

"From Phuket to Khura Buri by chopper"

written by Michel GÉRARD

Ko Phuket, the famous southern island of Thailand is widely-known as a heavenly island for tourists, for its leisure activities and its natural beauty. Phuket is the starting point for many exceptional adventures on the mountainous roads where bikers in love with big bikes appreciate an unforgettable circuit...



It is in the evening on the day before departure, that our group of bikers meets for the first time. We are evidently all very excited about our three-day excursion that would begin the following day, and we take the chance to look at the itinerary together and to check the motorcycles that are impeccable. After this short meeting we pursue a conversation with Sinto, the person responsible for our excursion, and the others in the group, during dinner in a local restaurant.

At 9:00 in the morning we get onto our bikes and begin to smile in satisfaction at the purr of the four strokes motorcycles. It does not take long for us to arrive at the Sarasin Bridge that joins the island to the mainland, and to begin our exploration of the region of Phang-Nga. The road that we take follows the coast and it is a real pleasure to enjoy the early breeze until our first stop in Thai Muang where we have coffee.

Once more on the road, our group now heads in direction of Khao Lak situated in front of the Similan islands. It is some kilometres before Takua Pa that we halt close to a deserted beach for lunch. There, we spend our free time and bathe in the crystalline waters. Sinto gives us the green light and we get astride again on our machines and head for Takua Pa, and then to Khura Buri more to the north of the province, our final destination for the day.

Upon arrival at the hotel we receive a cordial welcome and we take time to visit the place where we are going to spend two nights. A tropical forest surrounds the hotel, and everyone appreciates its peaceful atmosphere while having a drink close to the swimming pool. There we decide of the activities for the following day.

In the morning, our group gets ready to leave for the Surin islands on board of the hotel's speedboats for the exploration of some of the most famous diving sites in the world. When we arrive at our destination 70 kilometres farther, everyone grasps his mask and snorkel for a swim in the sea. It is between Ko Surin Neua and Ko Surin Tai that we admire the sea floor with its colourful fish. It is toward the beach of the northern island that we then move for a picnic. After a moment of relaxation on the beach, Sinto suggests a hike to explore the depths of the island. Two hours later, we are back in the water for a last bath before returning to Khura Buri.

When the season doesn't permit safe travel by boat, numerous activities are offered to the visitors like a jeep safari, trekking in the forest, canoeing in Khao Ya, mountain biking, bathing in the pure water of the Phang Nga cascades or elephant riding.

On the last day it is time to ride our motorcycles in direction of Takua Pa on a road in the mountain along the coast. A short time later our group of bikers crosses an astonishing landscape while going through the national park of Khao Sok in the province of Surathani. It is in Ban Takhun that we head in the direction of Ratchaphrapa Dam for lunch. This dam, that offers a splendid panorama of the park from the superior part of the reservoir, is 94 metres high and 761 metres wide, and retains the waters of the Pumduang River covering a total surface of 185 km². After lunch, we are back on the road heading toward the province of Krabi. Along the coast we pass Phang Nga again on our return to Phuket.

Our group of bikers cherish a marvellous memory of this excursion while promising each other to come back to the south during the next vacation for a two-week trip by chopper...

© Michel GÉRARD

*Michel Gerard is a Travel author based in Asia. Visit the Reperages Thailand Travel website for information and ideas of original excursions. Download your *free* ebook: "Stories of Authentic Eco-adventure Destinations for Travellers in Thailand" => <http://www.travel.reperages-thailand.com>*