

“30 Minutes & a Sprite”

I am going to bring you on Two truck rides... Two truck rides to a place called Patong- an area of Phuket Island ... These are not imaginary, they are trips I've been making for the past month now. The First truck ride leaves at 1:00 in the afternoon. We fill our water bottles up, pile into the back of a truck and head to Patong. We pass the westernized billboards, brick & metal 'Patong City' sign, & hold on tight as we slowly jerk up the steepest vehicle hill climb imaginable. As we round the top, the locals honk their bike and truck horns at the temple for the Buddhist 'Spirit on the Hill'. I guess we partake sometimes as well =)

We say 'Khorb Koon Kah' (thank you) to the truck for surviving the climb. As we descend down the hill, we can see the high-rise buildings and beachfront. Welcome to Patong. In a 15 minute car ride, we managed to drive over a 'mountain' & into a 'different world'. To any tourist, Patong would appear to be a prime vacation location. There are families and groups from all around the world walking the beach paths, eating ice cream, and shopping from the countless vendors. It seems to be a great place.



Patong Beach during the Day

The Second truck ride is at 9:00 at night. We get in the truck, head up the hill, pass the billboards, and honk for the 'spirit on the hill'... The same 15 minute ride to the exact same location, except the night visit to Patong is very different...



Bangla Road at Night

At night, Patong is no longer a family vacation destination. There is a main road called 'Bangla Road' with bars lining it and over 200 more in the alleyway's referred to as 'Soi ____' each with a different name.

Thai Girls are everywhere, and they are not bartenders. They 'work' for the bars, are advertised as being 'dates' to the men, and are sometimes even raffled off publically at night. Vendors are everywhere, but instead of selling hats and jewelry, they are selling you a 'ping pong show', which is accepted code.

What's so bad about this?! Patong could represent any city in the world. Isn't prostitution common & a lifestyle people choose to live?

There is a 'dark spirit' over Bangla Road. I haven't been TOLD this... I've BEEN there and I've FELT it myself. I'm