

Ko Tao PADI Open Water from only £460pp*

9 OR 10 DAYS / SMALL GROUP OR PRIVATE TOUR / STANDARD TOUR /

(Note: Add approx. £30 p/p local payment)



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Do you want to learn to dive, but avoid the cold, murky waters of home? Then why not learn to dive in the warm, tropical waters off the island of Ko Tao. The PADI Open Water Diver course is the most popular diving course in the world, and where better to take it than this exciting, exotic location. Situated in the Gulf of Thailand, this secluded island provides the perfect setting for your first diving course. Warm, clear waters conceal some of the worlds best dive sites, most just a few minutes boat trip from your hotel and the dive centre.

TOUR FACTS

Tour Code & Class:	DVTHOD / Standard
Group Size & Age:	Min. - 2 Max. - 8 / Min. age - 12
Activity - Diving:	Sightseeing, PADI diving course
Activity Level:	Medium
Accommodation:	7 nights in hotels
Transport:	Minibus, 2nd class A/C sleeper train, local bus, ferry
Meals:	7 Breakfasts (B)

YOUR 9 OR 10 DAY TOUR ITINERARY

- Day 1:** Arrive in Bangkok. Optional airport transfer.
- Day 2:** Bangkok - Grand Palace tour (optional canals tour). Overnight sleeper train to Chumphon.
- Day 3:** Ferry to Ko Tao. Introduction to dive centre. Free time.
- Day 4:** Ko Tao - Start PADI Open Water course.
- Day 5:** Ko Tao - PADI Open Water course.
- Day 6:** Ko Tao - PADI Open Water course.
- Day 7:** Ko Tao - PADI Open Water course.
- Day 8:** Ko Tao - Free time. Ferry to Chumphon then overnight sleeper train to Bangkok.
- Day 9:** Arrive in Bangkok. Transfer to hotel. Free time.
- Day 10:** Bangkok - Free time. Transfer to airport for flight home.

"Interested in adding some extra diving or sightseeing into your tour? ...then contact us for a tailor-made package"

FLIGHT BOOKINGS AVAILABLE
See page 4 for details

Regular small-group departures run all year round. Call or check the website for dates and prices. Private and tailor-made options are also available on request. Please refer to page 3 or website for details.

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

Grand Palace, Gulf of Thailand Coral Reefs & Fish, Relaxed Ko Tao Atmosphere, Tropical Island Scenery, Scuba-diving qualification.

FLIGHTS INCLUDED:*	LOCAL PAYMENT:	ENTRANCE FEES:	AIRPORT TRANSFERS:
X	✓	✓	X



To book visit: www.thailand-uncovered.com,
email: tours@thailand-uncovered.com or call us on: +44 (0) 845 130 48 49
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* LAND ONLY PRICE, FLIGHT QUOTES AVAILABLE ON REQUEST. / LAST AMENDED 12/06/2008 /

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DETAILED ITINERARY

DAY 1 / ARRIVE IN BANGKOK

You make your own way to the hotel today and check in (details & directions provided after booking).

If you are arriving in Bangkok today, then we offer an optional transfer in a private minibus from the airport to the hotel.

Overnight at hotel in Bangkok.

DAY 1 EXTRA OPTIONS

Arrival airport transfer

See pages 3-4 for details

DAY 2 / BANGKOK, GRAND PALACE TOUR, OVERNIGHT TRAIN TO CHUMPNORN

Your Thailand Uncovered rep welcomes you this morning, and gives a short pre-tour briefing as well as outlining the schedule for the next few days.

We then enjoy a half-day tour to the splendid Grand Palace complex and the Royal Temple of the Emerald Buddha where varied styles of Thai architecture are delicately woven together to enchant the viewer.

The rest of the day is free for you to enjoy more sightseeing in Bangkok, or just relax. In the late afternoon we board the train for the overnight journey to Chumphon, staying in second-class air-conditioned sleeping berths.

Overnight on train to Chumphon (B).

DAY 2 EXTRA OPTIONS

Bangkok canals tour

See pages 3-4 for details

DAY 3 / FERRY TO KO TAO. INTRODUCTION TO DIVE CENTRE

After arrival in Chumphon early in the morning, we transfer you by

bus to connect with the direct ferry to Ko Tao (approx. 2-3 hours). In Ko Tao we transfer to our hotel, where you will have the rest of the morning and most of the afternoon just to relax and explore your surroundings after the long journey.

In the afternoon we will introduce you to the dive-centre, where you will discuss and finalise the arrangements for your scuba-diving over the next few days.

Overnight at hotel on Ko Tao.

DAY 4-7 / INTRODUCTION TO DIVE CENTRE, AND START PADI OPEN WATER COURSE

The Open Water Course is conducted over a 4 to 5-day period, and successful completion leads to full entry-level certification to the world of scuba diving.

The course itself is broken down into three sections. These are

- Confined water dives, of which you do 3, and which are usually done in a cordoned off beach area or a pool close to the beach
- The theory section, which provides basic information and principles about diving, usually with the aid of videos along with a manual, and
- At least 2 open water dives under qualified supervision and guidance.

During your confined water dives, you will complete your skills development sessions, which will include (but are not limited to): neutral buoyancy, mask clearing, regulator removal / replacement, gear assembly/disassembly and storage, equalization, no-mask breathing, cramp removal, tired diver tow, no mask swim, alternate air source, stationary free flow regulator breathing, BC inflate, oral, removal and replacement of the scuba unit (u/w), removal and replacement of weight belt (u/w), removal and replacement of scuba unit (surface), removal and replacement of weight belt (surface), air depletion exercise.

The theory section (classroom sessions) is geared towards knowledge development, and will comprise of lectures, class participation and discussion. Students must successfully complete each section (module) before attempting the next module; there are 5 in total. There will be a final written exam. Most questions are either multiple choice or true/false.

Your Open Water dives will give you the opportunity to demonstrate dive planning, practice, and evaluation.

The course is relaxed and designed to be a comprehensive learning experience to help you reach your goal of becoming a qualified diver. Our instructors are used to teaching a wide variety of people, and will tailor the way they teach the course to your personal needs and ability.

This course can be done in conjunction with our Advanced Open Water course. Please contact us to arrange an extended tour.

Overnight at hotel on Ko Tao (4xB).

DAY 8 / KO TAO, FREE TIME. OVERNIGHT TRAIN TO BANGKOK

Your last day in Ko Tao is left free for you to relax, before catching the afternoon ferry to Chumphon where you'll have a little free time to look around the town before taking the overnight sleeper train back to Bangkok. Extra days in Ko Tao can be added upon request. If you want to do some extra dives, then we can arrange these, **within the restrictions of the 24 hour diving and flying rule.**

Some of the best local dive-sites include:

- **Chumphon Pinnacle:** Approx. 10 Km offshore this underwater granite plateau starts at a depth of 12m, with the walls dropping down to 24/32m. The top is covered with anemones, and you can see big groupers, barracudas, travellis, tuna, batfish, and occasionally reef and even whale sharks.
- **Southwest Pinnacle:** 10 Km south of Ko Tao. This granite boulder formation, with a max. depth of 28m is surrounded by colourful soft corals and offers you the opportunity to encounter big pelagic

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fish as well as leopard sharks.

• **Shark Island:** This is a small island south-east of Ko Tao, with an abundance of marine life, including reef fish, turtles, rays and much more. The depth ranges from 5-22m, but this site can be sometimes subject to strong currents, so it should only be dived by confident divers under supervision of an experienced dive master.

• **White Rock:** With two underwater rock formations with hard and soft corals, separated by sand patches, this is a colourful tropical dive, ideal for underwater photography. Depths are 7-20m.

• **Green Rock:** An assembly of underwater rocks, west of Nang Yuan, with swim throughs, tunnels and small caves together with a large variety of marine life. At the deep end reef sharks are frequently spotted.

Overnight on train to Bangkok (B).

DAY 8 EXTRA OPTIONS

Two extra dives

See pages 3-4 for details

DAY 9 / BANGKOK, FREE DAY

Upon arrival back in Bangkok we transfer you to your hotel, where the rest of your day is free to do some last minute shopping or a little more sightseeing.

Note: You can finish the tour and make your own arrangements after the train arrives in Bangkok, or fly home today if required (flights must leave after midday).

Overnight at hotel in Bangkok.

DAY 9 EXTRA OPTIONS

Early finish discount

See pages 3-4 for details

DAY 10 / TOUR ENDS

The tour ends after breakfast this morning. A departure airport

transfer option is available if you are flying home today. (B).

DAY 10 EXTRA OPTIONS

Departure airport transfer

See pages 3-4 for details

SMALL GROUP, PRIVATE AND TAILOR-MADE TOURS

SMALL GROUP DEPARTURES:

We have regular small group departures on this tour throughout the best diving seasons in Ko Tao. Departure dates are given on our website, and on request.

PRIVATE DEPARTURES:

You can also choose to do the tour privately, following the itinerary above, but on any other date. We add a small supplement for these departures. Please contact us first to check availability.

TAILOR-MADE TOURS:

Finally, this tour can also be used as a base for a private tailor-made itinerary, to be run on any dates. You can make adjustments as per your own requirements (for example, adding extra days, slightly shortening the tour, adding a scuba-diving course etc.).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

OPTIONS:

Booking and paying for options:

Options can be booked when you make your reservation on our website, between confirming your booking and your departure, and some can also be arranged during the tour itself, subject to availability at the time.

To comply with ATOL regulations in the UK, some options including flights where we don't issue the tickets here in the UK, are to be

booked in advance, but purchased from, and paid for to, our agent in Bangkok.

Credit cards, traveller's cheques or cash are accepted in Bangkok for these payments at the start of the tour (a fee will be added if you use a credit card). A receipt will be provided to show the flight & payment details.

Single room supplement - Price: £110 p/p

If you want to guarantee yourself a single room throughout the tour, then we need to add a single supplement charge.

If you are a single traveller joining one of our Standard level group tours, then if you are happy to, you may share a twin room with another single traveller on the tour of the same sex. If there are no other single travellers available for you to pair up with at the time of your booking, then we will need to add the single supplement to your tour price, but will refund this if we are able to pair you up later on.

Note: Couples will always be given a private double room where possible and triple/family rooms are available on request.

Book in advance. Pay in advance.

Extra days - Price: £20-£35 p/p/night

These are available on request in Bangkok before and after the tour starts and finishes and also in Ko Tao. If you'd like to include extra days elsewhere, then please request a tailor-made tour.

The price includes a night in the hotel, breakfast, all taxes and transfers (single supplements apply).

Book in advance. Pay in advance.

Arrival airport transfer - Price: £15 p/p

If you wish, we can arrange to meet you on your arrival in Bangkok airport, and provide a private transfer to the hotel used at the start

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of the tour. This is a 24-hour service.

Book in advance. Pay in advance.

Departure airport transfer - Price: £15 p/p

At the end of the tour, this option covers a private transfer to the airport in time for your flight home. This is a 24-hour service and is available on Day 9 or 10 of the tour.

Book & pay in advance OR in Bangkok.

Early finish discount - Price: deduct £25 p/p

If you want to finish the tour with us as soon as you arrive in Bangkok on Day 9, then this option removes the cost of your transfer from the station to our hotel, and the last night in the hotel.

You can still add a departure airport transfer option to your booking if you finish on Day 9.

Book in advance. Pay in advance.

2 Extra dives - Price: £40 p/p

This option adds 2 extra dives into your tour, to be arranged during your free time in Ko Tao. You can arrange exactly when and where to take these dives with the dive school while you are in Thailand.

We can also offer more extra dives if required - please contact us for more details and prices.

Book & pay in advance OR in Ko Tao.

INCLUDED IN THE PRICE OF THE TOUR:

- All accommodation (see below)
- Meals as indicated on the itinerary
- Transfers and transport as detailed in the itinerary
- Entrance fees to sites visited on the Bangkok tour
- Services of dive masters and instructors as indicated on the itinerary
- All diving Instruction and course fees

- Provision of all diving equipment
- PADI Certificate proving completion of course

NOT INCLUDED IN THE PRICE OF THE TOUR:

- International airfares
- Visa costs
- Airport transfers (available as extra options)
- Meals not indicated in the itinerary
- Drinks, snacks, tips, and other personal expenses
- Travel insurance - please see the policies available on our website
- Any other items not mentioned above
- PADI Dive manual (see below)

ACCOMMODATION:

Our Standard level scuba-diving tours use good quality hotels at approx. 3-star level, in which all rooms have air-conditioning and en-suite bathrooms.

Note: For our group departures, we will advise you of the hotel to be used on the tour about 2 weeks before departure. If you have specific requirements for hotels, then please request a private or tailor-made tour.

Hotels used on this tour (subject to availability):

Bangkok (3-star):

- Narai Hotel, Royal Benja Hotel.

Ko Tao (2 to 3-star):

- Ko Tao Resort (standard a/c).

At certain times of the year or where circumstances dictate we may need to use different hotels from those listed above. In this event alternative accommodation will always be of a similar standard.

Please see the Accommodation page on our website for more details of the hotels that we use in Thailand.

TRANSPORT:

This tour aims at bringing you as close to the real Thailand as possible and not cocooning you from it. To this end we use public transport wherever we feel that it meets our high standards. This includes 2nd class overnight sleeper trains, local buses and local ferries. We also use private transport, i.e. pick-up trucks and minibuses where necessary.

On the sleeper train a mattress, sheet, blanket & pillow are provided, and each carriage has its own guard who keeps it clean and can provide meals and drinks to your seat.

A variety of local dive-boats are used to access the diving sites.

TRANSFERS:

The tour includes all transfers detailed in the itinerary. Airport arrival and departure transfers are not included in the tour price, but are available on request (see Options section above).

INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS:

In order to keep our tours flexible, and to make them accessible to as many people as possible, we do not include your international flights in the set tour itinerary or price.

However, we do hold an ATOL (UK flight sales license) and are happy to book your flights for you. If you let us know your ideal dates and departure airport, then we will be happy to provide you with some flight options that we can arrange for you. You can then choose whether to book the flights through us, or make your own arrangements. Either way, your airport arrival & departure transfers are included.

DIVING:

When you are booking dive(s) and diving courses in advance, you should consider the possibility that you might not elect (for whatever reason) to use one or more of those dives. Dives

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are strictly non-transferable, and no refund would be issued if you did not use up all your dives. In the eventuality of a diving problem occurring whilst on one of our dive packages or courses, unfortunately no refund can be issued.

More information on diving with us is available on the diving pages of our website.

PADI COURSE MANUAL: £30 P/P LOCAL PAYMENT:

Dive-centres are no longer allowed to provide course manuals for you just for the duration of the course. You now need to purchase your own, and keep it with you when you go home. This cost is to be paid to the dive centre before you start diving. The Open Water Course manual price is set by the dive centre, and is approx. 2000 Baht or £30 p/p (the exact price will be set by the centre on your arrival based on current exchange rates).

EXTRA DIVES:

We cannot guarantee that all of the dive sites and options on approved diving courses will always be available. Changes will occur (subject to availability) and are entirely at the Dive Centre's discretion. Also, we cannot confirm where you will do any 'Extra Dives' that you book. The Dive Centre will endeavour to satisfy customers where possible, but it is entirely at the Dive Centre's discretion and local diving conditions at the time.

GROUP SIZE & TOUR LEADERS/GUIDES:

In order to provide the most personal service, and to make sure that you get as much out of our diving tours as possible, we like to keep our groups small. We therefore set the maximum number at 8 and the minimum at 2 people.

We provide a private guide for the sightseeing tour in Bangkok, and our local rep there will arrange all your transfers to and from the station/airport/hotel. Our local reps in all the towns and cities

en-route are also at your service.

For some smaller groups and private tours we will not accompany you on the sleeper train & ferry, but will include all transfers at both ends.

Our policy at Thailand Uncovered is to use only local guides and tour leaders where possible and for more details on our reasons for this please visit the 'Tour Class' page on our website. There still aren't enough qualified Thai diving instructors to go around however, so when we do use Western instructors, these will have worked in Ko Tao for some time, and know the country and surrounding dive sites well.

ENTRANCE FEES:

The tour price includes entrance fees to all the tourist sites mentioned in the itinerary.

Camera and video fees may be applied at some of the sites, and these are not included in the price.

TIPPING:

Tipping is not part of Thai culture, but has become customary but not compulsory in the service & tourist industry. Tipping is always optional, and any amounts paid should reflect excellent service.

It is normal and accepted for people to tip differently, and you should not feel under any pressure to tip any particular amount.

We are often asked for advice on common amounts however, and suggest that up to 10% of the tour price would be a suitable budget for this tour.

COUNTRY GUIDE:

For an in-depth overview of Thailand, please checkout the country guide pages on our website.

DATES & PRICES:

We have regular departures on this tour throughout the year, with some months missed due to the local weather conditions. Our small group departure dates are listed on our website and on a separate dates & prices sheet (available on request).

We can also run the tour privately for you on any other dates for a small supplement, or customise the itinerary to make a tailor-made tour to fit your personal requirements.

Please contact our knowledgeable sales staff for more help on creating the right tour for you.

CLIMATE:

The weather in Thailand varies between the northern & southern halves of the country, and the time of year, and is controlled by several different monsoons. These monsoon rains start and finish at slightly different times every year, meaning the seasons detailed below are not fixed.

In the northern & central regions (including Bangkok & Chiang Mai), the 'dry season' lasts from November/December to May, before getting steadily hotter in June and July. The most rain falls in August and September.

In Koh Tao, the 'cool dry season' runs from December to February, with the 'hot dry season' running from March to August, and the 'rainy season' starting sometime in September and finishing late November. We do not generally run any group diving tours from late-October until mid-December, as the monsoon rains and winds can make the water conditions unsuitable and visibility poor. The poorer diving conditions may extend either side of this period in some years.

Each of the seasons has its own charms and its difficulties, but one of the reasons we have chosen Koh Tao for this tour is its long diving season and great visibility.

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HEALTH:

Scuba-diving has its own special considerations with regard to your health. Please ensure you read the medical information on our website relating to scuba-diving. We will also send you a copy of the standard PADI medical questionnaire after you have booked, which you will need to complete before you start any diving.

For up to the minute health information & vaccination requirements for Thailand we recommend that you contact your GP or a travel clinic (1st Contact have a travel clinic with free advice tel. 0800 0393073).

General vaccination recommendations for Thailand include Tetanus, Diphtheria, Hepatitis A, Polio and Typhoid.

Note: The areas visited in this tour are not considered to be a malarial risk (the only endemic area is close to the border with Myanmar).

VISAS:

British, European, and many other nationalities do not require a visa for travel to Thailand for stays of 30 days or less. If you are staying longer then visas are required. For further information on your visa requirements, please contact us or checkout the visa pages on our website.

RESPONSIBLE TOURISM:

We take responsible travel seriously, and as well as taking this into consideration when we design our itineraries, and select the people and agents we work with, we also donate £2 for every person travelling on of our Thailand tours. One of the organisations we support is the Border Green Energy Team (BGET), who provide hands-on appropriate technology training and financial support to village innovators in ethnic minority areas on both sides of the Thai/Burma border. More examples of how we spend your money and full details of our responsible travel policy are given on our website.

PRE-DEPARTURE INFORMATION:

After booking, we will provide you with detailed information to help you prepare for the tour. This will include helpful advice on money, health, insurance, tipping, climate, clothing etc.

Further information is also available in the County & Travel guides on our website.

YOUR SPACE @ UNCOVER THE WORLD:

We have launched a community space for use by past, present and future travellers with us. Here you can make contact with fellow travellers in your group before you travel, or share photos and stay in contact with them after you return home. You can also ask questions of our staff and read updates on itineraries and destination news etc. For further details, please check...

<http://yourspace.uncovertheworld.travel>



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