



The Andaman Islands

Travel tips and travel information

Andaman Islands inclusive travel package

Traveling to the wonderful Andaman Islands has never been easier. *The Siam Junk* team can help arrange your travel to and from Port Blair and organize accommodation for any time you may wish to spend on land.

***The Siam Junk* optional travel package includes:**

- Return Flight from Chennai (Madras) or Calcutta
- Transfers from the airport to the pier for departure aboard *The Siam Junk*
- Transfer from the pier to the hotel on disembarkation
- One night in a Port Blair hotel (including breakfast)
- Transfer from the hotel to the airport

Package charges (per person):

The current rate (2009) for this package is *from* 300 Euro, based on a hotel room with double/twin share occupancy. Please contact *The Siam Junk* team for full details and confirmation of package rates for your chosen cruise dates.

***The Siam Junk* contact details:**

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***The Siam Junk* optional travel package details:**

- **Flights from Chennai/Calcutta to Port Blair, Andaman Islands**

Guests should make their own way to Chennai or Calcutta. From there *The Siam Junk* team will arrange the onward flight to Port Blair.

Guests will need to be in Chennai/Calcutta no later than 6:00am for flight departure as *The Siam Junk* will be departing from Port Blair later the same day.

- **Ground transport from Port Blair Airport to *The Siam Junk* Yacht**

After landing at Port Blair airport mid-morning you will be welcomed by our ground transportation staff and escorted to the pier where you will board *The Siam Junk*.

Refreshing drinks will be served on arrival.

- **Return journey – Ground transport from the pier to hotel accommodation**

When the *The Siam Junk* returns to Port Blair harbor your ground transportation will be waiting to escort you to your hotel for one night accommodation before departure the following day.

- **Ground transportation from hotel accommodation to Port Blair Airport and flight back to Chennai/Calcutta**

After breakfast your air-conditioned transportation with escort you back to Port Blair Airport. From here you will board your flight back to Chennai/Calcutta for arrival at around 12:00 midday.

We advise that onward flights to your home country or any other international destination should be arranged for after 4:00pm if you are planning to depart the same day.



Visas and passports

Indian visa regulations can vary from time to time. *The Siam Junk* team will aim to provide you with the most up to date information but it is strongly advised that you contact your local consulate to obtain the latest information on visa applications from your home country.

All guests are required to obtain a tourist visa for their trip to India. This can be done at your local Indian Embassy or consulate prior to departing for India. Please submit these requests as early as possible as waiting times are often more than one week.

Based on our previous knowledge we advise that our guests DO NOT mention that they are travelling directly to the Andaman Islands and only put their initial flight destination (eg Chennai or Calcutta) on the visa application.

NB. If you state the Andaman Islands as your destination the embassy will insist on issuing a 30 day Restricted Area Permit (RAP) along with the tourist visa, and this can take another 4 weeks or more to process! To simplify things guests should apply for the standard tourist visa *only* mentioning their first destination/airport in India.

Upon arrival in Port Blair guests will be issued a 30-day RAP visa free of charge.

Port fees, Marine Park fees and extra taxes

Our current rates include all additional charges levied by the Indian authorities.

Unfortunately the Indian government's forestry commission will be increasing their National Park charges for 2010. We will keep all customers informed if there is any surcharge as a result of these increases.

Money and Currency

The local currency is the Indian Rupee. Hotels restaurants and most shops accept all major credit cards. There are plenty of money changers and ATM's located in Port Blair and also at the port where you will board *The Siam Junk*.

Extra costs for incidentals can be paid in cash on the boat during your trip, or you may choose to pay your account at the end of the cruise before disembarkation. Unfortunately we cannot accept credit card payments onboard. However we do accept Thai Baht, Euro, GBP Sterling, US Dollars and Indian Rupees.



Time zones

Port Blair is 5 hours 30 minutes ahead of UTC (GMT).

Health issues

Health services in the Andaman Islands are not as advanced as western health care. There is a relatively well equipped hospital in Port Blair.

Malaria and other serious diseases are rare; however, we do recommend that all guests' vaccinations are up to date prior to departure.

We suggest that customers follow normal precautions when in India regarding drinking water, ice and general food hygiene.

Language and Religion

India and the Andaman Islands have several main languages including Hindi, Tamil, Bengali and a number of local tribal dialects. In Port Blair the locals speak very good English and are extremely friendly.

Clothing, Footwear and Accessories

On board *The Siam Junk* the dress code is casual, with most guests opting for nothing more formal than shorts and T-shirts, or swimwear and a sarong. The tropical heat in the Andamans makes this approach most suitable. On rare occasions the evenings can be a little cool, especially if there is a strong breeze, so a warmer top of some sort is recommended.

When in Port Blair and other areas of India shorts and T-shirts are acceptable. However women are advised not to dress provocatively. Dining in the evenings at upscale restaurants requires 'smart casual' dress in most cases.

A hat, plenty of sunscreen, some sturdy shoes that will protect your feet when scrambling on rocks and reefs and will not suffer if immersed in sea water, along with some decent sunglasses, are all advisable for your adventure aboard *The Siam Junk*.

The Siam Junk carries a selection of items including sunscreen, after sun lotion and toiletries.



Climate and weather

The Andaman Islands are centered in the Bay of Bengal and are often described as a tropical paradise. Much like the rest of SE Asia the islands are affected by the south west and north east monsoon seasons. The best time to visit these paradise islands is between December and April. The air temperature is usually a constant 22-33C (71-92F) with a steady south westerly ten knot breeze cooling the air.

Safety and First AID

Onboard *The Siam Junk* we have staff qualified in first aid administration and emergency evacuation. Port Blair has a well equipped hospital and a re-compression chamber for divers.

Please note that emergency evacuation, all related transportation and any treatment costs are the responsibility of our guests so we strongly recommend you take out comprehensive travel insurance.

Electricity

Electricity on the Indian mainland is 220V. On board *The Siam Junk* it is also 220V. Please bring the required adaptors for any electrical equipment you may have if your home power supply is different.

Smoking

Smoking is only permitted in outdoor areas and in the bar/salon aboard *The Siam Junk*.

We have a strict no smoking policy below decks and also on the upper level for the safety of all our guests.

Tipping

Tipping is entirely voluntary although most clients are generous with the staff if they feel they have provided excellent service and exceeded expectations.