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BUYER'S GUIDE

Condo vs villa in Phuket

Which should you buy?

A foreign buyer can own a Phuket condo freehold but holds a villa on a 30-year lease. Ownership, costs, rents, resale, finance and supply compared, with who each suits.

Condo vs villa in Phuket comes down to ownership first and lifestyle second. A foreign buyer can own a condo freehold in their own name, within the building's 49 per cent foreign quota. A villa sits on land a foreigner cannot own, so it is held on a registered lease of up to 30 years. Buy a condo for freehold and a home that looks after itself while you are away. Buy a villa for space and privacy, valued as a 30-year asset.

Condo vs villa in Phuket at a glance

	Condominium	Villa
Foreign ownership	Freehold, within the 49% foreign quota	Registered lease of up to 30 years
Main registration cost	Transfer fee of 2% of appraised value, often split	1.1% of the total rent over the lease term
Running costs	Common-area fee set by the building, plus a sinking fund at purchase	Pool, garden, utilities and upkeep, plus estate fees where there is an estate
Rent (C9 Hotelworks, May 2025)	1-bed long let: ฿22,541 a month on average	4-bed plus short-term: ฿179,445 a month on average
Nightly letting	The Land Department bars hotel use of condos	A small-accommodation route exists; ask your lawyer whether it applies
Supply (Knight Frank, 2025)	42,061 units	7,789 units
Resale	Freehold units can pass between foreign buyers	The buyer takes the years left on the lease
Day to day	Lock up and leave	Space, privacy and more to look after

Can a foreigner own a condo or a villa in Phuket?

A foreigner can own a condo outright and hold a villa on a lease. Under section 19 bis of the Condominium Act, foreigners can own units freehold within a 49 per cent foreign quota. The quota is measured on the building's total unit area. The purchase money must come into Thailand from abroad in foreign currency, and your name goes on the unit's title.

A villa stands on land, which a foreigner cannot own in Thailand. The standard route is a registered lease of up to 30 years. Pre-agreed renewals are not enforceable as a right, per Supreme Court Judgment 4655/2566. So value a villa lease as 30 years.

Both positions are set out in my foreign ownership guide and in Is a 30-Year Lease in Thailand Safe?. A company with Thai shareholders in name only, set up to hold a villa, is a nominee structure. It is illegal. A Thai buyer can own a villa and its land outright.

What does it cost to buy a condo or a villa?

The two are registered differently, so the fees differ. A freehold condo carries a transfer fee of 2 per cent of the Land Department's appraised value. Who pays it is a matter for the sale agreement, and it is often split between buyer and seller.

Registering a villa lease costs 1 per cent of the total rent over the term, plus 0.1 per cent stamp duty. That is 1.1 per cent in all, paid at the Land Department on registration. Add an independent lawyer on either route. The full list, with legal fees and the seller's taxes, is in What Buying in Phuket Actually Costs.

Which costs more to run, a condo or a villa?

A villa, as a rule, because you carry everything a building would otherwise share. In a condo, owners share the common expenses under section 18 of the Condominium Act. You pay a common-area fee, usually charged per square metre, and a one-off sinking fund contribution when you buy. Rates vary widely from building to building, and resort facilities cost more.

A villa has no juristic office sending one invoice. The pool needs servicing, the garden needs work, and air conditioning drives the electricity bill. Salt air and humidity age roofs and paint quickly. On a managed estate there is a common fee on top. Get the real figures for the property before you make an offer.

Which rents better in Phuket, a condo or a villa?

A villa earns more rent in baht, and a condo is simpler to let. Global Property Guide puts Phuket apartments at an average gross yield of 5.05 per cent, with the latest data at Q1 2026. That runs from 6.23 per cent for a one-bedroom to 3.72 per cent for a three-bedroom. Net typically runs 1.5 to 2 points lower. The survey's Phuket figures cover apartments only.

Rents show the gap in baht. C9 Hotelworks' May 2025 update put one-bedroom condos at ฿22,541 a month on long lets (about USD 660). Villas of four bedrooms or more averaged ฿99,872 on long lets (about USD 2,900). On short-term lets, which C9 counts as a week to 11 months, those villas averaged ฿179,445 (about USD 5,300).

The law decides which rent you can take. Stays under 30 days, for payment, generally need a hotel licence. Since November 2023 the Land Department's position is that a condo cannot be used for hotel operations. Accommodation of up to eight rooms and 30 guests has fallen outside the licence requirement since 29 October 2023. That opens a route for some villas; ask your lawyer whether it fits yours.

Knight Frank warns that projects relying heavily on short-term demand may see larger swings in income. My Phuket rental yields guide works an illustrative example. On it, a long-let condo and a nightly-let pool villa both net a little over 3 per cent.

How many condos and villas are there in Phuket?

Far more condos than villas. Knight Frank Thailand puts Phuket's cumulative condo supply at 42,061 units in 2025, against 7,789 villas. That is more than five condos for every villa.

Both markets launched less in 2025. Knight Frank counts about 5,073 new condos, down 51.7 per cent on 2024, and about 774 new villas, down 48.2 per cent. Sales moved in opposite directions. Condominium sales reached 4,455 units, down 24.8 per cent, while villa sales rose 12.9 per cent to 631 units.

Bang Tao took 30.8 per cent of new condo supply, while Si Sunthon led villa launches at 18.1 per cent. Condominium prices generally ran ฿125,000 to ฿160,000 per square metre (about USD 3,700 to 4,700). For what each part of the island is like, see where to live in Phuket.

Is a condo or a villa easier to resell in Phuket?

They resell to different buyers, so the question is who your next buyer is. A unit held in foreign freehold can pass to another foreign buyer even in a full building. The foreign share does not change. A unit on the Thai side of a full building can go freehold only to a Thai buyer.

A villa lease sells as the years left on it, so the next buyer gets fewer than 30. The buyer's lawyer will discount any renewal promise. Under section 544 of the Civil and Commercial Code, a lease can be assigned only if it allows it. Check that clause before you sign.

Knight Frank expects competition among off-plan projects to intensify after three to four years of heavy launches. A resale condo sits beside those new launches. A villa competes with fewer units, but its lease shortens every year.

Can foreigners get a mortgage to buy in Phuket?

It can be difficult for a foreigner to get a mortgage from a Thai bank, according to Wise. It says it may be possible for those married to a Thai national, working here a year or more, or holding permanent residence. That applies to condos: the Thai government's own guide says banks do not lend to foreigners on houses or land, so villa buyers use cash, developer terms or money raised at home. The Nation reported in August 2025 that international buyers were mostly buying high-end pool villas with cash.

AssetWise's chief executive told the paper that international clients often pay cash, avoiding bank-loan delays. If you plan to borrow at home, speak to a licensed financial adviser there first.

Lock-up-and-leave or space and privacy?

A condo is the easier home to leave. You close the door and fly home, and the juristic office looks after the common areas on the fee you already pay. That suits an owner here part of the year.

A villa gives a family room to live. It has a private pool, a garden and bedrooms with doors that shut. The trade is responsibility: someone has to see to the house while you are away. I live on an estate in Bang Tao. An estate that runs its shared road and gate takes much of that weight off.

Who should buy a condo, and who should buy a villa?

A condo suits a buyer who wants freehold in their own name. It also suits part-year owners, first purchases on the island, and investors who want a long let without a Hotel Act question. C9 found one-bedroom condos the most sought-after rental product.

A villa suits a family living here most of the year, or anyone who needs outdoor space. It suits a buyer who is content to price a lease on its registered term and will check who owns the land underneath. It also suits a Thai buyer, who can own the land.

If you already own one and are thinking of selling

Selling a condo, confirm whether your unit is held in foreign freehold and find your transfer records. Selling a villa lease, have your lawyer confirm the term left and that it can be assigned. Then ask the landowner about a renewal and its fee, in writing.

Condo vs villa in Phuket: questions buyers ask

Is it better to buy a condo or a villa in Phuket?

A condo suits a buyer who wants freehold in their own name and a home that looks after itself while they are away. A villa suits a buyer who wants space and privacy and is content to value a 30-year lease as 30 years.

Can a foreigner buy a condo in Phuket freehold?

Yes, within the building's 49 per cent foreign quota under section 19 bis of the Condominium Act. The purchase money must come into Thailand from abroad in foreign currency.

Can foreigners own a villa in Phuket?

A foreigner cannot own the land, so a villa is held on a registered lease of up to 30 years. Pre-agreed renewals are not enforceable as a right, following Supreme Court Judgment 4655/2566.

Which has a better rental yield in Phuket, a condo or a villa?

Global Property Guide puts Phuket apartments at 5.05 per cent gross on average, with net typically 1.5 to 2 points lower. Villas earn more rent in baht, but nightly letting needs a lawful route under the Hotel Act.

Can foreigners get a mortgage to buy property in Phuket?

It can be difficult to get one from a Thai bank, according to Wise. The Nation reported in August 2025 that international buyers were mostly buying high-end pool villas with cash.

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I would settle the ownership question before the property. If owning in your own name matters, the answer is a condo, and the choice of building follows. If a villa is what your family needs, buy it for what 30 years gives you and treat any renewal as a bonus.

Rent should come second in this choice. Both net a little over 3 per cent on my worked example, so buy the one you want to live in.

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Sources: Condominium Act B.E. 2522, sections 18 and 19 bis; Civil and Commercial Code, sections 540 and 544; Supreme Court Judgment 4655/2566; ThaiLawOnline, lease registration fee and stamp duty (1% and 0.1% of total rent); The Thaiger, Land Department transfer fee (2% of appraised value); Knight Frank Thailand, Phuket Villa & Condominium Market Year-End 2025; Global Property Guide, gross rental yields in Thailand, latest data Q1 2026 (accessed November 2026); C9 Hotelworks, Phuket Property Market Update, May 2025; Department of Lands circular of 6 November 2023 on condos and hotel operations, and Ministerial Regulation in force 29 October 2023 on small accommodation, both as reported by Tilleke & Gibbins; Wise, buying property in Thailand, updated 17 December 2025; The Nation, "Phuket becomes 'cash-rich' battleground for luxury developers", 14 August 2025. Approximate USD at ฿34. This is general information, not legal, tax or investment advice. Take independent legal advice before committing to any purchase or lease in Thailand.