

KOH RONG, CAMBODIA

by Madeleine Adamson

SONG
SAA
PRIVATE
ISLAND

*CAMBODIA'S ANSWER
TO KOH SAMUI*



At Song Saa, one can explore underwater or visit neighbouring islands

Investors touring Southeast Asia for a virgin piece of land should cast their eye over the Koh Rong archipelago in the Gulf of Thailand. Song Saa Private Island, to be completed in late 2011, is Asia's first environmentally planned island resort. The development spans Cambodia's Koh Ouen and Koh Bong islands, which bear the romantic name of *Song Saa* (Khmer for 'sweethearts'). Connected by a footbridge, the islands offer untouched rainforests, white sand beaches and a protected marine reserve. Yet Song Saa is only 30 minutes by speedboat from the newly opened Sihanoukville International Airport.

Cambodia — a popular last stop for backpackers after Thailand, Vietnam or Laos — has yet to be recognised as a luxury destination in its own right. But the tide has begun to turn, thanks to the country's budding economy, low development costs and growing access via regional carriers. Song Saa looks set to rival the resort towns of Koh Samui and Phuket that boasted immaculate beaches 40 years ago. >>





Australian couple Rory and Melita Hunter are the founders of Song Saa. When they wed a few years ago, the Hunters vowed to create something distinctive that would encapsulate their love for Cambodia and the environment. Despite experiencing challenges along the way, they have lived up to their oath. As Rory puts it, “It was about the perseverance to remain true to our ideals and never give up.”

Brocon Investment Co Ltd, Rory’s property development company, is the first foreign development company to sell Cambodian real estate. Brocon has initiated a leasehold ownership model that allows foreigners to purchase Cambodian properties and provides a 50 per cent finance option for expats. Brocon currently possesses a 99-year leasehold (starting from 2008) over both Koh Ouen and Koh Bong. The lease agreement also allows the company to sublease plots of land and individual villas to investors.

Whichever villa one chooses to call home — be it a jungle, overwater or ocean-view villa — one will have

an undisturbed view of the Gulf of Thailand. There are also amenities like air-conditioning, an in-room safe, integrated Bose sound system, iPod docking station and Wi-Fi broadband. When it’s time for important guests, one can entertain with a mini-wine cellar and bar. The two-bedroom villas come with butler service.

Melita, the property’s architect and designer, made sure that the villas fit in with their environment. Constructed by local craftsmen, they mimic the elements of traditional Cambodian fishing villages, built with sustainable native materials like driftwood, thatched roofs, local sandstones, timber, bark and bamboo. The result? Natural yet elegant sanctuaries.

What makes Song Saa’s location so idyllic is the pristine condition of its natural surroundings. Anemones and corals populate a colourful, diverse marine area. One can dive, kayak, snorkel or sail, or trek around the rainforest and the 20 deserted islands nearby.

For relaxation, some options are a sunset cocktail at the lounge, a barbecue

The villas are built with native materials such as bamboo, driftwood and sandstone

No matter where each villa faces, every window boasts a beautiful view



SONG SAA PRIVATE ISLAND IS ASIA'S FIRST ENVIRONMENTALLY PLANNED ISLAND RESORT

feast at Song Saa's overwater restaurant, a sunset Champagne cruise, or the cool waters of the large infinity pool linking the east and west sides of the island. If privacy and intimacy are preferred, there is the private deck of one's villa, one's pick of white sandy beaches from surrounding islands, or the spa and wellness centre tucked away in the rainforest. And yoga lovers can greet the day with a yoga and meditation session at sunrise. All these conspire to make Song Saa a paradise-like experience.

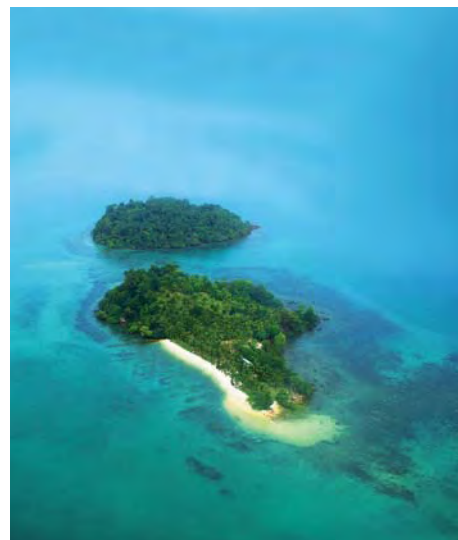
Song Saa has an experienced management team in charge of maintaining the ultimate luxury island lifestyle. General Manager Jean-Paul Riby, with more than 15 years of experience in Asia, is a specialist in remote luxury resorts. Project Manager Philippe Riant has two decades of experience in every stage of a resort's life cycle.

Moreover, the Hunters have established a protected marine reserve spanning over 10 million sq ft (one million sq m) and extending 656 ft

(200 m) from the edges of the island's reefs. The resort's well-qualified staff abide by international standards in caring for the reserve's rare creatures, such as dugongs, seahorses and exotic tropical fish. A portion of Song Saa's revenue is allocated for local education programmes.

After the success of their first phase of villa sales, the Hunters are currently offering the final five villas to investors. Given Song Saa's outstanding qualities, plus the growing popularity of Cambodia as a holiday destination, investors can expect to reap significant financial benefits. According to Rory, investors are guaranteed a yield of eight per cent over five years: "There is nowhere else (in the world) where a buyer could get this standard of investment at such a price."

Not every land that calls itself 'paradise' boasts a clean ecological conscience and a return of investment to boot. With all these, Song Saa is as seductive as a Southeast Asian island can be. 🏰



FACT SHEET

Name of property

Song Saa Private Island

Developer

Brocon Investment Co, Ltd

City / Country

Koh Rong Archipelago, Cambodia

Specific location

Song Saa or 'Sweetheart' Islands (Koh Ouen and Koh Bong)

Total land area

10 ha, including the overwater area between Koh Ouen (3 ha) and Koh Bong (4 ha)

Number of villas

25

Total floors for each villa

1-300 sq m

Price per square metre USD4,250 psm

Number of bedrooms

1-bedroom or 2-bedroom

Number of bathrooms

1 (in 1-bedroom villa) and 2 (in 2-bedroom villa)

Architect Melita Hunter

Interior designer Melita Hunter

Landscape designer Melita Hunter

Land term Leasehold

Special features

Protected marine reserve, infinity-edged swimming pool, spa and wellness centre, yoga and meditation centre, beachside water sports centre, ecological programme to experience the area's flora and fauna, equipped to hold weddings

Contact

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From the overwater villa, the sea is the extension of one's patio