



Discover diving in Sarawak



Krabi & Phang Nga reopening within August 2021



TAT says 7+7 plan stays on track



Sabah features in flight to nowhere



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TAT says 7+7 plan stays on track

Phuket Sandbox, Samui Plus going ahead; mid-August launch planned for Krabi and Phang Nga 7+7 programme.

Krabi & Phang Nga Planned reopening within August 2021



Both the Phuket Sandbox and Samui Plus programmes are going ahead as usual, and the reopening of Krabi and Phang Nga to fully vaccinated international tourists is set to start later this month, the Tourism Authority of Thailand reported on Tuesday.

The TAT press statement quotes Thanakorn Wangboonkongchana, Spokesperson of the Centre for Economic Situation Administration (CESA), claiming Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-

cha kept a close eye on the Phuket Sandbox and Samui Plus programmes.

"The PM voiced confidence in the plans to revive the economy through tourism by gradually reopening destinations that could ensure the health and safety of both the tourists and local people," TAT noted.

From 1 July until 1 August, Phuket recorded 14,910 international arrivals under the Sandbox programme. Of these, 34 tested positive for COVID-19 and had been sent for medical treatment.

To contain local transmissions, Phuket has stepped up screening measures on domestic travellers from 3 to 16 August to prevent the spread of the disease from other Thai provinces, while international arrivals under the Sandbox programme can still enter Phuket per the existing rules and regulations.

Meanwhile, the 54 new cases on Samui island traced to a restaurant cluster has been brought under control. There is no link to foreign tourists under the Samui Plus programme or those who continued their journey from the Phuket Sandbox programme.

From 15 July to 1 August, Surat Thani recorded 137 international visitors under the Samui Plus programme, with one person testing positive for Covid-19. In addition, there were 211 tourists from the Phuket Sandbox programme who visited Samui without any health or travel issues.

Krabi and Phang Nga are scheduled to reopen selected areas within this month under a 7+7 model. This will allow foreign tourists under the Sandbox programme to reduce the mandatory stay in Phuket from 14 to seven days, after which another seven nights can be spent

in Krabi (Ko Phi Phi, Ko Ngai, and Railay Beach), and Phang Nga (Khao Lak and Ko Yao).

The 7+7 model aims to provide international tourists with more options to visit multiple destinations during their trip to Thailand. Krabi and Phang Nga are ideal for this given their proximity to and ease of access from Phuket.

The transfer to Phang Nga, Khao Lak takes 90 minutes by car. A 30 to 40-minute transfer by boat from Phuket's Bang Rong Pier gets visitors to Ko Noi and Ko Yao Yai.

From Rassada Pier, the boat transfer to Krabi, Ko Phi Phi, Ko Ngai and Railay Beach takes 45 to 55 minutes.

Phuket, Krabi, and Phang Nga are designated Controlled Areas or orange zone provinces (total 11 provinces) following revisions and new restrictions from 3 to 31 August.

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Discover diving in Sarawak

Trips to explore Southeast Asia are on hold for the moment, but when normal returns, divers will head for the Sarawak's famous dive sites.

When life returns to normal guess where divers will head to explore coral reefs or shipwrecks? After a long gap due to the Covid-19



pandemic when travel gets back to normal diving enthusiasts from around Asia will be booking flights to Sarawak where they will revisit a fascinating underwater world.

Kuching and Miri offer remarkable diving locations suitable for divers of all levels. Whether you are new to diving, your diving skills need some refreshing, or you are an experienced diver looking for a safe and local dive destination, there are operators providing scuba courses or guide services as well as rental of diving equipment to ensure you have an unforgettable underwater experience.

The beautiful marine life of Sarawak's waters

Unlike Sabah and other islands off Peninsular Malaysia, diving is relatively new to Sarawak. However, the dive spots in Sarawak are



becoming increasingly popular. And the good news is that unlike the islands off the peninsula, diving is possible all year round in Sarawak.

Anyway, the best times to dive are between March to November, as the monsoon brings substantial rain from November through February, causing the water to be a bit more choppy than the rest of the year.

The average daily air temperature ranges from 30-33°C, whilst the water temperature from 28-31°C. Visibility ranges from 5-20 metres which provide plenty of opportunities to see a variety

of colourful fishes; and if you are diving in March or April, you may also come face to face with the Whale Sharks. These majestic, intimidating yet gentle monsters of the deep are often spotted around the wrecks but do take extra caution as the currents can be strong.

To help you plan your underwater trip, here is a list of some of the most recommended diving spots in Kuching and Miri.

Visit: <https://sarawaktourism.com/story/discover-diving-in-sarawak/>



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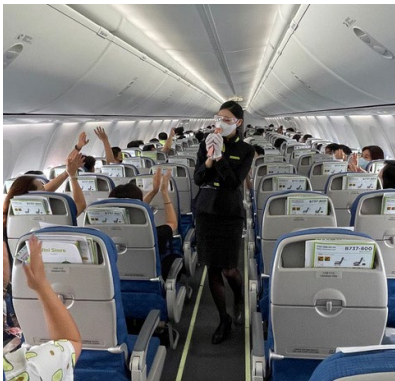
Sarawak
More to Discover

Sabah features in flight to nowhere

Nearly 100 passengers boarded on the 'Jin Air Flight to Nowhere, and the inflight theme focused on Sabah and its capital Kota Kinabalu.

A total of 96 passengers embarked on a Flight to Nowhere last week that took off from Incheon International Airport to present a Kota Kinabalu Sabah-themed experience during the special flight.

Flights to nowhere, also known as scenic flights or sightseeing flights, give participants a chance to relive the airport and flight experience that they have been missing during the Covid-19 pandemic.



In support of the local aviation industry and duty-free sectors in Korea that were affected by the global pandemic, the South Korean Government has extended its permissions for its local-based airlines to operate the 'Flights to Nowhere' programme. Jin Air has taken this opportunity to operate the flight, and Sabah state in Malaysia has been selected as the 4th international destination after Hong Kong, Osaka, and Okinawa.

With the support from Sabah Tourism Board and assistance from Tourism Malaysia, Jin Air, one of the largest South Korean low-cost airlines, has launched its fourth

'Flight to Nowhere' on 25 July. Departing at 1240 from Incheon International Airport, the flight route takes the passengers over Daegu, Busan, and partially into Japanese airspace before returning to Seoul at 1430.

The Kota Kinabalu-themed sightseeing flight featured inflight



services and activities. Passengers received goodie bags prepared by Jin Air and Sabah Tourism Board to commemorate the occasion.

Major duty-free shops in South Korea, namely Shilla, Lotte, and Shinsegae offered duty-free services on board. The cabin crew also prepared additional entertainment such as quizzes and lucky draw to keep the flight interesting. Round trip tickets (Incheon to Kota Kinabalu) sponsored by Jin Air, hotel and sunset cruise vouchers sponsored by the Sabah Tourism Board were offered as prizes to the passengers onboard.

"People clearly miss the experience of flying. These experiences will surely offer opportunities for them to remember Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia as a top-of-mind tourist destination," said Shaharuddin

Yahya, Director of Tourism Malaysia Korea. Given the success of the first flight, Sabah Tourism, together with Tourism Malaysia's Seoul office, will plan similar projects with Korean airlines, including Air Busan and Jeju Air, during August 2021.

"Flight to nowhere is the closest thing to travel abroad and

it accommodates travel-starved travellers," said Sabah Tourism Board general manager Noredah Othman. "We welcome Koreans to visit us again once the international travel borders reopen."

With most international flights suspended or severely reduced over a year due to Covid-19, the Ministry of Land, Transport and Maritime Affairs in Korea support aviation and tourism by permitting flights to nowhere, and it has proven incredibly popular among people who feels nostalgic for the pre-pandemic days.

Sabah has been one of the top holiday destinations in Southeast Asia among South Koreans prior to the pandemic outbreak. Nearly 400,000 South Koreans visited Sabah in 2019, with 67 direct flights departing from Incheon, Busan, and Muan to Kota Kinabalu.

Be Enchanted!

Bajau-Sama or West coast Bajau are known for their unique heritage that is authentic only to the district of **Kota Belud** in Sabah, the traditional horse culture.

Centara backs startup competition

CENTARA x **true digital park**
HOTELS & RESORTS
 present
CENTARA
Startup Sandbox



Prize winnings for Centara Hotels and Resorts X True Digital Park present Centara Startup Sandbox total of THB400,000.

Centara Hotels & Resorts and True Digital Park, Southeast Asia's largest startup and tech entrepreneur campus, join hands to deliver a competition and incubator programme.

The 'Centara Startup Sandbox' competition and a three-month incubator programme support startups and entrepreneurs with co-working space, facilities, mentorship and funding.

The Startup Sandbox project, held in collaboration with True Digital Park, will see teams compete for a chance to join the three-month programme, during which executives from Centara will provide regular consultation sessions and be the judge for the teams' final pitch.

"The world of hospitality is always evolving, and we are proud to be a part of this competition to encourage fresh ideas which will drive innovation in our industry. We are delighted to partner with True Digital Park to support promising

startup businesses in Thailand and to mentor the next generation of innovative thinkers," said Centara Hotels & Resorts chief executive officer Thirayuth Chirathivat.

"True Digital Park continue to build a complete ecosystem for startup and tech entrepreneurs to support the digital transformation and is proud to partner with Centara Hotels and Resorts. This startup sandbox program will strengthen our commitment to nurture tech talents and further accelerate innovative solutions," commented True Digital Park general manager Dr Tarit Nimmanwudipong.

Competing teams for the 'Centara Startup Sandbox' have to deal with a challenge: "How might we help clients experience their preferred destination or any hospitality offering while still providing them with more exclusive and memorable services".

The winning team will receive THB100,000 and free use of co-working space at True Digital Park for six months. The first and second runners-up will each receive free use of co-working space at True

Digital Park for three months.

Winning teams will also receive hotel vouchers from Centara.

- **1st Prize:** Centara Reserve Samui, two nights in Deluxe Ocean room with breakfast for two persons, value THB23,775 per prize times three prizes per team
- **2nd Prize:** Centara Grand Beach Resort Phuket, two nights in Deluxe room with breakfast for two persons, value THB12,947 per prize times three prizes per team
- **3rd Prize:** COSI Pattaya Wong Amat Beach, two nights in COSI Plus room with daily credit for two persons value THB3,295 per prize times three prizes per team

Teams with at least three members of any nationality 18 years old and above who have a business idea for the hotel and hospitality industry can apply now until 6 September 2021 at truedigitalpark.typeform.com.

For more information, visit <https://www.truedigitalpark.com/en/startup-support/centara-startup-sandbox>

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