

A vertical decorative border on the left side of the page. It features a light blue background with various floral and geometric patterns. At the top is a large, stylized flower with a scalloped center and radiating petals. Below it are several smaller flowers and swirling lines in shades of blue and green. At the bottom is a large, solid blue flower with a white scalloped center.

Thailand

*Koh Lanta,
Koh Ngai,
Koh Mook*

*March 15 - March 21,
2016*



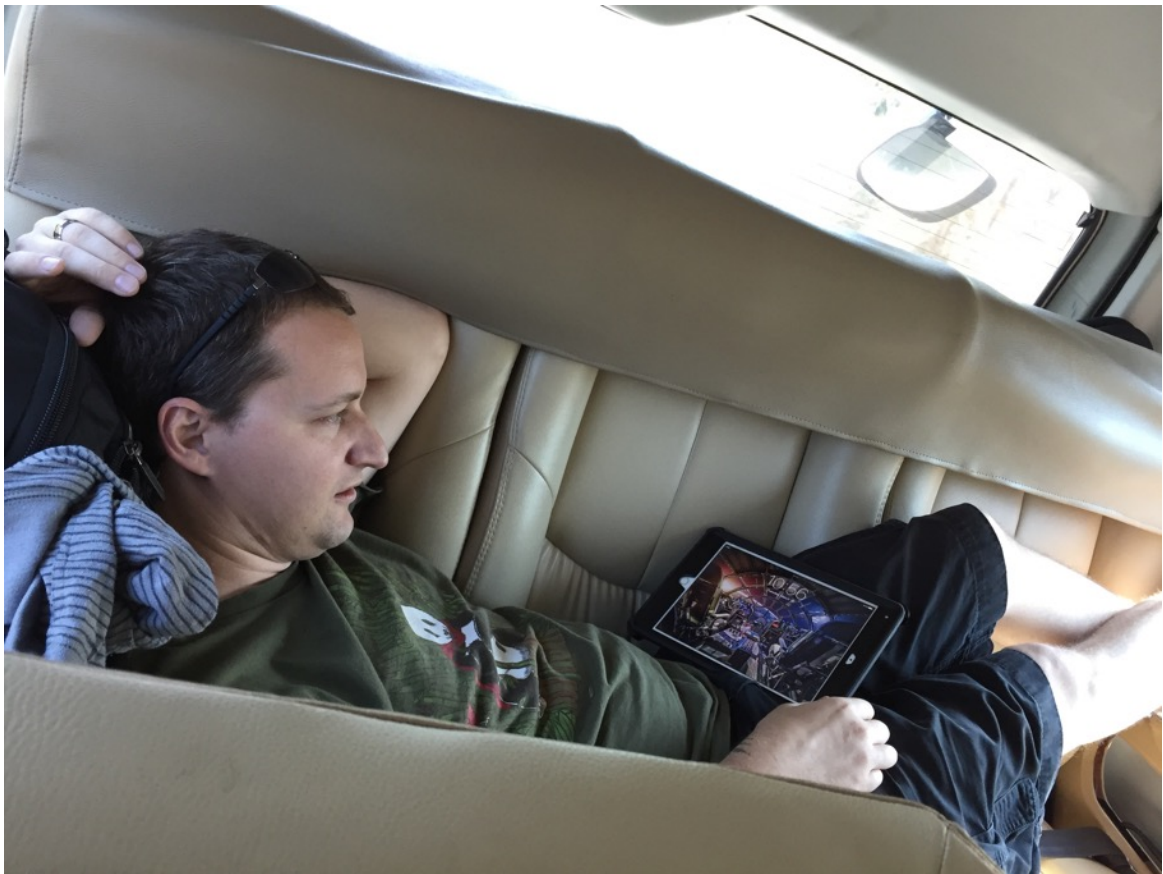
March 15 - Back at the Chiang Mai Airport to catch a flight to Bangkok and then to the Krabi Airport to head to the Thai islands. Even Ronald McDonald at the airport says "Sawatdi-Ka." Ariya saw us holding on the overhead handles on the bus transfer to the plane out on the tarmac and held on, too.





View from the plane and
met by our private van
driver at the Krabi
Airport.







The van driver drove us onto two ferry boats to cross from the Thailand mainland first to the small island of Koh Lanta and then to the large island of Koh Lanta.







We arrived at the Sri Lanta Resort and were greeted with fresh juice in the outdoor office while Adam and Tai signed us into our rooms.





We had to walk up these steep stairs and were driven up the hill to our cabins in a golf cart by a staff member.





Tai and Adam had a cabin and Nong, Ariya and I had a cabin right next to theirs. We needed the mosquito nets at night to sleep because they got indoors. With Ariya's extra crib put in and our luggage, it was a bit cramped. We split the costs of this trip four ways, and the cabins cost about \$26 each per night.





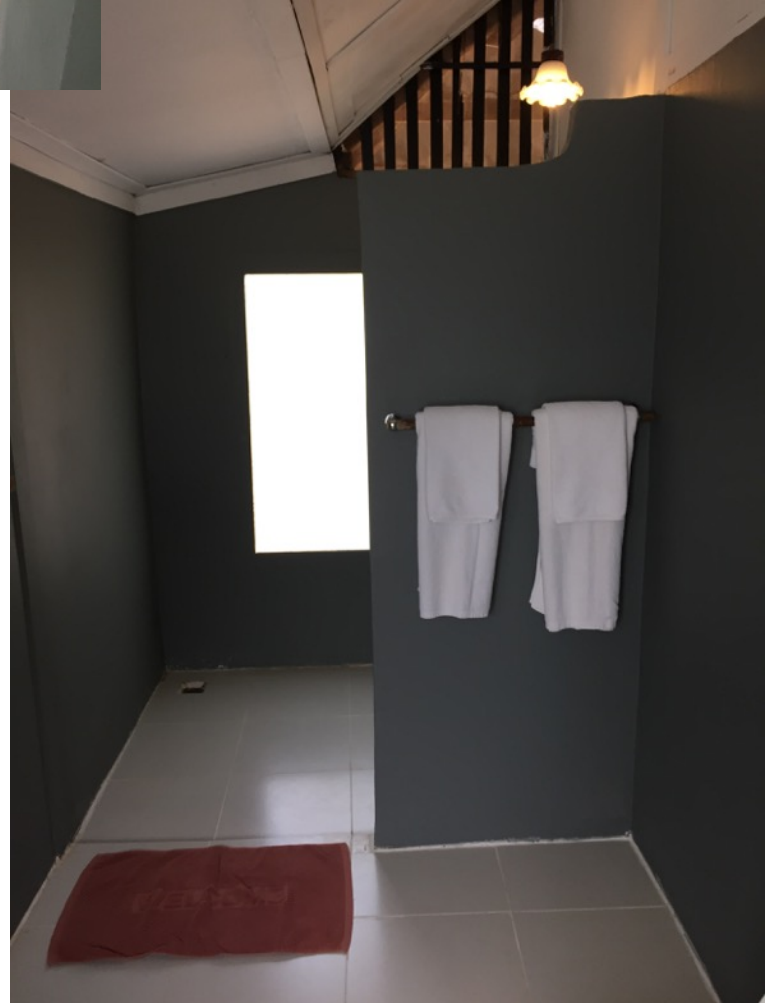
No chairs to sit on but Thai style mats on the floor, which was difficult for me to sit on and get up and down at my age. It was Ariya's first time to see a beach and ocean, so we took her in the water. At first she loved it, but a wave knocked us over and she cried. She also didn't like the sand on her feet. Then we all went for a swim in the infinity pools and back to take our showers.

Ariya fell asleep around dinner time and I was tired, so I stayed in the cabin while Adam, Tai and Nong went out to eat and explore the town. Ariya woke up after a half hour, so I ordered room service delivered.



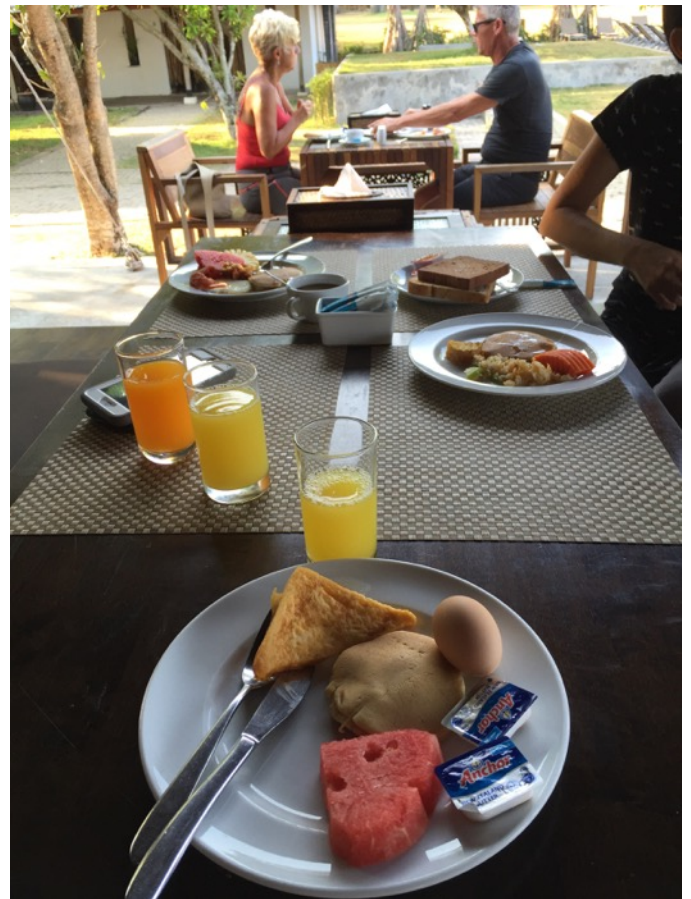


The bathroom floor was slippery when wet, and I almost fell and Ariya did fall.





March 16 - The next morning we climbed down the hill and stairs to get an all you can eat buffet breakfast in the open air restaurant overlooking the beach. Breakfast was included in the \$26 a night. Fresh squeezed juices every morning, pancakes, eggs, croissants, toast, fresh fruit, Thai food and more.





I walked around the grounds to take pictures of the beach and two infinity pools.







Ariya loved checking out the fish in the small ponds on the property.





Ariya by the outdoor office area and below an open air sitting area with jazz music playing.







Below - the second infinity pool.
One was salt water and one
was fresh water. They had
massage and manicure/
pedicure areas on the beach
that we didn't have time to do.





Tai met a taxi driver who hooked us up with a guy with a boat that was cheaper than if we booked it through the resort. The taxi driver took us to the pier. On the way he stopped at the 7/11 per our request so Tai could buy more milk and diapers for Ariya and some snacks. He charged a flat fee rather than by a ticking taxi meter. He put on a CD of a cartoon movie on the video screen for Ariya while her and I waited for them to shop. Tai got his phone number so we could call him to pick us up when we returned. At the pier waiting to catch the boat to Koh Ngai.





It was low tide, and we had to climb down these rickety cement steps and then down a shaky metal ladder into one boat and then cross into the other. We were nervous climbing down. This guy on the left was the boat owner. He carried Ariya down quickly like it was no big deal.



These boats were called long-tail speed boats. They tied scarves and flower leis around the front for good luck.





A fun ride. We had to stop at another closer island called Koh Bubu first to let off two other people on board.







Quick stop at Koh Bubu.
We stayed on board.







Then off for a longer ride
about an hour to Koh Ngai.







We landed on the beach of Koh Ngai. There are no roads on this island...just beachfront and jungle. We stopped at this beachfront place to eat and met this guy who was the chef.



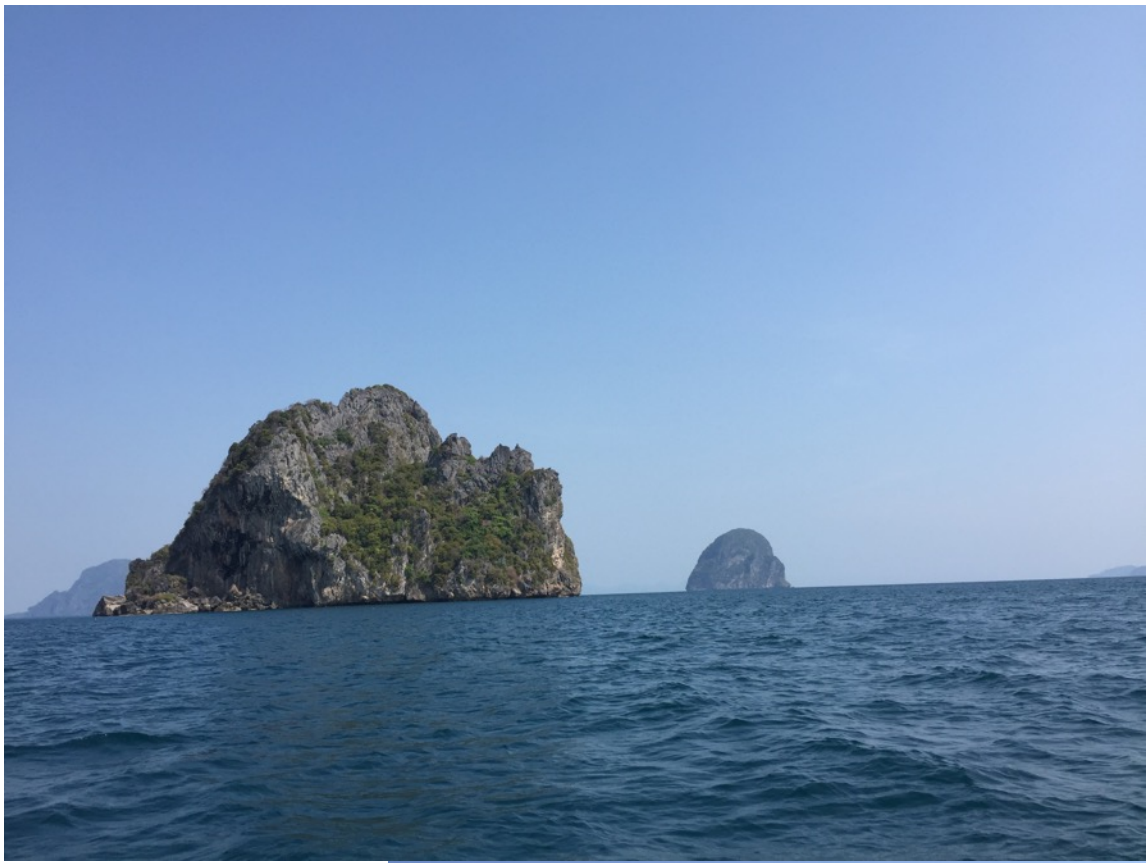


Good food, great coconut shakes and this beautiful view. We loved this place. The chef told us about a resort just down the way. We went there to see if they had any rooms available and they did for about \$40 each a night. We decided to book the room and spend one more night on Koh Lanta and then return to this island of Koh Ngai to spend the next 4 nights.









Then back on the boat
to go out to one of the
other islands to snorkel.







The water was so clear and beautiful. There were tons of tropical fish.





Adam and Tai went snorkeling while Nong and I stayed with Ariya on the boat.





Boat took us back to the pier at
Koh Lanta and we walked
around the town and did some
shopping.

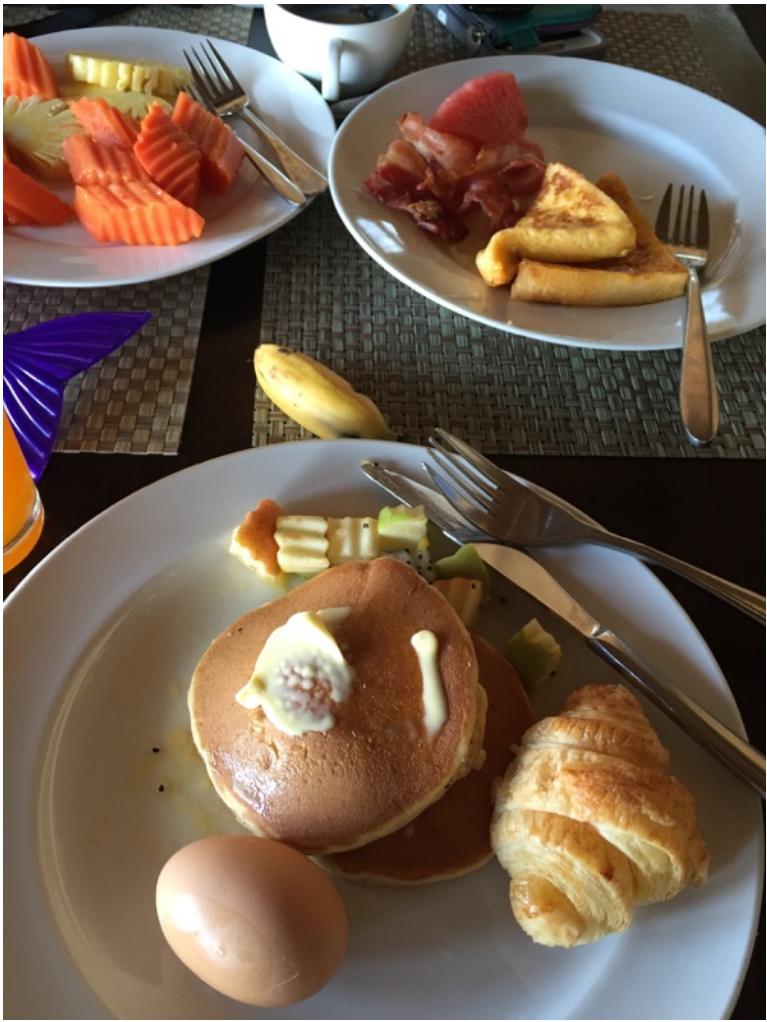






Tai and I got this delicious coconut ice cream from a street vendor.





March 17 - Last breakfast at Sri Lanta and before we checked out. Ariya made friends with the kitty cats running around there.





One last walk around the Sri Lanta resort before packing to leave for Koh Ngai.





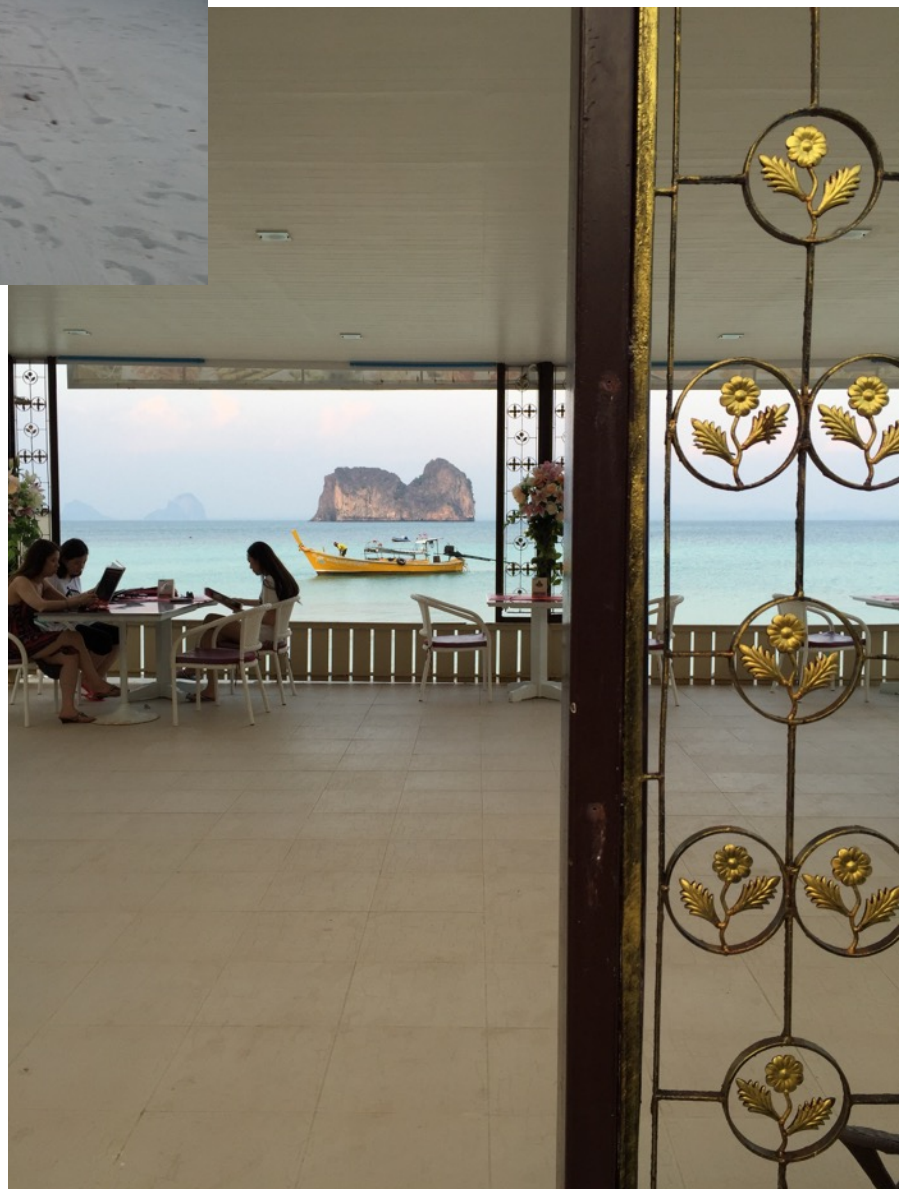


Our friendly taxi guy met us at the resort and drove us back to the pier to meet the same boat from yesterday who would take us back out the hour ride to Koh Ngai.





We checked into the
Koh Hai Fantasy Resort.





We got this corner unit, two story, two-bedroom, two-bath apartment style place.





The colorful door and inside to the downstairs living room area. Furniture was comfy but there was only an overhead fan in this room and no air conditioning so it was quite hot.

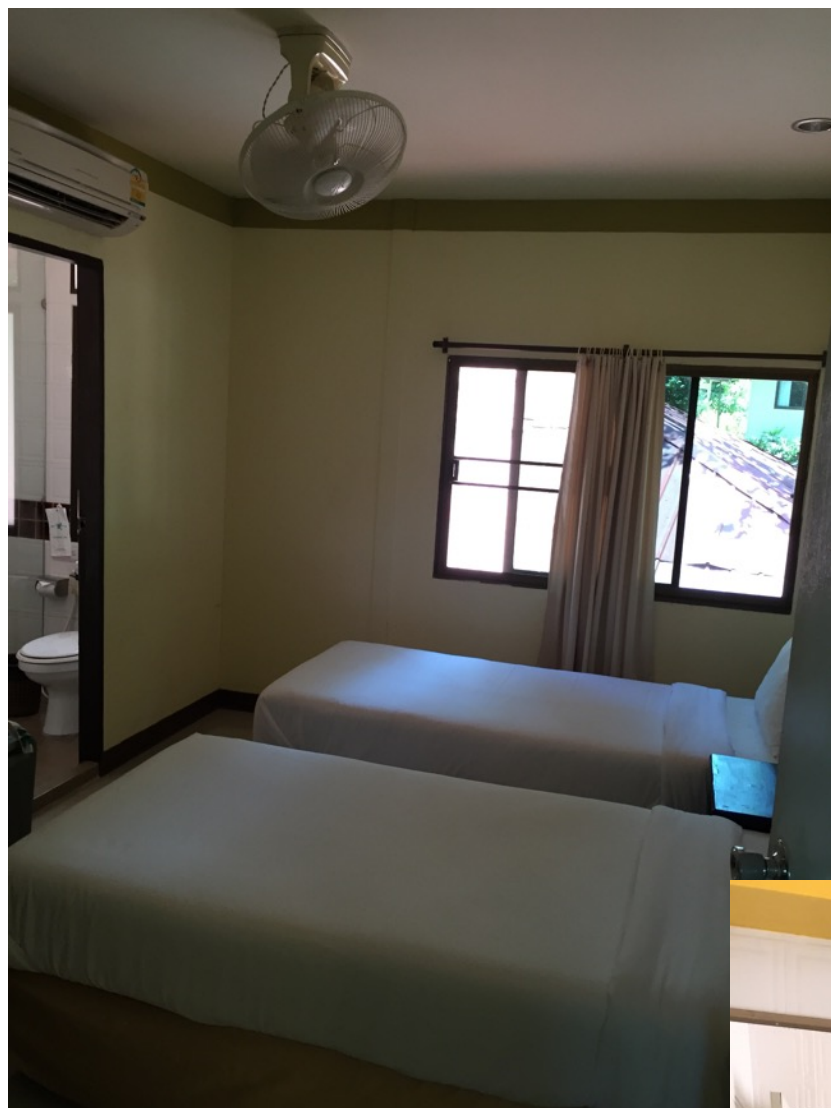






Adam and Tai had the master bedroom and bath. Both upstairs bedrooms were coolly air conditioned plus overhead fans.





Nong and I stayed in the second bedroom and Ariya slept between the twin beds on the floor on cushions. Our shower did not have hot water but the master bedroom did, which was a strange gas heater right in the shower with instructions on how to turn it on to light the pilot flame and heat the water. Tai had grown up with the same system and knew how to turn it on.



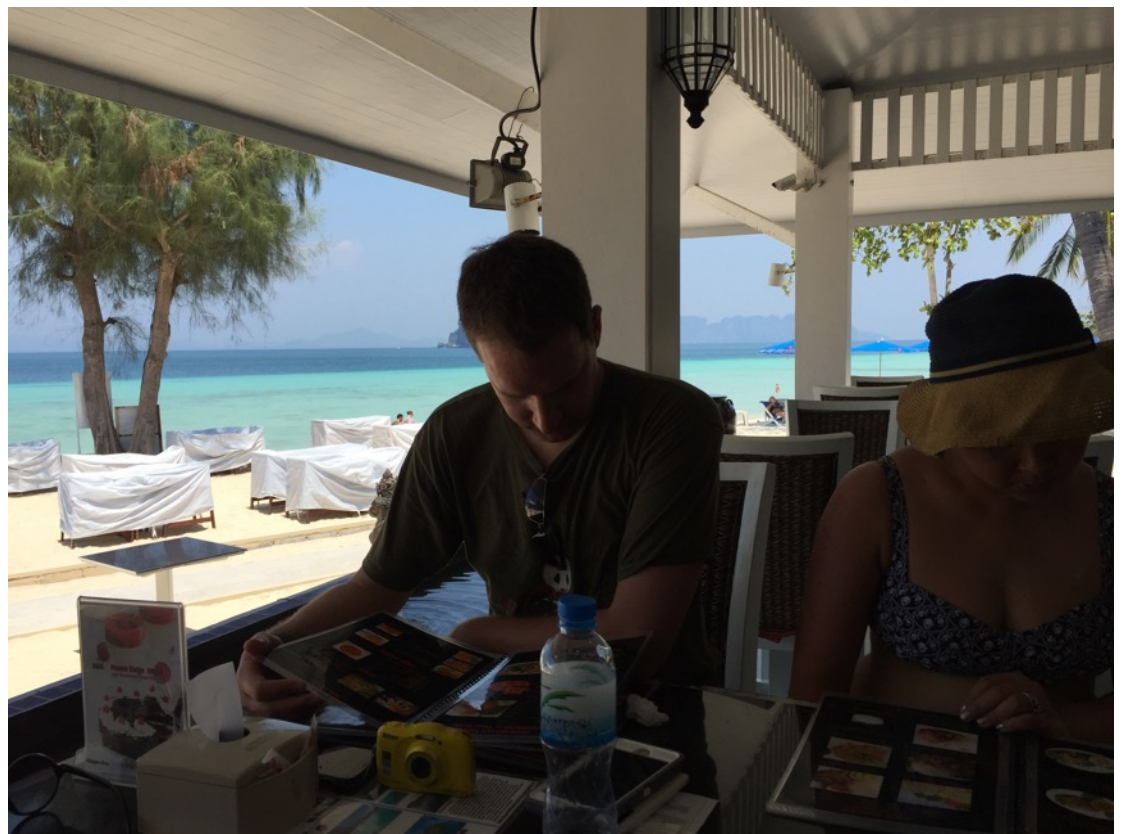


Artwork and decorations
in the living room area.





Then down to the beach for a swim and then to the beachfront restaurant for lunch.







Ariya still wasn't crazy about the sand at the beach, so her and I spent time in the pool, which had a perfect kiddie depth area for her to frolic in. This was easier for me to watch her, as the other resort didn't have steps and it was hard to get in and out of the pools. Except for the lack of air conditioning in the living room, I loved this resort and island much better than Sri Lanta on Koh Lanta. But the Sri Lanta also did have a better breakfast buffet.





Back to the beachfront restaurant for a cold drink. The beach was nice except for some broken shells and coral underneath the water.







Showered and dressed
for dinner.





Ariya found another kitty friend and sunset colors over the Andaman Sea.







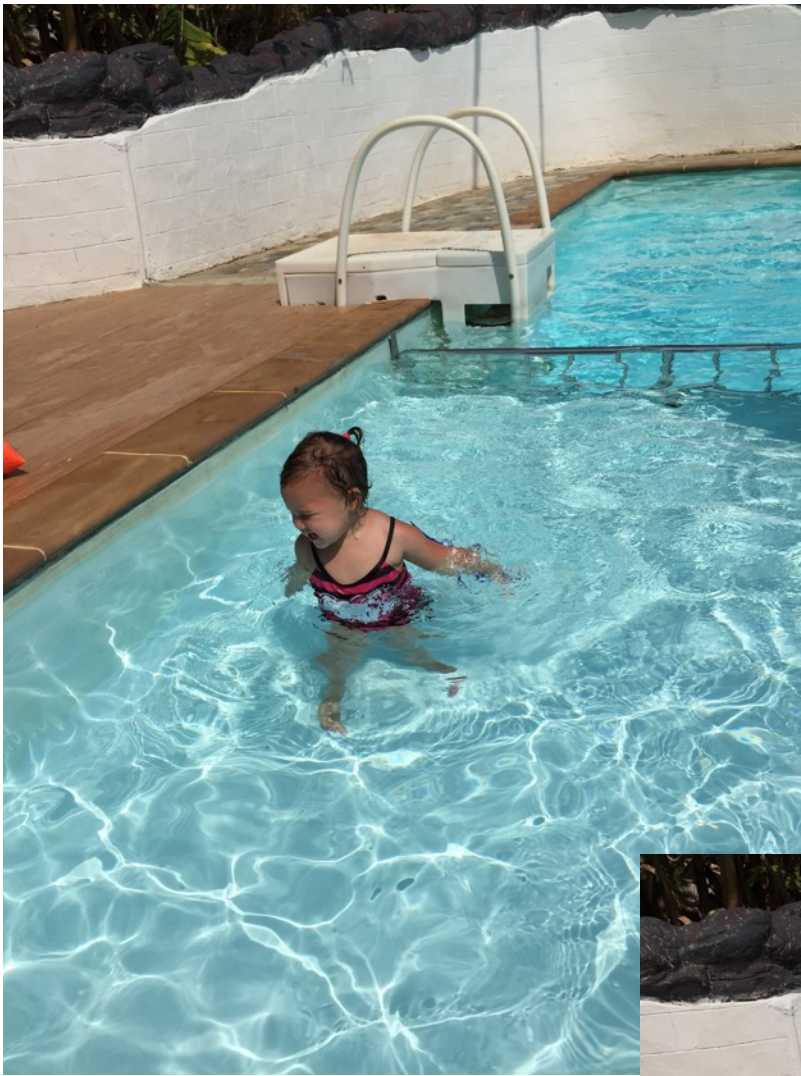
Walked down the beach to the same restaurant to where we ate lunch on our day trip. Ariya had to be carried, as she still wouldn't walk in the sand. Mosquitoes were biting.







Back at the resort, Ariya
playing with some toys
at the resort store.



March 18 - After breakfast
spent the morning hanging
out at the pool.







Then Nong and I got hour long massages right on the beach next to the resort. My aromatherapy oil massage cost only \$14 including tip!





Nong and Ariya sharing
a watermelon shake.





More cold drinks because it was so hot. Below a large lizard cooling off in the pond. It lived in the foliage in the front outside our rooms.





Tai and Nong walking through the resort. We headed to the beachfront restaurant just next door.









When we got back to the resort, some young girls were dancing and Ariya was overjoyed to join in. Then more kids kept showing up to this kids' dance party.



March 19 - Morning at the beach.





After 3 days Ariya finally
played in the sand!







Showered and dressed
up like an island girl,
Ariya is ready for dinner.











Ariya found a young friend to help her chase after one of the kitty cats running around the resort.

Mmmm—Mango sticky rice for dessert!





March 20 - Another boat trip out to Emerald Cave. Ariya and I stayed on the boat and ate paprika potato snack chips while Tai and Adam snorkeled into the cave where they discovered a small beach area within the cave. They said it was crowded with other tourists but otherwise beautiful. It was dark in the cave and Tai wore like a miner's light on her head to see.





They roped other boats together to anchor them at the busy Emerald Cave.





Then we went to yet another island called Koh Mook. This was by far the one with the best beach...silky smooth sand, no broken shells and the coral was far out so easy to walk in to swim.



Don't we all dream of resting in a hammock at a paradise beach!!







We ordered mango shakes and someone who had been there before us made a heart out of leaves in the sand.







Calm, clear, beautiful,
warm water. This
island does have a
bigger town
somewhere inland,
but we had this area
of the beach to
ourselves.





This sand was so silky
smooth.





Back on the boat but then the boat broke down and we had to call for another one to come rescue us. Not a bad view to sit and enjoy while waiting.





We transferred to another long-tail boat and they took us to another spot to snorkel. This time I went in. There were so many fish that you had to wave your hands to get them away just to be able to get in the water.





Ariya enjoyed feeding
the fish crackers and
watching them all
swarm to the surface.





Back at the resort spinach and cheese casserole and a coconut shake for lunch. Ariya practiced on Tai's snorkel getting ready for when she's old enough to jump in the water and see the fish up close.





"Yai" Nong and Ariya
on the front porch
looking at the big
lizard.





They cleverly had these little cement pools of water to wash the sand off your feet before going in the indoor areas or pool area. Ariya looking to me to lift her over the water.





Sunset at the beach. Ariya all dressed up for family photo.





Ariya stops to smell the flowers
and then to the beach for
family photos.









March 21 - A big green bug joined us for our last buffet breakfast at the resort before checking out and getting on another long-tail boat that would transport us to the town of Trang on the mainland of Thailand.



Our luggage aboard and off we go saying goodbye to paradise.







Pulling into the dock at Trang.





Adam and a young
man from the boat
unloaded our luggage.





Only motorbikes could fit on this narrow bridge to the land, so we walked to the main road to meet our van.



Our van was a few minutes late arriving so we didn't have enough time to explore Trana.





Another comfy air conditioned van. The driver was supposed to take us directly to the airport. Realizing we could pretty much find a way to bargain with some extra cash to get a driver to take us sightseeing, we left the island many hours early in order to hopefully explore this part of the southern mainland of Thailand before catching our plane.





With Tai able to speak her native language to the driver, she managed to have him call his company to get approval to take us around. Upon approval he first took us to lunch at a locally famous chicken and fish restaurant. I couldn't get past the smell of the fish and meat smells to order a meal, so I ended up just eating white rice.





Ariya again fell asleep for her nap. The driver next took us to a large Buddhist temple complex called the Cave of the Tiger. Depending upon donations to complete, this large building was still under construction after many years.





Ariya woke up in time to
sightsee.





I saw these statues like the one on the left everywhere in Thailand and mostly in temples. I looked it up on the Internet after getting home and they are "temple guardian statues."







After walking around outside, we walked up a ramp to go into a cave, which was originally the cave where a tiger lived, so that's why the temple is called "Cave of the Tiger."





Lighting incense
inside the cave
temple.

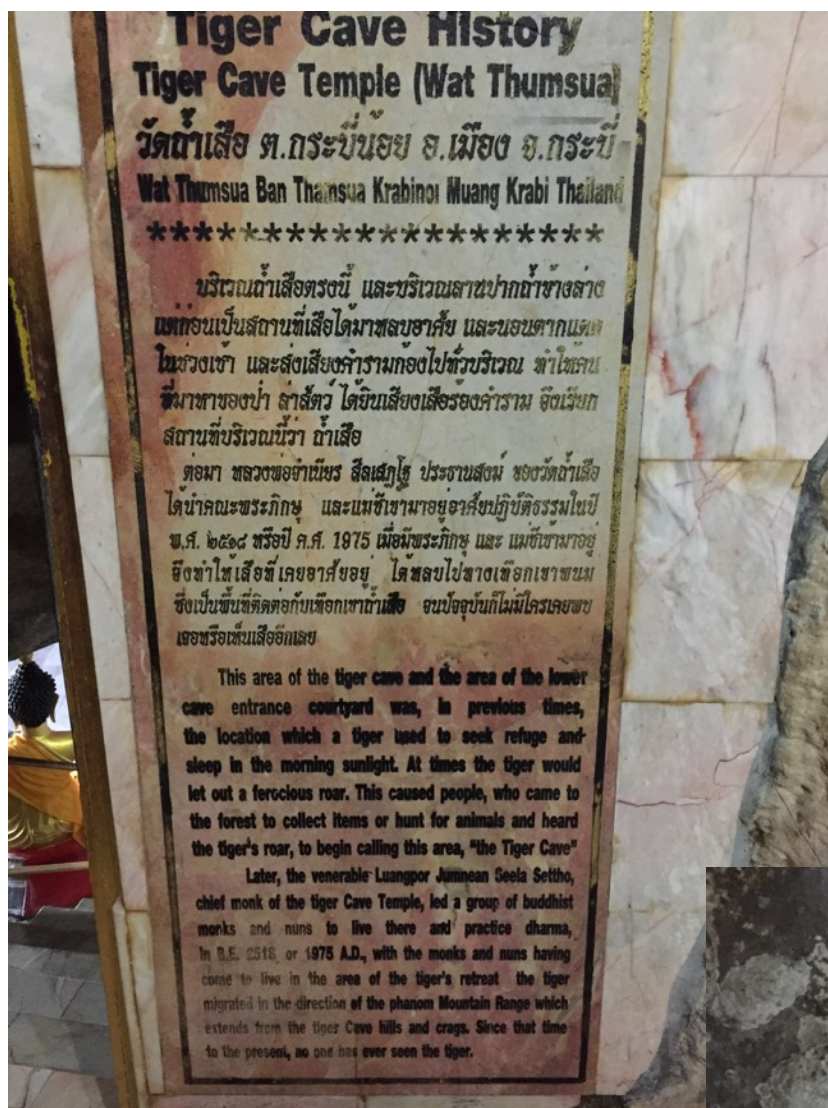




With a small donation we all
got our Buddhist string
bracelets tied on us—this is
Ariya's, Tai's and mine.

Up a few stairs to this tiger
statue shrine.



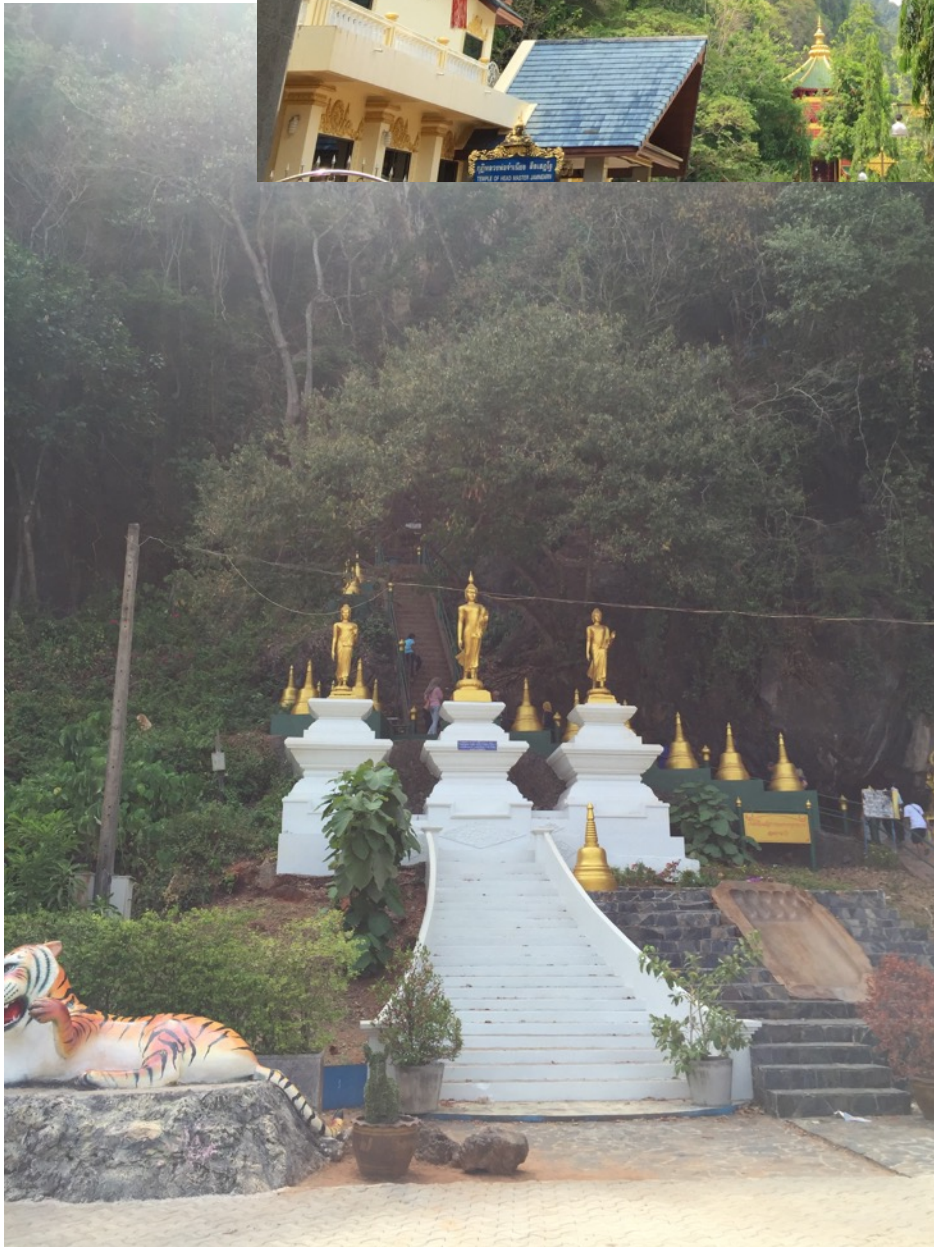


Explanation of the history of the
 tiger cave....and the statue
 below looks like jade but I'm
 pretty sure it's just green glass.











The main temple is at the top of the mountain 1,237 steps up. We all opted not to climb up. The humidity and heat here was absolutely unbearable.





But we were entertained by the monkeys that climbed down the mountain, over the statue and to the bottom to try to steal food.





The monkey below was so quick to steal a Coca-Cola plastic soda bottle from a Chinese tourist's backpack, proceeded to chew it open and drank the whole bottle!





We thought this monkey was probably pregnant.

And a lovely statue of the Buddha doing hand mudras.





And lastly a Chinese style pagoda shrine to Quan Yin. We decided we had enough of the heat and humidity and thought going to the airport we could sit in the air conditioning for the last few hours while waiting for our flight back to Chiang Mai. But we found out that the air conditioning was broke in the terminal we were in. Air Asia kept us waiting an extra hour of standing in line before checking in...and I was hungry with a headache from not having any lunch! We all agreed that the Krabi Airport experience was the low point of the trip.



