

Dive Sites around Phuket

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Ko Racha Yai - Bungalow Bay

Located on the west side of Racha Yai, Bungalow Bay offers excellent diving for the beginner and the advanced diver alike, even when wind and waves come from the east. Visibility never drops below 15m, usually it is about 20m. You can either begin your dive in the shallower part of the bay close to the beach, or as an advanced diver, jump into the water at the outer end of the bay. Your maximum depth here will be around 22m, that's where you reach the sand. Have a look around for rays there, even a whale shark has once been reported, which is an extremely unusual sight in this area. Continue your dive towards the inner part of the bay and you will find schools of Yellowfin Barracuda, many kinds of Butterfly Fish, Triggerfish, Pufferfish, Porcupinefish, Lionfish, Scorpionfish, Moorish Idols, Nudibranches and Moray Eels.

Ko Racha Yai - Staghorn Reef

On the east side of Racha Yai you will find this reef, which is full of Staghorn Coral. Once again, beginners and advanced divers will find a lot to see here. Enter the water either close to the beach at 5m depth and swim around boulders full of coral between sandy patches. These places are suitable for practicing skills during courses. You can also jump in at the south end of the bay and follow the reef. The staghorn here is full of marine life; you will find Boxfish, Moray Eels, schools of Yellowfin Barracuda, Lionfish, Scorpionfish, Butterflyfish, different kinds of Triggerfish, Pufferfish and Porcupinefish.

Ko Racha Yai - Homerun Reef

Just north of Staghorn Reef in bay #1 you enter the water in shallow part of the bay. Heading north you will find boulders rich with marine life, staghorn coral, a big school of fusiliers and many other tropical fish similar to Staghorn Reef. Continue with the reef on your left and you have a good chance to see an octopus or a turtle. Advanced divers can head east to a small wreck at about 22m depth, which is home to a resident school of snappers, Dancing Shrimps and Boxershrimps.

Ko Racha Yai - Lucy's Reef

This is the southernmost dive site of Racha Yai. Starting from the shallow part of a little bay you head south passing boulders with rich marine life. Swim over the sandy patches, you often find Dragon Pipefish here. Continue to south over coral gardens and staghorn coral until you reach a sloping reef that goes down to 22m.

King Cruiser Wreck

Originally a car ferry, the King Cruiser travelled between Phuket and the Phi Phi Islands as a passenger ferry until it hit the Anemone Reef in May 1997. As many fishing boats and dive boats were around for a rescue, everyone onboard got back on land safely. The wreck is now lying at 32m depth, which makes the dive site for advanced divers only. Currents can be strong and visibility might get 15m or less. You have to use a buoy line for your descent and ascent, so be prepared that you won't be the only one holding on to the line at 5m! Now the wreck is a home to lots of big Lionfish and Scorpionfish, so be careful if you have to hold on to anything! Watch out for schools of Fusiliers and hunting Trevallies. If you are lucky, you might even find a Turtle on the deck or a Leopard Shark down on the sand. During the past years the wreck has started to collapse, so don't penetrate the wreck unless you are trained and really know what you are doing.

Shark Point

Close to Anemone Reef and the King Cruiser Wreck is one of the best sites in this area. The main pinnacle is looking out of the water, continuing south you reach Shark Point 2 and further south Shark Point 3. Once famous for frequent Leopard Shark sightings, the site gives only occasional chance to see them nowadays. Someone once called this place "No Shark Point", and guess what happened that day. A beautiful Leopard Shark was lying on the sandy bottom, of course! Even if you don't see a shark, this is still one of the best sites around Phuket. Huge Gorgonian Seafans, Hard Coral, Soft Coral, anemones with lots of different Anemone Fish. This is where you find Nemo, the Anemone Clownfish, White Eyed Moray Eels, Giant Moray Eels, Ghostpipefish, Batfish and Barracuda. Maximum depth of this dive site is 24m.

Anemone Reef

This submerged pinnacle is another superb dive site. Beginning at a depth of 5m, the first you see is a carpet of anemones with lots of anemone fish living in there. This is another home of Nemo, and you can be sure to see all his family here also. Though smaller than Shark Point, many divers even prefer this site, due to a bigger chance of seeing Leopard Sharks. Besides, you will also find Nurse Sharks, Ghostpipefishes, White Eyed and Giant Moray Eels, Gorgonian Seafans as well as beautiful hard and soft coral. If currents are strong it can be a challenge to circle the pinnacle. On some dives you might have to stay on one side to find some shelter, but you will have to share this space with other divers, especially during your safety stop. Maximum depth is about 26m.

Ko Doc Mai

No one really knows how this rocky island got its name, which would be translated as "Flower Island" in English. If you find the flower let us know. Anyway, this dive site makes an excellent drift dive. Featuring a wall going down to 23m and two caves, this is a site for those looking for small stuff. Stay at a depth of around 15m during this dive, and you will find Boxershrimps, Dancing Shrimps, Ghostpipefish, many different kinds of nudibranches, and maybe even a Seahorse.

Other sights include Scorpionfish, Frogfish, Giant Puffer- and Porcupinefish, Nurse Sharks, lots of Butterflyfish, Bannerfish and Moorish Idols. You might also see a Banded Seasnake swimming along the wall and looking into tiny holes. The wall itself is full of coral and has large Gorgonian Seafans. The northern cave is rather small and should not be entered without experience in cave diving and appropriate equipment. Good buoyancy is essential in there, any finkick towards the bottom will stir up the sand and turn your visibility into almost zero! The southern cave is large enough to enter for almost everyone who carries a torch. You will get under a large overhang first where you should have a look for Seahorses. Enter the cave, turn around and have a look out into the blue. You won't forget this view!