

Dream Destinations – Photography in Paradise:

The Andaman Islands

An expedition led by award-winning photographer Cameron Hansen

The Garden of Eden?

When Marco Polo first set foot on The Andaman Islands several hundred years ago he assumed he had arrived in The Garden of Eden. Shimmering like emeralds in the midst of the sparkling Bay of Bengal, some seven hundred miles east of mainland India and around five hundred miles west of the coast of Thailand, their remote location ensured the islands were shrouded in mystery for centuries and their inaccessibility has guaranteed that not much has changed since that first great adventurer arrived.

The result is an unadulterated ecosystem and a naturalist's paradise. The incomparable vistas of this pristine tropical archipelago have elevated the islands' status to a genuine dream destination for even the most discerning modern adventure traveller. The Indian government rigorously protects the islands with National Park status and effectively limits the number of visitors, thereby ensuring the magnificent natural beauty remains as unspoilt now as it was in Marco Polo's day.

An invitation to modern adventure travellers

The incredible biodiversity, pristine tropical rain forests and crystal clear waters will be like a breath of fresh air for all nature lovers – quite literally. The islands are home to a vast collection of extraordinary coral formations, replete with technicolour marine life, an array of rare aquatic marvels and a multitude of exotic wildlife.

Join Cameron Hansen aboard the gorgeous luxury yacht, *The Siam Junk*, for an adventure holiday and the photographic opportunity of a lifetime.

A dream destination

The Andamans are the essence of natural beauty and present a photogenic landscape with an overwhelming profusion of picturesque opportunities for the keen photographer to enjoy – although any adventure traveller, with or without a camera, will be awed by the unique beauty of this magnificent destination:

Hundreds of islands, white beaches fringing their meandering coastlines, palm trees gently swaying with the rhythm of the sea, entice visitors to step ashore and leave tracks in virgin sand.

The most adventurous may choose to visit a live volcano on Barren Island, observe the last of the indigenous hunter gatherers on the sparsely inhabited islands here, or just trek through wild jungle to take pleasure from nature's most precious visual delights while being serenaded by colourful exotic birds.

Swimmers can bask in the warm turquoise sea alongside leatherback turtles and friendly dolphins before donning a snorkel or diving gear to visit untouched kaleidoscopic coral gardens and shoot breathtaking images with underwater cameras.

The more energetic can try wakeboarding, skiing or surfing the waves, keen anglers will be thrilled by the abundance of sport fish, and others might prefer to relax on deck while enjoying an ice cold cocktail, or perhaps spoil themselves with a professional Thai massage...

Let the mystical journey begin...

Photography in Paradise: The Andaman Islands

A Five Night / Six Day Itinerary

Day 1 – Departure from Port Blair

At around 9:30am our crew will welcome you aboard our beautiful yacht, *The Siam Junk* at our mooring in Port Blair. Complimentary drinks will be served in the salon during a short safety briefing and then a welcome talk by our special host, award winning professional photographer Cameron Hansen. When everyone is settled in we will get underway for our cruise to the North Cinque Island to arrive in time for lunch.

During the afternoon our tender will be available to everyone, allowing guests to step ashore to explore the island, snorkel and swim from the fabulous beaches, and enjoy the stunning scenery before Cameron organises a sunset photo shoot. The exact location will be decided on the day to ensure the best vantage point for both composition and colour, given the prevailing light conditions. Cameron will be on hand for those willing to learn how to maximise the use of a tripod and how to utilize slow exposures. A tripod and camera bag will be required for this shoot, as well as sturdy footwear as some rock scrambling may be involved.

The fragrant scent of exotic spices and a sumptuous dinner of freshly caught seafood will welcome our guests back on board as the tropical twilight finally fades.

Day 2 - Cinque Islands, Passage Island and South Rutland Island

After a leisurely breakfast we will take a relaxing cruise between North and South Cinque Islands before sailing south to Passage Island. Paddle in huge rock pools, snorkel, trek through the lush forests or simply stroll on the pristine beaches. Throughout the tour there will be opportunities to swim with giant turtles, dolphins, manta rays and even harmless whale sharks – the variety and abundance of the aquatic life here is truly awesome: Cameron will be available to assist with those wanting to learn how to capture these marvellous images on film. For guests interested in sport fishing these islands are ranked among the best in the world.

After a spectacular day offering numerous photographic opportunities we will sail north to our overnight mooring of South Rutland Island. The crossing will take approximately an hour and a half and will be timed for our arrival to take in the breathtaking sunset to the west.

Dinner will be served after sundown, followed by a slide show of Cameron's favourite images and a seminar style discussion about the techniques and methods he uses.

Day 3 - Rutland and Twin Islands

A leisurely day of cruising around exceptionally beautiful islands, taking in the sights of the coastlines of Rutland and Sister Islands with regular stops for diving, snorkelling,

water sports, fishing and photography during the day. During dinner we will up anchor and head for Neill's Island where you will wake up to the most breathtaking view...

Day 4 - Sunrise in Paradise

Keen photographers will want to be up shortly after 5am to be in time for a tropical sunrise session from *The Siam Junk* aft deck. Cameron will be available to offer assistance and advice with fstop / shutter and ISO speeds for these hand held shots – tripods are not required for this shoot. Cameron will help you learn to react quickly to the changing light conditions with the objective of capturing sharp images from a moving vessel in low light conditions.

An early breakfast will be served on the western tip of Neill's island before the day's cruise through the pristine Richie's Archipelago. You may be lucky and capture a shot of working elephants taking their morning swim off the north western point of Havelock Island, or maybe catch one of the huge marlin or yellow fin tuna during the cruise to our evening mooring.

We will pass through the channel between John Lawrence and Henry Lawrence Island to arrive at Inglis Island in time for another delicious dinner followed by a brief seminar from Cameron including some tips on night photography. Our guests may wish to join our crew in releasing lucky rice paper lanterns to soar into the night sky, or decorate traditional floating 'Loy Kratong' candles before releasing them into the sea...

Photographs of the yacht surrounded by flickering candle light will bring to an end another glorious day.

Days 5 – Inglis, Outram and Button Islands

The deserted Inglis Island is typical of this tropical paradise, with pristine rainforest surrounded by white powder beaches and colourful coral reefs: a photographer's dream. After a morning of exploring we will move north to Outram Island. The fishing at Outram is spectacular with giant groupers a plenty.

After Outram we will take a short cruise to North Button Island: manta rays, dolphins and giant leatherback turtles are common here and swimming with them is a lifetime experience. We sail slowly south between Middle Button and South Button to take in the wonderful photo opportunities before an overnight stop at North Button.

Our chef will prepare a spectacular barbeque banquet for our final dinner to be followed by a presentation by Cameron along with a slideshow of images taken during the trip. Each guest can submit up to twenty images of their own for inclusion in the seminar style discussion: the photographer who is judged to have presented the best image will be awarded a unique prize:

Cameron has created a limited edition print, a signed copy of one of his favourite images, exclusively available only to those who have experienced *The Siam Junk* photographic expedition as his guest.

Day 6 – Cruise back to Port Blair

After breakfast we will have a leisurely morning in the Button Islands before we begin our cruise back to Port Blair Harbour at around lunch time. The journey will take some four hours during which time our guests can just enjoy a relaxing cruise as we say farewell to this amazing paradise. A light supper will be served before disembarkation at Port Blair.

Disembarkation from *The Siam Junk* at Port Blair:

Arrival at the pier will be at around 6pm. Guests who have opted to have their ground transportation organised by us will be greeted by our drivers and escorted in air conditioned executive cars to their beautiful and historic hotel. After breakfast the following morning transportation to Port Blair airport will be ready and waiting.

Notes:

All meals, snacks, some soft drinks, tea and coffee are included. Alcoholic drinks will be available from the bar at our standard prices – please see our menu. Please notify us of any special dietary restrictions at the time of booking to ensure we can fulfil your requirements.

Diving, waterskiing, wakeboarding and other motorised water sports are all undertaken at the clients' risk. Water sports will be charged by the hour.

This special Dream Destination Photographic Expedition includes fuel, although we reserve the right to impose a surcharge if the local price of diesel rises above 25 Thai Baht per litre on or before the date of departure (currently 20 Baht during May 2009).

Please treat this itinerary as a guide only: all times, destinations and departure points need to be flexible to account for tides and prevailing weather conditions.

Onward connections and transfers are by arrangement with, and the responsibility of, the booking agent, except where *The Siam Junk* team have provided this service as part of a package. Please contact us for details.

Further details can be found at www.siamjunk.com