



Andaman Discoveries Short-Listed for Two Prestigious International Responsible Tourism Awards

Nominated for Virgin Holidays and Wild Asia's Responsible Tourism Awards

Kuraburi, Thailand - October 2007 - The tsunami brought a great number of changes: entire villages were relocated, livelihoods were impacted, and loved ones lost. Inspiringly, many communities have created new opportunities in the wake of loss, especially in the area of eco-tourism. As a result of its efforts working with these communities since the tsunami, Andaman Discoveries has been short-listed for two International Responsible Tourism Awards, including the biggest and most prestigious in the world, the Virgin Holidays Responsible Tourism Awards, to be presented at the World Travel Mart in London on 14 November to mark the world's first Responsible Tourism Day.

"Andaman Discoveries has been short-listed for their approach to tourism -- for putting people first. They recognized that the best custodians of cultural heritage are the local people and they have worked with communities to empower them."

Justin Francis, Director, Virgin Holidays Responsible Tourism Awards

The Virgin Holidays Responsible Tourism Awards, the biggest of its kind in the world, are organized by online travel agent responsibletravel.com, in association with The Times, World Travel Market, and Geographical Magazine -- the magazine of The Royal Geographical Society.

"By creating quality experiences that bring equal cultural exchanges between guests and villagers, Andaman Discoveries assists communities to preserve their traditional ways of life and natural environment."

Kelly May, Andaman Discoveries Director, named "Angel of the Andaman" for her relief efforts straight after the tsunami in 2004.

"One the strengths in Andaman Discoveries is their ability to work so closely with the community. They are part of it and work from within listening to the villagers ideas and guiding them towards making them reality. It's the communities themselves who are driving this initiative."

Rebecca Thomason, Responsible Tourism Coordinator and Judge of Wild Asia's Responsible Tourism Awards

"Andaman Discoveries has helped us make community-based tourism a reality and enabled us to initiate several development projects including children activities, a community centre, adult education, mangrove conservation and waste management awareness."

Nartladda Klongwitti local guide and Andaman Discoveries vocational graduate.

Based in Thailand, two and a half hours north of Phuket, Andaman Discoveries is [North Andaman Tsunami Relief](#) (NATR)'s long-term commitment to the villages of the North Andaman to enable self-sufficiency in the area of community-based tourism and community-led development.

Contact:

Kelly May, Co-Director

Andaman Discoveries

Telephone: 66 (0)81 243 3848

Email: info@andamandiscoveries.com

Website: www.andamandiscoveries.com

