

THAILAND

Prachuap

Khirikhan Province



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FOREWORD



Thanks for downloading this FREE interactive travel guide. You've made an excellent choice if you plan on **GETTING OFF THE BEATEN TRACK** in THAILAND. Before you delve into the content of this travel guide, please take a few minutes to read this foreword. It outlines how to make the best use of the information contained within.

First-hand experience: This travel guide has been put together using first-hand experience gained from traveling to, and exploring, all the locations presented within. The information and photos featured in my travel guides, have been collated over years of putting boots on the ground. There is no second-hand information, or information which is plagiarized from other travel sources, within this guide. Every cave, waterfall, river, viewpoint, jungle trail, temple site, guesthouse and restaurant presented, or promoted, I have been to and seen and/or experienced myself.

Getting off the beaten track: The primary focus of my travel guides is **ADVENTURE TRAVEL** (and activities) to locations which are non-mainstream tourist destinations. As an example, there is no information for the mainstream tourist locations of Thailand (except as transit hub's before heading off to a more remote location) listed in this travel guide. As such, the information in this guide is directed towards travelers (not tourists) who are keen for a bit of adventure - caving, climbing, jungle

trekking, kayaking - in an off the beaten track location, of South East Asia. If these types of activities aren't to your liking, then this travel guide won't be much use to you. There's no information in here about the party towns in South East Asia.

Budget travel: Knowing the importance of making the most of your hard-earned currency, my travel links ([12GO ASIA](#)) and accommodation links ([AGODA](#)) are predominantly budget oriented. They provide a range of options for getting to a central hub, or base, from which you can make your daily explorations.

Independent sightseeing: Instead of going on group tours, I strongly promote the idea of renting your own vehicle (car or motorbike) and venturing out yourself. To help you get to the exact location, there's always a [GOOGLE MAPS](#) link to show the route from a hub (hotel or guesthouse) to the sightseeing attraction. If there's a local tour operator offering excellent adventure type tours, or activities, I'll provide links to their website. A good example of a great adventure tour operator is [GREEN DISCOVERY LAOS](#), who offer excellent caving, kayaking and trekking tours throughout Laos.

The Table of Contents: This is page four of the travel guide and has a sequential list of sections, which you can go to directly by clicking on the [GREEN](#) numbered tab.

YouTube Links: These take you directly to my YouTube Vlog ([Megaworld Asia](#)) where you can see short, high quality travel videos of the numerous attractions listed in my travel guides. If you enjoy the videos, please hit the like button and don't forget to subscribe to see my upcoming adventures.

Your next adventure is just one click away

Safe travels,

MEGA

Prachuap Khiri Khan Province

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**It's Time To Get
Off The Beaten Track**

How To Use This Interactive Travel Guide

The Table Of Contents: To effortlessly move from the TOC to the page you want to view, simply click on the **page number**: **1**

YouTube Links: These will take you to a short highlights video, of the sightseeing attraction, in the section you're looking at:



Other Links: These take you to ancillary services such as recommended restaurants, or car and motorbike rental agencies, in the location you're traveling to:

ANCILLARY SERVICES

Travel Links: This takes you to **12GO ASIA**, an excellent travel group which provides a range of options for getting around the region:



The Table Of Contents: To move back to the TOC, click on the **yellow arrows**, at the bottom of each Page: 

Google Maps Links: These provide a route from a designated location (e.g., a hotel) to a particular sightseeing attraction:



Information Links: These links take you to information sites, such as Wikipedia or Wiki-voyage, to provide more in-depth info on a particular subject or location:



Accommodation Links: This takes you to the Agoda website to check accommodation availability and make bookings:



It's Time To Get Off The Beaten Track



PRACHUAP KHIRIKHAN - GENERAL INFORMATION

About: Located approximately 318 km south of Bangkok, Prachuap Khirikhan and its surrounding area is quite possibly the best kept secret for travel and sightseeing in Thailand at the moment. Due to the fact it's not that easy to travel to (you need to take a train from Bangkok or Surat Thani) it's still an off the beaten track destination. The small number of travelers stopping off there obviate this. However, the word is getting out that Prachuap and its pristine beaches and majestic coastal scenery, is a place well worth taking a couple of days to enjoy.

Getting there: There is no commercial airport at Prachuap Khirikhan therefore those wanting to travel there need to use the train or bus services. If you are coming from Bangkok you need to check the timetable as not all the trains departing from Bang Sue Station will stop at Prachuap Khirikhan station. The safest bet, in terms of arriving at Prachuap at a convenient time of the day, is to take the 8.05 am (special express # 43) out of Bang Sue. This will put you in Prachuap between 12.30 - 13.00 (approx 4.5 - 5 hours travel time).



As of Oct 2017, a one way fare is 455 THB per person for a first class seat. **Click the link below for travel options from Bangkok to Prachuap Khiri Khan:**



PRACHUAP KHIRIKHAN - GENERAL INFORMATION

Accommodation: Prachuap town has one of the most majestic coastlines of any town in Thailand. A sweeping horseshoe bay which is flanked by magnificent karst peaks at either end. The beach road runs for approximately 1.5 km along the foreshore and, as expected, there are lots of good quality, inexpensive accommodation choices looking directly out over the ocean. A popular choice for many travelers and backpackers is the **Thaimex cafe & Homestay**. Located just two streets back from the beach road, the Safe House Hostel has reasonably priced rooms for approximately US 16 per night. **Click the link below for inquiries at Thaimex Cafe & Homestay:**

THAIMEX CAFE & HOMESTAY

Where to Eat: There is lot's of inexpensive, outdoor Thai and seafood eateries along the beach road. For good quality western food, try The Greek Taverna:

GREEK TAVERNA



Mid-range Price: If you are looking for something a bit more upmarket then the **Hadthong Hotel** has nice rooms for approximately 1000 THB per night. **Click the link below to make a booking:**



Prachuap Beach Front

SIGHTSEEING ATTRACTIONS & LOCAL HISTORY

Attractions in and around Prachuap Khiri Khan: There are plenty of noteworthy attractions in and around Prachuap Khiri Khan Township and the best way of getting about is on a rented motor scooter. These can be hired from vendors along the beach road and the going rate is approximately 200 THB per day. **In no particular order this is a list of the worthwhile attractions in the area:**

- Ao Manao Beach
- Khao Lom Muak Peak
- Khao Chong Krachok (Temple)
- Khao Ta Mong Lai (National Park)
- Khan Kra Dai Cave (Ao Noi Temple)
- Singkhorn Pass (Burmese Border)
- Khao Hin Thoen Priests Camp
- Kui Buri National Park (Elephants)

Ao Manao Beach: This is one of the best beaches in the area and is located at the next bay south from Prachuap. However, to get there you'll need to pass through a Thai Air-Force base. The air force base has been there since world war two and mainly serves as a training branch. It gained some notoriety during the war as it was the location where the



Japanese army first landed to begin their invasion of South East Asia. The defense forces of the day put up spirited resistance and inflicted heavy losses on the Japanese invaders, but in the end succumbed to orders from the prime minister to cease fire. There is a monument commemorating the valiant efforts force in defending their country on December 8th, 1941. **Click the link below for more in-depth info:**

WIKIPEDIA

Ao Manao Beach

VIEWPOINTS & HIKES

Khao Lom Muak Peak: Most people will normally head straight to Ao Manao beach but if you happen to be in town on one of the Thai public holidays there is the possibility of doing something a bit more challenging; climbing up the peak known as Khao Lom Muak. Use google maps to make your way to a location known as the "**Monkey Monument**." This is where the stairway up to the peak begins. **Click the link below for directions:**



Limited Opening: As mentioned, it is only open on special holidays (e.g., Big Buddha Day) and you should get there early (no later than 8 am) as the site gets crowded with locals wanting to earn merit by making the ascent.

Start Early: It's also recommended to make the ascent in the cooler hours of the morning, rather than midday or the afternoon, because the arduous climb will have you bathed in perspiration. It's a 700 meter ascent to the top however, the stairs only go half way up due to the steepness of the upper section.



Fixed Ropes: Where the stairs finish, fixed ropes have been put in place to enable climbers to pull themselves up and over the steeper inclines. It's advisable to **wear good hiking boots as the rocks are jagged; sandals and flip flops will get cut to shreds (as well as your feet)**. A lot of the locals also use gloves to give better grip on the fixed ropes. Take a good supply of drinking water as you'll perspire profusely with the exertion of climbing the upper section. It will normally take an hour to make the ascent at a moderate pace. Once up there the effort is well worth it as the panoramic view is spectacular.



VIEWPOINTS & BUDDHIST TEMPLES

Khao Chong Krachok: This is a smaller peak, with a temple at the top, at the southern end of the foreshore road. Compared with Khao Lom Muak it is an easy ascent of about 300 steps. Most sightseers normally go up late in the afternoon to catch the sunset. To get there you'll need to park on the temple grounds and then work your way through the hawker's stalls to find the stairway to the top. **Click the link below for directions:**



Monkey's: Unfortunately, the hill top is inhabited by a large gang of monkeys and over the years, visitors have foolishly been giving them food. The monkeys have now become quite aggressive and will try to grab any loose items from sightseers, thinking it could be food.

Secure Your Valuables: It's advisable to keep things such as hats, caps, and sunglasses secured in a backpack. During my visit I had a bottle of drinking water ripped out of my hand and a local girl had her baseball cap plucked



from her head. Once gone, there's no getting the stolen items back as the monkeys will quickly move to a position out of reach. Be very careful with mobile phone use (taking selfies) as I've heard these have also been plucked from an unsuspecting visitor. Another negative about the site is the stench of monkey urine and faeces; it's everywhere. This site is one of those places that you tick off the bucket list and don't go back to.



BUDDHIST TEMPLES & CAVES

Ao Noi Temple complex: To get there use the same road to get to Khao Ta Mong Lai forest park. The road across to Ao Noi branches left a few hundred meters before the park headquarters. Follow the signage and you'll eventually pass the new teak temple at ground level, before arriving at the parking area at the bottom of the hill. **Click the link below for directions:**



The Old Temple: From the parking area a cement stairway starts from the bottom of the hill. Approximately 10 meters up, a branching set of stairs on the right leads up to the old temple. Although in a state of disrepair, there are a couple of interesting features worth a few minutes of your time. The old temple is an odd construction, with the outer surfaces covered in sea shells. To the left hand side of the structure there's also a great view out over the nearby bay.



Great Views

Buddha Statues: Behind the old temple there are a number of Buddha statues in amongst the undergrowth. One is an unusual depiction with a sword in the Buddha's hand.

Small Cave: The most interesting feature behind the old temple is the small cave which houses a number of Buddha Statues of varying sizes. On the left side, as you enter, there's a ledge with dozens of small, gold Buddha images.



Behind The Old Ao Noi Temple

BUDDHIST TEMPLES & CAVES

Khan Kra Dai Cave: After a few minutes spent checking out the old temple, head back to the main pathway, turn right and continue up to Khan Kra Dai Cave. There is a solid stairway of approximately 300 steps up to the cave entrance. The entrance is small and there's a ladder descent to negotiate but once on the floor, the cave opens up reveal a large reclining Buddha in the first chamber.

Terracotta Monks: Approximately 50 meters further on there's a second chamber with another reclining Buddha and an amazing sight; rows of terracotta monks seated on the cave floor. A close inspection of their faces will reveal they're all different.

Best Attraction: Khan Kra Dai Cave is probably the best attraction in the area. Being a few kilometers out of Prachuap town it has very few tourists going there. The majority of visitors are locals paying their respects to Buddha.

First Visit: I was fortunate enough to have visited this site in 2013 with a friend who knew the area extensively. Otherwise most people, even many who live in the area, have no idea



First Cave Room

of its existence as there's no official tour to this site. To get there you will need to rent a motorbike in Prachuap Khiri Khan and visit independently. **There is no entry fee.**

New Ao Noi Temple: This is the large teak structure you'll pass on the way to the parking area at the bottom of the hill. There's some nice coloured murals inside which depict the life of the Buddha.



Terracotta Monks

SINGKHORN PASS BORDER AREA

About: As the crow flies, this area is reputedly the narrowest part of Thailand - just 12 km from Singkhorn Pass to the coast - and forms part of the Isthmus of Kra. To get there from Prachuap Township use google maps and follow the winding road (via highway # 4 and route # 1039) until you arrive at the border pass. **Click the link below for directions:**



Border Market: The main point of interest here is the border market which is predominantly staffed and run by refugee hill tribe people from Burma. The market sells a range of products derived solely from the jungles of Burma. Apparently, all the natural timber furniture, the jewellery and the orchids all come from the jungles on the Burmese side. Whether one agrees with the idea of the sale of jungle products (particularly teak furniture) is an entirely personal choice but it is an interesting and colourful market.



Teak wood furniture



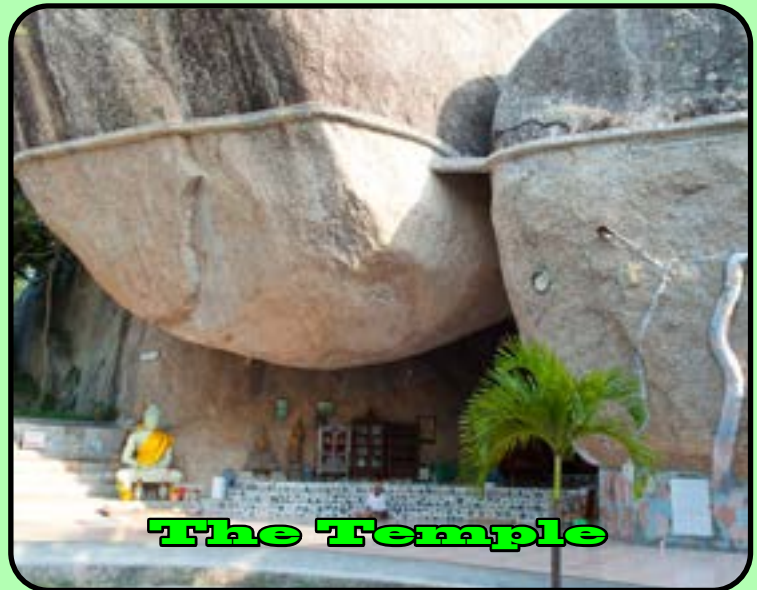
The Border

KHAO HIN THOEN PRIESTS CAMP

About: This is a remote temple site built in amongst a pile of massive granite boulders. It is a very nice sightseeing experience but is not so easy to locate. If you are coming from Pra-chuap khiri Khan, you need to get on to route # 1025 (right off highway # 4) and then follow directly for 8 km until you see the "Khao Hin Thoen Stones Hang". There is an unpaved road (approximately 800 meters) which leads to a parking area in front of the main temple. **Click the link below for directions:**

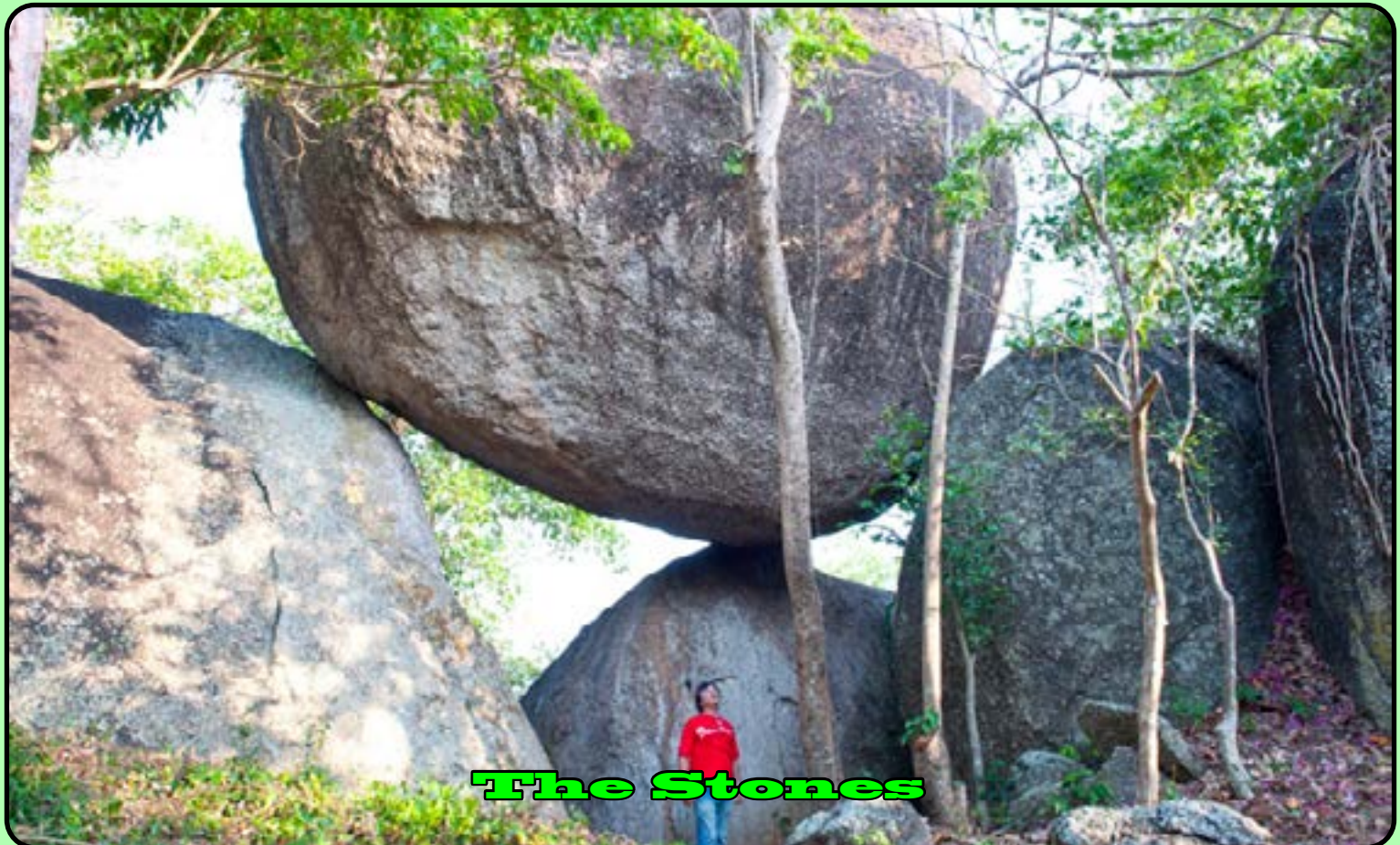


The temple (Wat): Is staffed by a resident monk and a number of nuns who have been developing the site for more than 30 years. The temple and living quarters are built into the large boulders at near the car park and you are welcome to leave a donation once you've completed your visit. The primary attraction of the site is a hiking trail which weaves its way through the large boulders which cover the area. The trail starts and ends at the temple and does a loop around the site. There's



directional signage (arrows) along the way to ensure you don't get lost. But having said that, care should still be taken in making sure you keep to the main trail as there are branching trails, leading to viewpoints, which aren't well marked.

Note: don't embark on this hike late in the day without a flashlight as the chance of getting lost as darkness falls, is certainly possible.



KUI BURI ELEPHANT RESERVE - GENERAL INFO

About: It's promoted as the best place in Thailand to see groups of elephants in their natural habitats and having visited a number of locations throughout the country, I'd say that would be an accurate assessment. According to the park guides, there are approximately 250 - 300 wild elephants in the vicinity of the national park. **Click the link below for directions:**



Getting There: It's well worth making the effort to go here but there's a couple of things to be aware of as this is not such an easy place to find due to confusion created by having two locations advertised as "wildlife viewing." If you go on an arranged outing with a tour company then that isn't an issue but if you are **doing it yourself** all you need to remember is to take the turn to the right off route # 3217. **That will be the first sign you see, take it.** If you continue on to the other location, at the southern side of the dam, you will end up



wasting at least an hour or more of your time. This location is the site of the national park headquarters and even though you will see signage saying "wildlife viewing," **IT IS NOT THE CORRECT LOCATION.** The staff there are very friendly and they speak some English. They will give you a poorly drawn map directing you back to the correct location. This map is hopelessly inaccurate in terms of distances and road directions.



KUI BURI ELEPHANT RESERVE - SIGHTSEEING

Wildlife Viewing Place: I was fortunate that I can speak some Thai so I eventually managed to get on the correct road to the correct "wildlife viewing" place. Once there a guide will approach you telling you the costs etc. The price per person for the tour is 850 THB. If you are coming independently in a vehicle you will be charged an additional 200 THB to park your vehicle in the parking area. The tour through the wildlife viewing area is done safari style from the back of a pick-up truck with bench seats.

Viewing Areas: There are three wildlife viewing areas along a 7 km dirt road. The guides are very helpful as there are some positioned at each location and they keep in touch with 2 way radios so they know exactly at each moment if there are elephants in the areas. Please note, the wildlife viewing tours are only done between 2 pm - 6 pm, so if you arrive in the morning you'll have a long wait. According to the guides, 4 pm - 6 pm is the best times as the heat is least intense and the elephants will come out of the forest.



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