



once IN A LIFETIME

Thailand isn't just about beaches and blissing out - dive in with Turquoise Holidays and explore the country's exciting array of activities and experiences

A Sea Fan in Similan Islands,
Phang Nga



Left Take an elephant trek through the scenic jungle in the north
Right Pool Villa at The Rasavanda

As well as some essential R&R, your dream Thailand honeymoon is all about experiences that will stay with you long after your tan has faded. Famed for its blissful beaches and beautiful hotels, Thailand is also renowned for the variety of activities and adventures you can enjoy as part of your stay, from massage lessons to learning how to be a mahout (who care for and 'drive' elephants).

DIVE IN

Just as there is a beach for everyone in Thailand, there's an experience for every interest and level of activity too. For water babies, dive in under the surface of the sparkling seas and explore some of Thailand's world-class dive sites. PADI courses are excellent value for money so whether you are a beginner or an experienced diver there are some famous spots you should try. The most popular and awe-inspiring dive destinations featuring spectacular coral walls, huge sea fans and amazing rock reefs are found off Phuket Island, most famously the National Marine Parks of the Similan and Surin Islands and Burma Banks. On the other side of the mainland, in the Gulf of Thailand, the areas around Sattahip and Koh Samui, especially Koh Tao, also have exceptional diving.

One of Turquoise's favourite spots is further

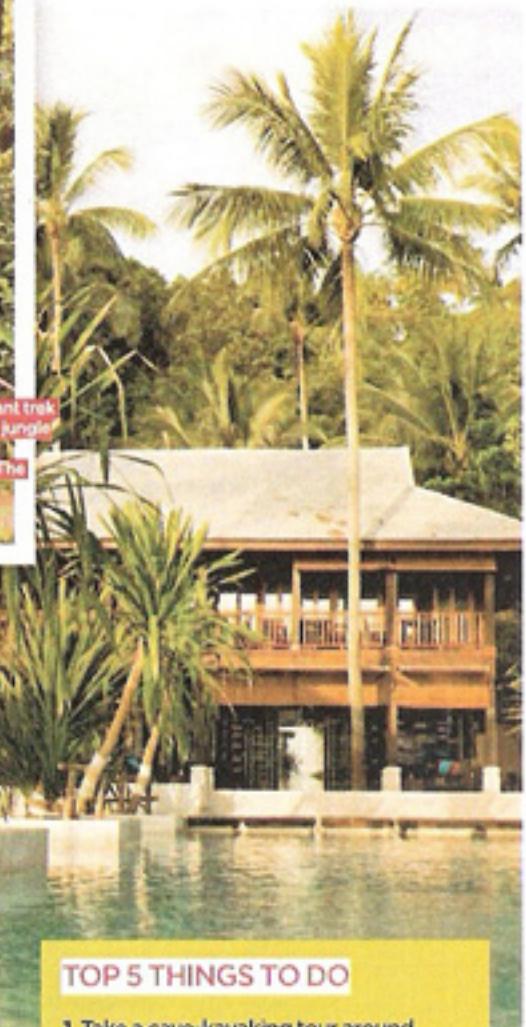
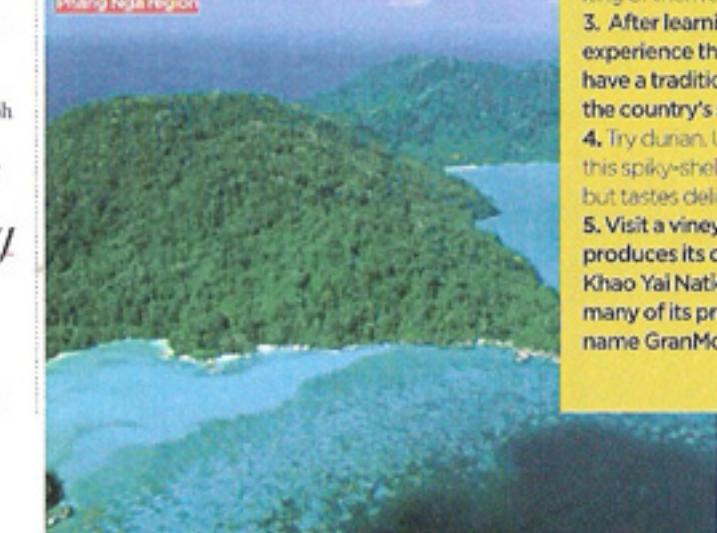
Dive into the sparkling seas and explore some of Thailand's world-class dive sites

south in the Andaman Sea, off the island of Koh Lanta, near the relatively unspoilt Krabi coast. The Pimalai Resort and Spa is a five-star retreat that defines the saying 'getting away from it all'. Tucked on a deserted cove between the rainforest and the beach, its paradise location means it is the perfect base to explore the surrounding seas. The hotel has its own boutique PADI dive center offering both basic dive training and trips to Thailand's most remote dive sites. Don't miss Koh Haa, five beautiful limestone islands separated by deep and abundant waters, the Phi Phi Islands and Hin Daeng and Hin Muang, the world famous Red Rock and Purple Rock.

GET ACTIVE

Back on dry land, get your heart racing with exhilarating mountain biking available across the country's diverse landscapes. The hilly

Idyllic islands of Phang Nga region



TOP 5 THINGS TO DO

1. Take a cave-kayaking tour around the stunning limestone islands off Phuket. Explore the caves and island lagoons and even meet the islands' resident monkeys.
2. Shop 'til you drop in one of Thailand's many markets. The Chatuchak Weekend Market in Bangkok is still the undisputed king of them all.
3. After learning the art of massage, experience the true artists at work and have a traditional Thai massage at one of the country's spas or on the beach.
4. Try durian. Unique to southeast Asia, this spiky-shelled fruit is famously stinky but tastes delicious!
5. Visit a vineyard. Yes, Thailand even produces its own wine and the beautiful Khao Yai National Park area is home to many of its producers, including top name GranMonte.



Left Stay with a hill tribe at Lisu Lodge in the hills of Chiang Mai
Right Take a cooking course in Thai delicacies at The Rasananda



north of the country around Mae Hong Son and Chiang Mai is the centre for much of the mountain biking activity with experienced guides leading tours and trips with meals and overnight stays, allowing you to explore the area and visit some of the region's hill tribes.

For the less energetic many hotels offer more gentle activities, which is a great way to explore the local area you are staying in. Six Senses Yao Noi, a stunning island retreat off the coast of Phuket offers numerous activities from rock climbing and sea canoeing to mountain biking around the islands scenery and sites.

AND RELAX...

For an altogether slower pace of experience, how about learning the traditional art of Thai massage. Wat Po Temple in Bangkok is widely regarded as the birthplace of traditional Thai massage and is still Thailand's most famous massage school. Full courses there can last weeks but for a brief introduction to this art, Turquoise can arrange a half day course so you and your husband will be kneading in no time. While you are in Bangkok check into one of the city's top hotels, the serene Sukhothai or cool Metropolitan, for a bit of further R&R. While you are in town, try your hands at another art – the art of shopping – in one of the many markets or malls across the city.

As well as their famous massages, there's another thing Thailand is known globally for: its food. Fragrant, spicy, varied and always delicious, there's almost as many opportunities to

take a cooking course in Thai delicacies as there are opportunities to eat them. The course at Koh Phangan's luxurious hideaway Rasananda, like many others, starts with an early morning trip to the local produce market, which is a must for any foodie, then it's back to the kitchens to learn how to combine the heady famous flavours, such as lemongrass, coriander, chilli or coconut, like a pro. Plus of course you get to eat your hard work at the end of the lesson!

BACK TO NATURE

Get up close and personal with Thailand's national symbol, the iconic elephant, cared for and driven by local men known as mahouts. The serene Anantara Golden Triangle resort in the north of Thailand has its own elephant camp, which was set up in conjunction with the country's National Elephant Institute and the Elephant Conservation Centre. During your stay you can take a one- or three-day mahout course teaching you the basic commands used to drive the elephant, how to bathe them in the river, as well as feeding and general daily care, culminating in a 'driving test' to pass the course!

There are also several traditional working hill tribes in northern Thailand. Boutique hotel Rachamankha is a haven of tranquillity in the midst of Chiang Mai's old town but also makes the perfect base to explore the region and can arrange visits to local hill tribes.

To get more closely involved with the communities, stay with a hill tribe at Lisu Lodge in the hills above Chiang Mai. An award-



Explore the local area
mountain biking at the Six Senses Yao Noi

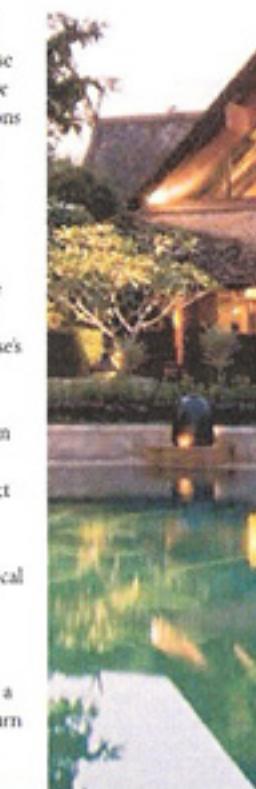


winning eco-lodge, the spacious wood and bamboo huts are set in lush gardens next to a Lisu (one of the main hill tribes) village, whose inhabitants built and now staff the lodge. Here you can take part in one to five day combinations of activities including wildlife walks, white-water rafting, swimming in waterfalls, or visiting a local school – all with a refreshing sunset cocktail and lovingly-cooked Thai food to round off the day.

For more community based tourism in the south of Thailand, the country's first luxury tented camp Elephant Hills is one of Turquoise's favourite back to nature destinations. Combining stylish, safari-style tents with a great range of activities, the camp is situated in Khao Sok National Park, the largest area of rainforest in southern Thailand. It's the perfect spot to enjoy activities and explore this awe-inspiring scenery.

Whatever experience you have in this magical and varied country, from adrenalin-fuelled adventures to learning local traditions and meeting local people, you are sure to return from your amazing Thailand honeymoon with a suitcase full of memories and a yearning to return to try all the things you didn't have time for!

OFFER Find out more about an experience-filled amazing Thailand honeymoon by visiting the Tourism Thailand website at tourismthailand.co.uk. The honeymoon experts The Turquoise Holiday Company (01494 678400; turquoiseholidays.co.uk) can create your own bespoke Thailand honeymoon and offer a 14-night trip from £2,825 per person, including two nights at the Metropolitan Bangkok in a City Room, three nights at Anantara Golden Triangle in a Deluxe Room, one night at Lisu Lodge, three nights at Rachamankha Chiang Mai in a Superior Room and five nights at The Pimalai, Koh Lanta in a Deluxe Room, all B&B (plus lunch and dinner at Lisu Lodge) and including all flights and transfers. Activities and tours would be at an additional cost.



Panaramic Pool view at The Anantara Golden Triangle

Thailand's first luxury tented camp Elephant Hills is one of Turquoise's favourite back to nature destinations