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AREA GUIDE

Kata, Phuket

An Advisor's Guide

1 hr	20–25 min	3 km	Kata	Nov 2026
AIRPORT	PHUKET TOWN	KARON BEACH	BEACH	UPDATED

Kata is a pair of beaches on the southwest coast of Phuket. Kata Beach, also called Kata Yai, is the main bay, and the smaller Kata Noi lies just south of it. Behind them is a compact resort town of family hotels and surf rental stands, with condos and villas on the hills either side. Phuket Old Town is about 15.5 km away and the airport about 46 km. Buyers come for the beach and the bay, and accept the long run north. Karon is the next bay north and Nai Harn the next bay south. Both have their own guides; this one covers Kata and Kata Noi only.

The lifestyle

Kata Beach is about 1.5 km of sand facing southwest, according to the Tourism Authority of Thailand. The small island of Koh Pu sits just offshore. The town runs along Kata Road, Ket Kwan Road and Patak Road behind it. Club Med Phuket sits by the beach. In 2025 it opened what it called its first dedicated family space in Asia-Pacific. It has a splash park, and the kids' club takes children from four months to 17 years. The town is built around families.

Kata Noi is the quieter bay, under 2 km south by road over a short rise. Its beach is under a kilometre long, with resort frontage along much of it. It is a public beach.

Above Kata Noi the road climbs to Karon Viewpoint, about 3.5 km from Kata Beach. From the top you see Kata Noi, Kata and Karon in one line. The same road carries on over the hill to Nai Harn and Promthep Cape. The slopes either side of it are where I would start a search for a sea view in Kata.

From November to April the water at Kata Noi is usually calm enough for swimming and snorkelling. The southwest monsoon runs from about May to October, and those are Kata's surf months. Kata has board rental and surf lessons, and TAT's surf guide calls it the safest bet for an aspiring wave rider. The trade is that swimming in those months goes flag by flag, and a red flag means do not swim.

Who it suits

Kata suits a buyer who wants a family holiday base: a beach you can walk to and calm water in the high season. It suits surfers who want to be here in August. It also suits an owner who wants a condo that is easy to use for a few weeks a year and easy to leave.

It suits less well the family whose week runs on a school run. HeadStart, Kajonkiet, British International School Phuket and UWC Thailand are all north of here. They range from about 14.5 km to HeadStart in Wichit to about 38 km to UWC in Thalang. It is a long way for a buyer who flies often, at about an hour to the airport. And a buyer who wants quiet in December may find Kata Beach busier than they pictured.

The question I would ask is whether you would still want to be here if the red flags were up for most of September. A buyer who says yes usually has a realistic picture of Kata.

The property landscape

The flat strip behind the beaches is the town: hotels, shops and restaurants. Homes sit mostly on the slopes behind it. Condominiums tend to sit lower down, off Kata Road and Patak Road, with villas higher up toward Kata Noi and the viewpoint road. The bays are small and the hills are steep, which shapes what gets built and where.

Knight Frank does not report Kata separately. It reports Karon, and Kata lies within Karon subdistrict, so that is the nearest published read. In 2025 Karon took 21.1 percent of Phuket's new condo supply and 17.9 percent of condo sales, second to Bang Tao on both counts. Knight Frank puts average condo prices across Phuket at ฿125,000 to ฿160,000 per square metre (approx USD 3,700 to 4,800). It does not publish a Karon figure, so I would not quote one.

A deep condo market gives a buyer choice, and gives the same buyer more competition when selling later. I would weigh a view that cannot be built out above almost anything else. Ask what can go up on the plot below you. The hillside rules also changed on 14 December 2024. Building between 80 and 140 metres above sea level was opened in a defined zone that excludes coastal areas. It is limited to a building of up to 6 metres high and 90 square metres, on a title issued before 2017. Your lawyer should confirm which rules apply to any plot or project you look at.

Tenure follows the rest of the island. A foreign buyer can hold a condo freehold within the building's quota. A villa sits on land, so it is usually held on a registered lease of the land with the house owned outright.

Renting in Kata

Kata has two rental markets. The holiday market peaks from November to April, when the beach is calm. The twelve-month market is the one I would think hardest about. The school drive matters here, because a family renting for a school year will often look nearer the schools. There is no published Kata rent data I would stand behind, so I will not give a range here.

If you are buying to rent, check the building's rules before anything else. Letting for under 30 days requires a hotel licence, and many condos ban short stays in their regulations. A unit that can only be let for twelve months is a different investment from one in a licensed resort programme. More on how letting works in Renting Long-Term in Phuket.

Getting around

Phuket International Airport is about 46 km from Kata Beach, about an hour outside peak hours. The route runs via Patak Road, Chao Fa West Road and the bypass road, then north on Thepkasattri Road. Phuket Old Town is about 15.5 km and Central Phuket Floresta about 15 km, each about 20 to 25 minutes.

HeadStart's main campus in Wichit is about 14.5 km away (about 20 minutes). Kajonkiet International School in Kathu is about 19.5 km (about 25 minutes). British International School Phuket in Koh Kaew is about 25 km (30 to 35 minutes) and UWC Thailand about 38 km (45 to 50 minutes). The full list is in my international schools guide.

For hospitals, Bangkok Hospital Siriroj is about 16 km and Vachira Phuket Hospital about 16.5 km, both about 20 to 25 minutes. Bangkok Hospital Phuket is about 17.5 km, about 25 minutes. Closer in, Karon Beach is about 3 km, Nai Harn about 8.5 km and the Chalong circle about 6.5 km. Bang Tao, where I am based, is about 29 km north.

The trade is that the routes to the airport, the town and the schools all start on Patak Road. From there they run onto Chao Fa West Road or Chao Fa East Road. Plan your day around peak hours on that corridor.

Buying and renting here: the practical part

The essentials in brief; the detail belongs with your lawyer. A foreign buyer can own a condo freehold under section 19 bis of the Condominium Act. That sits within the 49 percent foreign quota per building, with the money brought in from abroad as foreign currency (section 19(5)). Foreigners cannot own land, so a villa is usually bought on a registered lease of up to 30 years. Treat 30 years as the term. That is the legal maximum under section 540 of the Civil and Commercial Code, and pre-agreed renewals are not enforceable as a right, per Supreme Court Judgment 4655/2566. My 30-year lease guide has the detail.

Rental agreements over three years must be registered to be enforceable beyond three. Holding land through a Thai company with nominee shareholders is illegal, and the risk sits with the buyer. Use your own independent lawyer, separate from the seller's. I cover the structures in Foreign Ownership in Phuket: How It Actually Works.

Selling in Kata

A Kata seller is usually competing with a deep pool of condo stock across Kata and Karon. View, building management and the rental history are what separate one unit from the next, so put them first. List ahead of the high season, in September or October, when buyers are planning their trips. The seller or developer pays my fee; buyers pay nothing.

Kata: the questions I get asked

Is Kata a good place to buy in Phuket?

For a family holiday base or an easy lock-up-and-leave condo, yes. For a family on a daily school run or a buyer who flies every few weeks, somewhere nearer the schools and the airport will suit better.

How far is Kata from Phuket airport?

About 46 km by road, about an hour outside peak hours, via Chao Fa West Road, the bypass road and Thepkasattri Road.

What is the difference between Kata and Kata Noi?

Kata Beach is the larger bay, about 1.5 km long, with the town behind it. Kata Noi is under 2 km south, under a kilometre long and quieter, with resort frontage along much of it.

When is the surf season in Kata?

About May to October, during the southwest monsoon. From November to April the water is usually calm enough for swimming and snorkelling.

Can foreigners buy property in Kata?

Yes, on the same terms as the rest of Phuket. Condominium units can be held freehold within the building's 49 percent foreign quota. Villas are usually held on a registered lease of the land of up to 30 years, with the house owned outright.

Talk to me about Kata

I am based in Bang Tao, about 29 km north of Kata. If you are weighing Kata against Karon or Nai Harn, or looking for a twelve-month rental, get in touch. I can also give you my read on a specific condo or villa.

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Sources: Tourism Authority of Thailand, Phuket and Khao Lak surf spots, 10 August 2018 (Kata Beach length, orientation and surf); TTG Asia, Club Med unveils first family oasis in Asia-Pacific, 6 May 2025; Knight Frank, Phuket Villa and Condominium Market, year-end 2025; The Phuket News, 80-metre building restriction repealed, January 2025 (Cabinet resolution in force 14 December 2024); Supreme Court Judgment 4655/2566; Civil and Commercial Code s.538 and s.540; Condominium Act s.19 bis and s.19(5). Locations and road distances from OpenStreetMap and OSRM routing, rechecked November 2026; drive times are rough estimates outside peak hours. This guide is general information, not legal or tax advice. Ownership structures, fees and taxes depend on your circumstances and change over time. Take independent legal advice before committing to any purchase or lease in Thailand.