



Resurgence of Samui tourism fueled by domestic travelers, with 69% Y-O-Y growth

Muted Chinese traveler demand pushes hotels to diversify source markets and adapt to a changing landscape

“In 2023, Samui hosted 3,541,821 visitors, evenly split between domestic and foreign travelers, marking a shift from the pre-COVID dominance of overseas tourists. The gap between airport arrivals and visitors at registered tourist accommodations reflects that many visitors came by ferry from the mainland. A domestic influx has been crucial in driving the recovery, with the total number of registered hotel guests surpassing 2019 levels by 1.5 times. Airport passenger arrivals trailed, closing the year at 94% of pre-COVID level, with a total of 1,208,364 passenger arrivals.

Diving into the international sources markets, lower volume of Chinese travelers, previously one of the key source markets, now constitute less than 4% market share. This has been replaced by increased travelers from Europe, USA and a re-emerging Israeli market. The new mix of foreign travelers has resulted in a longer average length of stay.

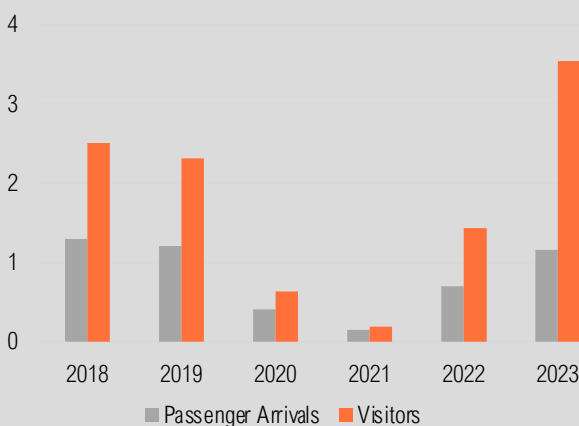
Samui’s tourism legacy was previously influenced by its limited gateway and reliance on Bangkok Airways, leading to higher travel costs compared to regional counterparts. Nevertheless, the limitations have also allowed the island to attract high-spending tourists which are favorable for hotel operators and maintain its position as a premium beach resort destination.

However, the cycle is expected to gradually shift as the government and Samui International Airport plan for expansion of the airport and adding a cruise terminal to increase traffic to the island. The entry of Scoot Airlines from Singapore and new routes promise further growth in the near future with an increased number of regional upscale travelers. Looking at the current momentum, the island-wide 2024 Q1 hotel RevPAR has already outperformed 2023 and may close at a 5-year historical high.”

..... by Bill Barnett, Managing Director, C9 Hotelworks

Samui Airport Arrivals vs. Total Visitors

No. of Person (In Millions)



Source: C9 Hotelworks Market Research

Market Trends

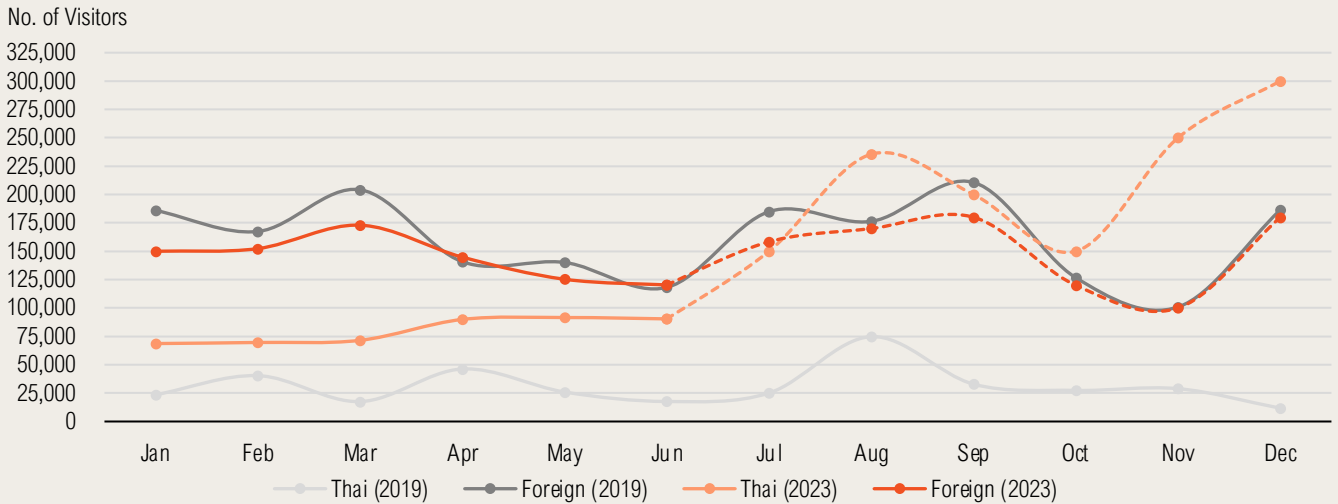
- Samui's hotel supply has steadily increased since 2017, reaching 630 establishments and 24,107 keys by 2023. Most new developments are boutique-scale and concentrated in the northern region, especially in Bophut. Branded properties make up 69% of the development pipeline.
- Visitor numbers during the high season are typically 1.5 to 2 times higher than in the low season. Foreign travelers peak during winter and summer holidays, while the domestic market rises in August. There are smaller upward spikes in February and April, coinciding with the Lunar New Year and Songkran.
- The government aims to position Samui as a premier luxury destination, with plans to develop a cruise terminal to attract high-end tourists. A PPP (public-private-partnership) funding mechanism will reportedly be used by the Thai government to fund the project.

Hotel & Tourism Market Review

Demand Indicators

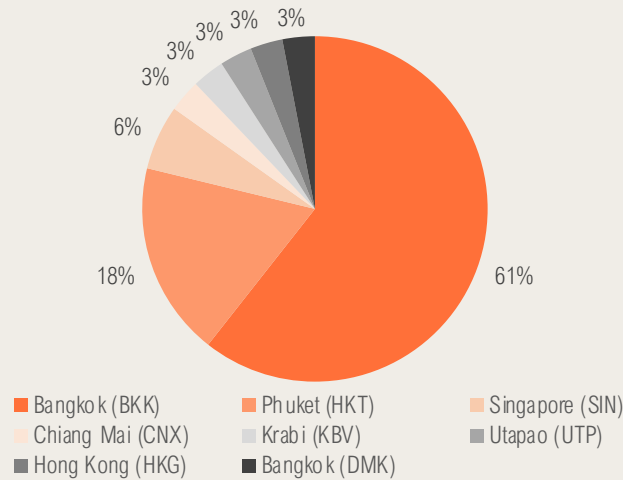
Previously, foreign travelers made up over 80% of tourists at registered accommodations. However, during COVID-19, internal tourism promotions resulted in a rise in domestic visitors and the trend has continued post-COVID. In 2023, Thai visitors totaled 1,767,415 compared to 372,210 in 2019. While foreign travelers also rebounded to 1,774,406, it has not yet reached pre-COVID levels.

Local and Foreign Visitors to Samui, 2019 vs. 2023



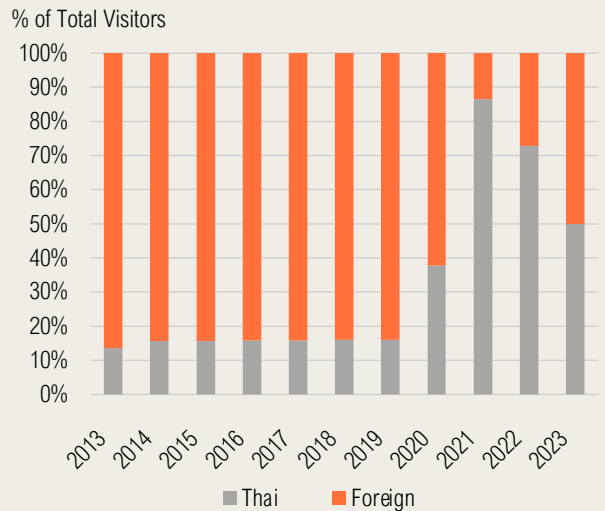
Source: MOTS and C9 Hotelworks Market Research

Top Airport Sources by Daily Flight Movements – 2024 YTD



Source: Samui International Airport and C9 Hotelworks Market Research

Local vs. International Market Share, 2018 - 2023



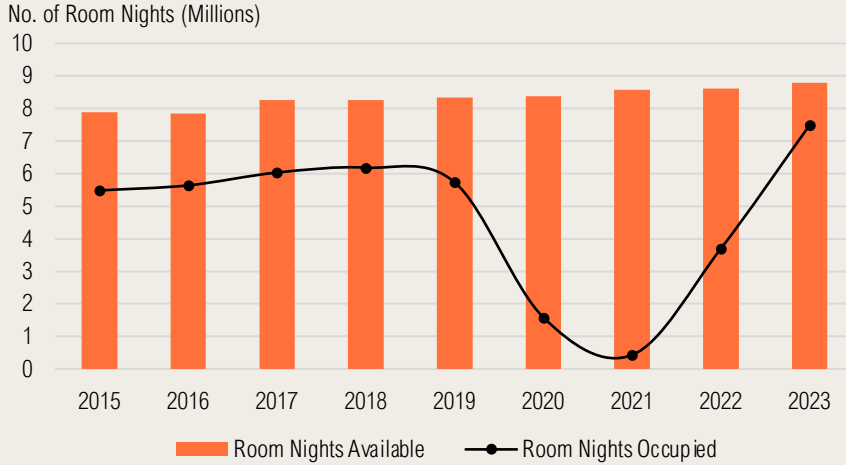
Source: MOTS and C9 Hotelworks Market Research

- Samui International Airport, owned by Bangkok Airways, has seen a steady rise in passenger arrivals over the past decade, except during the COVID-19 pandemic (2019-2022). From 2015 to 2019, the airport achieved a 4.2% Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR). In 2023, arrivals recovered to 94% of 2019 levels, indicating a strong tourism rebound, largely fueled by domestic visitors.
- As of FY2023, Samui recorded a total of 12,628 flight arrivals, marking a 60% year-over-year increase. Although this is only 88% of the 2019 flight arrival numbers, passenger arrivals have reached 94% of 2019 levels. This indicates better seat utilization levels on flights.

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Supply Indicators

Supply & Demand of Registered Tourist Accommodation

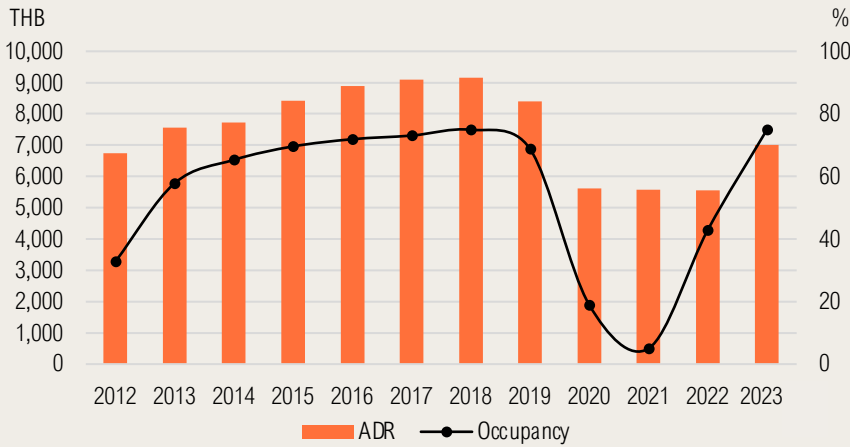


Island-wide occupancy average between 75% to 85% for FY2023, with Q1 2024 having significantly outperformed last year.

The 5-year CAGR of pre-COVID demand showed an annualized growth of 1.12%. In contrast, the compound annual growth rate of 2019 to 2023 (post-COVID) has surged to 6.92%.

Source: MOTS and C9 Hotelworks Market Research

Hotel Performance of Upscale Tier Properties



As of 2023, Samui's market-wide hotel performance was in line with 2019, with RevPAR at THB5,250 compared to THB5,780 pre-COVID, driven by a significant increase in room night demand. Although rates have not yet returned to 2019 levels, RevPAR in 2024 is expected to expand to market recovery levels.

Source: MOTS and C9 Hotelworks Market Research

Hotel Pipeline

Hotel Name	Location	Key	Opening Year
Centara Life Lamai Resort Samui	Lamai	60	2024
Moorea Boutique Resort Samui	Ban Tai	13	2024
79 Beach Club & Resort	Bophut	31	2024
The Odeta Samui	Bophut	99	2024
Marasca Samui	Chaweng	62	2024
Samui Coral Bay	Talingngam	42	2025
Hotel Indigo Samui Chaweng Beach	Chaweng	250	2026
Wyndham Garden	Bophut	201	2027
Sofitel Samui	Bophut	83	TBA
Total		841	

*To Be Announced

Source: C9 Hotelworks Market Research

