

In tune with nature on Ko Jum

Wildside offers attractive packages to this small island in the Andaman where oil lamps still light the night

Thailand's long west coast, overlooking the Andaman Sea and stretching 894 kilometres is blessed with many beaches and offshore islands — a world-renowned tourist destination. Among them is Ko Jum, a very scenic and beautiful island with an extraordinarily relaxing feeling in the Andaman Sea.

Located half way between Krabi and Ko Lanta, visitors have the opportunity to reach Ko Jum easily by the ferry which connects Krabi and Ko Lanta twice daily (from October-June). The island has 14 resorts ranging from backpacker budget bungalows (150 baht shared bath) to spacious brick buildings perfect for accommodating families right on the beach. (500-1,200 baht a night).

Experience Ko Jum's unspoiled tranquility along the 12 kilometres of sandy beach with its jungle vegetation.

All the three fishing villages of Baan Ko Pu, Baan Tingrai and Baan Ko Jum still lack electricity and therefore after 8 p.m. the island is fast asleep and visitors at the resorts are given oil lamps for the night.

The sunset never fails to impress with Ko Phi Phi's steep limestone cliffs set against the orange sun.

If you are one of those travellers looking for an exciting outdoor adventure on a far away island, Wildside, run by a Thai-German couple, is there to entertain customers with various breathtaking tours on Ko Jum such as biking, snorkelling, kayaking in mangroves, mountain trekking, visiting caves and the local flora and fauna, all with a complement of homemade cakes, breads and fruit



Kayaking and snorkelling in the sea around Ko Jum.

wines in a green airy restaurant.

For the bookworm Wildside has books on birds of Thailand, snakes and more, and for the environmental friendly there is a waterbottle refill service. Moreover, they use banana leaves for take away food on excursions. All tours include an environmental briefing and supervision by PADI professionals (divemaster and master scuba diver trainer).

For details contact: Wildside, Ko Jum, Tambon Ko Sriboya, Amphoe Nua Klong, Krabi, 81130, Thailand.

A road to avoid

Visitors to Phuket's Nui Beach beware! One of our readers, Leo Mesulam, a

long time resident in Hua Hin and a frequent traveller to Phuket, has this tale to share.

"During my last trip with my Thai wife, we went to Nui Beach close to Kata Viewpoint.

"After driving two kilometres on a steep and sandy road we were asked by two security guards to pay an entrance fee of 250 baht each just to reach the beach and the restaurant.

"We were surprised by the amount of this fee. And no where along the road we saw a road sign telling us to that effect, which we told them politely, but they got aggressive and even made threats to shoot if we didn't go away.

"All visitors to Phuket should avoid

this place," said Mesulam.

Tourism handbook

Thailand's Responsible Ecological Social Tours Project (REST), the organizers of last year's International Year of Ecotourism Regional Conference in Chiang Mai, Thailand and recipients of the 2002 World Legacy Awards for Destination Stewardship, and pioneers of the successful Community Based Tourism (CBT) projects across Thailand have published the *Community Based Tourism Handbook*.

The handbook is an exciting new resource which has now become available to tourism industry stakeholders, researchers and developers around the world.

The *Community Based Tourism Handbook*, written by Potjana Suansri, communicates the experiences, the successes and the lessons learned which the REST team have accrued throughout almost a decade of hands-on work "in the field." The handbook illustrates and analyses the complete process of facilitating and developing community-based tourism activities in partnership with local communities.

The handbook will be an indispensable resource for tour operators, governmental and non-governmental organisations, policy makers, academic researchers, community groups and other interested parties who wish to explore the CBT model in their own national and social contexts.

The handbook presents a clear sequence of step-by-step guidelines

towards the development of a successful CBT project. It is divided into 12 chapters, illustrating all of the key stages in the development of CBT.

These stages include "Choosing a Destination"; "Completing a Feasibility Study with the Community"; assisting communities to define their "Vision and Objectives"; "Planning"; "Administration"; "Programme Design"; "Marketing"; and participatory "Monitoring and Evaluation."

"REST is a non-governmental organisation. Our involvement in community-based tourism developed from our desire to direct the potential of tourism towards facilitating improvements in the life and environmental quality of Thailand's poor rural communities.

"Our intention in writing the *Community Based Tourism Handbook* is primarily to communicate the potential of CBT as a social and environmental development strategy to other countries and communities," Khun Potjana said.

The 120-page handbook is priced at 500 baht. In A4 size and two colours, the book is neatly presented with beautifully illustrations and translated into English by a team of REST's Western and Thai volunteers.

For further information contact Responsible Ecological Social Tours Project at tel: +66 2 938 7007; fax: +66 2 938 5275; or e-mail: rest@ecotour.in.th, or visit www.ecotour.in.th

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