Thailand continues to be one of the most tempting destinations for those who are seeking a combination of enchanting natural surroundings, alluring culture, and incredible biodiversity. Breathtaking silvery beaches lapped by warm, crystal clear waters are complemented by friendly locals, mouth-watering local delicacies, and an ancient and fascinating historical heritage rooted in Buddhist origins.

*Check out our Thailand Coral Reef Conservation video*

Koh Tao is most definitely the jewel in Thailand's royal crown, famed for its laid back atmosphere and immaculate coral reef diving. However, in recent years the island's land resources and coral reefs have come under increasing threat from rapid, unregulated and unsustainable development. Join our marine conservation and diving project and help protect this beautiful island and its pristine coral reefs for future generations whilst enjoying all this exotic country has to offer the adventurous traveller.

The work you carry out will be rewarding, challenging, and hugely beneficial to conservation efforts, as well as being amazing fun! At the end of the day you will gain immense satisfaction from knowing that you have helped to save this precious marine wilderness.

**PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS**

- Learn to dive in this land of intense beauty
- Make lifelong friends
- Help to preserve the delicate marine ecosystems

**PROJECT REQUIREMENTS**

- Minimum age of 17 years
- Intermediate level of English

**FAST FACTS**

| Location | Koh Tao, Thailand |
WHAT DOES THE PROJECT DO?

The project has been running on Koh Tao since 2008, having been set up by members of the local community to help preserve their local culture, land resources and coral reefs. The project has three different components, land conservation; marine conservation; and education, each playing their own part in helping to preserve the island.

The main aim of the marine conservation aspect of the project is to monitor and evaluate the health, status and diversity of Koh Tao's coral reefs in order to improve their current management and to ensure their long-term conservation. The regional economies and ecosystems depend largely on the health of coral reefs, which are declining in many areas due to human activities both on land and in the sea. Through research, the island communities hope to identify negative and positive trends in reef health and produce quantitative data that can be used to focus work efforts and influence policy changes. Through the use of passive and active restoration techniques they hope to reduce the impacts of human activities on Koh Tao's Reefs and assist in new reef development by maintaining biodiversity at levels that allows for the succession of corals following disturbance events.

Koh Tao's luxuriant mangroves, luminous sea grass beds and dazzling coral reefs play host to a multitude of tropical reef fish, seahorses and graceful sea turtles. Offshore there are dolphins and manta rays, and the deeper waters are a regular stop-off for giant whale sharks.

WHAT WILL I BE DOING?

The marine research and conservation programme is run in association with a local Koh Tao community organisation. This research and conservation project aims to provide the local stakeholders and government bodies with the information they need to design and implement management plans for the future protection of this marine ecosystem.

To gather the data needed you will dive, locate and map the extensive coral reefs and study the various communities existing on them. You may explore and record the living organisms that inhabit the luxuriant mangrove forests, dense seagrass beds and productive inter-tidal in the area. To do this you will deploy a wide range of newly learned research skills and scientific techniques including: underwater visual census of reef fish such as cloud fish, assessment of algal and coral cover to determine the extent and degree of coral damage due to erosion, line intercept transects for benthic life and indicator invertebrate species such as nudibranchs. You may even get to study the impact of tourism development is having on marine communities.

Although the work is challenging you will get immense satisfaction from having made a valuable
contribution to the conservation of this marine wilderness. You will return home with the new friends you've made and a wealth of incredible memories. Whilst on your placement you will work with a group of international and local conservation volunteers, researchers and divers to learn about and be involved in local coral reef management through education, research, and restoration.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I ARRIVE?

The project is located on the beautiful island of Koh Toa off the east coast of mainland Thailand. You could fly into either Koh Samui or Surat Thani airport where you will then use our easy to follow instructions to make your way to the connecting ferry. We will provide you with all the information you need prior to your departure to enable you to plan your journey. Upon arrival at the main island pier you will be met by a friendly Frontier representative and taken to your accommodation!

WHERE WILL I BE STAYING?

Whilst participating in this project you will be staying in a simple room at a little family run resort right by the beach in the south of the island, a few minutes walk from the dive school. Local amenities, bars and restaurants are within walking distance from the resort which is surrounded by tranquil gardens making it the perfect place to relax after a fun day of diving.

WHAT WILL I BE EATING?

Food is not provided as part of this programme. This is a fun element of travelling away from home as it gives you that added freedom and is a good opportunity to bond with fellow travellers while exploring local restaurants and market stalls! All meals are based on fresh produce that is purchased from the local area. Enjoy fragrant Thai specialities, such as mild coconut curries, fragrant steamed rice, or dumplings. Enjoy your meals alongside your fellow volunteers in the comfort of your peaceful surroundings.

COSTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Cost</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 week</td>
<td>US$ 1,145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 weeks</td>
<td>US$ 1,545</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra week</td>
<td>US$ 345</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For PADI Open Water - US$1,156

For PADI Advanced Open Water training - US$561

Please note that 1 week durations only available to participants with existing dive qualifications up to Advanced Open Water level or equivalent.

EFR, Rescue Diver and Divemaster training available at an additional cost.
DEPARTURE DATES

The project runs all year, but not that in March it is only available to advanced level divers. But the remainder of the year it is open to non-divers.

Depending on your diving experience the start dates will vary, and the exact start dates can be found in the table below.

Start Dates for 2020-2021:

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<th></th>
<th>Dec</th>
<th>Jan</th>
<th>Feb</th>
<th>Mar</th>
<th>Apr</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>Jun</th>
<th>Jul</th>
<th>Aug</th>
<th>Sep</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non Diver</td>
<td>14th</td>
<td>11th</td>
<td>8th</td>
<td>8th</td>
<td>5th</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>28th</td>
<td>26th</td>
<td>23rd</td>
<td>20th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open water diver</td>
<td>17th</td>
<td>14th</td>
<td>11th</td>
<td>11th</td>
<td>8th</td>
<td>6th</td>
<td>1st Jul</td>
<td>29th</td>
<td>26th</td>
<td>23rd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Diver</td>
<td>21th</td>
<td>18th</td>
<td>15th</td>
<td>15th</td>
<td>12th</td>
<td>10th</td>
<td>5th Jul</td>
<td>2nd Aug</td>
<td>30th</td>
<td>27th</td>
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<tr>
<td>End date</td>
<td>15th Jan</td>
<td>12th Feb</td>
<td>12th Mar</td>
<td>9th Apr</td>
<td>7th May</td>
<td>28th Jun</td>
<td>30th Jul</td>
<td>27th Aug</td>
<td>24th Sep</td>
<td>15th Oct</td>
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<td>Length of course</td>
<td>4wk</td>
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Note on diving levels given;
Non diver - No previous diving experience
Open water Diver – Has attained the Open water diving level
Advanced diver – Has attained both Open water and Advanced diving levels or higher.

Note that you have to be an Advanced diver to start the project, hence the variance in start dates. Non-divers start approximately 7 days before the start date, and open-water divers approx. 4 days before, so that these days can be spent getting your diving skills up to Advanced level, ready to begin the project.

DURATION

1 week +

WHAT’S INCLUDED

Before you go

- Pre-departure support
- Travel &medical advice &documentation
Equipment advice
Discounted medical kit
Free Frontier t-shirt

In-country

Accommodation
Local orientation
In-country emergency support
24-hour international HQ back-up

AIRPORT INFORMATION

Nearest airport(s): Koh Samui (USM)

CONTACT INFORMATION

Call us on 020 7613 2422 (UK) / 1 949 336 8178 (US)

Mail us on info@frontier.ac.uk

Check out our social media here:

Project details were correct at the time this document was generated. Price, dates and other details are subject to change. Please see our website for current details for this project.