



NGA KHIN NYO GYEE ISLAND, MYANMAR (BURMA)

Boulder Island

This remote island known for its balancing boulder may have inspired Peter Pan's Neverland.

The most remote and far-out island in the Mergui Archipelago, Nga Khin Nyo Gyee Island, or "Boulder Island," is known for the rounded boulder curiously perched atop another rock off the coast of the bay. The iconic balancing rock sits on a tidal platform amid a coral reef garden in the aptly named Boulder Bay. In between the rocky headlands, white sands stretch across the bay, forming a picture-perfect tropical island scene.

Only recently opened to foreigners, the over-800 islands of the Mergui Archipelago were once the domain of pirates, and the archipelago has suffered from plundering and pillaging throughout its past. Closed following Burma's independence and designated "out-of-bounds" during the decades of military rule, it is only in the last few years that intrepid visitors have been allowed back into the island group, which sits in the Andaman Sea off the coast of southern Myanmar.

The archipelago is now a sought-after dive destination, featuring mega-fauna such as sharks, whale sharks, and dugongs, and it is sometimes regarded as the last island frontier. Boulder Island is the outermost island of the group, which helps to explain its other claim to fame: that it may have inspired the mythical faraway island of Neverland in J.M. Barrie's *Peter Pan*.

A handful of eco-resorts have opened up recently on Boulder Island, offering low-impact, high-immersion experiences, including conservation projects showcasing the unique environment of the island.

Know Before You Go

To visit Boulder Island, you need to have an evisa for Myanmar, around \$50 USD, and to arrange in advance your trip out to the island, where Boulder Bay Eco Resort is based. There are weekly scheduled departures from Kawthaung in Myanmar, across the estuary from Ranong in Thailand. Another way to visit the archipelago is aboard the Sea Gipsy on Island Safaris, which calls into Boulder Island on its itinerary. Island access is restricted to booked guests and those on approved itineraries.

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