5PM - IT'S TIME TO GET HIGH DINING ON TOP OF THE WORLD IN BANGKOK FLOATING DOWN THE MEKONG RIVER

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August-October 2016

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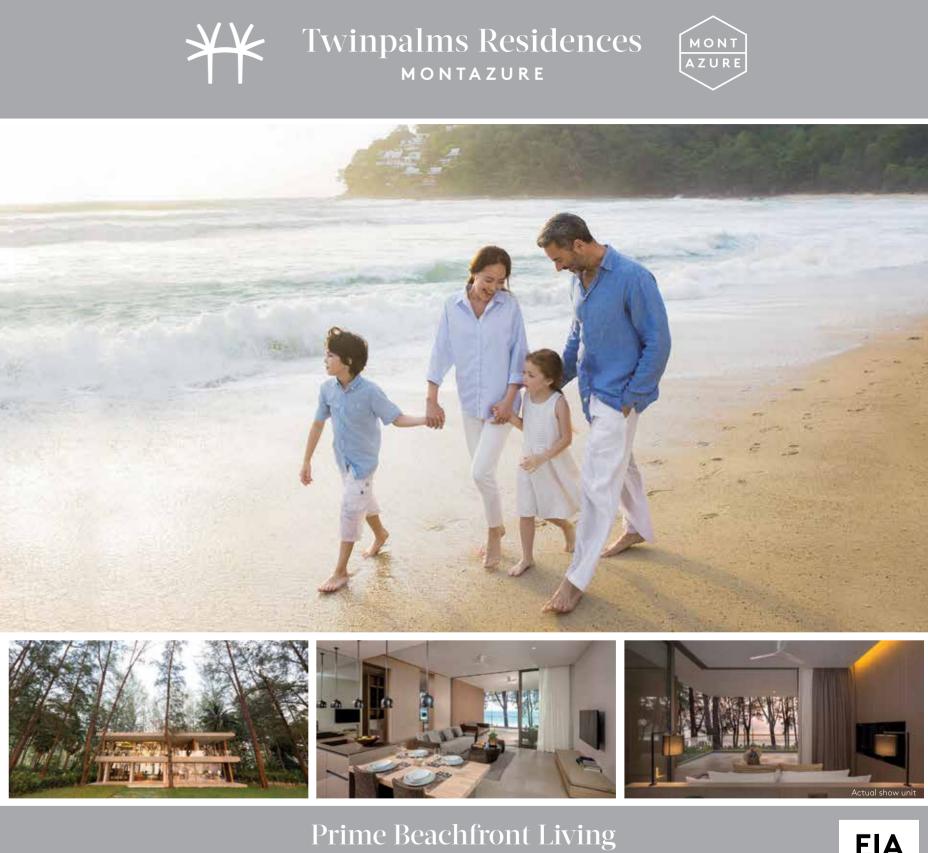
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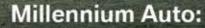
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Hello, my name is NAA,

THE We may have met before, though under a different name. In that case, nice to meet you again.

My name might be new, but you know what I'm all about – class and style, art and design, culture and travel, all served with a dash of luxury and heaps of creativity.

I like to make a lasting impression with my vibrant covers, inspiring stories, large sized photographs and meticulous attention to detail - qualities that are all reflected in my new name – NAA.

I was born in Thailand and my new name is a tribute to my origins. It's in Thai language that it finds a multi-layered meaning. So if you ask what NAA means, many answers will follow: NAA means Face, like those portrayed on my striking covers, each with a story to tell. NAA means Page, like those large pages of mine, filled with enriching stories and beautiful images. NAA means Forward, the only direction there is in a world, where change is the only constant.

Embracing this change and making the best of it, in this issue I travel far and wide to experience all its faces. I cruise down the Mekong river in Laos and gaze at a sunset over the South-China Sea in Vietnam, I enjoy a leisurely weekend break in Phuket and an active one in Samui, I dine on top of the world in Bangkok and escape the urban rush in the slow-paced Nan. During my travels, I meet fascinating people – an artist whose creativity outgrows the boundaries of art galleries and invades the streets, a designer who surfs the wave of change in the fashion industry, an architect who partnered up with Mother Nature for his latest endeavour and one whose magical touch turns everything into gold. I taste, smell and gaze in amazement at the beauty of Asia unfolding right in front of my, and your eyes.

But of course there's more, by no means is it the end of my story. In fact, it's just the beginning. It's time to go far and beyond, spread my pages and fly higher than before.

Come and join me on this journey. Let's go forward. Let's go NAA.







ISSUE





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A town where time stands still

What awaits one hour flight away from Bangkok? 5 degrees less on the thermometer and at least 50% less cars on the roads. Arriving to Nan offers a sensation of relief...and discovery.



Dive head first



ISSUE 1

Down the rabbit hole

Dive head first down the rabbit hole in some of Asia's most unique and extravagant bars.



76 Healthier body, mind and soul

In theory it takes little to get fitter and healthier – Eat better, move more and you'll be there. In reality you need one more thing – strong mind for better self-control.

Showing the potential



Singapore gets itself ready for an artistic extravaganza. During more than one month, between August 11 and September 17, the city will witness an abundance of street performances, theatre, dance, music and movie screenings - all part of the 2016 edition of the annual Singapore International Festival of Arts. Presentations from award winning artists and cutting edge exhibition are in the festival's program, whose this year's theme is "Potentials".

sifa.sq

2 Runners Up

To run 11km is one thing, to ascend 7km while ascending 900m is another. To do both at the same time is something completely different and will happen during Hong Kong's first vertical race - the Lantau Vertical. Those participating will start the race at Shek Pik reservoir in South Lantau to climb the highest peak (934m) of the Island, all in beautiful natural scenery. You can still sign up, if you dare. The race takes place on September 18.

lantauvertical.com



Detox and Retox at W

A new Retox and Detox concept called FUEL is being launched globally at W Hong Kong hotel aiming to instill its quests with the energy to look good, feel good, play harder and stay longer through a series of high-energy workouts or exercises. W is bringing this mindset to its signature summer pool parties and have all partygoers pumped up even before

the main event hits through 3 steps: DETOX, RETOX, and REPEAT. It starts with a small buffet with an array of healthy treats and drinks followed by various energizing sessions held at the beginning of each party at the pool. Every



session will feature a high-energy workout practice, such as boxing, dancing and more with electrifying DJ beats as the background music.

First unfolded in Hong Kong, FUEL already reached W Retreat Koh Samui, W Bangkok, W Singapore and W Bali.

theangle.whotels.com/fuel

4 Top of the list in The Nai Harn



Luxury beachfront resort The Nai Harn in Phuket has partnered up with global wine expert James Suckling to assemble an extraordinary wine list at the resort. "I am

convinced quests at The Nai Harn will love the collection of wines we have selected especially for the resort," said James Suckling. "We have taken a lot into consideration from the culinary experiences created by the incredible team here, led by Frank Grassmann and Kevin Fawkes, to the climate and variety of guests' palettes - and we will look forward to celebrating great wines throughout the year," added the wine guru. Located on beautiful Nai Harn beach, the resort offers 130 luxurious quest rooms and suites with panoramic views over the Andaman Sea, featuring a stunning new pool Rooftop Deck and food and beverage spaces.

thenaiharn.com

It has only been one year since the launch of Kata Rocks' Collective Series and it has already become one of Phuket's most exclusive themed events and sought after social gathering. 'New Gin Revival', 'Route 66', 'Rum Dairies' or 'La Barceloneta' brunch, each event built on the massive success of the last outing and helped the Collective Series



at Kata Rocks this August.

katarocks.com

6 Female touch

Thailand's first and only female wine grower and maker, paired by Beniawan Wisootsat of Fin Wine: the master of Thai food-wine pairing. September 8 to 11 from 6 to 10:30pm.

bolan.co.th

HAPPENINGS

5 Kata Rocks' Collective Series Energize Phuket

establish its own identity as a collective celebration of outstanding food, handcrafted cocktails and luxury. All facets showcased exceptional taste, music and

presentation accompanied by creative design motifs with matching menus ranging from Mediterranean inspired dishes, traditional American barbecue culture, to Caribbean cuisine and others. Stay tuned for the next Collective Series

1 The World is Your Oyster



From September 2 to 4, Vogue Lounge, located on the 6th floor of the Mahanakhon Cube in Bangkok invites you to enjoy an unlimited reserve of French Oysters (Fine de Claire, Marennes Olerons Number 2) and enjoy half a bottle of premium selected wine for just THB 1.400++.

All wines - Prosecco, Côte du Rhone and NZ Sauvignon Blanc have been selected to pair well with the oysters. Starts at 5pm.

voguelounge.com

The Reverie Saigon Honoured



The Reverie Saigon in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, a 286room extravagant hotel that opened just nine months ago. was recognized by Condé Nast Traveler as one of the most outstanding hotel debuts of last year. The US edition of the prestigious magazine featured the hotel on its 2016 'Hot List', its 20th annual compendium of the best new hotels in the world. In all, only 60 properties made the cut, after a team of its editors and travel correspondents rigorously (and anonymously) evaluated hundreds of hotels in 36 countries across six continents. Just seven hotels across Asia made this year's List.

thereveries aigon.com

Pairing wine with Thai food can be challenging. To tackle this challenge, FIN – Fabulous is Needed, the only lifestyle company in Thailand specializing in exclusive food, wine, and traveling experiences, invited three women, all leaders in their field, to come together to curate an event full of passion, skill, and knowledge. Taking place at the Bo.lan Thai restaurant in Bangkok, the "Made in Thailand" event will feature food cooked by chef Bo Songvisava of Bo.lan: Asia's Best Female Chef 2013 – The World's 50 Best Restaurants, wines made by Nikki Lohitnavy of GranMonte:



HAPPENINGS

9 Tea at Robuchon



Bangkok is the latest destination for Le Salon De Thé de Joël Robuchon, a café serving incredible patisseries. cakes, tarts, and baked goods, all presented to the same level of sophistication as Chef Joël's famed restaurants. Whether you want a quick cup of tea and a slice of something sweet, an authentic baquette on the go or an elegant afternoon tea banquet, this café endorsed by one of the world's most esteemed chef fits the bill. Located on the ground floor

of Central Embassy, home of the world's high-end designer brands, this exclusive tea salon suits its new surroundings perfectly. Joël Robuchon is famed for his exquisite haute cuisine, with fancy restaurants in practically all of the world's hottest cities (and more arriving every year), but his café brand allows people to try some of his food without breaking the bank and for that we welcome Le Salon De Thé de Joël Robuchon to Bangkok with open arms.

robuchon-bangkok.com

D Summer at Sofitel Hanoi



Immerse in the French elegance of Sofitel Legend Metropole Hanoi and enjoy a truly luxurious treat with the special Midsummer's Night Dream package featuring daily breakfast for 2, one way airport pick up by our luxury limousine, a 60-minute massage per adult, for 2 adults in a room and a 2nd room to accommodate children (under 16 years old) at US\$110++ per night. Promotional price of VND4,950,000++ per room per night is available until September.

sofitel-legend.com/hanoi

Trisara New Seafood Concept



The award-winning Seafood at Trisara re-launched on July 1 with an exciting new culinary vision. Staying true to its reputation of sourcing only the best quality seafood and creating outstandingly exquisite dishes, the new Seafood experience is centered around authentic Thai food inspired by the traditional recipes that have been passed down over the generations. Trisara's culinary team explores new regions and draws inspiration from "secret local recipes". One of the new signature dishes that embodies this inspiration is "Yam Ma Khue Yaw Poo Dum", a refreshing long eggplant salad with local organic eggs and fresh black crab from the UNESCO world heritage site Phang Nga Bay.

trisara.com

Hats on!

A Breakthrough in energy saving technology is finally being brought to you in Thailand from the inventors in Japan. When plugged into your



air-conditioning system, the Continewm net can help you save approx. 20% on your electricity bills. To celebrate this occasion a special event, hosted by LHM Asia, TEE Thailand & Bayside Group will be held at Continewm Head office In Bangkok on September 9, featuring not just luxury foods such as truffles, caviar, exclusive wines, champagne and unique beers but also authentic luxury fashion represented by genuine Panama hats and much more.

continewm.asia

SOMETHING'S COOKING IN THE KITCHEN... 01.10.16 INIALA

In Screaming Colour



Take a look at one of O'Connor's portraits and what you'll see is chaos – splashes of colour, randomness of lines, brush strokes that serve no purpose whatsoever... or do they? Take a closer look, let the image sink in, and before you know it, beauty starts showing. It's not that the image is hidden under this messy surface, it's integrated in it, rising up in all its screaming colour glory. To bring his faces to life, Danny O'Connor, a 34 year old artist from Liverpool, uses a large variety of media including acrylics, spray paint, paint markers, charcoal, collage, ink, graphite... you name it. "I use pretty much anything I can get my hands on. I like that these materials allow me to work quickly, gradually building the work up layer upon layer, covering some areas and allowing others to peer through. This helps me give my work a sense of depth," he explains.

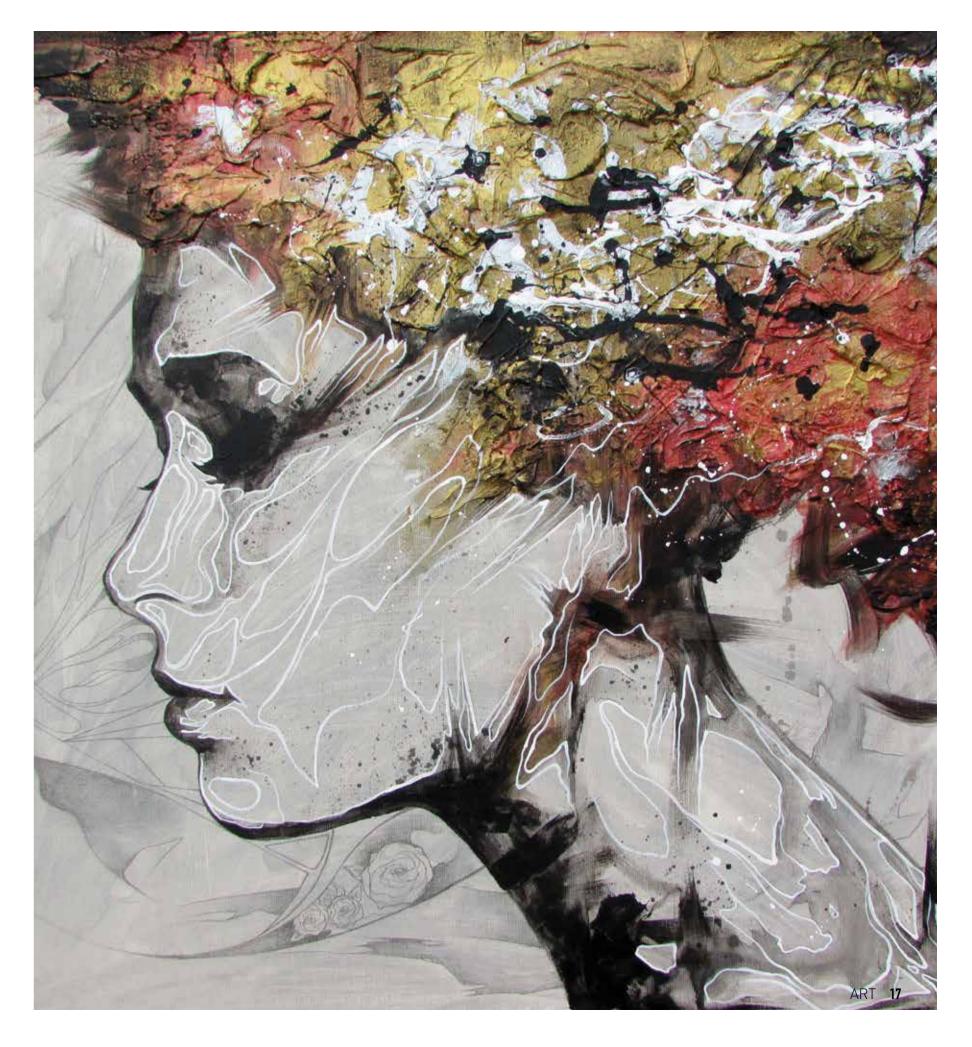
14 ART

It's messy yet clean, traditional but with a futuristic vibe, spontaneous yet precise - the art of Danny O'Connor is like the philosophy of Yin and Yang, presented in vibrant colours.

And this wide range of techniques can be very much present in any one of O'Connor's pieces. He might start working on a painting by throwing thinned down paint from a cup at the canvas and finish by laying down some fine lines for a final touch of perfection. "Usually I'll start by creating a background layer, painting in various areas of colour, tone and texture. This involves lots of splashing, spraying, drizzling and dripping of paint. The background then sets the tone for how the work will develop. Once the background layer has dried, I start to work on the subject over the top."

He himself describes the state of his mind when he's at work as "being in the zone" – like a sportsman about to become a champion, not thinking but using his instincts to react. "One brush mark will dictate where the next should go. And when things are going well, it's as if I'm moving to a rhythm, decisions don't require a huge deal of thought, they seem to come quite naturally,"







Maybe it's also this wide spectrum of inspirations that help O'Connor produce work that feels relevant to the times we live in? To the world he describes as a place both "energetic and fast paced, where the lines between the real and digital world are blurred." Whatever the reason, his visual style is definitely attracting attention. His works have been part of a variety of exhibitions all over the world and they are also popular with private collectors – first and foremost in the US but not just there. "I've also painted murals for bars, restaurants and clubs as well as on the street. I like the idea that people who otherwise may not have seen my works, get to appreciate them as well. " Street or gallery, private collection or public exhibition, wherever they are displayed, whatever

technique he uses to create them, all O'Connor's works have something in common – something more instinctual than intellectual. When asked about it, he comes with a simple answer.

His images confirm every word - they have a sort of primal, atavistic feel to them that one would expect from a prehistoric cave-painting but his are very much modern, if not futuristic inclinations are apparent as well – his works wouldn't look out of place in a cyberpunk graphic novel. "I like the sense of contrast in my work and that is true also with regards to my influences. Anything from Digital Art and Graffiti to Abstract Expressionism and The Pre-Raphaelites are all fair game to me."



"I paint from the heart and this is the most honest and truest way an artist can invoke emotions."



According to legends, the Chinese discovered the joys and benefits of tea almost 5,000 years ago. The Japanese tea ceremony dates back to the 15th century, though tea was used in religious rites even earlier. With less than 200 years of history and less than noble origins, the western "High Tea" tradition fades in comparison. Yet it is that manner of drinking of the world's second most popular beverage (water comes first) that has become an integral part of high-end hospitality. Let's begin by setting the record straight - the fancy meal comprising extravagant pastries and mini-sandwiches, paired with a selection of teas and served at some of

• Getting High on Tea •

Words by Maciek Klimowicz

How the West took one of the world's most noble beverages and made it fun.



the world's most luxurious hotels isn't really "High Tea" In fact the correct name for such event is "Low Tea" as finger food and heartwarming beverages are served on low coffee tables and consumed while sitting in armchairs and sofas. Classic "High Tea" was served at the high dining table, comprised of a mug of tea, bread, butter, meats, cheeses and pickles and was consumed by the hard working families of the industrial revolution period as a pickme-up meal after a long day's work. The term "High Tea" was then highjacked by the upper classes, who seemed to think it sounded rather noble, and so the fancy afternoon tea was turned into "High Tea".

MANDARIN ORIENTAL BANGKOK Authors' Lounge

Not to say that the aristocrats didn't have their own tea traditions. They sure did. especially since tea was a luxurious and expensive product reserved only for the royals and nobles when it first reached Europe, precisely France in 1636. And even though the first shipment of tea leaves landed in London twenty two years later, it was the Britons who, over the next couple hundreds of years, made tea their national drink, leaving the poor French with inferior substitutes such as café au lait or wine.

One of the characters who contributed most to the long lasting English romance with tea was Anna Maria Stanhope (1783-1857), the Duchess of Bedford and a lady-in-waiting to no other but Queen Victoria herself. Feeling rather hungry between breakfast and dinner the Duchess used to ask her servants to bring her a pot of tea with a snack in the afternoon. However, hunger wasn't Anna's only aliment. Her loneliness was equally severe, so she started inviting her friends to share this meal with her at exactly - yes you quessed it right - five o'clock in the afternoon. Anna's fancy friends guickly picked up the idea and an "Afternoon Tea" quickly became "a la mode".

Call it high or low, the "Afternoon Tea" was initially more about food than about the actual beverage - after all, the Duchess had been hungry, not thirsty. A classic "Afternoon Tea" menu covers both the sweet and the savoury flavours. A selection of sandwiches is a must, first and foremost the ones with egg and cucumber but also with ham, cheese, chicken breast, salmon and more. On the sweet side, freshly baked scones served with clotted cream and strawberry preserves are King. But of course it doesn't end there; today "Afternoon Tea" has grown to the size of a full-fledged meal with numerous cakes and savoury snacks served on the indispensable tiered cake trays. Its foreign varieties are especially interesting, exemplified



by the "Afternoon Tea" served at the ancient colonial hotels in Darjeeling - home of the world's finest tea. There, at the Elgin hotel, sandwiches and scones share plate space with pakoras - delightfully Indian vegetable fritters. Those paired with some of the finest Darjeeling teas and spectacular vistas of the Himalayas are a match made in heaven.

Originally "Afternoon Tea" comprised teas served with milk and sugar - some say to disguise the rancid flavour of the beverage made with leaves, which spent months in the terrible conditions of the East India Company's cargo ships, before reaching their destination. Today, tea travels around the world much faster (precious Darjeeling spring teas are shipped by jets to the most impatient buyers) and addons aren't necessary anymore (though Britons will surely disagree). While heavier, more masculine Assam and Ceylon teas are preferred at breakfast, "Afternoon Tea" calls for a bit of finesse embodied by the before-mentioned teas of Darjeeling. The teas of this Himalayan province of India are called "The Champagne of Tea" for a reason, and cups of



Darjeeling are often served together with flutes of Champagne at the most prestigious "Afternoon Tea" events. But the world of "Afternoon Tea" evolves just like anything else, and today Chinese green and Taiwanese oolong teas sit comfortably in between classic British teas on the menu.

Whatever the tea though and wherever it comes from, a respectable "Afternoon Tea" venue will only serve loose leaves. Tea bags are a thing of a morning rush and belong together with instant coffee served in paper cups. Tea true to its soul always swirls around freely in the teapot to give away all its hidden goodness. Tea is a moment of contemplation, a long calming breath; brewing it slowly and with complete attention is as close as food comes to meditation.

When tea is served with food and enjoyed in the company of friends as well as strangers in elegant dining rooms of prestigious hotels, its meditative aspect is somewhat lost. But "Afternoon Tea" has something else to offer in its place history, tradition and maybe most importantly - fun.







FOUR SEASONS RESORT CHIANG MAI -



INTERCONTINENTAL HUA HIN -



THE LANGHAM HONG KONG - Cor

24 AT THE TABLE



FOUR SEASONS RESORT KOH SAMUI -1000-





FOUR SEASONS HOTEL SINGAPORE -



THE PENINSULA HONG KONG -109,-



BANYAN TREE BANGKOK - 100 m,



W BANGKOK





Four Seasons Hotel Singapore - Exclusively crafted Diva Cocktail Selections by Javier De Las Muelas. Served in glass teapots reminiscent of having tea, each of the three cocktail is named after a famous diva (Grace Kelly, Liz Taylor, Ginger Rogers) and all are non-alcoholic or low on alcohol content for light afternoon consumption.



The Peninsula Hong Kong - The Peninsula Tea Collection includes some of the world's favorite and most prestigious teas - breakfast and afternoon, Darjeeling and Yunan, oolong and Pu-erh, whatever you desire.



Mandarin Oriental Bangkok - La Grande Dame was created by the prestigious tea house Mariage Freres to celebrate Mandarin Oriental's 140th Anniversary. A composition of grand green teas with voluptuous citrus, mandarin, clementine and yuzu is crowned by a dash of oriental rose.



St. Regis Bangkok - Who says chocolate only comes in brown or white? This TWG Tea South Africa red tea is masterfully blended with sumptuous cocoa beans for a unique sensory experience.





26 AT THE TABLE



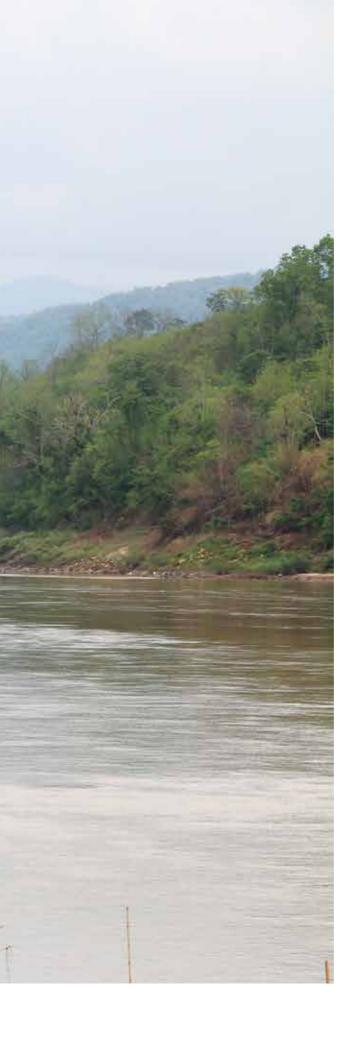
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A PERFECT

Words and Photos by Maciek Klimowicz



Due to its notorious road conditions, opting for a boat in Laos doesn't necessarily mean taking it slow – you might actually make it faster to your destination than by bus or car. But cruising the country's most famous river – the Mekong – is no race, it's a slow paced pleasure for those in search of serenity.

The Mekong, the 12th longest river in the world, travels for 4,300 km across 6 countries: China, Myanmar, Laos, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam. That's as long as the Pacific Coast Trail which connects Mexico with Canada, that's almost the distance from New York to Seattle or nearly half the length of the longest railway in the world the Trans-Siberian. Its basin is home to 60 million people and its waters to countless species, including fresh water dolphins, stingrays and crocodiles. It's known under a variety of names – the Mother Water, the Nine Dragons, the Turbulent Water, and is the most important river in Southeast Asia.

All this makes the Mekong sound mighty, even monumental. Yet the journey we are about to take down its waters is of a rather modest kind. More an excursion than an escapade, aimed more at relaxation than exploration. Let's begin in Pak Beng, a riverside village-slash-town in western Laos. Normally that would be just the halfway point of a classic Mekong river cruise from Huay Xai on the border with Thailand to the colonial gem of Luang Prabang. But if we were to sail the whole length of the cruise on these pages, we would run out of paper to write on. So Pak Beng it is.

To further save space, let's not talk about Pak Beng for too long, as there isn't really much to talk about – the whole town seems to depend entirely on the Mekong river traffic, offering cheap accommodation and a bite to the passingthrough backpackers. There is one place though that deserves our attention – the Luang Say Lodge (luangsay.com), the place where we spend the night.



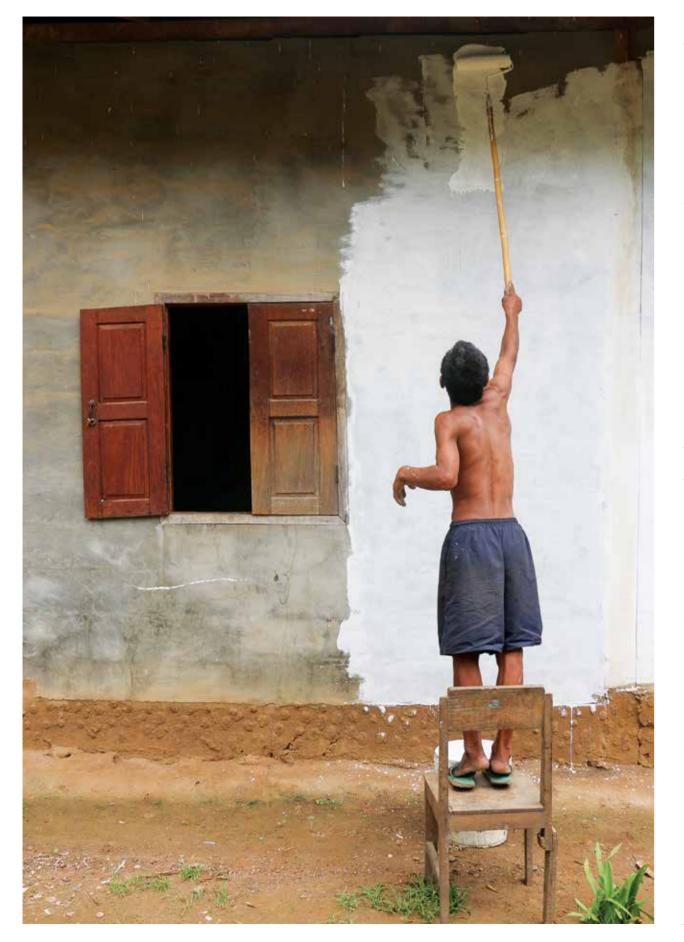








Luang Say combines traditional Laotian architecture - the main construction material being teak and rosewood – and international level of service. It's here that we experienced the gentle, friendly manner of Laotian people for the first time. The dinner and breakfast are served in a central restaurant overlooking the river. Most of the dishes on the menu use vegetables grown in the resort's own organic garden as ingredients. Follow up the meal comprising traditional Laotian dishes, with a cocktail on the open-air deck, before taking an elevated wooden walkway down to your bungalow. Located in a lush tropical garden, Luang Say's bungalows might look modest on the outside but the interiors have a luxurious quality you wouldn't expect in a remote place such as this. And let the river whispering in the distance put you to sleep.



Waking up the next day is easy, even though it's still early. Stepping out of the bungalow into the garden instantly reconnects you with nature – chirping birds, scented flowers, multicoloured butterflies. This connection will stay firm till the end of our journey.

After the breakfast it's time to board the boat. A short walk down a gentle slope to the river shore and we're ready to step onto the deck. The boat is long and narrow, with two rows of comfortable seats on both sides. The captain's cabin, from which he'll navigate the Mekong's treacherous waters, is at the front, the engines are at the back, so if you want some peace and quiet, stay closer to the bow. Though the stern has one advantage too – that's where a wellstocked bar is located. The choice is yours.

The next eight hours might be one of the most peaceful and serene times of your life. Just sit comfortably, ask the crew for a cup of tea made with loose leaves from local tea plantations, and soak in the atmosphere.







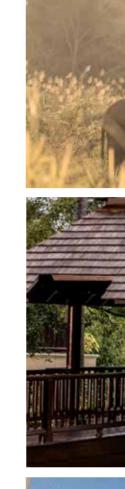
The rolling hills in the distance, the steel grey skies above if you're taking the cruise during the monsoon season and spotless blue heavens any other time of the year, the sepia-coloured waters of the Mekong, make up the frame of this exquisite scenery. In between there's just green – all its shades visible to the human eye. Some might call this setting monotonous, but I'd choose this kind of monotony over anything else, anytime. Just gazing at it, smelling the gentle scent of the river and the surrounding vegetation, feeling the mild breeze on your face will put you in a state that can only be described as meditative. Traveling often means discomfort, but not here - here it's pure bliss.

The boat does stop on the way, twice. Once by a local village and once by a riverside cave. But in all honesty, those stops are unnecessary and feel more like interruptions to the otherwise perfectly smooth ride. And when at around 4 pm we arrive at the pier in Luang Prabang, we don't feel we got there quickly or too late, everything feels right on time and in its right place.

It's a peculiar kind of journey, one without any particular highlights or anything standing out, like the sharp grey rocks sticking out from the river's murky waters. But what might be a fault somewhere else, here is the biggest advantage. This cruise is all about peace and harmony - the one with the nature that surrounds you and the one you might find within, as you float down the mighty Mekong.









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Visit the website fourseasons.com/thailand

Successful taste Nords by Matt Clemens Photos by Neil Massey www.neilmassey.com



ES DE CREAD

ORIGINE VIETNAM



Everybody likes chocolate. Some might even love it. And then, every once in a while, someone with a true passion for the world's favorite guilty pleasure shows up. If it so happens, that such two people bump into each other, amazingly sweet things start to happen.

When Samuel Maruta bumped into Vincent Mourou in 2010, during a weekend in the jungle of Southern Vietnam, they quickly discovered they share a common goal, a common passion. No, not yet for chocolate but rather for a life lived on their own terms. One was coming from an advertising background, the other from the world of finances, and both were looking for change. It came in the form of a divine bean.

Yes, you've read it right – divine. Cocoa bean is the fruit of a South American Theobroma tree, whose name translates to "The food of the Gods." It takes one such tree between 3 and 5 years to mature and start bearing fruit and once it does, it produces around 1,000 beans a year. A lot? It's only enough to make approximately 1 kg of chocolate.

With its 5,000 tons of cocoa beans produced each year. Vietnam is a dwarf in the global cocoa industry, making up just 1/1000 of the world's production. It might have something to do with cocoa's relatively short history in the country – while the bean has been already popular in the pre-Columbian civilizations of the Aztecs and the Mayans, they started to be introduced in Vietnam only at the end of the XIX century. Today much of it is still grown on tiny family-owned land plots of the Vietnamese farmers.







chocolate. They combined multimedia (Google and YouTube videos) with cutting edge technology (oven and food processor) to create their first batch of chocolate paste. Yes, it was crude and unrefined, but boy did it smell good! Much has changed in between this first trial and what Marou has become today – a recognized producer of artisan chocolate representing a selection of Vietnamese terroirs such as the fruity Ba Ria (76% cocoa), spicy Dong Nai (72%) and floral Tien Giang (70%). But despite its commercial success – Marou chocolate is distributed in some of the most prestigious locations in Vietnam, including Hanoi's Sofitel Legend Metropole as well as in more than 25 other countries around the world – and numerous awards for their efforts, including a prize from the London Academy of Chocolate, BBC Good Food Award and a Gold medal at the International Chocolate Awards, Marou has remained true to their philosophy of "From the beans to the bar". This is how they explain it themselves: "The fundamental difference between what we do and the work of other chocolate producers is that we procure our cocoa beans ourselves, by going directly to the farmers in the neighboring provinces. Our first and most essential task is to select the best beans from our 20 farmers. We don't let anyone do this for us. Every week we

It was on one such small farm that Maruta and Mourou found their first 2 kg of cocoa beans and decided to try and turn it into

travel from one farm to another to test the flavor of the cocoa beans. bag by bag."

"With these farmers, we created a strong relationship based on trust and we pay them a very good price for their effort, much higher than the market price," they add.

Apart from the attention to the quality of the beans and care for the farmers' wellbeing, Marou adds one more ingredient to the mix – respect for the environment. At the beginning of 2015, they launched a special initiative in collaboration with the owners of a forest concession of 400 hectares. Instead of clearing all the trees and replacing them with an intensive monoculture of cocoa, they aim to grow 2,500 cocoa trees in the existing natural forest. Initially planned for just 5 hectares, if proven successful, the project will expand to a bigger area preserving the natural habitat of the forest's fauna and flora.

But let's get back to the chocolate. Once the beans are harvested and selected, what follows is a meticulous process of fermenting and drying, mixing and blending, with a personal touch each and every step of the way. The result? The first chocolate made entirely in Vietnam, from the beans to the bar, with local ingredients of the highest quality.

However these are all just words. A real test takes place when you slip a piece of Marou chocolate in your mouth. That's when words fail, senses explode and you're transported to a different, better place. It's the fruit of passion that tastes so sweet.

For more information visit marouchocolate.com





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By Julie Lamare The sam of all things great

NAA SELECTION

Great food is not enough. Nor is great atmosphere. Nice setting is of little value on its own and attentive staff can't make it happen by itself. What makes a great brunch then? All of the above, in one place, at the same time. This place is Hyatt Regency Phuket Resort, the time is every Sunday.

Ingredient #1: the setting

Situated on a terraced hillside overlooking the beach of Kamala Cove, Hyatt Regency Phuket has its own unique style. Modern clean lines, uncluttered spaces and shades of grey with green and blue overtones dominating the colour palette, give the resort a contemporary feel that's welcoming at the same time. But it's the massive infinity pool overlooking Kamala bay that's especially impressive; its sparkling blue surface merging seamlessly with the Andaman sea spread right in front of the resort. At 72-meters, it is one of the biggest pools in Phuket and the guests of the Sunday brunch receive complimentary access. But before you take a plunge, let's check out the food.



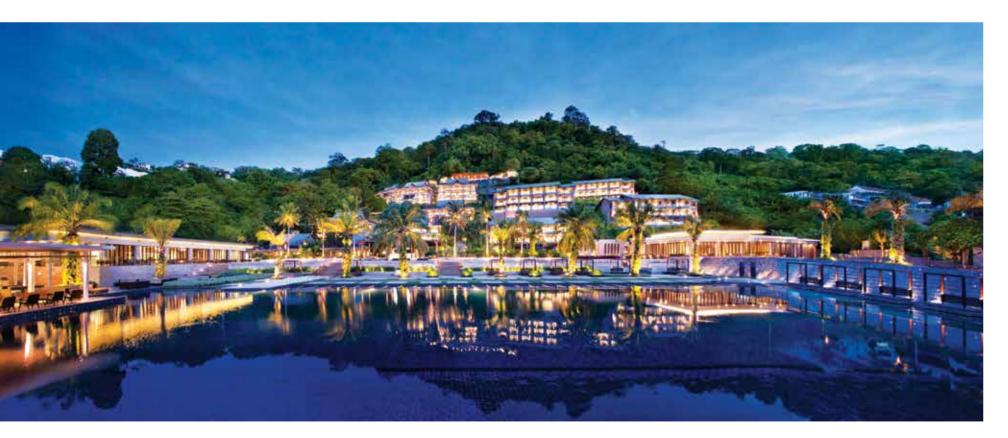
Ingredient #2: the food

The brunch is served at the airy Pool Bar – an open spaced restaurant overlooking the pool. A generous selection of dishes - both local and international – was carefully crafted by Head Chef Alessandro Martinelli. Except for what's common and indispensable on Sunday brunch menu – freshly roasted meats, seafood BBQ, fresh oysters and more, two food stations stand out. One is the pizza station with freshly made wood-fired pizzas, the other – a salad corner with a selection of colourful salad creations. second to none on the island. And don't forget to leave some space for the desserts – the sweets station is not an afterthought at Hyatt and the Panna Cotta is to die for. Pair it all with the free flow of wine, beer and cocktail options and you won't go thirsty either.



Ingredient #3: the vibe

The rather stiff, quasi-formal atmosphere that is common at many Sunday brunch events is absent at Hyatt's weekly feast. You can really feel that it's Sunday at the Pool Bar, so kick back and enjoy the food and the company. And once you finish your meal, grab a cocktail and relax on a sun lounge by the pool to the beats delivered by a live DJ. Leave the tie at home but don't forget your swimming costume.





Ingredient #4: the staff Good staff is one that you don't need to talk much about and that's exactly the case at Hyatt. Glasses are never left empty, dishes arrive to the table hot and fresh, smiles abound. In a place like this, tipping is a pleasure.

Ingredient #5: something extra The setting, the food, the vibe and the service are all excellent at the Hyatt Sunday brunch. And on top of that, there is something extra, something for the kids. Not only do children have their own kid's food corner at the Pool Bar but they also receive access to Camp Hyatt – a child-friendly space offering a variety of activities including an Art and Craft corner, balloon games, game zone and funny face mask making sessions.

The method: Mix it all up and serve fresh at a reasonable price to receive a Sunday brunch for everyone to enjoy!

Find out more on *phuket.regency.hyatt.com*



Words and Photos by Maciek Klimowicz

What can you find 55 minutes flight away from Bangkok? For starters – 5 degrees less on the thermometer and at least 50% less cars on the streets. The contrast between the bustling capital of Thailand and the quiet town of Nan – because that's where we're heading – is stark. The feeling you get once you step out of the plane into Nan's recently refurbished airport, is that of relief and relaxation.

But there's more, a sensation not common in contemporary Thailand, a country branded as "touristy" by the so-called "real travellers" - a feeling of discovery. Somehow Nan managed to steer clear of mass tourism, and while growing in popularity – also due to the daily direct AirAsia flights from Bangkok – it managed to preserve its silent charm of a backwater town.

Whatever the reason for that, it's certainly not for lack of attractions. The unique flavours of local Lanna cuisine and unique flavours of local culture, natural hikes in the surrounding hills and forests as well as authentic local art in the wat's (temples); all this turns Nan into a treasure chest just waiting to be opened.









But while I do enjoy a good trek and a hefty meal, it was Nan's art that brought me here. Not its contemporary art, displayed at the Nan Riverside Art Gallery on the town's edge, but the more ancient one, namely the famed murals of Wat Phumin.

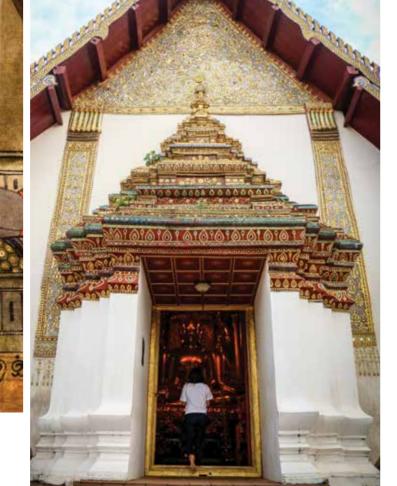
If there were one reason to visit Nan, it would be for these murals though the temple itself is charming enough. Not only is it gracefully attractive - its elegant white structure a real must-see for anyone visiting Nan – it's also unique. Wat Phumin might be the only temple in Thailand resting on the spines of two giant snakes. Similar serpents can be seen in wats across Thailand, but only the ones in Nan support a temple with their arched backs.

The interiors are unusual as well. Once you walk past the two lions guarding the main entrance and step into the dim-lit temple hall, you will be faced with not one but four Buddha statues, peacefully gazing in four directions. But even though they occupy a central and honourable spot in the Wat, the Buddhas are not what we're here for. At Wat Phumin, the walls steal the show.

The walls and the ceiling in fact - every square inch are covered with colourful frescoes. There are whole villages here, marching armies, man and women at their daily chores, frozen in time like on a large, panoramic photograph. The murals date back to the end of the XIX century, when they were created by local artists during the restoration of the, at that time, 300 years old temple. Some of them depict scenes from the Jataka Tales - stories of Buddha's earlier incarnations, but maybe the most interesting ones are those portraying the daily lives of the people of Nan, more than a century ago: people at play and at work, commerce and war, animals and landscapes; there's even an image of foreign, presumably French, visitors to the region.









And then there is the most famous of them, the one that made it to t-shirt and fridge magnets sold in Nan's souvenir shops and in its markets -"The Whispering" known as "Pu Man, Ya Man" in the local language. It depicts a man and a woman, both with blissful smiles on their faces. She leans toward him, he places one hand on her shoulder and uses the palm of his other hand to cover his mouth as he whispers something in her ear. What were the words that made her smile? We'll never know. Brochures in Nan's Tourism Office rush to point out that the couple was most certainly married and there is nothing erotic about the image at all. But to anyone with a bit of imagination, there's more to the picture than just matrimonial familiarity - the air around it is tense with romance.

As I step outside Wat Phumin, the vendors start setting up the nearby night market. Piles of clothes and souvenirs pile up on the tables; cauldrons of steaming soups, barbecues covered with smoking meats, mounts of fruits and sweets line the narrow lane adjacent to the temple. There is no crowd here and there is no rush; the atmosphere is one of joyful relaxation. I look around, soak it in and get a strange feeling that I've seen it all before.

Where? When? Wait a minute, I know! Just moments ago, on one of the murals of Wat Phumin – a beautiful temple in a town where time stood still.

Three times the Weekend By Maciek Klimowicz



Active weekend: **Renaissance Koh Samui Resort & Spa**

Don't get us wrong. Koh Samui is a splendid place to do absolutely nothing. The island has enough white sand beaches, blue skies and crystal clear waters to get even the most active persons to relax by the pool, with a cocktail in their hand. Especially when the pool is at the Renaissance Koh Samui Resort & Spa where sunscreen is offered complimentary and the wonderfully attentive staff diligently keeps you from moving from your sun lounge, the spa offers excusive privacy and the deluxe rooms and pool villas are some of the largest on the island. But as we already have a blissfully relaxing and idle weekend planned for the next week, we'll keep things busy in Samui. Especially that Renaissance Koh Samui Resort & Spa offers its quests fantastic ways to fill their precious time.

The name speaks for itself -Renaissance was time of discovery, time of travel, time for people with unrestrained curiosity. And so will be your time at the Renaissance Koh Samui Resort & Spa. To satisfy your renaissance spirit and awaken your inner traveller-discoverer, sign up for the resort's "Navigator Program".

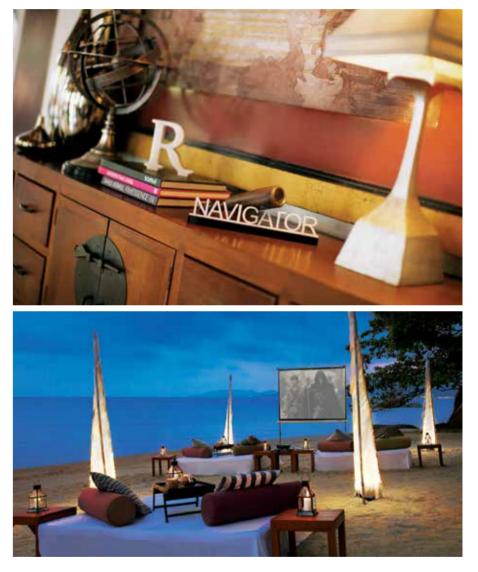
second largest island.

Back at the resort, you can put your cooking skills to the test at a private cooking class, during which you will learn how to use

Weekend! Oh the sweet sound of that word! How we anticipate it, how we count the days and hours till its arrival. But aren't just two leisurely days in a seven day week simply not enough? Especially that there are but two ways to enjoy the weekend. Two? Yes, two! To do nothing, or to do something, that's it.

We decided to add one more and present you with three ideas for a perfect weekend in Thailand's top three destinations. Get ready for triple the amount of relaxation, splendid cuisine and fun.

You will be assigned a personal quide who will uncover the most intriguing and beautiful places in Samui for you. Visit temples and local markets, the island's most scenic beaches and fruit plantations. There's a lot to see and a lot to learn on Thailand's



local ingredients and herbs from the resort's garden. Follow this up with a mixology session at the pool bar for a well-rounded experience. There you can make your own, not featured on the menu cocktail, each day with different ingredients. Once it's ready, sit back, stare at the sunset and look forward to the next, amazing weekend.

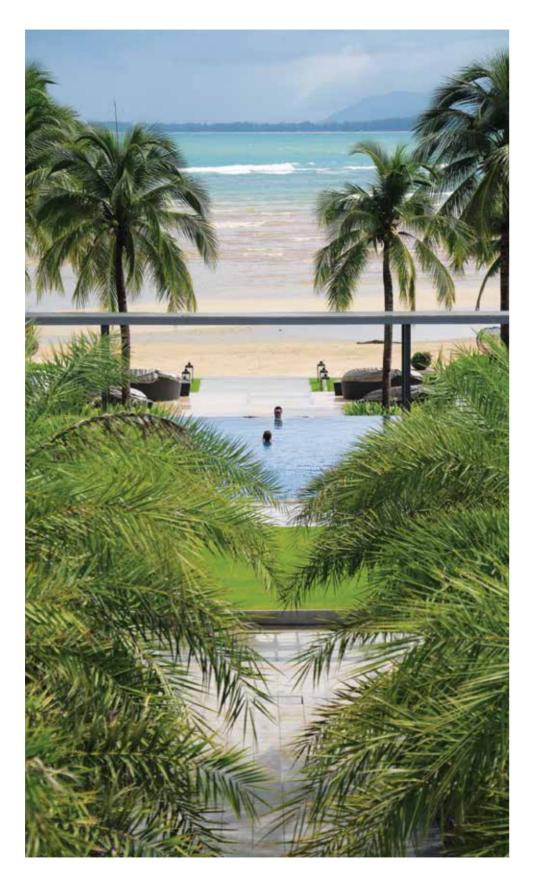
Find out more on www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/usmbr-renaissancekoh-samui-resort-and-spa or follow them on www.facebook.com/ renaissancekohsamui for amazing getaway deals

Relaxed weekend: Phuket Marriott Resort and Spa, Nai Yang Beach

Last weekend in Samui was a busy one, and so probably were the last few days at work. That's why what awaits you in Phuket is two days of perfect bliss. Located next to one of the island's most serene and less travelled beaches. miles away from the crowds of mass tourism spots, is the recently opened beauty - Marriott Resort and Spa in Nai Yang Beach.

The serene atmosphere of the resort embraces you the moment you enter its open-space lobby overlooking a picturesque bay – it offers easily one of the most beautiful vistas in Phuket. This feeling of unrestrained, open space is present everywhere in the resort – on the side of its massive, lagoon-inspired swimming pool, in its 180 spacious rooms blessed with abundance of natural light, at the beachside restaurant and bar – everywhere you go, you feel the limitless, open space. Especially so in Marriott's elegant yet cosy villas, located directly on the beach front – a setting that is guite unique in Phuket. Time spend on a sun lounge under a palm tree in front of your private beachside villa is relaxation embodied.

Its next level can be achieved at the resort's Quan Spa. You will feel your senses calming the moment you enter its dim lit, soothing interiors. Thailand is world-famous for its wellness and here at Quan, it reaches its perfect expression. The staff's kindness and professionalism as well as the variety of treatments available, make the whole experience as seamless as it is memorable.





And then there is something for those of us who need relaxation even more - parents. The beachside pirate-themed Kid's Club will keep your children occupied while you enjoy your moment of well-deserved rest. Of course you can keep active at the Marriott if you want to - beach Muay Thai sessions, a fitness centre, classes of local crafts and much more is here for your fun and pleasure. Add to this exceptional local and international cuisine served at the resort's two restaurants – the Andaman Kitchen and the Big Fish, the classy yet joyful atmosphere of the beachside bar, the staff that gives justice to the famed Thai hospitality, and you're in for an out of this world weekend experience.

Find out more on *marriott.com/hotels/travel/* hktnb-phuket-marriott-resort-and-spa-naiyang-beach or follow them on https://www. facebook.com/PhuketMarriottNaiYang/ for special deals.



Weekend at the table: JW Marriott Hotel Bangkok

It's time to test the 'third time's charm', in Bangkok. And after having reactivated in Samui and relaxed in Phuket, in the Thai capital we will replenish – prepare yourself for a weekend at the table! The Big Mango, as they call it, is one of the best cities for foodies out there, with spectacular cuisine on all levels – that is from the street side level to the rooftop level. But as we already did a fair amount of exploring back on the first island, in Bangkok we'll stick to one place. Not just any place though - the JW Marriott.

There are no less than nine bars and restaurants here, guaranteeing satisfaction







But then, is any weekend ever long enough?

Find out more on www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/bkkdt-jw-marriott-hotel-bangkok or follow them on www.facebook.com/ jwmarriottbkk for offers you can't resist.

to whatever cravings you might have. Japanese cuisine has an especially prominent presence and is represented by two restaurants. Tsu Contemporary Japanese Cuisine serves freshly prepared sashimi and sushi and other traditional Japanese dishes, also for dinner parties in private dining rooms. Nami Teppanyaki Steakhouse provides a cool, contemporary environment for you to enjoy imported cuts of waqyu and seafood, served in authentic Japanese teppanyaki style. Keeping up with the Asian theme, Man Ho delivers on the promise of providing home-style Cantonese, Sichuan and other dishes from all over China. Peking duck? Check. Kung Pao chicken? Dim Sum? Check! And you don't even need to leave the hotel's stylishly decorated premises to take a trip half around the world, At this legendary establishment, New York Steakhouse has been offering guests nothing short of premium cuts of meat from

Australia, Japan and the US served in an authentic Big Apple style interiors for nearly 2 decades. Manhattan Bar, Tsu Bar, and the Lobby Lounge never run out of fresh cocktails recipes, freshly-baked international delicacies are available all day long at the Bangkok Baking Company and the Marriott Café. Frankly, a single weekend is not long enough to experience and enjoy all the pleasures of the table at the JW Marriott Hotel in Bangkok.



10:30 I 9:30



Morning workout at Thanyapura

Whatever floats your boat - yoga, fitness, zumba, spinning, muay thai, tennis, swimming pool... Thanyapura world-class facilities and trainers will allow you to begin the day with an energy boost. Or else, opt for a meditation session followed by a homemade detox juice. Whatever you chose, you'll leave revived.

For more information visit thanyapura.com

14:00

I

11:00 -



Bv Matt Clemens

9:00

I

6:00

While Phuket has lots to offer, it guards its secrets well – after all it is Thailand's biggest island we're talking about. Some say it takes weeks to truly enjoy it and we agree... but we also give you a tool to make the best of your short island stay. Here's your key to the perfect 24 hours in Phuket.

Night and breakfast at **Renaissance Phuket Resort & Spa**

Renaissance Phuket Resort & Spa brings heaps of chic to its idyllic setting in Phuket's north. Located on the island's longest beach, away from the hustle and bustle of mass tourism spots,



the Renaissance offers blissful accommodation. exquisite cuisine, delightful recreation and unrivalled service. Wake up to some ocean views and kick the day off with a breakfast by the waterfall. Welcome to Phuket!

For more information visit marriott.com/hotels/travel/hktbr-renaissance-phuket-resort-and-spa/ - 16:30 14:30

Lunch and relaxing time at Trisara

To keep things light and fresh, once you arrive at the stunning Trisara, order the Trisara Life Salad, a fresh and fulfilling vegan composition that will bring you all the vitamins and proteins you need to recover from your morning workout. Later you can either choose a nap in a hammock on the beach if you prefer shade or lounging by the pool if it's some tan that you're after.

For more information visit trisara.com



17:00 - 19:00

Sunset Cocktail at 360 degrees, The Pavilions



Phuket's sunsets are world famous for a reason. To experience one from a premium seat, head for The Pavilions. There, in the 360 ° Bar, stunning sunset views are accompanied by some of the most superb cocktails and mocktails on the island and a tapas selection that is second to none.

For more information visit thepavilions.global/phuket/

Massage at Indigo Pearl's Cogoon Spa

Indigo Pearl's Cogoon Spa combines cutting edge treatments with the natural appeal of its lush. tropical garden. For a completely personalized experience choose Cogoon Rebirth Massage. The Spa's highly-skilled therapists will tailor a massage that fits your unique needs, wants and body composition to provide the ultimate satisfaction after 90 minutes of bliss.

For more information visit indigo-pearl.com/experiences/coqoon-spa/



23:00 I 19:30

Dinner and drinks at Bampot Kitchen and Bar

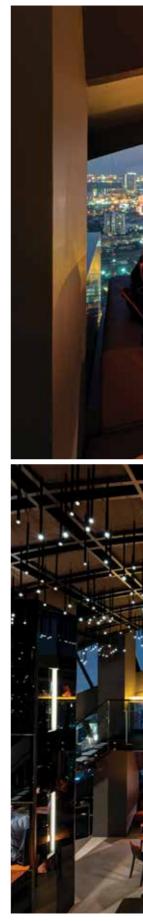


Bampot stormed the island's dining scene with its refreshing concept of casual yet guality dining in a contemporary, urban space. We cannot recommend anything in particular on the menu because it all tastes great and constantly evolves. After dinner stav for drinks -Bampot's mixologist is sort of a magician and the restaurant has a fantastic, lively vibe.

For more information visit bampot.co

SUCH GREAT HEIGHTS

When it comes to rooftop dining in Bangkok, Banyan Tree's Vertigo Grill and Moon Bar has always been on top of the list. But now, before you make your way to the very top, we recommend you to take a break on your journey up to the sky. Stop on the 60th floor, just below the roof.



NAA SELECTION





Awaiting there is Vertigo Too, a bar experience like you've never had before. And not just thanks to its elevated setting, high above Bangkok's chaotic street level. The sky-high indoor bar seduces with its futuristic yet classy design, incorporating arched ceiling covered in a canopy of lights, mimicking a starry night and plush long sofa beds lining both sides of the venue, from which you can feast your eyes with the sea of lights that is Bangkok at night on one side and the Chao Phraya River on the other, all while sipping on one of the signature cocktails on the bar's extensive menu.

Even ordering a drink here has been taken to the next level. No need to go to the bar, the bar will come to you - a mixologist with a cocktail trolley is always nearby, ready to create personalized cocktails of your design. And after such aperitif, there's only one way – further up.

The former helipad on the rooftop has been turned into one of the city's most unique dining experience, where it is enhanced by a 360° panorama of the city, sleek décor and live music. The food served at Vertigo Grill & Moon Bar, which includes Veran-seared Hokkaido Scallops, Olive Oil Poached Red River Prawns, Salmon Caviar, Gazpacho Sorbet and more, would taste great at any level, but enjoying it on top of the world is a new height of sensory experiences.

Find out more on *banyantree.com*

Antoni Mysliborski



Software developer by profession, photographer and traveller by passion. Since four years managing to combine both, living as a digital nomad.

In his travels, he likes to venture out of the beaten path – driven by curiosity and an urge to find the unadulterated truth about each place, instead of its version adjusted to the expectations of mass tourism. He travelled extensively in Africa and Asia, resided in the Buddhist monastery of Tawang, India and in an orthodox monastery in Ethiopia, trekked in the Himalayas and in the jungles of Papua, traversed Vietnam on a motorbike and experienced exorcisms in the Philippines.

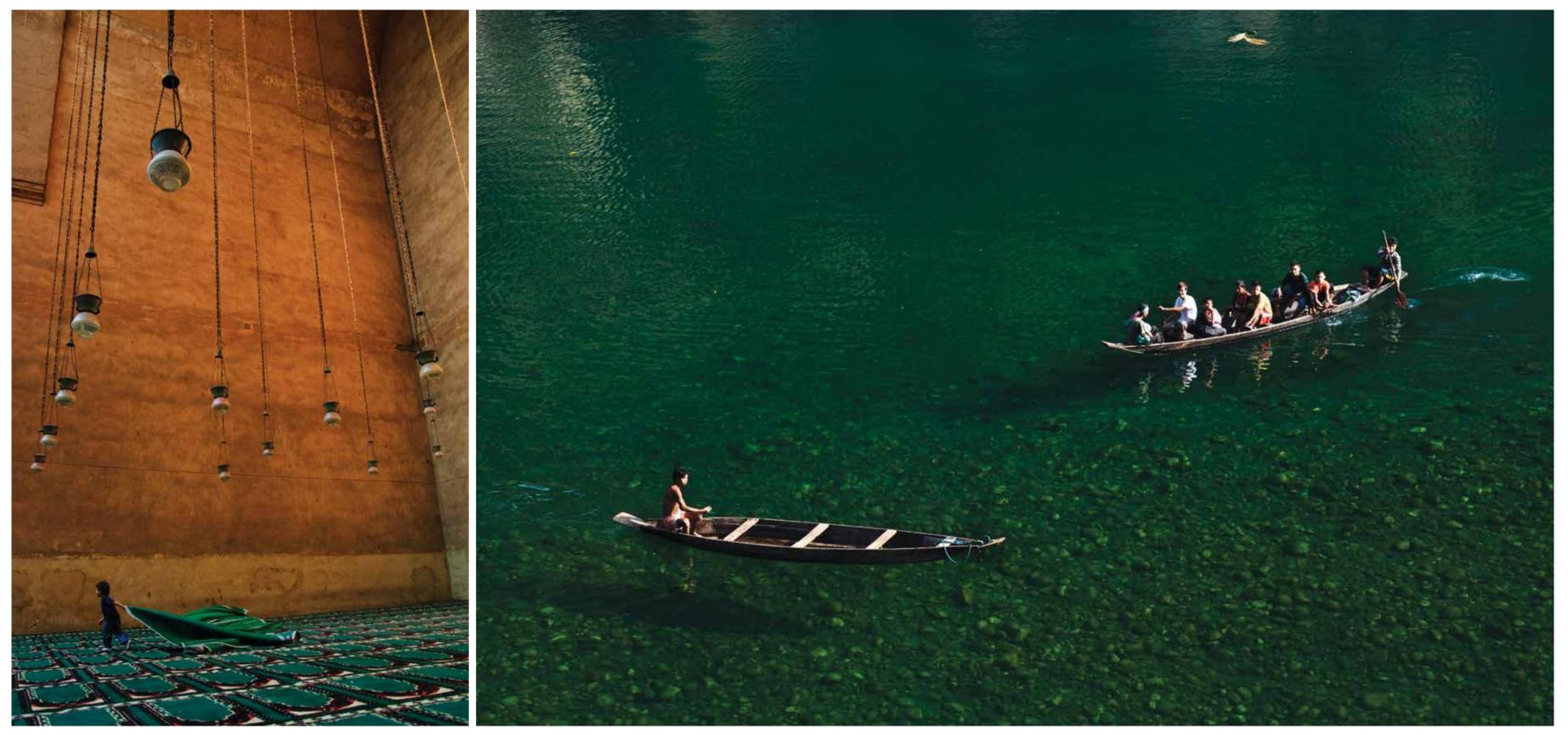
His photographs capture unique moments and places, forming a journal of his interactions with people and landscape he encounters on his way.



LOY KRATONG FESTIVAL, >>> Chiang mai, thailand

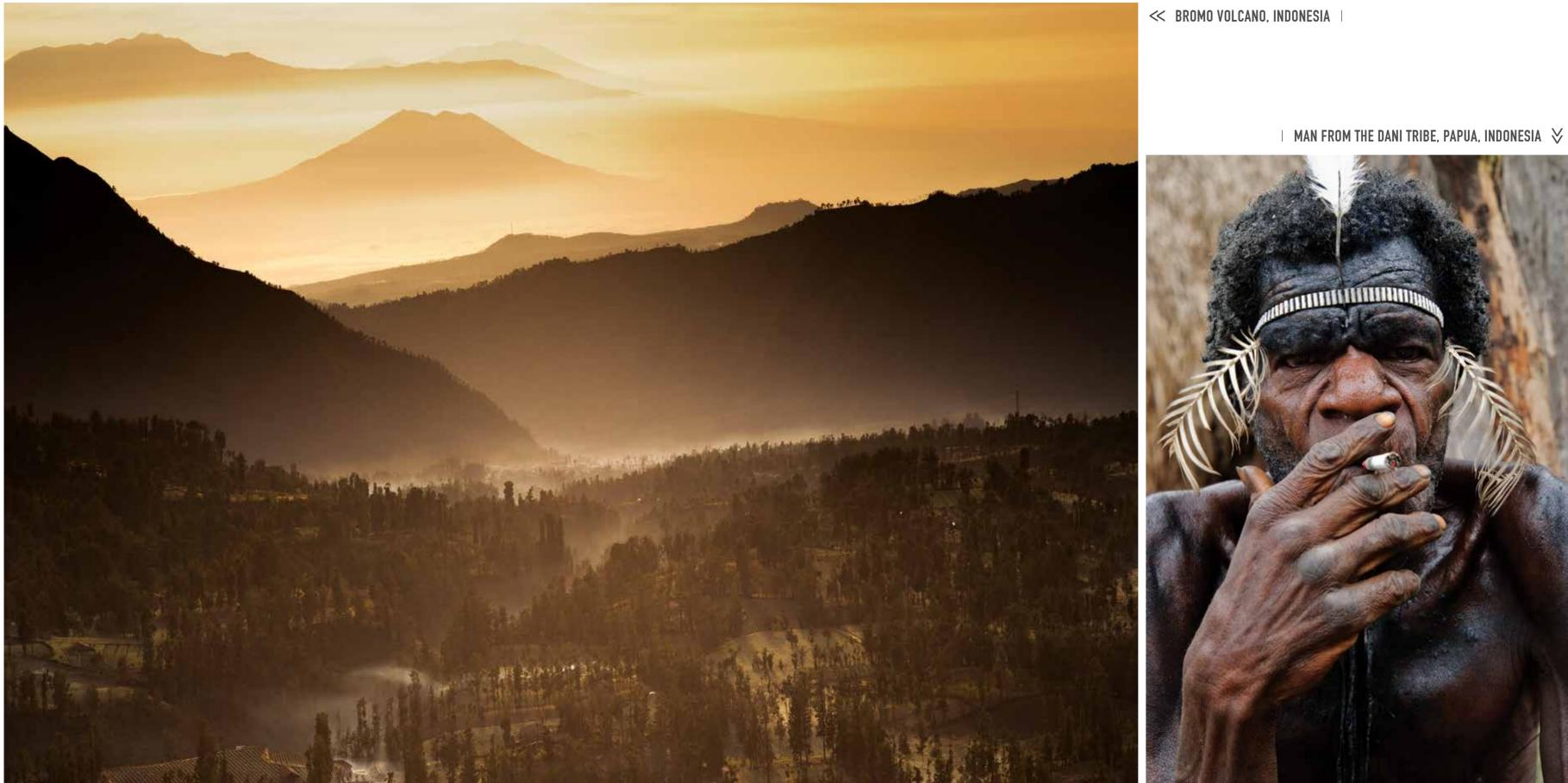






🗆 INSIDE GRAND MOSQUE IN CAIRO, EGYPT 🛛 🕅

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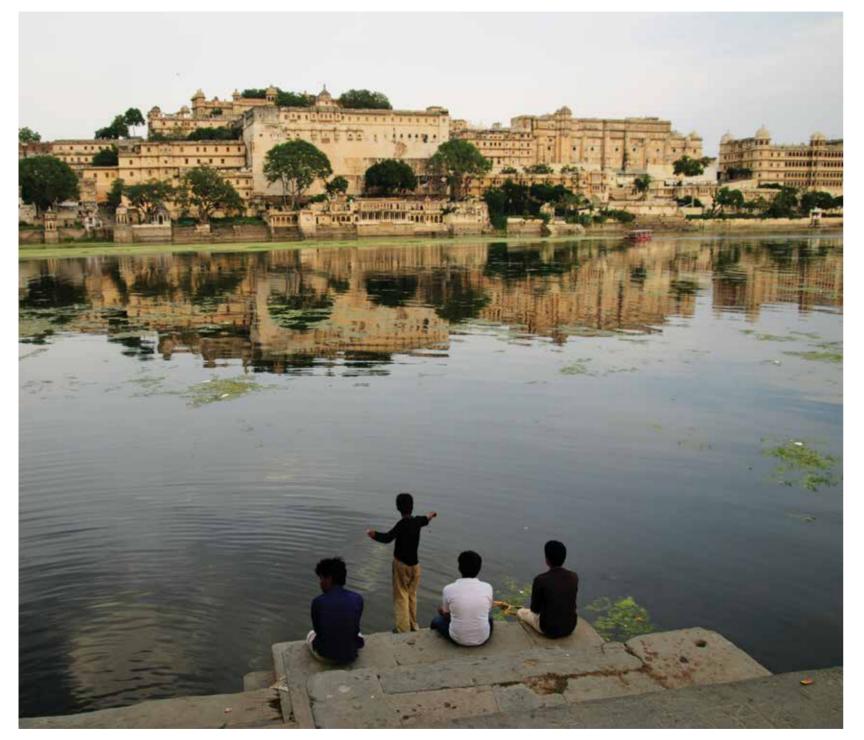
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HEALTHY BODY + MIND + SOUL

By Matt Clemens

Most of us know what it takes to get in shape – combine healthy food with some exercise and sooner or later you'll get there. But knowing what it takes is not enough. The journey to a happier life begins in your mind.

To understand the power of human mind better, we paid a visit to Phuket's Thanyapura Sports and Leisure Club – a place where experts take a holistic approach to nutrition, fitness... and mind training. Next to Thanyapura's world class fitness facilities and nutritionist-designed menus at its restaurants, a mind centre exists to provide its guests with guidance on their way to mental balance and wellbeing.

And while each is worth something on its own, exercises, healthy eating and mindfulness work best when practiced together. According to Thanyapura's experts, 1 + 1 + 1 is more than three.

MINDFULNESS: Pierre Gagnon – Mind Trainer

Don't react. act

"In some ways, mindfulness is fundamental to everything that we do. Through mindfulness, you become very aware of your environment and instead of just reacting, you begin acting. It all comes down to thinking – a very normal, natural thing that just happens. The problem is not the thinking itself, it's the relationship we have with our thoughts, both pleasant and unpleasant. Any thoughts that we have transform our body by creating a chemical reaction. Mindfulness allows you to create a distance from our thoughts, stops you from being manipulated by them."

Permanent bliss

"We all have a zone of pleasure, a neutral zone and an unpleasant zone, and we rarely remain in the neutral zone; most of the time, we move between pleasure and discomfort zones. Through mindfulness you will become aware of this movement and be able to stop it. If, for example, you compensate discomfort by eating sweets, becoming aware of this will help you stop yourself and go back to the neutral zone, and being there is a great pleasure. We tend to think that there is only pleasure and discomfort in life, but the more mindful you become the more pleasure you get from staying in the neutral zone and the span of your happiness increases."



The power of awareness

"Awareness is a huge first step, the realization of what emotions drive us. The second step is the realization that those emotions are impermanent, that the feelings come and go really fast. That way when an unpleasant feeling comes and you become aware of it, instead of reacting to it, you can observe it and wait for it to change and disappear. And it happens really fast..."

"Your brain doesn't want you to be happy"

Your brain can be your enemy

"Once you understand the way your brain works, you realize that it can be your worst enemy. Your brain doesn't want you to be happy, it wants you to survive another day. And it's also confused because in today's world it reacts to our everyday stresses – an important meeting, a bad relationship etc. – the same way it used to react to an encounter with a tiger in the bush. But once you realize that the thoughts you have are harmless and you are not in a mortal danger, your relationship with your thoughts changes, and your brain transforms."

Impermanence of pleasure

"There is nothing wrong with pleasure and when pleasure is there, stay with it. But all pleasure disappears and we desperately try to cling to it. So when you have a chocolate cheesecake in front of you, enjoy it. But once it's gone, it is gone. If the cake is followed by some unpleasant thought, let's say about a bad investment you made, you'll have this urge to go back to the previous state and you might end up ordering another piece of cake. It might work for a moment but after 3-4 pieces the pleasure is gone again. So the idea is to have the courage to be with your unpleasant thoughts and wait for another positive emotion to come. You're not the disk jockey, you don't decide what feelings you get, what music is played. But you can dance to the music, whatever it is."

From theory to practice

"It begins with meditation, sitting and observing your thoughts. And that's enough to begin a transformation in your brain. Simply speaking, our brains are composed of grey matter the computer, and white matter - the cables connecting the computer. Through meditation, you develop the white matter so you become more connected and this gives you better ability to control your thoughts. Neuroscientists say that it takes 300 milliseconds to become aware of a thought. Then you have 200 milliseconds to veto this thought. There isn't much space left for free will. From my experience, meditation and mindfulness give you more time to veto the thought and the veto becomes stronger."

Not just what but how you eat it

"Focusing on what you're eating, eating it slowly and enjoying the flavours makes a lot of difference. It's a different, better experience to thoroughly enjoy a healthy meal than to devour a bag of crisps in a minute. We encourage people to chew more, enjoy the flavours and focus on how your body, your brain perceives the food. Also, we introduce more and more raw food here at Thanyapura, which is composed of real, unadulterated flavours, the way Mother Nature gave them to us. And the flavours this food provides are more intense, helping with the mindfulness aspect."

One size doesn't fit all

"Your life is different than mine and small details can change a lot. Sex, age, level of fitness, all affect the nutrition we require. There are different lifestyles and they require different diets. It's not the same for parents who share their meals with their children and for business people who attend a lot of social gatherings where they tend to overeat and overdrink. There are different goals and different ways to get there. What I do is I give people personalized guidelines on how to achieve what they want."

Not just weight loss

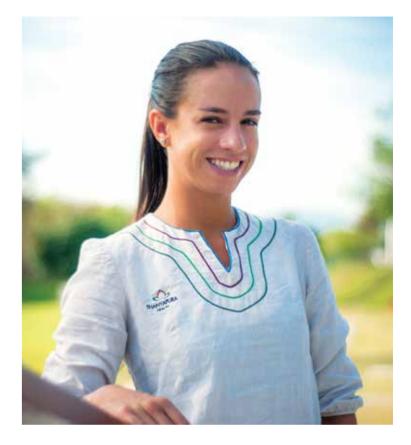
"Nutritionists are there not just for people who want to lose weight. I think everyone should see a nutritionist. Of course, people who try to lose weight might want to do it more often, maybe every couple of weeks, but even if you live a healthy lifestyle, it's good to consult an expert to see if what you are eating is good for you and what improvements can be made. There is a lot of misinformation about nutrition on social media and a lot of controversy around different ideas, so people get very confused. Experts can help debunk some myths and provide true knowledge."

"Sex, age, level of fitness, all affect the nutrition we require"

Diet > Exercise

"Proper metabolism and healthy lifestyle come in 70% from diet and 30% from exercise. Workout improves metabolism but just a little. So if you exercise and then follow it up with a pizza, you're doing more harm than good by not providing your body with the fuel to recover. Of course it's not like you need to eat super healthy all the time, a once-a-week "cheat meal" won't affect you much, but you cannot balance a bad diet with a lot of exercise, especially as you grow older."

NUTRITION: Marcela Soto - Sports Nutritionist



Healthy holiday

"Many people who stay at high-end resorts and hotels, do it regularly. They travel from one place to another every couple of weeks. This is the kind of lifestyle for which a nutritionist's guidelines come especially handy. It helps you to keep up with your goals. A nutritionist can make the right choices at the breakfast buffet, adjust your lunch menu to what you expect to have at dinner, tell you how many glasses of wine you can have etc. That way you can keep up your healthy lifestyle when you travel for business or pleasure and not jeopardize the achievements you already had back home."

Don't eat less, eat better

"It's not quantity that's the key, it's quality. If you give your body the fuel that it needs, you won't crave food so much. It's all about creating a balance. Of course, there are going to be some restrictions for people who are trying to lose weight, but it's not just cutting the portion down or following some strict diet of just eating apples and pomelos. When you consult a professional nutritionist, you will receive a menu adjusted to your personal requirements. In fact many of my clients tell me that after consulting with me they can eat more than they used to, they just eat better."



FITNESS: Stefan Lange – Personal Coach and Group Fitness Trainer

Fitness for the body, fitness for the mind

"Sport is basically making up for what we lost with the growth of civilization. We used to move but now we have all these elevators, escalators, cars. With sport, we move again and it changes our bodies, it's important for everyone, especially those who sit behind the desk all day long. But sport also changes the mind. From personal experience, if I can't do my exercise for a while, I feel discomfort. When I practice my sport I feel more like myself, my body feels better. And 99% of people I work with will tell you the same thing."

You don't have to, you want to

"First of all you need to realize that you don't do sport for anyone else but yourself. Nobody is forcing you to do it, you want to do it. That's why when people come to Thanyapura we first talk to them to ask what they want to achieve, what are their goals. Only then we find the best way to those goals. We create routines that are not easy to break, we have coaches who know how to keep the motivation up, we have group sessions where the dynamic is fantastic, people support each other."

"We create routines that are not easy to break"

Not just how you look but how you feel

"Training isn't only about growing muscles and losing weight. It's about stability, strength and ability to do more. The feeling of strength inside you, becoming less tired. For example I train mothers who recently had a child, office workers with backache resulting from long hours in a sitting position, and they come to me after training and say "I feel better". That's the best thing a coach can hear."

You set the goal

"No one can set your goals for you. In today's world, we like to push the responsibility away, put it in someone else's hands. But there is a part that we need to do ourselves, you have to take the first step and only then, we can provide you with help. First you want, then we give you what you want."

Make it personal

"Many people try to exercise by watching YouTube videos, and then they are coming to us and complaining about different pains. I say, let the experts do the experts' work. Online instructions are easy enough to follow but you're never sure if you're doing it right. And once you start doing it wrong, it can be difficult to correct it. If you spend half a year doing an exercise incorrectly, it will take us another few months to correct it. That's where personal training comes in: we can focus on specific goals and master the technique. And then there is also motivation. Not all people have enough of it to train for an hour with high intensity. With a personal trainer, you will feel more motivated."



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Guilt-free pleasures By: Alexandra Green

"Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food." - those wise words were uttered almost 2500 years ago by Hippocrates "the Father of Western Medicine". Today, they resound as loud as ever, also here, in the East. How do we know? We asked some of the best chefs in some of the best restaurants, hotels and resorts in Southeast Asia to provide us with the healthiest choices from their menus. What we received in return is one of the most colourful, decorative and delicious selections of food we've ever seen. And now we present it to you - with these dishes on the table, eating healthy is not an effort; it's pure, guilt-free pleasure.

Thanyapura Phuket

Each ingredient brings a great benefit for boosting your brainpower. Broccoli is a source of antioxidants that fights the degeneration of the neurons; broad beans are a natural source of levodopa, which is converted into dopamine, an important neurotransmitter that is associated with the functioning of the body movements; pecan nuts are a natural source of vitamin E, which improves the brain cognitive functions. And it also boosts your mood by tasting simply delicious.



Broccoli, broad bean, and pecan nuts



Chef Jirawat Wajasat





Grilled Whole Rock Snapper, Pandan Leaves

I was happy to discover that this dish is not just healthy but also good for the environment and work conditions of the fishermen. 100% of the fish choices and seafood in Erawan Tea Room are from Earth Net Small Scale Fisheries. That includes this whole rock snapper served with pandan leaves, soy sauce, fried garlic, shallots and coriander. The snapper is a firm fleshed, very clean tasting fish with a delicate flavour. Its meat is low in calories and is a source of lean protein.



Chef Kriengkrai Jakkhujuntorn

3 70

Plaa Pla Bai Bua

Do what I did and make tuna your next meal choice. It is loaded with vitamins and nutrients, low in saturated fats and is an excellent source of protein. Tuna is also a good source of selenium, an antioxidant that helps improve the body's immune system. At Conrad Koh Samui the fish is gently seared to preserve its natural flavor and goodness and served with lotus seeds, avocado puree, Thai herbs, lemon and mint sauce.



Conrad Koh Samui



Chef Amporn Choeng Ngam



Four Seasons Hotel Singapore

Jiang-Nan Chun Peking Duck

We all know duck to have some of the most tender and succulent meat, which is why I couldn't pass up the opportunity to try Alan Chan's Jiang Nan Chun Peking duck. There I discovered that before the ducks are roasted in a mesquite wood-fired oven, imbuing it with a delectable smoked aroma and succulence to the meat, they undergo a special preparation method for 14 hours which reduces fat under the skin for a healthier but still divinely delicious Peking Duck. For an intimate blend with the traditional flavours of the duck, caviar is served on the side, a rich source of vitamins and omega 3.



Chef Alan Chan



Grilled Sea Scallops with Organic Carrots

Looking for a dish that melts in your mouth and leaves you in a stupor of ultimate satisfaction? Look no further than the Hansar Bangkok's own take on grilled scallops. Chef Charles Christiaens takes a sophisticated and healthy twist on grilled scallops that brings out their delicate flavour and highlights their natural sweetness. Organic carrots add an eye-catching accent and are high in vitamin A for healthy eyes, plus vitamin C, fiber and potassium. This is how a classic dinner gets transformed into an incredible culinary experience.

Hansar Bangkok



Chef Charles Christiaens

1

L'Atelier de Joël Robuchon Bangkok

La Betterave

Joël Robuchon is one of the most famous and respected chefs in the world and he knows the benefits of using healthy ingredients for a healthy lifestyle. He even authored a book about healthy cuisine - so no one can say that healthy and fine cuisine can't go hand in hand. La Betterave, a true summer dish, is an apple and beetroot tartare with guacamole and green mustard sherbet. Wonderfully fresh, crunchy and full of flavour, the dish is topped with green mustard sorbet to add even more freshness and give it a touch of spiciness.



Chef Joël Robuchon

Four Seasons Resort Koh Samui

Cebiche mixto

Chef Chris Patzold never disappoints with his amazing creativity in the kitchen and his Cebiche Mixto is one dish that you cannot pass up while you are in Koh Samui. In his version of cebiche, he uses three kinds of the freshest of seafood - octopus, chilled prawns and white snapper that are diced and served with sweet pineapple, celery, lime, shallots and olive oil. On the side, banana crackers, lime and coriander are offered to complement this flavourful and healthy meal.





Chef Chris Patzold

Putahracsa Hua Hin

Pomelo Salad with Semi-Grilled Ahi Tuna

We all know salads are healthy and this delectable dish is one of the tastiest and healthiest salads I've had. It consists of pomelo, shallots, chili, makrut lime leaves, spring onions and sesame seeds mixed altogether and is served alongside a perfectly grilled tuna - one of the best sources of proteins and omega 3 acids around. The dressing is made with coconut milk, chili paste, fish sauce and lemon juice to give the dish some Thai character and your metabolism a boost.



Chef Wittawat Sornsomrith

Vana Belle Koh Samui

Larb Tuna

If you haven't tried Larb, originating from North Eastern Thailand, you are missing out on an amazing experience for your taste buds. Here, instead of pork or beef, tuna is used to offer a healthier alternative. Tuna sashimi is marinated in chili powder, fish sauce, lime juice, chopped coriander leaves, spring onions and red onion mix. It comes served with roasted ground rice, mint garnish and assortment of fresh vegetables. All that is delicious and healthy in Thai cuisine concentrated in a single dish.

90 AT THE TABLE





Chef Julong



Indigo Pearl

Quinoa Salad

Quinoa has remained largely undetected to most of the world until recently. This plant grows in the Andes Mountains of Peru and Bolivia; it is gluten fee and packed with many vitamins and nutrients. A dietary hit and a real super-food here it is served with olives, feta cheese, onion and parsley, pomegranate, lemon, olive oil and garlic dressing. This is as healthy as salads go, and as delicious and beautiful.



Chef Apadoo

The Pavilions Phuket

Tuna Tatatki Chef Belinda never fails to impress with her Pavilions signature seared Ahi tuna, crusted with black sesame and topped with a lively green herb dressing. This dish is both light and filled with flavour that will leave most wondering how something so impossibly delicious could be so healthy.



Chef Belinda





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Le Meridien Bangkok

Walnut crusted cod with leek and garlic velouté

On the texture side, this dish combines the smooth tenderness of the fish with the crunchiness of the walnuts and creaminess of the velouté. On the health side, white fish takes care of lower fat content, garlic provides an antibacterial boost, walnuts help keep bad cholesterol at bay and leeks are known to improve heart health. On the flavour side... it's just delicious.



Chef Markus Rotard

Kata Rocks combines innovative 'superyacht' inspired architecture, one to four bedroom elegant pool villas, signature Thai hospitality and extraordinary experiences for the discerning traveller. Surround yourself with infinite luxury when experiencing Kata Rocks' modernist cuisine, award-winning spa and Phuket's best sunset overlooking the

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Her brand is named after her Italian grandfather, her first collection – Bisalta, after a mountain in Italy's Piedmont, where her father grew up. Yet her designs are made in and with Thailand in mind. Meet Stefania Kim Gardini right before she takes the world of fashion by storm.

Hello Stefania, congratulations on the launch of your first collection. But before we talk about it, please tell me how your adventure with fashion begun?

Stefania Kim Gardini : I've always been bit of a weirdo with the way I dressed, which was kind of a hit and miss that's what comes with taking risks and exploring your own taste. I've also always made my own stuff and have been very particular about the things I wear. Here in Thailand there are a lot of tailors so I used to bring my own designs to have them made for me. But I had been working in fashion even before, for a couple of years, after college. I did fashion and luxury management in Milan where I got my degree, after that I moved to Shanghai where I worked for a branding agency and then I relocated to Bangkok and started working in-house for a fashion brand.

And when did the decision come to change this passion into a career?

After finishing my business degree I had to decide how and where to apply myself. I thought what is it that actually interests me? And as I had many interests in creative fields such as art and design, and fashion was one of them, I thought I'd stick to what I know and love. Also, we have a family business here in Thailand, so I'm currently still helping up with that, which gave me this great opportunity to figure out my own schedule and do something next to that, something that I actually like doing. And because I have already been working in fashion for a while, I had all the connections in terms of fabrics sourcing, production facilities etc. So it all naturally came together.

Were the very beginnings difficult?

The problem young designers run into is quantity. A lot of fabric suppliers won't take small orders, if you want to start small it's difficult with just about any product. But I found a supplier who was willing to take smaller orders and I knew someone who was willing to produce in smaller, boutique quantities. It required some digging, some negotiating, finding the right quality for some products but I was actually having a lot of fun with it. Eventually I came up with this small collection, it's only 10 designs.

Current industry standards are incredibly demanding, designers are expected to come up with not only a large quantity of pieces but also at a very high pace and for a starting entrepreneur that's too much. But it seems that the industry's paradigm is shifting from brick and mortar stores to online, to smaller quantities, higher customization. It's all because the consumer is becoming more and more educated. And in all that change I saw an opportunity to do what I'm passionate about.



Still, isn't being passionate about fashion and actually designing pieces, two completely different things?

Initially I would just see things that I liked and things that I didn't. But then a moment of introspection comes when you ask yourself "Why do I like that so much? Is it the fabric? Is it the shape? Is it the way the zipper is aligned?" And I got very curious about how things are constructed. I didn't study design and I'm still learning a lot in terms of technical drawings and such, but that's also what makes this so exciting. I worked on the business side of things and it's always easy to comment on somebody else's work, but how about doing it yourself? It's a whole different challenge.

They say that the best way to learn something is by doing it

Exactly! And especially now, with this first collection, I learned so many things and I can't wait to see what the second one is going to bring.

Do you remember your first design?

I started by trying to sew myself, I got myself a machine and some fabric to see how it works. I remember using cheap fabric because I was still practicing and I made a navy blue halter dress. I think I made this same dress three or four times before I got it right. And when I felt I knew how to do it, I got some better fabric and made it again, this time in a mint-green silky fabric. I remember wearing it out the first time, I wasn't feeling very confident about my sewing just yet and I was afraid someone might see the less than perfect seeming, to be honest it was quite nerve wrecking.

How did the collection come about?

I continued to change this first design around, adding on to it, and before I knew it, I had all these sketches and ideas. It was almost like making up my own closet at that point. And





eventually I got some feedback, and sat down with my production partner, I had to let go of some designs that didn't really work, but was also able to add more ideas and the collection started taking shape.

So the collection happened naturally?

Coming from the business side of things I know how important is to have a consistent concept, and a good foundation, so I started out with a couple few basic things – a short dress, a long dress, shorts, a top. I also wanted to keep it all very pragmatic, I wasn't looking to reinvent the wheel. A lot of designers start as creative artists and then they have to learn how to apply this creativity onto realistic and pragmatic set of ideas to turn it into a business, whereas for me it was the other way round. Because I had guite a set vision. I knew what I wanted the concept to be like and it naturally became a consistent whole.

How would you describe your style?

I'd say sophisticated and straightforward. Elegant and intimate but still fierce. I think there is a certain laissez faire about my clothing but it's also very non-nonsense. There is very little thrills, I don't have a lot of little bowties or frills, none of that. There is high functionality in a lot of my pieces. Certain dresses you can wear in three different ways, according to your own body type. And because you can wear it in your way and you can also accessorize it in your own way, it's a good foundation to express your style. Also all of the pieces are loose fitting so they are comfortable. There is a certain laissez-faire and nonchalance that comes with it, a confident ease with a degree of sophistication.

That's why you prefer silk?

Living in South East Asia, you want to dress stylishly but appropriate for work, and with all the traffic in Bangkok you don't have the luxury to just walk 5 minutes home after work and change for dinner. You also have the heat and the air conditioning... it's pretty difficult.

To figure out your style in those conditions! When I moved to Thailand I had to reinvent my entire closet! The great thing about silk is that it airs through a lot, it feels

fresh and is very comfortable, so it is perfect for this combination of a pragmatic approach to what you're wearing while still maintaining a certain level of sophistication.

How did you learn about fabrics?

What I like to do is go to Bangkok's China Town and India Town and I see what's out there and talk to people. I learned a lot there. I'd pull out different fabrics, ask questions "Where is this made, what is this made of?" Though what I like to do is actually close my eyes and run my hand through a bunch of fabrics and stop where it feels good.

Feels good?

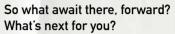
I think that one of the most important things about clothing is that it feels good on your skin. In Thailand it's sometimes very hard to find quality fabrics, a lot of it is polyester which makes one very hot and itchy, and in search of better quality fabrics people often go for higher-end brands. But those brands are often international, meaning that the clothes weren't made for the local climate or body shape. My designs are made with Thailand in mind, they have a resort feel and they are made of silk, which is great in hot weather. Plus Thai consumers are getting very educated and demanding, they like to try new things as taste levels are evolving guickly.

And are you aware of what's happening in the fashion scene in Thailand?

I think Thailand as a whole and especially Bangkok is very forward thinking, I like that the scene here is very experimental, there is a lot of people who are trying to do their own thing, it's amazing to be a witness of it all.

Just a witness or a part of it?

Because of my international background I don't fully claim to be a part of the Thai scene. I still feel very European, for example a lot of my clothing don't require bras, whereas Thai style tends to be a little bit more done up, often also a little bit more conservative. But in terms of mental attitude I think we are very similar. everybody is trying to do something creative, people are very curious and open-minded. The expression might be different from mine but in terms of mentality we are all trying to push things forward.



Firstly I'm very curious to see how this collection will be received. Then, I already have ideas for the next collection in my head and I I'm very excited to start working on that. Hopefully I will get the chance to explore different avenues and experiment a little bit more with my creativity.

Photographer: John Tods Location: IndoChine Resort & Villas

To find out more visit domenicogardini.com. Stefania Kim Gardini's designs are featured in NAA Magazine's "Wonders of Phuket" video. See it now at naamagazine.com

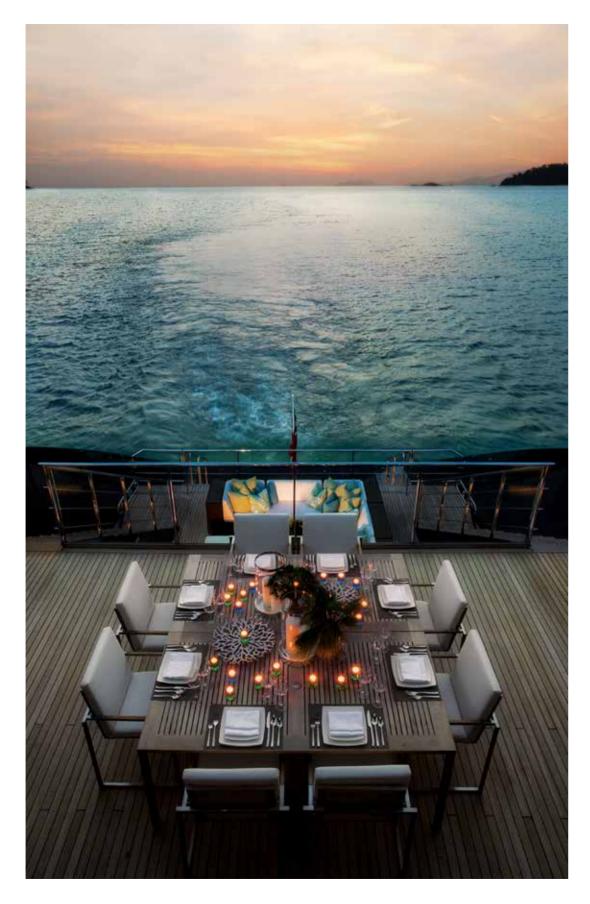


THE CUTTING By Matt Clemens EDGE

Last time we checked, shiny skyscrapers belonged in city centers and modern art in art galleries. Not anymore. Meet the Ocean Emerald – a floating marvel. There's no two ways about it – she's a stunner. Even if you think you've seen it all when it comes to super yachts, even if you frequent yacht shows and spend large amounts of time in vacht marinas. Ocean Emerald will stop you in your tracks and make you marvel at the limitless human creativity. It's tempting to simply tell you "just look at those pictures", and by all means – do; they are as much a pleasure to look at as is any quality piece of contemporary art. But there's more to the Ocean Emerald than its stunning exteriors. than those curved lines that seem to belong to the architectonic chic of London's skyline.

The striking 41-meter super yacht was built by the "Aston Martin of Yachts" as Rodriguez Group; a leading luxury yacht builder based in Italy is sometimes referred to. Though first established back in 1887, Rodriguez has no trouble keeping up with, and even setting new trends in yacht design, and what better proof than the Ocean Emerald.

The yacht boasts 30% more space than other vessels in her class and to further boost its spacious character, the design features extensive floor-to-ceiling windows, providing a constant supply of natural light.



en-suite bathrooms.



Take her for a day cruise and you can easily fit up to 50 guests on board while for overnight stays, five cabins accommodating 12 guests await - an airy master suite with two private terraces, 2 double VIP staterooms and two twin cabins with Pullman beds, all featuring interior design by the world-renowned marine architects, Sir Norman Foster & Partners and all fitted with

But as impressive as it is in those pictures, or even seen in real life, docked at a yacht marina, the true beauty of the Ocean Emerald can only be experienced on its deck, at a cruising speed of 14 knots. Here in South-East Asia, the best place to do that is Phuket, where the boat is the crown jewel in the catalogue of Bristol Charter.



It's big, it's beautiful, it's unique

Founded in 1959 in the French Riviera, the company expanded to Dubai in 2004 and has been operating in Phuket since 2014. Bristol's fleet ranges from a 23 feet craft to this 135 feet long stunner and comprises state of the art Motor Boats, luxury Motor Yachts, Game Fishing Yacht and Boats, Sail Catamaran, Motor Catamaran and Traditional Arabian Dhows.

A great example of another impressive boat in Bristol's catalogue is Shard 2 - a stylish and sexy 56-sport yacht from the reputable Princess Shipyard. She might not be a spacious super yacht like the Ocean Emerald but she makes up for it with her impressive top speeds and wide cruising range. She's fits up to 12 passengers and is able to negotiate great distances with maximum rapidity, offering those on board a wonderful experience and delivering them to paradise destinations such as the Similians or Phi Phi island.

So what makes your heart beat faster? The astonishing Ocean Emerald or the agile Shard 2? Take a look at the pictures and decide for yourself.

To find out more visit bristolcharter.net/en/phuket





By Matt Clemens

For Martin Palleros, the creative force behind Phuket's exceptional MontAzure residential resort, architecture and nature are inseparable.

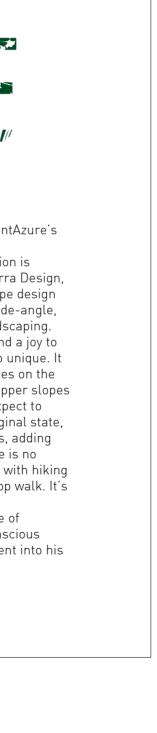
The northern part of Kamala beach in Phuket is a fascinating place. Heading south, as you leave the popular beaches of Laguna and Surin behind and prepare yourself to face the concrete and neon jungle of Patong, you suddenly find yourself surrounded by lush greenery of a tropical forest. To find such wild, natural landscape on the highly developed western coast of Thailand's biggest island is more than surprising. It's amazing.

It's in these surroundings of Phuket's last large stretch of undeveloped beachfront that a brand new project comes to live. Its name – MontAzure – reflects the fabulous diversity of the surrounding landscape ranging from oceanfront to mountainside, babbling brook to murmuring surf, ragged stands of casuarina pines casting dappled shadows on the golden sands to steep green slopes swaddled in almost impenetrable thickets of lush primary forest. And out of respect for this unique environment, nature will be more than an add-on to MontAzure's design. It will be its integral part.

Tasked with crafting MontAzure's vision is Buenos Aires-born Martin Palleros of Tierra Design, an architect who was seduced by landscape design early in his career and is known for his wide-angle, holistic approach to architecture and landscaping.

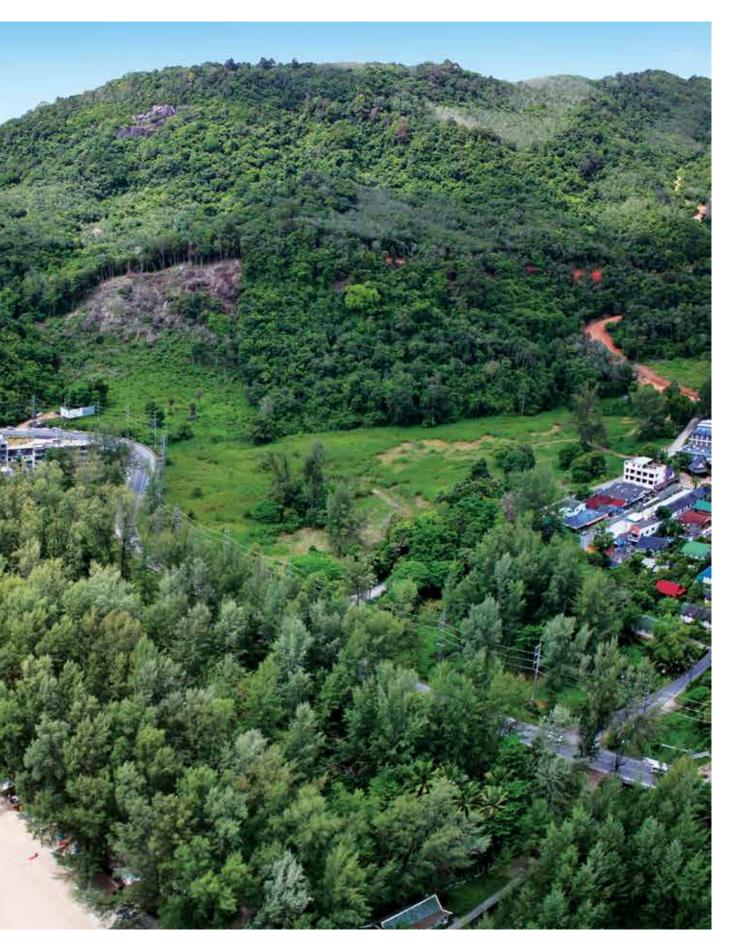
"The MontAzure site is a challenge and a joy to work on, as the variety of topography is so unique. It goes from beautiful mature casuarina pines on the beachfront to real primary forest on the upper slopes of the hills, which is not something you expect to find in Phuket – trees growing in their original state, undisturbed and magnificent," he explains, adding that "In these high hills, above 80 m, there is no construction. Just forest, a green reserve with hiking and mountain bike trails, perhaps a treetop walk. It's going to be very special."

Perfectly aware of the immense value of MontAzure's setting, Palleros made a conscious choice to weave nature and the environment into his design as integral parts of its fabric.





"Out of respect for this unique environment, nature will be more than an add-on to MontAzure's design. It will be its integral part."



"We have really put a lot into getting the use of materials perfect for the environment," he explains. "For example, the treated pine we will use on the wooden trim and decking turns a beautiful silver colour as it ages, which will complement the colour of the pine needles in the casuarinas. The slabs of raw concrete that make up the main structural walls will be softened by the shadow play of the shade trees and also by creepers that will spread across the concrete over time, softening the appearance and making it feel more organic. It's a very natural colour palette that complements the environment".

This level of respect for nature and drive to compliment it with his designs is not surprising for a man who thinks that he "shall never see a poem lovely as a tree." His is a world of sensibility and synthesis; juxtapositions of the organic and inorganic, the natural and the man-made, where subtle contrasts between colour, texture and form are reborn as delightful journeys for the eye; design as narrative, vista as vignette.











Apart from nature, the other influence taken into account when selecting the materials used in MontAzure design, is time. Materials are chosen based on their potential for patina, the grace-notes materials accrue with age, like character, such as Verdigris on copper, or moss on a roof tiles. Palleros uses plants like chess pieces, strategically locating them to soften view planes, create dramatic shadow play or spread their tendrils into intricate creeping organic screens and lattices.

The key word here is "timeless". Rather than seek cheap 'wows' in the here and now, Parellos considers what potential a project has to become and designs his creations to age gracefully and even improve over time.

Complete MontAzure masterplan covers 454 rai and will feature a number of integrated components, including an Intercontinental Resort and Hotel, four beach clubs for public and private use, exclusive private hillside estate villas and an expansive nature reserve. The first stage, Twinpalms Residences MontAzure, is to be completed in 2018 and will comprise 75 luxury condominiums, with 99 metres of absolute beach frontage.

Find out more at *condos.montazure.com*





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Here's an artist who, in his own words, combines "A heart and outlook of a tribesman with the vocabulary and education of a scholar." 34 years old and of American-Paraguayan-Brazilian descent, Cecê Nobre is a man who cites great philosophers as his biggest influence. Yet to tackle the complex issues that move him most – globalization, cultural erosion, colonialism – he reaches for an ancient form of art – a mural. His are large-scale, blindingly colourful and distinctively unique. And leave no one indifferent.

> Cecê Nobre has been based in Bangkok since 2010. See more of his works at *facebook.com/ccnobre/*







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One of Vietnam's most fabulous resorts was blessed by a man with a golden touch.

Don't you sometimes feel like simply packing your bag and going somewhere? We think you should. And when you do, don't just go anywhere. Go to Danang in Vietnam. Why there? Because thanks to recently launched direct Bangkok Airways flight from the Thai capital, you can. And because at the end of this journey, a true gem of tropical design awaits.

Say "tropical resort" and a picture begins forming in your mind – something luxurious yet close to nature, welcoming yet sophisticated, and all in all, while maybe not boring, certainly quite familiar. Add, however, "by Bill Bensley" to the equation and things get interesting, imagination runs amok.



Hailed as the "king of exotic luxury resorts" by the TIME magazine, Bill Bensley's signature is unrestrained creativity. He has the ability to bestow unique, artistic appeal on his designs. Where other architects might become a tad idle in face of South-East Asia's stunning natural surroundings that require little human invention and intervention to shine, Bensley has the courage and vision to add more. In doing so, he follows his own unique design philosophy of "Lebih gila, lebih biak," Indonesian for "the more odd, the better. Minimalism? Simplicity? Not on Bill Bensley's creative playground.

A glowing example of this approach awaits, hidden in the mythfilled hills of 'Monkey Mountain' in the heart of the Son Tra Peninsula nature reserve. It took 6 years to design and build the five-star InterContinental Danang Sun Peninsula Resort and the result is a work of art as much as a resort. As such, it stands out not only in the fast developing city of Danang, but in the whole of Vietnam - a country that has seen a constant growth in tourist numbers in recent years and is quickly emerging as one of the most attractive holiday destinations in Asia. And it's the country of Vietnam itself that provided the



architect with endless inspiration for this project. Before he got down to work with pencil and paper, before he even draw the first lines of the design with the eye of his mind, Bensley immersed himself in all the inspirations Vietnam had to offer - from temples, palaces and imperial tombs to the ancient streets of Hoi An, traditional craft villages and spectacular natural settings.



Those influences can be seen across the resort's four levels -Heaven, Sky, Earth and Sea. The deep dark wood used extensively in the project creates a strong contrast with the resort's white walls while complimenting the gentle greens and blues of the sea, sky and forest all around. The presence of local silk, carved wood elements, traditional Asian archways and custom made furniture makes the design inherently Vietnamese, while seamlessly blending contemporary and traditional elements. All this is set on rainforest cladded slope descending gently onto a private beach, with each of the resort's 200 rooms blessed with beautiful vistas of the South China Sea.

For this impressive design, accolades followed. The InterContinental Danang Sun Peninsula Resort was showered with awards, including Trip Advisor's Traveller's Choice, Luxury 50 by World Spa and Travel, Asia's Leading New Resort and The World's Leading Luxury Resort for two consecutive years (2014 and 2015) by World Travel Awards, to name a few, and still remains one of Vietnamese hospitality pinnacles. Bill Bensley's golden touch has done its magic once again. And now this gem is within reach, just a short fly away.

Find out more on danang.intercontinental.com



"The design blends contemporary and traditional elements while remaining inherently Vietnamese"



Some call it bar or tavern, others prefer pub or roadhouse inn, cocktail lounge, speakeasy, cantina or bodega. We call it the rabbit hole – a place where reality bends and when the right ingredients are mixed – magic may happen. The following pages are filled with Southeast Asia's most unique, exclusive, best designed and simply most impressive bars. Jump head first and disappear down the rabbit hole.



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AI AT YOUR SERVICE



If you think that development of Artificial Intelligence means the end of human kind, you probably spend too much time watching Terminator. Here's an antidote, something to calm you down meet Amelia, a new Al program which will be used to answer the auestions of local residents at the Enfield Council of London, Amelia can recognise speech, use logic, learn, resolve problems and even recognize the emotions of the person she's dealing with. We wonder if she will understand the emotions of the office clerk she's about to replace.

HEART IN A BACKPACK

How long can a man survive without a heart? Seconds? Minutes? The answer is - 555 days! Such was the case of Stan Larkin, a 25-year old from Michigan who was diagnosed with a fatal heart condition. While waiting for a potential donor, his own heart gave up and Larkin was fitted with the Freedom Portable Driver, a Total Artificial Heart mounted



on a backpack. With the device on his back, the patient was released from the hospital and spent another year and a half waiting for a new heart, which he finally received in May 2016.

BUILDING BLOCKS OF NOSTALGIA

Ever dreamed of stuffing your surfboard on the roof of your very own vintage VW Beetle and driving down the coast of California in search of a perfect wave? Now, you sort of can. Surf the waves of nostalgia with this LEGO Creator reproduction set. The blue Beetle comes equipped with a roof-mounted surfboard. The attention to detail is meticulous - the model is composed of 1167 pieces and it looks almost like the 1960 original, just smaller...and cheaper. It costs just 99,99 USD.

WATER TO GO

If you're an outdoor type who feels the calling of mountain ridges, deep forests and endless deserts, we have something BeFree special for you. The Katadyn BeFree is probably the best solution for all those thirsty hikers out there. The bottle comes with an integrated filter allowing you to safely enjoy water from natural sources such as rivers and streams. It's also collapsible - meaning it will not occupy the precious space in your backpack when not in use. The filter can clean up to 1000 litres of water of 99.99 % of bacteria.

TAKE WAVES AWAY



If you don't know how to or don't feel like starting a fire in the wood, forgot your gas cooker and don't have access to power supply to plug in an electric one, yet you feel like having a hot meal out in the nature, the Wayv Adventurer is here to help. It might look like a thermos bottle but it's much more - a microwave which can heat food and drinks on the go. And as it comes fitted with a battery, you don't need a power socket to enjoy your meal nice and hot. The battery lasts for 30 minutes of heating.

Interpreters - beware. The rest of us -UNDERSTAND MORE rejoice. The Pilot smart earpiece is here to change the way we communicate by automatically translating the language it hears to the one you understand. Simply pop it into your ears and receive live translation of whatever you hear into your own mother tongue. The piece works with a dedicated app which handles the actual translations and does not need access to the internet. The release is set for 2017.



PRINTED TO BE WILD

Minimalism means removing all that is not essential. As such the frame of The Light Rider 3D Printed Motorcycle is the epitome of minimalism. Designed using sophisticated software algorithms, the frame was then 3D printed – all its 14 hollow aluminium parts – resulting in a frame that is 30% lighter than a conventional one. Sadly, when fitted with an electric engine it can reach a not so impressive speed of 45 mph. But it looks great doesn't it?





IN-EAR COACH

Your phone is smart. vour watch is smart.

your home is getting smarter... Time for your headphones. Those from Vi are equipped with learning AI that can provide you with custom feedbacks based on your past trainings and performances. In short – your personal coach is now in your ears. The on-board trackers measure your speed, heat rate, elevation and more – though to do most of that, they need to be paired with your phone. Excellent sound quality is guaranteed by Harman Kardon and the battery lasts for 8 hours.

SHOOT FOR THE STARS

Until now, astrophotography

has been a hobby for geeks equipped with large size. sophisticated cameras. Tiny1 camera from TinyMos is here to change that. The producer claims that this point and shoot sized device is able to capture crystal clear images of the night sky. How? By fitting the sensor with larger pixels which are more sensitive to light. With added noise reduction Tiny1 makes it possible to shoot for the stars despite its small body. It also comes with interactive star map so you know what constellations you're shooting.





PROTECT AND EXPAND

Phone cases fitted with extra batteries which protect your precious smartphone while providing some extra juice are nothing new. But what SanDisk did is. iXpand Memory Case will not only extend the iPhones battery life but also provide it with extra storage. The case connects to the phone via the Lightning connector and expands the storage by 32, 64 or 128 GB, depending on the version. You need to use SanDisk's app to manage the files but it's still better than running out of space when you need it most.





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THE LANGHAM





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Traveler

GOLD

LIST





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