

A sunset scene over the Andaman Sea. The sun is a large, bright orange orb in the upper center, partially obscured by a thin layer of clouds. The sky is a deep, dark blue. In the foreground, several traditional wooden boats with tall, thin masts are silhouetted against the water. The water is calm and reflects the light from the sun. The overall mood is serene and peaceful.

**ISLANDS OF THE  
ANDAMAN SEA  
AND THE  
SEA NOMADS**  
PANORAMA



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## INTRODUCTION

**F**acts about the Salone were first met in the travel diary of a Frenchman published in A.D. 1675. In Morris Collis's 'Siamese White' they were called Silita, In A.D. 1891 census report of Kawthoung Township, they were called Silone. Since many years ago, they lived in Malay Peninsula and now, on the islands of Myeik, Botepyin and Kawthoung Districts and further south towards some islands on the Thai West coast. They are called Besing by the Malay. Thais called them Chao Talay or Chao Lay (men of the sea), Chao Nam (men of the water) and Chao Ko (men of the islands).

From the end of British colonial times until recent days no foreigners have been allowed into the Myeik / Mergui archipelago. The area off the Myanmar Tanintharyi / Tennasserim coast is dotted with more than 800 untouched islands, densely forested with jungle, usually a frontline of white beaches and sometimes rocks. One of the very few "virgin" places on this planet, above and under the ocean surface. In 1990 the Myanmar government changed the mostly English names of the islands to native names.

Since the end of the 90 ties some diving companies operating out of Phuket, Thailand, got permission to explore the waters. A very good description of the whole procedures for vessels to enter the area is at <http://www.seal-superyachts-asia.com/sea/myanmar2.htm> a good diving trip company at <http://www.genesis1phuket.com>



