staggering 1,272 steps leading up a limestone tower. This tour will also take you to Tapom Nemo Fish farm and Nopparat Thara Beach. Along the way you will enjoy the scenery and observe the local lifestyle.

8. Biking

Krabi has some of the most scenic roads in Thailand. Life is taken a lot easier in this part of the world and this is reflected in safer roads and driving conditions. Bike riding in this province is more than simply getting from A to B. An organised tour makes sense in a place where getting lost is easy, and the hidden gems stay hidden without an intimate knowledge of the area. You don’t need to be an athlete to enjoy the experience and you’ll be given protective gear as well as provided with an English-speaking guide. Groups are small and the experience is informative.

More at http://www.krabi-travel.com
WHAT TO EAT

While Thai food needs little introduction, these popular dishes are must-try while you visit Thailand. The below list spans everything from staple backpacker favourites to Thai classics. Although some of them may sound familiar, don’t be surprised if they taste nothing like what you usually find back home.

1. Tom Yum Goong (Spicy Shrimp Soup)
   A bold, refreshing blend of fragrant lemongrass, chilli, galangal, lime leaves, shallots, lime juice and fish sauce. Tom Yam is a versatile dish that can fit within virtually any meal – its invigorating sour-spicy-hot taste just screams 'Thailand'!

2. Pad Thai (Thai style Fried Noodles)
   From Cape Town to Khao San Road, the default international Thai dish. Dropped in a searing hot wok, fistfuls of small, thin noodles do a steamy minute-long dance alongside crunchy bean sprouts, spring onions and egg, before disembarking for the nearest plate.

3. Gaeng Daeng (Red Curry)
   Made with morsels of meat, red curry paste, smooth coconut milk and topped off with a sprinkling of finely sliced kaffir lime leaves, this rich, aromatic curry always gets those taste buds tingling.

4. Som Tam – (Spicy Green Papaya Salad)
   Hailing from the Northeast (Isan), this outlandish dish is both great divider - some can't get enough of its bite, some can't handle it – and greatly distinctive. Garlic, chilies, green beans, cherry tomatoes and shredded raw papaya get dramatically pulverized in a pestle and mortar, so releasing a rounded sweet-sour-spicy flavour that's not easily forgotten.

5. Tom Kha Kai (Chicken in Coconut Soup)
   A mild, tamer twist on Tom Yam, this iconic soup infuses fiery chilies, thinly sliced young galangal, crushed shallots, stalks of lemongrass and tender strips of chicken. Topped off with fresh lime leaves, it's a sweet-smelling concoction, both creamy and compelling.

6. Pak Boong Fai Daeng (Stir-fried Morning Glory)
   The leafy plant with hollow green stems and thin fragile leaves forms the main component of this super easy favourite. Cloves of garlic and birds eye chilies join it in a wok alongside oyster sauce, fish sauce and fermented bean. A few lazy stirs, and it's done!

7. Gaeng Keow Wan Kai (Green Chicken Curry)
   Another all-time favourite dish, served alongside a bowl of fragrant rice. Green curry paste and coconut milk form the creamy base. Morsels of fresh chicken, cherry-sized eggplants, bamboo shoots, sprigs of coriander and generous handfuls of sweet basil add body to this seminal curry.

8. Yam Nua (Spicy Beef Salad)
   If there was such a thing as a 'Salad Hall of Fame', Yam Nua would surely take pride of place. The fresh, fiery thrill of Yam Nua – with its sprightly mix of onion, coriander, spearmint, lime, dried chili and tender strips of beef – perfectly embodies the invigorating in-the-mouth-thrill of all Thai salads, the yummy-ness of yam.

More at http://www.krabi-hotels.com/dining/
BEST DINING EXPERIENCES

Krabi is fast becoming recognised, not necessarily as a culinary fine-dining location, but as a holiday location with several good dining options and lots of mid-range choices - and that can’t be a bad thing. Krabi Town has several simple-but-effective setups, Ao Nang has a wide selection of restaurants from seafood to fast food, and Railey Beach features five-star dining as well as simple beachside cafés and restaurants.

1. May & Mark Restaurant
   The remarkable Thai couple who run this restaurant/bakery named it after their children. A big favourite with the backpacker crowd, May & Mark does all the basic Thai dishes plus Mexican and farang-style food with enthusiasm (taught to them by passing travellers). There’s even a vegetarian menu and a good selection of breads so do try a sandwich. With a cheerful can-do attitude and friendly welcome, May & Mark is a recommended place to try in Krabi Town. Opening Hours: 08:00 - 23:00 Location: Maharat Soi 2 Phone: +66 (0)75 612 562 Cuisine: Around the world

2. Azzurra
   Azzurra bills itself as an “authentic Italian restaurant” for good reason; the owner is Italian and makes sure the fare is genuine. Here you’ll find a wide assortment of pastas, pizzas, breads, focaccia, soups, cheeses, and more. While it may be justifiable to charge above-normal rates for imported Italian food, Azzura’s Thai food is also expensive. The wine, however, is not and the quality of food (nothing is prepared in advance) makes Azzurra probably the best Italian in Ao Nang. Open: 11:00 - 22:00 Location: Central Beach Road Tel: +66 (0)75 637 848 Cuisine: Italian, Thai

3. Takola Restaurant
   Krabi Town may not be known for its culinary inventiveness, but it does have a few Aces up its sleeve, one of which is Takola, a chic eatery on the outskirts of town. Takola is a relative newcomer to Krabi’s dining scene, and while it trades tradition for trendiness and old-fashioned charm for chic, it still delivers great Thai and Chinese food the way it should be prepared. All products at Takola are organic and all the old favourites are here. Open: 06:00 - 23:30 daily Location: Utarakit Road, at the entrance of Krabi Town Phone: +66 (0)75 620 872 Cuisine: Modern Thai/Chinese

4. Seafood Street
   Ao Nang is a seafood lover’s heaven. The heart of all this white-flesh trading is on the aptly-named Seafood Street. It comprises five large eateries and it is the ideal place to enjoy some crisp white wine and dig into baked lobster, steamed fish, mussels or crab curry. The best-run of these restaurants seems to be the Italian Sala Bua, which boasts two separate Thai and Italian open kitchens, with an accomplished wine list of over 40 labels. As this is a popular sunset-viewing spot it’s best to try to get there early. Open: 11:00 - 23:00 Location: North end of Ao Nang Beach

5. Blue Mango
   This classy looking 100-seat restaurant flanks the road heading out of Ao Nang to Nopparat Thara Beach and serves Swedish, Italian and Thai fare. There is a decent-looking wine list here with labels at reasonable rates (for Thailand) and a fully stocked bar. Swedish owned, the restaurant aims at families and has set up a children’s menu, and a play area (unique to Ao Nang) for bored junior diners, with DVDs and a comfy sofa. Open: 08:00 - 23:00 Location: Beach Road opposite Krabi Resort’s main gates Phone: +66 (0) 75 637 689 Cuisine: Swedish, Thai and international

6. Thai Food Stalls
   Outside Krabi Resort in Ao Nang you will see several mobile and semi-permanent food stalls selling Thai dishes at a fraction of what they cost inside the surrounding resorts. If you don’t mind getting a takeaway or sitting on gaily coloured plastic chairs at rickety tables, you can enjoy such delights as som tam (green papaya salad), Thai pancakes, rotis, sticky rice, phad thai, grilled fish, pork and chicken, exotic-looking desserts and chilled coffee. Grab a beer from one of the minimarts if you feel like it; there’s no rule against it. Relax… this is Thailand.

7. Phi Phi Recommended Restaurants
   Phi Phi Island features the usual gamut of mid-range restaurants endemic to backpacker destinations. Irish pubs turn out dishes rich in calories, there is a scattering of Italian eateries, while seafood restaurants line the beaches – the best of these being the popular and spacious Tonsai Seafood. Le Grand Bleu (reservations recommended, phone: 081 979 9739) has excellent French and Thai food, while the quaint Pee Pee Bakery near the pier has almost cult status. Anna’s, right next to Moskito Diving, is also highly recommended for its fresh and healthy cuisine.

8. Rayavadee Resort
   This is serious splurge territory and prices are in orbital mode compared to surrounding restaurants. The resort has four dining outlets, Krua Phranang, Raya Dining, Raitalay Terrace and The Grotto, on Phranang Beach. The settings are perfect - but no better than neighbouring restaurants except The Grotto, which is unique. If you are looking for quality dining in a semi-formal setting, then Rayavadee delivers - but at a steep price. Open: Breakfast lunch and dinner, except Raya Dining which is only open at night. Location: Railay and Phranang beaches Cuisine: Thai, international

More at http://www.krabi-hotels.com/dining/
## WHERE TO GO FOR NIGHTLIFE

While no match for Phuket's Patong or the fleshpots of Bangkok in terms of bacchanalian partying and naughty nightlife, Krabi's after-dark scene does have a friendly, almost harmless feel to it that is tremendously appealing to many visitors, especially those with children. Phi Phi is no-holds barred, Railay laid-back and Krabi Town charming, while Ao Nang is variable – but each location’s nightlife is enjoyable.

1. **Ao Nang Center Point**
   
   Ao Nang’s nightlife epicentre, Center Point has been refurbished and is now a three-storey entertainment complex with plenty of bars to choose from. Rocky Bar has pretty good live music, while Airplane and The Cave Bar have eye-catching designs, but not as eye-catching as the ‘friendly’ girls inside. It’s all pretty state-of-the-art modern and worlds away from its previous, rather haphazard, existence, but thankfully the Thai sense of ‘sanook’ (fun) prevails.

2. **Railay Beach**
   
   An idyllic beach even on a rainy day, Railay West, with its surrounding limestone cliffs, is bordering surreal on a full moon night. Several bars along this strip have fire dancers and a chilled-out scene after dark. However, most of the night action takes place on Railay East - a short stroll away. There, a warren of wooden bars culminates with The Last Bar, a sizeable venture that juts out over the incoming tide. With live music in high season, fair prices and food served from breakfast till late, it’s deservedly both popular and busy.

3. **Ao Nang South Beach**
   
   If you follow the beach path past the Golden Beach Resort in the direction of Railay Beach, you’ll come to the Last Fisherman Bar. The bar employs a tried and proven formula - beach, stars, good music and a few drinks - and why not? It works beautifully. In the same area, The Last Café is run by dreadlocked Rastafarians who have a hard time saying “we’re closing now, goodnight”. Nightly beachside barbecues, cool cocktails and beer, beachside breezes and a friendly ambiance make this a great alfresco nightlife venue.

4. **Krabi Town**
   
   At first glance there’s not a lot happening here, but a stroll around town will reveal a few worthwhile places to mix and mingle. Near the waterfront are a few cafés and bars, such as Old West Bar opposite the Choke Dee restaurant, and Buffalo, a bar so typical of the reggae genre popular in Thailand that it’s almost a parody. On Maharat Road leading out to the airport, Room 69 and Room Garden are very big with the younger Thai set - you can dine and dance here. Back in town on Chaofa Road Chilling is easily recognisable with its Café Bon outside sign and its orange-lit interior.

5. **Nopparat Thara Nightlife**
   
   Luna Beach Bar is the only bona fide beach bar in Nopparat Thara. Situated on the beach itself, colourful and raucous, it features DJs, disco lights and a pool table – this is the place to let loose with friends and a whiskey bucket. Right next door sits Nopparathara’s version of a fille bar. Hippies Bar down the road is about the only mid-beach venue with a regular night scene. Khun Bet and his trio make good live music Wednesday, Friday and Sunday evenings from 22:00 till late. It lives up to its name with throw cushions and lounging spaces, as well as dreadlocked Rastafarians.

6. **Soi Bamboo**
   
   On Airport Road you will notice eight bamboo and thatch restaurant/bars on a corner of a soi containing more bamboo and thatch venues. Again, this is mellow territory compared to its Phuket and Bangkok counterparts, and, once again, you can both party and eat here. All open-sided, there are plenty of breezes to keep things cool and a lot of confusion regarding which bar plays what music to remind you that you’re in Thailand and out for the night. Here you’ll meet several exotic creatures who gaily blur the line between the sex divide. Relax, they’re friendly.

7. **Paddy’s**
   
   With lots of Irish memorabilia, chunky furniture, a pool table, easygoing music and a full menu of British pub food, Paddy’s is the place to go in Klong Muang if you’re after a bit of stodge with onion gravy. Also serving Mexican food, Paddy’s is about the best-equipped eating place in Klong Muang for entertainment as it has weekly live music in high season.

**WHERE TO SHOP**

For those looking for a pair of Jimmy Choo shoes or a genuine Cartier watch, Krabi Province will seem a bit of a let-down. Still, the area has some pretty decent boutiques – most notably in Ao Nang – and with the advent of superstores near Krabi Town the range of goods for sale has increased dramatically. It's really best to think of the shopping experience in this area as part of a well-rounded holiday.

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<tr>
<th>1. Krabi Town</th>
<th><img src="image1.jpg" alt="Image" /></th>
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<tr>
<td>Along a series of parallel numbered streets called Maharat, you'll find many textile shops interspersed with hardware stores and cafés. The downtown Vogue department store sells brand-name goods, but check the quality as copies side-by-side with the real stuff. You'll also find Boots the Chemist, a Bata and a Body Glove shop there. The central market on Maharat 10 is a grand place to take in the sounds, sights and scents of a typical Thai wet market, while throughout the town centre are ‘antique’ shops, again selling both bone fide and fake goods.</td>
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<th>2. Airport Road</th>
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<tr>
<td>A few kilometres outside Krabi Town on the airport road (Route 4) stands a collection of big supermarket and retail stores. Big C sells household goods and has satellite stores with brand-name goods. Tesco-Lotus is in the same game as Big C, but in a slightly higher quality bracket, and hosts two banks, lots of ATMs, a gold shop, a large sports outlet, a Levi’s shop and even a cinema. Of course, this being Thailand, both places have lots of eating opportunities. Nearby Outlet Village is perhaps the best sports and clothes hub in the province and is worth a visit.</td>
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<th>3. Ao Nang</th>
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<td>Since it's possible to stroll from one end of town to the other on a largely one-sided road, it's easy to plan shopping in Ao Nang. You just have to make up your mind from which end to start. At the northern end are some original and colourful clothing boutiques. Along the main Beach Road are countless stores selling copied T-shirts, flip-flops, beach hats and fake brand-name goods, such as diving Rolexes that you shouldn't wear in the shower and Levi's with a short life expectancy. This part of Ao Nang also features several good tailors and a couple of jewellery stores.</td>
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<th>4. Klong Muang</th>
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<td>Klong Muang is quiet. The beach and sunset views are its main attractions and for good shopping opportunities visitors should head to nearby Ao Nang. Indeed, apart from several mom &amp; pop stores and isolated 7-Elevens, the only good shopping facilities in Klong Muang are in and around the Klong Muang Plaza (spelled 'Klong Moung Plaza' on the sign) a square of antique and handicraft shops, massage and beauty parlours, cafes and boutiques - the antithesis of Bangkok shopping in that it’s clean, quiet and relaxed. Opposite the plaza is an excellent antiques store.</td>
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<th>5. Railay</th>
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<td>If you're in the market for hippy paraphernalia, second-hand books and the like then Railay East is for you. Interspersed between the pancake vendors, restaurants and bars, you will find several small vendors selling beads, flip-flops, wooden souvenirs, Frisbees, beach bags and beach tennis gear. Next to the Sand Sea Resort on Railay Beach stands an attractive, newly constructed shopping plaza. This plaza offers good-looking beach dresses, T-shirts, sarongs and even has a tailor! There's a lot of impulse shopping here, so be prepared for a lot of silly hats and rude T-shirts.</td>
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<th>6. Phi Phi Island</th>
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<td>A few years ago all you could buy on Phi Phi was food, beer and hippy beads, but nowadays things are definitely looking up. It's still quite confusing that clothing stores often double as impromptu mini-marts while mini-marts also sell clothing, and at the same time book stores masquerade as bars and coffee shops while coffee shops are the place to find good books - but that's part of the appeal of island life. Along the main street of Ton Sai Village you'll notice some stylish boutiques and several good jewellery outlets, while hole-in-the-wall stores are set up everywhere.</td>
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<th>7. Wet Markets</th>
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<td>All throughout Krabi Province you will see a colourful collection of roadside market stores with many motorcycles parked to the side, vendors selling out of the back of their pickups, colourful vegetables and piles of bizarre-looking fruit. These markets are not there just for commercial reasons, they are a part of Thai social integration and are fun to explore. There's not only food for sale here but clothes, DVDs, toys and a whole lot more. Just remember to bargain with a smile for more substantial items (such as clothes) for the real Thai shopping experience.</td>
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TIPS AND GOOD TO KNOW

Carry small change
Thailand is relatively inexpensive, unless you plan to enjoy all your shopping, dining and nightlife inside a hotel or upscale shopping malls. Taxi drivers, food vendors sometimes don’t carry change for big bills. So, make sure that you break the 1,000 baht notes into a few 100s and small coins upon arrival at the airport. The 5 and 10 baht coins usually come in handy when taking a taxi or public transport.

Barter, but nicely
The first rule of shopping in Thailand: if there’s no barcode or set price, get haggling. It’s expected. However, instead of adopting a confrontational “give me it for this price, now!” attitude, try the gracious, smiling “what’s your best price, my friend?” approach. Why? Because a smile here goes further than a sneer. Aim to chip anything from 10-40% off the quoted price. And by all means, walk away if the price is disagreeable – more often than not you’ll be called back for last-ditch negotiations!

Drink lots of water
This tip, of course, applies even to the Antarctic. But packing a supply of the wet stuff in Thailand’s sticky, stifling heat is even more crucial to your well-being. Our unscientific rule: drink more than you sweat. Fortunately, you are never more than a few paving stones from a drink vendor. Always make sure bottled water is sealed. For a change, take your chosen tipple modern Thai-style, in a small plastic bag with handle and straw. Its quirky but, as you’ll find when rummaging around markets, also convenient.

Carry a photocopy of your passport
Whether it’s an impromptu demand from a local policeman or a request from a bank teller, carrying ID is a must in Thailand. Proving who you are is a day-to-day formality, something the Thais are finicky about. Instead of dragging your passport around with you, (and a constant fear of losing it) take a photocopy.

Carry a hotel card with Thai directions
It’s simple. It isn’t rocket science, but this ingenious device, little more than a piece of card with your hotel’s address written on it in Thai, will save endless how-do-we-get-home headaches. Flash it beneath the eyes of your chosen driver and watch how his shrugs of utter incomprehension instantly change to reassuring nods.

EASY THAI PHRASES

Krab / Ka = Words added at the end of a sentence/phrase to add politeness. Krab for male. Ka for female
Phom / Chan = I (male / female)
Khun = You (polite)
Sawad Dee (krab / ka) = Hello (male / female)
Khob Khun (krab / ka) = Thank you (male / female)
Phom / Chan Pood Thai mai pen = I (male / female) don’t speak Thai
Hong nam yuu nai? = Where are the restrooms?
Tao rai (krab / ka)? = How much does it cost (male / female)?
Lod dai maak sood tao rai? = What’s your best price?
Pood len rue plao = Are you kidding?
Nii khong jing rue khong plom = Is this real or fake?
Ao ped ped = I want my food very spicy
Mai ped = Not spicy
Check bin / Kheb tang = Can I have the bill please?
Khun lor / suay maak = You are very handsome / beautiful