

PRESTIGE

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In Residence

With its dramatic hillside location overlooking Layan Beach in Phuket, The Residences by ANANTARA is the kind of place anyone would want to call home – even if it's just temporary – as FRANÇOIS OOSTHUIZEN discovers soon after checking in

WHEN THAI HOSPITALITY brand Anantara decided to jump on the branded residences bandwagon, the philosophy was clear: go all the way, or don't bother. That meant going big – palatially big. The result is 15 jaw-dropping, two-storey luxury villas ranging in size from 1,695 to 3,220 square metres (three to nine bedrooms), with purchase prices

starting from around 216 million Baht. Welcome to your own little slice of paradise – that is, if the price tag doesn't make your eyes water.

For starters, pristine Layan Beach, on Phuket's northwest coast, is one of the island's most sought-after and exclusive addresses. It's also the location of the much-lauded Anantara Layan Phuket Resort, the brand's flagship getaway in the south. Staggered up on a hillside next to the resort, the residences are accessed through

a private entrance – a gateway of sorts into a world of unsurpassed luxury and superlative service.

With names like Villa Andaman, Villa Naka, Villa Racha and Villa Lanta and the likes, each of the two-storey residences is unique in its layout. A combination of freestanding buildings, open-air pavilions, a 21-metre infinity pool,

staircases, landscaped terraces, sun decks and 180-degree views over the Andaman Sea combine to make for a contemporary, Thai-style compound – the work of Habita Architects.

Top-notch credentials inside out, interiors by renowned Jaya International Design – drawing on the cultural and ecological context of the setting – and every hi-tech lifestyle accoutrement you'd expect come as standard in each of the residences. The biggest luxury of all must be the generous volumes – ceilings rising up to majestic heights, sweeping outdoor spaces and indoor living areas of epic

proportions. Clearly, space was not an issue.

The residences are available for both freehold and leasehold ownership (30 years, with an option to renew for two consecutive terms), depending on the eligibility of the purchaser. We're told that 10 of the residences have already been snapped up, with just five remaining on the market.

Owners have the option to include their residences in a rental pool, managed by Anantara Layan Phuket Resort, with daily rates starting from 100,300 Baht for a three-bedroom residence. It includes the dedicated services of an on-site butler to see to your every whim. And of course, the five-star facilities of Anantara Layan Phuket Resort is just a short buggy ride away – including a variety of dining options (arguably the most

impressive breakfast spread on the island!), unadulterated self-indulgence at the famed Anantara Spa, concierge services to explore attractions on and around the island, all sorts of water activities, a children's club, and then some.

Undoubtedly the best part about the residences is how well they are equipped. A peek inside the kitchen reveals a space that would please any professional chef, and indeed that can be arranged for private dinners and parties – simply brief your butler and start thinking about what to wear.

If all of this sounds quite like bliss, that's because it is. **■**

