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SAREERAYA RESORT

Once a loved backpackers destination, Chaweng Beach on Koh Samui island is now the location of more than a few smart resorts, one of the newest of which is Sareeraya Resort. It has only been open since December 2008 and has already won the Landscape Design Honourable Award 2008 from the Landscape Designers Association of Thailand. As with many of the new resorts popping up in Thailand, Sareeraya's contemporary oriental style indoor/outdoor architecture, dubbed tropical chic, is stylish and in tune with its surroundings on the beachfront at Chaweng Beach. The resort's exact location on the beach is at the quieter end, and the resort itself, is sanctuary-like.

It is made up of only 26 villas and suites, many with private pools, some with outdoor jacuzzis. If you have a pool villa you may not want to leave it, but if you do feel inclined to go beachfront get in early for a front row deck chair. The beachfront starts to get interesting around mid-morning when vendors trudging through the sand hauling their wares thicken in number. Music blares from the bars, jet skis rip across the bay and the beachfront restaurants set up their tables on the sand, some on the very edge of the water. Sareeraya Resort doesn't have a spa, and little wonder given what's on offer within a 30-second stroll along the beach; dozens of charming open-air massage and nail salons where patrons lying on mattresses in their swimmers drift off to the sound of the lapping ocean and ladies chatting in Thai. A short stroll from the back of the resort will take you to Chaweng's commercial strip, a little Bangkok where tourists party until the small hours. Sareeraya's environmental responsibility programs include the Samui Coconut Tree Implant program for the island, recycling and a staff education program on energy and water saving.

View from the beach

Sareeraya Suite

DETAILS

Website: www.sareeraya.com
Location: Chaweng Beach, Koh Samui
Spa: No spa but there are massage gazebos by the pool
Restaurants and Bars: Chef's Table for international cuisine, local dishes and fresh seafood. Her Bar is by the pool and Read Red Bar is near the lobby.

Sareeraya Suite with pool

Beach front