



How to Spend a Weekend in Phang Nga, Thailand

Day 1: Check Into Your Hotel, Eat Dinner, and Relax by the Pool at Sunset

Check into Sametnangshe Boutique Hotel

A few months before our trip, I stumbled across a photo of the view from [Sametnangshe Boutique Hotel](#) on Instagram, and it stopped me in my tracks. I instantly added it to our itinerary, and I'm so glad I did.

The view is exactly as magical as promised with sweeping panoramas over Phang Nga Bay that you'll never forget. However, the hotel itself felt a little more worn than I expected, and it was the most expensive place we stayed on our trip.

We paid about \$190 per night for the basic room during the off-season, which felt steep considering we stayed in luxury resorts elsewhere in Thailand for half the price. Our favorites were [Santhiya Koh Yao Yai](#) and [Le Meridien Chiang Rai](#).

The upgraded suites with outdoor tubs and private pools looked dreamy, but we couldn't quite justify the extra cost.

That said, the service here was top notch! We were greeted with fresh mango smoothies and handmade flower bracelets. These small but thoughtful gestures made us feel so welcome. The staff really went above and beyond throughout our stay.

If you're looking for alternatives, we noticed the neighboring [Beyond Skywalk Nangshi](#) offers similar jaw-dropping views at slightly lower rates, so that might be worth checking out.

Dinner at Dalar Restaurant

The hotel's on-site restaurant, Dalar, serves delicious food with amazing views.

The menu includes both Thai favorites and Western options like pizza and pasta. We were skeptical about ordering pizza in Thailand, but it turned out to be delicious!

Unfortunately, it rained the night we arrived, so we couldn't sit outside on the terrace, but the views from the dining room were still beautiful.

Enjoy Sunset at the Pool

Sametnangshe Hotel does get the award for the best pool views! The infinity pool is small, but it boasts one of the most breathtaking views over Phang Nga Bay.

When we checked into our room, we were pleasantly surprised to find complimentary coconuts and a fruit platter. We carried them down to enjoy by the pool at sunset. It was pure magic and the perfect way to ease into our weekend.

Day 2: Breakfast, Longtail Boat Tour, Lunch, and Relax at the Hotel

Breakfast at the Hotel

Breakfast is included with your stay at Sametnangshe Hotel. While it wasn't the extravagant buffet spreads we had at other hotels in Thailand, it was simple, fresh, and tasty.

Alongside fruit and pastries, we could order hot dishes like omelets, which made for a perfect start to the day. Heart-shaped watermelon slices paired with that view? It doesn't get much better.

Longtail Boat Tour of Phang Nga Bay

The absolute highlight of our trip was a private longtail boat tour through Phang Nga Bay. Longtail boats, called *Ruea Hang Yao* in Thai, originated in the 1930s and have since become an iconic symbol of Thailand.

Taking a ride on a longtail boat was on my Thailand bucket list, and I'm so glad we could make it happen! Our tour almost got canceled due to rain, but luckily the skies cleared.

The hotel organizes the tour with local operators. You can't book in advance since tours are weather-dependent, but once you check in, you can pick from a few different tour options.

We chose Program A, which included a hidden bat cave, James Bond Island, Koh Panyee, and Lod Cave. The four-hour private tour cost about \$170 for three people, including national park fees and kayaking. We thought it was an incredible value for such a memorable experience.

Hidden Bat Cave

This was our first stop, and it was unexpected since it wasn't listed on the tour flier.

Our guide dropped us off with hard hats at the cave entrance and let us explore at our own pace.

The cave isn't very deep, but it has soaring ceilings covered in clusters of bats. You'll find makeshift ladders if you want to climb up and explore the different levels.

We spent about 15 minutes exploring the cave before hopping back into the boat.

James Bond Island (Khao Tapu)

Khao Tapu Island was made famous by the 1974 James Bond Classic *The Man With the Golden Gun*.

I was looking forward to this stop the most, but I have to admit that it felt too commercialized and was a little bit of a disappointment.

The famous small strand of beach is filled with vendors selling souvenirs. I understand this is the livelihood of so many locals, and we bought a beautiful handmade pearl bracelet and other souvenirs from the sweetest lady. However, I just wish they would move the stands to another part of the island so that the beach could remain unobstructed.

James Bond Island is part of a national park, and there is a fee to visit, so bring cash. It was 300 baht per person (\$9.22) at the time of our visit.

Drones are not allowed at national parks, including James Bond Island. I know you've probably seen amazing drone shots on social media, but leave your drone packed away!

Lod Cave

Our next stop was at Lod Cave, where you'll hop onto a kayak, paddled by a local guide (additional 300 THB per person).

We kayaked through thick mangroves and around unique rock formations. We spotted jellyfish and mudskipper fish that run on top of the water.

Our guides took us to the entrance of Lod Cave, but unfortunately, the tide was too high, so we couldn't enter the cave. When booking your longtail boat tour with the hotel, I would inquire about the tide timetable so that you can visit the cave at low tide.

Even though we didn't get to visit the cave, it was still a fun experience!

Koh Panyee

Our last stop was at Koh Panyee, a remote floating village with over 1500 residents hidden within Phang Nga Bay.

Koh Panyee was founded over 200 years ago by 3 Indonesian fishermen and their families. They built the village on stilts over the water since foreigners couldn't legally own land. The majority of the 360 families living here today are their direct descendants!

Today, Koh Panyee is a floating piece of history and thriving village with a mosque, a school, a hospital, a floating soccer pitch, a market, a museum, restaurants, a small hotel, and even a cemetery!

It really is such a unique place to visit and catch a fascinating glimpse into what life would be like living here. Tourism now supports much of the economy. Almost every home has a shop in the front selling goods or food, so bring cash to help support local families.

Koh Panyee was our last stop on the boat tour before heading back after a fun day of beauty and adventure!

Lunch and Relaxing at the Hotel

We took an early morning tour and were back in time for lunch at the hotel's Dalar Restaurant.

I liked my pizza so much the day before that I decided to try the gnocchi. That was an unfortunate decision. Jason and Jayden ordered Kra Pao, a traditional Thai dish, and they made the right decision!

We also couldn't pass up another fresh mango smoothie, it was so good!

This was our last meal at the hotel and I'm really going to miss dining with that view!

Since our flight from Phuket wasn't until the evening, the staff kindly stored our bags so we could spend the afternoon relaxing. We lounged by the pool, read, and even played games in the recreation room before heading out.

The hotel can arrange transportation, but we found it cheaper and just as easy to order a car on Grab.

A Few Final Thoughts

Phang Nga Bay is an absolute must for any Thailand itinerary. Its dramatic landscapes and hidden gems make it unforgettable.

As for Sametnangshe Boutique Hotel, my feelings are mixed. The views are unbeatable, the staff is incredibly warm, and the service thoughtful. But for the price, the rooms didn't quite live up to expectations. If you splurge on an upgraded suite, you'll likely have a more luxurious experience, but it does come with a price tag.

Even so, our weekend in Phang Nga was one of the most memorable parts of our trip, and I can't recommend it enough!