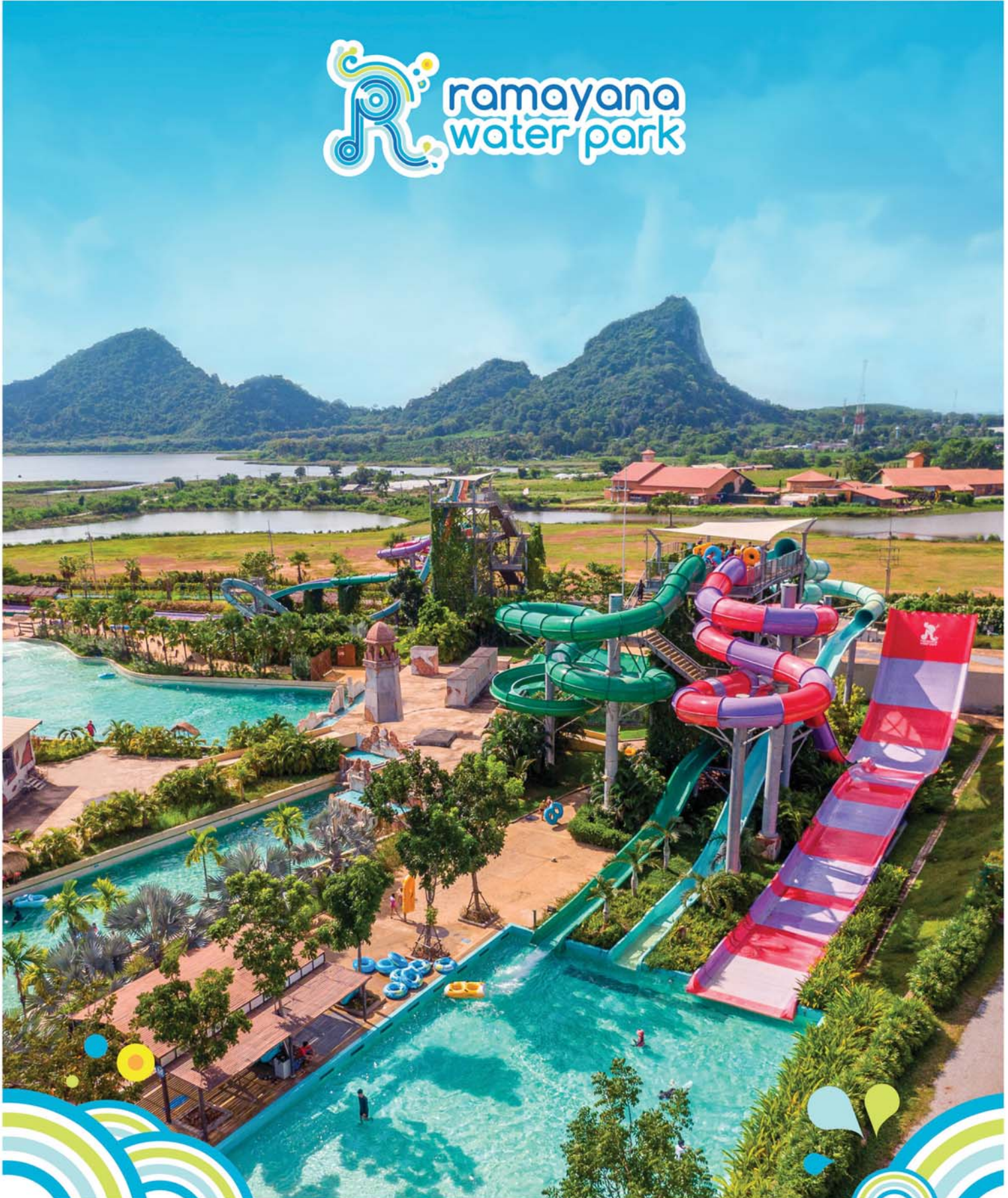


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EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Ramayana is all about creating a complete exciting experience. The park regularly hosts events like foam parties, fire shows and live music, keeping the energy high. Feeling peckish after all that splashing? Grab a bite at one of the many restaurants or cool off with a refreshing drink at the Monkey Beach Club.

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This Month in Discover Pattaya

Hi Everyone

With Pattaya's International schools all breaking for the end of the academic year, what better way to keep the kids entertained than to visit Ramayana Thailand's biggest water park! With their 3 new Kids Zone to enjoy it will provide hours of fun and games.

For sporting enthusiasts there's also plenty to keep you happy with Wimbledon, The British Open, The Olympics in Paris and of course The Marathon here in Pattaya. Turn to our sporting section for more information on all these events and more.

This month we discuss the potential benefits of eating spicy food and review some extremely healthy dishes from SunSabella. Barry and I also filmed there and interviewed Thomas Reimer at the Jazz pit for our latest YouTube video. Please subscribe to the Pattaya Trader YouTube channel to see us regularly film in and around Pattaya. Also, if you have a resort or restaurant that you would like us to review or are interested in advertising with us please send me an email with your contact information.

Looking forward to hearing from you

All the best
Gloria x

gloria@pattayatradetrader.com
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Learning to Use your Mobile Phone

- Howard Posner gives a class to PILC

Learning to use your mobile phone properly can make life so much easier and more enjoyable. You can stay connected with friends and family through calls, texts, and social media. Plus organizing your day can be a breeze when you use calendar and reminder apps. That's why it was a great idea for the Pattaya International Ladies Club to invite a couple of experts to give their members some helpful tricks and tips on getting the most out of their mobile phones



Carol Johnson took part in the Android Phone Class and told us:

You don't know what you don't know, that was the theme of our android class. Howard Posner did a wonderful job of showing us how to get the most from our phones. Throughout the class, you could hear the ladies saying..."I didn't know that"... "Wow, now I can use this". Howard showed us how to use many of the applications on our phones and taught us about some others that would make our life easier. I came away with two critical pieces of information:

1) The importance of having security on my phone. 2) How to set up an Emergency SOS, I didn't even know it existed!

Howard's class was predominantly concerned with Android phones. So for the ladies with Iphones James Erratt was on hand to help. Having worked for Apple he had plenty of knowledge to impart. Jody Abrams from the PILC remarked "He spoke to us in layperson's terms and I thought this was incredibly helpful. Everyone came away knowing more than when we started. And that's what the class was all about!"

Howard also shared some of his YouTube links for the PILC ladies to view at their leisure

https://youtu.be/h2Lndh_luPg - Best free App Google Keep

<https://youtu.be/xqkq9mlrO2U> - Your phone can save your life

<https://youtu.be/gPbPQdcL73s> - The most advanced Earbuds for Sleeping



In fact YouTube is a great resource for learning about educational apps or mastering your phone's features..Start by giving your phone a good spring clean: delete apps you never use, clear out old photos and videos and update your software. This helps keep your phone running smoothly. Customize your home screen with widgets and shortcuts for your favorite apps. This way, you can access your calendar, weather, and to-do list with just a glance. Also, make the most of your phone's built-in tools like the voice assistant—whether it's Siri, Google Assistant, or Alexa, they can set reminders, send messages, and even answer your questions hands-free.

To keep your battery lasting longer, use power-saving modes, lower your screen brightness, and turn off notifications for non-essential apps.However, don't forget to explore fun apps -games, and e-books can keep you entertained and lastly protect your phone with a sturdy case and a screen protector,.With a little care and customization, your mobile phone can be a powerful tool to enhance your everyday life.

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Do you want Spicy?

Every time I order some Thai food, I get asked the question, “Do you want it spicy?” This always takes me a little while to decide if I want to go down this road or chicken out and go mild. What I hadn’t realized until recently is that it’s not just a question of taste but also of health. There are many benefits to occasionally using chilies and consequences if you overdo things. Just ask Jason Rupp, who, at a recent eating contest, ingested 100 at one time and had some worrying side effects, but is okay now.

What chilies are used in Thai cooking?

Thai peppers are spicy chili peppers with a wide range of heat, and despite common belief, there is no single type of Thai pepper, with at least 79 separate varieties. Because of the wide variety, Thai peppers typically range from 50,000 to 100,000 Scoville Heat Units. Compare this to a typical jalapeno pepper, which ranges from 2,500 to 8,000 Scoville Heat Units, making the average Thai pepper about 15 times hotter than the average jalapeno. The most common ones used are: Prik num or “banana peppers,” for example, resemble a New Mexican pepper; prik yuak (milder, sweet); prik chee fah (milder, green and red varieties); prik leuang (with milder heat, great for pickling); prik jinda (hot peppers); and prik kee noo (very hot, similar to bird’s eye chilies).

What are the health benefits?

Gain a boost to your immune system because chilies are a great source of vitamin C and A, which are important for immunity and helping you fight off infections. Being rich in antioxidants can help protect cells from damage.

Studies have shown that capsaicinoids - a group of naturally occurring chemicals in chili peppers - can help decrease your chances of getting heart disease by reducing inflammation, blood pressure, and bad cholesterol levels.

Not only does capsaicin help your heart, but it can also boost your metabolism, promoting weight loss and burning belly fat. Studies indicate that eating chilies with your food results in you eating less.

Recent studies suggest that capsaicin can act as a cancer preventive agent, reducing the risks of gastrointestinal cancers. More study is required to see if it helps kill cancer cell





Effects on the Microbiome?

If you read last month's health article on the Microbiome, you might be interested in the effects of spiciness on this. One hypothesis states that consuming capsaicin may enrich the gut microbiota in bacteria, while another suggests it can affect the growth of certain bacteria in the gut and change the diversity and abundance of different microbial species.

However, over time, gut flora can develop a resistance to these molecules. I would advise then to gradually increase the amount you consume; like everything, it's safer in moderation. But what if you're not into moderation?

The Bad Effects of Eating Too many Chilies

I know it can often be a macho thing to demonstrate how hot you can go and how many you can eat. But unless you've been eating these blighters for some time and have built up some resistance, here are some things to consider. Capsaicin can irritate the digestive tract, leading to heartburn, acid reflux, stomach cramps, diarrhea, and even nausea and vomiting. If you already have stomach ulcers, you would probably realize that eating spicy isn't a good idea. Combined with the recent hot weather, too many chilies can lead to overheating, leading to excessive sweating. The raised body temperature will also make it harder to fall asleep. Also, irritation to the mouth and eyes and other places can cause burning. So be very careful if handling chilies to not touch your eyes; chili in the eye is no joke. Your savior in these dire burnouts is good old dairy products, so down some milk or yogurt!

If you do overdo it, don't worry you will survive, just.

You might get worried that you've overdone it with the hot stuff and you start feeling terrible. But if you are in decent enough physical condition you will survive. I doubt if you will ever go as extreme as our friend Jason Rupp, who managed to eat over 100 chilies in one sitting during an eating completion. Check out his video on YouTube entitled Death Noodles! The Spiciest Food in Jakarta gone wrong! America vs. Indonesia Warung Abang Adek has over a million views on his channel. The dish they tried was called Indomie Pedas Mampus, which is about the spiciest you can eat in the world. The worst effects were stomach pain, bad headache, high fever, chest pains, weakness





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Sun Sabella was named in honour of the owner's parents. Dr Samak and Dr Isabella (affectionately known to all as Ella) joined in the name 'SABELLA'. The owner Dr Sunya's abbreviated name was then added and so 'SUN SABELLA' was created.

A perfect place to enjoy authentic Thai food, whether you opt for the open-air restaurant or like us choose the air-conditioned inside dining area, you will be delighted to find a flavourful culinary experience with a blend of sweet, sour, salty and spicy tastes.



The health benefits of Thai food are renowned. At SunSabella dishes also incorporate fresh herbs and spices grown on the grounds of the resort, providing the freshest garden to table produce to be enjoyed anywhere.

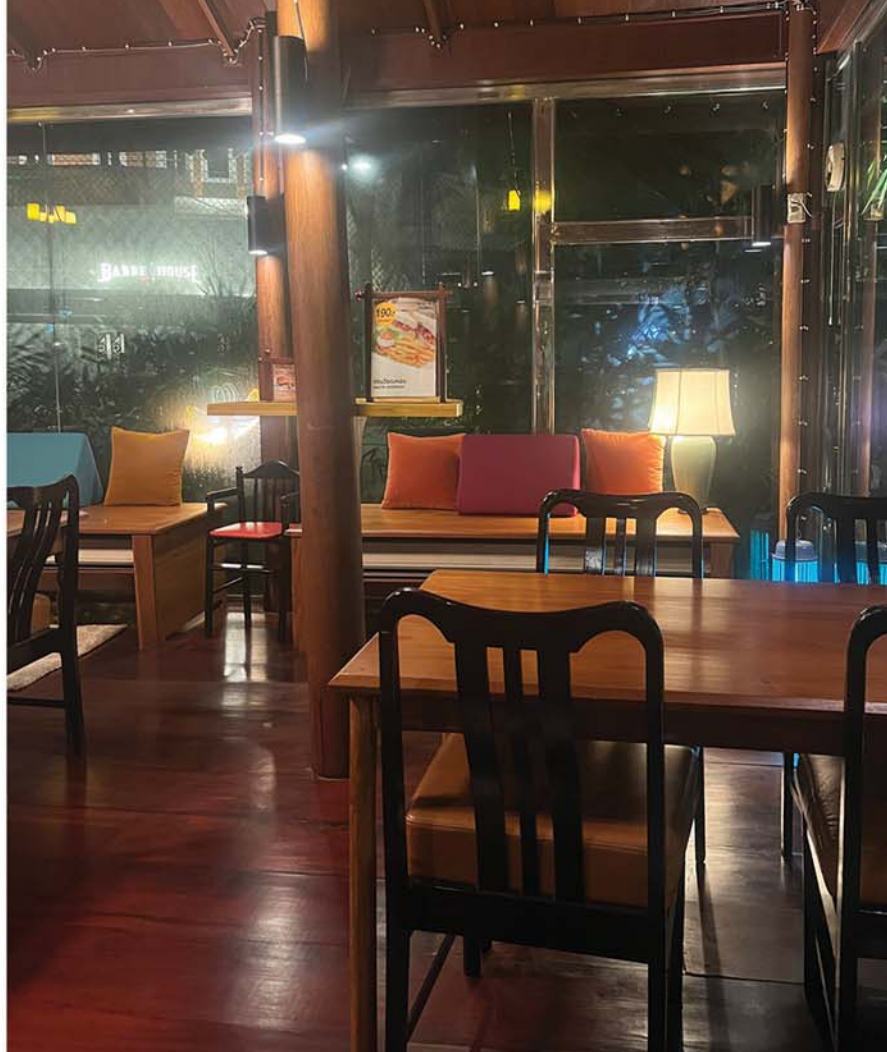
Lemongrass, garlic, ginger, and chilies not only add flavour but also boost the immune system and metabolism. You will also find dishes with a selection of lean proteins like chicken and seafood, as well as an abundance of vegetables, contributing to a balanced and nutritious diet.

Culturally, Thai food reflects the country's rich heritage and culinary traditions. At Sun Sabella each dish is crafted with a meticulous balance of flavours. The gentle sounds of jazz music and soft glowing lighting adding to the sensory experience as charmingly attired waiting staff, in traditional Thai costume serve you.

We opted for the chinese spring rolls with shrimp. They were bursting with so much fresh flavour you could almost feel yourself getting healthier as you ate them. The choice of either a sweeter or spicier accompaniment just adding to the variety of flavours.

Then on to some Stir Fried Kale with Pork which was extremely crisp and tasty, followed by succulent fried shrimp with garlic and pepper. Even the cucumber at the side of this dish was a fresh feast. We then decided to try some green curry and rice plus steamed Okra in Oyster Sauce, every mouthful was zesty, fresh and delicious.

If you've yet to try the food at Sun Sabella I urge you to go - your whole body and especially your taste buds will thank you.



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See Thomas Reimer Play Live at The



From the age of 6 Thomas Reimer had a deep love of music. He spent 8 years studying violin at the Academy of Music in Graz and the Bruckner Conservatory of Linz in Austria. At 14 he decided to change to the guitar, continuing his musical studies at university in Vienna. After gaining his diploma he went to Munich, to the world famous Jazz club Unterfahrt where he stayed for 20 years as its Jazz School's Musical Director. He was also invited to play on the main "Galleria" stage with his band at Musikmesse in Frankfurt. At its peak this was one of the largest international trade shows and music festivals in the world.

Whilst in Munich Thomas also played at one of the city's famous nightclubs: Nacht Cafe where many German celebrities such as Boris Becker liked to hang out. It was there that the famous American guitarist, singer, songwriter George Benson joined him on stage and they performed together. You can see the autograph from George to Thomas, that says "To Thomas -great Guitarist. George Benson". It is above the bar at the Jazz Pit.



Also there is a copy of the CD Global Guitar that Thomas played on, alongside such legendary greats as Al Di Meola, Scott Henderson, and Mike Stern.

How did this memorabilia make it from Munich to Pattaya? Well, when travelling to Thailand, Thomas came upon the Jazz Pit (then in Soi 4, Pattaya). It became his home when he was asked to join as the club's Musical Director. Four years ago he moved with the Jazz Pit to its beautiful new location at the Sugar Hut resort in Jomtien.

You can hear Thomas play at The Jazz Pit every evening other than Tuesdays and will be amazed by his incredible solo repertoire of over 1400 songs. He also enjoys playing here with many international musicians including: Dale Barlow saxophone (Australia), Willard Dyson drums (USA), Steve Cannon trumpet (USA), Bump keyboards (Thailand), Yoshi trumpet (Japan), Odd Riisnaes saxophone (Norway) Ala Heiler vocals (Germany), Fabrice Cima saxophone (France), Ron Cole guitar (USA), Harold Shorter drums (Germany) Dan Rose saxophone (USA) and Andy drums (England).

If you want to catch a full band night, go on Friday and Saturday evenings or at the really popular Sunday jam session: 2pm - 6pm. Otherwise pop in to see Thomas who has been performing on stage for 53 years and you can see him play live here any night but Tuesday. Chill at the Jazz Pit with a good drink and enjoy some cool sounds.

The Jazz Pit is at Sun Sabella, by the entrance of Sugar Hut Resort & Restaurant (by the junction for Pratumnak and just before the Law Courts)



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The Sportsman Pub and Restaurant has been serving the Pattaya community for many years and has a long and proud history of providing top quality European and Thai fare. Dave Bowers, the owner of the establishment for the last twenty plus years, steered The Sportsman through the pandemic and the hard work that the team and Dave himself put in made sure that the business got through the difficult times and is now thriving once again.

Dave himself first came to Pattaya as early as 1990 and gained valuable experience on the ups and downs of running a licensed bar in the city before getting involved with The Sportsman when it opened on Valentine's day 1997, Since then he has been able to fine tune this bar/restaurant into one of the most popular in the city frequented by expats, regular visitors and holidaymakers alike.

Coming up to date, The Sportsman offers specials on virtually every day of the week, ranging from 10% off Mexican food on Mondays to drinks specials on various pints, including Guinness, Tiger, Heineken and Thatchers Cider, also a great all you can eat Pizza and Pasta buffet on Friday for a price of only 299 Baht plus a 2 for 1 cocktail offer. My personal favourite is the burger, chips and bottle of beer or soft drink on Wednesday at the great value price of only 195 Baht.

The Sportsman also runs a weekly quiz night which is always very well attended with free pie and chips to all those who play. They also provide top quality outside catering for private functions under the banner of Party Food Pattaya. This service comes highly recommended by its many patrons. Before I go I must mention the staff here. Anyone who has a business in Thailand will understand how difficult it can be to have well trained friendly staff, but the people who work here really are excellent. They are very efficient and make a very positive contribution to the congenial atmosphere. All down to Dave's hard work I'm sure – he told me! Anyone who appreciates good quality food, good service and good company will enjoy The Sportsman Pub and Restaurant.

Of course, we cannot talk about The Sportsman without mentioning the famous Sunday Carvery. Priced at 495 Baht, this all you can eat three course feast is extremely popular in Pattaya as the quality is exceptional and consistent. Having visited several times myself, I can vouch for it! Served from 12.30 pm until 8.30 pm, if you give it a try make sure to take your appetite with you.

As the name of the bar would indicate, there are several TVs dotted around the place, showing every available sport for the customers. Dave and his staff are always on hand if you want to request something they are not already showing, you only have to ask.



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Rotary Club of Pattaya Center International's Glittering 1st Year Anniversary Celebrations was held at the Hilton Seaboard Ballroom







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The Paris 2024 Summer Olympics, July 26 to August 11

The Paris 2024 Summer Olympics, officially known as the Games of the XXXIII Olympiad, are set to take place from July 26 to August 11, 2024. This historic event will mark the third time Paris has hosted the Olympics, with previous Games held in 1900 and 1924. Paris, known for its rich history, iconic landmarks, and cultural heritage, provides a stunning and inspiring backdrop for this global celebration of sport. One of the most significant aspects of the Paris 2024 Olympics is its strong emphasis on sustainability and environmental responsibility. The organizing committee has committed to making these Games the greenest ever. This commitment includes a plan to halve the carbon footprint compared to previous Games. To achieve this, Paris 2024 will utilize existing or temporary venues, minimizing the need for new construction. For instance, the Stade de France, built for the 1998 FIFA World Cup, will host the opening and closing ceremonies.

Renewable energy sources will power the Games, and efforts will be made to promote public transportation over private cars to reduce emissions. Paris's extensive public transportation network, including metro, bus, and tram systems, will play a crucial role in this endeavor. Additionally, the Paris 2024 Olympics will take full advantage of the city's iconic landmarks and cultural settings, offering a unique and picturesque experience for athletes and spectators alike. The Champs-Élysées will host the finish line for cycling events, while the Place de la Concorde will be transformed into a dynamic venue for urban sports like skateboarding and BMX. The Eiffel Tower will provide a breathtaking backdrop for beach volleyball, and the historic Grand Palais will be the site for fencing and taekwondo. The Olympic rings have been displayed prominently in various locations around Paris, such as the Hôtel de Ville and the Trocadéro, with the Eiffel Tower as a backdrop.

These venues not only highlight Paris's architectural beauty and historical significance but also integrate the city's cultural and touristic appeal into the Olympic experience. This approach is designed to create a festive atmosphere that celebrates both sport and culture.

Paris 2024 will feature a diverse array of sports, including the introduction of new disciplines that aim to engage a younger audience and reflect contemporary trends in global sports. Breakdancing, officially known as "breaking," will make its Olympic debut, joining other urban sports like skateboarding, surfing, and sport climbing, which were introduced at the Tokyo 2020 Games. These additions are part of the International Olympic Committee's (IOC) broader strategy to modernize the Games and attract a new generation of fans. Another key focus is gender equality and inclusivity. For the first time in Olympic history, the Games will feature a nearly equal number of male and female athletes. This milestone reflects a broader effort by the IOC and the Paris 2024 organizing committee to promote gender equality in sports.



In addition to gender parity, the Games will highlight the talents of athletes with disabilities through the Paralympic Games, which will follow the Olympics. The Paralympics will use many of the same venues and facilities, ensuring accessibility and demonstrating the organizers' commitment to inclusivity.

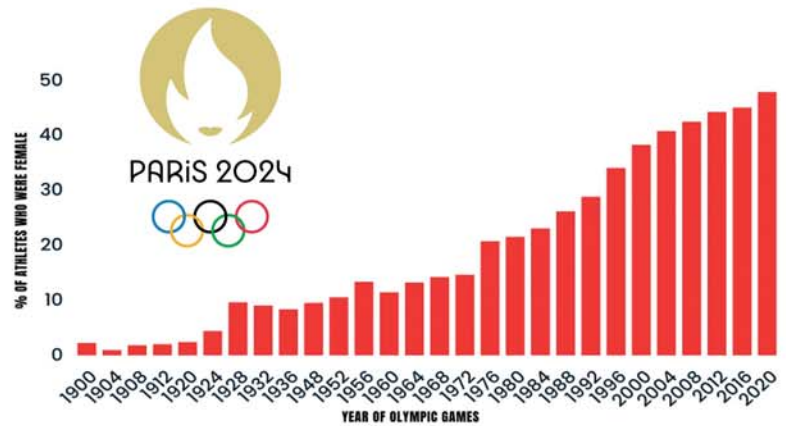
The Paris 2024 Olympics are expected to have a significant economic and social impact on the city and the country. The Games are projected to create thousands of jobs and stimulate investment in infrastructure and tourism. The focus on sustainability and legacy means that many of the improvements made for the Olympics will benefit the city long after the Games have concluded.

Located less than five miles north of Paris, the Olympic Village spans across Saint-Ouen, Saint-Denis, and L'Ile-Saint-Denis. It features 330,000 square meters of residential and training facilities for athletes. After the Games, the Village will be transformed into a residential and commercial area, ensuring sustainable use of the infrastructure.

Initiatives include upgrading public transportation, enhancing urban spaces, and promoting sports participation among the local population. These efforts are designed to ensure that the benefits of hosting the Olympics are widely felt and contribute to the city's long-term development goals.

Despite the excitement and optimism surrounding the Paris 2024 Olympics, there are also significant challenges to address. Security will be a major concern, given the large number of visitors and the high-profile nature of the event. Organizers are working closely with local and international authorities to ensure the safety of all participants and spectators. Also, logistical challenges, such as managing the influx of tourists and coordinating transportation, are being meticulously planned. The goal is to provide a seamless and enjoyable experience for everyone involved, from athletes to visitors. The 2024 Summer Olympics in the heart of Paris promises to be a landmark event, combining the city's historical charm with modern innovation. Setting standards for future Olympic events.

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TALKIN' BOUT AN EVOLUTION



WORDS SCOTT MURRAY PHOTOS PMG SHIPYARD

Built by Thailand's PMG Shipyard, the solar-assisted Cora 48 develops on a proven platform and offers masses of flexible outdoor entertaining space, as well as the market's best-lit indoor lounge.

Philippe Guenat and his boatbuilding company PMG are no stranger to innovative projects, having built the solar-assisted Heliotrope 65 luxury powercat over a decade ago. As such, it should come as no surprise that his latest project, the Cora 48, an evolution of the Heliotrope 48, is again setting new standards for comfort and luxury in the region. CE approved with a Class A rating, the Cora 48 is almost 24ft wide and good for open-sea cruising for up to 20 people. The catamaran can even be beached in case of emergency.

Boasting vast experience in hospitality and boat building, having worked on designing and building solar-assisted and solar-powered catamarans since 2008, Guenat has gone to great lengths to ensure that all who ride on the Cora 48 will have a pleasurable experience. Guenat reveals that although Cora's hull is the same as used for the Heliotrope 48, changes include the shape of the portholes and a completely redesigned deck, flybridge and hard top, with new moulds being made for all.

The flybridge has been redesigned because the staircase was moved to the starboard side of the boat, behind the fridge. Previously, on the portside, it obstructed the guests' view from the saloon. The aft deck is covered with Flexiteek, while there's now a hatch at the top of the staircase to keep out the rain.

Guests are welcomed by a long, C-shaped sofa that spans the whole aft end of the flybridge, while two separate, foldable tables can be joined when one large dining table is needed. There's lots of storage space to store cushions. In fact, PMG has increased the size of all the storage areas on the yacht to give those on board as much space as possible to store gear and other items.

The large L-shaped galley includes an electrical barbecue, while the yacht's sole helm station is fitted on the starboard side. The Cora 48 is equipped with CZone, the electrical management system, where you can control and see the status of the boat's electrical consumption. After using Simrad for many years, all Guenat's new boats now feature Garmin nautical equipment on their boats. There's 70m of anchor chain, which can be controlled from the flybridge or by a handheld remote. The hard top has been extended by 50cm on every side, so now rainwater drops onto side decks instead of the flybridge. The four solar panels on the hard top can charge the battery system running the housekeeping side of the boat except for the air-conditioning. The second Cora 48 is being built with larger solar panels, which will allow the air-conditioning unit to run for seven to eight hours without using a generator.



The Cora 48 starts aft with two fixed transoms and a hydraulic platform that's fitted with tender chocks and can lower to complete full-width bathing platform. The aft cockpit is fitted with a very wide sofa, two adjustable tables that can be joined if required, and folding chairs. On both sides of the cockpit, the new overhead 'wings' protect guests from the sun and the rain. The side rails are made from top-quality Taiwanese 316L stainless steel, with a glossy finish and 32mm handling grip. They're slightly higher than railings on other boats, giving passengers a more comfortable feel on the open seas. The passages lead to the foredeck, where the former sunken seating arrangement has been replaced with a flat deck for sunpads to help increase the volume in the forward cabins below.

The aft cockpit is connected to the interior by an attractive bar area that faces the galley, which can open to the elements by a sliding window, while the main sliding door is also made of Taiwanese 316L stainless steel. The L-shaped galley includes two sinks forward of the cockpit bar, while to port are induction hobs, a microwave and masses of enclosed and open storage areas. The interior also has a large island bar in the centre, while the lounge is forward and features an aft-facing C-shaped sofa illuminated by natural light through the panoramic windows. The angle and size of the main saloon windows, made with tempered glass, has been changed to reduce the heat inside.



Aft view of the L-shaped galley, which opens up to the cockpit due to sliding windows and also offers counter space on the island bar. Accommodation options include the owner's layout with a master suite in the port hull, featuring a forward-facing bed aft, desk, lots of cupboard and storage space, and the en-suite bathroom at the forward end. On the starboard side, two guest cabins also have a ceiling height of 2.1m, good lighting and plenty of cupboard space. The aft cabin has a forward-facing bed, as in the master, while the forward cabin has a raised double bed facing the window, as well as an extra single berth. Both cabins have their own head with toilet and sink, and share access to a central shower room. In the toilets, new electronic switches allow guests to flush with seawater when out on the ocean, and with fresh water when in the marina.



To avoid osmosis and the wood bora worms, plywood is not used in structural construction, unlike with many European builders. The GRP is vacuum infused with vinyl ester resin, and gelcoat protects it from osmosis, reducing the weight of the boat by up to 20 per cent compared to traditional building methods. It also allows the boat to maintain a high resale value and keep its shiny colour. Power wise, two 286hp Steyr Diesel Monoblock diesel engines – made in aluminium and used by the Austrian military – can work with multiple types of fuel, handy when cruising in various countries. The engines have been paired with custom-built five-blade propellers.

The recommended cruising speed is between 14 to 17 knots, although the Cora 48 can reach up to 22. The yacht is equipped with a Fischer Panda generator and the voltage is 24V and 220V for appliances and sockets, but can be switched to 110V at the request of clients. Other items include a noiseless water maker that can pump out 160 litres an hour, plus an 80-litre hot-water boiler. A man with a hospitality background who enjoys entertaining, Guenat knows the value of keeping guests happy and comfortable, but it's his creativity that has shone through in redesigns that have produced the Cora 48, a winning upgrade.

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The Pattaya Marathon 20 -21st July

Attracting athletes and enthusiasts from all over the world, Pattaya's Marathon has earned a reputation as one of the top marathon events in Southeast Asia. Over the years, it has grown significantly, attracting elite international runners as well as local enthusiasts looking to test their endurance. Endorsed by the Association of International Marathons and Distance Races (AIMS), it is recognized for its well-organised structure, stringent safety measures, and festive atmosphere.

Starting from Central Festival, the marathon course has been planned so that runners make their way along Beach Road, then follow the route as it winds through the city's main thoroughfares. Passing notable landmarks such as the Pattaya Viewpoint both runners and spectators will be able to enjoy panoramic views of the city. This year's marathon offers not only a challenging race but also a scenic route that showcases the city's beaches, bustling streets, and cultural landmarks. Important as the event will give a significant boost to Pattaya's economy, especially during low season. It is hoped to attract thousands of visitors who will contribute to the local hospitality and tourism sectors with hotels, restaurants, and local attractions all gaining business during the marathon weekend.

Training for any marathon requires rigorous preparation, especially in Pattaya due to its tropical climate. Runners are advised to acclimatise to the heat and humidity by training before the event. Hydration is crucial, and participants are encouraged to stay well-hydrated in the days leading up to the event and throughout the race. The organisers will provide water stations, medical tents, and rest areas along the route. Pre-race training programs and workshops are also offered to help runners prepare physically and mentally for the race. The organisers have also implemented several green initiatives, such as reducing plastic use, promoting recycling. Therefore the water stations this year will be stocked with biodegradable cups, and there will be a strong emphasis on leaving the racecourse as clean as it was found.

The Pattaya Marathon 2024 has several race categories to accommodate a wide range of participants, from professional athletes to amateur runners and even families. The main categories include:

- 1. Marathon (42.195 km):** This is the flagship event, drawing the most competitive runners. The full marathon route takes participants through some of the most scenic parts of Pattaya, including the beachfront and the city's bustling streets.
- 2. Half Marathon (21.1 km):** This category is ideal for those who are looking for a challenge but are not ready to tackle the full marathon distance. It offers a balanced mix of challenge and enjoyment.
- 3. Quarter Marathon (10.55 km):** Perfect for amateur runners and those who prefer a shorter distance, the quarter marathon provides a taste of the marathon experience without the intense demands of longer distances.
- 4. Wheelchair Marathon:** This category underscores the marathon's commitment to inclusivity, offering differently-abled athletes the opportunity to compete and showcase their talents.
- 5. Family Run (3.7 km):** Designed to encourage participation from runners of all ages and abilities, the family run is a fun and engaging way for families to enjoy the event together.

More than just a race the organisers hope the event will be enjoyed for its cultural benefits and that it will bring together the local community and international visitors. There will be entertainment staged at various points along the route to keep the runners motivated, such as traditional Thai music and dance performances. It is set to be a spectacular event that highlights the best of what Pattaya has to offer. Whether you are a seasoned marathoner or a first-time participant, the Pattaya Marathon is a celebration of athleticism, community, and the enduring human spirit. Sure to be a highlight of the year for both participants and spectators.

Sports Update

For July by Steve Wade

We have plenty of top class sport to look forward to in July, starting off with the business end of the 2024 Euros in Germany. The final is scheduled on the 14th and you'll find more details in last month's issue of Discover Pattaya, in print or online, but I'm sure all you football fans will be up to speed already!

The Tour de France, which started in Italy in late June, will climax in Paris on the 21st after an exciting three week course over mountains and through valleys where only the strongest and most determined riders survive and prosper. I'll say it again, this looks more like torture than sport to me and I am lost in admiration for the people who take part in this most gruelling of events.

Wimbledon is with us, starting on the 1st of the month and finishing with finals weekend on the 13th and 14th. We'll have to mention the dreadful English weather here. Summer has yet to show its face in blighty with regular rainfall and temperatures in the low teens the current state of affairs. With no sign of this abating, it may be that the all England Tennis Club will have plenty of interruptions to deal with.

The last "major" of the year in golf, the British Open, is being played at what most people regard as one of the tougher layouts on the open schedule, Royal Troon, between the 18th and the 21st of the month. This is a great event for all the golf fans in the Kingdom, as you have no need to stay up for most of the night to watch the final outcome! As with all majors, the cream of the golfing world will be playing, whether LIV golfers or not, and this will be a must watch for golf fans everywhere.

The UK is the place for some big events this month as the British Grand Prix at Silverstone is scheduled for the 7th. The F1 travelling circus then moves on to Hungary on the 21st and Belgium on the 28th before going into a 4 week mid season break and then resuming in Holland in late August.

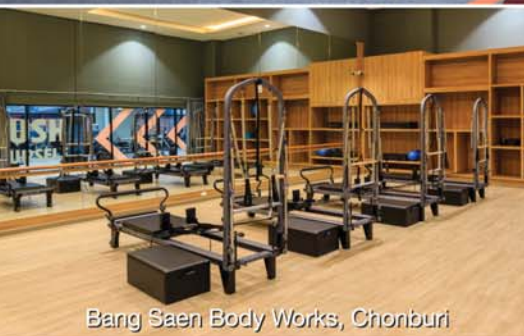
Saving the biggest event until the end, we have the summer Olympic Games starting with the opening ceremony in Paris on the 26th. The games go on until the 11th of August so we will return to the outcome next month but I think we can look forward to an exciting opening with the City of Lights a stunning backdrop to this once in a generation event.

That's it for this month. Plenty to look forward to I think you'll agree.

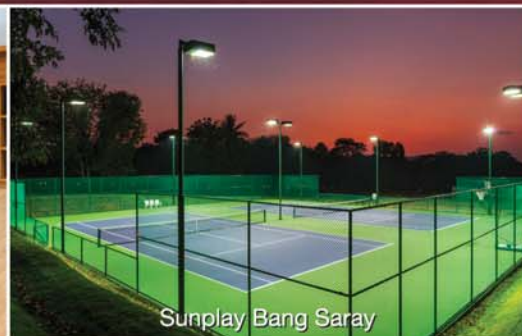




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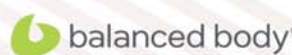
Rugby School Gymnasium, Chonburi



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THE FIRST FEMALE-FOUNDED BRAND TO ALIGN WITH F1

Charlotte Tilbury Beauty has announced its official sponsorship of F1 Academy, the first female founded brand and first beauty brand in history to enter the F1 space. Charlotte Tilbury is a renowned British makeup artist who launched her eponymous beauty brand in 2013. The brand is celebrated for its luxurious, high-performance products and glamorous packaging. It has garnered a global following and numerous awards, solidifying its status as a staple in the beauty industry through innovative products and a strong digital presence.

Charlotte Tilbury is seen here with Susie Wolff, a trailblazing figure in motorsport, known for her achievements as a racing driver and executive. Born in 1982 in Scotland, she has competed in DTM and Formula Renault and in 2012 joined Williams F1 Team as a development driver, becoming the first woman in over two decades to participate in a Formula One race weekend in 2014. After retiring from driving in 2015, she focused on promoting diversity in motorsport and in 2018, she became Team Principal of Venturi Racing in Formula E, where she has been influential in pushing for gender equality in racing.



The F1 Academy is a female-only racing championship founded by Formula One, supporting female drivers from across the globe to progress to higher levels of competition. Currently 40% of F1 fans are female, contributing to a total 2022 season viewership of over 1.5 billion. This partnership will bring to life Charlotte Tilbury and F1 Academy's shared purpose to empower everyone, everywhere to feel their most confident.



Charlotte Tilbury will use its global platform to showcase the F1 Academy's incredible female drivers, helping them build their careers and shining a light on their achievements and talent, so that a wider audience will learn about the opportunities this amazing sport can hold for women.



F1® Academy driver, Lola Lovinfosse, will be sporting the Charlotte Tilbury racing suit and helmet, as well as the 'Charlotte Tilbury operated by Rodin Motorsport' car – fully wrapped in the brand's signature colorway with the Hot Lips icon and Charlotte's empowerment mantra 'Makeup Your Destiny.'



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What's on The Small Screen



Cobra Kai Season 6 Part 1

Cobra Kai Season 6 Part 1 picks up the pieces after Terry Silver's downfall, with Daniel and Johnny facing the aftermath of their alliance.



Lady in the Lake

In 1960s Baltimore, two women's lives collide as a housewife becomes an investigative journalist obsessed with a young girl's disappearance and a Black woman's mysterious death.



61st street

In Chicago, an innocent Black athlete fights for his freedom after a deadly drug bust gone wrong.



Snowpiercer Season 4

Though fractured by leadership struggles, the survivors of Snowpiercer fight for survival after finding a potential haven in the frozen wasteland.



The Ark Season 2

The Ark One's crew grapples with dwindling resources and a mysterious new contact on their journey to a potential homeworld.



Time Bandits

A history-loving kid joins a wacky band of time-traveling thieves on a mission to save his parents and the world.



What's on The Big Screen



Despicable me 4

Will Ferrell, Steve Carell, Miranda Cosgrove, Kristen Wiig

Gru, his family, and the Minions face off against a new villain while Gru adjusts to life with his adopted son.



Deadpool Wolverine

Ryan Reynolds, Hugh Jackman, Morena Baccarub, Jennifer Garner

Pulled from his reality by the TVA, Deadpool must team up with a gruff Wolverine to save his universe.



The Bikeriders

Austin Butler, Tom Hardy, Jodie Comer, Michael Shannon

The Bikeriders chronicles the transformation of a Midwestern motorcycle club from a band of outsiders into a dangerous gang.



Fly Me to the Moon

Scarlett Johansson, Channing Tatum, Chris Evans

In the 1960s space race, a NASA director and a marketing whiz clash and collaborate on a secret plan for a potential fake moon landing.



Twisters

Glen Powell, Kieranan Shipka, Anthony Ramos

A storm-chasing rivalry reignites as a cautious scientist and a reckless social media star face off against unprecedented tornadoes.



Asphalt City

Sean Penn, Tye Sheridan, Mike Tyson, Alisa Mironova

Rookie paramedic Ollie Cross navigates the chaos and ethical dilemmas of New York City's night shift alongside his jaded veteran partner.



OURA RING SMART GENERATION 3

The Oura Ring Generation 3 is a health tracking smart ring that monitors your sleep, activity, and nighttime bio-signals using advanced sensors to provide personalized insights into your health and recovery. The comfortable, discreet design lets you wear it 24/7 without disruption. It tracks sleep stages, heart rate variability, and body temperature, analyzes your daily activity, and offers personalized health insights and guidance (with membership). However, keep in mind it requires a monthly or annual membership for full features and may not be suitable for all activities due to its ring form.



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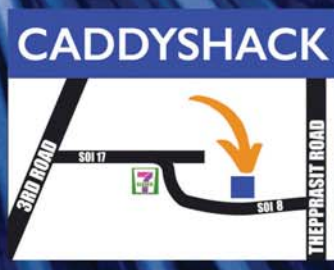
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COFFEE, COFFEE, COFFEE - Barry Upton

How many times have you woke up in the morning and thought 'I need coffee....now!'

There have been previous contributions to this magazine extolling the virtues of good coffee and it is, indeed, the most popular drink in the world with more than 400 billion cups consumed each year. More Americans consume coffee than any other beverage including tap water. The word coffee comes from 'Kaffa', a region in Ethiopia where coffee beans may have been discovered. Brazil is the top producer of coffee and has held that position for over 150 years.

The Coffee Song (They've got an awful lot of coffee in Brazil) first recorded in 1946 by Frank Sinatra is probably the most well known musical tribute to the beverage. Since then, it's really hard to think of any others that followed. So, 78 years later, I decided I should take it upon myself to write and record a coffee song, one that would fit the bill on any morning radio show in the world and actually be perfect as a show opener.

Marina G, a female singer friend of mine who hails from Siberia and has performed extensively in Pattaya, on occasion with my good self, was suddenly available and in Pattaya for a short time after completing a six month contract at a resort in the Maldives. We committed the song to a 'full on' FAB BAZ production and proceeded to film a video at some choice well known coffee houses in the area. The resulting visual treat can be viewed at my YouTube channel FAB BAZ MUSIC TV. The plan is to release the song worldwide and achieve global domination in the 2024 coffee song stakes.

However, before that happens, it would be foolish of myself and my publishing label in the U.K. not to offer the song to some big coffee corporations for a possible advertising campaign which will go hand in hand with any commercial pop release. So achieving a marketing deal of some kind will take precedence.

The song has a very catchy chorus so, feel free to sing it to your heart's content every day. Also, the middle 8 section is another set of lyrics to learn -

Cappucino, Frappucino, Espresso, Arabica,
 Robusta, Americano, Macchiato, Mocha, ha!
 Cappucino, Frappucino, Espresso, Arabica,
 Robusta, Americano, Macchiato, Mocha, ha!
 Oh gimme that dirty coffee



Update: My new YouTube channel FAB BAZ SUNSHINE TV was launched at the beginning of June featuring uplifting material with interesting and positively spirited individuals. New material is always being uploaded and already features with some popular Pattaya 'characters' plus a few fun events have surfaced. All you have to do to be made aware of new arrivals is to go to FAB BAZ SUNSHINE TV on YouTube and click on the 'Subscribe' icon, not forgetting to also click 'like' and the 'bell' for future notifications.....completely FREE.

As Robbie once said...'Let me entertain you'. Now go get a coffee! If anyone's interested, mine's a Latte.



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SUDOKU JULY 2024

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SOLUTIONS

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Jason and Carla Go to Istanbul



Istanbul is a magical city filled with fairy tale streets around every corner. The biggest city of Turkey (Turkiye), it straddles Europe and Asia across the Bosphorus Strait and has been called “The City of Wonders” for a good reason. We love it! The breathtaking views by the waterside are even better than you can imagine or see in pictures.

Istanbul has witnessed the rise and fall of many empires so it is full of the blending of lively cultures and religions – giving it a wonderful, rich history. There is so much to see, experience...and eat! The Turkish foods and experiences of savoring Turkish tea or the strong Turkish coffee just make each day a joy. Also, walking around or taking the ferries became our favorite activities. Everywhere you turn is a picture with your eyes!

We were in Istanbul for a week and would recommend this city to all who love to travel and haven't been there yet. It was quite safe, and the famous Turkish hospitality is still alive. We stayed in the laid-back hipster zone of Kadikoy, a fun district (one of 39 districts in a vast city of over 15 million people). Umbrellas of all colors hung overhead in this little neighborhood and it was filled with cafes and cute shops.

We had been to Istanbul before on a previous trip. That time, our lodging was in the busier area of Taksim, which has lots of restaurants and nightlife and goes much later into the night – or even all night. However, Kadikoy is an area with less tourists and the type of foreigner you see here is more of an expat.



Istanbul is a city of incredible beauty and activity. You can marvel and admire the architecture, the beautiful waters, bridges and skyline. It is easy to take lots of pictures...and we did! Also we enjoyed taking pictures of the cats that are allowed to live all over the city and are well-cared for, (yes, the locals feed and take care of the street cats). You know how some cities have cat cafes? Istanbul doesn't have those. Every place is already a cat cafe. This is a real “cat city”, and the locals like it this way.



Istanbul as a destination has a lot going for it. People are generally very friendly. We felt safe. Public transportation is available all over the place. Prices are in lira, and the food is affordable. A good bet for reasonably-priced food are the plentiful cafeteria-style restaurants throughout Istanbul – where you can choose your food dishes simply by pointing to it. We were also excited with the shopping in our walks. We found kind and caring people that didn't just want our money. One shopkeeper near the bull statue in Kadikoy went out of her way to help Carla with a selection of cosmetics and even arranged a discount. On another walk, we went into a family wellness store, and the staff helped Jason pick out all kinds of wellness and health supplies, including body “scrubs”, and men's energy herbal potions.



Photo By Carla Marie Rupp

We went way out of our way finding hamams, which are Turkish massages, scrubs and saunas.

At Turkish hamams, the men go to one side and the ladies are on another side, for modesty reasons. Some hotels even offer hamams. We went to a few hotel spas that feature the hamam experience. We can recommend a top quality one at the Holiday Inn's E-Spa in Kadikoy. The spa management kindly allowed Carla to film Jason getting his luxury body scrub and massage, complete with a gallon of milk poured over his body by two ladies. Jason has posted some of these great hamam visits on his Jason Rupp YouTube channel.

We not only went out of our way to experience hamams, but also for Jason to find and experience authentic Turkish barbers to make videos for his Jason Rupp YouTube channel.

We reminisced about our previous Istanbul trip where we set up barbershop appointments for each of us with Anil Cakmak (who is great at head massages), and with Pink Barber (called that because he likes the color pink and uses the color everywhere in his barbershop). We love these memories and special times. Jason has popular YouTube videos with each of them on his channel. We are grateful for these experiences. And thanks to Pink Barber for taking us on a day tour by public transport to the tourist center of the famed Sultanahmet Mosque area. Our favorite there is the iconic Hagia Sophia Mosque, from the Byzantine era. It features a soaring 6th-century dome and rare relics.



Each time we went to Istanbul, we walked the full length of famous Istiklal Avenue. Istiklal happens to be in the touristy and fun Beyoglu district, a street where you can find just about anything. One end you can get pictures at the historic Galata Tower and of the colorful tram going the length. On the other end is Taksim Square. One of our goals this time was to find several restaurants we had liked the previous time. When you like something, it's always nice to go back. The first place was for desserts that Jason especially loves called katmer and kunefe with pistachios sprinkled on top. We returned to eat these two desserts at Baran Lahmacun, the restaurant on a winding street off Istiklal.

Falfool restaurant is where we ate a few times by our apartment, and we became addicts of their falafels and hummus. The owner was from Palestine and told us that the best falafels are from there, since that is where he said they originate. There was always a wait, which we were fine with. Their freshly diced veggies and falafel balls, so carefully made. We would order so much that we couldn't finish it all. The owner even let us take the bowls home, and said if you bring it back or not – no problem. We did bring our bowls back!



Istiklal Avenue.

Then we walked to find our friend who owns the Taxim Park Durum restaurant. It made us so happy to be reunited with Emi and his staff. We took pictures together with him, as he served us the yellow lentil soup we remembered and loved, with lots of raw veggies to add on top. We warmly hugged our gracious friend and said bye until next time. Turkish hospitality is real. Sometimes this meant that we had to insist on paying many times. It was hard to know when to stop insisting and just accept some of the gracious Turkish hospitality. But you can repay the kindness with some gifts from your own country when you travel Turkey. It is your call.

It was getting into the evening and we didn't know if the owner of another favorite Taksim restaurant, HK Kebab Home (run by chef Halil) was still around. The other time we went to Istanbul, we visited his restaurant many times. He made juices of all kinds at his primarily pasta restaurant. Luckily, he was there when we found his place and was so happy to see us. We smiled and hugged him. He had now changed his menu to feature kebabs and totally stopped making pasta and juices. But he went down the street where his friend makes fresh juice on the sidewalk and generously brought us freshly squeezed orange juice. He served us a big delicious salad. Chatting with this dear Turkish friend was done via the Turkish and English translation app on our phones. As it was getting late, we decided to take a taxi back to Kadikoy and said farewell to him.



Chorda Turkish Soup



The next day we packed and cleaned our tiny apartment and, with suitcases in hand, made our way down to the waterfront. Jason did some last minute shopping on the way. We also stopped at an outside table of a restaurant to have more rice pudding, baklava and Turkish coffee. When we reached the port, Jason found the Hava airport bus and bought our tickets, which was easy. Carla sat at a bench, admiring the scenery on the water, and the passenger ferries, while watching our luggage. Before boarding the express airport bus, Jason spotted a shoe shine man with a winning smile. So, he opened his suitcase, took out his fancy shoes and got a shoeshine. He was proud to post this shoeshine video later on his YouTube channel showing the scene.

We enjoyed every moment of our trip. Istanbul is one of the most beautiful cities we've visited. It's got food we like, extraordinary scenery, exciting vibes, a great culture – including hamams and the best barbers. We have found kind locals for friends. Some things were relatively cheap and others not, but it was a deal when it comes to memories.

We flew back to Bangkok via Thai Airways direct flight. Go to Istanbul. We enjoyed our week-long trip in Istanbul. The only problem was that it went by so fast.

Jason Rupp and Carla Marie Rupp are freelance travel journalists. They love discovering and experiencing new places and returning to find people they have met on their trips. They run a YouTube channel called Jason Rupp – Travel & Pamper.





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SUNTHORN PHU - THAILAND'S SHAKESPEARE

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE POET



Firstly, in this first article, we would like to introduce you to Sunthorn Phu. Sunthorn Phu was born on 26TH.June 1786 during the reign of King Rama I. Sunthorn Phu was only his pen name. His official name, in full court title, was "Phra Sunthorn Voharn". (Phra being the title of a Thai nobleman comparable to that of a Viscount in England).

Sunthorn Phu entered royal service during the reign of King Rama II which was a golden era of Thai poetry and fine arts. His poetry writing was quickly favoured by the King although the poet's reputation unfortunately went down during the reign of King Rama III. However, it rose again during the reign of King Rama IV when Sunthorn was promoted to the role: Chief of the Royal Scribe. After that he was given the official title of Phra Sunthorn Voharn which was his final title when he passed away at the age of 70 in 1855, during the reign of King Rama IV.

The statue of Sunthorn Phu is situated in a memorial park at the Mae Pim Cape, Rayong Province, the poet's hometown. In 1986, the 200th anniversary of his birth, Sunthorn Phu was honoured by UNESCO as a great world poet. He is often referred to as the William Shakespeare of Thailand and the 26th of June has been declared Sunthorn Phu Day to commemorate his birth.

His poems can be classified into 5 categories:

1. Tale poem,
2. Thai travel poetry
3. Proverbs
4. Play poem script
5. Thai Verse poem

Phra Aphai Manee is one of Sunthorn Phu's top five tale poems and has been declared the most outstanding and popular tale poem. The story is very exciting with the poet's thoughts and proverbs interspersed throughout the story. In Chapter 2, next month we shall tell you more about this wonderful story.



The statue of Sunthorn Phu is situated at the Mae Pim Cape in Rayong Province, his hometown.

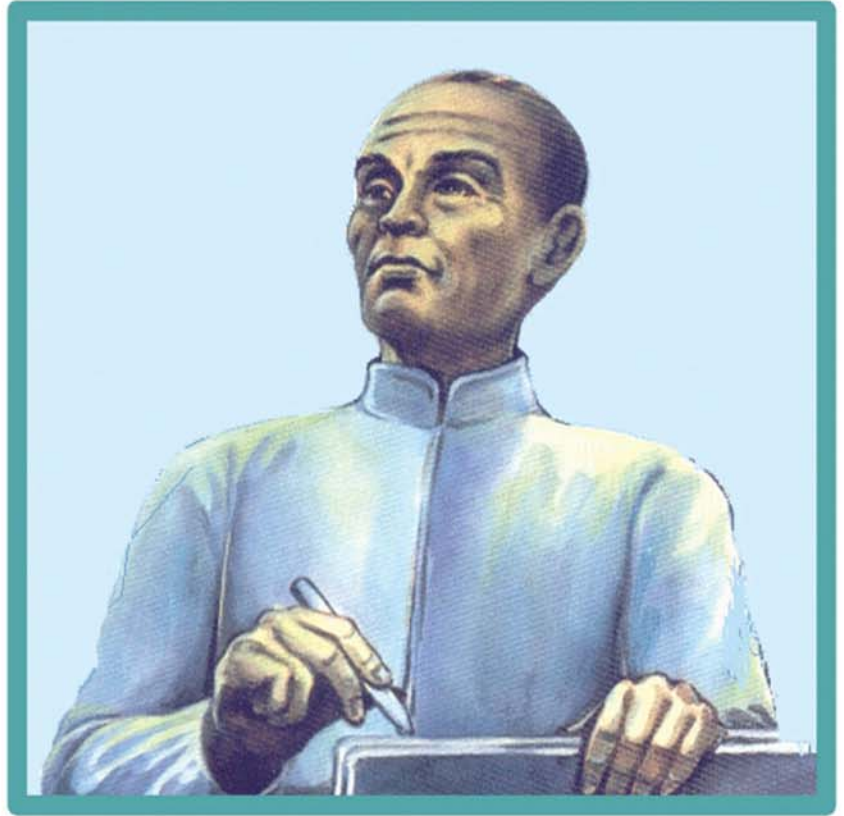
นิทานคำกลอนเรื่องพระอภัยมณี

ตอนที่ 1 : ประวัติของกวีสุนทรภู่ ผู้เขียนเรื่องพระอภัยมณี

เนื่องในวันสุนทรภู่ เมื่อวันที่ 26 มิถุนายน ที่ผ่านมาเราขอนำเสนอผลงานสำคัญของท่าน คือ นิทานคำกลอน เรื่องพระอภัยมณี ซึ่งเป็นผลงานที่โดดเด่นที่สุดในบรรดาบทกวี ของท่านสุนทรภู่ ก่อนที่จะกล่าวถึง เรื่อง พระอภัยมณี ในบทต่อไป ขอนำประวัติและผลงานของท่านมาบอกเล่าเพื่อความเข้าใจในแรงบันดาลใจและจินตนาการของท่านในการแต่งเรื่องพระอภัยมณี

ชื่อสุนทรภู่ เป็นเพียงนามปากกาของท่าน เดิมท่านชื่อ "ภู่" เกิดเมื่อวันที่ 26 มิถุนายน 2329 ตรงกับรัชสมัยพระบาทสมเด็จพระพุทธยอดฟ้าจุฬาโลกมหาราช แห่งกรุงรัตนโกสินทร์บิดาเป็นชาวบ้านกร่ำ อำเภอกงหรา จังหวัดระยอง มารดาเป็นแม่นมของพระธิดาในกรมพระราชวังหลัง เมื่อโตขึ้นได้สมัครเป็นมหาดเล็กของพระองค์เจ้าปฐมวงศ์ พระโอรสในกรมพระราชวังหลัง เริ่มแต่งผลงาน 3 เรื่อง

คือ นิทานคำกลอนเรื่องโคบุตร นิราศเมืองแกลง และนิราศพระบาท ปี พ.ศ.2363 สุนทรภู่เข้ารับราชการในรัชสมัยพระบาทสมเด็จพระพุทธเลิศหล้านภาลัย รัชกาลที่ 2 ได้รับตำแหน่ง "ขุนสุนทรโวหาร" ช่วงที่ติดคุกจากโทษฐานทำร้ายญาติผู้ใหญ่ของแม่จันซึ่งเป็นคนรักซึ่งเป็นหญิงสาวชาววังหลัง ในช่วงที่ติดคุกอยู่ ได้เขียนนิทานคำกลอนเรื่อง พระอภัยมณี ชีวิตของสุนทรภู่ ตกอับในสมัยรัชกาลที่ 3 ส่งผลให้ท่านต้องสร้างสรรค์ผลงานทางวรรณคดีอย่างมากมาย เพื่อการเลี้ยงชีพชีวิตของสุนทรภู่ได้กลับมาได้อีกครั้งในสมัยรัชกาลที่ 4 ในตำแหน่งเจ้ากรมอาลักษณ์ฝ่ายพระราชวังบวร ที่พระสุนทรโวหาร จนถึงปี พ.ศ.2398 ได้ถึงแก่กรรม เมื่ออายุย่างเข้า 70 ปี เนื่องด้วยสุนทรภู่เกิดในสมัยรัชกาลที่ 1 และมีชีวิตอยู่จนถึงรัชกาลที่ 4



จึงได้รับฉายาว่า กวีสี่แผ่นดิน ผลงานของสุนทรภู่ แบ่งได้เป็น 5 ประเภท ดังนี้

1. นิราศ-ที่โดดเด่นคือ นิราศภูเขาทอง
2. นิทานกลอน-ที่รู้จักกันทั่วไปคือ พระอภัยมณี
3. สุภาพคดี- เช่น เพลงยาวถวายโอวาท สุภาพคดีสอนหญิง
4. บทละคร เรื่อง อภัยนุราช อันเป็นผลงานชิ้นสุดท้ายของชีวิต
5. บทเสภาเรื่องขุนช้างขุนแผน

พระอภัยมณีมีชื่อเสียงและมีความนิยมสูง ด้วยเนื้อเรื่องที่ตื่นเต้นอัศจรรย์และสอดแทรกคติสอนใจไว้ตลอดเรื่อง ด้วยผลงานอันทรงคุณค่าทางวรรณกรรม สุนทรภู่จึงได้รับยกย่องจาก UNESCO ให้เป็นบุคคลสำคัญของโลกด้านวรรณกรรม ในปี 2529 อันเป็นวาระ ครบรอบ 200 ปี ชาตกาล สุนทรภู่ มีผู้กล่าวว่าสุนทรภู่ เป็น วิลเลียม เชกสเปียร์ ของประเทศไทย

ปัจจุบัน มีอนุสาวรีย์สุนทรภู่ ตั้งอยู่บนแหลมแม่พิมพ์ อำเภอกงหรา จังหวัดระยอง บ้านเกิดของท่าน อันเป็นแหล่งท่องเที่ยวสำคัญแห่งหนึ่งของไทย

Architects are adding AI to their digital arsenal.



At the turn of the century, architects embraced 3D parametric modeling through building information modeling (BIM), and in the last 10 years connected BIM to the cloud to improve coordination and productivity. But BIM struggles to unify data and workflows across the entire plan, design, build and operate lifecycle. Integrating AI—along with granular data and automation—will empower the next generation of architects with a more connected and outcome-based approach to design, enabling them to focus on outcomes like building performance or sustainability from the very beginning of a project.

Today, the creativity of architects is being tested by the need to maximize building density and use of space without negatively impacting people's quality of life or the environment. This is precisely where AI and outcome-based design come into play, enabling architects to arrive at solutions faster and more efficiently, and giving them the time to focus on creative solutions to the biggest challenges we face. For these reasons, trust and optimism for AI today is high, according to the ArchDaily report. European and US architecture firms shared an openness to AI that is rooted in the belief that it can help expand and reimagine their value propositions.

AI has been identified as a key focus area in business transformations, with 34 percent of CEOs marking it as the top theme following digital transformation. Operations efficiency followed at 9 percent.

Comments from Don Scheibenreif, Distinguished VP Analyst at Gartner, highlighted the prominence of generative AI (GenAI) in displacing digital as the primary buzzword among CEOs. "The majority of CEOs surveyed believe that the AI breakthroughs of 2023 justified the tech sector hype. They are relying on CIOs, CTOs, or CDOs to unlock the value of GenAI, showing that this is a team effort when approaching these projects and not just a top-down experience," he said.



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Thai real estate faces turbulence amid rising costs and economic challenges



Things may look rosy at the highest echelons of Thailand's real estate market, but high interest rates and rising inflation are hitting developers and end users alike

Home building costs rose throughout 2022, hitting their highest growth in 19 quarters in the last quarter. On Rama 4 Road in Bangkok, on the fringes of Lumpini Park—the main green lung in the city— Thailand's biggest construction project, One Bangkok, is taking shape. Once completed, it will be a towering collection of apartments, office blocks, luxury hotels, and shops. Bets on Thailand's property market don't come bigger. Indeed, it is undoubtedly the most extravagant undertaking yet seen in the Kingdom.

Showpiece projects like One Bangkok are masking an overall gloomy economic outlook for Thailand as One Bangkok is something of a bullish outlier. Beyond the smoke and mirrors, Bangkok's residential sector is enduring a rough ride. This year, only 40,000 new condominium units are expected to be launched in the city's midtown and suburban areas, according to the latest data from CBRE. Excepting pandemic-ravaged 2020 and 2021, when launches in downtown and suburban areas were at their lowest since 2012, this year is shaping to be among the slowest in over a decade.

The downtown sector will experience some marginal improvement this year—with 4,500 new launches compared to 3,153 last year—but remains well down on pre-pandemic levels. The chief culprits are rising interest rates and a sputtering economy. Things have become so concerning that Thailand's prime minister Srettha Thavisin declared in February that the economy was at a "critical stage".

He has been at loggerheads with the central bank to cut the interest rate, which the central bank kept in February at 2.50 percent, the highest in more than a decade.



Despite his repeated warnings of the toll high household debt and China's slowdown are taking on the Thai economy, the bank remains resolute: Unless structural problems in the economy are solved, it won't cut rates. "2024 started with a cautious outlook for the first half, with the prospect of a more active market in the second half of the year," says Roongrat Veeraparkkaroon, managing director of CBRE Thailand.

"Higher interest rates and concerns over inflation saw end-of-2023 GDP numbers fall well short of expectations. As a result, we expect early 2024 to be relatively muted in terms of activity."

For the housing market, the consequences have been tough. Home building costs rose throughout 2022, hitting their highest growth in 19 quarters in the last quarter at 6.2 percent. For this year, house prices are predicted to rise by between five and 10 percent, particularly for new projects. Leong Choong Peng, an advisor to Mentabuild, a construction consultancy, says developers usually bear the brunt in tough times.

“Higher interest rates generally affect the developers due to the increase in project financing costs, more than the contractors or builders as they are primarily concerned with rising fuel and material manufacturing costs,” he states. “The material to labour cost ratio in Thailand is roughly 70 to 30. Therefore, the increase in material cost has more effect on overall construction cost.”



For younger buyers, it's meant their ideal home has become suddenly unattainable amid mounting household debt and rising inflation that has made banks cautious to approve loans. “I want to buy a home, but it feels like I can only afford a townhouse with my budget,” Kamonchanok, an office worker, tells The Nation newspaper. “The dream of having my ideal home seems challenging given the current state of the housing market in Thailand.”

Analysts predict fewer low-rise launches in 2024 because of stricter lending policies for projects and mortgages. Instead, developers will shift their attention to the more buoyant luxury market. Nichakamol Horungruang, senior manager for research and consulting at JLL, anticipates the completion of approximately 2,800 new luxury units across 10 projects, and the unsold rate to remain below 5% throughout the year. “Luxury condos are often purchased by wealthy individuals and foreigners,” she says. “Additionally, most Thai buyers in the luxury market are end users who are primarily seeking to reside in the units rather than purchasing for investment purposes. “The upcoming new projects will be positioned at the top end tier of the market, with an average selling price of approximately THB 300,000 per square metre (USD8,765) or higher.”



Among the more ambitious projects on the cards are the Nirvana Collection Krungthep Kreetha, a super-luxury block of single houses priced between THB 80 million to THB 150 million. In the neighbourhood of Ari, Vi Ari has launched near the BTS Skytrain station. The complex is made up of just six houses with prices starting at THB 82 million.

Outside Bangkok, Phuket is also enjoying a bump in new luxury developments. Hip hotel name Standard International is collaborating with Thai developer Sansiri on new branded residences in Phuket and Hua Hin, which is already home to a Standard hotel. Prices for the units range from THB8.99 million to THB 100 million with move-ins for Hua Hin starting in Q2 2026 and Phuket possibly in late 2027.

Thai Premier Srettha Thavasin is prioritising real estate as a potential driver for the economy. Yet the economy can't rely on a robust luxury market alone. Prime Minister Srettha, who is a former property tycoon (he co-founded Sansiri), says housing is an “important issue that needs immediate fixing” for its potential to have a knock-on effect on other businesses. Among the measures he has proposed are reducing property transfer and mortgage fees; granting soft loans to low-income earners for their first house purchase; reducing land and building tax by 50 percent for a year; and rebooting the full loan-to-value ratio (LTV) to stimulate the buyer market.

Nichakamol of JLL says these combined should give more buyers, from a wider demographic, money to play with and more affordable housing options. “The announced policies are expected to be effective and have a positive impact on the overall market, including the luxury segment,” he says. “However, we will monitor their implementation and effectiveness in the coming months.”

Soaring Above Jomtien: A Look at SKYPARK Lucean



Rising from the heart of Jomtien Beach, SKYPARK Lucean promises to redefine luxury living. This prestigious development by Lunique Real Estate Co., Ltd. boasts a vision that blends modern elegance with the tranquility of a beachside escape.

Designed for Elevated Living

SKYPARK Lucean isn't just another condo complex; it's a statement. Two impressive phases, featuring towering structures with a total of 899 units, offer a range of options from studios to spacious 4-bedroom residences. Imagine waking up to breathtaking panoramic views of the Gulf of Thailand's azure waters or the vibrant Pattaya cityscape – every unit promises to be a haven.

Location, Location, Location

Nestled on Jomtien Second Road, SKYPARK Lucean enjoys the best of both worlds. Residents are mere steps away from the pristine sands of Jomtien Beach, perfect for soaking up the sun or indulging in water sports. At the same time, the development offers easy access to Pattaya's bustling nightlife, entertainment hubs, and a plethora of dining options.



A World of Amenities

SKYPARK Lucean isn't just about the stunning views and prime location. The development boasts a comprehensive suite of amenities designed to pamper residents. Dive into the inviting swimming pool, work up a sweat in the state-of-the-art fitness center, or simply relax in the lush gardens. The development also features a concierge service, library, and office space, catering to every need.

An Investment in Paradise

Scheduled for completion in November 2029, SKYPARK Lucean presents an exciting opportunity for investors seeking a slice of Pattaya's thriving property market. Whether you envision it as a permanent residence, a vacation getaway, or a rental property, SKYPARK Lucean promises to be a sound investment.

Living the High Life

SKYPARK Lucean isn't just a place to live; it's a lifestyle. Here, you can truly live life to the fullest, surrounded by luxury, convenience, and breathtaking beauty. Soar above the ordinary and discover a new level of living at SKYPARK Lucean Pattaya.



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