

# Inviting Nature In: Laguna Phuket Creates Pocket Forests with SUGi

Since its establishment, which commenced with a seven-year rehabilitation journey from a tin mine to the integrated resort destination it is today, Laguna Phuket has remained committed to safeguarding its natural environment. Building upon this dedication, Laguna Phuket has now partnered with rewilding specialists from SUGi to reintroduce native wild species into the surrounding landscape. This visionary initiative begins with the creation of several planned 'pocket forests' within the destination, recognised as Asia's premier integrated resort, set against the stunning backdrop of the Andaman Sea.

Under SUGi guidance, the Laguna Phuket team adopted a multi-faceted and multi-phase approach to rebuilding the symbiotic web of Phuket's rainforest. Following the Miyawaki method of afforestation that mimics the way a forest would recolonise itself if humans stepped away, the team selected several secluded areas within Laguna Phuket with the goal of turning them into self-sustaining 'pocket forests' in a year's time.

To that end, the team selected 84 species of native trees based on a survey of the last remaining virgin rainforest Khao Phra Thaew, focusing on those that would occur naturally in that particular area without humans, to build a site that is more responsive to climate change. During the recently completed first phase, a total of 7,500 saplings across Open Kitchen and Veya Grove were planted with the help of children from the neighbourhood and Laguna Phuket Kindergarten who had the chance to learn about local ecosystems as part of Laguna Phuket's commitment to inspire the next generation to become stewards of the planet.

Quick to establish and maintenance-free after the first two-to-three years, Miyawaki forests grow ten times faster and are thirty times as dense as alternative reforestation solutions, providing a greater amount of forage for pollinators, a refuge for birds, and a cool home for insects.

*“This rewilding project with SUGi is about creating spaces where people fall in love with nature in a different way. It is the beginning of our next chapter of bringing communities and rewilding all our properties around the world. We decided to start here, where everything began in 1994 with the first Banyan Tree. This place was a tin mine and we transformed it into what you see today. Now we are going through the next transformation, where we are bringing back an ecosystem of native flora and fauna. Sometimes starting from the beginning can help shape where you want to go in the future. Every resort we have is about experiencing nature in a way that really connects you to your soul. Bringing nature in and inviting people to create their own sanctuary in connection with nature.”*

— Ho Ren Yung, Head of Brand HQ at Banyan Tree Group

Laguna Phuket has been focused on creating public green spaces, including parks, meditation paths, mazes, and the newly rebranded SEED organic farm as part of its commitment to developing sustainable communities.

Given space and time to thrive, the Open Kitchen and Veya Grove plots at Laguna Phuket will become biodiversity hotspots as well as serve as a blueprint for the Banyan Tree Group’s future reforestation initiatives in partnership with SUGi. By implementing a dynamic, innovative approach that benefits both the local community and visitors, the two parties hope that the resulting tranquil sanctuary will help promote interaction between people and nature.

*“Projects such as the collaboration with Laguna Phuket allow rewilding to be an interactive sensory experience - bringing a glimpse of nature back into people's lives. We are all instinctively drawn to seek out nature and travel is becoming more and more about people looking for the beauty, peace and healing qualities nature provides as an antidote to the stresses of modern life. Projects such as this initial one in Laguna also bring the ecological ancestry of the area alive again - a glimpse of the lush forest that once covered much of this beautiful island.”*

— James Godfrey-Faussett, the Lead Forest Maker of SUGi

Joining the ranks of Laguna Phuket's existing sustainability initiatives, the new partnership with SUGi offers a viable means to regenerate an indigenous ecosystem, benefiting human and planetary health. This win-win solution for both people and nature bring the Banyan Tree Group one step closer to achieving sustainable development goals while promoting ecosystem restoration with increased biodiversity.





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ABOUT BANYAN TREE GROUP

Banyan Tree Group (“Banyan Tree Holdings Limited” or the “Group”) is one of the world’s leading independent, multi-brand hospitality groups centred on stewardship and wellbeing while offering exceptional, design-led experiences for the global travellers of today and tomorrow. The Group’s diversified portfolio of hotels, resorts, spas, galleries, golf and residences is centred around an ecosystem of 10 global brands, including the award-winning [Banyan Tree](#), [Angsana](#), [Cassia](#), [Dhawa](#) and [Laguna](#), as well as the highly anticipated new brands of [Homm](#), [Garrya](#), Folio and two new Banyan Tree brand extensions, [Banyan Tree Escape](#) and [Banyan Tree Veya](#).

Founded in 1994 on the core concept of sustainability, Banyan Tree Group seeks to create long-term value for all stakeholders and destinations across its network of properties, products and brands, through a purpose-driven mission. With 8,000 associates across 23 countries, Banyan Tree Management Academy (BTMA) was established in 2008 to support the Group’s goals through advancing people development, management excellence, and learning with integrity and meaning.

Banyan Tree Group has received over 3,000 industry awards and accolades since inception over 25 years ago, most recently being named among the Top 25 Hotel Brands in the World by Travel + Leisure. It has also received recognition for its commitment to environmental protection and community development through its Banyan Tree Global Foundation (BTGF), which aligns the Group’s efforts to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Executing on its regionalised growth strategy, the Group’s global footprint continues to grow with over 50 new hotels and resorts under design and construction in the pipeline, in addition to over 60 operating hotels in 17 countries. As a global industry hospitality leader, Banyan Tree Group firmly embeds its mission to be a business that benefits all stakeholders, for the greater good.

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