



Vikings on Koh Tao

Joint Thai/Swedish project sells land on prime location on Koh Tao

By Lars Pinnerup

Koh Tao, in English Turtle Island, favored destination for divers and people fond of acquiring sun burnt backs while snorkeling over the islands stunning coral reefs, is experiencing a Viking invasion some 1000 years after the heydays of the blonde nordic warriors.

The land is divided into 17 plots varying in sizes from 700– 900 square meters. The plots are situated in an elevating landscape giving them all a great sea –and land view.

A little over half of the available plots have been sold; two of the

buyers have already constructed houses on the land, while a third is populated by builders and building materials. Depending on the size, the plots are being sold for between 1.000.000-2.000.000 Thai baht a piece. The whole project is being run by Swede Henrik Waara together with his business partners Narong Noorach and Tim Prarichatnon and Marcus Drobyny

Doctor in real estate

Back in Sweden Henrik Waara works as a family physician but as a doctor he also specializes in illnesses related to diving. He got into the Viking Village project after having bought a house on Koh Tao from Mr. Narong.

- I bought a house on Koh Tao I 2007, in which Narrong had invested. He later asked me whether I would be interested in being involved as an investor in future projects. Instead of

just throwing money into it I asked him why we didn't just do the whole thing together. I asked him if there were any suitable land on the island and slowly the idea of Viking Village took shape. We found the land and involved its owner Tim Prarichatnon and later Marcus Drobyny in the project as well. I created a website for the project and shortly after, we were in business.

Swedish buyers for Viking project A narrow dirt road with trees on both sides leads up to the hill where the Viking village is being established. As Henrik is busy with his duties as a doctor back in Sweden it is mainly Narong Noorach who is in charge of the practical and daily operations of the business. The project first saw light in the July 2008, and so far most of the buyers are Swedish with the exception of one who is British.

Narong Noorach does not hesitate when asked why people from the

other side of the world should invest in a piece of land on Koh Tao, construct a house on it and use it, either for permanent living or as a holiday retreat:

- The island is a true paradise for snorkeling and Scuba diving. We have beautiful coral reefs and some of the best diving sites in Thailand. But the island is also an ideal retreat for the person who wants to relax on the beach, Narong Noorach explains.

He have designed and built a house for himself at the foot of the hill, and it is also him that is responsible for designing and constructing the houses on the plots.

- But the buyers have their say and influence on what the house is supposed to look like. I try to meet their demands in terms of materials and design. If they want I am also capable of handling the interior design for them, Narong Noorach says and continue breaking down the economy



on the purchase of house and land in Viking Village:

- The buyer is looking at a total investment between 5-6 million Thai baht for land, house and furniture. On Samui Island, such a house on a similar location will cost from ten million Thai baht and up.

There is a one year warranty on the house, and despite the relatively short assurance Narong Noorach is sure that there will not be any problems with the houses.

- We have used good quality materials and we have done this before, so people will not get any unpleasant surprises, he states.

Koh Tao, paradise without spark

With its 21 square kilometers Koh Tao is a small island. Most people visiting the island go there for the beautiful scenery above and beneath the water.