

# Discover the Hidden Treasures of Sandwip Island

Sandwip Island may not be everybody's idea of a great holiday destination but the more adventurous might want to seek it out and discover its many hidden treasures. The island is located in southeastern Bangladesh and is quite different from other parts of the country.



So how exactly is this island different from other parts of the country? For starters, it is an island so it has been more or less separated from mainland Bangladesh for many years – even if inhabitants could use a boat to travel between the island and the mainland. What makes it especially unique is that this is not a coastal island – it is a river island that is situated in the Meghna River estuary. Despite its location the island is so big that it is home to almost 400 000 people! There are also as many as fifteen different wards, 62 mahallas and 34 villages on Sandwip Island. The entire island is 50 kilometers long and 5–15 kilometers wide.

Sandwip Island in Bangladesh has a great historical legacy. The island itself is about 3000 years old and it has been ruled by many different people over the centuries, including Delwar Khan. It was a Portuguese and Arakanese pirate stronghold during the 17th century and even today some of the architecture on the island reflects this part of the island's history.

However, the governor of Bengal saw fit to put an end to this in 1665 as part of attempts to stop his people from being misled by the wild fancies of these unreligious and thieving individuals. Under British rule its location proved to be a bit of an administrative problem. Today it is well and truly a part of Bangladesh. It is not very developed, but where it is developed you may see remnants of its interesting past.

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One of the nice things about Sandwip Island in Bangladesh is that it has been formed by silt deposits from the Meghna river. This makes it an incredibly fertile island – something which the people of the island have been exploiting for years. Large crops of rice, dal, vegetables, coconuts, battle leave and wheat have all been grown on the island at some point in its history. Today the main crops are melons, mangos, pineapples, gaab, jam, coconut and various crops. Sandwip has also gained a reputation for

being a premier ship manufacturer. There are a lot of different things to see on this incredible little island – why not visit it and discover them for yourself?

Photos: Ambdhaka

<http://www.bangladesh.com>

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