BUTLER ESTATES



AREA GUIDE

Nai Harn, Phuket

An Advisor's Guide

1 hr	25 min	10 km	Nai Harn	Nov 2026
AIRPORT	PHUKET TOWN	CHALONG CIRCLE	BEACH	UPDATED

Nai Harn is a small bay near the southern tip of Phuket. It has a public beach, a freshwater lake ringed by a path, and hills of private villas running back toward Rawai and Kata. It sits in Rawai subdistrict, about 16 km by road from Phuket Town and about 48 km from the airport. People buy in Nai Harn to live here rather than to pass through. The day runs on the lake path, the beach and the hill roads. The trade is distance: most errands are a drive, and the airport is about an hour away.

The lifestyle

Nai Harn Beach is a public beach at the head of the bay. The surf can turn quickly, even in high season. In December 2019 lifeguards posted red flags after a circular rip current trapped several swimmers here. Rawai's mayor asked people not to enter the water where no lifeguard was in plain view. Swim between the flags.

Behind the beach is Nai Harn Lake, with Wat Nai Harn on Wiset Road between the two. In December 2024 The Phuket News reported a ฿66.6 million (about USD 2 million) upgrade of the 1,973-metre lakeside path. The plan adds a bike lane, solar street lights and parking. The work stalled. The first contractor abandoned the site, and the Phuket Provincial Administrative Organisation cancelled the contract in April 2025. It re-tendered the job in May 2025, with completion then targeted for early January 2026. I have not seen a report that the work is finished, so check the path for yourself on a visit.

South of the bay, Wiset Road climbs past the Windmill Viewpoint and Ya Nui Beach. Promthep Cape is about 4 km from the beach by road. North of the bay, past The Nai Harn hotel, sits the small beach at Ao Sane.

Listings often file Nai Harn under Rawai, because it sits in the same subdistrict. Rawai Beach is about 4 km east by road, over the headland. Kata Noi is about 9 km north over the hill, and my Kata guide covers it.

Who it suits

Nai Harn suits people who live here, full time or for long stretches. If your week is built around a morning walk, a run or a ride, the lake and the beach are a few minutes apart. It suits families at Lighthouse International School in Rawai, about 5 km away. Berda Claude International School (BCIS) in Chalong is about 10 km. My international schools guide covers the rest.

It suits less well the buyer who flies often. The airport is about 48 km by road, roughly an hour each way outside peak hours. Families at British International School Phuket face about 28 km each way. UWC Thailand in Thalang is about 40 km. If you want to walk out to bars and late dinners most nights, a busier beach town will suit you better.

The question I would put to anyone looking here is whether they would use the lake path most mornings. If yes, the distance usually matters less. If not, the north of the island may suit you better.

The property landscape

Nai Harn is villa country. Most stock is private pool villas in the hills behind the lake and along the roads that climb toward Rawai and Kata. There is a smaller layer of low-rise condos and land plots. Hillside lots carry the sea views. Villas near the lake trade on the walk to the water rather than the view.

The market here is small. At its Phuket Real Estate Forum in November 2025, C9 Hotelworks counted 43,481 residential units available in Phuket's primary market. Rawai held 5,149 of them, about 12 percent. C9 listed no residential units in Nai Harn itself, only 660 hotel keys. I have not found a published price series for Nai Harn on its own, so I do not quote one here.

Building on the hills is controlled. A Cabinet decision took effect on 14 December 2024. Land between 80 and 140 metres above sea level in the zone it covers can now be built on, under strict terms. The title must have been issued before 2017. Only one standalone building is allowed, no more than 6 metres high and 90 sqm in footprint. The plot must keep 70 percent open space. Coastal areas sit outside the zone and have their own controls, and slope requirements sit in a separate code of practice.

For a buyer, that matters in two ways. A plot high on the hill may carry a tight limit on what can be built. A view across lower land also depends on what the rules allow on that land. Ask your lawyer to confirm the plot's zone, altitude and title date, and a surveyor to check the slope, before you price the view.

Renting in Nai Harn

Most tenants here are residents: families, long-stayers and people who chose the south for the lake and the beach. I have not found a reliable published rent series for Nai Harn alone, so I describe the market instead. My read is that villas within walking distance of the lake let first, and hillside villas let on the view.

Letting a property for less than 30 days needs a hotel licence, and many condo buildings ban short stays in their rules. Check both before you build an income plan around holiday lets. More on twelve-month letting in Renting Long-Term in Phuket.

Getting around

Distances below are road distances from the lake, with rough drive times outside peak hours. Phuket International Airport is about 48 km, roughly an hour. Phuket Town is about 16 km, around 25 minutes, and Central Phuket is a similar run. Bangkok Hospital Phuket is about 19 km, around 30 minutes, and Vachira Phuket Hospital about 18 km. Chalong Circle is about 10 km, some 15 minutes.

For schools, Lighthouse International School in Rawai is about 5 km, around 10 minutes. BCIS in Chalong is about 10 km, some 15 minutes. British International School Phuket is about 28 km, around 40 minutes. The run north uses Chao Fa West Road through Chalong, then the bypass. That stretch is where most peak-hour delays happen.

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)). Villas sit on land, which foreigners cannot own. A villa purchase is usually a registered lease of the land for up to 30 years, with the house owned outright.

Price the lease on those 30 years. Section 540 of the Civil and Commercial Code caps a lease at 30 years, and pre-agreed renewals are not enforceable as a right, per Supreme Court Judgment 4655/2566. My 30-year lease guide has the detail. A lease over three years must be registered to be enforceable beyond three. Holding land through a Thai company with nominee shareholders is illegal and puts the asset at risk. Foreign Ownership in Phuket: How It Actually Works sets out what does work.

Selling in Nai Harn

Buyers who want Nai Harn usually want the lake and the beach, and have already accepted the drive. Lead with walking distance to the water and state the drive times plainly. Have the title, the lease chain and the building permit ready, because the buyer's lawyer will ask for them. On a hillside plot they will ask about altitude and zone too.

Nai Harn: the questions I get asked

Is Nai Harn a good place to buy in Phuket?

For a buyer who will live here and use the lake path, the beach and the hills, yes. For a buyer who flies often, or has children at school in the north of the island, the drive will weigh heavily. The airport is about an hour away.

How far is Nai Harn from Phuket airport?

About 48 km by road, roughly an hour outside peak hours and longer at peak. The route runs north via Chao Fa West Road and Thepkasattri Road.

Is Nai Harn part of Rawai?

Yes. Nai Harn Beach and the lake sit in Rawai subdistrict, which is why many listings say Rawai. Rawai Beach itself is about 4 km east by road, over the headland, and has its own guide.

Can foreigners buy property in Nai Harn?

Yes, on the same terms as the rest of Phuket. Condominiums 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.

Can you build on the hills around Nai Harn?

Within limits. Since December 2024, land between 80 and 140 metres above sea level in the zone the rule covers can carry one standalone building. It can be up to 6 metres high and 90 sqm in footprint, on a title issued before 2017. The plot must keep 70 percent open space. Your lawyer should confirm the zone and altitude of any plot.

Talk to me about Nai Harn

If you are weighing Nai Harn against Rawai, Kata or the north of the island, looking for a twelve-month rental, or want my read on a specific villa, get in touch.

Rex Butler, Managing Director

+66 93 760 8561 | rex@butlerestates.com | butlerestates.com

BOUTIQUE REAL ESTATE AGENCY IN PHUKET

WHATSAPP

Sources: The Phuket News (rip current warning, 12 December 2019; Nai Harn Lake makeover, 24 December 2024; Nai Harn Lake contract cancelled, 2 May 2025; 80-metre rule repealed, January 2025). C9 Hotelworks, Phuket Real Estate Forum 2025 (residential units and hotel keys by location, 20 November 2025). OpenStreetMap and OSRM routing (locations and distances). Supreme Court Judgment 4655/2566 (pre-agreed lease renewals not enforceable as a right). Civil and Commercial Code s.538 (leases over three years) and s.540 (30-year maximum). Condominium Act s.19 bis (49 percent foreign quota) and s.19(5) (foreign currency). Distances rechecked November 2026. Views on renting and selling are my own. 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.