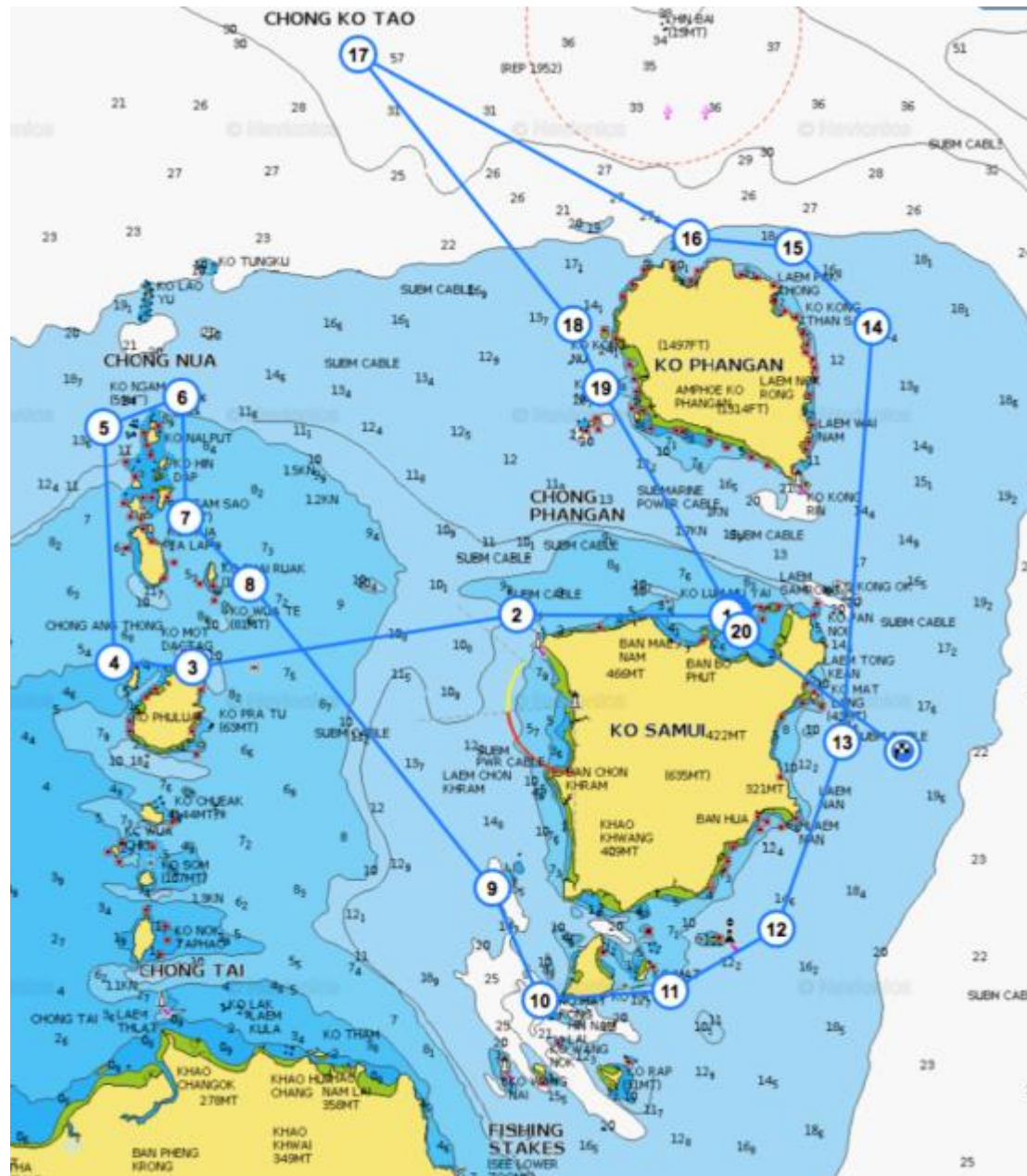


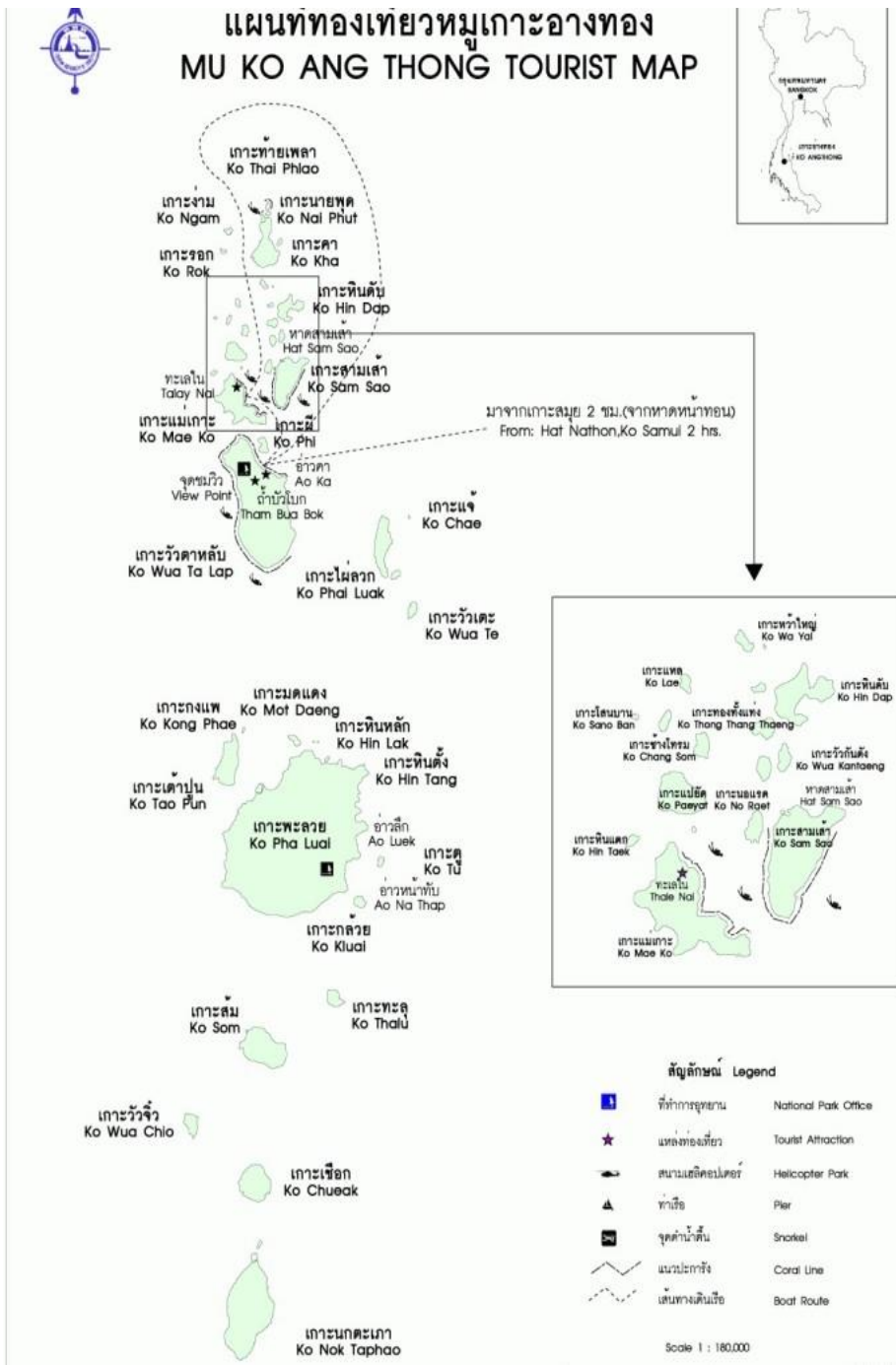
KOH SAMUI | ANG THONG NATIONAL PARK | KOH PHANGAN | KOH TAO | KOH SAMUI

DAY 1: Arrival Koh Samui - Ang Thong National Park

Taxi transfer from Koh Samui Airport to Bo Phut (about 15 minutes), board OCEAN EMERALD at the Fisherman Village.

Koh Samui (1) - Koh Ang Thong National Park (3) (45 nm)





DAY 2 and 3 ANG THONG (3) – (8) (40nm)

The Ang Thong National Park was established in 1980 and covers 42 islands in a total area of 102 km², of which only 18 km² are land. Most of the islands are close to each other; sailing around the park offers a breathtaking panorama. Islands are of different sizes and shapes. All – except for one – are uninhabited and undeveloped. Locals often named them after their distinguishing geography, such as ‘Sleeping Cow Island’ and ‘Three Pillars Island’. Most islands are covered with tropical forests and consists of limestone with mountains of about 10-400 meters above sea level. Over centuries, chemical conditions and weather created strange-looking caves and cliffs. Part of the movie “The Beach”, starring Leonardo DiCaprio, Tilda Swinton and Robert Carlyle was filmed here.

On land, dry evergreen forest covers the large islands of Koh Wua Talap, Ko Paluai, and Ko Sam Sao. The Ang Thong Lady's Slipper Orchid (*Paphiopedilum x Ang Thong*), is an endemic species found only in Ang Thong.

Plants found in limestone crevices with little or no soil, are often small, dry-tolerant, and slow-growing such as *Dracaena Loureira*, Malayun Spurge Tree, *Euphorbia Antiquarum*, and *Morinda Tinctoria*.

Wildlife consists of smaller animals, and include 16 species of mammals, more than 50 species of birds and 5 species of amphibians.

Ang Thong Island: Interesting wildlife to look out for is the Dusky Langur, which comes down to the park's HQ allowing visitors to observe it closely. There is a well-marked, near vertical trail leading to the very top of, not for the faint-hearted. Be sure to start early take good shoes, water and of course a camera. Toward the southern end of the beach is another jungle trail up to a huge cave well worth the trek.

Koh Wua Ta Lap at Ao Phi: there is a ranger station, bungalows, shops and restaurants here.

Koh Wua Ta Lum: ashore there are some steep steps that take you up to a viewpoint overlooking the park and an emerald lake hidden in the center of the island.

Koh Sam Sao: The 'Stone Bridge' is a natural feature, linking two rocks, big enough to ride a dinghy under. Ashore is a short trail leading up to a viewpoint.

Koh Thai Phlao: A group of small islands located in the northern end of the National Park. There are several small 'hongs' (Thai word for 'rooms') dotted around the islands, some large enough to enter by dinghy at mid tide, or explore by kayak. There have been sightings of whale shark and dolphins in this area.

Koh Phaluai, Pinnacle Beach: the east coast is protected area, reserved for bird's nest collection and no anchoring is allowed. On the north coast is a beautiful beach well sheltered from the south and west. You might find giant monitor lizard trails.

Day 4: ANG THONG (8) – KOH SEE KOH HA (9) (20 nm)



Koh See Koh Ha, means 'Four Islands, Five Islands', as one island is hidden behind another. The islands are home to swifts, known for their nests, main ingredient in birds' nest soup. The birds are protected as their nests sell at a high price. Sea Gypsies are the only island inhabitants; their small wooden homes perch on rocky outcrops – much like nests themselves. The gypsies are employed to guard the nests from poachers.

KOH TAEN (10) and KOH MUDSUM (11) (10 nm)



Koh Taen is inhabited by few people, although the population fluctuates with the tourist season. The island is near the fishing village Thong Krut on the south coast of Samui, and accessible only by boat. It has several beaches and is surrounded by coral reef, suitable for snorkeling. Koh Taen features a mangrove forest on the southwest coast with abundant wildlife. Monitor lizards can often be seen during a walk. There is a small temple with a freshwater spring right on the beach.

DAY 5: KOH MUDSUM (11) – KOH PHANGAN (14) (35 nm)

Famous for its full moon parties at Haad Rin Beach, Phangan is primarily a backpacker destination. A party primarily features electronic music and attracts anywhere from 4 - 40,000 party-goers. The name 'Pha-ngan' comes from the word 'Ngan', meaning 'sand bar' in the southern dialect. Indeed, there are many sand bars around the island.

Due to its topography, the population remains based around the coastline whilst the mountainous interior is generally inaccessible. More than half the island is designated as **National Park** and has more than 80 km² of rain forest with diverse flora and fauna. It is also considered a spiritual place with numerous Buddhist temples around the Island and a thriving spa, retreat and meditation industry.

Koh Kong Than Sadet (14): A small island with a scenic beach, great for swimming. It is the gateway to Than Sadet National Park, which includes Than Sadet Waterfalls. The waterfalls have been visited by three Kings of Thailand and are the biggest on Koh Phangan. The National Park offers guided tours through the jungle, where often one can spot giant monitor lizards.

Had Thong Nai Pan (15): A picturesque cove with two beautiful beaches, good swimming, a small village, a few cool bars and a short trek to Than Prawes Waterfall.

Had Khuad (Bottle Beach) (15): A beautiful long white sand beach, great for swimming with several restaurants.

Chaloklum Bay - Koh Ma National Marine Park (16) (10 nm)



Joined to Koh Phangan by a clear white sandbar, Koh Ma has some of the region's best dive sites with clear waters, magnificent corals, turtles and shoals of fish.

Had Thong Lang: A deserted coral bay, great to explore and ideal for a secluded lunch.

DAY 6: KOH PHANGAN (16) - KOH TAO (17) (30 nm)

Koh Tao was likely a stopping off point for Malay fishermen in the past, due largely to its isolated position in the Gulf of Thailand. It was used as a political prison in a similar way to Koh Tarutao in the South. In 1947, the prisoner inhabitants were given a Royal pardon and the island was once again abandoned. The legend then goes that two brothers from Koh Phangan sailed to Koh Tao and settled on the land that is now considered Sairee beach. They farmed and fished and lead a simple life style. Gradually a few simple shops and dive huts started to appear, then resorts, and later bars and other tourism businesses. The island developed two main areas: Sairee Beach, now thriving with nightclubs, resorts and dive shops, and the sleepier "local" side of Chalok Ban Kao.

Koh Nang Yuan is just a short distance from the west side of Koh Tao. It has a lovely beach and is best visited before 9:30 am or after 4:30 pm.



Hike 10 to 15 minutes up the steep path to the viewpoint of the three islands' highest peak and you will be rewarded with a view, which is nothing short of stunning. The island's newest attraction is inter-island ziplining!



DAY 7: KOH TAO (17) – KOH PHANGAN (18) (30 nm)

Cruise down the west coast of Koh Phangan

Koh Kong Nui (18)

A small island, waters around are good for water sports.

Had Lad, Had Yao, Ao Chao Phao (18) are neighbouring beaches, sharing one of the best stretches of coral reef. Good for snorkeling.

There are several good Thai restaurants on all three beaches.

Koh Kong Kliang (19) A small island, good for snorkeling and kayaking.

KOH PHANGAN (18) - KOH SAMUI, BOPHUT BEACH (19) (15 nm)



Disembark OCEAN EMERALD at the Fisherman Village.

Transfer to Koh Samui Airport.

Total distance: approximately 235 nm