

RANONG Province

Amphoe Mueang

1 - Ranong Governor's Grave (สุสานเจ้าเมืองระนอง) This Chinese grave of Phraya Rattanasethi (Kho Su Chiang), Ranong's first governor, is situated on a piece of land dedicated by King Rama V, about 1km away from Ranong provincial town on Highway 4004 (Ranong-Pak Nam). There are 3 tiers of stone platform with steps leading up to the grave with antique granite sculptures of Chinese noblemen, horses, goats and lions on both sides.

2 - Hot Springs and Raksawarin Public Park (บ่อน้ำร้อนและสวนสาธารณะรักษะวาริน) Located about 2km east of the provincial office, the hot springs have been a popular tourist spot ever since King Rama V visited Ranong in 1890, and named the road to the hot springs 'Chon Ra-u', meaning 'hot water'. There are three natural spring pools. The temperature of the water in the pools remains constant at about 65 °C. The water is both potable and suitable for bathing. Bathing in the pools is recommended for both medical treatments and as a relaxing way to ease stress and tension. It is also one of the various sources of water used to make lustral water for the Celebrations on the Auspicious Occasion of His Majesty the King's 5th Cycle Birthday Anniversary. Surrounding the hot springs is a deep shaded park called "Raksawarin", where rest pavilions and washrooms have been provided for visitors' comfort. Nearby Wat Tapotharam also provides bathing rooms for visitors who want to enjoy the healthy mineral water from the thermal springs.

3 - Wat Hat Som Paen (วัดหัดสมแป้น) Located at Mu 3 Tambon Hat Som Paen, 7km from Ranong provincial town on Highway 4005 (Chon Ra-u Road) or 6km from Raksawarin Park. This temple is on Khlong Hat Som Paen and provides a sanctuary for a shoal of soro brook carp. Besides feeding the fish, visitors to Wat Hat Som Paen can also pay respect to the image of Luangpho Khlai who was much revered by southerners and passed away at this temple.

4 - Wat Suwan Khiri (วัดหน้าเมือง) This century-old temple is located within Mueang Ranong Municipality on Highway 4004 (Ranong-Pak Nam). It contains a Burmese style Chedi of over 70 years old and 10 metres in height, which was built by a Burmese, a main ordination hall or Phra Ubosot where a beautifully bejeweled standing Buddha image is enshrined and a belfry decorated with a feline pattern.

5 - Namtok Punyaban (น้ำตกบุญบาล) Formerly known as Namtok Set Takuat, this 20-metre high waterfall is located at Mu 1 Tambon Bang Non, on the right at Km.597 on Highway No.4 towards Chumphon. A parking area, food shops and souvenirs are available.

6 - Namtok Ton Phet (น้ำตกโตนเพชร) Situated at Mu 4 Tambon Ratchakrut, 29km from Ranong on the Ranong-Phang-nga route. Turn right at Km.641 into a dirt road with a direction sign to the Ranong Boy Scout Camp for 2km and another 1.5km walk will lead to the 11-tiered falls. Surrounded by moist evergreen forest with Ranong's highest Phota Chong Dong Mountains being the source of water, each tier of the falls cascades down boulders all year round. Visitors are recommended to ask villagers in the area for directions.

7 - Phukhao Ya (Grass Hill) or Khao Hua Lan (Bald Hill) (ภูเขาหญ้าหรือเขาหัวล้าน) Known to locals by a variety of names and endearingly referred to as Thailand's version of a Swiss pasture, this hill, located in Tambon Ngao on Highway No.4 (Ranong-Phang-nga) about twelve kilometers from downtown Ranong, is something of an anomaly as it is completely treeless, being covered instead by a thick blanket of grass. Numerous walking trails and good vantage points offering unbroken views of the countryside make this hill the most popular in Ranong.

8 - Namtok Ngao National Park (อุทยานแห่งชาติน้ำตกหงาว) Located in Tambon Ngao in the vicinity of Khlong Phrao National Park, the steep Ngao Waterfall can be seen from a great distance away because of its commanding height. The area is home to a unique species of crab. Known to locals for years as Pu Chao Fa. This fresh water crab has just been recently classified by the scientific community and added to the world's list of shellfish. These crabs, easily recognised by their white bodies and dark purple mouths, live in crevices or under dry leaves along the banks of the small creeks which run from the waterfall. Interestingly, the biologist who first classified this species, Professor Phaiboon Naiyanet from Chulalongkorn university, named the crab Phricotelphusa Sirindhorn in reverence to Her Royal Highness, Princess Sirindhorn.
How to get there : From Ranong, take Highway No.4 (Ranong-Ratchakrut) for approximately 13km, then turn left for another 2km to the headquarters.

9 - Ngao Mangrove Forest Research Centre (ศูนย์วิจัยป่าชายเลนหงาว) Located about 15km from the town centre, the Ngao Mangrove Forest has been declared a World Biosphere Reserve Zone by UNESCO owing to the essential role this mangrove plays in maintaining the region's ecological integrity. Many species of marine life come to the mangrove to mate, incubate their eggs and care for their young until the offspring are strong enough to face the perils of the open sea. The centre offers guided forest walks. Arrangements can be made by writing to the Chief of Ngao Mangrove Forest Research Centre, Mu 4, Ban Lang, Tambon Ngao, Amphoe Mueang, Ranong 85000 at least three weeks in advance of a proposed visit to the centre, Tel. 0 7784 8391-3 or contact Office of Mangrove Resources Conversation, Department of Marine and Coastal Resources, Tel. 0 2298 2649.

10 - Hat Chan Damri (หาดชาญดำริ) Located about nine kilometres from downtown Ranong along Highway No. 4004 (Ranong-Pak Nam) or 8km from the Ranong Governor's Grave, this small beach and pier, and a nearby hillside viewpoint offer good vantage points from which to witness seafaring life along the mouth of Ranong's principal river. From here visitors can see across to Victoria Point or Ko Song in Myanmar or further out to the many other islands, big and small, which dot the Andaman Sea. The hilltop viewpoint is a particularly good location for watching Ranong's sunsets. The Jansom Thara Resort, situated above the beach, offers boat trips to some of the islands.

11 - Victoria Point or Ko Song (วิคตอเรียพอยท์ หรือ เกาะสอง) As an island in neighbouring Myanmar, Ko Song offers visitors a variety of local products, souvenirs such as wicker basketry, lacquerware, and gems. Long-tail boats can be hired in Pak Nam Ranong or on the Ranong Pier. The boat ride to Victoria Point takes about 15 minutes each way and costs between 200 and 300 baht. Before embarking on this excursion, visitors must obtain a boarding card issued by the Ranong Immigration Office in Pak Nam Ranong, tel : 0 7782 1216. Jansom Beach Resort also offers tours to Ko Song, Tel. 0 7783 5317-9, Fax : 0 7781 1589 E-mail : jansombeach@yahoo.com

12 - Ko Chang (เกาะช้าง) With an area of 18 square kilometres and 80 homes on the entire island, Ko Chang welcomes visitors with a quiet, unspoiled tropical island ambience. Cashew and para rubber plantations as well as coastal fisheries are the people's main occupations Ko Chang is also home to oriental pied hornbill. In addition to bird-watching and fishing, there are various other activities for visitors to enjoy. Like Ko Phayam, boats can be chartered from the Ranong Pier. The island can be reached within 1 hour by long-tail boat. There are four beaches on the west of the island. Accommodation is available, please contact Ranong Agricultural office, Tel. 0 7781 1091, 0 7781 2918. E-mail : agistrn@cscoms.com

13 - Ko Phayam (เกาะพะยาม) Two hours by boat from the Ranong Pier, Ko Phayam is famous for both its long fine white sandy beaches and for the cashew nuts which are grown on the island. A number of sea gypsies, or Chao Le, live on the island as well. The waters between Ko Phayam and the nearby islands of Ko Hai Hin and Ko Chang often provide excellent game fishing. To get to Ko Phayam, visitors can charter boats from Ranong Pier for about 1,000 baht per trip. Visitors can also charter speedboats from Ko Phayam Resort. Prices range from 2,000 to 4,000 baht, depending on the size of the boat. Reservations can be made by calling 0 7781 2297, 0 1323 0436

14 - Mangrove Arboretum (สวนรุกขชาติป่าชายเลน) Located within Pa Khlong Lamliang-La-un National Reserve area and attached to a concession forest, the mangrove became under concession for 15 years before reforestation under the Khlong La-un Mangrove project in March 1983. Two years later, it was developed into a mangrove arboretum with a 1,500-metre long boardwalk being constructed to facilitate visitors in studying the 25 species of mangrove flora.

Amphoe Kra Buri

15 - Royal Initial Stones (ศิลาสลักพระปรมาภิไธย) At Km.525 on the Chumphon – Ranong route in Tambon Pak Chan, 86km from Ranong, there is an area opposite to Ban Cho Po Ro School where the royal initials of King Rama V were inscribed onto a stone to mark his royal visit by an elephant and horse caravan from Chumphon to stay overnight at Don Wang Thu Pavilion in Tambon Pak Chan on 21 April, 1890. There are also inscriptions of Their Majesties King Bhumibol Adulyadej and Queen Sirikit's as well as Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn's initials on their royal visit from Chumphon to see their people here on 7 March, 1959.

16 - Kho Khot Kra or Kra Isthmus (คอคอดกระ หรือ กี้วกระ) Located in Ban Thap Li, Tambon Lamu at Km. 545 on Highway No. 4, 66km northeast of the town centre, the Kra Isthmus is the Malay Peninsula's narrowest point, spanning a mere 44km from the Gulf of Thailand on the east coast to the Andaman Sea on the west coast. There is a large cement map to help orient visitors. The Kra Isthmus provides an excellent vantage point from which to see the Kra Buri River forming a natural boundary between Thailand and Myanmar.

17 - Tham Phra Khayang (ถ้ำพระขยงค์) Formerly known as Tham Khao Yang, the cave is on mountain in Tambon Lamliang, 18km from Amphoe Kra Buri, with a left turn from Phetchakasam Road (Ranong-Chumphon route) for another 1km between Km. 563-564. Despite its small scale, this cave is related to a legend of the establishment of the district. Some 40 metres deep inside, a staircase leads upward and further outside the cave to where some rare herbs are believed to

have been grown. The cave has a large flock of bats inhabiting inside. Visitors are recommended to take with them a candle or flashlight. Every year during Chinese New Year, a 3-7 day fair is held for people to gild and pay respect to the Buddha images in the cave, as well as, to admire the cave's beauty and study the herbs.

18 - Namtok Chum Saeng or Namtok Sai Rung (น้ำตกชุมแสงหรือน้ำตกสายรุ้ง) This waterfall is situated at Ban Pak Chan, Tambon Pak Chan, 80km from Ranong on Highway 4 and 16km from Kra Buri (on the way to chumphon) between Km. 529-530. Turn left opposite to the entrance to Ban Pak Chan Self-help Settlement for 3km. It is recommended to visit Namtok Chum Saeng in the rainy season when a lot of water cascades down the boulders in rainbow splashes. This is how it is called "Namtok Sai Rung" or Rainbow Waterfall.

19 - Namtok Bok Krai (น้ำตกบกกทราย) Located at Mu 8 Tambon Nam Chuet, approximately 54km from Ranong on Highway 4 (Ranong-Chumphon). There is a sign to the waterfall between Km. 556-557 for another 13km. The road is not in good condition all year round, particularly in the rainy season. At the end of the road, a 20-metre walk through farmland and a moist forest will lead to this enormous waterfall that runs throughout the year.

Amphoe Kapoe

20 - Khlong Nakha Wildlife Reserve (เขตรักษาพันธุ์สัตว์ป่าคลองนาคา) From Amphoe Kapoe, take Highway 4 toward Phang-nga for approximately 25km, turn left between Km. 685-686 for another 200 metres to Khlong Nakha Wildlife Reserve Headquarters. This wildlife reserve houses a breathtaking waterfall known as Namtok Phan Met (น้ำตกพันเมตร) amid a stretch of verdant forest. Unlike national park, wildlife reserves are not open for tourism. An overnight stay within the area for educational purposes will require a letter of permission to be presented to the official. Write to the Director, wildlife Conservation Office, National Park, Wildlife and Plant Conservation Department, Bang Khen, Bangkok 10900 Tel. 0 2562 0760, 0 2561 4292-3 ext. 765 Contact at least 15 days in advance.

21 - Laem Son National Park (อุทยานแห่งชาติแหลมสน) Declared a national park on 19 August, 1983, it covers a total area of 196, 875 rai, comprising coastal districts from Tambon Ratchakrut, Amphoe Mueang, southward via Tambon Muang Klang, Tambon Kapoe, Tambon Bang Han and Tambon Nakha, Amphoe Kapoe, Ranong province, to Tambon Khura Buri, Amphoe Khura buri, Phang-nga province. It also covers islands in the Andaman Sea; namely, Ko Khangkhao and Mu Ko Kam. The national park headquarters is located at Hat Bang Ben, Mu 4 Tambon Muang Klang, 45km from Ranong on Highway 4 (Ranong-Phang-nga), or 6km from Amphoe Kapoe, with a right turn for another 10km on a dirt road at Km. 657.

The national park has two climates: rainy season with heavy rainfalls during May-November and summer during December-April. Places of interest within the national park include:

22 - Hat Bang Ben (หาดบางเบน) is a long and vast sandy beach shaded by pine trees where the national park headquarters is located. A scenic view of islands in the sea is available from here.

23 - Hat Laem Son (หาดแหลมสน) is a white sandy beach approximately 4km next to Hat Bang Ben. It provides home for various kinds of birds and is ideal for bird-watching and camping.

24 - Hat Praphat or Hat Hin Thung (หาดประพาส หรือ หาดหินทุ่ง) is located at Mu 2 Tambon Kam Phuan, approximately 90km from Ranong on Highway 4 (Ranong-Phang-nga) or 30km from Amphoe Kapoe with a right turn at Km. 702 into a dirt road for another 3km to the national park's Protection Unit. Similar to Hat Bang Ben, Hat Praphat is a large beach shaded by pine trees.

25 - Ko Khangkhao (เกาะค้างคาว) is an island with fine sandy beaches and a gravel beach known as Hat Hin Ngam in the north. It is approximately 40 minutes by boat from Hat Bang Ben.

26 - Ko Kam Tok or Ko Ao Khao Khwai (เกาะก่าตอก หรือ เกาะอ่าวเขาควาย) is approximately 20 minutes by boat from Ko Khangkhao and is where a sub-unit of the national park is located to facilitate visitors. It has a bay that curves to nearly make a circle.

27 - Ko Kam Yai (เกาะกำใหญ่) is a scenic island with white sandy beaches almost all around. It is approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes by boat from Hat Bang Ben.

28 - Ko Kam Nui (เกาะกำน้อย) is not far from Ko Kam Yai with beaches on one side and many other nearby islets, Laem Son National park provides accommodation and food shops for visitors. For more information, please contact the National Park Office, National Park, Wildlife and Plant Conservation Department at Tel. 0 2562 0760, www.dnp.go.th or Head of Laem Son National Park, Hat Bang Ben, Tambon Muang Klang, Amphoe Kapoe, Ranong.

Amphoe La-un

29 - Khao Fa Chi (เขาฟ้าชี) So named because of its resemblance to a traditional Thai food cover, Fa Chi hill is located off Highway No. 4 in Tambon Bang Kaeo. The hill provides an excellent vantage from which to see two rivers, the Kra Buri and the La-un, converge. The many river islands formed where these two rivers meet makes the scenery fascinating to behold. Sunsets are often breathtaking. Japanese Warship Wreck near the bridge which crosses the La-un River, history buffs will find the remains of a Japanese military base complete with a warship wreck, underground tunnels and the remains of a railway line. Japanese soldiers used this area as a port of sending support to Burma during the Second World War.

30 - Japanese Shipwreck (ซากเรือรบญี่ปุ่น) Approximately 2km beyond Chao Fa Chi, on the left near the bridge across the La-un River, a wreck of a Japanese logistic warship used in World War II between a pier in Tambon Pak Chan, Amphoe Kra buri and Burma is visible at low tide.

Amphoe Suksamran

31 - Ban Talae Nok

The livelihood of this Muslim community depends on natural resources in the mangrove area and on the self sufficiency basis. The community knows how to manage the tourism site, treat and control solid waste and environment as well as recycle the used products. Tourists will enjoy learning mangrove eco-system, local wisdom and way of life. contract Address: 2/5 Mu 1, Tambon Kamphuan, King Amphoe Suksamran, Ranong Tel: 087 384 8437 Email: chaace@hotmail.com