



Dream Destinations

'Magnificent Myanmar'

A Luxurious Ten Day Sea Safari Aboard The Siam Junk

The Hidden Islands of Mergui

Hundreds of years ago the only visitors to these hidden islands were the occasional Chinese trading junks carrying merchants willing to barter fruit, jade, amber, teak and other valuable goods for earthenware pots and porcelain vases. By travelling this virgin territory aboard The Siam Junk, with her traditional lines so familiar to this region, you will literally be reliving history.

The beautiful Mergui Archipelago (Myeik Kyunzu) is located in the Andaman Sea towards the southern border between Burma (Myanmar) and Thailand, and consists of over 800 islands ranging from a few hundred square metres to hundreds of square kilometres. These islands are acknowledged to be some of the most spectacular natural formations in the Andaman Sea and are sometimes referred to as the Pashu Islands after the Malay inhabitants.

An invitation to modern adventure travellers

Any romantic travellers, adventurers, keen photographers, divers and eco-tourists will be thrilled by the opportunity to explore this uniquely unspoilt part of the world, especially with the added opportunity to experience contact with the indigenous nomadic Pashu people whose lives are still blissfully unaffected by modern civilisation.

For many decades the area was closed off to foreigners by the Burmese Junta but in 1997 dive operators from Thailand negotiated with the authorities to allow live aboard cruises to enter the country. Due to Burma's relative isolation and the limited opportunities for tourism the area is devoid of the plethora of hotel and resort developments that can be found just south in Thailand, and the resultant biodiversity is unparalleled.

The environment is therefore a delight for any discerning tourists wishing to see nature at its most pristine, and although this itinerary is primarily focussed on the world class diving located here, anyone joining a bespoke cruise aboard The Siam Junk will be able to enjoy this unique natural landscape while undertaking a very low impact form of tourism.

Join us for the adventure holiday of a lifetime!

The Siam Junk

T: +66 (0) 899 721 387 T: +66 (0) 822 753 907 F: +66 (0) 76282 119
www.thesiamjunk.com info@thesiamjunk.com

Sea Safari: Magnificent Myanmar – The Mergui Archipelago

A Ten Night / Ten Day Itinerary

Day 1 – Departure from Ranong

At around 9:30am our crew will welcome you aboard before we depart Thailand's Ranong Deep Sea Port for the short crossing over the Pakchan River to check into Burmese waters at Victoria Point. After an informal safety brief our helpful host will handle all check-in procedures and deal with guests' passports and Visas. Burmese officials will board the yacht and complete the check in process with the Captain in the wheelhouse.

After check-in is complete, at around 11:00am we up anchor and embark on our magical voyage into Myanmar's unspoilt islands. We cruise north into the Mergui Archipelago, enjoying magnificent scenery as we cruise through lunch and into early afternoon for our first dive location at our anchorage at High rock. This craggy islet with its lone tree may seem unspectacular compared to other islands we pass but its charms lie beneath the waves: surrounded by reefs and a steep rock wall, the sheer volume and variety of aquatic life will take your breath away!

After everyone aboard has experienced the wonders of their first dive in these amazing waters we cruise north for the short hop to the Loughborough Island Group to anchor at Stewart Island where guests can enjoy the evening on board or go ashore to explore the romantic deserted beaches by moonlight. As we anchor at Stewart Island until dawn, keen divers may opt to undertake a night dive here.

Day 2 – Swinton, North Twin and Clara Islands

An optional morning dive is available at Stewart Island for early risers – well worthwhile for the exciting swim-throughs here – whereas those wishing a more leisurely morning may like to take a trip to the aptly named Cavern Islands to explore the caves at the water line, or have a massage on deck!

Soon after breakfast we cruise north to Great Swinton Island to arrive at around noon. After a light lunch divers will have the opportunity to take a short tender ride to the famous 'Shark Cave' dive site, while other guests may wish to explore the shore with its freshwater creek and low lying beach.

During the afternoon we depart Great Swinton Island and cruise ever further north-west to North Twin Island for keen divers or direct to our overnight anchorage at Clara Island if no dive is required, where dinner will be served in the majestic southern bay.

The Siam Junk

T: +66 (0) 899 721 387 T: +66 (0) 822 753 907 F: +66 (0) 76282 119
www.thesiamjunk.com info@thesiamjunk.com

Day 3 – Clara Island to Sir John Malcolm Island

Guests are usually thrilled when they wake up to the magnificent natural beauty of Clara Island and her three fabulous beaches. The morning here offers numerous diving opportunities, beach and jungle exploring, snorkelling or fishing. The water clarity is so good you can usually see the bottom in thirty metres of water, and at the southern end of the main beach you'll find a spectacular waterfall with crystal clear, cold mountain water tumbling down to the beach.

Early afternoon we head north to our overnight anchorage at Sir John Malcolm Island where a fabulous sunset dinner will be served.



Day 4 – Black Rock to Great Western Torres Island

During a leisurely breakfast our Captain cruises north to another spectacular dive site in this amazing archipelago: the craggy islet of Black Rock is often considered one of the best dive sites in Myanmar – but is not for the faint hearted! Two dives can be undertaken here either side of lunch, but be warned, you will inevitably be surrounded by white-tip, black-tip and silver-tip sharks...

During the early afternoon we haul up the anchor and cruise onwards to Great Western Torres Island for our overnight anchorage.

Day 5 – Torres and Sergeant Islands

On Day five guests will enjoy the chance to kayak, dive, snorkel, swim, and fish as we spend the day exploring the wonderful Great Western Torres and Sergeant Islands. There are many stunning dive sites around these two Islands as well as untouched beaches and mangrove lagoons which are ideal for kayaking. The kaleidoscopic corals are home to all manner of colourful and exotic tropical fish – including plenty of butterfly fish, batfish, rays and leopard sharks.

At Tower Rock, with its sheer walls plummeting into the depths and the lunar-like landscape that surrounds it, advanced divers are pretty much guaranteed another experience of a lifetime – a close encounter of the Manta Ray kind!

The seas here can be rough, and so, depending on the weather, the night anchorage is usually at Kunthi Kyun Island just south of Sergeant Island.

The Siam Junk

T: +66 (0) 899 721 387 T: +66 (0) 822 753 907 F: +66 (0) 76282 119
www.thesiamjunk.com info@thesiamjunk.com

Day 6 – Bentick and Sister Islands

During breakfast we cruise south towards Bentick Island – famed for dugongs, the sea creatures purportedly the inspiration for mythological mermaids, though a lot of rum must have been consumed for that particular leap of imagination! Unlike much of Asia, dugongs are not at risk from hunting by the local population – deaths usually occur only when gill nets accidentally snare them instead of the intended target of shark

The afternoon is spent relaxing at any one of a number of suitable anchorages available to us, as guests explore this delightful area. After dinner we cruise further south to our overnight anchorage at the Lower Sister Islands.



Days 7 & 8 – The Sister, Salet and Lampi Islands

After breakfast keen divers will be pleased to enjoy the morning exploring yet more glorious dive sites, the Southern Sister Island. Our dive guides take guests to one of the near-by sites, while non-divers may prefer to explore the unspoilt surrounding islands or snorkel at some of the coral covered bays.

The Siam Junk

T: +66 (0) 899 721 387 T: +66 (0) 822 753 907 F: +66 (0) 76282 119
www.thesiamjunk.com info@thesiamjunk.com



During lunch we head to the mystical Salet Galet Island, separated from Lampi Island by a thin channel about 200 metres wide and three kilometres long for two days of exploration.

Ma Kyone Galet accommodates a Moken fishing village, where these inspirational Sea Gypsies have made their home. Their traditionally nomadic lifestyle has been restricted by the Myanmar government but they are still a fascinating community, willing to share with outsiders their unique knowledge of the local environment and the survival skills they have developed to adapt to it. If you'd like to understand more about their surprisingly sophisticated 'primitive' lifestyle and largely self sufficient community, then, if approached in the right way, these friendly locals will be delighted to help you – and may even teach you how to spear fish!

Kayaking up the river into the interior reveals scenery reminiscent of the movie, Jurassic Park – with ancient rainforests full of evocative sights and sounds guaranteed to live in your memory forever.

As the tropical sun sets we serve a gourmet dinner and head south along the shore of this vast island, dropping anchor near another mangrove fringed lagoon: it is truly magical here and a fantastic spot to overnight.

This whole area is outstandingly beautiful and a nature lover's paradise. For the energetic there is a stunning, but strenuous, 3 or 4 hour jungle trek up the west peak of Lampi Island to a spectacular view point overlooking the lagoon with its picturesque village of wooden huts. Guests will again have an opportunity to meet the semi-nomadic Moken people, and, for the trek into the jungle, one of these intrepid local hunters will lead the way!

After a well deserved lunch guests can take a dip before we head south along Lampi's west coast to Bo Cho Island. This bay hosts another large Sea Gypsy settlement and guests can go ashore and take a stroll through the village. Early evening we will cruise south, serving dinner as the sun dips below the horizon. Our overnight anchorage is Frost Island with its amazing sweeping white sand beach and fringing coral reef that offers excellent snorkelling.

The Siam Junk

T: +66 (0) 899 721 387 T: +66 (0) 822 753 907 F: +66 (0) 76282 119
www.thesiamjunk.com info@thesiamjunk.com

Day 9 – Frost Island to Pirate Island

After breakfast we head south to High Rock or Stuart Island for a morning dive – there is plenty to see here, and although the diving may seem less exciting after some of the wonderful sights encountered at the locations we've visited further north, it is still considered to be on a par with the best of Thailand.

After lunch we take a relaxed cruise to Buddha Bay or McLeod Island, depending on whether guests wish to undertake a second dive. Spend the afternoon relaxing, diving, snorkelling, swimming, or fishing – the choice is yours. After dinner we will start our evening cruise to Pirate Island.

Day 10 – Blue Lagoon Island and return to Thailand

During breakfast we cruise to Blue Lagoon Island and possibly on to Birds Nest Island where, if we are lucky we will get permission to enter the caves where the locals harvest the birds' nests (the local authorities can be a little fickle, though handful of dollars usual has a persuasive power!). There is the option of a final dive here during the morning.

Lunch is served in this scenic location before we hoist the anchor and bid a reluctant farewell to Myanmar as we finally make our way back to Victoria Point. Our on board host will handle the checkout process with the Burmese authorities before cruising across to the Thai side of the Pakchan River for disembarkation of The Siam Junk at the Deep Sea Port.

Onward travel arrangements will be determined prior to the cruise, with land and air transportation organised to suit our guests.



The Siam Junk

T: +66 (0) 899 721 387 T: +66 (0) 822 753 907 F: +66 (0) 76282 119
www.thesiamjunk.com info@thesiamjunk.com



Notes:

All meals, snacks, some soft drinks, tea and coffee are included. Alcoholic drinks will be available from the bar at our standard prices - please see our menu. Please notify us of any special dietary restrictions at the time of booking to ensure we can fulfil your requirements.

This special Dream Destination Sea Safari includes fuel, although we reserve the right to impose a surcharge if the local price of diesel rises above 30 Thai Baht per litre on or before the date of departure (currently 28 Baht during June 2010).

Please treat this itinerary as a guide only: all times, destinations and departure points need to be flexible to account for tides and prevailing weather conditions.

Clients are advised to have comprehensive travel insurance, and must ensure they have appropriate personal cover for all water sports they plan to undertake. The Siam Junk Team can organise coverage if required.

Diving equipment and a dive master can be arranged for an additional fee. Waterskiing, wakeboarding and other motorised water sports are all undertaken at the clients' risk. Water sports will be charged by the hour. Specialised sport fishing equipment and tuition can be arranged for an additional fee.

Applicable Marine Park fees are payable by clients directly.

Onward connections and transfers are by arrangement with, and the responsibility of, the booking agent, unless by prior arrangement with The Siam Junk Team.

Standard Terms of Business apply. Copies are available on request. Further information, including video clips, can be found at www.thesiamjunk.com

Photography:

Landscape and yacht photography courtesy of Cameron Hansen - www.cameronhansen.net
Underwater images courtesy of Paul Lees - www.diveguidethailand.com

Please contact us for details of specialised cruises hosted by these exceptionally talented professional photographers.

The Siam Junk

T: +66 (0) 899 721 387 T: +66 (0) 822 753 907 F: +66 (0) 76282 119
www.thesiamjunk.com info@thesiamjunk.com