

# Keeping Fit With Muay Thai

**M**ore and more people are looking to blend their holiday to Thailand with some form of education and physical fitness program that is an important part of a healthy life.

One of the more popular ways to achieve both is to visit one of the growing numbers of Muay Thai training camps that have opened up on the island in recent years.

We managed to visit one of Phuket's local training camps, Tiger Muay Thai and MMA, nestled amongst the rubber trees between Chaofa East and Chaofa West Roads in Chalong. It is the largest complex on Phuket and arguably in Thailand as well.

It has been operating for just over two years but already boasts some 18 trainers, all current or ex-fighters of Muay Thai and several variations of the



sport. The camp is gaining quite a reputation already after Master 'Tody', who runs one of the largest Muay Thai schools in the world in Las Vegas, described it as the best in Thailand on a recent visit to all training camps in the country.

One of their focuses at the moment is on MMA or mixed martial arts. This applies many forms of fighting styles as the name suggests into moulding a well rounded athlete. Head of the MMA program is 'Magical' Ray Elbe. He is a Lotus Club Purple Belt under Juliano Prado. The Thai manager and head trainer at TMT is Piyanat Chaimanee "Phet". He has been at the camp since the start of operations and is presently helping another trainer Khun "Ngoo" polish his skills in MMA to put the centre on the world stage. Khun Ngoo is off to Russia, China and Indonesia soon to compete in the MMA championships. But if honing your skills to get to the

international level is not your idea of fun then TMT can help you out there too. They run many different types of courses for children to adults in disciplines from Muay Thai, Muay Boran (the oldest form of Muay Thai), Muay C h a i y a (Ayutthaya period

combat fighting), Krabi Krabong (using combat sticks), and MMA to more sedate relaxation disciplines of Yoga.

Short term tourist orientated courses run from 600 baht per day to 8,000 baht per month for most courses and because the camp is set in such a picturesque setting there is ample accommodation onsite and next door if you decide to stay awhile. Accommodation packages range from 12,000 baht per to 32,000 baht per month depending on the level of luxury you wish to immerse yourself in.

Children's courses are only around 1,000 baht per month and if you are an Expat living on Phuket you can get discounts of up to 50%.

There is a UK certified Sports Therapist attached to the camp and along with the extensive range of courses provided, plans for Detox facilities are in the final stages.

To the Thais, Muay Thai is regarded as a prestigious national sport. Thai boys will in one or another way, learn how to box Thai style. Even Thai girls will know enough of the basic principles and to be able to use it for self-defense when necessary which can be scary even when you have removed all sharp objects.

It can only be assumed that Thai boxing existed since the Thai emigrated from



the South of China. The [Tai tribe] immigrants had to hide from attackers and met with resistance from local people. In short, they had to fight endlessly for their survival. By the time they managed to settle in the "Gold Promontory", the Thais had gone through to countless battles and many lives had been lost. The ancient weapons consisted only of spears, swords, pikes or bows and arrows. But in hand-to-hand combat weapons become clumsy, and elbows, knees, feet and fists became more practical. This must have been extremely successful, as it was then developed into a form of martial arts used in battle. Modern Muay Thai incorporates these skills as well as blending in a health and fitness regime so you can get the most benefit from your stay.

So whether you feel like trying to punch someone's lights out or just keeping fit and healthy with some Yoga, TMT has something for everyone.

*Tiger Muay Thai and MMA is located at 7/6 Moo 5 Soi Tad-led in Chalong.*

*You can visit their website at [www.tigermuaythai.com](http://www.tigermuaythai.com)*

