

Cruising Guide:
Koh Chang
Koh Wai, Koh Mak, Koh Kut
Koh Rang Marine National Park



Area Overview

The Ko Chang archipelago is a must see cruising ground, it's 52 islands combine a balmy tropical climate with the lovely temperament of the Thai people. Deserted, long, white, sandy, palm tree lined beaches, secluded anchorages and a scattering of restaurants and resorts offering you the best surroundings and authentic Thai cuisine.

If snorkeling is your thing you'll find living coral reefs at most anchorages. For a deeper look, diving can be arranged with local operators BB Divers on all islands and can be booked in advanced.

Beyond the abundant beaches, resorts and tropical rainforest walks, the area is of historical significance. Situated in what was once named the Gulf of Siam and bordering Cambodia there remains influence of the Chinese traders of old and stories of pirates, the Japanese occupation during the second world war, the French occupation of Indochina or Lao, Cambodia and Vietnam combined. A little bit of research before you arrive will provide you with an endless opportunity to explore the islands beyond the shoreline.

There aren't many more than our fleet of yachts frequenting the area so you can be sure that there will be no jostling for anchorages. Often times you'll have an anchorage all to yourself.

A Brief History

Ko Chang

The fishing villages and small local ports have supported the traders plying the waters between China and Bangkok. Just south of Ko Chang the French sunk one of the few Thai Naval vessels during the period of the French occupation of Indochina.

Ko Kut became a refuge for people fleeing from the Japanese occupation during the second world war and up until the late seventies and at the end of the Cambodian civil war the area was considered a lawless no-go area by most and stories of piracy flowed like the water.



A Brief History continued...

Things have changed since then, Ko Chang, the largest of the islands in this group and second largest island in Thailand, boasts a healthy tourist trade. The area was given National Park status in 1984 and 85% of the islands rainforest interior remain in tact.

The Park boundaries include many of the surrounding islands and reefs and works to protect a traditional way of life amongst the local fishing community as well as protecting a wealth of marine life and coral reefs.

Beyond the Marine Park but within a day's sail lie Kok Mak and Koh Kut, both boasting an impressive history that's well worth some investigation before you set sail.

Ko Mak

Ko Mak's history dates back to the late 1800's and was administered by the Prachankiriket province "Officers of Chinese Affairs" appointed by King Rama V. Since then the Thai/Cambodian borders have moved and Prachankiriket province is now part of Cambodia and known as Koh Kong. Their descendants make up the five family clans that today own most of Koh Mak island. The wealth of these families has fostered many interesting characters, artists, & architects who have bestowed upon Ko Mak some of their most prized works.



Ko Kut

Koh Kut being the most distant island it's the least documented; Its people and culture are a convergence of Khmer and Thai people who fled the various wars that scar local history.

Royal visits include King Rama VI in 1911 when he visited one of the many waterfalls and gave it's royal name 'Anamkok Waterfall' after a Vietnamese king taking refuge in the Kingdom of Thailand during the reign of King Rama I in the late 18th century.

Their culture and traditions remain in tact on the east coast and it's an interesting visit by yacht. This is in stark contrast the western side of the island which is home to some of Thailand's best resorts and most beautiful beaches and bays. These resorts nestled in amongst the trees have been serving the more discerning traveler for years and as a visiting yacht you'll receive the very best of Thai hospitality.

Ao Salak Phet - Island Spirit Yacht Charter Base

Points of interest: The town of Salak Phet is the largest and oldest settlement on Koh Chang and the home of Ko Chang's primary fishing community which remains rustic and authentic. The area is also home to the islands largest mangrove forest and just a quick drive or short bike ride away you can reach a well maintained viewing path that weaves its way through the trees and shrubs. Another great way to explore the mangroves is on a kayak from the base or a few small resorts closer to the mangroves for easier access. The Mangrove Hideaway is an interesting little boutique type hotel right in the center of the local village on a mangrove river.

The temple in Salak Phet is worth a look at its vibrant colors and design. The area is great for a bicycle on the flat terrain and shaded streets.

Just a bit further a field is the *Ko Chang Spa Resort* where one can truly be pampered, offering every imaginable combination of spa treatment, massage, daily yoga classes and healthy food.

Salak Phet is a relaxing and interesting place to spend a day before or after you trip.



Approaches:

ROCK AWASH HAZARD: Just south off the tip of the western point at the entrance to the bay approximately 300 meters out, lies a large and generally submerged reef. The reef is marked on the chart however one must take precaution particularly if you are heading to or from the adjoining western bay of Bang Bao, as the hazard is an unusually long distance from the shore.

Enter in the middle of the bay, refer to anchorage data for anchoring choices. Please contact the Base Manager to arrange assistance to the dock or take a mooring ball until you can make contact. **Please do not attempt to come along side the pier unassisted.**

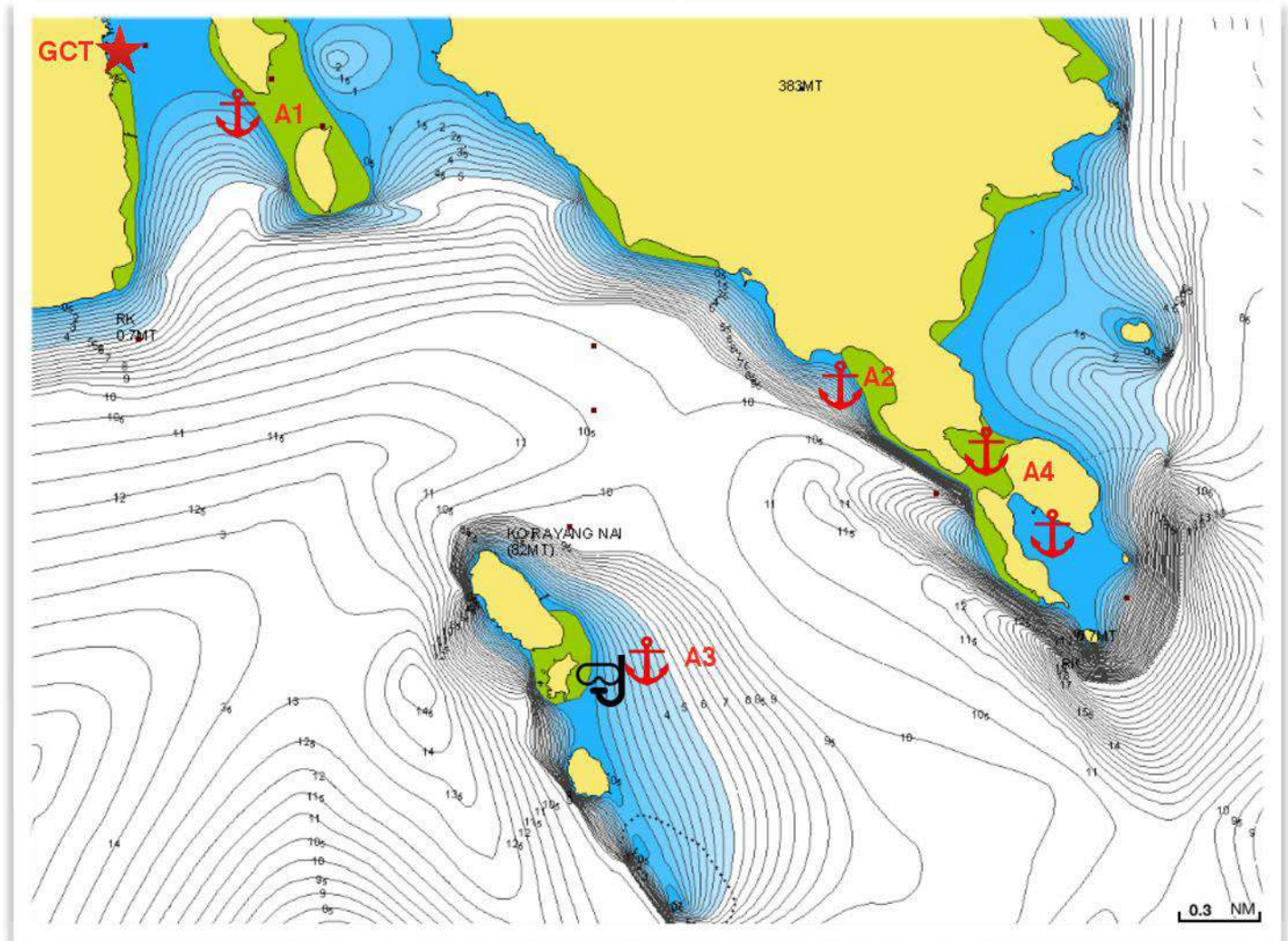
Anchorage

A1. If you'd like to get off the pier but don't have the time left in the day to make it out of the bay, this is a very pleasant option offering privacy in a well protected location before you head out to explore the archipelago.

A2. Another close anchorage in the NE winds is Long Beach on the eastern shore of the bay. The rustic Tree House Resort has good food with a large menu. This is a very shallow bay, the water is only waist height 800m from the shore at high tide, so **Anchor well off in 10m** and use the dinghy anchor to avoid a long drag to the restaurant.

A3. This island group and it's resort are privately owned and generally no problem to drop in. The resort on the north island caters to groups. When unoccupied the staff are generally very happy to see someone.

Anchor just off the pier in 8m mud taking care not to block access to the pier. These islands are a good day stop on your way south for a quick dip and a snorkel around the southern rocks. For light SW winds and swell there is protection but no protection in the NE winds therefore it's **not recommended for overnight anchorage in the NE** and only in light weather in the SW winds. Take the dinghy to explore the islands and snorkel the reefs. **Watch for abandon moorings, lines and shallow water.**



Ko Ngam

The name Ko Ngam directly translated means beautiful Island and the name is not misplaced, often referred to by Sailors from Phuket as mini Phi Phi Island due to the slight similarities.

The island's two beaches are separated by a low lying isthmus while the two ends of the islands are thickly forested hills. It is this shape that makes the bay to the south **dangerous during the stronger NE winds from November through to the end of January**, as winds are funneled through the isthmus greatly increasing the wind speed.

Amenities

Ko Ngam is part of the marine park and there for construction is restricted and up until October 2009 there was no amenities on the island, however there is a derelict resort but other than that you will have the island to yourself. In high season there's sometimes a little bar/snack shop on the island. The Tantawan just across the channel with the bungalows has a nice restaurant you can take the dinghy to.



Koh Ngam North Bay

Approaches

North Bay - enter the channel from either side staying in the center of the channel in 8-16m.

South Bay - **steer well clear of the rock awash at low tide just SW of this island until in +10m depth, it is not very accurately charted.**

Anchorages:

A4. North Bay - anchor at 8-10m in the channel.

South Bay - anchor in the middle in 5 - 7m

Note the extending reef off the land, especially on the NE side of Koh Ngam.



Ko Chang Outer Islands

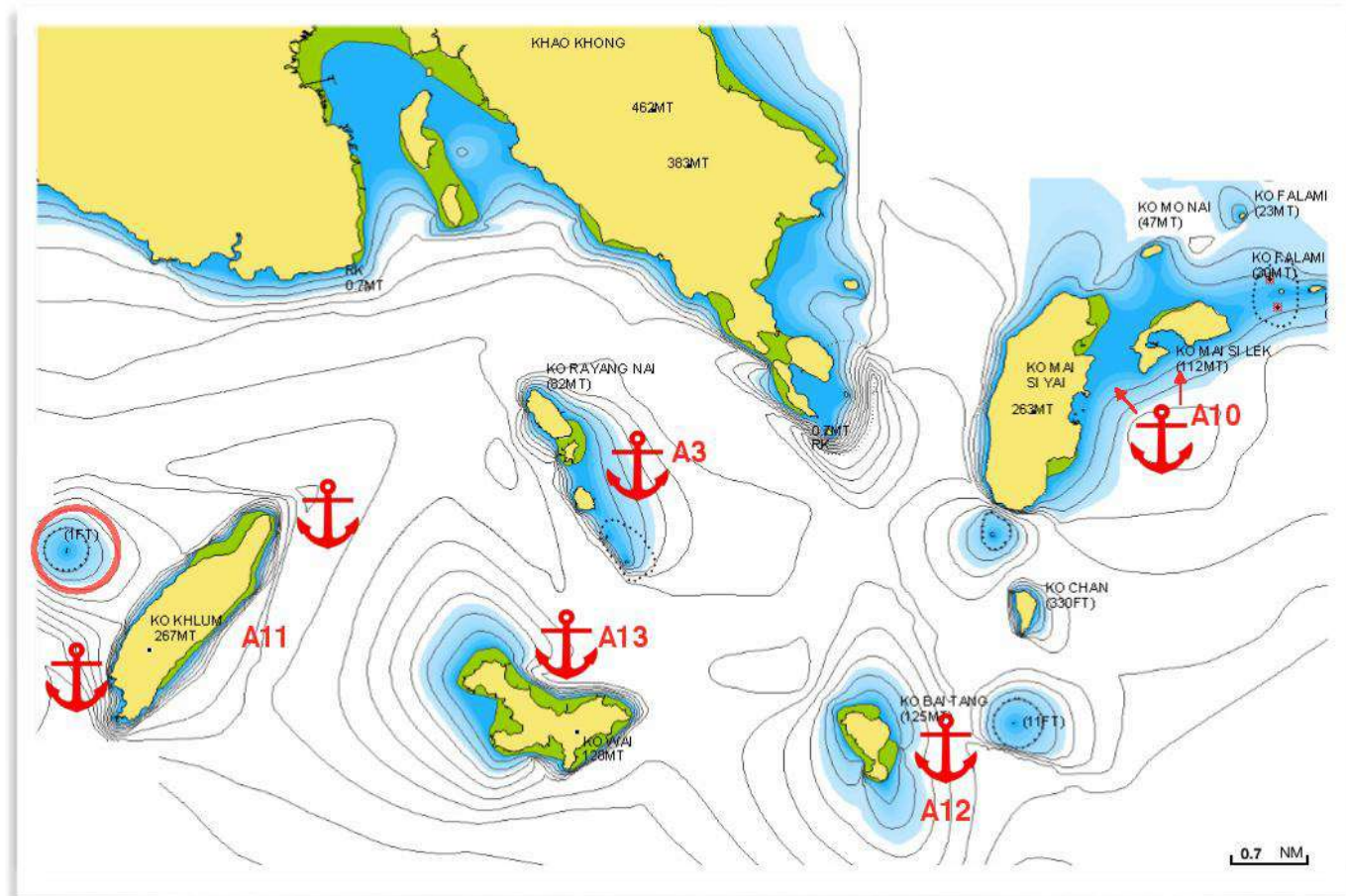
Amenities

The few small communities that existed prior to the establishment of the marine park were permitted to stay and maintain any infrastructure in place. For this reason there are basically no amenities on any of the islands in this group other than a scattering of small fishing villages, a private resort on Koh Rayang Nai and Koh Wai. There are no mini-marts or ATM machine. It feels like you're a million miles away from any civilization where you're in the eastern most islands.

That said, there remains an abundance of pristine beaches and bays that offer good protection and a wealth of snorkeling opportunities. Having a small palm tree lined bay and white sandy beach all to yourself in this area is infinitely doable.

Approaches and Anchorages

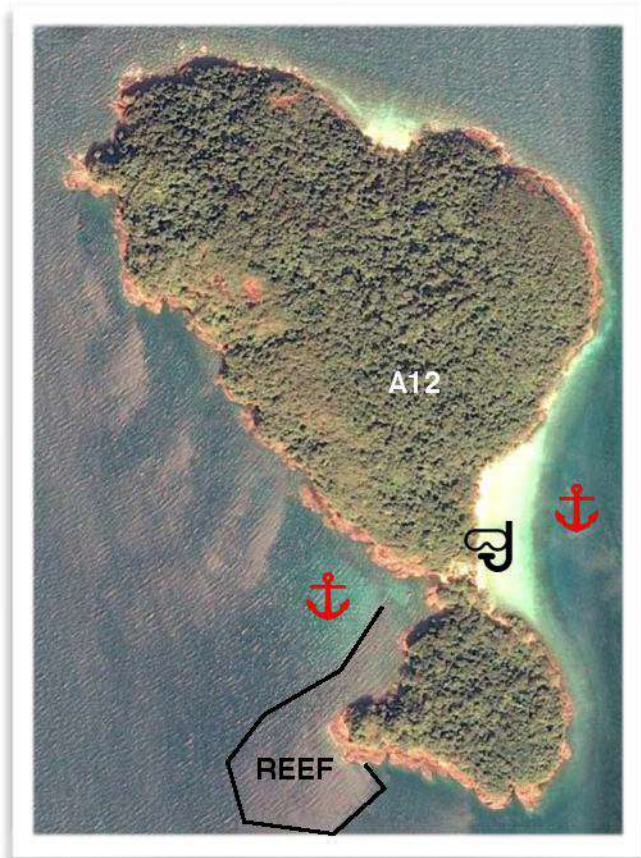
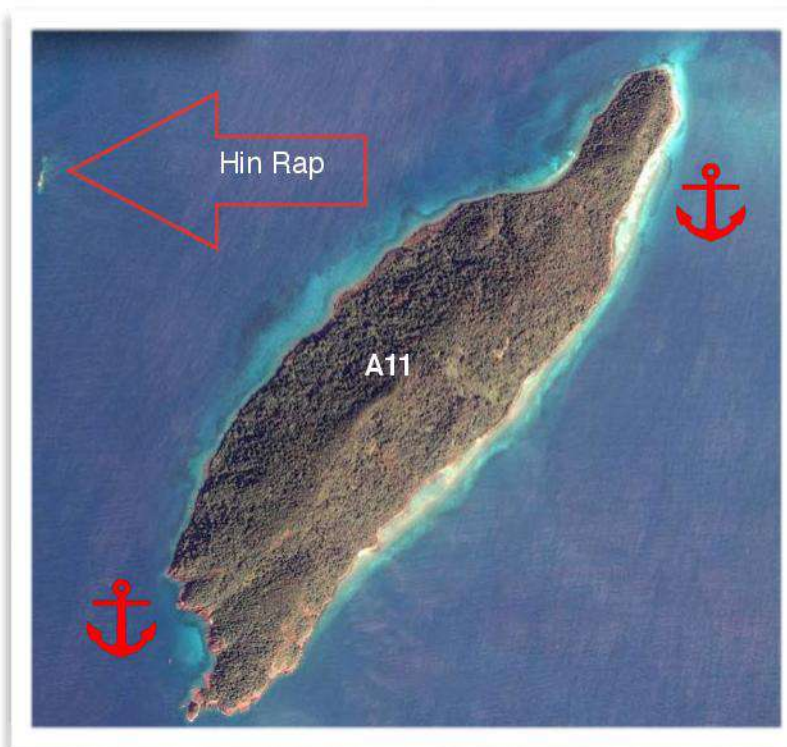
A10. Ko Maisi Yai (big) and Ko Maisi Lek (small) are generally considered to be lunch stops. Ko Maisi Lek offers better protection in the NW winds and both have small fishing villages in their bays. At Ko Maisi Yai you can anchor in sand between the islands in 7-10m. In the northeast bay of Yai you can Anchor in 5-7m outside the middle of the bay. At Ko Maisi Lek anchor off or in the middle of the bay in 5m to 7m on a mud bottom,. Watch out for the extending reef off the shore on both sides.



Approaches and Anchorages cont...

A11. Ko Klum island is uninhabited and has steep cliffs that reach to the waters edge. Not a lot in the way of beach here, but you can find a sandy spit or two at low tide and a picturesque rocky beach in the south. Approaching the island on the west side **be aware.....very aware... of the rock awash to the west, Hin Rap which has no doubt sunk a few boats in its time.** This rock is well know by the local diving and fishing communities and features on most of those trips operated in the area. It's deep around **Him Rap at 14m** and gets deeper quick so be careful if you stop for a snorkel and watch the weather.

At Koh Klum you can **anchor in 7m anywhere along the west side** which offers good protection in the NE winds. On the south side is a beautiful Tahitian looking spot with **anchorage in 9-10m** towards the middle of the small bay. Alternatively, **anchor 4-7m on the NE side** which offers good protection in the SW winds with a white sandy beach at low tide. **It's gets deep fast all around this island so be careful if staying over night.**



A12. Ko Bai Tang

Known as Turtle Island because of it's shape, there's a deserted park headquarters on shore and a reef around the edge of the beaches often good for snorkeling. There's not much protection here and only in light winds should you consider staying overnight at this anchorage.

You can anchor on the **southwest or southeast side of the island in 10m**. It's best to swim ashore as the island beaches are rimmed with reefs. On the **west side anchor in 8-10m** leaving enough swing room to avoid the reef on the south edges. Swim ashore for a snorkel around the rocky outcroppings. On the **east side anchor in 10m off the reef** and snorkel the reef or swim ashore to explore your own private beach. You can also simply walk across the island to either side and explore. The north beach is deep at 13m+ and not real suitable for anchorage though you can make it a day stop for a snorkel in the right conditions.

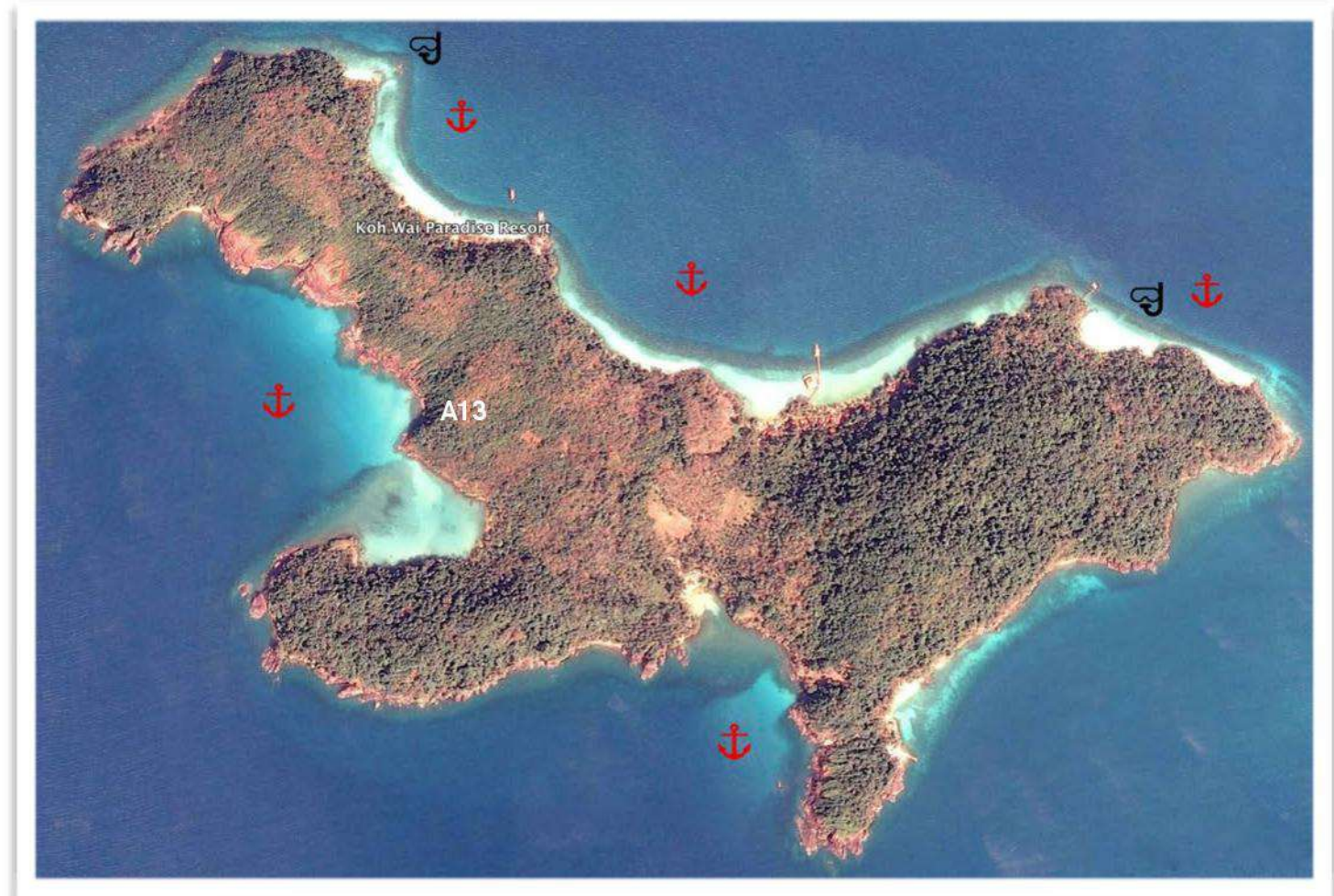
A13. Ko Wai

The north facing big beautiful bay on Ko Wai is a favorite day trip destination for people traveling from Ko Chang with considerable infrastructure and fun shallow snorkeling all along the beach to the NW tip. There are a few resorts in this bay though no protection in the NE winds.

The coral reef in this bay shoals up very quickly and has brought several of the charter fleet to a quick end to their voyage over the years.... so if you are dropping anchor here for a beach side lunch anchor in **8m to 10m well off the beach**. When bedding the anchor be sure you don't drag all the way to the reef.

For an overnight anchorage drop anchor in the small rocky SW bay. There's a not so well marked trail that takes you to the north bay, be sure to take a flash light, footwear and bug repellent is advised (try in daylight first), tie the dinghy to a tree to avoid a nasty swim back to the yacht when you return and keep an eye on the weather as you will be out of sight of the yacht. Best advice is have dinner on board and enjoy the serenity of the solidarity and the beautiful sunset.

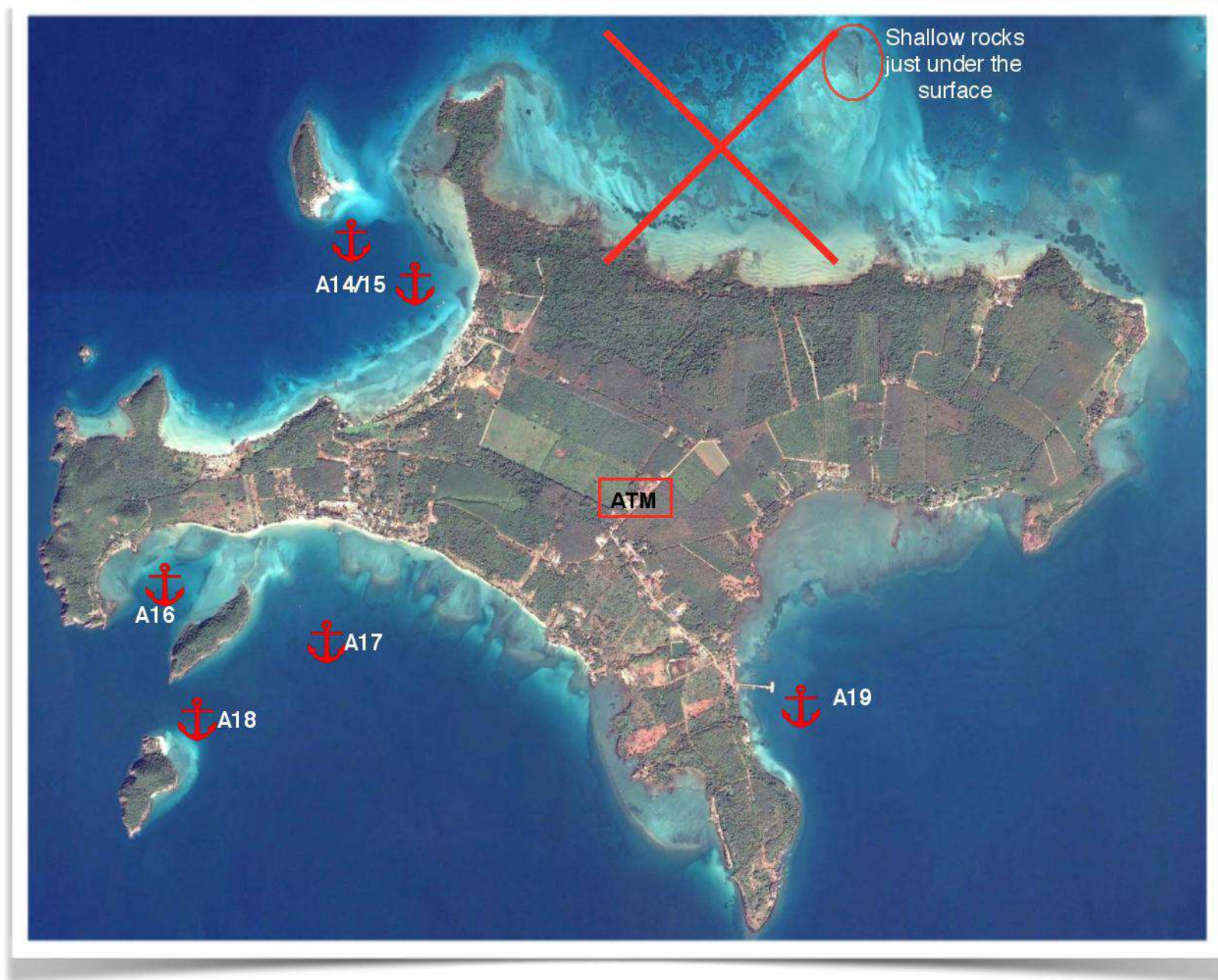
In the southern bay you can walk across to bottom finger to the SE bay and if you're lucky the place will be open for a cold drink and maybe even a snack. In heavy winds the fisherman tend to hide out on the south side and there's the option of getting fresh fish or squid. They want only beer and not money so bring them a few cold ones in the dinghy and you'll have the freshest seafood around.



Ko Mak

Unlike most of the islands Ko Mak is flat so taking a motorcycle is less of a hazard and the flat terrain also makes it a great place to explore by bicycle. There are “Eco Trail”, signs posted spasmodically across the island, you generally find one of the map posts near a pier, hotel or cross road. This map details a trail that takes you to the islands most prized attractions and was originally intended to be a bicycle trial and that was the Eco bit. There are lots of bicycles for rent and an abundance of motorcycles which is a quicker way to travel on the island but cycling allows you to take in all the rubber tree farms and coconut plantations at a more relaxing pace. You can also rent a songthaew taxi to take you around the island.

This island is quite different to the other islands in the archipelago, very chilled and laid back and well worth exploring. There is one ATM in the middle of Koh Mak but it doesn't always have baht so be prepared and stock up before you go. If you need to exchange foreign currency the hotels can do it at bad rates and high fees.



Approaches and Anchorages

A14. Koh Kham This is my favorite anchorage, however in the NE winds it is not advisable to anchor here over night if the winds have a lot of northerly, though it's a great lunch spot. The beautiful Koh Kham island has an abandon modern resort with vines covering the concrete walls in great contrast to the white sand beach and black lava boulders leading out to a sand bar. There is a 200฿ fee and that gets you a cold drink and one of the many swings or seating areas. Worth the fee it has a nice rim trail for great views, abandon villas for sunset and also bathrooms and showers you can use.

Anchor southeast of the long pier in 5-7m. Watch the depth as it shallows towards the sandbar quite quickly. Bring the dinghy to the sand bar or the beach to the east of the pier. Do not take the dinghy to the west side of the pier as it's very shallow and sea urchins cover the bottom of the sea floor.

Be aware that to the east of Koh Kham and between Koh Mak there is a large sandbank and you can not pass through. Also pay close attention and stay well off the pier when coming or going and note a ring of rocks around the islands west to north shore and off the southern most tip.

Alternatively you can anchor more south towards Koh Mak in 7-10m. Winds from the north will creep into the bay but if there's a lot of easterly you'll be well protected. **Squalls often blow up at night from the NE and it's not advisable to anchor here at night in the NE season.** During the SW season if there are strong winds they can wrap around Koh Rang from the west and into the north bay making it roly and uncomfortable. More southwest to easterly winds make this spot a fine anchorage.



Approaches and Anchorages cont...

A15. North Koh Mak

The long sandy beach on the north side of Koh Mak is well worth a visit. Behind the pier is the **Ko Mak Resort**, a huge property with a great pool to the west that has a toilet and three showers surrounded by greenery and flowers.

Follow the path west, or the beach to the **Seavana Resort** with its domed thatch roof serving the best food we've found on the island with friendly service and reasonable prices.

Anchor in 5-10m north off the Koh Mak Pier and away from the route of the speedboats.



Cococape Pier



Bring the dinghy ashore to the east side of the pier on a sandy bottom. All along the beach there are underwater obstructions and it's best to bring the dinghy ashore in this area and walk from here.

The restaurant has a shower near the toilets and behind the **i-Talay** bar is **Koh Mak Information** and a little mini-mart beyond that.

A little more to the west is the **Cococape Pier** bar that stretches out over the water with snorkeling from the pier, a fresh water shower at the end of the pier and is a picture perfect spot for sunset and delicious drinks by Chai, the friendliest bartender in Thailand. Bring some snacks cause there's no food served here.

Be careful tying up the dinghy to the end of the Cococape pier as there is reef and sea urchins underneath so make sure you know the tide and leave before it gets too low.

A short walk up the hill behind the Cococape or up from the Seavana is the **Islanda Resort** with breathtaking views of Koh Kham and to the north.

Approaches and Anchorages cont...

A16. Southeast Koh Mak is a sheltered little bay with not much going on other than it's well protected in the NE. Do not attempt to bring the dinghy around the north Ko Rayang Nai or to shore as it's very shallow water with lots of rocks. This is however a great day stop for a paddle up the west coast of Koh Mak where there are lots of caves and large schools of small fish in the clear water.

Anchor in the middle of the bay in 8-10m with enough swing room to clear the surrounding reefs.

A17. Ao Phra is a huge bay and is the primary place to anchor during the NE winds. **Anchor in 5m to 7m** off the wooden pier by at least 100m and to the west to gain a little more protection from Ko Rayang Nai, take care not to venture too close as this beach has a treacherous shoal that lines the entire shoreline, be sure to have a lookout on the bow as you come in to anchor.

The rocky shoal is so shallow that it's not recommended to take your dinghy to the beach so access is via the pier staying to the west (see picture). Board at the steps and please move the dinghy away from the steps and along the pier so you don't block access for other boats or passengers.



Places to go:

To the west of the pier you'll find a few beach resorts with a relaxing atmosphere and good food. Straight through to the hotel street entrance and up the road a bit there's live music and great tea and cocktails at the outdoor Koh Mak Art House. Across the street is a good cheap local food that will deliver it to you while you enjoy the music and libations. Turn right at the street entrance for a wide range of eateries, bars, knick-knack shops, bike rentals and resorts. A market with well stocked veggies and basics is just down the street on the left side with big white freezers out front where you can also stock up on ice. A little further down the road is BB Divers for scuba diving and if you're looking for a party the Monkey Island Resort is your best bet. There are no 7-11's but on the street to the left is a well stocked mini-mart with an often decent wine selection.

Approaches and Anchorages cont...

A18. Koh Rayang Nok has an exquisite little beach in the north and if you'd like a change from the hustle and bustle of the ferries and speedboats rocking the Koh Mak anchorage during the day this is an option. **Anchor in 7 - 10m** on sand just east of the beach. There is some infrastructure on the island and they do charge a fee for visiting in the day time, the fee includes a refreshment, chair and umbrella. It was 100฿ at the time of writing. Watch the currents through the pass and they can be quite swift so don't let anyone drift away when you're not looking.



A19. Ao Ta Nit is the home of the commercial port and Ao Nid pier that services the island and although not unpleasant does not offer anything in particular to the cruising yachtsman except it's a well protected anchorage.

There are a few small resorts and restaurants ashore as well as Koh Mak Seafood just north of the pier with the Koh Mak museum serving a little bit of history inside. The small beach resorts along the shore have trees with shaded beaches. At the base of the pier the Koh Mak Steakhouse & German Bakery making fresh bread everyday. **Be very careful when approaching the pier as there are many sharp shells lining the steps that can damage the dingy. A beach landing is not advisable.**

Koh Kradat is the low lying island NE of Koh Mak and fun for kids. The island is privately owned and visitors have to pay 100฿ entry fee which includes a deer spotting tractor tour of the island which also stops off half way at the beach for 30 minutes. The island is surrounded by shallow water and hidden rocks and if you want to visit you should take a tour from Koh Mak.



- ★ **Koh Kham Island**, 200฿ maintenance fee for the island which includes a cold drink, beautiful white sand beach with sand bar, hike, snorkeling for turtles on the southwest side.
- ★ **Koh Mak Resort**, sand bottom east of the pier for the dinghy. Motorbikes from Koh Mak Info. Happy hour 5-7pm, buy ice at the bar and a mini-mart behind.
- ★ **Koh Mak Resort pool** with showers in the foliage.
- ★ **Seavana Resort** - best restaurant on the island.
- ★ **Cococape Pier Bar**, a great spot for sunset. Tie up to the end of the pier and move it out of the way for swimmers and snorkelers.
- ★ **Islanda Resort** with great view of Koh Kham and to the north.
- ★ **Koh Mak Art House**, live music most nights, great drinks and good cheap Thai food across the street.
- ★ **Market** 2 white freezers out front. Fresh fruit and veg, eggs, bacon, cheese, tofu, beer, juice.
- ★ **Koh Mak Steakhouse and German Bakery** for fresh bread baked daily. Homemade sour cream (can't recommend steaks)
- ★ **Koh Mak Seafood**, over the water with a small museum.
- ★ **Koh Rayang Nok Island**, 100฿ fee for beach use gets you a cold drink, chair and umbrella.
- ★ **ATM machine**



Overview

Ko Rang is one of the archipelagos most popular dive and snorkeling areas, it is also the outpost base for the Ko Chang Marine Park Headquarters. Along the southeast side there are several rocky islands which the marine park have placed a string of floating ropes to protect swimmers and snorkelers from boats. You are not allowed to anchor around the northeastern islands as the park is trying to preserve those reefs.

There are numerous mooring buoys in this area that are available for yachts to use, however be sure to take the outer buoys around the islands as the inner buoys are too close to the rocks. Only use these moorings as a day anchorage, not for overnight. Be sure to check the quality of the lines before you tie off.

If you plan to overnight in Ko Rang during the NE season you'll need to make your way around to the upper west side of the island where there's a nice sandy spit and good snorkeling.

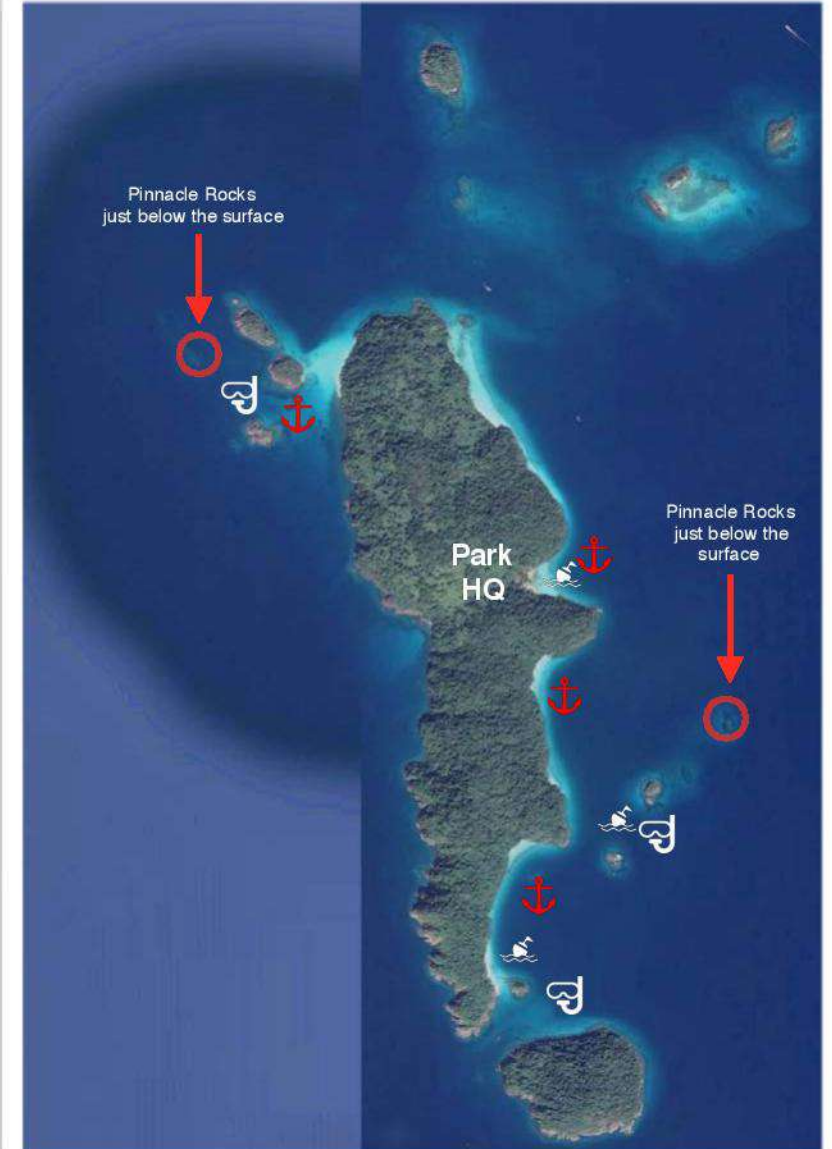
The Park Rangers will come to collect a fee of 200฿ per person and 100฿ per hull that allows you 5 days (consecutive) to explore the area. They don't speak much english and are pretty serious about their jobs. You'll get a pretty park receipt and hang on to that if you stay the night. Once you leave, if you return you pay again.

On the southeastern most tip of the island there is a phallic shrine frequented by the local fisherman who believe their offerings will bring them success in their fishing and protect them from danger. The shrine has a collection of penii that would send a wave of insecurity through any man. If you're with children you may wish to research the significance of the phallic symbol in Asian culture so that you are well equipped to answer the "why" questions.

Amenities

There are no concessions for accommodation on Ko Rang so the island is purely natural. This is a great place to cook that dinner you provisioned for, nicely tucked away at your very own private beach. In the SW season the preferred anchorage is at the Park Headquarters. You can fill your tanks with water here at the end of their floating pier. Ask permission at the shack onshore and they will set it up for you if water is available.

Tourist boats crowd the area from 10am to about 3pm and it can get busy, especially on weekends. It's best to arrive in the afternoon and you will have the place to yourself until the next day mid-morning.



Approaches and Anchoring

A20. On the southeast side you can take one of the mooring buoys outside the floating ropes around the small islands and snorkel right from your boat. Note the wind direction when choosing a buoy. Alternatively, you can take a buoy or anchor off the white sandy beach and take your dinghy to the marked snorkeling site and tie it to the ring of floating rope while you're snorkeling. **These balls are not for overnight anchorage.**

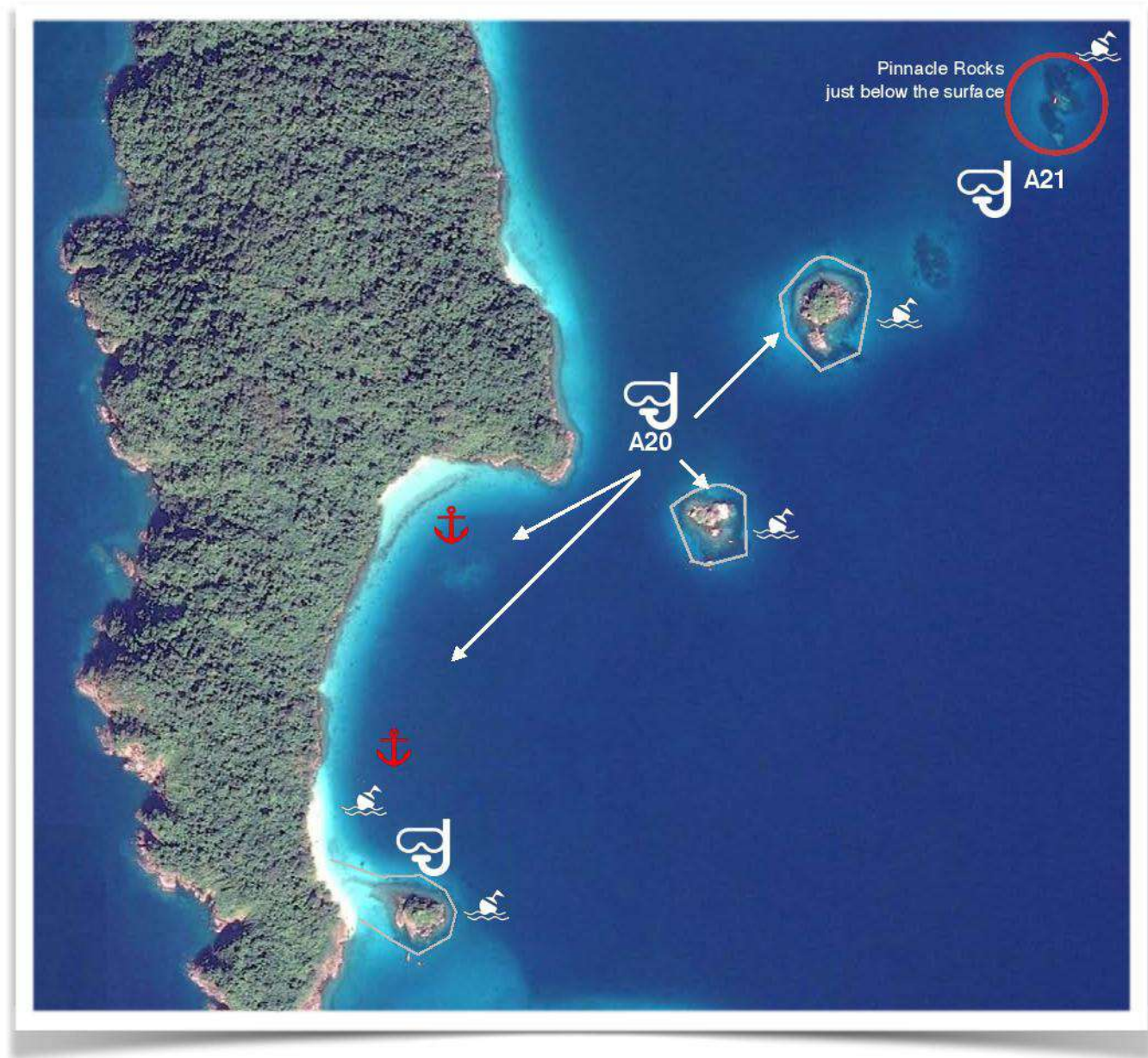
Point to note: getting in and out of the dingy in deep water is not easy and there is no location on the little islands to take the dingy to that will make it any easier.

Near the beach there are tourists boats that crowd in around lunch time so a mooring ball might not be available. You can anchor a little further off the beach or just to the north off the sandy beach in **7-10m**. A few of the tourist boats have slides off the side and my experience is that they don't mind if you take a turn. They might also have cold beer.

The island just off the beach is worth a snorkel around as well and there are mooring balls on the north, south and east sides.

A21. THIS IS NOT AN ANCHORAGE.

DO NOT approach in a sailboat. Only take the dinghy, kayak or SUP and beware of it navigating the area. There is a large yellow mooring ball attached to this pinnacle rock where you can tie off and have a snorkel around. If there is a dive boat there, you can usually tie off to them for easier dinghy exit and entry.



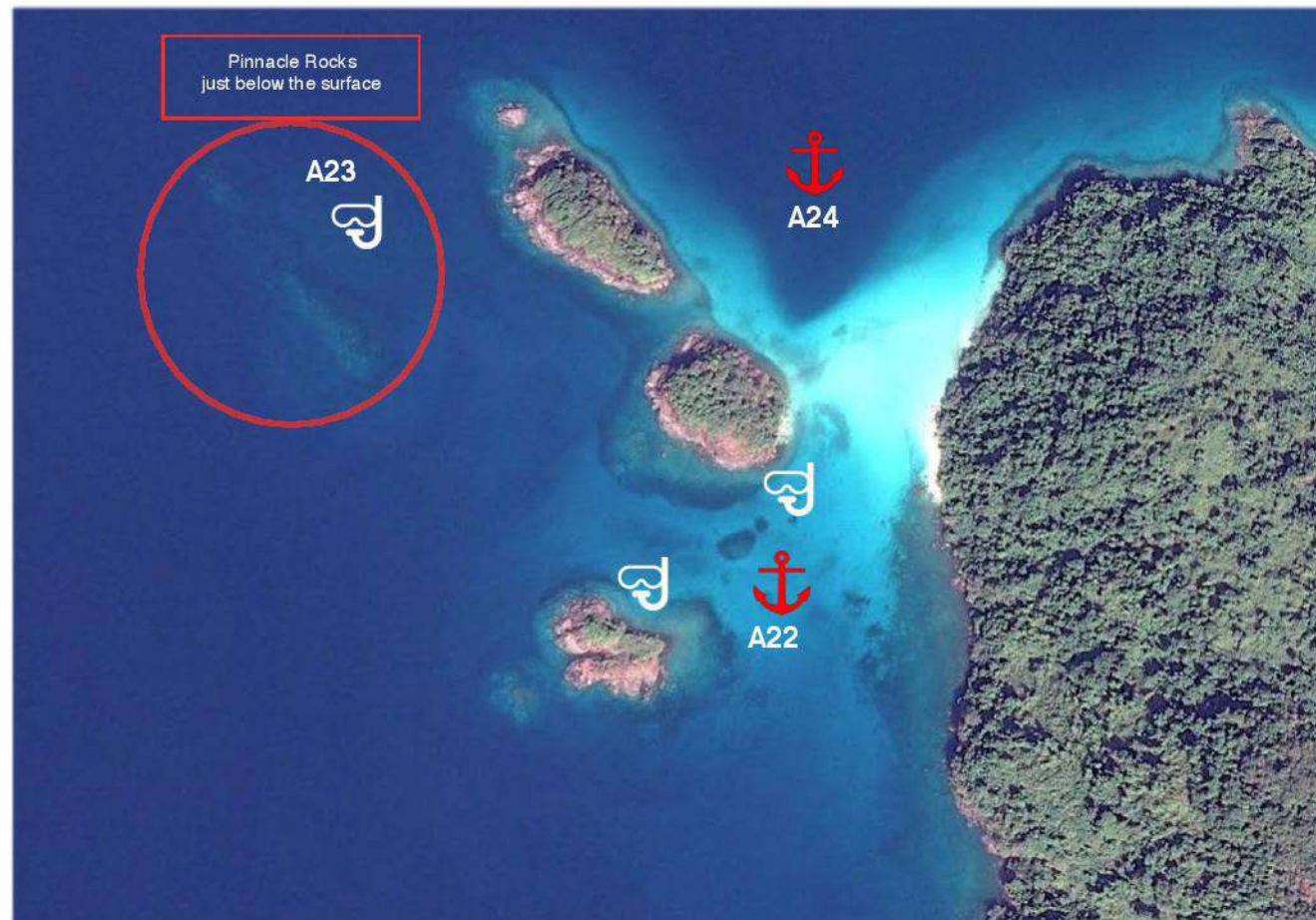
Approaches and Anchoring cont...

A22. Not recommended during the stronger NE winds due to the island not being big enough to provide protection, this is a beautiful and peaceful anchorage in light winds. This is also a great day spot and you're only 4-5nm from Koh Mak if you need to seek a more sheltered anchorage. There is often a mooring ball or two but beware of ropes floating without a ball to mark it.

The water is usually clear and you will **Anchor in 5 to 10m** on sand,

Note the sand bar between the small island of Ko Thian and Koh Rang in the NW, do not pass between these islands.

There is good snorkeling in this area and a beautiful white sand beach on shore.



A23. THIS IS NOT AN ANCHORAGE.

These pinnacle rocks are just below the surface and there are really big fish in the water here.

This is a National Marine Park and you're not allowed to fish within one mile of the park.

DO NOT approach in a sailboat. Only take the dinghy, kayak or SUP and **beware of it when navigating the area as it's not marked accurately on the charts.**

Only sometimes is there an empty jug or two attached to this pinnacle rock where you can tie your dinghy to. If there is no marker, there might still be a rope to tie off to or tie your watercraft to yourself.

A24. This spot is a little deeper and can provide protection from the SW swell and wind. The sand bar between the islands gets quite shallow so be careful getting to shore. **Anchor in 8-12m.**

Approaches and Anchoring cont...

A25 This is the Marine Park Headquarters and where you can fill your water tanks up at the end of the floating dock. Ask a ranger on shore if you can fill up and they will advise you what time, water might not always be available.

Make sure when you go to inspect the end of the dock first with the dinghy and notice the lay-lines that run out from the dock to avoid when coming alongside. They usually want you to fill with water before 9am or after 4pm to make room for the tour boats and fishing boats that visit the islands. Make sure to ask in advance and don't expect to pull up to the dock right away in the middle of the day.

There are jungle hikes from here and a wooden sign to the left of the pier on land showing you the route options. Bring repellent and drinking water.

Mooring balls seem to come and go, usually there is a big mooring ball in the center of the bay. You can also anchor in **10-12m** in the middle of the bay.

You can take a dinghy or paddle along the coastline from here and snorkel in the clear waters along the shore. Just to the north or south there are secluded beaches and isolated shorelines to explore.

There is a small snack shack on shore but don't expect much in the way of food beyond crisps and pot noodles.

Bathrooms and showers are on the north side of the beach.



Koh Rang Floating Dock & Snack Shop

Koh Rang - Park Headquarters



Overview

Ko Kut is a special place. There are so many things that come together to make this island one of the most memorable cruising locations you'll come across; stunningly beautiful bays and beaches, waterfalls, charming Thai style resorts, over the water fishing villages and just a relaxed feeling island wide. Being surrounded by this much beauty is always enjoyable.

Ko Kut is largely isolated, it is the southern most point of Eastern Thailand and therefore has not really made it high on the backpacker or mainstream tourist trail yet. It has long since been a relatively upscale retreat for local people and remains beautifully Thai.

Ko Kut hosts a scattering of resorts who's food and hospitality are perfect. There are rivers to explore, waterfalls to visit, night walks, cocktail bars to lounge in and an over supply of deserted palm tree lined white sandy beaches all accessible from very protected anchorages.

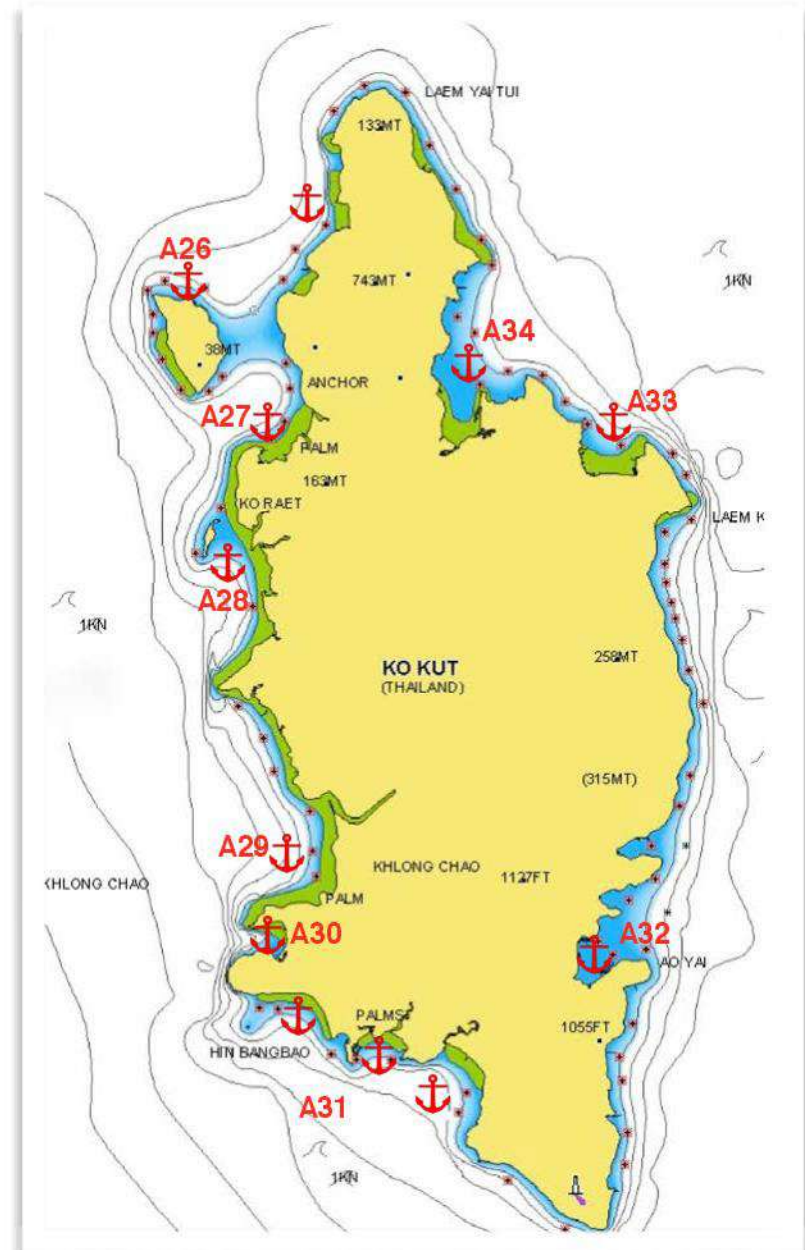
With the main tourism being local, don't expect as many people to speak english here.

The only way to get to Koh Kut is by ferry from Laem Sok in Trat direct or by speedboat from Koh Chang or other local islands. In the works is a link between Koh Kut and the mainland to the east which would bring in more travelers coming from Cambodia.

Amenities

There is no "tourist town" on Ko Kut. The town center is very much a small Thai Village that supports the outer lying fishing villages. There is a local fresh food market, a hospital, a school, post office and a few other general stores but with a bit of exploring you'll be able to find most of what you might need. Staff at the resorts or dive shops are good sources for information and are always willing to help out.

There is only one (inconvenient) ATM machine on the island at the hospital that gets topped up once a week so make sure to bring plenty of cash with you or you will be paying hotel foreign exchange rates. You can take a taxi or rent a motorbike to get to the ATM and we recommend the latter and mix that up with a tour of the island. Fisherman's Hut is near the ATM and worth a stop for lunch. The roads aren't crowded and there are a lot of things hidden in the beautiful jungle here.



Approaches and Anchorages

A26. Ko Maisi Lek, when visiting the island **Anchor in 7 to 10m on sand**, on the north east side of the island near to where the visible infrastructure is on shore.

Be aware of the rock to the east of the channel and take care when maneuvering here, the channel is smaller than it looks.



Points of interest: Ko Maisi Lek is a nondescript island that was once home to one of the royal appointed Officers of Chinese affairs and the old dilapidate plantation style house remains. The caretakers are generally ok for you to take a walk around. The mosaic floors date back to the King Rama 5 era and any person educated in this period of Asian history will be astounded by the abundance of artifacts that are left just lying around.

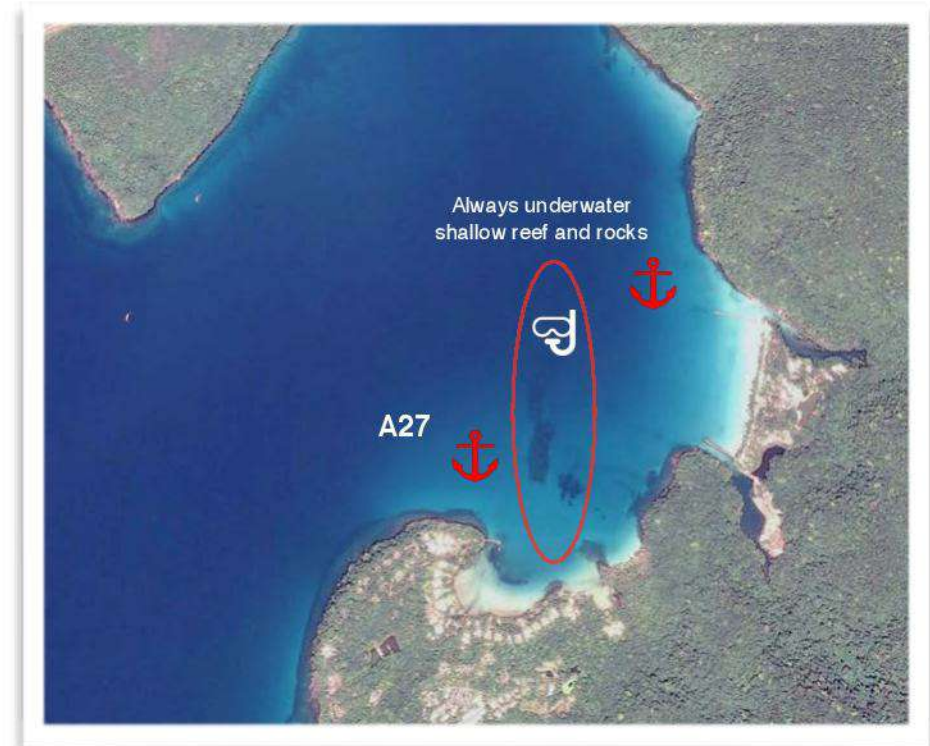
Maisi Lek island is a funky place for a change of pace and an interesting local experience.

There used to be a pearl farm on the island and maybe you'll get that lucky shell that was left behind to grow a record breaking pearl.

A27 Soneva Kiri is a 6-star resort catering to only those who can afford it or like to play High-Roller now and then. They have Treepod dining and a nice pool side restaurant that looks so beautiful it just might bring a tear to your eye. The units are so fabulous each with their own private butler, buggy and beach it's hard not to want to peak. But although the resort is private the reef that they built outside the resort is not.

Anchor is 5-7m sand bottom away from the long dark reef you can see underwater. **Anchor to the W or NE of the reef.** The beach on the western shore is private so you're not always welcome to go ashore but it's mostly empty. Beware of the large long shallow reef. Go well north to clear the reef if heading to the beach. For a meal at one of the Soniva Kiri's 5 restaurants you must call ahead. www.soneva.com

To the north are two sandy beaches you can anchor off for good NE protection, the northern one being the best.



Koh Kut - Captain Hook's Bay

Approach and Anchorage

A28. Ao Check Ki (Captain Hooks Bay) Approach from the south of Ko Raet, do not pass through the north channel as there is a sand bar across the entire channel.

Anchor anywhere in the bay on **sand in 4 to 7m**, in-between the rocky headland and Ko Raet is best. You'll be the focus of many sunset photographs taken from the sunset viewing platform of the Captain Hook's resort. It's tempting to get close to land here, but to enjoy a mosquito-less evening stay well off shore.

Points of interest: This is one of our very favorite locations. Besides being an absolutely spectacular bay with a coconut tree lined long white sandy beach, crystal clear water and protected anchorage, tucked into the corner is Captain Hook's Resort which is an absolute gem. Captain Hook's has a great bar menu of cocktails and mock-tails. The Lychee Rose is a real treat on a hot day, or any day. You can order bags of ice here at the bar.

Take your dinghy to the small stream around the point and you'll find their peir, take which ever spot is best suited to the tide.

Take care navigating the river, best to take a flash light with you and go



slowly keeping an eye out for nets in the river and shallow sections around the bends.

Captain Hook's is a sprawling space that includes a restaurant, cocktail bar, relaxation areas and massage salas as well as a swimming pool if you'd like to take a swim with a shower next to the pool.

Up the river is the quaint **Bann Makok Resort** with a relaxed atmosphere, great fruit shakes and food in a tranquil setting on the river. At night a mass of incredibly well coordinated fire flies are blinking away happily on the edges of the stream. Here they can tell you how to get to the Kai Yee waterfall for a refreshing dip. It's about a 20 minute walk, ask if it's flowing so you're not disappointed.

Snorkel off the SE side of Koh Raet to find sunken temple statues near the marked mooring ball.

All in all this anchorage is just a fun and beautiful place to visit.



Captain Hook's Resort Pier

Approaches and Anchorages

A29. Ao Klong Chao is the waterfall stop, really only good for a day anchorage due to swell well in to the NE. During February and March you can generally stay overnight.

Anchor in 7-10m in sand well away from the beach and large coral heads that line the shore. Pack some water, snacks and your spare fuel tank and take your dingy to the small estuary tucked in the northern corner of the bay. If the tide is low you'll need to get out and go by foot for a short period. At the mouth of the estuary on the north shore is the Away Resort, a great lunch spot and they have toilets and showers that you can use before you head back to the yacht.

Paddle up or dinghy along the river staying in the center for approx. $\frac{3}{4}$ nm. Along the first part of the river there are several houses and a few dive resorts. Once you pass under the bridge civilization mostly dies away and there is only vegetation. For the Australians reading this; no there are no crocodiles but it sure does look like prime croc country.

You'll come to a fairly obvious end to the river, tie your dingy to the old pier or a tree and follow the track to the road and turn left, approximately 15-20mins. Note that the track leading from your dingy is a subsidiary track that joins up with the road, leave a trail of bread crumbs by the junction as it is not always obvious when you return and is easy to miss.

Like most good waterfalls, there's a Tarzan rope to swing from and uniquely in this pond there are small fish that like to nibble on you, they don't bite, just nibble... but it does tickle.

The waterfall is best from November through January but flows all year and is worth a visit anytime with it's fresh water and little pools below the falls you can sit under for a water massage.

This area has beach resorts with beach bars worth a visit and some places along the river to enjoy as well. Just inside the river the **Sunset Bar** has good music and you can bring the dinghy right to the ladder and climb up for a cold drink and his infamous Pad Thai. Enjoy a drink here and you can leave your dinghy to explore the little village. Across the street and down the road to the right is the funky **Tawan Eco Bar** with amazing music and if you can play an instrument, you can be the entrainment. The drinks are on the honor system so grab a cold one and mark it down, relax and enjoy. Don't forget to tip yourself for such great service.



Koh Kut - Bang Bao Bai

Approach and Anchorage

A29. South Klong Chao, just to the southwest and outside of the bay off the A-Na-Lay Resort is a nice anchorage to get out of a southwesterly swell. **Anchor in 7-10m sand bottom** just off shore and away from the reef. The A-Na-Lay Resort has a nice dock you can bring the dinghy to for a swim and good cheap Thai food with a nice view. Don't go into the bay with the yacht as it shallows quickly. The bay just to the north has a beautiful palm lined beach but only take the dinghy in there as well and watch for the rocks and reef off the points and in the bay.

A30. Ao Bang Bao is another favorite hideaway. This delightful sandy bottom bay offers excellent protection and is the best place to anchor up at night having just spent the day at the waterfall or exploring the island.

The approach can be a little daunting as the entrance to the bay is smaller than you might think. Stay in 15m of water off the northern point until you can see the entrance in full, then enter in the center between the two heads.

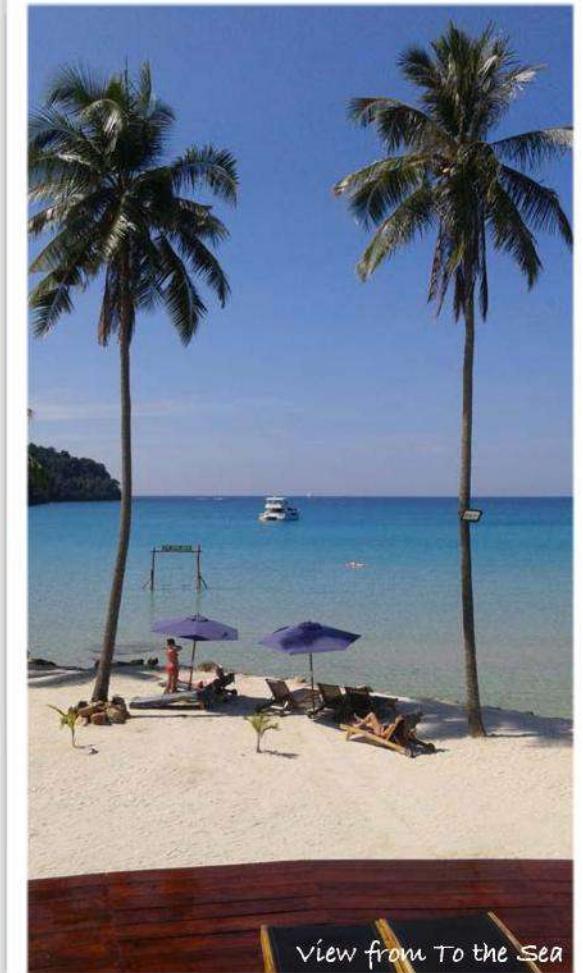
Anchor in the middle of the bay in 7 to 10m and take the time to bed your anchor in properly.

There are a few resorts on the beach but **The Beach Nature Resort** is our pick of the bunch. The owner is super friendly, there are clean toilets and showers and the restaurant is excellent with a rooftop bar and some of the best massage we've found in Thailand.

To The Sea has an cool terrace bar where you can get a photo of the yacht perfectly framed between two palm trees.

In the south corner at the estuary mouth is a little spot with good Thai food, a lovely wooden bridge you can dangle your feet off and enjoy the cheapest beer in the bay.

BB Divers has a base here if you're interested in scuba diving or just have questions about where to snorkel. You can usually restock ice from the resorts.



Approaches and Anchorages

A31a. Hat Thakian North just around Lam Bang Bao, a spectacular long white sandy beach, there is only Cham's House Resort on the beach which has beautiful grounds, "casual dining" and great sunset views.

Approach on the outside of the rock, Hin Bang Boa and give it plenty of clearance. Anchor anywhere along the beach in 5 to 7m on a sandy bottom.

A31b. Hat Thakian South just around Lam Ton Son, yet another spectacular long white sandy beach, a little more protected with basic bungalows. This bay is a favorite bay for fisherman and does sometimes get crowded in heavy weather.

To the north end of the bay there is the remnants of what was planned to be a marina. At this point there is little of interest there for cruising yachtsman and it is not possible to navigate the channel.

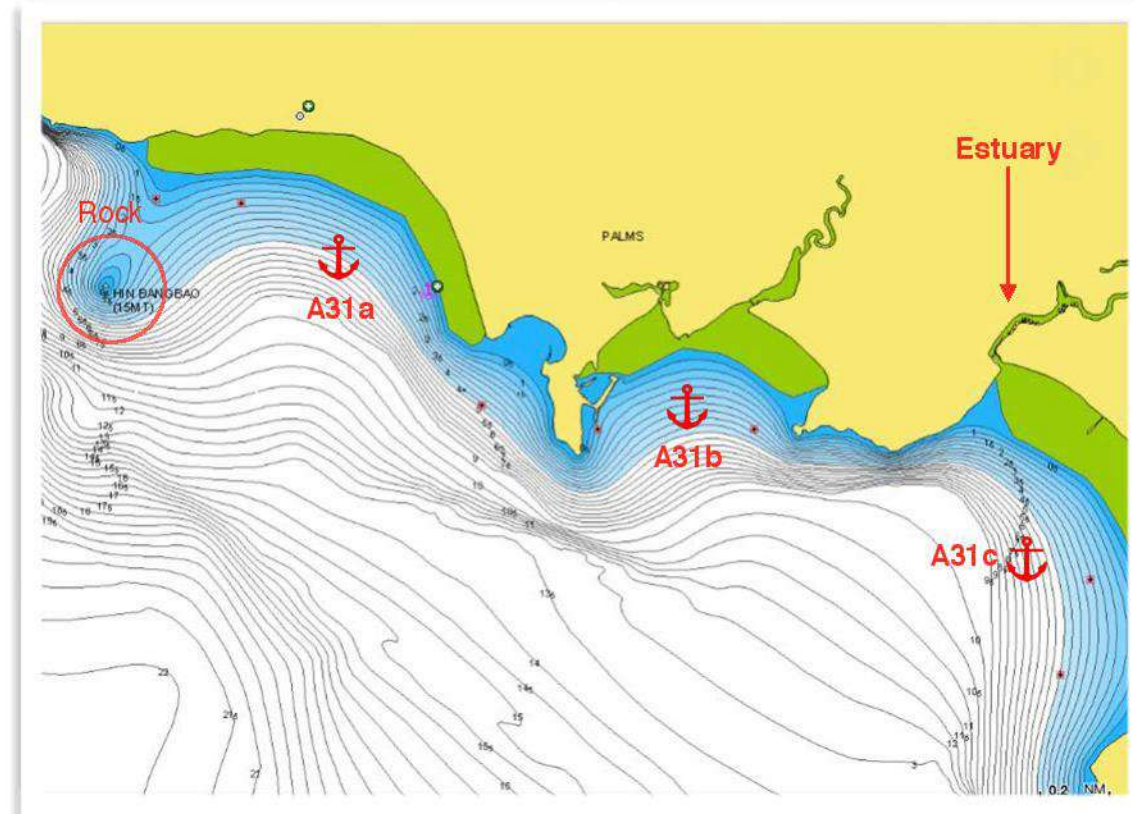
Approach giving plenty of water to the point and stay in the center of the bay, both sides of the bay have rocky outcrops extending quite far out.

Anchor in 5 to 7m in sand.

A31c. Ao Phrao is a must do bay. The beach is exquisite, most of the resorts are a little more basic but offer good local food and are very friendly. Mainly it's the river trip that gets all the raves. Again this can be a popular shelter for fishing boats but the bay is huge so there is plenty of room for everyone. You can trade your "extra" beer for fresh catch off the local fishing and squid boats.

Approach in the center of the bay and **Anchor in 5 - 7m on sand** between the middle and the west end of the beach. This gives you dingy access to the resorts and the estuary. Provision for your dingy ride with water and snacks or check out the little shop just inside the river mouth or drop into one of the interesting places along the river or on the beach.

Enter the estuary carefully, you may need to walk the first section with your dinghy to get over the shallow sandbar. From here, motor along the river as far as you like but be careful of obstructions under the surface. This is a National Geographic like journey that seems to have been forgotten by time with its water village, a monastery, and a truly life sustaining river which makes it all a cultural delight.



Approaches and Anchorages cont...

A31c. Ao Phrao cont...

Just at the entrance of the river on the north side of this long stretch of beach is the **Rest Sea Resort**. This resort caters to all your delights be it for a real coffee, a juicy western burger, top notch Thai food or simply the fresh and clean atmosphere to laze around in with hammocks floating over the sea. It's a contemporary space on a pretty beach with a modern feel. It's a nice place to stop on your way to or from the working temple at the end of the river or simply a nice end to a stroll down the beach.

A little further up and inside the river is the laid back **Gumm Lonely Club** for a more authentic feel of the area and some smooth jazzy tunes.



There are a few places along the river if you're feeling adventurous but keep in mind these are also peoples homes so proceed with respect.

If you plan to visit the temple, please dress appropriately with covered knees and shoulders for both men and women.



Koh Kut - Fishing Villages - Ao Yai

Overview

It's stated earlier that Ko Kut is special and it is in many ways. Without doubt the people that live on Ko Kut are one of those special things. The island is quite isolated so the fishing villages are the real deal. There will be very little in the way of tourist information but a lot in the way of interest and hospitality if you take the time to venture in and explore. Just a note on dress code, these villages are quite isolated so heading to a fishing pier in a bikini or swim shorts is not a cool thing to do.

Approach and Anchorage

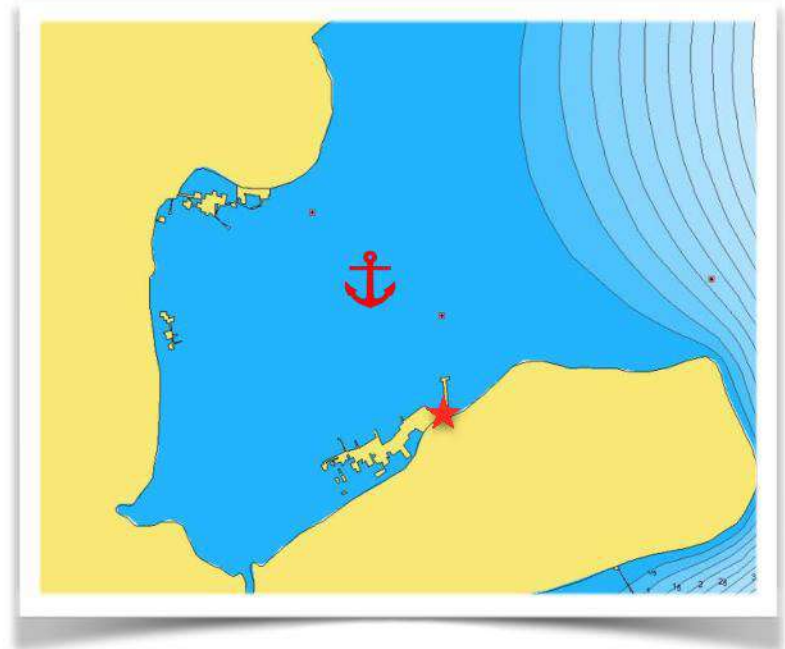
A32. Ao Yai fishing village, in the NE winds does not provide sufficient protection to be an overnight anchorage but it makes for a great lunch spot or provisioning trip if you'd like to top up your fresh seafood supplies.

Approach heading due west in the center of the bay to avoid the rock at the north headland, this rock is only awash at the lowest of tides and generally can not be seen, nor is it marked. Take a path in the middle of the two hazards on the chart.

Anchor on a mud bottom 5-7m just beyond the large concrete pier and off the fishing village pier far enough to not impede fishing boat access.

Note that the bay gets very shallow past the end of the fishing village pier so don't venture beyond that. You'll notice some fish pens (sticks in the water) in that area which are in about 1m of water at low tide, go anywhere near there and you'll be stuck in the mud.

Getting a shore can be an adventure in itself. You can take your dingy to the south corner of the pier to a precarious floating bamboo dock marked in the picture or tie your dinghy to a ladder on the pier. Alternatively you can come alongside a fishing boat, climb over it and to the pier. Make sure to tie your dinghy off to something other than the fishing boat because they might head out. The first place right on the corner is the most yacht friendly and is one of the cruising rally party locations so they know sailors well and are very helpful and friendly. Take a stroll down the pier and a step back in time as you see how the "other half lives". These people are so relaxed it seems like all they do is nap all day. However, the place can come to life at night when it cools down and along the pier further down the way is a great spot for dinner at **Noochy Seafood** for a fresh seafood extravaganza. Don't be afraid to try something unfamiliar.



Approaches and Anchorages

A33. Ao Yai Koet is a stunning little bay with a low key Thai resort made quite extraordinary by the rainbow color scheme that's unfortunately falling apart. There is only a beach at low tide and in the NW corner a little dinghy channel.

Approach in the center of the bay and **anchor in 4 to 6m on a sandy bottom**, the bay gets very shallow so don't go in to the bay much past the main resort building.

Again, not an overnight anchorage in the northeast winds, but this is quite a lovely lunch stop and the resort is worth a look around. Not always open though generally if the cook's in residence they'll be more than happy to whip up a meal and show their skills.

A34. Ao Salat, "Salat" is Thai for pirate, so this is Pirate Bay... long since gone are the pirates but it's not hard to see why this was a good place to call home. You can imagine the pirates disappearing back into this small protected bay with their booty from the trading ships passing just below Ko Kut on their way to Bangkok.



Approach in the center of the bay and anchor well off the pier so as not to impede other boat access and stay off the line of yellow buoys that mark the submarine cable and some reefs to the west towards shore. **Anchor on either side of the yellow buoy line in 7-9m mud.**

To get ashore, head into the bay a little and look for a ladder, anyone will do but there's one outside a little mini mart that's convenient. Otherwise pull up to a fishing boat and climb over but tie off the the pier in case that fishing boat heads out to sea.

This village is serviced by one of the islands paved roads so is significantly more used to seeing tourists than Ao Yai in the south and for what it lacks in hospitality it makes up for in ambiance.

There's not much ashore but if you're hiding from weather and can't get to Captain Hook's Bay, you can take a 20 minute taxi ride to **Bann Makok** for lunch or a drink and then a water taxi to **Captain Hook's Resort** for one of Mr Hoy's infamous cocktails. There's not much to see in Ao Salat other than the beautiful golden Buddha and the preserved monk inside. There is a ferry here to Laem Sok, Trat if you need to arrange crew.

Koh Chang Anchorages - Bang Bao

Bang Bao

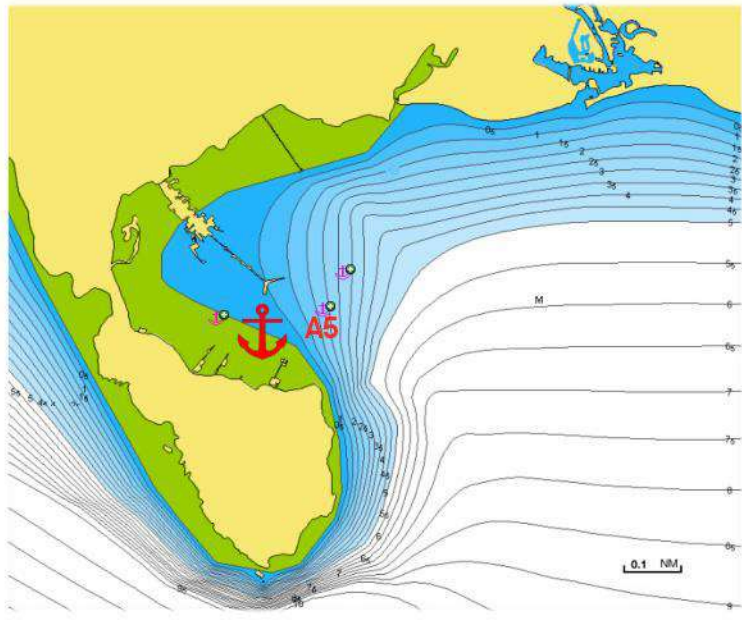
A bustling pier with just about everything you could imagine precariously mounted on stilts, this is the main drop-off and pick-up point for the areas dive boats, speedboats and day trips and also remains a working fishing village. You can buy fresh seafood delivered straight from the sea to the pier, enjoy one of the excellent seafood restaurants or try the Buddha View on the pier to dangle your feet over the water.

Amenities:

Provisioning: Food and beverage in abundance, clothing stores, souvenirs, pretty much everything you could want. There is also several bungalow resorts located on the pier. At the end of the pier on land there is a good fruit stand and a little further along a small market with veggies and basic supplies.

Services: There is a bank at the entrance to the pier, you can exchange foreign currency or draw cash from the ATM. You'll also find many tour operators if you need to make travel arrangements as well as Internet access, laundry, mobile phone shops, and a post office.

Island access: This is a convenient place to base yourself for easy access to the west side of the island, taxis are available at the entrance to the pier, you can also rent a car or motorcycle though the roads are windy and steep going north from here. To the west is the bohemian Klong Koi. To the east from Bang Bao there are a few small resorts and restaurants on the rocky shore above the water and cheap eats on sandy Klong Kloi beach. Be careful if approaching the beach in the dinghy as there are rocks in the sand and a shallow reef off shore. Head for Mr. T's for live music and excellent curries. **Do not attempt to go ashore at night.** Klong Kloi is best approached by the road. Popular with day trippers, this area can get crowded from mid-morning until afternoon.



Approach and Anchoring

A5. Enter in the middle of the bay and be aware that this can be a busy thoroughfare for commercial boats and fishing flags. The bay is very shallow once you get beyond the end of the pier and the eastern side of the bay quickly shoals up to a drying reef. The best anchorage is to stay just west of the main concrete pier and lighthouse, you can move beyond the end of the pier approximately 100m, **anchor in 3 - 4m of water.**

To access the pier you can either take your dinghy to one of the restaurants that have a floating dock and tie up there or take your dinghy to one of the concrete stairways and tie up to the main pier, be sure to move your dinghy out of the way of commercial boats using the same access point and remember to leave enough of the painter to allow for a falling tide. At night it's easiest to tie up to a tour boat and climb across to the pier.

Warning: at low tide you can not use your dinghy to access the west side floating docks as it is too shallow and keep in mind how much time you intend on spending on the pier and what the tide is doing. It is a very hazardous task to drag your dinghy through the mud, you'll sink in to the mud all the way to your waist!!

Koh Chang Anchorages - West Coast

West Coast of Ko Chang

This is the main tourist area of the archipelago and quite typical of Thai beach resort towns that start out as little known backpacker retreats and grow into a patchwork contrast of old Asian style and new modern style buildings. There are 5 areas which are described below. Refer to the *Ko Chang Guide* for up to date information. The west shore beaches often disappear at high tide.

Amenities:

Provisioning: Koh Chang has larger supermarkets now such as Makro, Tesco Lotus and Big C located in Whitesands Beach.

V Mart, the overpriced but well stocked store in Chai Chet offers a broad range of items and stocks many western brand food items as well as a good variety of liquor and wine.

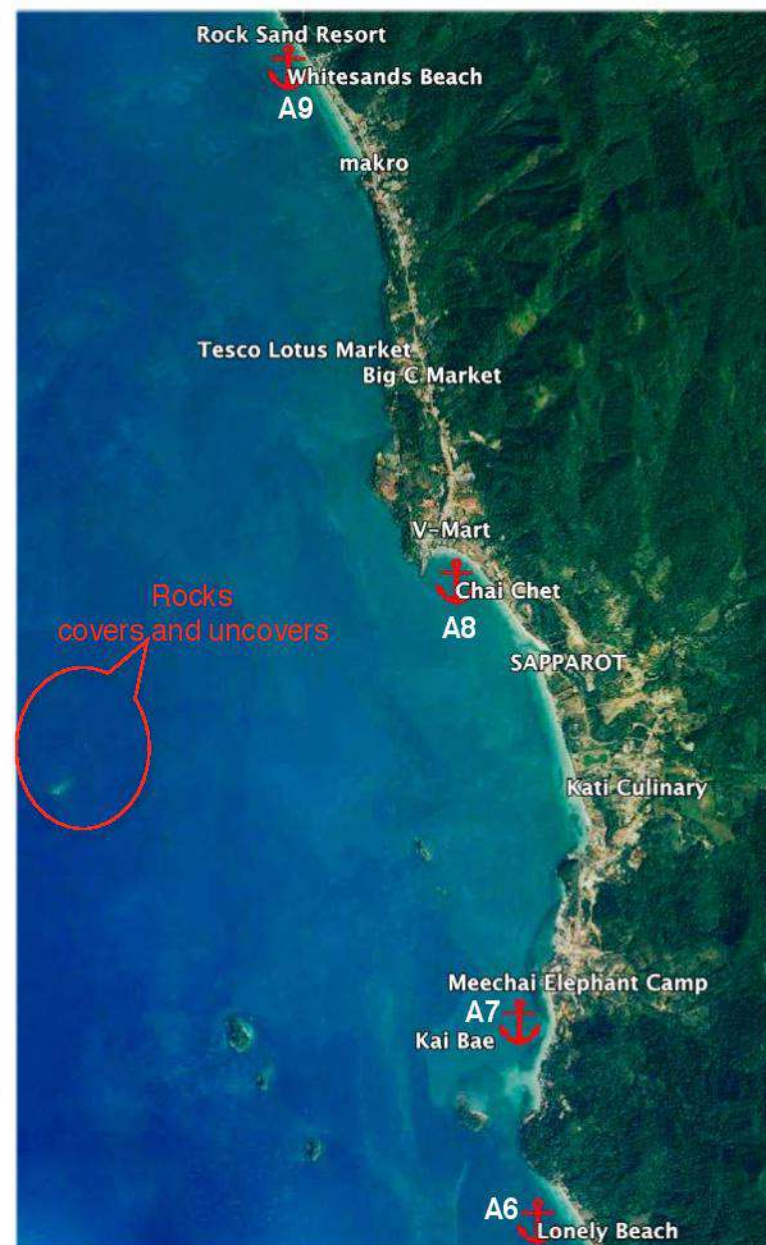
Lonely Beach is more the hippy-dippy, young backpacker scene open late at night with lots of tattoo and piercings and some good vegetarian food on offer.

Kai Bae is more family oriented with lots of good restaurants. You can visit the **Meechai Elephant Camp** and have them meet you at Kai Bae beach to play in the water with the baby elephants for 500B and totally worth it. Don't forget the bananas.

Chai Chet is mostly resorts with a nice beach and the Klong Prao River which you can navigate in the dinghy. Bring the dinghy right to the dock at the **Sapparot Bar** for some tasty homemade curries and a cold drink.

Klong Prao to the south has a more local feeling with a wide sprawl of little roadside shops. **Kati Thai Cooking School** on the south side of town is a great place to learn to cook your favorite local dish. Town is far from the water and easiest to get to by taxi. There are a variety of resorts along the beach.

Whitesands Beach is party central with all the big food shops. In the north you can stop for lunch at **Rock Sand Resort**. Anchor just off-shore and dinghy or swim to the beach.



Approaches and Anchorages:



A6. Lonely Beach, home to the once lonely location of the Tree House, now it's not so lonely with several resorts sharing this lovely beach. There are a variety of resorts on the beach and the little town is just to the south and off the beach, a short walk or taxi ride away.

Anchor in 5-7m off the sandy beach about 400m from the shore, the beach is shallow shelving and there are a few rocks around so take great care when taking the dinghy ashore. Always tie the dinghy off and/or use the anchor and be aware of the tides.

Don't attempt to go ashore south of the sandy beach as there is no safe place to land the dinghy.



A7. Kai Bae Beach has a wide variety of restaurants and bars and the **Meechai Elephant Camp** where you can take the baby elephants for a walk on the beach. They don't charge for a picture but the precious pachyderms frolicking in the water are not to be missed.

Anchor in 5-7m and head in towards the south side with it's sandy bottom. This coast has a shallow shore so pull up the engine and paddle to the beach if necessary.



Approaches and Anchorages cont...

A8. Chai Chet Take care when navigating around this area as there are numerous small islands and submerged rocks. The anchorage is at the northern end of the bay away from such hazards.

Anchor in 5-7m well off the beach or around the klong (small river) mouth.

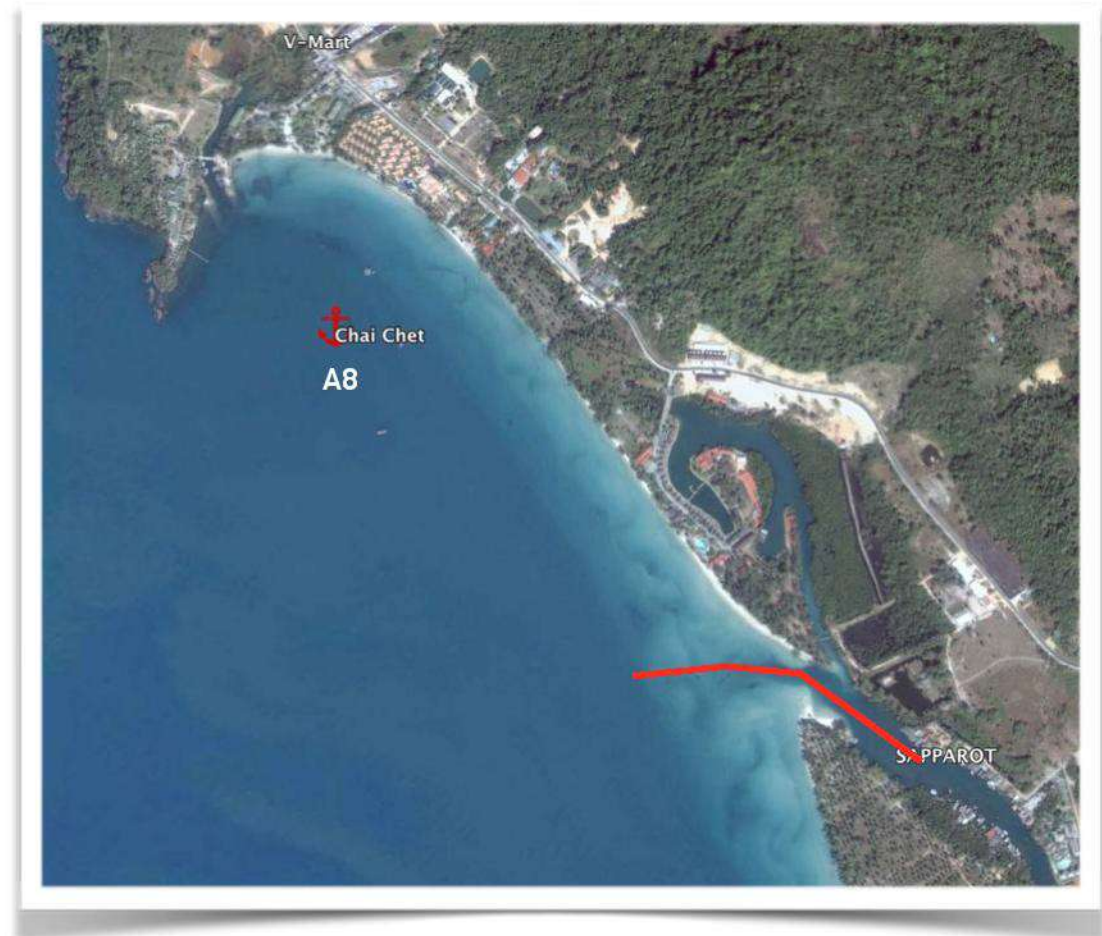
Points of interest: The beach is sandy all along but shallow so take care when going ashore. There are several resorts and the well stocked V-Mart, mini-markets and ATM machines. Toward the center of the bay is a river that can be navigated by dinghy at high tide, or followed on foot up to a small waterfall. The trail is about 3km long and most evenings is lined by hundreds of fireflies. The head of the waterfall is now a national park so there is an entry fee. At the end of the river is where one elephant camp takes their tours and you will often see elephants bathing in the water.

Take care when entering the river as there is a large submerged rock in the center of the channel near the entrance.

Most of the jetties up the river are restricted for use only by the resorts that built them, however it is possible to take the dinghy to a restaurant if you stop there for a drink or something to eat.

Check the tides before going. Docking your dinghy at **Sapparot** for lunch or a drink is a good start. At night the river is beautifully lit by the restaurants and resorts and Phu-Talay Seafood is a scenic stop for dinner.

Off the southern end of this bay are the small islands of Koh Suwan and Koh Rom, beware of several small uncharted rocks around here. Sailing south around the headland into Bai Lan Bay, pass to seaward of Koh Man Nai, you can walk out to this island at low tide.



Sailing south around the headland into Bai Lan Bay, pass to seaward of Koh Man Nai, you can walk out to this island at low tide.

Approaches and Anchorages cont...

A9. Whitesands Beach

This is the main town on Koh Chang. It's possible to anchor anywhere along the beach **in 5-7m on sand** but it's best to anchor towards the quieter northern end of the beach as the beach is dingy friendly. The central section of the beach can dry up 100m offshore in low tides and the southern end of Whitesands beach in fact has no sand and is extremely rocky. Find a tree to tie your dingy to if you plan to stay ashore for any period of time.

Points of interest: Toward the north end of the beach is the popular 15 Palms Resort that has a good restaurant, wireless internet, toilets and showers and there is also a great tree to tie your dingy to. Make sure the staff see you tie up and stop in for a drink and they'll keep an eye on your dingy for you. On the main road is a 7-11 store, pharmacy, ATM, dive shop and multitude of roadside stalls and restaurants.

Before the cliffs to the south end of the beach are some excellent sunset chill out spots. If you're looking for the latest sports update or you're just in need of some pub food and beverage, turn right here then walk around 500m and half way up the small hill is Paddy's Palms Irish Pub. It has the best Sunday Roast in Thailand and also has excellent wireless internet and a nice selection of imports.

Past the huge KC Grand Resort at the north end of town is the Rock Sand Resort that sticks out over the water on stilts. They serve great food in big portions on the deck over the water for great sunsets and have a floating platform you can swim to just off shore.

If you don't mind being further from town, anchor to the far north off the Rock Sand or even the White Sands Beach Resort on the sandy bottom.

All the shops are in this area if you need to restock your provisions and just about anything you can dream of can be found in this little touristy mixed hodge-podge of hotels, souvenir shops, food stalls, buy-me-drinky bars and mini-marts. To re-provision at the Makro, take the dinghy as far south as you can on the sandy shore and then you'll have to walk the rest of the way. Or just take a taxi from where you find a comfortable anchorage and beach landing. The Tesco and Big C are further south and a taxi ride away but Makro should have all you need. .

