Beaches Near Bangkok

1. **Hua Hin**
   Thailand’s oldest beach resort was popularized by the royal family when they had a summer palace built here in 1926. Though the 3-mile (5-km) beach is fine for a stroll or a pony ride, shade is limited, and the shallow bay can frustrate swimmers. Vestiges of the past remain in the train station and the squid piers along the front. There are some good seafood restaurants in the area. 118 miles (190 km) SW of Bangkok • Map S3

2. **Cha Am**
   Though nearer to Bangkok than Hua Hin, Cha Am is not as popular. A quieter beach alternative, it is frequented by Thai families and students, and is now also starting to attract more foreign visitors to its string of high-rise hotels along the front. Casuarina trees provide good shade and swimming is possible, though the water is sometimes murky. 100 miles (161 km) SW of Bangkok • Map S3

3. **Koh Si Chang**
   Rarely visited by foreigners, this small, rocky island is located 5 miles (8 km) off the east Gulf coast. It has a selection of everything – secluded beaches with clear waters, a hilly interior ripe for exploring, the remains of Rama V’s palace, and some reasonable accommodations. The most popular beach is Tham Phang Beach. 62 miles (99 km) SE of Bangkok • Map U3

4. **Pattaya Beach**
   The nearest mainland beach to Bangkok, Pattaya is very easy to get to from Suvarnabhumi, the international airport. While the town’s reputation rests more on its nightlife than its golden sands, it boasts a reasonable stretch of beach and offers various watersports. Seafood and cold drinks hawkers stroll the shores. 103 miles (165 km) SE of Bangkok • Map U3

5. **Nakluua Beach (Pattaya)**
   Located just north of Pattaya City, Naklua Beach is the quietest of Pattaya’s three beaches, and still retains its fishing village charm despite the encroaching condominiums. There are only a couple of big hotels here, but the village has several seafood restaurants. Overlooking the beach is the unusual Sanctuary of Truth, a massive wooden building covered with intricate carvings. 103 miles (165 km) SE of Bangkok • Map U3

6. **Jomtien Beach (Pattaya)**
   The southernmost beach in Pattaya, Jomtien, is a bit quieter than the town’s main beach but...
is backed by plenty of high-rise hotels, whose occupants sun themselves on this 9-mile (14-km) strip of sand. The beach has a reputation as Thailand’s top windsurfing spot. Waterskiing, parasailing, and scuba diving are also on offer and there are several golf courses nearby.  

**Ao Thian (Koh Samed)**  
The candles that used to flicker in the bungalows before electricity arrived here lend the beach its name – Ao Thian, or Candlelight Bay. It now offers air-conditioned accommodations built along a hillside, but fortunately the laid-back image conjured up by its name still prevails. The narrow bay is interspersed with huge, smooth boulders that give it a very distinctive character.  

**Ao Prao (Koh Samed)**  
The only beach on Koh Samed’s west coast, Ao Prao, or Paradise Bay, has been commandeered by expensive resorts. The island is so narrow it is possible to stay on the east coast and walk across to the west coast to watch the sunset. There is a dive center here, as well as kayak and boat tours on offer.  

**Ao Wong Deuan (Koh Samed)**  
Located half-way down the east coast of Koh Samed, Ao Wong Deuan, or Moon Bay, is the island’s second-most popular beach. Several ferries a day head directly to this bay from Ban Phe (Rayong Province). There are some attractive accommodation options and the place is a bit more peaceful than Hat Sai Kaeo, except in the center where there is a clutch of bars.  

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**Hat Sai Kaeo (Koh Samed)**  
An offshore island within easy reach of Bangkok, Koh Samed has inviting beaches, with superb clear water and soft sand. Hat Sai Kaeo, or Diamond Beach, is the longest and most-easily accessible beach on the island. It is also the busiest, with a string of resorts drawing in tourists. It is wise to avoid weekends when there is a shortage of accommodations.  

**Mermaid statues at Hat Sai Kaeo**