



FAMILY TRAVEL GUIDE

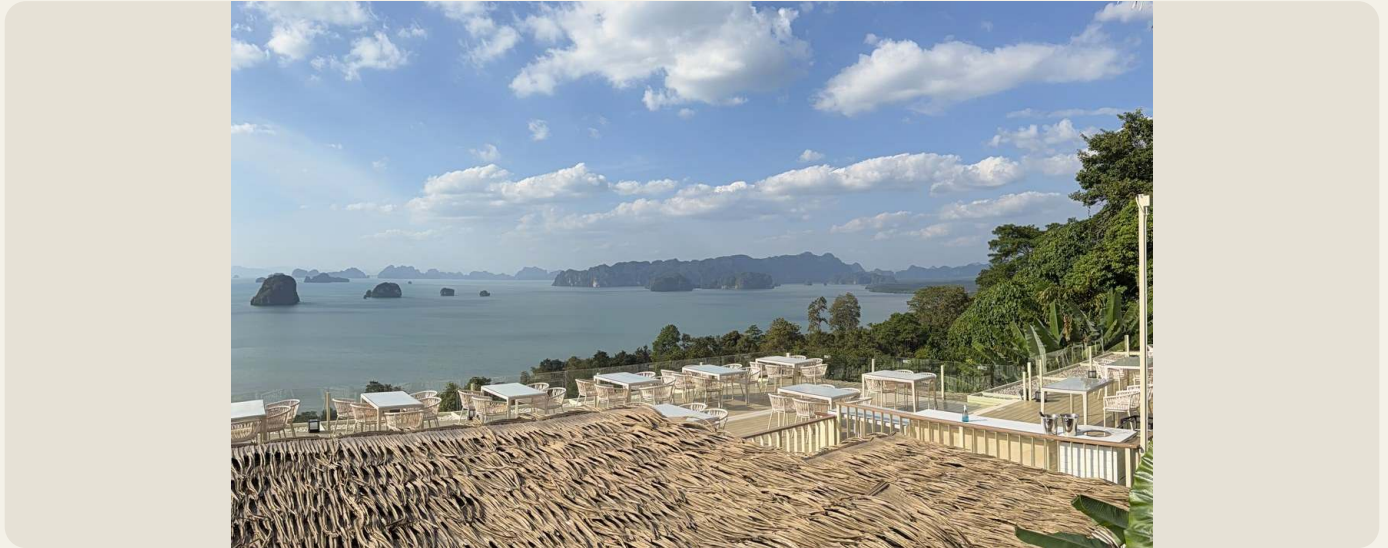
THAILAND: PHUKET & KRABI

12 days by the sea with a rental car and a family plan

BALU_TRAVEL

QUICK START

We spent almost two weeks in southern Thailand, based near Nai Yang Beach and driving independently around Phuket and to Krabi.

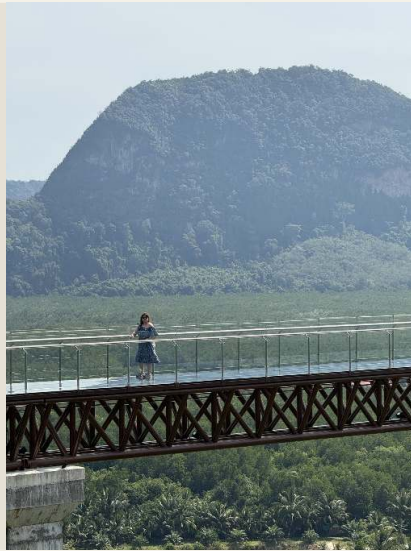


- January is high dry season, with warm water and generally comfortable weather.
- A rental car made the route much easier because the sights are spread across the island.
- We used cash, a UnionPay card from a Russian bank and an eSIM.
- Complete the current Thailand arrival form within the required window before landing and save the confirmation.

Always verify current entry and driving rules before departure.

THE ROUTE AT A GLANCE

Our base was near Nai Yang, 10-15 minutes from the airport.



- Days 1-4: Nai Yang, the first beach days, Kanda Coffee, a viewpoint, spa and Bang Tao.
- Days 5-6: one night in Krabi, Tha Pom park, sunset and island options.
- Days 7-10: food, Sugar Marina, Wat Kanan, Old Town and a beach massage.
- Days 11-12: flexible Phuket days and an event at Lotus Arena.
- Day 13: onward flight via China.

WHERE WE STAYED

Three very different stays gave the trip its rhythm.



- Chao Wilai Residence near Nai Yang: four bedrooms, three bathrooms and an easy family base.
- Panan Resort in Krabi: huge windows, a sea and mountain view, and a short walk to the beach.
- Sugar Marina Lagoon: villa-style rooms opening directly to the pool, breakfast, children's spaces and thoughtful room amenities.
- Nai Yang and Nai Thon are quieter than the south while staying close to the airport.

RENTAL CAR

On Phuket, independence changes the whole trip.

- We booked through Localrent and the car was delivered directly to the house.
- The rental cost was about USD 500 and was paid in cash during our trip.
- The car made beaches, hill cafes, temples, Old Town and Krabi realistic in one itinerary.
- Free roadside parking was available along Bang Tao during our visit.

Confirm deposit, insurance, licence requirements and fuel policy in writing.

PHUKET DAY BY DAY

The northern coast became our everyday version of Phuket.



- At Nai Yang we swam for hours and ate pineapple rice, papaya salad, tom yum and watermelon juice.
- Kanda Coffee included a shuttle to a 180 m viewpoint, buffet food and a glass bridge.
- Bang Tao worked for a long beach walk, shopping and dinner.
- At Wat Kanan we walked barefoot through the white temple and watched carp and turtles in the moat.

OLD TOWN, MASSAGE AND AN EVENING EVENT

A few slower days brought colour, food and a much-needed pause.



- One Chun in Phuket Old Town has appeared in the Michelin guide. Some dishes were genuinely very spicy.
- The Thai massage salon at the far end of Nai Thon Beach cost around THB 400 for an hour during our trip.
- Old Town feels colourful and cinematic, especially in the softer morning light.
- Lotus Arena was poorly organised on our event night, but the concert itself was excellent.

Use 'no spicy' clearly if you need the mild version.

ONE-NIGHT KRABI TRIP

We left around 11:00 and reached the area in roughly two hours.



- Tha Pom Klong Song Nam has boardwalks over clear water and dramatic limestone scenery.
- The park felt safe and quiet during our visit.
- At low tide near the hotel, the water stayed shallow far from shore and we caught and released small crabs.
- One group took an island trip while the rest returned to Phuket and spent more than four hours at Mantra Spa.

WHAT TO EAT

Seafood was the strongest part of our food memories.



- Try pineapple rice with seafood, papaya salad, tom kha and tom yum.
- Tom kha worked surprisingly well for breakfast.
- Fried fish from a beach stall was much cheaper than a similar restaurant portion.
- Choose cooked street food and busy stalls with good turnover.
- Mai Tai became the holiday cocktail, while grenadine was the flavour detail we remembered.

MONEY AND USEFUL PRICES

Treat figures as a reference from January 2026 rather than a fixed price list.



- We exchanged US dollars locally and used a UnionPay card.
- ATMs charged about THB 250 per withdrawal, so we took larger amounts less often.
- Our working conversion was roughly RUB 2.6 per baht.
- Keep cash for markets, small restaurants, massages and places that do not accept foreign cards.

SAVED LOCATIONS AND BOOKINGS

Keep coordinates and booking links together before setting off.



- Nai Yang Beach: 8.0804, 98.2892.
- Kanda Coffee viewpoint: 8.2363, 98.4479.
- Tha Pom Klong Song Nam: 8.2127, 98.7790.
- Wat Kanan: 7.8858, 98.3907.
- Nai Thon massage area: 8.0584, 98.2793.
- Compare hotels on Booking and Trip.com and reconfirm every reservation.

Save the points offline before driving away from the coast.