

Old Phuket town trails

The two-kilometre walk isn't strenuous; in fact it is a cultural delight

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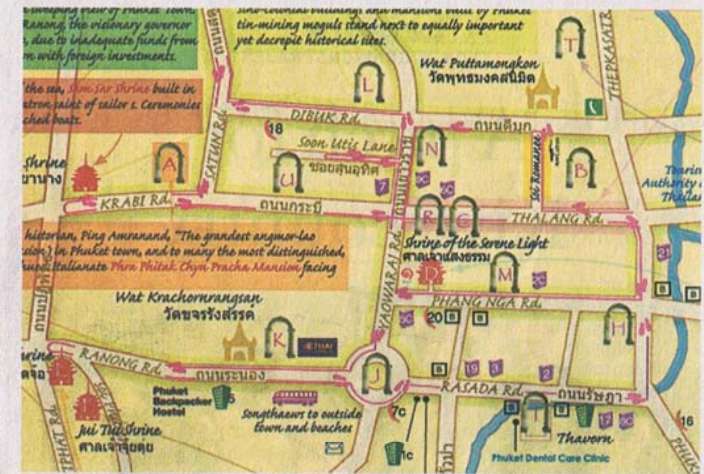
A journey into Phuket town's past begins with a walk — one that encompasses treasures easily missed from the back seat of a taxi. This isn't a strenuous stroll — about two kilometres, however a real cultural delight.

Let's start from the intersection of Phangnga and Phuket roads. Facing south, walk the block and around the corner onto Rasada Road. Follow it up to Suriyadate Fountain past the award-winning Bank of Ayudhaya, Sino-Colonial building (on left). Continuing straight up on Ranong Road takes you through the fresh market which is now under construction. Turn left at Soi Phutorn to Pud Jow shrine and Jui Tui shrine where the renowned Vegetarian Festival is highlighted.

You may choose to loop around from

the Suriyadate Fountain onto Yaowarat Road, instead. Decide if you will go straight along or right onto Phangnga Road. If you look carefully on the north side of Phangnga Road, about 50 metres from the corner of Yaowarat Road T-junction, you should spot a small archway indicating a Chinese shrine (some folks have lived here for years and missed this treat). Walk up the narrow soi (lane) and behold the Shrine of Serene Light. There is a surprise here!

Further on Phangnga, note the historic On On Hotel where the opening scenes of the movie, *The Beach* were filmed. Thalang Road is a splendid example of Sino-Colonial architecture, dating back to early 20th century. As you pass, take a moment to appreciate the flavour of old Phuket. See if you can spot some of the actual architectural characteristics



With a map in hand, you can easily find your way around the old town of Phuket on foot. The one shown here is Phuket Town Treasure Map produced by Art & Culture magazine.

listed next to this map. You will see also — or perhaps first smell — Guan Choon Tong, an established Chinese herbal medicine shop.

Soi Romanee, Satun, Ranong, Dibuk, Yaowarat roads and up Rang Hill all add their own charm to beloved Phuket Town.

On Krabi Road find two grand mansions. Phuket Island is a brilliant blend of fine beaches, azure seas and its little known captivating cultural tin-mining history. A walk in "Old Phuket" town reflects the diverse past of its multicultural heritage.



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