

CRUISING NOTES ON MALAYSIA AND THAILAND

Compiled by Susan Mitchell, Yacht ELENOA
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PREFACE

Most of this information comes from the last three seasons. Earlier notes are included where they fill a gap. *Please verify all GPS coordinates on the charts before using them!* The main sources were: letters from friends, SSCA and Canadian BWC bulletins, and a handwritten guide by an unknown author. Each contributor is indicated by a short abbreviation at the beginning of his/her section.

1994	Unnamed Yacht	comments on AIR 93 notes	1994
AIR	AIRLEA	Jack & Diane Myles	1993
APG	APOGEE	George Smith & Janet Murphy	1995/6
ARI	ARIADNE	Piero & Arianne Paolich	1992
ARJ	ARJUMAND	Ralph & Connie McNeil	1996/7
CB	Phuket Services	by Christine Bond	1992/4
CG1	Handwritten Yacht Guide	John Batts	1994?
DC	DIFFERENT CONCEPT	John Kuhn & Nina	1996
DRAC	DRACOMARIS	Ben & Elizabeth Anderson	1997
COM	COMORANT	Ward & July Lehardy	1994
EL	ELROND	Larry & Sharon Dimmick	1992
ELE	ELENOA	Paul & Susan Mitchell	1997/8
INT	INTER-MISSION	Jeff & Lisa Wallace	1993
KN	KAIEN	Walter & Mavis	1997
KRS	KRIOS	Juergen and Karin Schultz-Rohl	1994
LR	LONE RIVAL	Mark Scott	1991
MAD	MADELINE	Alayne & Alec Main	1995
MAR	MAR LUV	John & Ruth Martin	1991
OMU	OMURAMBA	Roger & Linda Townsend	1995
OW	OCEAN WANDERER	Tony & Ariel Knight	1994/5
PJ	PACIFIC JADE	James & Sally Lawrence	1994/5
REN	RENAISSANCE	Thalia Hearne & Bob Tiews	1996/7
RR	RAI REVA	Peter & Sandy Oehmen	1995/6
RUBY	RUBAIYAT	Dave & Amy Sherman	1996
SAR	SARACEN	Randle & Sharon Douglass	1994
STR	STRIDER	Richard & Debra Boileau	1995/6
STYL	STYLOPORA	Don Gilchrist & Robyn Boase	1995
STST	STEPPING STONE	Mike & Rae Sutcliffe	1994
SUN	SUNDOWNER	Roger & Molly Firey	1992
SWAG	SIR SWAGMAN	Don & Gera Fussel	1996
TI	TIERAS	Fred and Esther Hizsa	1994
VIS	VISITOR	George & Nancy Christy	1994

GENERAL INFORMATION

CUSTOMS & IMMIGRATION

[ARJ] You can do your own clearance at Pengelih Cape 01° 22' N; 104° 05' E., which is the entrance to Johor Strait. [97] Anchorage is fine, take your dinghy ashore. Malaysia requires you check in at every customs port, but it seemed OK this year to check out here direct for Langkawi even if you were stopping anywhere in the Malacca Straits.

Malaysia visas

[REN] You will have to take periodic trips outside the country by boat, train, car or bus to renew your visa. Everyone gets 3 months free: Americans automatically on entry; others get 2 months on entry with a free 1 month extension after that. To extend beyond 3 months without leaving the country is possible for 100 Rgt/passport/month. It is far easier and cheaper to take the night bus to Singapore for 36 Rgt, see a Singaporean movie, then return by the next night bus. You will get your 2 or 3 months at the border as they check you in; they don't seem to care about the boat. There are lots of other options for a quick trip out of the country: a ferry to Sumatra, cultural village on the Thai border. The cheapest option is to stay in the Langkawi area and take the ferry to Satun, Thailand, and back in one day for about 40 Rgt per person round trip.

[SAR] In Malaysia you will get either a triangular or rectangular visa stamp in your passport. With the triangular stamp (we understand) you are not allowed to leave your boat for any reason including inland trips or flights home. We think this is not a problem with the rectangular stamp, but still need to put to the test. No one knows why some boats were stamped one way and others another way and sometimes in the same port of entry! Whichever one you get it is good for 3 months for citizens of the US. and Japan. Most other countries, including Australia, get 2 months.

[RR] Malaysia is a lot more reasonable than Thailand in all respects. A visa is not required in advance, but the length of visa varies according to your nationality, e.g. Americans receive 3 months. Australians get 2 months and Asians (such as Singaporeans, Filipinos Indonesians) only have one month. This can be renewed for up to a month, perhaps more, but usually most folks have moved on. We have never paid more than a ringgit or two (cost of forms) in Immigration or customs.

[REN] Malaysia charges \$2-4 ringgit upon entry, \$14 ringgit upon exit. Malaysia gives change, Thailand doesn't. Prices can vary. On the run between Thailand and Malaysia, moving up the Malacca Straits, they only want one to check in at the first port landing (Malacca, Port Kelang, Lumut). At the moment Americans get an automatic 3 months. It is possible to extend a month but often easier to take a bus or ferry to the border and back.

Thailand Visas

[RR] With all the **immigration info** fresh in my mind I will try and explain it all here. Thailand, and Phuket in particular, seems to operate differently than most countries. Basically you can enter aboard your yacht without any prior visa. The captain and crew will be given a one month stay. If you overstay accidentally or on purpose it will cost you 100 baht per person per day. If you ask for additional time the going rate seems to be 500 baht for 10 days per person. On entering you must pay 300 baht per yacht and the same for departure. Most yachts seem to take their one month then check out for Malaysia (Langkawi). It is only 120 miles between the two and everyone takes their time coming and going. Clearance can be made in Krabi or Phuket.

Now if you decide you want to stay longer in Thailand and don't want to play this one month thing and sail your boat in and out of the country, you can leave the country and obtain a regular tourist visa at a Thai embassy or consulate (the closest being in Penang). However, before you leave Thailand (by air or road) you must put up a 20,000 baht bond at a local bank. The account is in your name and it accrues interest but the assets frozen until released by the Immigration Dept. (on your ultimate departure by yacht from Phuket). We are told the bond is an assurance that you will

return to Thailand and not leave your boat there. Doesn't sound a bit logical but there it is. It is possible to obtain a 6 month multiple entry visa in two or three month increments which still means that you must exit the country every two or three months. It is a day's drive to the border from Phuket or a \$100 US return airfare to Penang. We hear that the Immigration Dept. will renew it for 2,500 baht (they drive it to the border and get it stamped in and out ...yeah, sure!)

Now crew members can obtain a tourist visa in advance of coming to Phuket and it will be honored **if** they enter Thailand as passengers not crew. This is very important and there are separate forms for crew and passengers. **The captain must always enter as crew so a tourist visa would not be honored ever.** The Thai Embassy in Singapore swears up and down that it doesn't matter whether you arrive by land or yacht and will happily take your money for a visa. Believe me, it does matter!

Customs charges in Phuket are 100 baht on arrival and 200 baht on departure, no receipts given so no doubt going in someone's pocket.

[next letter] I wanted to add a few more comments about **Thai immigration**. Change the 500 Baht for a 10 day extension to 500 baht for up to 30 days or portion thereof. That seems to be the most common figure. However, we recently ran into an Austrian couple who wanted to extend for one month and were told they must go to the Boat Lagoon (a Phuket marina) and have them do the paperwork. It ended up costing them 500 baht each, 600 baht for the boat, one day's marina fee at 10 baht/ft. per day, plus a couple hundred more baht for other charges they couldn't identify. What a rip-off and that's the reason why we just don't mess with it. Just take our one month and go.

[ARJ] On the subject of **Thailand visas**(This is all information which we've gleaned from others as we're just entering the country ourselves.) The skipper only gets 1 month regardless of anything any consulate may have stamped in your passport to the contrary. But accepted practice is to check out of Langkawi, take 2 weeks to check in at Phuket or Krabi (you must check out of Thailand at the same port at which you check in!), spend your month in Thailand, check out, then take 2 weeks to cruise back to Langkawi to get a renewed chance at Thailand. If a person wants to leave their boat in Thailand they can leave it under bond (US\$800) at a place like the Boat Lagoon (in which case the boat can stay in the country for 6 months). **Don't list a second person as crew--call the mate a passenger instead--**or you will have to place two bonds to leave the country.

[ELE]In 97/98 Boat Lagoon would put up the bond for you and do the paperwork for leaving the boat in the country for 2000 bhat. Then while in your home country you can get a 3 month "non-immigrant's visa", multiple entry 3 times. Cost \$20 per entry, not per visa, in USA. If the captain has bonded the boat and flown out, then on his return this 3 month visa will be honored. As has been said before, it is not honored when sailing in.

[REN] At the moment Immigration is charging 300 baht for Captain/Crew and 10 baht for Passengers. I'm always a passenger. Customs charges what they can get away with, but the minimum anyone seems to pay is 100 baht. Most people skip the Harbor Master because he is so far away. It doesn't matter to Malaysia if one has a Harbor Master's clearance from Thailand.

Thailand is currently giving everyone a month's visa upon arrival no matter if they have purchased a visa ahead of time or not. Buying a visa for Thailand is a waste of money. For 500 baht/passport you can get a 2 week extension. Most people take the month without extension, but hang out in the lovely islands between Phuket and Langkawi for 2-4 weeks as they come and go. 2-3 weeks seem to be expected, though we took 4 and experienced no problems. Once one reaches Malaysia though, it is advisable to check in at the first opportunity.

[STR] When we arrived in Phuket, we were given 30 days when we cleared in at Immigration, even though we had received two-month visas at the Thai embassy in Singapore. Some cruisers were able to extend their visas when they expired, and other cruisers were refused. It just seemed to depend upon the "reason" for requested extension and the particular Immigration officer at the time.

[TI] Here in Phuket there are a lot of unhappy people. The Thailand embassies in both KL and Singapore sold **2 month visas** for Thailand for mega bucks. **None of these visas were honored by the immigration officials here.** Everyone was given only one month whether you had a visa or

not. We did not obtain visas before arrival, as we were lucky enough to talk with other boats on the radio who had gone through the hoops. Clearing in was simple and quick. Immigration and Customs are neighbors on Phuket Road in town. Immigration demanded 300 bhat while Customs took 100 bhat to clear in. To clear out Immigration wants another 300 bhat. The long term cruisers prefer to deal with the officials in Krabi as attitudes and fees are better there, we are told.

[ELE] Every now and then during the busy time of year in Ao Chalong, Phuket officials will cruise the anchorage to see who's there. So it's a good idea to check on arrival here, and leave this anchorage promptly when you're checked out. One yacht in 98 was delayed 10 days by an engine problem after they had checked out, and were told, "No problem." They may really be looking for yachts that have overstayed their 6 months (see below).

New Customs Regulation 1998

[ELE] Thailand has decided to enforce a law requiring that the owner of every foreign yacht entering the country post a bond, or sign a paper saying he will be responsible for paying the bond if the yacht does not leave within 6 months. Yachts checking into the country have had to do this since May 1998, but never had to pay, only sign the guarantee. It's too soon to tell whether any extensions beyond the 6 month period will be granted, and if so, for how long and under what circumstances. This is a Customs law, and does not change the rules for the Immigration bond mentioned above, which is 20,000 bhat to be posted if the Master of the yacht leaves the country, leaving the boat behind. That bond still must be paid, or the Boat Lagoon will post it for you for a 2,000 bhat fee (not necessary to have the boat there to get this service).

HELPING MAKE BUSINESS GO SMOOTHLY

[CB] **Dress:** When dealing with government officials or doing business in town it is appropriate to wear clean and slightly more formal clothes. No T shirts and thongs at check in time! Untidy and/or unclean clothes are considered an insult. Some particularly scruffy sailors have been told to go away and change, so be warned. For men a collared T-shirt or shirt, shoes or sandals, and long pants are preferable to shorts. For women, good idea to have shoulders and thighs covered. Blouse skirt or pants are ideal and comfortable for buses etc. Just look around you at the local people, they are nearly always very neat and clean. Follow suit and you should have no problems.

Behaviour: It's not wise to get angry or impatient, to swear or shout. YOU loose face, and it is likely to make the situation worse and lengthy. Be polite and attentive, patient with the language difficulties and you will be surprised how smoothly things can progress. Remember, government officials have a job to do and responsibilities to carry out so it is sensible to treat them with appropriate respect. If you are really having problems try and get to speak to a superior.

Attitude: Remember, you are a guest in Thailand. The Thai people are friendly, helpful and generous of spirit. As Buddhists they believe in enjoying everything they do, work or play. So if you make your business or social encounters enjoyable experiences, you benefit also. As in most Asian countries, it is best that no one loses face in any encounter. So, don't argue yourself or them into a corner, it will be stalemate for sure. It's similar to bargaining over price, they start high, you low and you meet in the middle. Everyone happy. Also be respectful of the numerous religious icons in the street, they are important.

Immigration/Customs/Harbour Master

It is essential that all skippers and crew members complete the necessary clearance procedures as soon as possible after arriving. In Thailand it is not necessary to fly the Q flag. On this coast, yachts can clear in at Phuket or Krabi on the mainland. Remember, that you have to clear out where you cleared in.

In Phuket for the King's cup special arrangements have been made with all three departments for the clearing in to take place at Nai Harn, for those yachts arriving for the first time in Phuket, on the

day following the second race from Phi Phi. Other participants already in Thai waters must deal with their own arrangements on arrival.

The Immigration and Customs are conveniently located near each other on south Phuket Rd. Office hours 0830 - 1200, 1300 - 1630 Mon to Fri. Charges are payable at both departments. Skippers must also report to the Harbour Master on arrival which is a tuk tuk, car or motor bike ride away at the main harbour. [97/98 most yachts didn't report to Harbour Master & it didn't seem to matter.] Similar procedure on departure, but in reverse. Go to Customs first. With those papers and your Port Clearance which Customs issue, Immigration can check you and your crew out of the country. Everyone must attend with passports & ships papers.

At **Krabi** a similar system operates, but there you go to Customs first, then Immigration. Also if you are not anchored in the river, you will be asked for an additional fee to go out and inspect your boat at its location as well as provide transport for the Customs officials.

All skippers or crew arriving from another country by sea get 30 day **visas**, which can be extended a further four weeks. If any of the crew are not leaving Thailand on the same boat they must be signed in as passengers, so as to receive a white card which must be produced when you leave the country by air, rail or road. If the skipper is leaving temporarily, another crew member must be nominated captain. Immigration regulations vary depending on what passport you hold, make sure you know your country's particular visa entitlements. Skippers, remember, crew are your responsibility, and there have been some very expensive and time consuming oversights in the past. So check all papers, especially out of date passports and expired visas. The buck stops and stalls with you!

Remember to be well organized and prepared with all relevant ships papers and crew documents. As well, always carry a couple of photocopies of each passport, they are needed. Be polite, respectful and attentive, patient with any language difficulties, relaxed and smile. You will find business does go more smoothly.

RADIO

[REN] 4417 SSB is the main chat station in the morning, and VHF 69 is the calling channel in Malaysia and Thailand. Folks switch to 68 or 72 generally.

FUEL

[ARJ] We use the Baja filter every time we fill and found no trouble with our fast flowing filter (not the cylinder model). We fill infrequently with a capacity of 313 gallons (Darwin-Bali-Penang) and have heard of no one who has taken on dirty or watered fuel. A slower filter could be a problem occasionally--like the fuel barge in Langkawi yet the YC is OK. No where else seemed to be a problem that we heard of. Fuel prices listed are US cents/ltr in Nov '96. We fueled in Bali for 20¢ ('95 price). Fuel can be had at Port Klang, Lumut, Penang (26¢ at fuel barge), and Langkawi (fuel barge or YC marina 27¢). Diesel is more expensive in Thailand yet petrol is cheaper we hear.

[REN] **Malacca Straits:** Bob cannot remember the price on the way up from Singapore, but I think the top price has been .40US/litre. We always use a Baja filter, but we still picked up a lot of crud in the Racor filter, including something that etched the plastic bowl of the filter, turning the clear yellow plastic white and opaque with stress cracking. It think it was the Port Kelang fuel but don't know for sure: that was the last fuel stop before it happened.

Thailand The fuel available at the fuel tug in Ao Chalong Bay is good and only a bit more expensive than the gas station, but both places have optimistic quantity meters. Our 19 litre jugs took 21 litres -- amazing! The Boat Lagoon fuel is more expensive but not by much, while the dock is easy to land upon as well as a nice break from jerry juggling.

[KN] Diesel and Propane are available at:

Port Klang: At the yacht club. (propane at the chandlery)

Penang: From fuel barges at the junk anchorage.

Langkawi: Fuel pumps at the yacht club marina just south of ferry docks.

Phuket: Fuel barge in Chalong Bay. Propane is available from one of the dive shops.

[ELE] In addition to these places, diesel is now available:

Lumut at the International Yacht Club about a mile upriver from the Navy Base. You don't have to take a mooring or pay anything to take on fuel, and water was free.

Langkawi - Rebak Marina has fuel dock.

Phuket at the Boat Lagoon. Occasionally the fuel barges call in at Nai Harn and Patong. We got petrol near the Ao Chalong roundabout.

PROPANE

[see also KN's entry under "Fuel.]

[REN]Propane refills are easy in Thailand (and cheap), but difficult in Malaysia. They use some screwy valve that requires an adapter no station has. One must rent a large propane bottle, rig up an adapter, then drip feed it on the boat. I think the bottle size is always 50 lbs too, but as I've never done it I'm unsure. So far we have been able to stretch our propane out until we return to Thailand. I don't know about kerosene, except it is available.

[ELE] In Langkawi Rebak Marina has propane. It is gravity fed from one of their large tanks, and requires a Malaysian adapter to hook that tank to yours. They don't have one.

In Phuket, there's a propane farm about 1k from the Ao Chalong roundabout, south on the road to Raiwa Beach and Nai Harn. You often have to leave it for a few hours unless the right guy happens to be there. No special fittings necessary.

WATER

[REN]We have survived the straight tap water in Malaysia, though a functioning tap can be difficult to locate. They just had a cholera outbreak in Penang due to contaminated ice, but the government quickly stamped it out. I've not heard of any cruisers succumbing. In Thailand drinking water can be difficult to come by. The only safe water I know of is purchased at **Ban Nit Marina** (just moorings) adjacent to Ao Chalong for .02/Baht/litre when available. There is a mooring buoy usable at high water. We've lived for months off their water with no ill effect.

[ELE] In Malaysia we drank the water available from marinas and fuel docks with no problems. In Thailand one must be more careful, and make sure the water offered is "drinking water." Besides the one in Ban Nit, there is another water buoy in **Patong Bay**, a large white Styrofoam square float, close to the shore in the north corner of the bay, accessible at all tides. Here one pays a flat fee, 300 bhat in 97/98, for all the water you can use in one fill.

PROVISIONS

[SWAG] In Penang you can get chloroform from the chemical shop - a drop in flour, spaghetti, rice, etc. stops weevils. [97] Also available from chemist (pharmacy) in Phuket, near the market & buses.

[PJ] Toilet paper and other paper products, toiletries and basic pharmaceuticals, tea, coffee, sugar, powdered milk, rice, flour, pulses, butter, margarine and other basic provisions were readily available and every village had a market with eggs, fish (if you had no luck catching it yourself), fruit and veggies. Tinned fruit and veg. from Malaysia were stocked in Singapore but difficult to find in Malaysia. Marmalade was too sweet for our taste except in Singapore. Sweet biscuits were delicious in Indonesia, Singapore and Malaysia. Cashew nuts were cheap and delicious in Thailand. All drink was expensive in Singapore, and in Malaysia except from the duty-free area of Langkawi. Bread was usually good, but occasionally, in Malaysia, there was only soft, sweet bread. Phuket has an excellent fresh market, and provisioning there was generally better than Malaysia. After Singapore, rice, pulses, flour and dried fruit were always infested with weevils. Bay leaves are the best preventive although not 100% effective and should be bought in Australia as they are unknown even in Singapore.

[REN]There are plenty of markets to buy fruit and veggies, with the one at **Phuket Town** the best so far. Tough buffalo meat, chicken, fish, and seafood are available. At the Cold Storage in **Langkawi** I can purchase Anchor cheddar cheese, edam, and Swiss, NZ beef (not the best) and a few home goodies. It's pricey, though. Sitiawan, near **Lumut**, and **Penang** are much better for provisioning, with a bigger selection. **Phuket** is expensive, though they do have American catsup and a locally made good imitation maple syrup for about \$1USD (Log Cabin quality). The Chinese mini-markets in **Ao Chalong** are priced the same or less than the big Robinson's supermarket in Phuket Town.

Except for some superb canned curries (the one with the label in Thai only) it is best to provision in Lumut or Penang. And jam. Malaysian jam is very sweet, with few natural ingredients; whereas Phuket has pricey imports. Planta or homegrown peanut butter in Malaysia is good and not too sweetened, but expensive compared to Oz and NZ. Planta and Blue Ribbon do make an excellent canned margarine that is almost as good as the real thing, but much cheaper. It isn't quite toast quality but otherwise is far superior to anything else I've tried. It keeps without refrigeration too. I bake and cook in it using real butter (the only alternative at \$1USD/270g) for rice and bread. After NZ the butter will taste bland to you, but margarine is very pricey. It is Anchor butter but it doesn't taste as rich as I remember. It is also foil wrapped, so of limited life.

Malaysian "spicy cubed pork" in a can is excellent, chili inspired, with minimal fat or unidentifiable bits. Canned powdered milk is everywhere in great selection though mostly for infants. Fat free milk powder is rare, as is canned evaporated milk or reduced cream. Very good canned clams are available, Brasso rare, cooking/baking spices limited and variable, whole wheat flour unavailable, bran (etc.) unavailable, brown sugar plentiful in Malaysia, white wheat flour and rice flour available in 1kg bags (with bugs in Malaysia), no chocolate chips anywhere, raisins are expensive in Malaysia and OK (in the market) in Thailand, though cheapest in NZ or OZ.. White bread is available most places, bad but cheap corn chips available sometimes, Doritos rarely in Langkawi (almost \$4USD), good cheap white rice everywhere, no brown rice, dried beans in Thailand only, no treacle/golden syrup/molasses, but imitation (yuck) honey or expensive Oz/US honey is available. Booze is expensive except in Langkawi, cigarettes are inexpensive, Malaysian coffee is undrinkable, Thai coffee is better, instant is everywhere but expensive, sweetened condensed milk is everywhere and cheap, paper towels are usually nonexistent, corn meal nonexistent, and sweet cordials everywhere. Sunquick is the best we've found so far. It tastes the closest to real orange, mandarin, grape, or lemon than anything else here or in Oz. Chili powder is everywhere as are chilies, cumin is rare, no cinnamon, no oregano, no parsley, fresh chives, weak but cheap garlic, ginger root, red and white onions. Sometimes a cherished spice makes a sudden brief appearance in a store but not often. Expensive and rare are chutneys and relishes, though there are excellent hot sauces.

There seem to be a lot of personal grooming products and cleaning products and odd inexpensive mozzie coils that needs lots of air around them to burn. A specially built holder is available cheap in most stores the coils are sold in. WD40 and CRC are rare but here. Clothes are reasonable to cheap (hard to find large size), while bolts of material look well priced, but I have little knowledge of fabrics. Postage is expensive, particularly parcels, though everything seems to go through. Letter envelopes are reasonable to inexpensive, though usually of the type this letter is in - side flapped. Pads of lined paper aren't that available, but there are numerous cheap alternative forms, though not of recycled paper. Greeting cards are cheap (ex: 10 Christmas cards, good quality, real pretty too, less than \$1USD). The season is no big deal however. Chinese New Year is the holiday for non-Muslims, Ramadan for Muslims.

Friday is the day off in Malaysia, while Sundays are slow in Thailand, but many things are open. In Malaysia money changers give the best rates when bank fees are worked in, while in Thailand banks are one's only choice. You will need some baht for bus fare to Phuket Town so get some in Langkawi. At the moment it will cost 20 baht for both of you to take the bus into the market, then another 20 to Immigration (only a 20 minute walk away if you have the map). There are money changers all over the place in Phuket Town.

[next letter]**Shopping** Things to buy up here - pirate CD's for both the computer and music, and pirate videos. They have them down pat. You can get a CD with 20 of the latest programs on it for less than \$10 US. Good quality too, but no manuals. The videos tend to be a shoddier bunch, but you can watch them in the store before buying them usually. They average \$6 US for the good ones. They have pirate cassette tapes, watches, clothes, everything around here particularly in Thailand, but except for the 2 mentioned they are of markedly inferior quality.

HAUL OUTS

[See SIR SWAGMAN'S list of Yards & Marinas at end of these notes]

[ARJ] Haulouts here in SE Asia are expensive. People haul at Nat Steel (fax 65-543-1659), Raffles (fax: 65-862-2280), and Bala in Singapore; Royal Selangor YC at Port Klang (fax 603-368-8650), Tan Shipyard in Lumut (fax 605-622- 3790), Penang YC (fax 604-263-5977), Phuket Boat Lagoon (fax 667-623-9056). **The paint** itself is cheap in S'pore and JB (Johore Bahru) with tin base available. Sigma Coatings in S'pore sells to ships-- available to us at around US\$10/liter--a marina mate has used it for years and gets 5 years by putting on several layers. Another popular brand is Jotun.

[98] We've been told the **Penang Yacht Club has sold their travelift** to Port Dickson Marina. If so, that facility is not longer available.

[STR]In **Penang**, Malaysia, we hauled *STRIDER* out for a bottom job. Penang Yacht Club has a 100-ton travel lift and the boatyard is paved in concrete. Most of the marina personnel speak good English. We brought all of our haul-out supplies with us, although limited supplies are available in Penang. Supplies can be ordered from Singapore and shipped up within a couple of days.

[ARI] We hauled out in **Penang in Batu Maung Slipway** (phone # 04183045; fax 041838688; owner Mr. Oh) in the small village of Batu Maung, SE tip of the island. It is not a yard for yachts; they usually work on big fishing trawlers, but they have a crane that can lift seven tons. The price was R350 in and out; R30 per day hard stand, plus R10 per day water and power (220v). We were pretty satisfied and we had some excellent fiberglass work done. They are expanding the yard facilities and planning to buy a bigger crane. The only problem is that the water in the area is very shallow and they can only haul out at spring tides yachts with no more than six feet of draft, but the best thing of Batu Maung was the people of the village. We became friends with a group of Chinese fishermen and they invited us in their homes, drove us around the island, gave us a lot of fresh fish, and introduced us to the interesting multi-cultural traditions of Malaysia.

[REN] Boat stuff is expensive up here and haulouts outrageous. It would cost us about \$600 USD to simply get RENAISSANCE in and out of the water, not including the yard time, paint, or the hundreds of incidentals charged. The only alternative we've heard about is a small fishing boat haulout facility in the **Perak River, south of the Lumut River, Malaysia**. I haven't talked to anyone who has hauled out there yet, but I have conversed with people who have used other Malaysian and Thai "yacht yards" and learned that for a lot of money, most boats leave with more damage than they had when they arrived. It seems the Selenger Yacht Club, **Port Klang**, likes to run boats into piers and the **Penang Yacht Club** has dropped a couple on their keels. Yachting is still a rich man's sport here, one just arrived, so there are barely any facilities. There are **piles in the Lumut River at Mr. Chan's**, 1 mile past the Lumut Yacht Club, where one can do a touch up, and a **stone pier in Phuket** that boats have used, but otherwise the services are rare and poor. **The Boat Lagoon** in Phuket is excellent, top notch, professional, and shockingly expensive. That was the \$600USD quote.

[next letter] There are not any cheap alternatives this year except careening, very difficult to do more than just paint. It's really best to haul in Australia and try to go with only bottom scrubbing up here. Things grow quickly in Asian waters.

Phil Hollywood, Canadian yachting who has settled here, does run the Boat Lagoon as manager/harbor master and does an excellent job. It seems to be a number one operation, with no accidents due to management or workers. The place is beautiful and spotless; the people friendly and helpful. The work is contracted in from outside, so the marina takes no responsibility for that, but generally if Phil recommends someone it is a sure bet. The marina is well protected, and the only one where no thefts have been reported on SSB. They have a 100 ton travel lift and concrete hard stand with hefty stands and room for over 80 boats. When they haul you out they have a diver in the water watching and adjusting the straps as you go. It really is a well run place, the best in the area. In Dec 95 their prices were (25baht=\$1 US at the time):

Berth daily 7.75b/foot; weekly 53b/foot; monthly 176b/foot; yearly 1907b/foot.

Hardstand travelift 292b/foot; cradle 1655-3300b/foot [??] scaffolding 1100b; pressure wash 11b/foot; utilities 10% rent; plus hardstand berthages same as regular berths above. Prices have changed since then, so it's worth faxing them at 076-239-056. You must book well ahead because the yard fills up very fast. Bottom paint is cheap, about \$40 US/gallon for the Jotun Saeconomy here in Phuket Town mid 96. Have heard it is less costly in Singapore (because of the ships?).

YACHT REPAIRS

[REN] There are ways to get things done up here but one has to be inventive. In general, SE Asia seems to be a "do it yourself" type of place; the results are usually much more satisfactory. Everything seems to be available here too.

Rolly Tasker, near Ao Chalong Bay, Phuket makes inexpensive basic production-like **sails** of good quality fast, and has done many sail repairs/modifications, but always with a screw up. The Thai ladies working for him are ex-clothes makers, not sailmakers, so anything deviant throws them off. No one has had modifications or custom work done without needing to take them back at least twice. The repairs are always speedily done, though.

We haven't seen much **teak**, though there is supposed to be a good local hardwood related to teak used to construct the popular sampans here, but I haven't seen it or heard of anyone using it. Phuket's much vaulted stainless steel is not marine grade, it is for food warmers and display cases, but the workmanship is good. Marine hardware and rope is unavailable.

At Ao Chalong there is an **inflatable dinghy** maker who has done fast excellent **repairs**, picking up and delivering almost on time. Lots of boats have had **galvanizing** done here without much trouble and good results. I think the place near Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia is the best though there is a place in Thailand. It seems to be cheaper to do it oneself. Transport to the galvanizers is a problem in Thailand. We have yet to find a good exterior **varnish**, but prices are so low we are experimenting.

[next letter] Thailand is also a lousy place to get work done. We always seem to need just that when we arrive in Phuket, so I know. Labor is inexpensive, but the laborer usually insists on doing things his way only. One boat needed an engine part welded. Armed with precise measurements and a mechanical drawing, the captain went to a welder and minutely explained exactly what he wanted done. After he left, the welder did it his own way. The part did not fit. It had to be modified, the welder was evasive, when pinned down he was insulted and demanded more money for the modifications. These were not made as agreed upon, the part still did not fit. In the end the job took 5 times longer than it should, cost more, was botched but useable, and created a lot of hostility and frustration. Sometimes the job never gets completed. This happens to everybody. I think Malaysia is better but I don't know for sure.

[KRS] The Boat Lagoon, a marina with travel-lift had just been opened in a lagoon on the east coast of Phuket, and other **repair opportunities** were plentiful. For **inflatables** contact Hans, a German expert in Chalong, who uses special glues [he was highly recommended in 97]; for **marine supplies** look into Huat's hardware store downtown. When your own wits are at end, you will find the best source for any kind of information is Rowdy, the genial witty owner of the trimaran ALLEGRA, anchored normally amidst the Chalong bunch.

[COM] We bought a **new battery in Phuket** and got excellent service and price from Thong, at Singha Battery, 1512 Montri Road.

[97] Steve at Friendship Marine, the used boat bits place near Ao Chalong, was organizing regular trips to the galvanizer this year.

MAIL

[ARJ]**Mail Drops**

(Malaysian Borneo) Labuan Marina, 1 Jalan Wawasan, 87000 W.P. Labuan, Malaysia; Tel: 60-87-418 111 Fax: 60-87- 413 468

Sebana Cove Marina 5 miles up Santi River at O1° 24.7N 104° 09.8E
 PO Box102, Bandar Penawar Post Office, 81900, KotaTinggi,Johor Darul Takzim, Malaysia
 FAX 60-7-825-2413 TEL 60-7-825-2411

Royal Selangor Yacht Club, Jalan Limbongan, 42000 Port; Klang, Selangor Darul Ehsan, West Malaysia; Tel: 60-3-368-6964 Fax: 60-3-368-8650

Admiral Marina Port Dickson, 5th mile south of Port Dickson; Town; Tel: 60-3- 248 1033 Fax: 60-3-243 4933

Penang Yacht Club, Kedah Pier, Jin Tun Syed Sheh Barakbah; 10300 Pulau Penang,
 Tel: 60-4-263-5976 Fax: 60-4-263-5977

Bayan Bay Marina, 2 off Jl. Aziz Ibrahim, Sg. Nibong; 11900 Bayan Lepas, Penang;
 Tel: 60-4-642-2339 Fax: 60-4- 642-2336

Poste Restante, Kuah 07000, Langkawi, Kedah, Malaysia

Langkawi Yacht Club, Kuah, Langkawi, Kedah, Malaysia; Tel: 60-3- 264-9800 Fax: 60-3-264 9700;

Rebak Marina Resort

PO Box 125 (couriers use Pulau Rebak), 07000 Kuah,Langkawi, Kedah, Malaysia
 Tel 60-4-966-9960, FAX 60-4-966-9973

Phuket Boat Lagoon

PO Box 500 (22/1 Thepaksattri Rd); Phuket, Thailand 83000 FAX 66-76-239 056

Poste Restante, Phuket 83000 Thailand works well, or...

Poste Restante, Post Office, Rawai, 83130, Phuket, Thailand.

This is the post office just near the main anchorage of Ao Chalong.

Phuket Boating Association 59/2 Moo 9 Chalong Bay, Phuket 83130 Thailand.

FAX 66-76-381-322. Convenient: right at dinghy dock in Chalong Bay. VHF 69 "Chalong Harbor."
 If using their mail drop, they prefer you sign up for a temporary membership (1 month, 500 bhat in 1997). Membership includes use of their dinghy dock, deep water access at nearly all tides.

Phuket Yacht Service Laem Phrao Marina, Box 77; Phuket Post Office, Phuket 83000 Thailand;
 Tel: (66-76) 327 109 Fax: (66-76) 327 109

[REN]Whatever needs to be **imported should be sent to Langkawi**. Thailand has a 30% import duty plus corrupt customs officials. For mail, general delivery is a cardboard box on a table in the post office. **Boat Lagoon** has worked well for us in Thailand, though general delivery at the Phuket Town post office has worked well for others.

HEALTH

[REN]**Malaria** We are not taking any preventatives but do carry the cures, 2 doses each. As far as I know no one has contracted malaria here, although inland may be another story. There don't seem to be too many mosquitoes ashore on Phuket or Langkawi. Up the Dindings River in Lumut there were a lot at sunrise and sunset, so we used repellent at those times. The local mosquito repellent is worthless; stock up before you come.

[1994] **Malaria** no reports - not a problem in Singapore or west coast Malaysia and Thailand, not many mosquitoes anywhere in dry season. Whatever you take: chloroquine, maloprim, doxycycline or Lariam, remember pills do not guarantee you will not get malaria. Lariam is often used as a cure instead of a preventative.

[APG] Have taken nothing for **malaria** in Malaysia or Thailand.

[ELE] The west coast areas of Malaysia & Thailand are considered safe, especially during the NE monsoon, the cruising season. Although most people on yachts are not taking preventatives for malaria here, the following is condensed from Indonesia & Solomon island notes for your info. You may want to take preventatives during inland trips. Suggest carrying supplies for cleansing and treatment regimens for all crew in any case. All medicines except Lariam are widely available and very cheap in Indonesia, and probably also in Malaysia.

The following is for your info just in case. For children, consult a doctor or the IAMAT traveler's health booklet, available free from IAMAT, 417 Center Street, Lewiston NY 14092 USA; also in Toronto, Geneva, and Christchurch.

Prophylactic Regimen one of the following, start 1 week before and continue 4 weeks after leaving the area. Lariam is more expensive & not well tolerated by some; doxycycline can be a bit hard on the stomach.

1. mefloquine hydrochloride (Lariam) 250mg, 1 tablet per week.
2. doxycycline 100mg 1 tablet per day

Treatment If fever or flu like symptoms appear and no clinic is nearby, treat as for falciparum malaria. Too risky to take the chance. And try to get to a clinic ASAP. If clinic is immediately at hand, a cheap & easy finger prick test will determine whether you have falciparum or vivax malaria. They will also have the pills available, very cheap, so you don't have to use your stores. Stop prophylaxis regimen during treatment, then resume.

Vivax: take Chloroquine 300mg (usually in 500mg tablets combined with something else), 4 tablets per day for 4 days.

Falciparum: Sulfadoxine 500mg & pyrimethamine 25mg (combo in Fansidar) 3 tablets in one dose, after a meal, with 8 oz water.

Cleansing Regimen May be taken immediately after treatment, or 4 weeks after you have left the malaria risk area when you have finished the prophylaxis.

Day 1: 600 mg chloroquine (2 tablets, see above) and 15mg quinine. After 6 hours take 300mg more chloroquine.

Days 2-4: 300 mg. chloroquine and 15mg quinine each day.

Days 5-14: 15 mg quinine each day.

PEOPLE

[REN] In Malaysia, all officials and most citizens speak good to excellent English, though it is very useful to know some Malay. Malay is basically Indonesian with a few changed words, so by the time you arrive from Indonesia you should be prepared. There are English TV, English radio, English publications. The people are very tolerant, gentle, hospitable, usually cheerful, and a tad Americanized, as Malaysia is rapidly gearing up to accommodate Singapore's overflow. We find a comfortable and easy country to live within.

Thailand is a struggle. Thai is a tonal language difficult to master, yet one must try because so few people speak English. As Phuket becomes more tourist oriented folks are learning English, but not knowing at least Thai numbers means market annihilation. The Thais we have met have been aggressive with a backtone of hostility, though outwardly gracious, graceful, immaculately groomed, and always smiling. The expat community is about the same only snobbier. It's a good place to watch one's back and realize nothing is for free. It's a place to check cans of turps, etc. to see if any of the contents have been drained off, and where bargaining returns strongly to the scene. I've been told the Thai "attitude" is different away from Phuket, more generous, certainly we had a very pleasant experience with some fishermen in Phang-Nga Bay. Though still aggressive, they were friendly and patient with our lack of Thai, giving us crabs and fish in exchange for cigarettes and empty jars. For the fun of it they took Bob and I net hauling in their sampan, then zipped us about to "their" cave. Had we more time I think it would have been interesting to anchor by their village for a couple of days. We happily invited the fishermen aboard, but would allow no Phuket Thais while anchored in Ao Chalong.

Phuket has a touch of the exotic, however, that makes it interesting. Buddhist temples of gaudy mirrored tile and gilding are everywhere, elephants, orange robed monks, fancy house shrines and a whole host of minor things announce a culture which copies no industrialized nation (except

maybe a touch of China). Unlike Malaysia, Thailand has never been colonized, resulting in a sort of arrogance. I find it all a challenge, whose tiny victories seem immense to me. Usually by the end of our month there I am ready for isolated island anchorages, then easy Malaysia.

MONEY

[97] In 97 both the Malaysian ringget and the Thai bhat dropped considerably, but not as much as the Indonesian rupiah. Prices in US\$ have remained constant, sometimes cheaper for domestic goods. Convert prices in this guide, to US\$ at the following rates:

before Aug 97: US\$1 = M ringget 2.5 ; or Thai bhat 25

Aug 97 to date (June 98) US\$ 1= M ringget 4; or Thai bhat 40.

[RUBY] **Note on Money before leaving Thailand for the Red Sea** We heard that it would cost about \$1500 US between Langkawi and Suez, so we got that in Thailand and it was easily done. Some others didn't and were seen scurrying around from Sri Lanka on, always looking for a place to get some US dollars.

OFF SEASON

[ARJ] **People who stay the season** usually want to leave the Phuket area by mid March to early April due to the arrival of rainy season & change in wind direction. But some still stay while others go a little south to hold over at Langkawi or Lumut. Langkawi has a beautiful cruising area--but not as extensive as Phuket. Lumut is up a river & most people opt for cheap moorings off Kampung Bahru, with the town of Sitiawan with rather good provisioning and an excellent injector shop about 30 min bus ride away.

Singapore's season of torrential downpour is Dec/Jan.

[REN] During the worst part of the SW monsoon most boats holed up in **Kuah** or **in Lumut** up the **Dindings River at Kampung Baharu or Chan's**. It all depends on your likes and needs. How long is difficult to say because it is so variable. This year (96) the rainy season didn't come until October; some years it arrives in June; usually they say July and August are the worst months. You just hold tight until the SSB reports of folks heading up the coast are more favorable and it looks like the transition is on the way.

[98] **Rebak Marina** is very popular now that it is fully operational and prices are still lower than any of the other marinas. It's very sheltered and security is excellent, so it's a safe place to leave the boat. Resort policy is to make yachties very welcome..

[See also East Cost and Borneo notes at end]

CHARTS & GUIDES

[STR] **Sail Thailand** was a very helpful guide, available from Artasia Press Co. Ltd., Phuket office phone and Fax: (076) 216 707. [97 also sold by Boat Lagoon for 450 bhat]

[1994] Also handwritten **Booklet by John Batts**. [97] Both books are indispensable.

[STYL] A small **glossary** is appropriate here. To understand Thai charts Ao = bay, Ko or Koh = island, Ban = village, Hin = danger. It is also worth noting that the letter "h" in words beginning with ph or th is not pronounced, ie Phang, as in Phang Nga Bay is pronounced "Pang" and the name might be written thus, Ao Phang Nga.

[ARJ] got Thai charts #333 & 334 at Friendship Marine ,also Big A at Ao Chalong "lite house."

[ELE] Full color Thai charts of the whole area are excellent, have labels in English, and very cheap (175-250 bhat each in 1998).

Charts can also be **copied** on a full size machine in Phuket at Top Copy, 7/5 Sukhat Road (near the prison) in Phuket. Cost in 97: only 60 bhat.

[PJ]Charts. Motion Smith in Singapore, with an office in Kuala Lumpur, are major Admiralty chart agents and one should not count on buying charts again before Europe or South Africa. There is a chart agent in Colombo with a limited stock. Charts could be photocopied in Singapore, good reproduction on good quality paper, for about \$3 each, and borrowing charts to copy was a major activity. Photocopies are particularly attractive on coastal passages such as Singapore to Phuket, where each chart is used for only one or two days. We thought the following charts were essential, except where stated to be merely useful. All references are to Admiralty chart numbers:

- **3841, 3843**: (Singapore Strait and Serangoon Harbour [Changi Sailing Club]. There are many charts of Singapore Harbour, essential or useful depending on the route chosen, whether one stops at Changi or the new marina on the Indonesian side of Singapore Strait, and the state of the continuous reclamation in Singapore Harbour.
- **1355** (Malacca Strait) and **3942-3947** (6 charts Singapore to Phuket). We also found the following larger scale charts essential: **3453** (Kelang Straits); **792** (Lumet); **843** (Langkawi); **1366** (if entering Penang); **3941** (Phuket and Ao Phangnga). Some Thai charts were available in Phuket.

PIRATES

[PJ] There aren't any. Once there were pirates in Malacca Strait, but it has been many years since any yacht was in danger. Certainly no yacht sailing Malacca Strait in 1993/94 had the slightest fear of pirates. The west coast of Thailand was equally safe.

WEATHER

[CG1]**Weather - Malacca Straits** can be divided into four seasons:

1. **NE Monsoon - November to March** This is the dry season; winds are predominately NE 10-20, occasionally 30k. There are frequent calms lasting from a few hours (evening and early morning) to whole days or few days' duration. Rain is very rare and the days are fine and relatively cool; the sun is furthest south at this time, only 60 degrees above the horizon in December. Very pleasant cruising weather. Because the wind is coming straight off the Malaysian peninsula, there is no swell and any seas that do come up during local strong winds drop quickly when the wind drops.

2. **Transition Period - April and May** This is the height of the transition period between the NE and SW Monsoons and is marked by many calms, very light winds, and flat seas. When there is wind it can come from any direction and vary in strength and direction, but is not common from the E through to S or from N. There is the odd rain squall that can last from 5 minutes to an hour or 2, with winds sometimes up to 25k under them. Very little chance of a "sumatra" (see SW monsoon). Weather is hot and sultry.

3. **SW Monsoon - June to September** This is the wet season. Hot sultry weather as the sun is in the North and the humidity is high. Winds are predominantly from SW 10-25, with frequent calms and frequent rain squalls. The squalls last from a few minutes to a few hours, but typically last for 15 minutes with very heavy rain and either no wind or, more frequently, winds up to 25k. These winds change strength and direction depending on your position relative to the center of the squall. Once it has passed over, the skies clear and the wind returns to what it was before the squall arrived. A squall can usually be seen well before it arrives as an isolated large, dark, towering cloud, and, should you be close to land, gives you plenty of time to either anchor or head for an open area before the heavy rain causes a complete whiteout. This is also the season for "sumatra" winds.

Sumatra winds are a different matter altogether. In the day they can be easily identified as a long rolling bank of very dark cloud extending roughly north-south from horizon to horizon and coming from the west, from Sumatra, thus their name. At night, when they are most common, the first warning is when they hit. They are most frequent in the South Malacca Straits, but do occur occasionally around Penang and Langkawi, and more rarely around Phuket. Typically there will be 2 to 4 during the season in Penang and 1 or 2 in Phuket. There is no avoiding the very strong winds up

to 60k from the westerly quarter and very heavy rain. They can last for 5 or more hours, though more commonly last about 20 minutes to 1 hour, and then end as quickly as they began.

4. **Transition period - October** same as April/May.

[KRS] Meandering through fleets of fishermen along the peninsula of **West Malaysia**, the June/July weather brought no gale force sumatras but intermittent thundershowers, variable SW winds, 1 kt counter-current and noise of the iron sail.

INLAND TOURING

Malaysia

[SWAG] For **land travel** in Malaysia, coach travel is very economical. For long distance ask for VIP Top from the coach company of your choice. VIP top means least seats and therefore more room and comfort. Train travel, for those who prefer it, is much more expensive, double the cost.

[RUBY] Some places to stop are KL in Malaysia (don't know why people bothered), and in Thailand: Bangkok, Chang Mai and Chang Rai. You can save Malacca, Malaysia for later, or you can cross from the yacht anchorage at Water Island by ferry.

Thailand

[VIS] Those spending time in Phuket should try to go north by bus or train to **Chaing Mai**, the silk center. It is worth the long ride and far superior to Bangkok. The Loy Krathong Festival there at the end of November is outstanding, as is the dinner with Thai dancing at the Old Cultural Center.

[RUBY] A fun option we missed was the sleeper train in Thailand. Apparently, it looks like seats that face each other, but in the evening the steward comes in and folds out the beds and drops the upper berth and puts up the curtains. More privacy than you'd expect, and friends had a ball.

[ELE]Chang Mai

Accommodation: Galare Guest House 750 bhat, air-con, hot shower, does not include breakfast. Tel 273-885; fax 279-008

Excellent location by the river (though most rooms don't look over the river). Their restaurant is great place for leisurely breakfast. Short walk to night market area, which also has restaurants, food stalls, and during the day an Internet cafe (near MacDonald's).

Eating Out Lots of good choices here. We particularly enjoyed **Riverside Bar & Restaurant**, which is a very nice riverside walk from Galare. We ate outside along the river; nicely lit after dark.

Touring We rented a car from Northwheels, 800 bhat for the day, and did our own factory tour. Prices fixed mostly and not that good but selection is much better in the bigger factories so do have a good look out there. The big teak furniture place was great.

Another day could be spent driving north of the city to see all that is out there. (Much cheaper in your own car than the travel agents' tours.) If visibility is good, the drive up the hill to Doi Suthep would be well worth it. The other temples in Chang Mai we thought were nothing special; the Bangkok ones are so fabulous there's no comparison. If you are definitely going to do the river trip that we did from Chang Rai, that will include an elephant ride and plenty of hill tribe villages, so you may not want to do that here too. Ditto the Hilltribe Museum. If you do go to the elephant camp, the one farther out of Chang Mai is the better one; they have a show at about 9:30 I think and then you can take a nice ride through the jungle & have lunch there too in a real rural setting. The night market is just like Patong, but much bigger & more crafts & hill tribe stuff.

Chang Rai

Accommodation: Golden Triangle Inn Tel 716-996; fax 713-963 is terrific. 600-650 bhat, air con & hot shower, includes excellent full breakfast. All rooms in old teak building style & well planted (some mozzies). Ask for room in back away from main road. Short walk to very small night market & hilltribe museum (excellent, & good restaurant there), banks with ATM machines & anything else.

Dinner in their restaurant also very good; great menu. We also liked a small German owned place on the right down Phahonyothin Road (to the south) about 3 blocks.

Mae Kok River Tour from Tha Thon to Chang Rai. Booked by Mae Kok River Lodge.

Their number is wrong in Lonely Planet; I got the number from Golden Triangle's travel agent but they could not book the tour. Better to go to Tha Thon & check out their picture book etc & look at boat and other tour choices & book it yourself then. However we did book from the travel agent at Golden Triangle an air-con van to take us direct from hotel to Tha Thon for 1000 bhat - about a 2 hour pretty ride - worth it (cheaper than the price Mae Kok Lodge quoted for the same service). The alternative, public buses or noisy longtail up the river, would take most of a day.

The tour was excellent; more expensive than the other choices, but it is a much higher quality tour, worth the difference in price we thought even though it's shorter. One night two days was enough. If it's raining a lot I'm not sure I would do this trip though. The accommodation on the river in individual thatched chalets was charming, but had mozzies. Take coils! Nice dinner & drinks afterwards by fire. Food was good. Tour includes lots of hill tribe villages (mostly by jeep in morning of first day) and elephant ride on second day. Their boat was much better than others too. They had a muffler on the longtail, which they used only occasionally to get you through the flat boring parts of the river. Our guide was **Dan**, we thought he was excellent; ask for him & meet him first. Excellent English & has a few gray hairs & has been guiding for 10 years.

Tha Thon

Accommodation. Several places all right next to each other along the river, different types. Mae Kok is nice (rooms similar to Golden Triangle) but overpriced we thought at 900 bhat including full breakfast. No air con but you don't need it. There were some bungalows downstream from them that looked OK & were cheaper. Also a modern hotel right by the road don't know the price. Have a wander across the bridge to check out the backpacker's restaurants & cheaper boat tours .

MALACCA STRAITS

GENERAL

[SWAG] Everyone appears to be rushing to get to Phuket. It doesn't take as long to see as one would think from the glossy cruising guide, so enjoy the trip between Singapore and Phuket.

[SUN] We have traversed it 3 times, doing it differently each time. We do not think there is a best way to do it, but here are a few observations. The first time we anchored every night, thought it was a good passage, and had no problems, but we may have been lucky. We have since then experienced a few Sumatras, violent thunderstorms with strong winds, and observed the fishing fleets working inshore at night, which suggest our anchorages were not all that secure. Running straight north is a good option if you can stay well rested and alert, as the commercial ship traffic and fish operations create a dense traffic situation that requires constant vigilance. The compromise that was right for us was to anchor at **Kukup Island** (20 miles N of Singapore), **Water Islands** (just off the City of Malacca), **Port Dickson** [new marina here in 97], mouth of the river into **Port Kelang - Lumut** or nearby **Panghor Island, Pinang** and **Langkawi**. There are undoubtedly many more that the old hands can recommend; we have used these and in 92 they were good.

[CG1] recommends only one stop, at Port Klang, then clearing from there straight to Ao Chalong on Phuket Island. A direct course drawn on the chart will pass just to the west of the Butang group. This is a good route as it avoids the shipping lanes, fishing boats, fishing nets, fishing stakes, and shoals that a coastal route encounters, which makes night travel particularly difficult. In the transition season, this route allows more sea room in case a sumatra hits.

[COM] Malaysia and the renown Malacca Straits were one of the more pleasant surprises of our trip thus far. In company with four other boats, we anchored most nights while traveling the Straits. When sailing overnight we planned to be far enough offshore to avoid the fishing nets, but close

enough to be out of the shipping lanes. It seemed the magic figure for us was a depth of 150 feet, with a very alert watch.

[STR] Our trip up the Malacca Strait was straightforward. We made mostly day hops with one overnight from Port Klang to Penang. We used **John Batts' *The Phuket and Malacca Straits Cruising Yacht Guide*** [CG1] for reference.

[PJ] By December '93, Singapore was feeling the tentative arrival of the northeast monsoon that gives sheltered anchorage in Malacca Strait. The change of monsoon also brought heavy rain and thunderstorms, and it was time to move on. A yacht at anchor next to PACIFIC JADE was struck by lightning, losing all her electronics; and another which left with us on December 2 was also struck and forced to return.

Tidal streams are strong south of Singapore, and by catching the favourable stream we easily made 60 miles in daylight to anchor south of **Pulau Pisang** (Pisang Island), the southernmost Malaysian island in Malacca Strait. John Batts' cruising guide describes Malacca Strait as "more a passage between Singapore and Phuket than a yachting destination"; and experienced sailors who had made the passage several times said that one could, by motor-sailing, ride a favourable stream for 390 miles through the strait to Penang. **We chose to day-sail**, both to see a little of Malaysia and, by staying inshore, to avoid heavy traffic in what is reputed to be, after the English Channel, the world's busiest shipping lane. In daylight we had no difficulty avoiding the fishing nets that so plagued BAGHEERA. Another yacht reported that both shipping and nets could be avoided by sailing just outside the shipping lane on the Malaysian side. We always found an anchorage before dark, although it was necessary to use the engine every day.

[LR] It was the end of February before I left Singapore & motored westward and northward towards the Malacca Strait. One must move through the **Singapore Strait** to get there. It is like driving through Manhattan at rush hour with the amount of shipping traffic. The Malacca Strait is a fairly shallow waterway giving ships the time-saving alternative to going south of neighboring Sumatra. The tidal mud flats extend a fair distance offshore, allowing the cruising yachtsman an infinite number of anchorages during settled weather. Weather being what it is, unpredictable, there are a number of small islands that would give some protection from the seemingly ever present swell. This allows one to "day hop" most of the way to Phuket. There is plenty to see along the way.

[TI] The Strait of Malacca, between Sumatra, Indonesia and the Malay peninsula, is busy with freighter traffic and fish boats. One of our buddy boats, ICARUS, was trapped in fishing nets twice. We rarely had usable wind in this stretch of 500 miles but timed the tides to take advantage of the currents and motored a lot. The water was cloudy, the scenery mundane and progress slowed down by the underwater growth. We decided to travel only during daylight hours. We started at dawn and stopped before the inevitable 3 p.m. thunderstorm.

[MAR]**Weather and Traffic** - Malacca Strait- We made this trip in mid-February about the time of the new moon. In the narrowest part of the Strait we had mostly no air and a consistent favorable current of about 1 knot. Once on the widening part of the Strait, we had NW winds for about a week, usually 10-15 kts, but sometimes up to 20 kts. We beat up the Sumatra coast to We Island on the N tip to refuel. The weather was consistently clear, no rain, calm to moderate seas, and nice sailing if we ignored the fact that we were always off the rhumb line! Currents are hard to predict in this area, and the strength of tidal effects varies with the moon, of course, but we generally had a favorable NW set. There is an incredible amount of shipping in these waters; it was typical to have a dozen ships nearby. We had no problems with fish traps, fish nets or boats in the Strait, as many yachts do, because we always stayed in very deep water, near or in the shipping lanes. Contrary to many previous reports, we found the local Indonesian craft and their nets to be very well lit at night.

Piracy

[94] In 1994 four cases of piracy reported off **Karium Besar Island, closest island to Malacca Straits**. Karium group is located 01' 04 N, 103' 21 E to 01'11 N, 103' 21 E.

[OW] On November 10, we headed out into the notorious Malacca Strait and made our way northward toward Port Klang. I was apprehensive as we made our way into the Strait. What lay in store for us? Piracy has always been at the back of my mind, fueled by all the hype one read about in newspapers and magazines, not to mention the TV. The positive side of all this is that not a single yachtie from the previous year reported an incident.

We elected to stay in the main shipping channel, which we thought would be more predictable than being closer inshore where all the unlit fishing boats and their traps were. This, I think, turned out to be a good idea as we had a most enjoyable overnight sail up to Port Klang. There were stacks of ships to contend with, but at least they had their navigational lights on and we could work out where they were going. They also monitor channel 16. We had the most spectacular thunderstorm in the late afternoon with tremendous lightning. It was so severe we elected to switch off all our electronic gear in the hope nothing would get damaged. The bolts of lightning were so close and so loud one literally had to cover up one's ears. There was very little time between the lightning and the noise. As the sun rose above the eastern horizon, we could make out the land and the entrance to Port Klang.

[MAD] We don't understand what all the fuss is about. Sure there are lots of ships, but we had good wind, did overnight hops and never saw a fishing net. The freighters clearly travel up the middle, you just stay to the east of them.

[RR] Due to thick haze and air pollution from forest fires in Kalimantan and Sumatra we have pushed on farther north to Malaysia. It was necessary to use our radar in daylight hours in the Malacca Strait, as visibility at times was reduced to a half mile. We have never seen anything like it and it is very unusual to hear ships' fog horns in this part of the world.

[RUBY]**Thoughts on weather and timing on the Malacca Straits** I think I would get to Singapore by the end of September or early October. You start to get the changeover weather in Sept/Oct/Nov in Singapore and it's not nice. Lots more thunderstorms and rain and squalls and it isn't fun moving around shipping lanes in zero visibility. Park the boat in Sevana Cove and use the month there to fly back to the states or take an inland tour of Malaysia/Thailand.

We day hopped up the Straits. There weren't ever any stories of pirates, and our only encounters were with shrimp fishermen who traded us a huge pail of jumping fresh jumbo prawns for 3 beers! Weather was the biggest problem, but more for the other cruisers who tried to go during the change of season. We motor sailed and were in Langkawi in 2 weeks. NE winds never did blow, even by the time we were leaving Thailand for Sri Lanka. You'll probably get NW winds in the straits and motor into it. Strong tides, 2k, in Singapore area.

[AIR] We basically **daysailed** (motored - no wind usually) from Singapore to Phuket, a few long distances required starting before dawn. The strait is a busy place - shipping traffic, fishing boats, nets, flags and horrendous debris, even whole trees -- so we were happy to travel with daylight. We found that the **fishing nets** can be passed over between floats or flags. The fishermen often lay their nets from the bow with the boat in reverse. We almost hit a small boat thinking he was going away from our path but in fact he was backing across it. In the south end of the strait there are some stick weirs but they are close to shore. We **checked in and out** at most stops as required and found the officials always pleasant but in general they don't really want to be bothered. I think you could check in at the first stop and clear to Langkawi despite other stops. We didn't hear of any piracy in the strait. **Fuel** was easily obtained at Port Klang; we didn't try elsewhere. **Dutyfree** in Langkawi is just beer, wine and liquor. **Provisioning** is better before Langkawi; **electronics** in Singapore.

[ARJ] We found it best to go north in the light airs of the variable transition time in November. The wind seems to funnel down the straits from the NW regardless of whether the prediction is generally NE or SW --except for squalls! Powering is always better than square waves! The Straits are notorious for ugly wind- against-tide seas! We think conditions start improving near Lumut or Penang.

Check-ins required: Penang no; Lumut & Langkawi yes (Immigration Ist).

[REN]The Malacca Straits were something to endure. The water is very muddy, full of garbage and fishermen with long nets. We stayed about 5 miles off the coast so as to be in 20' of water most of the time. There one can motor or sail over the nets between the floats as they are deep set, but always eye the net's owner in the sampan. Usually the net goes over the bow and is marked by a flag at the other end. There are far too many to dodge. They are out morning and night.

The bottom is generally excellent holding mud. Except at 2 small island groups we usually found ourselves anchored 1-2 miles offshore in 8' of water in a shallow coastal concavity. We motored all the way. What faint wind available was generally from the north, as was the strongest (1-2 knots) flow of the current. Because we had to make 40 mile days to reach any form of shelter, we simply had to motor after an early morning start. We always seemed to suck up a plastic bag at least once during the day.

Every afternoon violent thunderstorms roared out of the west to scare us silly. The seas never grew large and we could drop anchor anywhere, but always we were exposed, a target to the awesome lightening shows. I hate the helplessness of being ship bound during a lightening storm. We unplugged all the antennas, but other than that we could only pray and hope. So far that has worked, except in Singapore where at least 4 boats were hit between late October and early December. We didn't feel safe anywhere between Singapore and Port Kelang.

[SAR] **Anchoring** is mostly simple in the straits. Motor in toward shore (Malaysian side) to your favorite depth and drop it in a sandy, muddy bottom with good holding. Turn your anchor light on so the fishing boats will see you and sweet dreams!

Winds in the Straits of Malacca are usually northeast from November through March but could shift between north (bad) and east (great sailing). Seas were slight and the current generally set north. At times, particularly in the southern part of the straits, they were adverse (south setting). In general, sailing in the straits was some of our most enjoyable ever with smooth water and mostly reaches. We day sailed in 40-60 nautical mile hops in daylight and had little trouble avoiding the fish nets, traps and boats that are very thick outside the shipping lane. Yachts wanting to do overnights generally stayed to the side of the heavily trafficked shipping lane, thereby missing both the freighters and fishing nets, traps and boats.

[OW] **Struck by lightning in Langkawi.** "We have been hit," exclaimed Arien, "and the VHF isn't working." The great news was that nobody was injured, although Arien did feel a tingling sensation pass through her body when we were struck. What followed was a rather depressing couple of hours as we systematically went about the tedious task of ascertaining what had been damaged. The list grew rapidly and included: SSB, automatic tuner, radar, GPS, two meter radio, loran, all the Brookes and Gatehouse navigational gear including boat speed, depthsounder, fluxgate compass, wind instruments, VHF antenna, TV, video, microwave, CD player, tape player, anchor windlass, solar panels, navigation lights, autopilot and wind generator. Subsequent reading indicated lightning is the most powerful electrical event in nature. An unpredictable transient static discharge, one bolt of lightning can contain 50 million volts and 400,000 amps, can heat the air to 50,000 degrees Fahrenheit in a channel width seldom more than one inch, and can do so in a millionth of a second.

This would probably be a good time to let you know what we do when there is a lot of lightning around - and there is definitely a lot of lightning around Malaysia at this time of the year. We know of seven other boats that were hit. Three were hit on the same day as ourselves and in the same bay! We have a heavy gauge wire attached to the port stay that we hang overboard with a zinc attached to it. OCEAN WANDERER is GRP with encased steel ballast. All throughhulls are grounded through a dyna plate, as is the SSB. We switch off all electronics and try to make a point of disconnecting the backstay antenna tuner. In this case it was not disconnected. Interestingly enough the two items that were not switched off were the VHF and video/TV. The VHF was the only piece of electronic gear that we did not have to replace, even though its masthead mounted antenna was literally blown right off--gone! The TV changed from colour to black and white.

It would be an understatement to say we felt rather depressed as we sat down to supper that evening and talked about the damage and our options. Here we were in the middle of nowhere with extensive damage done to OCEAN WANDERER. We decided to notify our insurance company in Germany (Siegfried Preuss) and it was they who came to the rescue. A fax arrived the next day and read "Please contact our agent in Penang for intervention as expert." This was music to our ears. We sailed overnight to **Penang**, covering the 76 miles in under 12 hours and arrived at the Penang Yacht

Club (PYC) to find the adjuster waiting at the dock for us! Fortunately the haulout revealed no structural damage, which was a big relief.

The insurance company agreed to replace new for old, which was very fortunate as there was nowhere in Penang where we could have any of the electronics repaired. The closest place was Singapore, and even this was questionable. A fellow yachting that was struck attempted to repair the few pieces of electronics by sending the equipment back to the USA. What followed was a most frustrating couple of months for him, as he couriered the defective parts back and forth to the USA. His damage only involved the SSB and boat speed instrument. We had a month of frustration and hard work as we set about getting OCEAN WANDERER ship shape once again. The adjuster and everyone at the PYC couldn't have been kinder and more helpful. Connie (the secretary at PYC) helped me send well over 140 faxes to Canada, New Zealand, Singapore, Malaysia, South Africa, Thailand, England and the USA as we attempted to round up gear and have it couriered to Penang. Once again our SBU (Shore Back Up) team (Mum and Dad) came to the rescue and were tremendous in helping with long distance communications.

FIRST DAY

[ARJ] To depart Seban Cove in Malaysia, skirt the Singapore traffic & arrive at 1st overnight anchorage. FREE SPIRIT says:

PENGELEH	01' 22.25N	104' 05.25E	
	Leave customs first light to make P.Pisang by 15-1600		
REDCLIFF SHOAL	01' 18.73N	104' 01.85E	
E. BURON	01' 14.65N	103' 51.00E	<i>Leave north cardinal marker to south of you!</i>
BN 5	01' 14.15N	103' 49.77E	
P. BUKOM	01' 14.50E	103' 45.75E	
TERUMBU SERBUT	01' 14.80N	103' 42.10E	
T. PIAI	01' 15.30N	103' 30.00E	
P. KUKUP	01' 18.00N	103' 24.50E	
P. PISANG	01' 27.00N	103' 14.80E	

Anchorage for night nearby. Can enter at night due to light--anchor nearby where comfortable.

PULAU PISANG

[AIR] Pulau Pisang 1'27.93 N 103'16.10 E

Leaving Changi at 6AM we rode a favorable tide all the way around Singapore to the west side and were able to continue on to Pulau Pisang. Anchored (15') on the SE side, strong currents.

[ARJ] Don liked farther north where steady wind (SW) & blow (evening squall from NW which last about an hour) didn't cause so much trauma

[SWAG] Pulau Pising: 1' 28.12 N; 103' 16.46 E 7m sand

[ARJ] ARJUMAND left P.Pisang at midnight, traveled 1-2 miles off the points, were usually 3-4 miles inside freighters, and arrived Pankor Laut at Lumut 36 hours later in 0-5K headwinds. With radar nite travel easy.

[AIR] **Tanjung Tohor** 1'50.58 N 102'43.83 E

Anchored SE of the Cape (16') again strong current. This is exposed but was OK when the wind dies at night.

[ARJ] **Anchorage** 01' 56.20 N 102' 34.50 E

in 8 m mud. Shipping usually far out except 1st day from S'pore.

WATER ISLANDS/MALACCA

[AIR] Pulau Besar, Water Islands or 2' 06.2 N 102'19.90 E

Anchored to the NE (22') side with late day uncomfortable chop against the current but this dies with the wind at night. Others anchored on the south side. Took the ferry across to Umbai and bussed to Malacca, an interesting old city, very hot.

[SWAG] Pulau Besar: 2' 07.2 N, 102' 19.8 E or 2' 06.1 N, 102' 19.9 E
(Ferry and bus to Malacca. A number of boats dragged here last year.)

[ARJ] P. Besar Anchor on north side in SW--stay close to island to east thru channel. Can get ferry in to Malacca--superb museums.

[REN] Lots of people stopped at Water Islands (very pretty) to take a water taxi then bus to lovely Malacca Town. One can clear into Malaysia there but I think most simply toured the pretty ancient town, went to the museum, explored the numerous antique stores, and left the officials for later. We didn't feel RENAISSANCE was secure enough at the Water Islands to leave her for a day so skipped Malacca. Photos I saw later made me regret that decision, however, as the place looked both pretty and interesting.

[PJ] At the Water Islands we anchored southeast of a jetty on the east point of the main island; and in the roadstead of Melaka where we cleared into Malaysia. That historic old port is well worth a stop for its mixture of Malay, Chinese, Portuguese, Indian and British cultures easily seen on a tour by bicycle-propelled becak. In one fascinating shop, tiny shoes are made for a few old Chinese women whose feet were bound when they were young.

Unfortunately, the Immigration Officer stamped our passports not with tourist **visas** but with crew visas, which restricted us to the port area of every port we visited. Melaka officials have done this before and have been told by higher authority to enter yachts as tourists but persist in this error. The Immigration Officer at Lumut was sympathetic but said the mistake could not be remedied and he could not give us the correct visas. Our son, Andrew, was flying to join us in Malaysia and we ignored the restriction to meet him in Kuala Lumpur, but did not think we could ignore it so far as to make a general tour of the country. This was a great disappointment as our reading, particularly *Tales from the South China Sea*, the edited transcript of a BBC series about Malaysia, had made us want to know the country better.

We were up much of the night at Melaka as a series of fierce squalls blew through the unsheltered roadstead and two yachts dragged their anchors. These squalls had troubled us at each anchorage so far, but north of Melaka the wind gradually settled in the northeast with less squally wind and more calms as the thunderstorms moved to the western or Sumatra side of the strait.

[SAR] Melaka. The next day we motored against wind and current to the Water Islands. Sharon had her tooth pulled by Melaka's finest Chinese (Singapore trained) dentist and received little sympathy as El Capitan was also suffering with a heavy cold. We were too sick to sightsee our first time into Melaka, but later trips revealed a historic and funky Chinese town where we found the most wonderful satay!

[LR] I anchored off the harbor entrance of the historic town of Malacca in about 9' of water (at low water) over thick, brown mud. Take the dinghy across the almost-drying bar at the breakwater entrance up the river to the police dock, tie up and check in. (In Malaysia, pleasure boats do not really need a port clearance. The harbormaster will stamp your Singapore port clearance, which you then take to your next port of call.) Malacca has a magic to it which is left over from the time when a Sumatran prince commanding a band of sea gypsies (read "pirates") arrived from across the Strait and proclaimed himself sultan over this strategic naval position. It grew quickly as a trading center, for the sultan provided "insurance" to those who used his "safe" harbor. Arab and Chinese traders sailing their respective monsoons met here. They traded, bartered and swapped for several months at a time, waiting for the monsoons to change and again return whence they came. The Chinese and the Malays are the majority of those who live here today.

[TI] Malacca. Three days later we anchored in shallow water a half a mile off the port of Melaka. Highrises decorated the coastline. We counted 16 cranes erecting large buildings. The only way we

spotted the anchorage half a mile off the Melaka River was the sight of the masts of a square-rigged ship on display behind the harbour master's office. The next morning we went into town taking our dinghy up a very smelly river. When it was too shallow to motor Fred rowed; each oar blade came up coated with a black, oozing sludge. The Malay fishermen waved and smiled from their wooden sampans. They were drinking tea beside their small charcoal cooking fires on deck. The boats tied three and four deep along the congested river. Some had loads of timber cut down from the rain forests. I hoped we wouldn't have to pay stiff overtime fees for clearing customs on a weekend. But it was a quick easy **check in** with all the government offices located the same building. All the fees to check totaled 4 ringgit. Our passports were stamped for a stay of 2 months. We were free to explore.

Melaka was fascinating. There was the old town that reflected the Portuguese and Dutch era in its architecture. There were hundreds of small shops and eating stalls. We had huge plates of mee goreng (fried noodles with bits of chicken and veggies) for 70 cents. We quickly learned to order made without chili. There was often enough chili residue in the wok to make it hot enough for me. Rudy found hamburgers the same price and a smile crept across his face. We climbed the hill to the remains of an old fort and a 300 year old church and visited a sultan's palace. Then we crossed the street to a huge air-conditioned mall. There we found McDonald's and Kentucky Fried Chicken and movie theatres. Many people here speak English, especially the younger generation. It is taught as a second language in most schools. We had no problems communicating anywhere in Malaysia. seems to be a very progressive country many ways.

We've been able to watch local TV in Bali, Singapore and Melaka. Some TV shows are in Chinese or Malay (similar to Indonesian) but others are in English. They must buy some of American shows that get canceled after the pilot. Most shows are terrible.

[SWAG] Malacca must be seen. Stadthuys Museum will give you a good background to Malacca's history. The Baba-Nyonya Heritage Museum is good value.

CAPE RACHADO

[AIR] **Cape Rachado** 2'24.50 N 101'51.70 E
Anchored on the S side of cape (23') for a quiet night.

[ARJ] **C. Ricardo** 02' 25.05N 101' 51.15E
(or see below) Going north used Pt. Dickson behind island. With an early start can go Pt. Dickson to Port Klang.

[ARJ] **Tanjung Tuan** 02' 24.50 N 101' 51 .70 E in 8 m
[PJ]A day north of Melaka, we found sheltered anchorage at **Port Dickson**, east of Pu. Arang Arang.

[SWAG] **SAND BANK:** 2'33.5 N, 101'41.5 E

PORT KLANG

Royal Selangor Yacht Club

[CG1] Not the prettiest anchorage, but a good first stop after Singapore to relax, top up on provisions, visit Kuala Lumpur and to bypass the tricky "One Fathom Bank." Follow the channel to the Selanger Yacht Club and temporarily either come alongside the floating jetty in front of the yacht club or pick up a mooring. Then introduce yourself at the club and you will be shown to your mooring. Very friendly and comfortable yacht club with great food and a slipway.

[AIR] There are moorings available from the Royal Selangor YC at RM 10 plus RM 5 per person. Seemed safe enough and we bussed to KL (RM 2 for aircon express). Port Klang is a dirty industrial stop; only reason to go is if planning to see KL.

[RUBY] The yacht club is an oasis in the sewers and poverty. It is a fun stop and the food was great. You take a cheap mooring and they have free hourly bum boat service to and from the club. Avoid

being there during the Raja Muda, because they need all the moorings. Better to avoid the crowds and travel behind them.

[SWAG] For **marine spare parts and hardware** and odds and ends see Tai Seng & Co., 55 Leboh Berangan, Port Kelang.

Supermarket: 30 minutes in train from Port Kelang to **Kuala Lumpur**. Train stop called Subung Jaya. There is another Carrefour Supermarket in case you missed the one in Johor Bahru.

[REN] We cleared at full, fishy Port Kelang solely to purchase fuel from the Royal Selanger Yacht Club, a bunch of snobs. Some people like it up that river tributary paying 20 ringgit/day anchored or moored. The club runs a "jingo" boat or wooden water taxi every hour on the hour, so one needn't use a dinghy or battle the strong current. There were cold showers and a pool that never seemed to be open. (We didn't feel the ritzy club and its staff at all welcoming.) Downtown numerous comfy buses or a train can take one to Kuala Lumpur, Cameron Highlands, wherever one wants. Inexpensive tours are available at the KL train station.

We didn't find **Kuala Lumpur** that interesting, though we went on an overcast, drizzly day when perhaps the city wasn't at its best, and hadn't time for tours. In fact, at 20 R/day for the mooring, we stayed the minimum amount of time. It took a little over 1/2 a day to clear in with Customs, Immigration and Harbor Master there, as they are adherents of "the book" and unsure what to do about yachts. They were pleasant enough fellows, just not very efficient. Before we continued north we had to clear out with them and received a sealed letter for our next group of officials. Though we planned to stop along the way we cleared for Langkawi. It seemed to make everyone happy.

The **town of Kelang** hasn't much to offer, though there are small supermarkets. It's a large town but very utilitarian and dull. I ended up jerry juggling the diesel and water from the club's fuel dock because of a motorboat that had been tied to it for days. I made a reservation to bring **RENAISSANCE** in days in advance but apparently it made no difference. Using the hourly jingo boat it took me until 1:00 AM. Definitely not a place to which we hope to one day return.

[LR] Next stop north along the coast was Port Kelang at the head of the Kelang River delta and a suburb of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia's capital. The only place to stay here is on a mooring provided by the Selangor Yacht Club. There is **fuel and water** available at the landing pontoon. The generous hospitality at the club is legendary. The fees, however, have more than tripled. My calculations put it as being one of the most expensive yacht clubs in SE Asia (about par with US east coast). Stay long enough to take the daily air-conditioned coach to K.L. (**Kuala Lumpur**) and experience a bit of the old colonial empire set in an Islamic state. (The Coliseum bar and restaurant is a must.)

[EL] If you wish **to travel inland** to see Southeast Asia, we recommend leaving your boat on a buoy at the Royal Selanger Y.C. in Port Kelang. Buoys are US\$10, US\$5 per person, per week. There is a pool, and free transport to and from the dock hourly. It is an hours ride to **Kuala Lumpur**, and airfare rates are good. K.L.'s. gold street in Chinatown has quality chains and jewelry, and they do custom work at great prices. Thaipusam is the end of January at the Batu Caves, an Indian festival worth experiencing.

Raja Muda Regatta

[OMU] Raja Muda Regatta is a week long race from Port Klang to Langkawi, consisting of 3 overnight passages interspersed with sumptuous banquets, cocktail parties, entertainment, tours etc. We had a great time and met many good people in the process.

[OW] We stayed at the Royal Selangor Yacht Club waiting for the start of the Raja Muda International Race. We toured inland for four days and visited the Cameron Highlands, Kuala Lumpur and Ipoh. We also visited a tin mine, tea estate and rubber plantation. On returning to Port Klang we found the place a hive of activity as well over 70 boats had gathered for the race. What followed was 10 days of racing and partying, with the emphasis being on the latter! There were three overnight races up the coast with a stop every other night for a spectacular party with an abundance of delicious food and a bar that never ran dry! Boats from several countries were competing and a fun time was had by all.

Unfortunately the winds were extremely light making for rather frustrating sailing, with us actually going backwards at times as the current took us southward. We completed two of the overnight races with a good placing and ended up using our engine in the third race as there was just no wind.

Outside the River Entrance

[PJ] And another day brought us to **North Kelang Strait**. Most yachts use Kelang Straits to bypass One Fathom Bank and many stop at the Port Klang Yacht Club. They reported a warm welcome but a foully polluted harbour and almost unbreathable air. We did not enter the inner harbour, but found excellent sheltered **anchorage** close **east of Pu. Ketam**, about one mile south of the north tip of that island. The anchorage was just west of a line of lighted buoys, which enabled us to leave at 0400 for a long day to Lumut.

[SWAG] **Tanjung Mahung**: 2° 54.89 N, 101° 15.98 E 5m mud
anchor anywhere on the port side while passing through Port Kelang

[ARJ] Port Klang **South Entrance on Lamut River** 02° 54.75 N 101° 16.0 E (anchorage)
Anchor anywhere along river. Barge with a large "bow wave" from current passing was anchored in river on 3 mooring buoys being dragged under by the current!

[[AIR] **Pulau Kelang** Anchored to NW side of the Klang Strait for an easy before dawn departure for Lumut.

[CG1] **S side Selat Kelang, W of channel off S tip of island**. 20' mud. Sheltered and secluded in NE monsoon. If arriving at night this anchorage is easy to find because of channel beacon lights.

[SWAG] **Sand Bank**: 3° 07.8 N, 101° 16.1 E mud

[ARJ] **Pulau Angsa** 03° 11.40 N 101° 13.50 E [or SWAG's 101° 12.81 E 10 m mud]

[PJ] We made the mistake of stopping just short of Lumut at the **Sembilan Islands**, where anchorage was said to be good. However, the holding was poor, the current strong, and the fine old wooded Australian cutter ROAMA, with whom we had cruised for some months, dragged anchor during a windless night.

LUMUT

Pulau Pangkor 4° 12.36 N, 100° 33.23 E

[SWAG] Pangkor Island is worth a look. Many good anchorages

[ARJ] **Pankor Laut** 04° 12.12N 100° 32.78E
Beautbay--saw at least 15 Hornbills early & late day! Anchor at Pankor and hire a motor scooter around Pankor--good fun!

[ARJ] **Pulau Pangkor** 04° 11.60 N 100° 35.00 E
pretty, worth a couple of days--Teluk Gedog (south jetty in ruins with new jetty & "yacht club" a bit farther north in bay) --anchored out in 18 m- could go in closer Have artsy mini-buses labeled TAXI--share taxi for 1 RM --motor bike FUN! Channel markers in NW channel are black and white checkered and seem to be out with GPS readings.

Lumut

[ARJ] **Dindings River** Local traffic goes to E side of Selat Dinding but according to chart passes could be hard to find. Lumut charges RM7/day to anchor off. Farther up river--fuel at fish factory--keep to center of river to reach moorings where people leave boats to travel inland.

[REN] Now Lumut was where we started to have fun. The town is tiny but welcoming, well landscaped, with a real seaside port feel. It was a pleasant stroll past smiling people to the cheap, cheap food stalls to eat out in the sea breeze. We got on real well with the marina managers. Every evening we would take them out to dinner or vice versa, then sit around the office area watching free new release videos on the big screen color TV sharing a bag of peanuts roasted in the shell or whatever Malay snack they wanted us to try. The anchorage was secure up a river surrounded by mountains, which kept the storms behind them.

It was an idyllic 10 days we spent anchored off the unopened **Lumut International Yacht Club**. They even had a free washing machine! It is all different now that the club has opened I hear. The Lumut International Yacht Club now charges 7 R/day for anchoring in front of the club area whether the facilities are used or not (it used to be 5 R for using the club. The showers are filthy and the visitors aren't allowed into the club grounds. What a shame!

[97] The Yacht Club now has a marina, and moorings for 7 R/day (cheaper by the month) which includes club facilities, except the pool, which is a few R extra. Showers were fair. There is a nice **fuel dock**, 20% cheaper than Seban Cove, with free water. You do not have to be staying there to use it. You can anchor briefly free, if not going ashore, but it's better to go few hundred metres downstream, where the small pilot boats are. There you can anchor off a small beach, leave your dinghy on it, and you're almost in town. There is a very small wet market on the road between the Yacht Club and town in the morning. Very frequent buses to Sitiawan from here (1/2 hour). The tourist office in Lumut has a Home Country Direct Phone.

Kampung Bahru 04' 17.96N 100' 40.03E **and Chan's** (halfway between YC & Kapung Bahru)

[LR] I continued to motor up the coast to the "sleepy" port of Lumut tucked in behind Pangkor Island. It is the home of Malaysia's largest navy base, but still pleasantly low-keyed. I anchored in 30', over river mud. This delightful, airless, well-protected cove provides shelter to several yachts whose owners have flown back to civilization to work or visit. The boats are well looked after, some having stayed only 5-6 months; a couple, well over a year. From here, you can leave your boat safely and travel inland. Leaving behind the stifling humidity of sea level living, one can experience the cool, refreshing, crisp mountain air of the **Cameroon Highlands**. Here one is immersed in the endless valley terraces of the tea estates

[REN] **Off Season** At the moment we are up a muddy river off a very hospitable village named Kampung Baharu with about 25 other yachts. It's a most convenient and easy place to be. Then there's the wildlife, not necessarily a benefit. Tiny bats like to nest in comfy mainsails. You can take care of that by removing it or tie a line around it, but in searching for a home they tend to divebomb any errant heads, before admitting defeat and flying off. There is a 60 lb monitor lizard around here, but he seems more afraid of us than we of it. He has been aboard most boats in the anchorage at least once (during a 3-6 month period) via anchor chain or fenders, but leaps overboard as soon as discovered. He boarded us at 2AM scaring us silly. I have seen smaller ones swimming around. Sea snakes masquerading as floating twigs are everywhere but extremely timid. They are amusing to watch, catching a breath of air they stiffen their upper body, then bob it out of the water exactly like a twig. There are also sea eagles, multi-colored king fishers, swallows, mosquitoes (dawn and dusk), and flies (bad every 2 weeks). Large fish and otters thrash about the boat in the middle of the night.

[ARJ] People who stayed enjoyed village life--lots of flies!!!

[ELE] In the fall of 97, moorings in Kampung Baru were 3R/day with no discounts for long stays. However, the ringgit is cheaper now, there is a basic shower ashore, good water from a long hose, and a workshop area where one can spread out bits and pieces of a project. Nice atmosphere, and they say the flies come and go. **Chan's** was still 2R/day, and they have a good tidal grid with a concrete base.

Sitiawan

[SWAG] For the Lumut area, Sitiawan is the main shopping center. Bus from Kampung Baru (up the river from Lumut) goes to Sitiawan every ninety minutes.

Mail: to Post Restante, Sitiawan 32000, Perak, Malaysia.

Faxes: can be sent from Sitiawan Motors, No 3 Jalan Lumut, Sitiawan. Reasonable price and will receive faxes for free. Fax: 60-5-691-1188.

Dentist: Dr. Wong in Kampong Koh, just a small bus ride from Sitiawan. Economical for crown work.

Lumut Sailing Club: charges seven Malaysian rupees (RM) to anchor anywhere off their club.

Other good businesses in Sitiawan:

Sitiawan Motors, see above for address. He has filters, engine parts and is a real good source for finding things and getting things done.

Flexseal Enterprise, 27 Taman Sentosa, Jalan Lumut, Sitiawan, for marine paints, mastics, hoses etc.

Long Cheong Foundry (see Nancy, she speaks English) K66 Kg Koh Road, Sitiawan, for welding and machining.

Lon Soon Sdn Bhd. K32C Lekir road, Kg Koh, Sitiawan, for plywood.

Lee Electrical Service, No 8 Taman Ros, Jalan Raja Omar, Sitiawan for electronic components.

Supermarkets: Plenty, Fajah, Looking Good, Cut Price.

[REN] In nearby Sitiawan are numerous hardware stores, 2 good foundries, 3 supermarkets, bakeries, s/s welders, stationary stores, plastics warehouses, and just about anything needed to complete a job. A 30c bus ride takes one to Lumut and an excellent lumberyard, while a \$1.50 bus ride takes one to Ipoh's machinists. Prices are reasonable to low and the service is fast and usually good, so we're spending heaps on boat projects. Good thing the food is cheap or we'd be hungry! I think many canned goods are less expensive in Oz, but noodle restaurant meals are much more affordable, so we have one meal of fried noodles or rice each day at \$1.00 each, cheaper than cooking.

Outside the River

[AIR] **Pulau Talang** 4.25.30 N 100.34.71 E [SWAG & ARJ: A bit roilly]

Anchored (22') NE side of the small island ready for early departure for Penang. When coming up from Lumut, we passed quite close (@ 100m) to the lighthouse on Tg Hantu and had enough water. Others who passed a little farther out found more extensive sandbanks than shown on the chart.

[ARJ]**N Pulau Rimau** 05' 14.65 N 100' 16.40 E [or SWAG: 5' 15.9 N; 100' 16.6 E]
5M mud; beautiful bay

PENANG/GEORGETOWN

[PJ]Another long day took us to **Pu.Kendi** close south of Penang.

[AIR] Penang Island

Anchored (22') in the large bay on the north (west) side of Penang after sailing up the west side. A little roilly but OK.

[ARJ] **N Pulau Pinang-(Ujung Batu)** 05' 27.88 N 100' 12.64 E 3.6 M mud (Doug & SWAG)

[CG1] Anchor in 10' sand/mud at the foot of the conspicuous Mutiara Hotel. A long way from town and often roilly. During fair weather this is a pleasant anchorage.

Around the NW tip of the island is Monkey's Beach, a nice anchorage and beach during the NE monsoon.

The other shallow bays on the N coast of Penang are really no use as anchorages.

Approach/Anchorage/Check In

[ARJ] Most yachts go under the bridge (28 M) Leads are to east of P. Pinang not as shown.

[ARJ] **Junk Anchorage** 05' 24.50 N 100' 20.50 E

corner of anchorage is now flashing white. Blow horn for water taxi for MR1/pers--go shore through stick village at Chiu Pier--YC send faxes for cost--YC north of tourist office off Fort Cornwallis. Under bridge no prob--Filthy water but colorful small city--great place--hire a motorscooter. VHF 68--calling freq.

[CG1] 20' mud, black sludge. A very dirty anchorage off a village on stilts. However, this is the most convenient anchorage as it is right next to downtown Georgetown.

[SWAG] Georgetown Junk Anchorage 5'24.5 N, 100'20.5 E

8m sloppy mud. Most yachts quietly pass under bridge, despite what the regulations may say.

Main Anchorage Chew Jetty. No dinghies required - call up the boatmen at the nearby Chinese village on stilts by whistle or similar - 1 RM per person each way. Have ample fenders out!

[REN] The anchorage is incredibly foul on the water's surface and the ocean's floor and the marina hazardous during the NE monsoon and preceding transitional period, but the island itself is intriguing. It starts with simply getting ashore. There is no safe place to leave the dinghy, so one honks the ship's horn to draw a sampan from the nearby clan pier. For \$1 R a large wooden boat with wimpy fenders will come out to collect you and take you to the end of their pier. The long elevated wooden slat pier belongs and houses an entire Chinese clan, their homes built cheek-to-jowl on either side of the boardwalk. It is like walking through a small village, the house doors open, oriental altars on display.

[CG1] You are not supposed to go under the bridge joining Penang to the mainland without written permission. Customs is on a pier in Georgetown near the yacht anchorage, and Immigration is in Butterworth on the mainland, which is a bit of a hassle. Take the ferry over. There are no good anchorages, no yacht services, and no yachts in Penang, but the provisioning is good.

[STR] We had to take the ferry across to **Butterworth to clear in at Immigration**. The building was under reconstruction at the time and looked "bombed out" on the bottom floor, but Immigration was in full swing upstairs. The Muslim ladies in Butterworth were very colorful in their head-to-toe outfits. **Customs clearance** was done right in Penang near the yacht club.

Georgetown

[SWAG] **Penang** Information below was gathered during 1995 by MALEK and added to by various others:

Water: Good sweet water can also be arranged from the boatmen.

Diesel: Take yacht or dinghy to fuel barge, no booking required.

Garbage: The Penang "Water Witch" comes around the anchorage, gives you a hoot, whereupon you sling your bags in and they're scooped up. No apparent pattern for this however, so keep an eye out.

Supermarkets:

Ground floor at the Komtar

Gama - not too far from Komtar

Fina Cold Storage, Penang Plaza, Burma Road

All are excellent for varying things, including western products. Fina has a separate fresh meat counters and a superb bakery, although it is the furthest away, but you can get a bus back to Komtar area (bus stop -turn right when you come out of Cold Storage and walk a short way).

LPG: It is not possible to get your bottles filled, but you can exchange your Malayan bottle if you have one, or put a deposit and acquire one. The alternative is to buy a fitting and decant from Malaysian bottle to your own.

Police Station: Penang Road, near to Cathay cinema.

Cinemas: Several; main and most convenient English-speaking ones are Cathay and multi-cinema in the Komtar (3rd floor). All are advertised in English newspaper.

Laundry: 474 Chulia Street

Ice: No 64 Chew Jetty (yellow door), or cafe opposite the end of Chew Jetty on corner.

Fresh Markets: Various and excellent. An easy way to find the main one is to cross the road from the Police Station in Penang Road and walk in past where all the stalls are selling sweets, nibbles, etc. (near the bus stop). Also Lebuah Carnarvon open street stalls for veggies, eggs, pork and chicken and wet market on corner Lebuah Buckingham and Lebuah Camarvon for fish, veggies, noodles, etc. Go early for freshness. They close midmorning for hygienic reasons.

Paints: Hock Hin Paints, 336 Chulia Street

Electronics and Hardware: Thye Huat, on corner below Hotel New Asia, junction of Ropewalk/Bintus Tali/ Kimberley Road.

Electrical/Electronic Repairs: Tye Seng, 179c Carnarvon Street.

Chemicals: Mr. Ong, Liangtraco, 352 Chulia Street - a wonderful emporium, huge variety of all substances from cleaning acids to olive oil to perfume oil. Also Sodium Metabisulphite for water-maker pickling. Can get chloroform (a drop in flour, spaghetti, rice, etc. stops weevils) and Borax (sprinkle powder around cupboards to stop those cockies dead).

Jewelry Cleaning: a little shop in Love Lane, turning right on the way up Chulia Street, on the right-hand side.

DHL: Turn left out of Chew Jeuy on to Weld Quay (main road) a few yards down on right hand side.

Poste Restante: Downing Street - turn right out of Chew Jetty and walk way along Weld Quay, past bridge and old buildings. Turning on left-hand side.

Main Post Offices One in building nearby Post Restante, one nearby Komtar.

International Telephones: Same building as Poste Restante. Phone section remains open on Sundays.

Ferry to Butterworth: Right-hand side along Weld Quay. Pay only on return journey approx. 40 sen.

Eating: Everywhere and wonderful, but the following are some of our favorites:

The Pork Lady - turn left from Chew Jetty on to Weld Quay, stay on left-hand side past DHL, you will come to a bird shop, next door is small cafe with large tree growing through it. Sells beer.

Sun Fook Cafe - for dim sum breakfast, Cintra Street (off Kimberley). Excellent, but really is for breakfast, you have to get there early and it's all over by 11 am.

Green Plant - Cintra Street, in case you get a yearning for some cheap, but nice western food.

Hong Kong Restaurant - 29 Cintra Street, good "sit-down" local food, especially fish.

Immigration: Bayan Plaza, Butterworth, bus from ferry terminal, No 53. Not for clearing in, as this isn't necessary in Penang, but we got new visas there without having to leave the Country.

Boat Bits:

S H Chool Fasteners: 62A Noordin Street - great place. Only 304, but every type of stainless bolt, screw etc.

Onomichi Marine Enterprises: 337 Beach Street - good deals in outboards, also outboard oil.

[ARI] The main town, Georgetown, is very interesting and worth a visit, even if the anchorage is not nice or comfortable, owing to the ferries that go back and forth to the mainland. Here we had our fore-cabin cushion covers made for only R35; plus material (US\$35), by a Chinese tailor. Close to Captain Kling Mosque there are at least 3 good supermarkets with a good supply of western food and thousands of small shops where, if you are patient enough, you can find anything you may need.

[REN] Definitely we'll need to go to Penang, a Chinese dominated island close to the mainland and about midway between Langkawi and Lumut, to buy canned foods and basic electronic bits.

Langkawi is an expensive place to buy provisions whereas Penang has basically mainland prices.

Besides, Penang is fun. The whole main town of Georgetown is arranged in clan blocks with the clan temple in the center. Ancient slate tiled roofs over narrow 2 slated Chinese shophouses

close packed on either side of narrow convoluted streets where everything is available. The Chinese will eat anything. Georgetown is probably as close as we can get to China outside of the country. A wander among the back streets is a voyage of discovery with many a humorous twist. I never grow tired of meandering about absorbing Penang's energetic, commercial, odd culture through my pores. Buried beneath all this bustling life lies the architecture of an old English colony. The rubber plantations which supported the legacy of its botanical garden are all reachable by regular bus service clearly marked out on a map available at the tourist office. They even color code the buses. There is a lot to see and do in Penang. If the anchorage were better it would be a great place to spend a few weeks, yet as it is Penang is a place I look forward to visiting again. Maybe this time I'll bus hop completely around the island or take the cable car to the mountain top.

[OW] For the technically minded, I should probably elaborate on some details related to **purchasing, shipping and installing boat gear in Penang**, and just highlight some of the incidents. I should mention that our insurance company was excellent in coming to our assistance and in responding to any queries and concerns that we had. As mentioned, they agreed to replace new for old. They also agreed to cover marina charges, shipping, labour charges, the cost of sailing OCEAN WANDERER back to Penang to effect repairs, the haulout and airplane tickets that had to be purchased to get the crew to us due to the change in our schedule. It was definitely their support that enabled us to keep our heads above water and move on.

Some of the highlights of repairing and replacing gear in Penang. OCEAN WANDERER is wired for 12v DC and 110v AC. Appliances were not available anywhere else in the world except North America, and as a result we had to ship a microwave oven from Canada, with the first one arriving damaged. It was returned and a second one had to be sent. The Autohelm 5000 autopilot was replaced with a Brookes and Gatehouse Hydra 330 pilot. This necessitated totally reconstructing the stainless steel bracket and quadrant to accommodate the drive unit. The final welding was done on Christmas Day. Needless to say, Dad was not a popular father on Christmas Day! Before shipping a TV and video from Singapore, we had to obtain a TV license for Malaysia. Only then would the courier agree to deliver the items. We could not pay with a credit card, so a money order had to be obtained first.

Ray Roberts in Whangerei was excellent in speeding gear to us, in spite of my giving him a credit card number that had been canceled! West Marine were also excellent in rushing several items of gear to us. We can highly recommend Cara Ullman. She really is in touch with the cruiser and did everything in her power to accommodate us. We had trouble replacing our Brookes and Gatehouse equipment through their Florida dealer. I have since written to the B&G head office and am awaiting their reply. I should add we have been most impressed with the actual B&G gear we have on board and can highly recommend it. SBU (Shore Back Up) DON'T LEAVE HOME WITHOUT IT. My parents are our right hand and have been fantastic in taking care of the many items that needed attention. Our American Express card has really come to the fore, not only in the replacement of our stolen credit cards, but also in the ease in which we are able to obtain travelers cheques and cash.

Penang Yacht Club

[ARJ]**Mail drop** No. 3 Lebu Penang, 10200 Pulau Penang, Malaysia Ph 604-619-255 (domestic 04-619-255); FAX 604-619-177

Marina US\$28/day (46ft) Swimming pool & expensive boatyard with travel-lift

[RUBY] **Do not use the marina in Penang**, it has wicked currents and our friends' boat got all smashed up on the docks, with lines breaking and cleats twisting. They desperately need a breakwater.

[PJ] MOLLYMAWK reported good provisioning in Penang, and we heard similar reports in '93; but anchorage was said to be indifferent and a marina on the northeast point of the island was poorly built and badly situated in an area of strong currents. Some yachts which used the marina suffered hull damage.

[STR] **Facilities** were incomplete at the Penang Yacht Club, although the pool was operational, no showers and only port-a-toilets. Plans are in the works for a new clubhouse. During the haul-out we

stayed at the New Pathe Hotel, a short walk from the boatyard across the park. Cost at this funky Chinese hotel was about \$20 US/night which included a private bathroom with bathtub and air conditioning. We had to buy earplugs to sleep at night — the traffic was loud! We really enjoyed Penang. Everything was close at hand within walking distance or a trishaw ride away. The Dutch architecture is interesting as well as the Chinese temples and Little India. Provisioning in Penang was good at the Komtar Center and at Cold Storage, in our opinion better than Langkawi or Phuket.

[KRS] In Pinang KRIOS was the first foreign boat to be **hailed** by the brand new 70 ton travel-lift of the YC (US\$180) at George Town's NE. Manager of the shipyard Malcom, himself an experienced racing sailor and foreman Akbar, did a great job, although we were powerless against the droppings of myriads of crows. The marina itself (US\$32/day) we considered unsafe because there was no breakwater to protect the free floating finger docks from the swell -- or garbage! Another wharf with rocking slips in the southeast of the island (Batu Maung) proved unreliable after change of management.

[ARJ]**T. Bahang** 05' 27.88N 100' 12.64E.
Swing all ways at west side--all together in center.

LANGKAWI AREA

ISLANDS SOUTH OF LANGKAWI

[ARJ]**Pulau Bidan, Pulau Songsong, Pulau Bunting**
all good anchorages behind approx 05' 50.00 N 100' 20.00 E

Pulau Paya 6' 04 N; 100' 02 E

[CG1]Although seemingly exposed, the east side of the island is usually reasonably calm. No anchoring allowed, as this is a marine park. Pick up one of the park moorings, which are laid along a lot of the reef, and report to the Park office. Best dive in the Malaysian part of the Straits for both free diving and SCUBA. Great visibility. The coral garden on the south tip is fabulous. No fishing. Don't try to go between the 2 islands to the NE.

[AIR] P. Paya is a marine reserve (but very murky water) and our cruising guide indicated many moorings but we found only 3 near the visitor center (2 occupied by fishing boats). By radio we heard that the fishing boats leave about 1830 and return in the morning and may attempt to raft up to you. We continued on to the south islands of Langkawi which offer many very pretty anchorages.

[ARJ]Pulau Paya: in book--a reserve, use the moorings, can tie 2-3 yachts between 2 cans.

[REN] There is a Marine National Park in between composed of 2 small islands and a bunch of big steel moorings, but that place is a hazard. One must use the moorings, which inevitably turn around and attack the boat at midnight. Some people tied between moorings while other boats rafted up, but that can only be done in unusually calm conditions. There is a nasty current (NW-SE) between Penang and Langkawi, while snap storms seem to hit that little park with force. Lots of boats stopped there and said it was pretty, but most had minor damage to the topsides.

OTHER STOPS NEAR LANGKAWI

[STYL] Some of the **islands of Langkawi** are national parks, but many are uninhabited solely due to their mountainous nature. Dense vegetation comes right down to the water's edge and with relatively narrow fringing reefs it is sometimes possible to anchor close in. From such vantage points we were able to view wildlife at a range not generally available to yachts. Orange breasted kingfishers are spectacular in colour and pretty easy to spot, as are the hornbills with their black and white plumage and characteristic flight. Sea eagles and brahmny kites are also common, but it is the monkeys that generally fascinate. At dawn and dusk long tailed macaques forage for crabs along the foreshore,

and in some locations leaf eating monkeys with striking white caps and unusual orange-brown babies can be seen feeding in the tree tops.

[COM] Langkawi, with its more than one hundred islands, was wonderful and could keep you in different anchorages for several months.

[REN] Clustered about Langkawi's feet are numerous small lovely islands of soaring limestone cliff walls and isolated protected caves. There are dozens of protected, romantic, beautiful small anchorages where only critters dwell, all less than 15 miles apart. In fact, most are only a mile or less, Kuah generally 15 miles away, and all with little treasures such as fresh water springs and/or pools, otters, monkeys, and deer. There is at least one all-weather anchorage accessed via a 20' gap in a limestone wall and ringed by land. The holding is generally mud.

Pulau Dayang Bunting/Fresh Water Lake 6' 12.1 N; 99' 46.7 E

[REN] One of the area's best known attractions, Pulau Dayang Bunting has a crystal clear freshwater lake with an anchorage suitable for NE conditions nearby. It's well worth a visit although it can be busy with day trippers from Kuah.

[RUBY] Make it to the Lady of the Lake anchorage and swim in the fresh water lake..beautiful!! It's surrounded by sheer rock cliffs that somehow have green growing all over.

Pulau Selang has 0.6 M rock due east of island about .3 mi and 0.4NE of isle at about .5 mi.

[PJ] Langkawi is the only real cruising ground on the west coast of Malaysia. A number of spectacular islands provided sheltered anchorages, clear water for swimming and, on Pu.Dayang Bunting, a freshwater lake with a swimming float only 10 minutes walk from the dinghy landing. On Christmas Day, seven yachts lit a fire on a small beach near the track to the lake to enjoy a traditional dinner of roast beef, Yorkshire pudding, baked yams, Christmas pudding, cheesecake and fresh fruit, with a warm sea to swim in and monkeys watching from the branches overhead.

The Channel Between Gabang Darat & Dayang Bunting 6' 11.4 N; 99' 47.4 E

[STYL] As is often the case, the more remote corners have the most to offer. In the southwest region the narrow channel between a small island called Gabang Darat and the larger, Dayang Bunting, is navigable and provides good all around protection in any wind direction. The channel tends to be a bit deep, but there are a couple of shallower areas for anchoring, either near the small beach or off the mangroves further south. Being so close to vertical limestone cliffs dripping with rainforest feels unnatural in a yacht, but it is this very proximity that makes it a hard spot to beat for wildlife watching.

KUAH TOWN

[CG1] Duty Free Langkawi, with its 103 islands and large sheltered **Bass Harbor**, offers plenty of protected anchorages in any wind and sea conditions. The holding is good in mud and sand, and the sea bottom in all but a few anchorages is free of coral or rocks. You can usually anchor close to shore, so long dinghy rides are unnecessary. The water in Langkawi is murky, so diving is limited. There are many extremely cheap, good, clean restaurants. The food is delicious: Malay, Chinese, Indian, Thai or Western. Sea food is plentiful. Beer is RM1 a can.

Anchorage A, east of town off the ferry jetty, is best for visiting Kuah township, reprovision, or take on water and fuel. Dingy access to the beach near the marble crane to the south of the ferry jetty. Be sure to anchor out of the way of the ferries. In strong SW - W winds it is a bit choppy (and a wet dinghy ride!), but safe if you have enough scope out. Taxi to town is RM2.

Anchorage B, right off town, is closer, but mud flat dries at low water.

[STYL] **Weather:** The NE monsoon blows from late November to March, while the SW monsoon sets in during May and persists until September. The periods between the monsoons, April to May

and October, are particularly rainy and thundery. But we haven't experienced much wind in either season, so motoring or motor sailing seems to be the norm. The occasional squalls, when they hit, take one rather by surprise. We recently experienced our first 'sumatra' (particularly strong squalls said to occur from May through to August and named for their place of origin). Fortunately they are rare and over in a few hours. About midnight the hatch slammed fully open and the boat shuddered under the initial gust. Even though the harbor in Kuah is well protected it is quite large and has a fetch of a few miles in a westerly direction. It was enough for the waves to build up quite quickly and for a while we had breaking seas around us. At least 7 boats dragged their anchors; I was grateful to be anchored somewhat on our own rather than too close to other boats. Things were a little hectic down at the favored end of the anchorage near to the dinghy pontoon.

Mail and Duty Free Packages

[ARJ]**Mail drop: Poste Restante** Malaysia (will hold mail for over 30 days--good reputation)
(Thailand demands 100% duty on packages--send to Langkawi, Malaysia instead)

[ELE] **In 1997 Sea Speed moved out of Kuah Town** and is under new management as well. It is no longer next to DHL, and it's a RM 6 taxi ride each way to go collect your mail. They are still a source for engine parts, liferaft repacking, and they will still hold mail and packages if you wish. Their new address is: No 8 Lot 428, Sungai Menghulu, Kuah 0700 Langkawi, Kedah, Malaysia. Their phone numbers did not change: Tel 60-4-966-0681; FAX 60-4-966-9224. Couriers: we used Airborne Express with good results; most West Marine shipments came via DHL, who got mixed reviews this year. Did not hear of anyone who used FedEx here.

DHL Office is at **Kala Enterprises**, Mr. Loo Kean Hwa, 49 JI. Pandak Mayan, Pusat Bandar Kuah, Langkawi, 07000, Malaysia.

[ELE] Alternatives for mail & packages:

Rebak Marina Resort for those who are going there. Staff is efficient, friendly and helpful. PO Box 125 (couriers use Pulau Rebak), 07000 Kuah, Langkawi, Kedah, Malaysia
Tel 60-4-966-5566, FAX 60-4-966-9973

Everything was delivered to the marina, which is on an island separate from the mainland. No problem, no extra charges.

In Kuah town, **Poste Restante** for mail, and the **Langkawi Yacht Club** for packages & faxes, a short dinghy ride or walk from the anchorage.

Langkawi Yacht Club, Kuah, Langkawi, Kedah, Malaysia;
Tel: 60-3- 264-9800 Fax: 60-3-264 9700

[SWAG] Langkawi is duty free so have things sent there.

Liferaft Service through Seaspeed not authorized RFD, but all the Ferry Life rafts are done by them and the price is right. One can be present during servicing if desired.

Duty free beer was approximately 1.00 each. Gin, Scotch, etc. also reasonable: Approximately RM 20 to RM 30 per bottle. RM 1.90 = Australia\$1.00 in 1996.

[PJ] Motorcycles and cars could be hired to tour Langkawi Island but we hired a car with a driver who showed us crocodiles, fish drying, a working rubber plantation, and rice harvesting in traditional and modern ways, and helped us to order lunch in a local restaurant. We are convinced that the additional cost of a driver is more than repaid in local knowledge and advice.

[REN]Langkawi is where the water changes from mud brown and garbage packed to murky green and cleaner. There is still oil and fuel smells at the main town of Kuah due to the many ferries, but elsewhere the water is clean of man made wastes. All the ocean water around here carries some agent that leaves a rust mark along the waterline. Tin? Iron? There are a lot of minerals coming in from the rivers. But even in this regard Langkawi is much improved.

Plus the place is lovely in a Tonga-ish way. The main island of Langkawi is ridged with sharp mountains, emerald green with rainforest, accented by snatches of white sand beach. Brahmany kites and sea eagles wheel elegantly overhead. A lot of money has been invested in Kuah recently, resulting in elaborately landscaped parks full of fairy lights, soaring airy Arabic architecture and cleaner everything. Large colored lights are strung between the old fashioned lampposts that line the street over the newly laid brick sidewalk (already caving in near the waterways).

The only problem is that Langkawi is expensive. The islands cry for fame is that it is duty free, yet the only deals we have seen are for cigarettes, booze, and chocolate. There also isn't much to do. The easy going Muslim town of Kuah has only one bar with live music but it is in a hotel and very expensive. Otherwise there is nothing to do but eat and rent videos. They are trying to develop Langkawi as a tourist attraction, so there is hope that the bus system will improve and become known to the tourist office, but at the moment their stock answer is "take a taxi." I know there is a bus, I know it goes where I want, but can I get anyone to tell me which bus, when it runs or where I catch it? No. There really isn't much to see anyway, but I'd like to get up to the mountains.

[STYL] Kuah is a colorful town, but one where tourist development is proceeding at a furious pace. It's already in danger of losing some of its appeal through rapid modernisation and over-development, but plenty of character still remains in the older sections of town. Much of the local business centers around the duty free nature of the port, and many of the visitors are Malaysians in search of cheap household goods. Alcohol is also cheap, unlike Thailand or even "duty free" Singapore. Local beers, Carlsberg & Tiger, are RM 1 per can, about 60c Australian in 1995. One litre of Gordon's gin will set you back a mere RM 22. Malaysia has significant Chinese and Indian minorities, so that English is widely spoken since it is the common means of communication between ethnic groups. And then there's the food: there's variety and ample spice available in the numerous restaurants and food stalls. We found judging an establishment by the number of locals eating was an effective test. Often the decor leaves much to be desired and at one of our favorites, the Tandoori House, we were virtually sitting in traffic. But the food was excellent and we suffered no ill effects. Well, not often and not serious anyway.

[ARJ]Kuah town: Across from DHL, must go to Indian restaurant. VHF 69 --calling freq. Yachties meet Asia Hotel Wed then nearby nite market.

Beer is cheap (US\$.40/can) in the duty free island of Langkawi but otherwise quite dear in Malaysia. Rum, Gin, Scotch etc can be had for US\$8-10 in Langkawi; bottled wine for US\$6+. Thailand demands 100% duty so have nothing shipped there! Instead have all items shipped to Langkawi via DHL & receive them duty free.

[SAR] Langkawi is beautiful and duty free while surrounded by lovely islands, many of which reminded us of the Vava'u group in Tonga. We intend to spend more time here. Kuah is yacht friendly and offers many services including CB Trading (on the main street of town), wherein you will find Sea Speed Boat and Yatch (sic) Supplies Sdn. Bhd. Besides offering marine supplies they will collect mail and faxes. Domino Restaurant will also hold mail for yachties. Address: C/O Domino Restaurant, PO Box 707000 Kuah, Pulau Langkawi, Malaysia. They serve the best sautéed chicken livers and fish and chips in town, answer a multitude of questions and rent motorbikes. Proprietor Wolf Langenbacker is the Langkawi Port Officer for "Transocean" of Cuxhaven, Germany. The newly opened Yacht Man's Pub and Grill serves great meals too.

[97] Jimmy's Restaurant was the yachtie hangout this year, though Domino's also recommended for its reasonably clean toilets and good food. Elmona was a popular travel agent. Full size chart copies from the shop near Domino's. Van taxis go up and down the main street: share taxi ride is 1R per person anywhere in town; 2R per person outside town. Taxis picking up at Langasuka (the Rebak Ferry dock) were charging 3R per person. A private taxi was 4R in town; 12R across the island to Langasuka.

REBAK MARINA 06' 17.39N 99' 41 .68E [ARJ]

[ELE] You don't see the entrance until you are nearly on top of these coordinates. The channel winds to the inside of the island before you can see the yachts. Marina is now fully operational, it is a

first class facility, totally protected, a good place to leave the boat. If staying aboard, free ferry goes many times a day over to the main island and back. Veggie market right where ferry docks once a week. A 2k ride north (towards airport) to a town with meat market and bakery and post office. Berth rates have gone up twice in 97 as the ringgit has gone down; but it's still cheaper than any of the marinas near Singapore.

PANTAI KOK/SEVEN WELLS 6' 21.7 N; 99' 40.6 E

[STYL] Pantai means "beach," and in NE winds, Pantai Kok is also an attractive anchorage with the clearest water in the area. If any criticism can be leveled at Langkawi it is that the water is not clear. A beautiful turquoise color yes, but clear, no. Pulau Paya to the south, and the offshore islands across the border in Thailand have good water and some nice coral, but clarity of water is not a feature of this area. One of the best inland attractions on Langkawi can be accessed from Pantai Kok. **Telaga Tuju** is a spectacular series of waterfalls but quite an energetic climb in the tropical heat. The name means Seven Wells and at one level it's possible to slide over the slippery rocks from one pool to the next. We all had to have a go.

[STR]Outside of Kuah town there were many nice anchorages and we especially enjoyed Pantai Kok, 06°21.75N 99°40.56E, where we had some good dinners ashore and watched the annual LIMA exhibition the first week in December, which featured spectacular air shows over the airport.

HOLE IN THE WALL

[ARJ] **Entrance** 06' 25.61 N 99' 52.13 E **Anchorage** 06' 24.88 N 99' 51.92 E

[SWAG]Hole in the Wall- Miles of inland waterways. Course 190° to entrance [see above].Branch left, branch right past fish farms or dinghy straight ahead to restaurants & bus to Kuah Town.

[STYL]The **river estuary to the NE of Languun** is navigable to yachts at 6' 25.7 N; 99' 52.2 E. Known as "the Temple" because of spectacular rock formations, this anchorage has a very narrow entrance, and we were not game to go in. We do know several yachts who have anchored inside and rave about the wildlife.

[STST] Here and there in the world there are a very, very few places, where, by some happy accident of nature, something special occurs, Here in Langkawi, it is a narrow cleft between two soaring cliffs cloaked in rain forest green. The trees were filled with Hornbills calling and chattering, and the kingfishers, jewels of glowing orange and electric blue, quarreling in the branches overhanging the deep green water, Families of river otters squeaked and tumbled through the anchorage, while ashore monkeys foraged on the beach where a stream flowed through small pools, just right for bathing, into the sea, Aloft, the white clouds streamed from the cliff tops, but only gentle breezes reached us at sea level, It really was perfection, a place for renewing the soul.

THE NORTHEAST ISLANDS

[STYL] The northeast islands are still very quiet. The only people we saw were occasional fishermen putting out their crab nets or fish pots. The **channel between Pulau Languun and the main island of Langkawi** has several protected spots.

THAILAND BETWEEN LANGKAWI and PHUKET

[ARJ] **After clearing Langkawi** can drag feet up to 2 weeks with no problem before clearing into Thailand. [98] This is still true, but Phuket will question you if you take more than that going north. Going south, you can take 3.

TARUTAO

[SWAG] Some interesting anchorages that are not listed in any cruising guides:

East coast of Tarutao:

06° 31.4 N, 99° 41.3 E

06° 37.2 N, 99° 41.3 E

06° 42.4 N, 99° 40.2 E

We visited these in March when winds were favorable for the east coast. It may not be the case during October, November and December, which is the time when most yachts come through.

West coast of Tarutao: 06° 41.6 N, 99° 38.4 E. Visit tourist information hut & read history on pirates.

[CG1] I have not been to Ko Tarutao yet, but am advised that it is a majestic, scenic, beautiful island. The northern anchorage is the most popular, with great exploring up the river in the dinghy. Besides the bays on the west side, 3 possible anchorages on the SE side are worth checking out. One is in the bight on the main island, the other 2 are NE and SW of the butterfly-shaped islet to the SE, in 30' mud. I'm told these are ideal anchorages in the right conditions.

OUTSIDE ROUTE: BUTANG GROUP, KO ROK NOK, KO RACHAS

Butang Group

Pulau Nipis (Ko Lipe) approx 6° 29' N; 99° 18' E

[CG1] Anchor north of the hump in the island off the village and jetty, outside the fringing reef, in 15' broken coral & sand. Lunch stop only to visit the large interesting village. Nice beaches, bungalows, restaurants.

[*Sail Thailand* suggests also anchorage on the south side, good for overnight in NE monsoon.]

Ko Ba Tong approx 6° 32' N; 99° 10' E

[CG1] Anchor off the beach on the northeast side, 30' sand and coral. Beautiful area, white sand beaches, good beginners' dive, nice coral, clear water. Good stopover when cruising direct from Port Klang or Lumut to Phuket. Deep water. If too gusty, it's better to anchor at **Ko La Dang**. Channel between Ko Ba Tong & Ko Rawi is deep and easy to navigate; watch for easily visible fringing reefs.

Ko Rawi approx 6° 34' N; 99° 13' E

[CG1] Two anchorages: off bight just north of east tip of Ko Ba Tong, in 30' coral; or off the SE beaches outside fringing reef in 35' coral. Nice beaches, uninhabited. Eastern anchorage is good with fresh water stream.

Ko Kata approx 6° 33' N; 99° 16' E

[CG1] Anchorage in 60' sand and mud to western end of south side off the beach & outside fringing reef. Pleasant anchorage but deep. Nice bush and small beach, good diving.

Ko Adang approx 6° 33' N; 99° 18' E

[CG1] Anchor at north end of long beach on west side, in 20' sand and mud. Good anchorage all along this nice white sand beach. Two fresh water streams and pools near south of beach. Also can anchor in small bight at west end of south side of the island, in 30' coral. Nice bush and small white sand beach, reasonable diving, scenic, secluded, uninhabited.

Ko Rok Nok 07° 12.82N 99° 04.08E

[ARJ] Marine reserve--reasonably clear water

[CG1] Anchor in east side of the channel just north of sand spit on Ko Rok Nok in 30' sand, or just to the east of that position in the east entrance to the channel. Beautiful secluded islands, great anchorage, except in strong NE winds a roll comes in from the east. White sand beaches, clear water, good coral and diving. Uninhabited. Lobsters in cave and reef on west side of island. There's a phallic shrine on the westernmost beach on north coast of Ko Rok Nok: please show respect and don't touch. Clear passage between the islands, but look out for fringing reefs on both sides. I have not anchored in the **bay on the south side of Ko Rok Nok**, but I understand that you can anchor clear of the reef in good shelter from strong NE winds.

[STST] One interesting stop was at Ko Rok Nok, Here we found, built into the rocks and tree roots just above the beach, a phallic shrine. Under a tiny, Chinese-temple-like shrine or altar draped with colourful scarves and sprays of plastic flowers, were stacked like cordwood, you guessed it, large, log-like carved penises, some painted in bright colours, some beautifully varnished and extremely lifelike, if you can call a six foot specimen 'life-like' ! It was mind boggling ; left us speechless! The island is a regular stop for itinerant fishermen, and a former island home of the wandering Thai tribe of Sea Gypsies who have been displaced from this area now. How will I ever explain these photos?'

[98] Ko Rok Nok has been "developed" but it's still beautiful. There are approx 18 moorings (orange plastic buoys) strung out in the channel and to the east. They are a bit close to shore and close together for comfort. A Park Ranger's hut and basic camping facilities are on the north shore. Sometimes the ranger tells anchored boats to take a mooring (no charge), sometimes not. One suggestion was to take up 2, bow & stern, to keep from swinging too close to the fringing reef.

Ko Rachas

Ko Racha Noi approx 7' 30' N; 98' 19' E

Anchorage between the 2 islands on the west side of the channel, in 36' broken coral and rock, but it is not good holding. No beach, good diving, uninhabited.

Another anchorage about midway up the west side of the north island in the bight, 45' broken coral and sand. No beach, good diving.

Ko Racha Yai approx 7' 36' N; 98' 22' E

[CG1] Great anchorage in the deep bay on the west side. Fine white sand beach. Thai style restaurants. Bungalows.

INSIDE ROUTE - VIA KO MUK, KO LANTA

[ARJ] liked inside route better --Little islands between you'll curse or love, they alter the wind from a 10 k drift on the bum to 20 k in the teeth!--many can anchor near and are beautiful.

Ko Muk

[ARJ] 07' 22.57N 99' 17.19E Great Hong anchorage with cave--BEAUT!!

[SWAG] Ko Muk: 07^o 22.9 N, 99^o 17.07 E or anywhere near. Visit hong via dinghy. Enter near mooring buoys.

Ko Ha Yai approx 7' 24' N; 98' 54' E

[CG1] Lunch stop or light weather anchorages only exist on the east side of the fringing reef on the small island to the NE of Ko Ha Yai. Very scenic, good diving, nice beach in the bay.

Ko Kai approx 7' 44' N; 98' 37' E

[CG1] Lunch stop or settled weather only. Anchor off the west side in 55' coral and mud. Great diving, no beach, uninhabited.

Ko Dok Mai approx 7' 48' N; 98' 32' E

[CG1] No anchorage but very good dive. Uninhabited. Interesting cave north of the midpoint on the east side.

Ko Lanta Yai

[CG1] Anchor south of the isthmus on the NW tip of the island, 12' sand. Secluded tranquil anchorage. White sand beaches run nearly the full length of the west side of the island. Small villages, bungalows near anchorage. Another anchorage in a bight about 3/4 way down the west side. Nice anchorage and beach, though in strong NE winds a slight swell comes from the SE. Small village here.

PHI PHI DON

[CG1] Although very touristy, this is the most popular anchorage in the Phuket area. White sand beaches, clear water, good coral, caves, limestone formations, many bungalows, shops and restaurants, ferry service to Ao Chalong, Phuket Town and Krabi. Yachts mostly congregate in the **Ton Sai Bay** on the south side, 15-25' sand.

Ao Lohdalum, just north of the isthmus, is a good secluded option. You can anchor off the fringing reef in 15' sand and mud, but at low water the reef dries and you have to plan dinghy trips ashore around that. Good Coral here.

There are also **2 small bights** in the west side north of Ao Lohdalum **before you get to Lanah Bay**. Both of these are perfect secluded anchorages, only room for a few yachts. Need to eyeball your way in. Nice beach, coral, caves, scenic. Great sunsets.

[ARJ] South anchorage or west side for wx--Can take ferry from Phi Phi Don to Krabi for check in-- (must check out where you check in).

[REN] Slowly, easily hopping northwestward, sometimes sailing, usually motorsailing, we will eventually arrive at Phi Phi Don Island at the bottom of the famous Phang-Nga Bay, between the east coast of Phuket and the mainland. We really like Phi Phi Don. The anchorages to north and south are both deep U's edged with 200' tall sheer limestone cliffs, crystal clear water, and rarely any swell. The northern anchorage is coral filled, so one must anchor well off from shore, but the south one allows one to get in close to the narrow strip of beach which joins the 2 mountainous halves of island. Here lives a sleepy tourist town of restaurants, souvenir shops and bungalows. Everyone is so laid back they are almost asleep. The rest of the island is a nature reserve - or supposed to be -- if a developer has enough money he gets what he wants.

I don't know why we like the place really. It's noisy, as there is a lot of unmuffled motorboat traffic, whose mutterings are bounced and enhanced by the cliff walls. Except for 2 restaurants, the rest are expensive as are fresh veggies or fruit, and it's definitely a tourist trap. There is just something about the place we like, plus I can take long wooded walks every day. For some reason we always spend a week there.

[STYL] Ko Phi Phi Don is, from a cruiser's point of view, logically part of the southern extremity of Phang Nga Bay. The water is deeper and clearer with some good snorkeling. There is much hype about Phi Phi, called one of the three most beautiful islands on Earth, and hordes of day-trippers are attracted from Phuket and Krabi. The southern anchorage in **Ton Sai Bay** is very busy with ferries and longtails all day. It is also somewhat exposed to the east and can be rolly

Ao Lohdalum to the northwest is a beauty, however. It is just across a narrow sand spit from Ton Sai and just as close to all of the facilities. It is much quieter than Ton Sai, with no swell, and very appealing. There is a deep indent in the coral forming a narrow sandy anchorage for half a dozen boats lined up like spoggies on a fence. The bay is shallower than Ton Sai and at low tide there is an extensive sand flat that dries. But there are good bars close ashore and Singha beer is pretty cheap, so waiting for the tide is painless. The "main street" of Phi Phi can be a zoo but it's fun in small doses

A longtail trip around **Ko Phi Phi Le**, a scenic island just south, is a good diversion with an enormous cave where the locals risk their lives on spectacularly inadequate looking bamboo scaffolding in pursuit of minute birds nests made out of the spittle of swifts.

If you are feeling fit or can take plenty of time, a climb to the **lookout on Phi Phi Don** makes you realise that it is not just hype about Phi Phi. It is really lovely, and as an anchorage, Ao Lohdalum is in total contrast to the frantic to-ings and fro-ings in Ton Sai Bay. We stayed a week and could have stayed longer. There are small markets ashore for simple provisioning and any number of cheap eating establishments providing delicious Thai food.

PHI PHI LEH (KO PHRAYA NAK) approx 7' 41' N; 98' 46' E

[CG1] Anchor in the bight on the west side, shelves rapidly from 50 to 20' broken coral and mud. Secluded anchorage except for many day tourist boats, nice beaches, good diving, uninhabited. In light conditions can anchor off the hong on the east side in 30', broken coral and mud, long enough to explore in the dinghy. Off the SE corner there's a bay blocked by an island, a good lunch stop only. Anchor SW of the island between it and the S tip of the main island, bow anchor in 35', stern anchor towards shore to the N in 10'. Beautiful, majestic, secluded anchorage.

[ARJ] Superb scenery & nice snorkeling -- room for 1 or 2 boats.

[97] From 1000 to 1600 every day the magnificent soaring cliffs that surround this bay echo the deafening noise from longtails and speedboats and larger dive boats bringing hoards of daytrippers. Even the Sunsail charter boats usually don't stay the night, so from 1600 to 1000 the next morning it's all yours. Great fun to feed the fish here. Nice short walk up the valley opens out to the bay at the south side of the island.

PHUKET ISLAND

[KRS] Weren't we now in the SE-Asia of hot tasting food? Try Thailand. This, low general costs, and the charm of the easy going Thais are well-known. With the result that in Chalong Bay, Phuket, one can spot the biggest conglomerate of deep rooted boats, except perhaps in St. Thomas, USVI. In some sense it's a much nicer water-based side-kick of the crowded outfit of infamous Patong which boasted New Year's 93-94 brilliant fireworks of outstanding sorts. Clean beaches on the west coast with more or less hidden resorts (and swells in the summer), ludicrously formed limestone islands between Phuket and the mainland in the Bay of Krabi make the tourist invasion understandable. Beside diving excursions in the clear waters of the Phi Phi Islands, a round-trip to Bangkok, and visits to ruined pagodas, completed our happy time here.

[STYL] From a yachtie's point of view Phuket Town is not the centre of activity, being pretty much in the middle of the island. Yachts tend to accumulate in a few select places around the coast, each having its particular advantages depending on your needs and preferences. Weather notwithstanding, one or another will have the greatest appeal.

AO CHALONG - NW SIDE

[CG1] This is the best anchorage when first arriving and clearing into Thailand. It is a large, very well protected all weather anchorage with good holding in mud and plenty of room. The eastern approach is easier than the southern approach. **Take care** to avoid the **mud bank** in the north of the bay (visible at low tide when close as a brown patch) and the **reefs** on the southern approach. Don't leave your dinghy tied to the long ferry jetty, as it is used constantly by ferries and fishing boats. Go instead to the beach in front of the conspicuous light house. At low spring tides the mud is exposed near the beach, so for the few days around spring tides you need to plan your trips ashore. [98: Phuket Boating Association has dinghy dock, deep water access at nearly all tides.]

Ao Chalong is close to Phuket Town and is situated in the center of the popular cruising anchorages, so it is the best spot for provisioning and servicing your yacht. There is a fuel and water

barge in Ao Chalong, many excellent restaurants and a range of bungalows. Roads at the roundabout go to: Phuket Town, Nai Harn, Kata, Karon and Patong.

[PJ] The principal yacht anchorage for Phuket is the head of Ao Chalong, convenient to shops, restaurants and a market, and close to the bus line to Phuket Town. However, a wind with any south in it can raise an uncomfortable chop.

[STR] We can recommend the sushi lunches and frosty cold mugs of beer at the Boating Association.

[ARJ] Leave dinghy on beach near sm jetty or pay 500 baht/month to use jetty --beach dried to sticky goo at low tide.

[SAR]. From here supermarkets, post office, fruit and veggie stands, laundry, motorbike rentals, beauty parlors, seafood restaurants and the bus (tuk tuk) into Phuket are readily available very convenient. Next door to Latitude 8 [now Jimmy's Lighthouse] there are two small marine stores.

[ELE] Phuket Boating Association, next to Jimmy's, has **fax service and Internet cafe**, available to non-members. **Provisioning** There are several small supermarkets, a bakery and a good night fruit & veggie market by the Ao Chalong roundabout. What you can't find there will be in Phuket Town at Robinson's supermarket or Sin & Lee, 49 Thalang Road. For imported beef & deli, try Phuket Meat Importers tel 216-425 about halfway between Ao Chalong & Phuket town on the right. The Boat Lagoon also has a small supermarket next door to the marina.

[TI] We anchored in Ao Chalong, the main yacht anchorage for the island of Phuket. It is a very large shallow bay with a mud bottom. We were half a mile off the beach, as boats closer in touch bottom at low tide. Onshore the dinghies congregate at Pan's Lighthouse, a bar on the beach. It has a very conspicuous lighthouse to guide the thirsty sailors in. The beach landing is not usable for 2 hours on either side of low tide, as you sink into the mud up to your knees. Next door to the Lighthouse is Quantum Marine services, PO Box 271, Phuket Fax 076-381-322. We had some mail and faxes sent here with good results. Shopping here is good; most supplies we normally buy are available here. There is a morning market 100m up the Ao Chalong Monastery Road every day at 0800. There is lots of fresh produce.

[ELE] **Friendship Beach** is a guesthouse on the water about 2k from Ao Chalong on the right. They sell used boat bits, dive gear, a full range of Thai charts at 175-250 bhat each. Also they serve good hamburgers and have 3 computers hooked up to the Internet. To get there, take the Nai Harn bus which passes through Ao Chalong on its way from Phuket. Their phone/fax is 076-381-424.

PHUKET TOWN

[Ed.note: see Christine Bond's "Directory of Yacht Services" at the end of this guide.]

[SWAG] Phuket seems to be changing all the time and we saw a lot of changes between March 1996 and December 1996. It is an easy place to get around and there are always plenty of yachts to get current information from once you get there.

Here are normally a number of places that will receive **mail**, but one cannot forecast from one year to the next which will be reliable. We recommend that Poste Restante be used at the local Post Office just near the main anchorage of Ao Chalong. The address is Poste Restante, Post Office, Rawai, 83130, Phuket, Thailand.

[ARJ] **In Phuket**, lunch at Metropole Hotel, fantastic smorg on Sundays 180 bhat.

AO CHALONG - E SIDE - BAN NIT

[COM] In Phuket, for Christmas, we anchored at the Ban Nit Marina run by American yachtsman Bob Stevens. Strictly for cruisers, this was like a home away from home. A thatch roofed restaurant, small repair shop and fresh water at mooring made this a great place to be. Bob can normally get fuel, parts, do small repairs or advise you where to go to fix it, send Faxes and will hold your mail (c/o Ban

Nit Marina, P.O. Box 270, Fact, Thailand 83000. Fax: 011-66-76-381-057). Two disadvantages: a fringing reef makes it difficult to go ashore during the lowest two hours of a low tide and there is no fixed transportation system to town (10 miles away). Hitch-hiking usually works within ten minutes. During the northeast monsoon season [December-April) Ban Nit provides the only lee anchorage (with several moorings too) in Ao Chalong Bay.

[ARJ] Ban Nit Marina can get **water** at blue buoy. - Call on VHF 69 between 8-5 for them to turn it on. On Sundays and holidays they are closed and you can't get water.

[STYL] Ao Chalong is a large fairly shallow bay on the south end of Phuket island. Ban Nit Marina is on the east side of the bay and well-protected from the northeast monsoon with good holding and a nice restaurant ashore. It is not a 'marina' in the Australian sense (ie: there is no floating dock) but moorings are available and Bob Stevens, the proprietor, can point you in the right direction to find those elusive spare parts in Phuket. The beach is pleasant and multihulls and centreboarders can dry out for extended periods. There is a well demarcated fringing reef which dries, but a hand dredged channel means reasonably good dinghy access to the beach in all but the lowest spring tides.

[97] Bob Stevens no longer owns Ban Nit; but they still offer the same services, but without the benefit of his knowledge, experience, and helpfulness.

[1994] Ban Nit Marina: Cheap laundry, water buoy, propane, showers, restaurant, fax & mail service

[PJ] Ban Nit on the southeast side of the same bay offered quieter anchorage, easier dinghy landing, small but pleasant restaurant, showers, and good water from a tap attached to a mooring buoy. Fuel boats came alongside to sell diesel; but for a modest fee, John, an American who operated Ban Nit, would fill jerry cans with cleaner fuel from a depot in town. The only disadvantage of Ban Nit was that it lay a 40-minute walk from a bus line.

[REN] Ban Nit "Marina" is not a marina at all, no docks or berths, only moorings and some services ashore. There is an expensive restaurant (but a nicer cheap one a short walk up the hill), bare basics shop, a few overpriced moorings, and a very congenial office that offers to make fuel runs/ collect mail/ find workers for visiting yachts. The cost for water in 96 was .20b/litre. Ban Nit is also a much more protected anchorage than Ao Chalong, but no easy access to town.

AO CHALONG - SOUTH SIDE - KO LON

[CG1] Ko Lon, north side. Nice spot, good beach, restaurant, bungalows, water (non-drinking) available by hose from the jetty for a fee.

[CG1] Ko Lon, NE side. Three beaches, all nice white sand with a bit of poor reef and reasonably clear water. Middle beach has a large tree overhanging the beach so you can swim in the shade near high tide. Very pleasant, uninhabited.

[CG1] Ko Lon, W side. Pleasant secluded anchorage and beach.

BOAT LAGOON Entrance buoys at 07' 58.65 N; 98' 24.9 E

[ELE] On the east side of Phuket island north of town. Make a booking on VHF 71, 0800-1700. Channel is not quite deep enough; office will make a time according to your draft (add .4 metre to your draft, that's how much water they say you will need on the tide table to clear the channel) and meet you at the entrance buoy. A first class full service marina and repair facility with 120 berths, hardstand for 80, and 60 ton travel lift for haul outs. Very crowded during NE monsoon.

PHUKET ISLAND - WEST SIDE

[CG1] During the NE monsoon the wind at Nai Harn, Kata, Karon and Patong can funnel strongly through the bays. During the transition periods watch out for rare but sudden SW wind. Sometimes

small waves close to shore cause difficulties in beaching and launching the dinghy. The south west coast area is the tourist resort, swimming beaches, fun part of Phuket island.

NAI HARN

[CG1] 15-25' sand. Top anchorage. White sand beach, sand bottom. Good restaurants. Road to Ao Chalong, Phuket, and Kata. Bungalows.

[PJ] After Ao Chalong, the most popular anchorage was Nai Harn, a little further from Phuket Town but on a bus line, with several small casual restaurants and good water from a tap on the beach. From the bus one can see, beside the road at Rawai Beach, the HENRY WAGNER in which Tristan Jones crossed Thailand from the Andaman Sea to the Gulf of Thailand, described in his book *To Venture Further*. At the head of a tiny cove immediately north of Nai Harn, unnamed on the chart but known as "**Mums Bay**", was a spring filling a stone cistern, not suitable for drinking but convenient for laundry. The owner generously allowed free use of the cistern and yachties usually repaid him by buying beer, soft drinks and bananas from his refreshment stall.

[ARJ] Phuket YC is hotel only--home of King's Cup--pretty bay--no protection from west.

[SAR] Our favorite spot during the season of November to February was on the west side, in beautiful Naiharn Bay, in front of the Phuket Yacht Club Hotel (not really a yacht club at all). What a life! You can swim or dinghy to the long white beach equipped with lounge chairs (B\$40 per couple). After awhile our new friend Tuk would come around with fresh pineapple, watermelon, paw paw and mango for B\$10. All seafood is inexpensive, except for tiger prawns and lobster sold by the gram.

KATA

[CG1] Another top anchorage, white sand, restaurants. Road to Chalong, Phuket, Nai Harn and Karon. Club in north of bay. Bungalows.

KARON

[CG1] Yet another top anchorage, white sand, restaurants, bars, some provisioning. Road to Ao Chalong, Phuket, Kata and Patong. There's a beautiful secluded bay in the far north end of the big bay with a low key restaurant and resort. Bungalows.

PATONG

[CG1] Another top anchorage still. White sand, restaurants, bars, more bars, some provisioning. Road to Phuket, Karon, Ao Chalong. The bay just around the corner to the north of Patong apparently has a fresh water stream. Bungalows.

[ARJ] like Kuta Beach--New Years eve wild fireworks--great wetmarket.

[ELE] An absolute zoo because of so many jetskis, but for New Year's fireworks and partying it's worth it. There's a water buoy on the north side of the main bay, flat fee 300bhat in 1997/8. Good provisioning ashore at 2 department store complex supermarkets and fruit stalls near the night market on the back street. We found Home Country Direct phones upstairs from the Post Office next to MacDonalds. On the hill 3k north of town overlooking the harbor is a great restaurant called Suang Sawan. Call them at 344-175 or 176 and they will provide free transport both ways.

NORTH OF PATONG

[CG1] Up to the Burma border is pretty well one continuous anchorage during the NE monsoon, with long white sand beaches, beautiful bush and scenery, a few villages, but mostly uninhabited and away from it all. Do not enter Burmese waters.

The bridge on the northern tip of Phuket Island between it and the mainland is too low for yachts to pass under.

NORTH & WEST OF PHUKET ISLAND

SIMILIAN ISLANDS

[OW] We were keen to head out to the Similian Islands, 50 miles northwest of Phuket. This group of islands was really beautiful with their white sandy beaches and all, but the anchorages were very rocky, resulting in our having a most uncomfortable night, as OCEAN WANDERER lay abeam to the incoming swell. A stern anchor helped keep our bow into the swells, making for a happier and more restful night. The scuba diving was not wonderful as the visibility was poor and the currents were rather strong.

[PJ] The Similian Islands, northwest of Phuket, are said to offer the best diving in Thailand. In January '94, the most comfortable anchorages were the ones furthest north, marked "E" and "F" on Batts' sketch. The water was clear and diving good, but not spectacular. There were not enough mooring buoys and the anchorage was uncomfortably deep in coral that fouled the anchor. In addition, the ground tackle tended to destroy beautiful areas of coral. We were once again thankful for scuba gear!

[CG1] Although I have not yet been to the Similian Islands I am aware that one must **beware** of reefs which may be just under water at high tide on the indicated anchorages. Navigate with care! These are the top dive spots in the scope of this guide and are becoming very popular during the NE monsoon. Many dive charter boats are doing day and longer trips. [98: Islands are numbered 1-9, going south to north]

Island number 1 Anchorage off NE side. Fair weather anchorage only.

Island number 4 Anchorage off east side, and north side. These are the best all around overnight anchorages in the Similians. National Park HQ bungalows or tents available.

Island number 8 Anchorage in southernmost bay on east side. Fair weather anchorage only. Anchorage in NW bay, very good in NE monsoon for overnight anchorage. Well water available. National Park bungalows here also.

Island number 9 Anchorage off sw side. Fair weather anchorage only.

SURIN ISLANDS

[CG1] **Northern Island** Anchorage in the bay on the west side is the best one. Do not attempt to sail between the two islands: very shallow and many coral heads. Well water available from National Park HQ on south shore. Sea Gypsy village on opposite shore.

Other anchorages on SE side and NW side of the channel between the islands.

BETWEEN PHUKET & PHANG NGA BAY

KO HI approx 7' 44 N; 98' 23' E

[CG1] Anchorage in bay on south side, shell and broken coral beach, reasonable diving. A bit of swell in NE wind. Pleasant, secluded anchorage.

Other possible anchorage off south side of west tip, east of the small island. Two beaches on N shore are frequented by hotel guests from Phuket. Nice sand beaches, restaurants, bungalows. Beach activities available. Possible anchorage in middle beach on north shore.

KO MAI THON approx 7' 45 N; 98' 29 E

[CG1] In the bight on the west side, there is a very nice secluded anchorage. Good diving, good beaches. Only room for one yacht.

KO KAI NOK approx 7' 54 N; 98' 31 E

[CG1] I have only sailed through these islands without stopping, but the beaches and possible anchorages look great at two locations: on west side of each of the islands.

LAEM HUA LAN approx 7' 54 N; 98' 36 E

[CG1] Anchorages in bay on south side, outside of fringing reef which fills most of the bay. Other than fishing village in NW corner of bay, not a very interesting anchorage. No good beaches. But this is a handy sheltered lunch stop when sailing between Ao Nang/Krabi and Ao Chalong.

KO YAO YAI

[CG1] **West coast** Could anchor in many places on this coast during the NE monsoon. Anchorage in the next bay south of Ao Labu, where the chart shows 8₂, is off quite a large village which I believe has a restaurant. To the north of this anchorage I have sailed close along this shore which has many small nice beaches and pleasant scenery. Especially nice were the bight on the north side of Ao Labu (chart 5₄) and the beach around the corner nearly due west. I did anchor about halfway up the coast from there (chart 9₇), in a very pleasant anchorage with nice secluded beach, and a fresh water stream that forms convenient pools in the sand at the top of the beach.

KO LIPI approx 7' 57N; 98' 31 E

[CG1] Anchorage in the bight on the SW corner of the island in 45' mud. Very scenic, secluded anchorage. Nice little beach and good diving. Room for only one yacht inside.

KO NAKHA NOI approx 8' 02' N; 98' 28' E

[CG1] Anchorage off south end of beach on NW side of the island; pearl rafts to the north. Pearl farm here sells to the public in the building on north tip of the island. Discolored water; nice beach. You pay 60B to go ashore here. Possible anchorage off SW side as well in front of small beach.

KO NAKHA YAI approx 8' 03' N; 98' 28' E

[CG1] Have only been close to the east side of this island, but there looks like a very nice anchorage off the SW side (chart 1₉ note rock offshore); off fringing reef which extends quite a ways out from the beach.

KO BOI YAI approx 8' 08' N; 98' 33' E

[CG1] Possible anchorage off the south tip looks interesting; otherwise this is a relatively bland island.

KO BOI NOI approx 8' 11' N; 98' 32' S

[CG1] I have sailed close by but not anchored. The beach on the west coast just south of the bump looks pleasant and secluded with a nice beach. Also, the beach on the small island to the south looks good.

PHANG NGA BAY & KRABI**PHANG NGA BAY**

[STYL] We went up into **Phang Nga Bay** to check things out. To say that the geology and general architecture of the place is phenomenal is to understate the case dramatically. The area is the remains of an uplifted limestone plateau which has fractured, weathered, and eroded into the most dramatic islands imaginable. They rise, sheer and overhanging, 300 metres or more out of the sea. Every square metre less than vertical is covered with lush vegetation and the area is riddled with huge caves and deep clefted inlets. A feature is the hong, only discovered from the air after World War Two. The word "hong" is Thai for "room" and these rooms are lagoons within the islands, open to the sky but with no visible sign from the seaward side. There is often a cave which connects the hong to the sea and sometimes these caves are navigable by dinghy at certain states of tide. To go through a winding 200 metre cave with bats, owls and swifts to emerge from total darkness into a hong with rainforest

clad walls, clear turquoise water and butterflies flitting about, is beyond the scope of language to describe, except to say it is fantastic in the most literal sense.

To describe Phang Nga as phenomenal is as much an understatement as it is to call it unforgettable. There are any number of anchorages and the area can be sailed in both monsoons. It is one of the reasons for doing an entire season in Thailand rather than dashing off to Sri Lanka and the Med. Put simply, we wouldn't have missed it for quids.

[REN] This is where the real cruising begins. Limestone outcrops weathered into narrow mushrooms or coxcombs. The anchoring is in mud close to the shore, with protection to be found in almost any weather. Down here the islands are big, lush, white beached with small fishing villages or sea gypsy camps with visibility to 30', fresh water streams, occasional caves, and a marvelous wild feel. We have rarely been in an anchorage with more than 2 other sailboats, though there are sometimes many fishing boats. The scenery is dramatically moody, changing with the sunlight and weather. Great tall monolithic pillars stretching for the sun, closed umbrella-like mushroom islands, massive wedges of rock, lots of sheer gray limestone cliff walls and oddly weathered shapes that cause one awed puzzlement. We would sit with our coffee watching the setting sun make unattainable, mystic scenery rosy and musing about how such a place could possibly come to be. Despite library visits it is still a mystery, made more intriguing by the honggs (Thai for room) which permeate many of the islands. Honggs are basically lagoons buried deep within the rock bodies of the islands, roughly circular, with soaring cliffs and shallow mud bottoms, the honggs are holes in the rock mass discovered when the sea eventually carves a tunnel through one, or recently, by air.

What a buzz! Flashlight clamped to my teeth I would pull myself stalactite by stalactite (or paddle) into total blackness and silence, the dropping of water like an explosion. The beam of my flashlight would strike a stalactite, drawing forth sequin sparkles and scaring the bats into turbulent, abrupt flight. Eventually ahead I'll see a patch of glowing sea-glass green water, then a small patch of blinding sunlight behind the jagged teeth of the cave roof. With a great deal of squirming, I would pop through into a lost world, a hidden world known only to me. At least until the tourist canoes show up. I spent whole days, sunrise to sunset, poking my dinghy's blunt nose into every rock and indent along the base of the cliffs of nearby islands. Great fun!

Add to this that Phang-Nga Bay is usually under 30' with no seas and unfortunately little wind, extremely well protected, and full of fishermen trying to sell one jumbo prawns (but make sure you know the market price first!) and Phang-Nga Bay makes for some pleasant spelunking. The whole bay is about 25 miles square, so the next anchorage is rarely more than 2 hours away and there aren't many submerged hard bits. The water was a murky green, but I have been told it is clear in the December to March period. I hope we'll find out.

[INT] Plenty has been written about these places so I will just add that you should leave at least three weeks for Phang Nga Bay. Get the charter guide that lists all the anchorages and be prepared to shoot a dozen rolls of film. It seems that there is a postcard view everywhere you turn.

[STST] Phang Nga Bay The bay is roughly a 40 mile by 40 mile square, It is very shallow, and dotted everywhere with vertically sided limestone islands, pillars, spires and unbelievably narrow blades jutting up to about 500-800' high. The entire area is honeycombed with caves; some are flooded and you can take your dinghy through and out the other side of the island, Some huge caves are open to the sky in the centre of the islands; they are called "honggs" and are like entering a prehistoric world as you slide in through a cave entrance, very low to the water, and the secret inner world opens up to you, trees, cactus, ferns, vines and shrubs crowd the sheer walls - there is no soil there the roots are driven deep into the faults of the rock and the nutrients come from the water leeching through the rock. This is the only place we have ever seen external stalactites. On the overhanging cliff heights and walls they hang down towards the sea, and even into the sea, where they are covered with oysters. The cliffs look as if someone had taken barrel loads of black, brick red, cream and white paint and thrown it at the cliff tops, where it then streamed down the sides to the sea. On the beaches below, monkeys hunt for crabs in the mud at low tide.

One really neat exploration we made--we took all our flashlights in the dinghy and wound through a flooded cave for 600 feet in the pitch dark with flying bats overhead who come out through a low arch only 3 feet above the sea into a beautiful hong. Really quite incredible, the contrast

between the dark cave the burst of brilliant light as you emerge into the hong. The James Bond film, "Man With the Golden Gun" was filmed here. I can only say, rent this film and watch for this enchanting scenery, you will know what I'm trying to describe to you. I remember seeing it years ago and just not believing there was such a place in the world, and now we are really here. It is now a tourist trap of the lowest order, with tacky tacky being sold on the beach.

The local fishermen use "longtails" here. The long, flat, dory type boat has a diesel or gasoline small car engine mounted on a swivel at the stern. A chain-drive attaches to about a 10 foot -long shaft with a big two bladed propeller at the business end. The operator swivels the whole contraption to steer the boat. They have no mufflers either, and are extremely noisy.

This afternoon we are anchored far up a small tributary of a river, The friendly fishermen here have been showing us how they farm oysters - at low tide a network of stakes is revealed with thousands of motorcycle tires strung between the stakes, and the oysters are growing on the rubber tire rims - a great recycling project! In this whole huge, interesting bay, we are almost the only yacht out cruising. We can't believe it; yachts are crowding the anchorage at Phuket, but I think we've seen a grand total of 3 other yachts out really cruising - unbelievable! but we've seen it everywhere on our travels - the old "herd instinct."

[CG1] Sheltered Phang Nga Bay extends north from a line joining Ao Chalong and Ao Nang near Krabi. It is 25 miles at its mouth and 35 miles deep, with an area of 400 square nautical miles. There are countless islands, ranging from a few large inhabited islands to many uninhabited limestone islands dripping stalactites, many spectacular caves and beautiful bush and scenery. Bats, herons and swallows. The water is generally not clear in the northern part of the bay so the diving is not great, but swimming is fine. There is no provisioning or services in Phang Nga and water is scarce.

Phang Nga is a world forgotten by time, which no words or glossy pictures can capture. You have to go there. Explore all islands you can anchor near by, and dinghy to find thousands of breathtaking sights.

KO PHANAK

[CG1] Anchor in the bight about the middle of the west coast. Very scenic. Uninhabited. Enter cave in bay next to anchorage near high tide in dinghy. Take powerful flashlight; cave goes for about 200 metres then comes out in inland lagoon. Fantastic!! Bats, stalactites in cave. Next cave to the north: enter at mid tide into the lagoon. Bay on north side of this island has a very nice, secluded beach and splendid scenery (dinghy access only).

In SW monsoon can anchor directly across on east side of the island, but in strong SW wind can get a bit lumpy. Many great caves and scenery on the east coast of Ko Phanak.

[ARJ] Anchor off west side in 4.8 metres. Go to the hong twice, at both high and low water. Also there's a nice cave north of the island on east side near 0.7m mark in *Sail Thailand* p. 29.

[STYL] Ko Phanak is a few hours from Laem Phrao and it contains several caves and hong: one at 200 metres, being the longest cave of any we went into. There is no good overnight anchorage at Phanak but in the right weather nearly the whole of Phang Nga Bay is one continuous anchorage. The northern part of the bay, in particular, is surprisingly shallow in spite of the dramatic height and steepness of the islands. The current, which during springs can be a major factor, sometimes scours holes and channels as it swirls around the islands, but if you lose visibility in a rain squall (a not uncommon occurrence), you can just toss over the pick and wait for it to pass before continuing on your way. On the western side of the bay near Ko Phanak the **fishermen** are an enterprising lot. Even before you anchor, chances are a longtail will pull alongside and offer you fresh **prawns**. And when I say fresh you'd better believe it. They are still hopping about on the floor of the longtail. The fishermen are very amenable to bargaining but they know the value of their catch and while you may pay too much there is a floor to the price below which they will not go. For us it was about 150 baht per kilo. Shelled green and fried in butter, brushed with a marinade of Teriyaki, chili and garlic they make for a memorable meal.

KO RA NA [ARJ] Lunch stop. Anchor east of the island, and explore the hong on the north side.

KO YAI GROUP/ KO HONG

approx 8' 13' N; 98' 30' E

Ko Yai

[CG1] Anchor off beach in middle of west coast in 30' mud. Secluded & uninhabited, stunning scenery, reasonable beaches. Small island to the south of Ko Yai has beautiful little bay on its north side with nice beach.

Ko Hong

[CG1] "Paradise Island." Anchor off SW side outside of fringing reef in 15' mud. This uninhabited island is one of the most spectacular limestone islands in Phang Nga. Explore in the dinghy at mid tide - breathtaking. No proper beach here.

Another anchorage is off the NE side in the channel between Ko Hong and Ko Na Khae, 20-45' mud. Top anchorage. It gets shallow to the north. Spectacular.

[ARJ] Anchor off SW side. Several places to explore here.

[STYL] There are two islands called Ko Hong so they are known as Ko Hong Phang Nga and Ko Hong Krabi, even though both are in Phang Nga Bay. East and West would have been better but that's not the way they did it. Ko Hong Phang Nga is a good overnight stop for a few days. Anchorage is good in four or five metres just south of Ko Hong. There is a very pretty lagoon which is, in reality, a big hong with a couple of narrow gaps in the rock wall. On the west of the lagoon is an easy cave into a small hong and then another cave out to the sea. It is a good introduction to cave and hong exploration and quite beautiful in its own right. Monkeys move around on the sandbars inside the lagoon although they are shy. IRONBARK anchored in the channel northeast of Ko Hong; a sheltered enough spot, but they found the current pretty fierce at times.

Ko Na Khae

A good alternative anchorage is south of the western peninsula in 25' mud. Uninhabited.

KO RAYA GROUP/KO PHING KAN ("JAMES BOND ISLAND")**[CG1] Unnamed island SW of Ko Yang, W of Ko Lolo**

Anchor well offshore (shallow area) in 10' mud to east of the island. Uninhabited. High scenic island with large cave on beach on northeast point. You climb up inside the mountain and come on top for panoramic views.

[CG1] James Bond Island approx 8' 16 N; 98' 30 E

Very touristy but beautiful island. Shallow area, so have to anchor well offshore to the south in open water 10' deep. Lunch stop only.

[STYL] The fishermen will also offer you transport to what is known locally as "James Bond" Island. It is too shallow to approach in a yacht without local knowledge so if you want to see it a longtail is probably best. It was the location for an otherwise totally forgettable movie called "The Man with the Golden Gun". We found that binocular range was quite close enough for us. There are lots of day trippers and an excess of the usual tourist trash, so we found it easy to pass by. If you feel your life is not worth living without having set foot on James Bond Island, **Ko Yang** with its striking headland is a good anchorage to use.

Ko Yang

[CG1] Another spectacular and beautiful island with nice beach. Anchor south of SW tip outside fringing reef in 20' mud.

[ARJ] Suggest anchoring S of **Ko Yang** and dinghy over to **Ko Phing Kan** (James Bond Island). Tour boats congregate in the NW Bay. Get the brochure from the park ranger on the island re other caves in the area. There's a good one on SW side of **Ko Ra Ya Ring**.

Ko Raya Ring

[CG1] Anchor off SW side just before west coast bends sharply straight north, in 30' mud. Uninhabited all weather anchorage. No beaches. Could get gusty in strong NE winds.

Another anchorage for shoal draft only, in 5' mud, off NW side between this island and the smaller one to the NW. Uninhabited, all weather anchorage; majestic scenery, cathedral like cave goes right through the island (dinghy access), small beaches.

Also can anchor to west of above mentioned small island, in 20' mud. Uninhabited all weather anchorage. Beautiful.

North of Ko Raya Ring approx 8' 20' N; 98' 30 E

[CG1] In the entrance, anchor in 12'm all weather anchorage. The two conspicuous towers on the mosque act as leads to locate the channel to the village. Keep them just open to your port and head between the mosque and the small island in the channel, keeping it to starboard. High tide is the best time to navigate in this area as it is shallow, though the soundings and channels as marked on BA chart 3941 are reasonably accurate. Interesting Muslim fishing village built mainly on stilts. Large mosque, basic restaurants, shops and bungalows. No alcohol.

KO MAK approx 8' 17' N; 98' 35' E

[CG1] Anchor NE of E tip of island off village with jetty in 15' mud. Interesting, scenic island. Shallow area but there is deep water near the east point. In NE monsoon, this is a lunch stop during light weather only, but good anchorage in SW monsoon.

KO SUM approx 8' 15' N; 98' 36' E

[CG1] Anchor off W coast in the middle, in 15' mud. Relatively uninteresting island with no beaches, but a safe, uninhabited, secluded anchorage.

KLONG PAK KAO approx 8' 23 N; 98' 38 E

[CG1] Approach: from the east side of Ko Mak, proceed straight north, passing between Twin Sisters (2 islets) on port and 2 stakes to starboard. Then pass fish traps close on port hand just before turning into channel entrance. Anchor in the channel about 1 mile up from the entrance just before passing a small island on the south side, in 15' mud. Uninhabited, all weather anchorage. Very scenic and secluded. Shallow area so best to sail near high tide. Some of the best cave hunting in the dinghy is up the tributaries of this klong. The cave off the east side of the estuary a further 2 mi up on south side of main channel is unreal. I am sure there are continuous anchorages far up this klong. Floating houses, large village. Fascinating remote tranquil cruising.

CHONG LAT CHANNEL approx 8' 16' N; 98' 38" E

[CG1] Best anchorage is at southern end of channel off bay on N side of Ko Chong Lat outside fringing reef in 15' mud. Uninhabited, all weather anchorage. Very scenic and secluded. No beaches.

Another possible anchorage in narrow part of channel to the north, off a nice small beach on Ko Chong Lat to the west. But the current is stronger here.

[STYL] There is good all weather anchorage in Chong Lat Channel to the north east of Ko Roi with striking geography. The current is intimidating in the narrow north section but eases as it widens out farther south. Throughout are thousands of poorly marked fishing floats to keep you on your toes.

KO KHLUI CHANNEL approx 8' 14 N; 98' 38' E

[CG1] Anchor SW of S tip of Ko Chong Lat in the channel between it and Ko Khlui, 12' sand and mud. Pleasant, uninhabited, secluded, sheltered anchorage. Coarse golden sand. Nice scenery and bush. Water is not clear.

Ko Khlui West Side

[CG1] I have not anchored here but the small beaches in middle and south of this coast look sheltered and safe. Very beautiful and interesting looking island.

KO KHAI [Ko Pai?]

[ARJ] Lunch stop - nice cave here.

KO BATANG approx 8' 13' N; 98' 35' E

[CG1] I have not anchored here but the bay on the west side looks like a good anchorage if it is deep enough. There is a majestic, large limestone cave above the beach.

KO ROI approx 8' 12' N; 98' 36' E

[CG1] Anchor off the west side in 20' sand and mud. Perfect island and anchorage. Reasonably clear water, nice reef, grand and picturesque island with caves to explore in the dinghy on the south bluff and a cave on the northern beach leading into a large, beautiful inland lagoon. Nice beaches. Uninhabited and secluded.

[ARJ] LOVELY!! Good hong and beach. Has reef which extends to south in clear water--saw hornbills a plenty.

[STYL] Half a day's sail (or motor) east from Ko Hong is one of the prettiest anchorages and most appealing islands in the area. If there is a problem with Ko Roi it is that the anchorage is a relatively narrow shelf coming up steadily from 20 metres towards a fringing reef that dries at low water. We got good holding at seven metres after it leveled out. Most of the time the current is parallel with the reef going one way or the other and the wind tends to keep you stern out. At night however with the change of tide you might hang stern toward the island so swinging room on the reef has to be factored in to moderate the temptation to get closer. The hong at Ko Roi is easy to get into and truly lovely inside. There is much vegetation, a nice beach, and many birds, particularly blue reef herons, azure kingfishers and spectacular, noisy, black and white hornbills. Over the days we were at Ko Roi we spent hours in the hong: exploring in the dinghy or just lying back watching the goings on. This forms some of our most indelible memories of Phang Nga Bay.

KO KUDU YAI approx 8' 12' N; 98' 38' E

[CG1] I have only been just inside the entrance to the bay just west of the SE tip and it was very shallow, 4', but there may be a deeper hole further into the bay. If so this would be the perfect, picturesque all weather anchorage - worth sounding from the dinghy. [*Sail Thailand* says that this bay is filled with coral, and suggests anchoring between this island and the smaller one to the NW in 20' mud.]

KO HONG KRABI GROUP**Ko Pak Bia (Mushroom Island)** approx 8' 07' N; 98' 41' E

[CG1] A group of 3 small islands joined by reef filling the channels between them. Anchor off the SW side of the group in 50' sand and mud. Scenic, fair diving, reasonable beaches. Uninhabited. Nice anchorage.

Ko Hong Group approx 8' 06' N; 98' 41' E

[CG1] These attractive islands, 1.5 miles NNE of Ko Hong, are steep to and deep with no good anchorage, though the west island has a beautiful bay on its east side with white sand and nice bush and a Thai house. Perfect, except the small bay is full of reef, dropping off to 70' outside, so cannot anchor. Better to anchor at Ko Hong and explore these islands by dinghy.

Ko Hong Krabi approx 8' 04' N; 98 41' E

[CG1] Anchor off the lagoon on the NE side in 45' shells and mud. Interesting island to explore in the dinghy near high tide when you can enter the lagoon. There is a deep cave above the white sand

beach near the entrance to the lagoon. Clear water, reasonable coral, secluded, uninhabited, scenic group of islands.

[*Sail Thailand* suggests an anchorage off the S bay in NE monsoon, 60' one of the prettiest bays in the area.]

[STYL] A short half a day's sail south of Chong Lat is Ko Hong Krabi. The islands around it are very appealing, but there are no good all weather overnight anchorages. The day we were there it blew up a bit from the northeast in the late morning and we only stopped for an hour to take the dinghy into the hong for a look. By early afternoon it was over 25kts and the best anchorages nearby for these conditions are Ao Nang and Phra Nang on the mainland.

KRABI

Ao Nang/Krabi approx 8' 01' N; 98' 51' E

[CG1] Anchorage in Ao Nang and the 3 bays to the SE, all in 10'12' sand and mud. Next most popular cruising anchorage after Phi Phi Don. Clear water, white sand beaches, fantastic limestone cliffs and caves, many bungalows and good restaurants. The road to Krabi town goes from Ao Nang for basic provisioning. Top Spot - great anchorages.

[PJ] At the southeast or **Krabi side** of Ao Phangnga were good walks ashore, pleasant restaurants, and better swimming and snorkeling.

[SAR] Krabi has striking scenery and good snorkeling, but exercise caution as one yacht had their outboard and dinghy stolen from the beach this year.

RAI LAI BEACH

[MAD] Rai Lai Beach, just west of Krabi, is quite touristy, by our standards, but this means there are lots of restaurants with menus ranging from 40 to 100B (25B = US\$1). The food was excellent and some places showed videos. The beaches were crowded with nude Europeans, but the trails and caves were deserted. There is splendid spelunking and rock climbing in this area. The caves are home to bats, spectacular stalactites and quartz waterfalls. One cave climbs up through a mountain to an opening overlooking the anchorage. We took a **long tail boat into Krabi** for 40 baht per person one way. Some cruisers checked in and out this way.

[STYL] Railei Beach, just north of Phra Nang, is a small bay with pretty good protection from the northeast. With two reefs in the main and half a jib we fairly flew across from Ko Hong with only a couple of short starboard tacks. Railei is a nice beach, with lots of bungalows catering for backpackers, which means the beer is not overpriced, the food is good, cheap, and plentiful and the atmosphere overall very easy. **Krabi town** is worth a look. It is almost as big as Phuket but much less touristy. From Railei a long-tail ride to Ao Nang and then a bus to Krabi is good fun and you get a look at the countryside. From the longtail staging area at Krabi on the riverbank you can come back to Railei non-stop. If the northeast monsoon is fresh this is the dry way and very picturesque. We stayed a few days at Railei but then it blew up again, this time from the southeast, which is unusual for March. Even with our makeshift "flop-per-stopper" damping down the roll it was pretty uncomfortable so we moved down to Ko Phi Phi Don.

KO YAWASAM approx 7' 57' N; 98' 47' E

[CG1] Anchor west of the channel between the islands off the fringing reef, 35' sand and coral. A light weather anchorage only as you have to anchor close to the reef to find shallow enough water. Good diving on nice coral: lobsters.

KO DAM HOK, KO DAM KHWAN approx 7' 58' N; 98' 48' E

[CG1] Two islands joined by solid reef between them. Anchorage off west side of Ko Dam Hok in 35' sand and mud, beautiful anchorage, nice white sand beaches on both islands, good coral, clear water, shrine in cave on small beach shown near anchorage (leave shrine alone).

Alternative anchorage, light weather only, in SW monsoon would be off the SE side of Ko Dam Khwan north of small islet, in 20' sand and mud.

[*Sail Thailand* suggests anchorages: 1) just N of Ko Dam Hok between it and small islet, or 2) just N of Ko Dam Khwan west of the reef that joins it to the islets to the north. Good for overnight in NE monsoon.]

KO MAIPHAI

approx 7' 49' N; 98' 47' E

[CG1] Anchor southwest of this island in 15' mud & broken coral outside the fringing reef. Careful of the reefs in this area. Good light weather anchorage or lunch stop. Nice beaches and coral, clear water, uninhabited.

KO PU

approx 7' 50' N; 98' 57' E

[CG1] Anchor on west side just south of the headland, in 12' shells and mud outside fringing reef. Secluded anchorage, nice beaches, not limestone type island, gusty in strong NE winds, interesting fish trap near anchorage. There also looks like a good and very scenic anchorage SW of the southern tip of the island, west of a line between it and **Ko Lola**. Beware of Hin Lola Rock.

EAST COAST OF MALAYSIA/THAILAND

[DC] Not many yachts in this area. Many in Hong Kong and Singapore, but they rarely venture out more than 100 miles. Wind blows 60% of the time if you can sail in less than 9k, otherwise it blows only 30% of the time.

Kuantan We were the first yacht to cross the 2' deep 2 mile long reef to enter this, the largest Malaysian town on the coast. You have to time it right with the 6' tide. We were anchored next to the bridge, and the waving and horn blowing are constant. However, there are 16 new marinas in Thailand/Malaysia and the resort development is overwhelming. As the SW Pacific fills up, this is the sailing area of the future.

Sonokhla, Thailand was a strange place, old fishing port with over 700 fishing boats because this coast is so shallow. No tourists, so no English but they are very friendly. I went to a big LPG freighter to find out where he unloads so I could go fill up. He could understand only that I needed LP so out of his 10 million gallons he filled up my bottles, but no idea how much to charge, such a small amount, so it was free. You should see me in the machine shop making bolts, backing

plates, getting stainless bolts out of 4" thick cast mounting, fixing motor, finding cable, rebuilding motor.

Ko Samui, Thailand A resort showing the beautiful natural resources Thailand has to offer. The people are delightful, the weather and food perfect. We are anchored in a 3 mile sandy bay with 200 restaurants and 3000 rooms and not another boat. Just don't rush through this area.

[EL] There is not enough good to be said about Thailand's west and east coasts, as no fishing boat hassles, and friendly, fun loving, people. As for provisioning, there are cheeses, mayo, laundry soap, fabric softener, ketchup, sterilized milk, tuna, and good paper products (cheap).

On the east coast you can **check-in at Koh Samui. Check-out from Malaysia** can be done from **Kapas Island**. Ride the morning ferry to Merang, and then bus it to Kuala Terengganu. You must have an immigration permit to enter Thailand or Singapore from Malaysia. There is an anchorage at Perhentian-Ketchil Island 30 miles north of Kapas, from which it is a two day run to Koh Samui. We anchored at Chaweng Bay. Baht buses run continuously to Nathon, where you check in. Immigration is tainted, and you will get monthly Visas easier by bringing a gift fifth, and a smile. Lots of fun can be had at Ao Chaweng's village. We recommend Murray's Down Under Bar, the Green Mango disco, and for unreal food, the Colibri. Fuel and water can be arranged through some of the beach-side motels. Head Rin beach on Koh Pha-ngan is a good anchorage, and has a fun ADULT Full Moon Party once a month. Koh Tao has few anchorages, and most fill up with the fishing boats. Little Koh Nangyuan, on its NW tip, has a nice anchorage, and restaurant.

[LR] I returned to Singapore, and with my parents as crew, headed up the east coast of peninsular Malaysia. By now it was April and the southwest monsoon had yet to even begin to whisper a breeze, so we motored the 20+ hours needed to reach **Tioman Island**. This, along with the dozen or so small islands in this area, is a tropical paradise less than a day's sail from the muddy, brown waters of Singapore and northern Indonesia. The beaches are white and the water is clear blue. Some of the islands have small resorts which cater to the ex-pats living in Singapore and Malaysia. There are still many coves and inlets where privacy can be found.

I traveled further up the coast toward the Thailand border, to the boat building and fishing community of **Kuala Terengganu**. Here they build boats the old fashioned way, out of hand-sawn wooden planks. On **Pulau Duyong** family builders construct 40-60' coastal fishing craft, skin first, framing second. The local wood is called "chani" or iron wood. It must be drilled as one cannot drive a nail through. Hull planks are drilled and fastened using wooden dowels mated to their common edge. A strip of paper mulberry tree bark is laid in between the planks as a natural caulking. The monocoque skin is now reinforced with frames. These boats are built by eye, using no plans. There were at the time 3 or 4 traditional-style sailing yachts being built here. In the case of these boats, frames are constructed first, then planked. The discerning European clients were having their boats constructed in one of the few affordable parts of the world left; but not for long.

One anchors just inside the breakwater in 10-20' over sand. The brown-colored water hides a multitude of sins, including untold amounts of daily garbage. You can take your dinghy to the town dock. I preferred using the numerous water taxis, plying back and forth across the shallow bay. Here in Kuala Terengganu you can experience traditional Malay culture and lifestyle. And, if you are fortunate enough to be here during the month of June, you can indulge in the queen of tropical fruits, the durian. The nighttime market is filled with vendors who have smuggled their contraband down from Thailand. In the evening, the warm offshore breeze brings with it that sweet and pungent scent of durian. There is no halfway with this fruit; you love it or you hate it.

Having spent the better part of two weeks here, I set sail (read "motor") across the South China Sea. I wanted to stop at **Natuna Besar**, an island occupied by Indonesia, but still disputed by Vietnam and Malaysia. It is generally off-limits to cruising yachts as it is seldom listed on one's Indonesian Security Clearance. Armed with my expired Security Clearance, a smattering of the Indonesian language, and feigning the excuse of needing fuel (let's face it, I could use some; still very little wind), I crept up to the harbor entrance of **Genting, on Pulau Sedanau** (3 45'N., 108 01'E.). The reef to starboard is easily identifiable by a large rusting hull, half out of the water. For the rest, you will have to fend for yourself using the vague description in the USDMA Sailing Directions (en route), Pub. 163. Once inside this pass, there are posts identifying the edge of the separate reefs and coral outcroppings. Secure in this extremely well-protected lagoon, one can tie up to the town pier or

anchor in 12-15' of brown-colored water. The town, and the pier, are constructed entirely over the water, as are the houses, the shops, the sidewalks, and the "streets." The chief of police, the harbourmaster, and the head of the coast guard, none of whom could have been 30 years of age, made it clear to me that I was to leave as soon as I had taken care of my business. Later in the afternoon they came down to the boat to visit and see if I had any magazines with pictures of "lettuce." Somewhat confused I showed them a cabbage I had in my food stores and asked them if it was similar to this. The game of charades continued until I realized they meant "ladies." All day and all night, old men and young children alike maintained a vigil over LONE RIVAL. There were only 3 people on the entire island who could speak any English, and after a tiring day translating, I decided to move on. I retraced my footsteps of the day before and then sailed south along the edge of several of the surrounding volcanic islets. If the Indonesian government ever opens this area up for cruising, it will offer some dramatic anchorages.

I passed the island of **Subi Besar** that night and sailed close enough to smell the sandalwood and plumeria trees. The spicy fragrance heightened even more my image of being in an exotic land.

[RR] For those who need a respite from the big city, the islands of East Coast of Malaysia offer a paradise only an overnight sail away. Unfortunately, fresh fruit, vegetables and general groceries are not available in the islands so it's necessary to sail well supplied. The **Malaysian check in** point is at **Tanjong Pengelih** on the Johore side about 8 miles from Changi Point.

It is then about 70 miles to **Pulau Tinggi**, where we recently spent several lovely days tucked into the little bay on the north side. The bottom is sand but the bay is quite small. When several Malay fisherman decided to join us one evening, we spent a good portion of the night keeping a watch so they wouldn't swing into us. We were delighted to see monkeys swinging from the trees ashore.

We next stopped at **Pulau Rawa**, which has a small resort and is very popular with Singaporeans. It is about 9 miles off of Mersing on the Malaysian mainland. The anchorage is wide open and it is not uncommon to have squalls pop up now and again. Protection can be found, however, at the north end of **Babi Kechil North** just to the west.

On to **Pulau Tioman**, which is probably the most popular island in the area. The Merlin Hotel Group has a very large resort in **Telok Tekek** on the west side. Although open to the prevailing SW winds during this time of year, the holding ground is good (sand) south of the jetty. There is a small island in the middle of the bay that offers some good snorkeling. Dive boats from the resort go out to other prime locations. We did have one strong squall blow in from the NW which was not too pleasant and other days we sometimes had an uncomfortable swell.

We moved up the coast to **Telok Salang**, which is a smaller bay offering some protection from the SW. The beach was full of sand flies that left nasty, itchy bites for several days. The local fishing boats like this anchorage so sometimes there is a tight fit at night.

Our favorite spot on Tioman was **Telok Juara** on the east coast. It is a large open bay but the SW corner offers the best protection with good holding ground in sand. There is a fresh water stream at the SW end of the beach that is navigable by dinghy at high tide. It's a wonderful jungle escape with singing birds, insects, lovely butterflies and a vast canopy of trees. Since there is no one living upstream, pure water for drinking can be obtained bubbling forth under some rocks. Take the first left turn of the first left branch. There is a little village at the other end of the beach with a few cottages for tourists. It's a pleasant walk. Or there is a longer trail across the mountains to Telok Tekek (about 1½ hour hike one way). Again, we experienced some sand flies, an uncomfortable roll and the inevitable Malay fishing boats anchoring too close. Well, no place is perfect.

Our **trip back to Singapore** was a bit of a struggle fighting wind on the nose and a very strong northbound current. Using **Lima Channel** can save a bit of time, but the currents can be extremely strong. We picked it right and rushed through at about 8 knots. Helpful to check the local tide tables. We checked out of Malaysia at **Tanjong Pengelih**.

MALAYSIAN BORNEO

[ARJ] Another option for the following season is to go to the east side of Malaysia--during the SW monsoon starting in May -- and do Borneo (Sabah & Sarawak), go up over the top visit Sulawesi,

and scoot back from Bali to Singapore by about November. Everyone seems to rave about Kuching & Kota Kinabalu in Malaysian Borneo. Malaysia also has a number of islands on its east peninsular coast which people do in the SW monsoon. However, after the cruise through Indonesia you would want to go on up to Phuket, and enjoy their prime time cruising of December thru mid March.

[KRS] Malaysian Borneo. The passage of 400 nm to **Sarawak** in August was very agreeable with slight seas. Another reason to celebrate after an uneventful cruise up the well buoyed Sungai Sarawak to **Kuching** was the very peculiar waterfront, with floating pontoons at the promenade with hawker stands commemorating its one year existence. It was conveniently located in the center of town and free, but too many curious strollers knocked on the hull. Immigration (Pending Bus No.1 to ferry terminal) granted us an everlasting sojourn! Fuel by barge on the outskirts of the city.

Through oil fields in calm air and garbage loused-up seas we motored 400 nm to the **Royal Brunei YC** beyond **Muara harbor**. There is no problem to enter at night. You will find a pleasant anchorage (5m), and a full variety of galley needs (despite it being a dry country one may bring one's own alcohol), a pool, and they give a free temporary membership. However, like Brunei's currency, immigration is on par with Singapore. A fuel barge is situated at the river mouth and the more social bunch at the club near marker 33A; no dinghy docking.

The free port **Victoria** on the island of **Labuan**, 20 nm to the northwest, is on the verge of becoming an important offshore financial center. One of the new developments (not yet completed) is the Waterfront Marina (US\$0.80/ft rebate if remaining longer) with first class furnishings, walking distance from town. Harbormaster Capt. Bill (Ch. 6) is trying his best to assist. Worth mentioning is the fact, that in this case the establishment has been made possible by landfilling, using an otherwise ugly part of shore instead of spoiling a nice anchoring spot like it so often happens. Opposite, on the west side of the bay, Borneo Yacht Services with Tony and Neil (a subsidiary of Borneo Divers) has been founded; haulout by crane, moorings provided and a fuel barge stationed nearby.

Juraman Island, 9 nm to the southwest, is a low key hut-assemblage with some food and drinks and a formidable sandspit.

On the leg north you fall upon **Tega**, Sabah's first of several islands declared as a National Park. The most sought after of these is **Pulau Manukan** south of **Kota Kinabalu**; suitable for yachts if one is willing to anchor in over 23 m in sticky mud; small entry fee, pool, good restaurant, excellent diving.

Tanjung Au's marina has been modernized. The Boat Club's manager and charter skipper John (Ch. 69), who shares his new accommodation with Borneo Divers, has laid moorings (US\$1.60); shuttle boats (US\$.40/p) are available as well as their car which will take you for clearance (S\$12); fuel barge towards downtown or have the Club fill your Jerry cans (US\$4/boat load). Shangri La resort still allows you to use the pool US\$4/day Bus (No. 2, Beach Hotel) to town. Around the corner the KKYC is very active in teaching kids to master their Optimists. The **anchorage** there is mainly frequented during northerlies when the boats from Tanjung Aru switch over. Showers are free, local meals and drinks against coupons. Landfilling is in progress north of the resort in preparation to offer another marina in compliance with a not yet existing demand. We took pleasure in white water rafting (grade 3 of 6) on the **Padas river** looking forward to meeting orangutans, leaving the climbing of the highest mountain in SE Asia to people who like to breathe in the clouds.

[LR] My first "landfall" along the **Northern Coast Of Borneo** was 22 miles up the **Sarawak River**, at the capital of the east Malaysian state of Sarawak, **Kuching** (1 34'N, 110 21'E). There are two sandbars one must cross inside the entrance to the river, which are not a problem unless you draw more than 4 meters. The river is well marked with lighted buoys and leading marks. The trip up reminded me of the descriptions of jungle rivers in Somerset Maugham's short stories -- meandering, lazy, brown river, with little trace of movement or activity along the shoreline, unless one looks very closely. Someday I shall return and cruise the long, muddy rivers of Borneo and Sumatra. The ports at the mouth of these rivers were home to the first Arab traders who settled in the area.

On the final stretch of river towards **Kuching** you will be bearing 270-280 M. Stay close to the port shore as there are unmarked rocks in the middle of the river 6' below the surface at low water. On the port shore you will notice 3 separate fuel barges. There is plenty of depth here and it makes for a convenient spot to **take on fuel**. Continue on, past the Hilton hotel, past the market, and just past Brookes shipyard where the river opens up on the port side. Below the state mosque in 25', over mud,

one can drop the hook. Dig it in well as there is floating debris from logging operations up the river after it rains, or at springs. This can easily collect on your anchor chain causing additional load. The state of Sarawak is rich in history, from the days of head hunting sea Dyaks to over a century of rule under a benevolent white raja. The **museum** at Kuching is one of the finest in all of S.E. Asia. A Saturday night market brings the bushmen to the outskirts of the city to trade their wares; a fascinating cultural display. There is never enough time and after 2 weeks I left.

Back down the lazy river; then I followed the coast line north and east to the commercial LNG port of **Bintulu** (3 16' N., 113 04' E.). Go to the inner harbor and anchor all the way back near the water police dock. From here it is 20 kilometers to town, by bus or by catching a ride at the harbor gate entrance. Fuel would have to be jerry canned by car or bus unless you were taking on 100 gal. or more. The inner harbor is extremely well protected from weather and police will keep a close eye on your boat if you are away. In fact, this is an ideal place to leave the boat if you intend traveling to **Niah Caves** (where remains of 40,000 year old Cro-Magnon man were found) or to **Ganung Mulu Caves**, the site of the largest cave in the world. The latter trip would take a minimum of 5 days and I am told the landscape in the heart of Borneo jungle is extraordinary.

A week after arriving in Bintulu, I made my way further along the coast towards the oil rich sultanate of **Brunei**. One can enter the seaside port of **Muara** (5' 02' N, 115' 04' E.) easily. Muara is well marked with lighted buoys, and has a deep-water channel for commercial shipping. Proceed through the port area and follow the starboard shore around until you see the markings of the Yacht club (Smaller keel boats on moorings and day sailors on the beach). You can anchor in 12' on river mud. There is a clubhouse which serves light meals in the evenings; the weekend is when things become active. It is a 20 minute walk into town, where you can take care of clearing in. You will be issued a visa on the spot. The currency is on par with that of Singapore, and is interchangeable. It is an hour-long bus trip into the capital of Brunei, **Bandar Seri Bagawan**. An alternative is to take your boat up the river to the "town" clubhouse of the yacht club. This is located only 10 minutes from the town center. Follow the river up until you see the crosstrees on the club flagpole. You can anchor very close to shore in 25', on river mud, out of the way of the river barge traffic. The hospitality of the club is exceptional. Veteran cruisers in this part of the world warn newcomers to be aware of the "brain cell killers"; the guy who is standing next to you at the bar buying drinks. My glass was never empty. The stories one hears at the bar about the excesses of the sultan and the condition of the country's infrastructure makes one wonder how long it will be until this form of government will be challenged.

Brunei is the place to buy **duty free and diesel fuel**. The retail prices on liquor and cigarettes are about what you would pay in Singapore for duty free. There are 2 or 3 fuel barges along the edge of the river and fuel is cheaper here than anywhere else in the area.

I stopped in **Victoria Harbor** (5' 17' N, 115' 14' E) on the nearby island of **Labuan, Malaysia**. Labuan is advertised as a duty-free port, but only for the likes of outboards, etc., not for the usual. Aside from the masseuse at the hotel health club, there did not seem to be any redeeming attractions in Labuan.

Still with no wind and still motoring, continued eastward toward **Kota Kinabalu**, the capital of **Sabah**, the eastern-most state of Malaysia, and the northeastern tip of Borneo. Here the water begins to turn blue again. One anchors just west of the commercial harbor in the shadow of **Gaya Island** at either the yacht club or in front of the **Tanjung Aru Resort** (5' 59' N, 116' 02' E). It is easy to spot the resort from offshore because of its dominant red roof. There is a small breakwater which protects the anchorage during the southwest monsoon. During the NE monsoon everyone moves around the corner to the yacht club, a 15-minute walk along the beach from the resort. The resort is probably the most convenient as it has a dinghy dock which allows one to forgo dragging the dinghy up the long, shallow tidal flats in front of the yacht club. Both have showers. Fresh water must be jerry jugged; diesel the same, unless you take the boat to the commercial fuel barge in the main harbor area.

The exciting part of Kota Kinabalu (KK) looms over the town and harbor. For the fit and healthy, a two-day hike will take you to the summit of **Mt. Kinabalu**, 13,600'. The first day you climb to the base camp at 11,000' and early the next morning make the final ascent. It is the tallest mountain in S.E. Asia. It is taller and requires a more rigorous climb than Mt. Fuji in Japan. During the final push for the summit, I thought how ironic it would be to get frostbite in the tropics.

For a step back in time and into the primal rain forest of Borneo, there is a daily general cargo train which runs from KK to the logging town of **Tenom**, home to the Murut tribe. The Muruts are the traditional hunters and food gatherers, who were the last to give up head hunting in Sabah. "General cargo" means you, the "locals," the chickens and the goats. As the train leaves the coast, it follows the Baras River, which starts out slowly but will develop into a raging torrent as you move inland. Tunnels have been carved out of the **jungle** undergrowth. The train stops in what appears to be the middle of the thickest jungle. Passengers depart and disappear in the first meter or two of dense green. At brief clearings one can glimpse sheets of latex hanging on racks to cure, freshly collected that morning from the wild rubber trees. You can catch a bus early the next morning from Tenom back to KK via the **Crocker Range of Mountains**, home to the Kadazan tribe.

It was nearing the end of August and time for me to turn westward, with the intention of being in Cape Town for Christmas. Now the southwest monsoon was in full force, making up for its tardiness with a vengeance. I beat back towards Kuching, dodging the numerous oil rigs off the coast of Brunei and the occasional coral reef; then back up the Sarawak River, which felt very familiar by now. I made a few repairs and said a final good-bye to some very good friends. The final leg to Singapore was much of what it had been for the past week -- on the nose with a bit of a bounce.

NOTES ON THE HONGS

Ben and Elizabeth Anderson, DRACOMARIS

Lat/Long references given after the place name are for the approximate center of the island/site unless otherwise noted. The B:XX and ST:XX are the page references in the Batt notes and *Sail Thailand* 2nd Edition. All islands/sites are on Thai Chart 333 except #1 Mt Khao Kayan, which is on Thai chart 308 or British 3941. Original information from ARJUMAND through ANTARES II. Initial data on sites 1 & 19 came from ACACIA SPRAY and 21 from AQUANTIQUE.

THE HONGS

1. **Mt Khao Kavan** (Entrance 08 07 S; 98 44.8 E) ST:63 (near Ao Talen)

ACACIA SPRAY anchored at 8 06/98 45. Follow the channel in and you will find a village with a green Kayaks for Hire sign on the beach. Go quite close to the beach and just past the village you will come

upon a high rock island which you keep to the left. After passing the rock island proceed another 250 meters and look for a tributary on the left (this is the first tributary on the left past the village). Proceed into this creek and on your right will be a rock face which comes right to the water's edge. Pass by the rock face and continue through the mangroves to a second rock face - you are going away from the first rock face now - (this rock face does not come right to the water) and right at the start of the rock face there is a small tributary and a short way in is the entrance to the cave that goes through to the hong. Look out for kayaks as an indication of the entrance and they will often point it out to you. This is a double hong and ACACIA SPRAY recommends a half tide access time. Suggest that unless you have a hard bottom dinghy that you do not mind scratching a bit on the oysters and rocks you hire one of the fiberglass kayaks from the village.

2. **Ko Phanak** (08 11.0 S; 98' 29.5 E) B:19 ST:29

a) Lat. 08 11.44 Anchor in SW corner of bay approaching from the North. Beach only visible at low water. Enter the cave from the South - there is a rock shelf if you are too far south and a rock practically in the center of the opening. Cave relatively clean right through (3' 4' mm.). Hong can be entered only with a small dinghy and lying low in it.

b) Lat. 0811.88 Access to hong can be made on 2 levels. Through the upper cave enter this from your dinghy (you have to climb up the rocks) and the lower cave by dinghy - we did not investigate the lower access but it appears to be OK from mid to low tide.

c) Lagoon at top of island. Easy dinghy access

d) Lat. 08 11.0 approx. There are caves and access to another hong from the east side of the island. The thought is that the cave may give access to the same hong as a) above and you may have to climb up the cliff to get into the cave.

3. **Ko Roi** (08 11.5 S; 98' 37.0 E) B:26 ST:33

Going from Ko Roi from Ko Yang cross on a rising tide and hold tight to the island (either side). No beach at high tide. Anchor at North end of beach.

4. **Ko Ku Da Yai** (08'11.5 S; 98' 38.6 E) B:27 ST. 33

Anchor towards South end of SW bay.

5. **Ko Hong** - [or Ko Hong Phang Nga] (08' 13.3 S; 98' 30.3 E) B:20 ST:30

Anchor off NE or SW corner. 3 caves and 1 hong in bay on East side. Dinghy into bay. Bhudda in bay. The hong is probably the easiest to enter and spectacular and you can exit the hong through another cave and finish outside the island. The first of the cave entrances are quite close to the entry to the hong that is in the bay, and the other entry is just inside a prominent tree growing out from the bank as you enter the bay from the north.

6. **Ko Ra Na** (08' 14.7S; 98' 28.7E) no refs. Cave on North side.

7. **Ko Phra At Num** (08' 14.7 S; 98' 28.3 E) B:21

Ex Batt P21: "High scenic island with a large cave on beach at NE point. You climb up inside the mountain and come out on top for panoramic views". This is a tall cave that you enter from the small beach at the northern extremity of the beach. There may be a land entrance from the other side. The 'mountain' description is a little deceptive - you can climb perhaps 30M and there is a view but hardly panoramic. Not a brilliant cave and not worth going out of your way to see.

8. **Ko Khai** (08'15.2 S; 98' 13.9E) No refs. Cave on North side.

9. **Ko Na Khae** (08' 14.0 S; 98' 30.4 E) B:20 (the top island) ST:30
Anchorage in bay at NW corner.

10. **Ko Yang** (08' 15.9 S; 98' 30.8E) B:21 (Anchorage B) ST:31

Anchorage off SW corner.

11. **Ko Phing Kan** (08' 16.3S; 98' 30.2 E) B:21 (Anchorage C) & 22 ST:31

James Bond Island. There is a jetty on the West side. Landing can be made by dinghy on the beach just north of the jetty (space among the longtails permitting) or the little beach on the East side of the island where the Ranger's office is tucked in against the cliff face. Obtain the green brochure on the Ao Phangnga National Park from Rangers office. It identifies the attractions of the park area.

12. **Ko Ra Ya Ring** (08' 17.5 S; 98' 29.6 E) B:21

We anchored at 08 16.17/ 98 29.3 and dinghied to James Bond Island. You can take your dinghy in through the mangroves 2 hours either side of high tide.

13. **Ko Thalu** (08' 18.0 S; 98' 28.9 E)

There is a cathedral cave at approx. lat 0817.83. View from West side of island and as you go North there are some great overhangs.

14. **Ko Thalu Nok** (08' 18.07S; 98' 30.08 E)

There is a cave right through the island. Enter from the East via a lagoon. Access seems to be OK even at low tide.

15. **Ban Lum Than** (08' 20.0 S; 98' 28.0 E)

Seems that this may be a village.

16. **Ko Pan Yi** (08' 20.0 S; 98' 30.3 E) B:22

This is the Muslim Stilt Village. Many restaurants selling seafood and you can walk through the village and view souvenirs, local produce stalls etc.

17. **Khao Khian** (08' 20.7 S; 98' 30.3 E) There are rock paintings under the overhanging rocks 100m approx. up the East side of the island.

18. **Tham Nak** (08' 20.0 S; 98' 28.0 E)

This cave is shown on the Ao Phangnga National Park brochure and is behind the title block on Thai Chart 333. We were there quite a few hours away from high tide and it seems that there would be a problem climbing onto the jetty after approx. mid tide. This is a magnificent cave but we did not find the rock drawings. Probably the best way to find the site is to follow the longtails that are going in there.

19. **Khlong Pak Lao** (Entrance - 08' 21.9 S; 98' 38.8 E) B:24

ACACIA SPRAY anchored in the river. Use the Batt sketch but note that the cave is actually in the second creek on the right (not the first as shown by Batt). The creek is approx. 2 km up the river and as you come into the creek you will see concrete steps on the left down to the water and a post to tie your dinghy up to. You can see the steps quite easily from the main river. Further up the river is a stunning cave that goes right through a mountain. Proceed further upstream for another kilometer or so - you will pass several fishing rafts and many fish stakes - stay mid stream and well away from any stakes in the water. Pass a village on the left and then all the mountains are on your right. The cave is right in front of you as you approach the last mountain. The cave is quite narrow but the sides and bottom seem quite clean and access should be OK from mid to high tide.

20. **Tham Lod** (08' 22.5 S; 98' 28.5 E) Cave that you can pass right through.

21. **Ko Muk** (07' 21 S; 99' 18 E) ST:94

AQUANTIQUE advises anchor in the northern anchorage. Take dinghy south (approx. 5 minutes) to the spot where there are 2 small mooring buoys. Best to go in between low and mid-tide. Short tunnel - take torch. Really lovely hong. Longtails take tourists in and often snorkel in at high tide (using underwater torch).

Langkawi - Doggies Beach. (Info to be confirmed) Walk to cave.

A NOTE ON LONGTAIL HIRING.

It seems to us that it is not possible to have an enjoyable outing on these unique vessels unless the **arrangements are clearly understood** by the driver. The majority of their customers are non-boaties who might be quite happy to spend most of the day picnicking on a deserted beach. On one of our trips the driver went to sleep under a tree and did not want to wake up so soon. The ploy seems to be that they negotiate a whole day deal and then proceed to shake the living daylights out of you, wet you with spray over the bow etc. so that you are amenable to their pleas that some places previously agreed for a visit are now out of bounds or the sea is too rough. We have hired a few now and suggest the following procedure:

- a) Study your charts, brochures etc. and be ready to refer to the sites you wish to visit and be able to show them to the driver either on a brochure or chart.
- b) Have a clear understanding with the driver on the order for the trip and get his assurance that there are no problems with access because of height of tide during the time of your trip.
- c) Make sure that the driver knows that his boat speed is entirely under your control and be ready to ask him to slow down if it gets too bumpy or you are getting wet.
- d) Ask to see the boat you are going to go in so that you can be satisfied with the cover from the sun and that there are sufficient seats.
- e) It is always good to negotiate the deal the day before so that there is no pressure to leave quickly before you are happy with all the arrangements. Invariably when you turn up the next day the driver's boat is 'broken' and you will be offered an alternative at 50% more. We had this happen twice - the first time we walked away and arranged another longtail and the second time only two of us went to shore half an hour prior to the appointed time and on receiving the 50% extra news proceeded to walk away slowly which had the magical result of restoring the originally agreed deal.
- f) A good contact for a longtail trip from the Ko Phing Kan area is one of the National Park rangers, Ardun, who can be contacted on 01-477-9821. You can also ask for him at the rangers office. We paid 800 Baht total (there were six in our party) for a visit to sites 13, 18, 20, 18, 16, & 14 (in that order) on the list above. His boat did not have seats however prompting d) in these notes above but we had six small stools on our boat which we took. It could be that Ardun can arrange some seats. You could not get a better and more considerate driver - he slowed down when we were writing some notes, took great care to get us into the best position for photos and slowed at the first hint of spray into the boat and his English is adequate.

Location of cave paintings referred to in National Park brochure

KHAO KIEN This must be Khao Khian. Refer to 17. Above

KO PAN YI This is the Muslim fishing village island (16) above). Not mentioned in Sail Thailand and no reference to cave in Batt.

KO RAYA See 6. Above - paintings must be in the Ko Phra At Num cave.

THAM NAK See 18 above

KO PHRA AT THAO This is shown on the National Park brochure. The coordinates on Thai Chart 333 are 08' 13.5 S; 98' 28 E.

RESTAURANTS NEAR ANCHORAGES

There are a proliferation of restaurants at most of the east coast of Phuket bays,. Nai Harn, Rawai, Ao Chalong and Ao Nong, Re Lai and Pra Nang on the Krabi side of the bay The following are some of the restaurants to be found in more isolated places:

KO YAO NOI (08' 08 S; 98' 39 E) B:14 ST:38

Anchor at the end of the pier on the east coast. Long Beach Resort

KO RACHA YAI (07' 36.4 S; 98' 22 E) B;9 ST:70

Anchor on the east or west coast depending on the wind. Walk up through jungle. ST anchorage 'A' recommended.

CHONG KOH YAO (08' 05.2S; 98' 38.2 E) ST:38
Anchor on east side opposite 2 small islands. Bungalows on stilts.

KO LANTA YAI (07' 42 S; 99' 06.5 E) B:34 ST:92
Restaurant is in the bay on the east coast.

KO PAN YI (08' 20 S; 98' 30.3 E) B:22
Many restaurants - this is the Muslim stilt fishing village

KO RANG YAI (07' 58 S; 98' 27 E)
Very new - opened in May 1997.

KO DAM HOK (07' 58 S; 98' 48.5 E) B:30 ST:44
North side of the island there is a resort with restaurant etc.

Boating/Yachting Services in Phuket

The What, When, Where and How of Phuket: A Directory
by Christine Bond [undated, approx 1992/4]

[ed note: This came from SSCA. I found nearly the same writeup in the 1995 edition of [*Sail Thailand*](#).]

While the collective prospects may initially appear somewhat daunting, you will soon discover that Phuket offers a remarkable range of goods and services especially for the boating and yachting community. Combine this with the friendly and helpful nature of the Thai people, add some local basic codes of conduct and the result will be not only an enjoyable and fascinating stay in this part of Thailand, but also have the satisfaction and reassurance of knowing that your boat is also being well looked after.

MARINAS/HAULOUT/MAJOR REPAIRS

Boat Lagoon Phuket - Ph 076 239 055, Fax 076 239 056, 22/1 M.2 Thapkasattri Rd.(lane next to Caltex Service Station), Phuket. VHF 71.

The newest and to date the most modern and comprehensive marina complex in Phuket. Travel Lift (max 100 tonne), marina berths, long term boat storage, shops, and Sunsail Charters will be using it as their new base Worth hiring a bike and checking out.

Ban Nit Marina - Fax 076 381 057, GPO Box 270 Phuket 83000. Channel 69 VHF

Situated on the far side of Chalong Bay, the marina offers a wide range of services for yachts and crew. Restaurant, moorings, showers/toilets, fresh water, ice, diesel/petrol, motor bike hire, (a car can be arranged through next door), and a wide range of engineering, refrigeration and mechanical repairs, small and large jobs. Fax and Mail service.

Phuket Marine Company Ltd - Ph/fax 076 381 325, Latitude 8 Complex, Ao Chalong, Phuket.

Contacts: Jim Pearson and Willi Wiegand. (Thai, English, German spoken) Morning coffee, usually 'the boys', at this establishment is a local institution, time to discuss work, trade advice, browse for that special part, play computer games or just plain gossip! A full range of engineering, electrical and refurbishing services on offer as well as a small but interesting second hand items, where you can also get rid of some of your own excess ballast for a 10% commission. Definitely worth putting your head in the door.

Phuket Yacht Services - Ph 076 224 999, Fax 076 220 915, mobile 017 230 459 Laem Phrao

Contacts: Andy Dowden or Jan Jacobs (English, French, German, Dutch, Thai and Greek spoken) Office in Phuket town, marina/workshop at Laem Phrao near the bridge in the north of Phuket. During King's Cup PYS will have two experienced mechanics on standby at Nai Harn to deal with any minor repairs, so yachts can get out to the start the next day. Service will be FOC. Fully equipped workshop to cope with all kinds of repairs from electrical and refrigeration to mechanical and engineering, Careening poles, boat minding and maintenance. Big and small jobs OK. Restaurant, shop, laundry and free rides to town on offer at Marina as well as diesel, petrol, power and water off the jetty. Singapore and Bangkok contacts for parts.

Haulout Facilities:

Where and how you haul out obviously depends on what type of boat you have and the sort of work needed. Travel lift, slipway, careening poles, beaches or jetty, all are available in Phuket. Best to ask around those who have had direct experience and talk to Jimmy or Willi at PMC, Jan at PYS, or go down to the new Boat Lagoon or the slipway and see for yourself.

Ao Chalong Cruising Yacht Club Ph/Fax 076 381 322, based at Latitude 8 Restaurant/Bar, Ao Chalong beach. Commodore: John Batt.

Started over two years ago, the ACCYC hold regular social events and sailing rallies. They also offer sailing dinghy lessons for children with a former Thai Optimist Champion Somchai (Jaeb) Moonprasert. A special event is planned for the King's Cup and there will be a ACCYC sponsored feeder race to Phi Phi for the first race. Ideal meeting place for sundowners with friends, or to find out who is in town. Seasonal, yearly and junior memberships available.

SAIL MAKERS/REPAIRS:

Quantum Marine Services Ltd - Ph/Fax 076 381 322, Beach front office, Latitude 8 complex, Ao Chalong. Sail loft 45/2 Moo 9, Choafa Road, Ao Chalong, 2 mins away. PO Box 271, GPO Phuket 83000, Thailand. Contacts: John Batt and Jill Thomas.

New sails, repairs, sunbrella, awnings, windscoops, flags and bags as well as yacht management, charter and international deliveries. Phone/fax at reasonable rates and free mail service. This Kiwi couple happy to help with local info and during King's Cup their sail repair services will be on hand at Phi Phi and Nai Harn. Pop into the beach front shop as they also stock some stylish handmade clothes and swimwear as well as second-hand books.

Cobra International Co. Ltd. - Ph 076 212 923. 95 Patiphat Rd, (near market), Phuket town.

Contact: Rick Reynolds.

Specialises in sail repairs for wind surfers and yachts as well as general canvas, sunbrella and awning work Will pick up and deliver locally. Some ropes and chord available.

HARDWARE/SPARE PARTS/PAINT

Note: A good way to save time and avoid frustration is to take a sample of what you want if at all possible. Helps get over the language barrier, as a diesel engine is a diesel engine no matter what part of the world you are in. Take fabric samples when choosing paint if necessary. Carefully measure and write down sizes, code numbers, lengths and dimensions. Take a calculator with you to help with bargaining, as in most shops haggling over the prices is standard business practice. if nothing else learn to count in Thai, it does make a difference to what you are asked to pay.

G.C. Huat Hardware Store - Ph 076 211 097. 18 Rassada Rd, (near market), Phuket town.

Contact: Daeng Huat. (Thai and English spoken)

A local institution and walking computer on most nautical spare parts. If she does not have it in stock can arrange delivery from elsewhere. The rare and exotic can be found in the far reaches of this tiny yet enormously stocked store. Everything from anchor chain and spark plugs to waterproof adhesives and fuses. A shop that is always a delight to visit.

Sin Dee Hardware - Phang Nga Rd, (opp Maeporn Restaurant).

Large double fronted shop crammed with an astonishing range of general and not so general hardware items. Ideal for ordinary items at reasonable prices.

Poltep Trading -82 Phang Nga Rd, Phuket town, (near clock tower corner PO end).

Speciality marine items as well as general hardware. Some English spoken. Paints, varnish, shackles, water containers, bolts, nuts, and screws.

Am Nuay Sup Shop - 146/148 Phang Nga Rd, Phuket town, (near long haul bus station).

Brightly painted double fronted hardware store/paint shop. Distributor for all types of Jotun paints, epoxies and thinners. Mixer available to colour match.

MARINE PLYWOOD

Phuket Prasert Kij Ltd Part., 49-51 Bangkok Rd, Phuket town.

Quite a few larger hardware stores stock marine ply, what you have to look for is the distinctive red triangle. Per sheet the price is around 700 B. This store is near the local bus depot near the market, so with the help of a crew member you could put the ply on the bus like a local and pay a little extra for a detour to the Ao Chalong beach front or the bus goes right to Nai Harn. It's an experience!

ELECTRICAL SALES AND SERVICE

Electro Tech Supply, Ph 076 212 641. 111 Phuket Rd, Phuket Town.(same road as Immigration)

Contact: Som Chart, (English spoken)

Excellent for most electrical needs large or small. Helpful and while he doesn't do repairs himself, he is only too happy to recommend appropriate local people.

Southern Dynatech Co Ltd - Ph 076 211 325. 95 Krabi Rd, Phuket town.

Contact: K.K. Tham.

Wide range of electrical items, and there is a repair workshop on the premises.

JRC Electrical Repairs - Ph/Fax: 076 216 163. 2/58 Srisutus Rd, Rassada Village Phuket.

Situated in the commercial area of the wharf area out towards Koh Sirey. The workshop is small but well equipped. Staff friendly and helpful. Some English spoken.

Furuno Agent - Ph 076 213 647. 20/13 Soi Talingchan, Phuket town.

Situated next to United Parcel Office the shop is very small with a limited range of spares. Perhaps good for overseas contacts. Some English spoken.

Ao Service Centre - Ph 076 213 139. 1/4-15Tunge Rd, Phuket town.

Contact: Wattana Friakonedung

Something for the computer buffs amongst the fleet. This business comes highly recommended for prompt and reliable service.

(CCC) Computers And Communication Company Ltd - Ph 076 213 471, Fax 076 213 61. 39 - 39 Royal Plaza Building, Bangkok rd, Phuket town. English spoken.

Contact: Wacharong Tongkua.

A full range of sales and support services for computer or communication needs, including service.

BATTERIES

Phuket Battery Shop -75/16 Bangkok Rd, Phuket town.

Phuket Battery Shop - 100/4 Bramee Rd, Patong, Phuket.

Contacts:Mr Norongchai & Mrs Wanpin Wangkiat. (English spoken)

A family enterprise, both shops offer a wide range of batteries to suit the marine needs. Will deliver, and remember in Thailand they take old batteries as trade ins, so it's worth keeping in mind when you are bargaining over price.

Singha Battery - Ph 076 211 761. 15/2 Montri Rd, Phuket town. (near main Post Office) Manager: Trong (English spoken)

Very helpful and friendly. Use to dealing with the needs of yachting fraternity.

Phai Boon Battery Shop- Ph 076 215 591. Fax 076 215 685. 12/11 Montri Rd, Phuket town. (near main Post Office)

A wide range again. Many locally produced under license for the big Japanese names.

DINGHY REPAIRS

Cholmark Boat Co. - Ph/Fax 076 381 432. 110/11 Patak Rd, Kata Beach, Phuket.

Contact: Hans Martin. (English, German, Thai spoken)

Specialises in repairing inflatables, big or small. Has all the proper glues and fabrics. Also licensed to re-pack life rafts. Pick up and delivery can be arranged.

Sea Nomad - Ph 076 223 358-61, Fax 076 221 847. 58/1 Rassada, Koh Sirey, Phuket. (English, German, French spoken)

Thailand's leading inflatable boat producer, also does repairs for not only inflatables but also fibreglass dinghies, PVC or Hypalon.

CHROME PLATING

Chrome Shop - 226/21 Thep Kasattri Rd, (road from town to airport), Phuket town. Put the sparkle back into those chrome fittings above or below decks. Process takes 3-4 days, reasonable prices, and some English spoken. Familiar with yachting parts.

BOOKS

Good Earth Second Hand Books - 114/52 Patak Rd, Kata Centre, Kata, Phuket 83100. (next to Kata Pharmacy) Contact: Julie Hirunchai

When Pan's Lighthouse closed many in the cruising fraternity wondered where they were going to get good reading material at reasonable prices? Well, barely had the dust settled on the Closing party when Julie opened her latest venture. The biggest range of second hand books on the island, English, German, French, Swedish, Japanese and Dutch titles available. The best news is that Julie still bakes those wonderful cakes, brownies and cup cakes that developed a cult following at Pan's for Sunday afternoon tea. So you can sip tea, coffee, beer or wine while you browse the shelves, indulge in a few sweet treats, exchange news and catch up with old friends. Open Mon-Sat - 1130 - 2000.

GAS/FUEL/WATER/ICE LAUNDRY

Gas [Propane] - There are many filling stations throughout Phuket, as gas is widely used as you will see. However, some foreign fittings prove difficult. There is the main filling station on Mae Luang Rd in Phuket town, or if you are in Ao Chalong area the shop opposite the Esso service station near the Police station at the roundabout. 48 hour service. Ban Nit & PYS will also arrange bottles to be filled.

Fuel - Diesel is available from Phuket Yacht services wharf at Laem Phrao, Ban Nit Marina, or from the Hyak barge moored in Chalong bay. They will come to you if preferred, however have plenty of fenders ready to protect topsides. You can jerry can it from the local service station, coming back by tuk tuk. The same with petrol, but remember to be very careful transporting petrol as many people smoke.

Water - There are two types, drinking and washing, and they should NEVER be confused. Drinking Water is available from many local stores in the familiar large white plastic bottles, or the Hyak barge has both drinking and washing, Ban Nit has drinkable water as does PYS. When in bars or restaurants you will be served bottled water to drink or in local cafes the jug on the table is for drinking, You can have few worries as the Thais are very particular about their own food and drinks. If served ice with a drink, it will most certainly be suitable for drinking.

Ice - In true Asian style the Thais are serious about their ice. Again, there are two types: drinking, and chilling which comes crushed or in blocks. It can be found in shops everywhere as refrigeration is still relatively new, and from nearby your anchorage you can usually arrange transport to the beach. You will find handy small bags of drinking ice in most supermarket freezers, great for dinner parties or sundowners aboard when you don't have a freezer.

Laundry - Many people offer laundry and they will be well sign posted. The going rate is usually calculated by the piece or by weight. Around 30B per kilo. Best to settle on a price when you drop it off rather than later.

PHOTOCOPY SERVICE

Top Copy - Ph 076 223 511. 7/9 Suthat Rd, Phuket town.(top of street PO is on)

Contacts: Wanpen Matra and Suchat Onchan.

Have full size photocopier that will do charts (60 baht each), as well smaller colour and B/W. Ideal for getting a copy of a rare repair manual or guide.

PLASTICS

Sangdumrong Store, 34 Bangkok Rd, Phuket town

Anything and everything in plastic, melanine, cutlery, crockery, cooking pots and utensils, glassware, excellent range of cleaning gear including heavy duty , brushes, sponges, eskies, buckets etc etc.

YACHT CHARTER/DELIVERY/SALES

Phuket Yacht Services - ph 076 215 997, Fax 076 220 915. Contact: Andy Dowden. Charter/Sales

Thai Yachting Co. Ltd.- ph 076 341 153, Fax 076 341 154. Charters.

Quantum Marine Service - ph/fax 076 381 322. Contact: John Batt and Jill Thomas.
Sales/delivery/charter

Phuket Marine Company - ph/fax 076 381 325. Contacts: Jimmy and Willi. Sales/delivery

Tops'l Marine - ph/fax 076 381 380. PO Box 22 Phuket 83000, Thailand. International yacht delivery and management. Quotes include experienced skipper, engineer and crew as required.

Marinasia - ph/fax 381 065, Ao Chalong. Charter/Sales.

South East Asia Diving - ph 076 340 406. Patong. contact Mark. Charter.

MARINAS/HAUL-OUT FACILITIES MALAYSIA & THAILAND

SIR SWAGMAN 1995-1996

The following is a guide to marinas and haul-out facilities on the cruising route through Malaysia and Phuket [with additional info from others in 95-97]. The information listed is basic, only as a starting point for individuals to follow up. Details of costs have been omitted due to continual changes [added from another yacht's June 95 letter]. For hauling out to antifoul buy your paint in Singapore, Sitiawan in Malaysia or Phuket.

MALAYSIA

Sebana Cove Marina:- 01 24.7'N, 104 09.8'E

PO Box 102, Bandar Penawar Post Office, 81900 Kota Tinggi, Johor Darul Takzim, Malaysia.

Phone 60-7-825-2411

Fax 60-7-825-2413

VHF CH 71, call SCM

Facilities: Water, (we drank it), electricity, both metered, swimming pool, showers, restaurant, golf course, courtesy bus to local village and Singapore ferries.

Comments: This very secure marina is part of a large condominium type of development, first class and friendly. The marina is a way up a buoyed river (River Santi), there is a sand bar at the mouth but enough water for quite large yachts.

For a fee they will process your papers (customs etc.) or do it yourself before entering the river at Pengelih Pt 01 22.1'N, 104 05.3'E (cost of RM 2-4 for customs documents so get some when leaving Indonesia or Singapore).

Marina is about 1 1/2 hours to Johor Bahru by road

<u>Berth Rates (in Ringgit)</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Week</u>	<u>Month</u>
30-35	18	115	460
36-40	20	135	528

Ferry to Changi 4 times a day at RM 27 return per person. Cheaper services on small local boats from Pangelih Point. Price of berths may go up in future as demand increases.

Royal Selangor Yacht Club: Port Klang, approx 03 00.5'N, 101 23'E

Phone 60-3-368-6964

Fax 60-3-368-8650

VHF CH ?

Facilities: Moorings with tender service, clubhouse, swimming pool, chandlery. Railway haulout to 28 tons and max 8 feet draft (king tide).

C S Tan Shipyard: Kuala Bernam, approx 03 52'N, 100 52'E

10 min walk up river from the town of Hutan Melintang

Phone 60-5-641-1335 Mr Soon Tan speaks English; if he's out ask for Dieter or Bibi

Home phone and fax 60-5-622-3790

Facilities: Railway haulout

Comments: Many yachts are making use of this yard during '96.

Lumut Yacht Club: - 04 14.2'N, 100 38.4'E

Phone 60-5-683-7800

Fax 60-5-683-7700

Facilities: Marina (slips available), moorings and fuel dock.

Mr Chan: Lumut 04 16.4'N, 100 40.2'E

Phone 60-5-688-3518 (Mobile) 010 558-1586

Fax

Facilities: Moorings and yacht minding service. Grid looks good. Concrete apron. Fuel available at fish factory opposite. Caution: Do not get rigging caught in overhead gantry.

Comments:- Many yachts are left here during the wet season.

Kampung Baharu: Mr Zainal, just up river from Mr Chan. 04 17.8'N, 100 40'E

Phone 60-5-691-9754

Facilities: Moorings and yacht minding service. Showers, water, etc. small grid. Friendly village atmosphere.

Penang Yacht Club: Georgetown 05 27.9N, 100 18.5E

No.3 Lebu Penang, 10200 Pulau Pinang, Malaysia

Phone 60-4-263-5976

Fax 60-4-263- 5977

Facilities: Marina, 100 ton travel lift, diesel, water, metered electricity, swimming pool . Good concrete hardstand. Boatyard prices Haul & launch RM 12/foot. Wash RM 5/foot. Blocking 12/foot. Hardstand 2/foot/day. Do your own work surcharge 1/foot/day.

Comments: MARINA NOT RECOMMENDED. Very exposed without a breakwater. Time entrance for slack water due to strong tidal current.

[97] The travel lift has been sold and some docks were in disarray. No one stopped here.

Batu Maung Slipway: 05 17.2N, 100 17.4E
 Phone 60-4-626-1845/1659/1676
 Fax 60-4-626-2688
Facilities: Railway, Well equipped workshop.

Rebak Marina: Langkawi 06 17.44'N, 099 41.71'E
 Phone 60-4-966-9960
 Fax 60-4-966-9973

Facilities: Swimming pool, ferry service to main island.

Comments: Looks a very secure marina, part of a condominium project still under construction.

Note: Vessels over 6 feet draft may need to check depth. [97] Yes, but OK inside. Some berths only 6' or less at low tide, so tell them your draft. [98] Travellift is coming by the end of the year or in 99.

Port Dickson Marina (near Malacca)

Report in early 97 that this marina was open. Good place to leave boat and visit Malacca, old ancient city. [97] They bought travel lift from Penang yacht club, possibly operational in late 98 or 99.

THAILAND

Phuket Boat Lagoon: 07 58.6'N, 098 24.91'E
 Phone 66-76-239-055/213- 443
 Fax 66-76-239-056
 VHF CH 71

Facilities: First class marina, diesel, metered water and electricity travellift.

Comments: A tender will guide you in from the above coordinates, some yachts may have to wait for a higher tide. [97 no tender but channel is well marked. Access at or near high tide only.]

Note: Some of the hardstand area will be covered by 1 or 2 feet of water during a flood tide.

Phuket Yacht Services - at Laem Phrao: 08 10.1'N, 098 20.7'E
 Phone 66-76-206-704-5; Fax 66-76-206-706 Manager: Andy Stevens
 email: andy@yacht-haven-phuket.com www.yacht-haven-phuket.com

Facilities: Moorings, careening piles, diesel, water, jeep rental. [97] Now have marina berths, restaurant, laundry, nearby convenience store. Very friendly & helpful management. Far from everything except the airport. Transport and on site facilities should improve in 98.

Ban Nit Marina: 07 49'N, 098 23.2'E

Facilities: Moorings, water buoy, diesel delivered in jerry cans, motor cycle rental

Note: This is not a marina despite the name but does give service relating to the above facilities.

Ao Chalong Bay:- approx. 7 49'N, 98 22'E

Moorings may be free (nobody collected money in 95/6 season). Check the holding, the danforth style anchor may have been replaced with a rock.

Note: It is reported at this time (August 1996) an excessive charge is being made by the Local Chief to moor or anchor in the Ao Chalong area. This habit could spread throughout the whole of Phuket if current complaints do not stop it. [97] Anchoring still free here.

Phuket Boating Association in Ao Chalong Bay VHF 69 "Chalong Harbour"

Phone 66-76-381-615; Fax 66-76-381-322 email: boating@loxinfo.co.th

Facilities: [97] For members (500 rp/month): use of VHF radio, holds mail & faxes, dinghy dock (not a place to tie larger boat), shower, water tap, discount on email & internet.

Koh Naka Yai:- 08 02.66'N, 098 27.55'E

Careening is often carried out beside a concrete jetty at this island, the accepted practice being a 200 baht donation to the village elder for the school.

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