



# 3 off-the-beaten-path itineraries to explore on your next trip to Thailand

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Attracting over 30 million tourists a year, Thailand doesn't typically come to mind when you think of remote, unexplored travel destinations, but that doesn't mean your vacation has to involve pushing your way through crowds and getting hounded by street vendors trying to sell you souvenirs.

Idyllic retreats are still plentiful in the land of beaches and Buddhas, and the pristine tropical scenery in Thailand is still as awe-inspiring as ever. Whether you're looking for a secluded, romantic getaway for two at a luxe oceanfront resort, or travelling inland to seek out the cultural heartland of the country, here are three itineraries that will take you away from the crowds and the chaos, exploring the best this beautiful country has to offer.



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## Find Romance at Kata Rocks in Phuket

Beautiful beaches, gorgeous weather and a bustling nightlife and dining scene (not to mention cheap direct flights) make Phuket a perpetually popular weekend destination from Hong Kong. Despite its stunning scenery, however, a flood in tourism, cheap vacation packages and a reputation for being a bit of a party city can make the city seem more suitable for young partygoers than couples looking for a quiet getaway...

Nonetheless, there's still romance and serenity to be found if you know where to look. Follow our itinerary below to make the most of a relaxing weekend getaway for two in Phuket.

### Where to Stay

A one-of-a-kind luxury oceanfront resort located on the west coast of the island, you'd be hard-pressed to find a more secluded and peaceful resort than **Kata Rocks**. The first property from **Infinite Luxury**, Kata Rocks has none of the overly groomed feel of international chains, offering a truly bespoke experience from start to finish — an idyllic retreat far removed from Phuket's tourist crowds.



Overlooking the sparkling Andaman Sea at the southern tip of Kata Beach, the staggered property means that all of the 34 one, two, three and four-bedroom villas afford panoramic views of the water, with each boasting its own private infinity pool for lounging in utter seclusion. With its whitewashed walls, the resort can feel more like you're in Greece than Thailand, where traditional decor has been swapped out for eye-catching glass and metal, clean and modern lines, and a sophisticated and sleek design. In short, Kata Rocks is the epitome of super-luxe and exclusive accommodations in Phuket.

### What to Do

If you only have a few short days in Phuket, it's likely you'll be spending most of your time holed up in this little slice of paradise. Each villa feels like your own private party pad — decked out with a fully equipped kitchen and dining area, two flat-screen TVs and private butler service, and state-of-the-art iPad technology for that luxe penthouse feel. And of course, there's the private plunge pool — a secluded spot to cuddle up with your significant other away from prying eyes.



The top-notch facilities are well-deserving of the resort's 5-6 star rating. Head to **Infinite Luxury Spa** to indulge in a Chakra Wellbeing healing massage and facial in one of seven plush treatment rooms, followed by a personal training session at the **Infinite Luxury Gym**, outfitted with intuitive, touch-screen navigation from PowerPlate resistance exercise stations to LifeFitness elliptical cross trainers. If you're looking to dial up the romance at night, opt for a **candlelit dinner for two** on the rocks — the only sound being the waves crashing on the shores — or step into the **Wine Cellar** for a personalised cheese and wine tasting session, guided by head sommelier Kathrin Liebscher. It's one of the few wine cellars in all of Phuket and offers over 300 wine labels with 24 varieties available by the glass.

When hunger strikes, the **Restaurant and Bar** at Kata Rocks serves up fresh Mediterranean and local Thai fare from head chef Laia Pons, a graduate of two of the city's finest Michelin-starred restaurants. At the hour between dusk and nightfall, the **Sunset Bar** is a magical spot to watch the sky turn in gradients of colour, with the drifting clouds reflecting off the infinity pool and stylish sun bathers soaking up the last rays. With a cocktail in hand and live music playing in the lounge, it's hard to imagine anywhere else you'd rather be.



If you're spending more than a few days at the resort, you can make some time to venture outside the property to explore the charming surrounds, with a number of boutique shops, restaurants and bars located within walking distance in Kata Village. Meanwhile, the beach is just a short buggy ride away, where water activities include parasailing, jet skiing, kayaking and paddle-boarding. Cheap massages on the beach and a scattering of oceanfront seafood restaurants are just a few of the charms of Kata Beach, providing a welcome escape from the rowdier Bangla Road and Patong Beach.

Room rates start at HK\$6,175 per night for a one-bedroom sky pool villa.

**Kata Rocks**, 186/22, Kok Tanode Road, Kata Beach, Phuket, 83100, Thailand, +66 76 370 777