

Cha Am & Hua Hin

Introduction

Cha Am and Hua Hin, both closely associated with Thai royalty, and located on the sunrise side of the Thai Gulf, some 3 hours southwest of Bangkok, are essentially quiet and relaxing seaside resorts ideal for family vacations. Although merely some 25 kilometres apart, the resorts are each in neighbouring provinces, Cha Am in Phetchaburi, and Hua Hin in Prachuap Khiri Khan. Both enjoy a wealth of satellite attractions, prominent among them national parks and historic cities.

Attractions

Cha Am (160 kilometres southwest of Bangkok)

Immediate & Related Attractions

Cha Am Beach

The extensive and popular beach is considered to be one of the most beautiful on the western side of the Thai Gulf.

Phra Ratchaniwet Marukkhathaiyawan

This beachside wooden palace was formerly used as a royal summer residence by King Rama VI during the 1920s. The palace is contained within the Border Patrol Police Headquarters south of Cha-am on the road to Hua Hin.

Kaeng Krachan National Park

Thailand's largest National Park is located some 50 kilometres northwest of Cha Am. The park extends towards the Burmese border to the west, is characterised by a topography of forested hills and mountains, and waterways, and has as a major focal point the Kaeng Krachan Dam, a 58-metre-high and 760-metre-long structure that dominates a scenic reservoir.

Chao Samran Beach

This scenic beach, 51 kilometres north of Cha Am, is one of several popular beaches to the east of Phetchaburi provincial capital.

Khao Wang

This 92-metre hillock on the northern approach to Phetchaburi provincial capital (some 36 kilometres north of Cha Am), supports the Phra Nakhon Khiri palace constructed in 1860 by King Rama IV (King Mongkut). Phetchaburi residents refer to it as Khao Wang, literally Palace Hill. The area is now known as Phra Nakhon Khiri National Museum and is open to the public every day from 9.00 AM until 4.00 PM. Admission is 10 baht per person. Visitors may walk to the hilltop complex, or ascend by cable car.

Khao Luang Cave

This picturesque cave, some 5 kilometres from Khao Wang, contains a Buddha image cast by the royal command of King Chulalongkorn to honour his father, King Mongkut.

Hua Hin (185 kilometres southwest of Bangkok)

Immediate & Related Attractions

Hua Hin can lay claim to being Thailand's oldest beach resort. This status dates from 1926 when King Rama VII built a beachside palace named Klai Kangwon (Far From Worries). The Thai royal family still customarily spend the hottest months of the year, generally March through April, there. Many prominent Bangkok families maintain beachside villas. Hua Hin boasted

Thailand's first golf course (still in use as the Royal Hua Hin Golf Course after some 70 years) and the resort continues to exude, despite modernisation, a genteel fin de siècle atmosphere.

Hua Hin Beach

This extends some three kilometres southwards from the fishing village and rocky headland (that gives Hua Hin, literally Rocky Head, its name) until a southern headland where Buddhist temples cling to yet another, somewhat formidable cliff. Fine white sand, resort hotels, many watersports opportunities lend the resort its distinctive ambiance.

Khao Takiap

This hill marking the southern extent of Hua Hin supports Buddhist temples and offers a commanding view of the resort, particularly early in the morning.

Sea Pine Tree Garden

This is located 8 kilometres south of Hua Hin. A left turn is made at Km 240 on Highway 4 for a distance of half a kilometre. There are restaurants and accommodation facilities. Further details may be obtained from Hua Hin 511-239-40.

Pala-U Waterfall

This scenic waterfall, some 60 kilometres west of Hua Hin, is an increasingly popular destination.

Khao Tao/Sai Noi Beach

Between the Km. 243 and 244 markers, there is a branch road which leads to a scenic lake, and a beautiful beach named Sai Noi.

Khao Sam Roi Yot National Park

This coastal national park, literally translated as 'Three Hundred Peaks', covers more than 24,500 acres. High, thinly vegetated limestone mountains and

coastal marshlands overlook several islands. The marshlands support a great variety of waterfall species and the limestone masses are riddled with popular caves. Accommodation and camping facilities are available.

Further details may be obtained from the National Parks Division in Bangkok (Tel: 579-0529).

Prachuap Khiri Khan

This unpretentious and somnolent provincial capital lies 90 kilometres south of Hua Hin and nestles against a crescent bay with a fine beach. The most prominent landmark is a beachside hillock named Khao Chong Kra Chok (Mirror Mountain) near the provincial office. The hillock supports a Buddhist shrine on the top, which is reached by a climb of some 390 steps. A tribe of mischievous monkeys inhabit the hillock. The summit affords exhilarating views of the rugged coastline to the north, including Sam Roi Yot, and a splendid view of Prachuap Bay.

Playing Golf

Golfing opportunities abound in Cha Am and Hua Hin. Indeed, golf is the major sport aside from popular watersports. Some of the courses are well established. Others are recent creations, several having been specially designed by internationally renowned golfers. Major golf courses include:

Cha Am Villa & Golf Club

27-hole course. Club house, driving range.

Tel: (032) 471-974

Springfield Royal Country Club of Cha Am

36-hole course designed by Jack Nicklaus. Club house, driving range, conference facilities, sports club, cycling track.

Tel: (032) 471-303, 471-324

Palm Hills Resort & Country Club

18-hole course designed by Max Wexler. Country club with sports and recreational facilities, driving range.

Tel: (032) 520-800 Fax: 520-820

Majestic Creek Country Club & Beach Resort

18-hole course, club house, driving range.

Tel: (032) 520-162-6 Fax: 520-477

Royal Hua Hin Golf Club

18-hole course, simple club house, seafood restaurant opened in 1924.

Tel: (032) 511-585

Sawang Golf Course

27-hole course, club house

Tel: (02) 440-0240 Fax: 440-0245

Lake View Princess Resort & Golf Club

18-hole course designed by Robert Packard, club house, driving range, conference, sports facilities.

Tel: (032) 520-091 Fax: 520-098

Milford Golf Course & Condominium

18-hole course designed by Robert Mcfarland, club house, sports complex

Tel: (02) 235-2871

Shopping

Hua Hin is best known for its cotton products, which come in a wide range of prints and colours, and its dried seafood products which enjoy enduring appeal among those who favour Thai and Chinese cuisine. A nightly street market in Hua Hin is the favourite venue for shoppers. Phetchaburi has long been renowned for the excellence of its Thai-style sweets which include subtle custards and egg-based confectionery. Several specialty sweet shops are located at the foot of Khao Wang on the northern outskirts of the provincial capital.

How to get there

By Bus

Airconditioned coaches and nonairconditioned buses leave Bangkok's Southern Bus Terminal every day for the approximately 3-hour trip to Cha Am and Hua Hin. For further details, please contact Bangkok 434-5558 (non-air) or 414-4978-9 (air).

By Rail

Several trains leave Bangkok's Hualampong Railway Station daily for Hua Hin. The trip takes approximately 4 hours depending on the type of train (Sprinter, express, rapid, etc.)

By Air

Bangkok Airways operates a daily flight from Bangkok to Hua Hin.

[Please click here to preview flight timetable or to book a flight](#)

Festivals

Phra Nakhon Khiri Fair

Each February, the hilltop Phra Nakhon Khiri palace in Phetchaburi becomes the focal point of a popular fair which features light & sound presentations, bazaars, folk entertainment and other special activities.

[Hotels in Cha Am / Hua Hin](#) | [E-Biz-Travel.com](#)