

MY SAVVY TRAVELLER

PHULAY BAY, A RITZ-CARLTON RESERVE: BLISS BY THE ANDAMAN SEA

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Phulay Bay, A Ritz-Carlton Reserve near Krabi, Thailand

By Shannon Melnyk

Upon arrival, it's unclear what awaits behind the fortress of [Phulay Bay](#), one of only a handful of Ritz Carlton Reserve properties in the world. Just a quick one-hour flight from Bangkok, the exotic sanctuary is nestled in idyllic Krabi, on the coast of the Andaman Sea known for its coral-fringed islands and towering lime stone karsts dramatically jutting out of the ancient waters.

You'll be guided through a narrow amethyst pathway only to be silenced by a majestic pavilion, where chilled lemongrass tea will recalibrate the travel-weary soul and a personal butler appears to whisk you off to your private villa.

The vibe here feels peaceful and grand, including the spacious villas that offer garden or sea views. If the massive lotus-shaped tubs, plunge pools, outdoor baths and iridescent magenta robes don't make you want to hide here forever, the 4 meter by 2 meter beds will. And that's no type-o: the custom-made Sealy nights are but a dream with room to spare.

You may not want to leave this private oasis, but you should; the sunsets alone will linger even longer than the Basilito Thai Mojitos at the Chomtawan bar or a candlelight seafood barbeque on the beach. The traditional Thai cuisine at Sri Trang ensures you needn't leave the property for an authentic, flavourful menu.



One of our favourite suites at Phulay Bay

Come sunrise, seaside yoga instruction is the perfect way to prepare for the most delicate coconut French toast this side of Southern Thailand. While away the day at the postcard perfect infinity pool, or select a Thai, European or Asian treatment at the spa – but leave time for the vitality pool, which is sanctuary personified.

An exceptional plus is the Personal Explorer made available to customize guests' experiences. They'll recommend and facilitate adventures both on and off the Reserve. On offer are jungle safaris, snorkelling, and island-hopping with a delightful Thai picnic on Hong Island. Select activities also include helicopter tours, Thai culinary classes and stunning treks to the Wat Bang Rieng Temple.

Personalized service is the whole point at a Ritz Carlton Reserve, but there's a special energy here; the staff takes great ownership in their guests' well-being, and it shows. After the 2004 Tsunami, Phulay Bay did not suffer catastrophic damage, but tourism here did; it is said that the Reserve's owner, known for the popular Singha Beer empire, kept Phulay staff on the payroll for over five years until the industry recovered. The story is heart-warming, and so is the service. Many of those same staff remain and make it their mission to make you feel at home - in paradise.

Ms Melnyk was a guest of Phulay Bay, a Ritz-Carlton Reserve



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