

Issue 236/63 MAR 2026

DISCOVER PATTAYA

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An Oasis in the Heart of the City



Avenue Boutique
Condominium

Avenue Boutique

Condominium



Live Boutique. Live Central. Live Elevated.

Body

Avenue Boutique Condominium introduces a new class of low-rise living in the heart of Pattaya. Designed for residents who value privacy, style, and convenience, the development brings together contemporary architecture, refined interiors, and premium amenities that enrich everyday life.

From the rooftop sky garden to the ground-level pool oasis, each space is crafted to deliver calm, comfort, and character. Just steps from Soi Buakhao's vibrant dining and entertainment scene, Avenue Boutique offers a lifestyle that is both effortless and exceptional. Your boutique sanctuary in the city begins here.



Key Features

This Prime location is ideal for residents and investors seeking both tranquility and connectivity in one of Thailand's most dynamic coastal cities.

- 500 meters from "Pattaya Beach"
 - 600 meters from "Tree Town Night Market"
 - 750 meters from "Mike Shopping Mall"
 - 850 meters from "Tukcom"
 - 1 kilometer from "Central Festival Pattaya"
 - 1.2 kilometer from "Walking Street"
-
- Fully fitted units with premium materials
 - Ground-level swimming pool surrounded by lush landscaping
 - Fitness, sauna, steam, rooftop garden
 - 24-hour security, secure parking, on-site property office





Where Lifestyle Meets Strong Returns

Body

Avenue Boutique is engineered for investors and end-users looking for long-term value. With high rental demand, a proven developer, and an unbeatable city-center position, the project offers a compelling blend of capital growth and consistent yield potential.

The development's modern unit layouts, professional management, and walkable location make it a preferred choice for both short-stay renters and long-term residents. Whether you are securing a vacation home or building your investment portfolio, Avenue Boutique delivers a smart, resilient opportunity in one of Pattaya's most active markets.

Highlights for Investors

- Strong rental demand in Central Pattaya
- Prime walkable location ensures high occupancy
- Trusted developer with a 20-year track record
- Competitive entry price with high appreciation potential
- Studio, 1-bedroom, and 2-bedroom units available



Sinking Fund: 600 THB per sqm

Maintenance Fee: 50 THB per sqm per month

Transfer fee: Shared equally between Buyer and Seller

Expected completion: Q2 2029

20 years Experience

Avenue Boutique - A Smart Investment Opportunity for both City living style and investment. Construction and Development of Avenue Boutique is well known by Mr. Maimon David Marsiano, a trusted developer with over 20 years of experience and a successful track record in Pattaya, including

- City Garden Condominium
- Avenue Residence Condominium
- Cosy Beach View Condominium
- Centara Avenue Condominium
- Centara Azure Hotel
- The Kosher Hotel
- Grand Avenue Residence

As Chairman of the Marsiano Group, He continues to oversee his developments to maintain top living standards for all residents. With its prime location, high demand for rentals, and strong capital appreciation potential, Avenue Boutique is ideal for both long-term investors and those seeking a vacation home in Pattaya.



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DISCOVER PATTAYA

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Avenue Boutique
Condominium

This Month in Discover Pattaya

Hi Everyone

Welcome to our March issue featuring the stunning Avenue Boutique Condominium on this month's Front Cover and Cover Story. We invite you to visit their showroom on Soi Buakhao to discover the exceptional location for this exciting new project. Enjoy the rare opportunity to own your own condo with a beautiful oasis in the heart of the city, - prices start from just 2.99 million baht.

We are also delighted to welcome The Standard to Discover Pattaya - what a stylish and sophisticated resort this is! Be sure to read our review of their wonderful seafood buffet at Sereia Restaurant and also turn to page 8 for the grand opening of Torien, Pattaya's highest Izakaya rooftop destination at Pattaya Marriott Resort and Spa.

Then if you've looking for something to do on St Patrick's day, book your place at Dicey Reilly's. Don a large green hat, enjoy a pint of the black stuff and even take the chance to play a game with Irish snooker legend Ken Doherty.

Wishing everyone a great Month!

From the Discover Pattaya Team

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Flame-Grilled by the Sea: A Culinary delight at The Standard, Pattaya, Na Jomtien

By Gloria Jones

The Standard has built a global reputation for bold design, cultural relevance, and a distinctive approach to luxury. Known for creating iconic hotels in major cities around the world, the brand attracts creatives, modern travelers, and stylish locals seeking more than just a place to stay. A Standard property is never predictable; it blends laidback luxury with a pulse of energy, where design, dining, and social life intertwine. That spirit now finds its beachside expression at The Standard, Pattaya Na Jomtien.

Opened in October 2025, following the success of The Standard, Hua Hin and The Standard, Bangkok, this new Na Jomtien escape brings the brand's signature flair to Thailand's eastern seaboard. With 161 rooms and suites, the resort is thoughtfully designed for weekenders from Bangkok, globe-trotting creatives, and design lovers who appreciate aesthetics as much as atmosphere. It also introduces the brand's first-ever beach club, Esmé, marking an exciting evolution for The Standard in Thailand. The result is a destination that balances resort-style calm with vibrant social energy, offering a fresh and stylish alternative to more traditional seaside hotels.

Architecture for the Na Jomtien project was led by ONION, the renowned Thai architectural firm behind notable projects such as King's College International School, Bangkok, and the interiors of the Queen Sirikit National Convention Center. Their design vision is immediately apparent from the moment guests arrive. Walking from the lobby through beautifully landscaped gardens toward the ocean, one begins to appreciate the sculptural quality of the buildings. The edges are softened by undulating curves that echo the rhythm of nearby waves, creating a fluid connection between structure and sea. The exterior feels organic yet contemporary, as though shaped by coastal winds.



The landscaping plays an equally important role in the guest experience. Lush green foliage surrounds the pathways, creating a sense of tropical abundance, yet the gardens are thoughtfully designed with wide, paved walkways that make navigating the property effortless—even in heels. Every corner feels intentionally composed, almost cinematic, guiding guests on a sensory journey from arrival to oceanfront. There are countless photo-worthy spots, each framed by greenery, architecture, and glimpses of the sea.



At the heart of the outdoor space lies the pool, resplendent with rows of striking orange sun loungers. Not just any orange, but “sunset orange,” I am informed—The Standard Pattaya’s signature color. Just as The Standard, Hua Hin is known for its sunrise yellow, Na Jomtien embraces this deeper, warmer hue, perfectly suited to late-afternoon light over the Gulf of Thailand. The loungers pop vividly against the blue water and green landscape, reinforcing the playful yet polished aesthetic the brand does so well.

Dining at The Standard, Pattaya Na Jomtien is a highlight in its own right, particularly at Sereia, the resort’s seafood-focused restaurant inspired by the rich culinary traditions of Chonburi. Here, the spotlight is on the freshest local catches and premium meats, expertly grilled over live fire. The open, flame-driven cooking style enhances natural flavors and adds a theatrical element to the dining experience. Thoughtful details—such as hot plates placed under individual serving dishes to keep food at the perfect temperature—demonstrate a commitment to quality and comfort.



While seafood is the star, vegetarians would find themselves more than satisfied by the impressive range of plant-based offerings. Grilled local vegetables showcase seasonal produce at its best, while roasted pumpkin with grilled sweetcorn delivers both sweetness and smoky depth. Stir-fried bok choy is vibrant and fresh, and dishes such as smoked potato and lemongrass salad or green mango with cashew salad offer bright, aromatic flavors that reflect Thailand’s culinary heritage. The variety ensures that every guest, regardless of dietary preference, can enjoy a memorable meal.

For seafood lovers, the selection is indulgent. Alaskan King Crab makes an appearance alongside fresh oysters and mussels, served with crispy shallots, red wine vinegar, and roasted chilli jam for a perfect balance of briny, tangy, and spicy notes. Sushi topped with caviar adds a touch of decadence, while sashimi platters featuring tuna and salmon celebrate purity and freshness. Each dish feels carefully curated rather than excessive, allowing the quality of ingredients to shine.

Beyond the raw bar, heartier options further showcase the kitchen’s versatility. Seafood fried rice is fragrant and generous, garlic pepper shrimp packs a punch, and mussels cooked with coconut and Thai herbs offer a creamy yet aromatic twist. The curries, deserve special mention. Seabass in green curry is both delicate and robust, the creamy coconut base enlivened by fresh herbs and green chillies. Massaman short ribs provide rich, slow-cooked comfort, blending tender meat with the deep, warming spices of this beloved Thai curry. Roast chicken with lime leaves rounds out the selection, infusing familiar comfort with bright citrus fragrance. Southern Thai crab curry delivers bold, complex flavors with a subtle heat that lingers pleasantly. These dishes reflect a thoughtful balance between regional authenticity and contemporary presentation.

Overall, The Standard, Pattaya Na Jomtien captures the essence of the brand while embracing its beachfront setting. It is at once relaxed and lively, design-driven yet deeply connected to local culture and cuisine. Whether lounging by the pool on sunset-orange chairs, wandering through sculptural gardens, or savoring expertly grilled seafood, guests are immersed in an experience that feels both effortless and curated. For those seeking a seaside escape that combines creative energy with resort tranquility, this Na Jomtien retreat sets a new standard on Thailand’s coast.

The Standard, Pattaya Na Jomtien

Tel : 033 111 555

8/12 Moo 2 Soi Na Jomtien 10, Na Jomtien, Chonburi,
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Facebook, Instagram & LINE Official Account:
@thestandardpattaya



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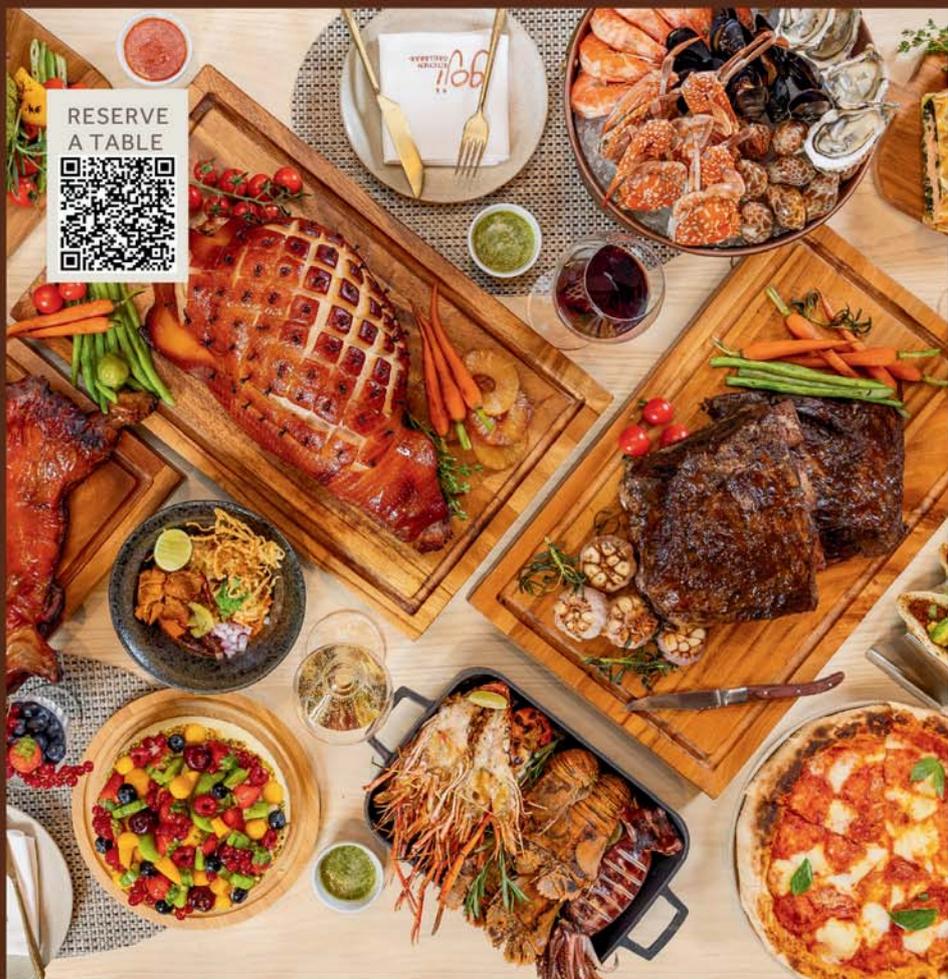
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Pattaya Marriott Resort and Spa Launches its **“Torien Rooftop and Bar”**

A Modern Izakaya & Rooftop Destination and New Seaside Landmark Beach

by Gloria Jones

At Discover Pattaya, we are already great admirers of Pattaya Marriott Resort and Spa, the five-star landmark on Jomtien Beach. If you missed any of our previous reviews of the exceptional dining available at this stunning resort, you can visit our website, pattayatrader.com, where you'll find features on the outstanding Goji buffet and the delicious Italian cuisine at La Familiare. So, it took no time at all for me to accept an invitation to attend the launch of their newest lifestyle dining destination: Torien Rooftop and Bar.



Launched as part of Asset World Corporation’s vision to support Pattaya’s growing lifestyle scene, Torien proudly claims the title of “Pattaya’s Highest Izakaya Rooftop,” delivering a high-energy social experience complemented by magnificent panoramic views over Jomtien Beach. The ribbon-cutting ceremony was led by Asset World Corporation’s Chief Hospitality Group Officer, Souffian Zaeraoui, alongside the resort’s General Manager, Michael Hogan. Mr. Hogan remarked:

“This venue is a key piece of the puzzle that completes the leisure experience at Pattaya Marriott Resort and Spa. With our rooftop location offering panoramic views, combined with the dedication of our team, I am confident that Torien will be more than just a restaurant—it will be a new landmark creating vibrancy and unforgettable impressions for all our guests.”

Once the ribbon was cut, invited guests eagerly stepped inside the much-anticipated high-rise restaurant. I was immediately impressed—not only by the spectacular views from the 15th-floor setting but also by the stylish interior design. Torien blending traditional Japanese charcoal grilling artistry with beautiful Chochin lanterns, seamlessly integrated into a contemporary, elegant setting. A striking central bar anchors the space, surrounded by intimate and comfortable dining areas and when night falls, the lantern light create a warm, romantic atmosphere.



We were welcomed with a glass of sparkling sake, setting the tone for an intriguing inaugural menu. A comforting Chinton broth was followed by succulent Yellowtail interlaced with charred orange segments—a combination I particularly enjoyed, as citrus fruits beautifully enhance the fresh fish. Next came a refined duo of nigiri: one salmon and one beef, served with truffle and crisp nori. It was already clear that only premium ingredients are used in Torien’s Japanese cuisine.

As Ekapoj Yamlamai, Director of Operations, explains: “At Torien, we don’t just present food; we present the ‘Izakaya Rhythm’ of socializing. Our concept brings authentic Japanese grilling expertise together with the finest seasonal ingredients. Whether it’s signature dishes like Wagyu Katsu Sando or Charcoal Grilled Lamb Chops, everything is designed for sharing.”

Our Kushiyaki Grill Set—featuring chicken thigh, pork jowl, and impressively large tiger prawns—was a perfect example of that philosophy. The main course that followed was undoubtedly my favourite. The Chilean sea bass was beautifully white, flaky, and succulent. Presented on a large leaf with tender local spinach, it was elevated by a red and white miso glaze that delivered remarkable depth of flavour. Even though I felt comfortably satisfied, the dessert offering proved impossible to resist. A creative fusion of Italian and Japanese influences, the matcha tiramisu was both creamy and indulgent—a delightful finale.

At the heart of Torien’s concept is a seasonal, sharing-style menu designed to showcase pristine, high-quality ingredients, complemented by a carefully curated selection of sakes and highballs. One standout dish that has firmly secured its place on my list for a return visit is the Wagyu Katsu Sando—breaded Wagyu tenderloin, perfectly crisp on the outside and tender within, paired with house-made katsu sauce, caramelized onion, and lumpfish caviar for a rich and layered indulgence. However, it was time to explore the Rooftop Bar Zone on the 16th floor—an open-air space embracing sweeping views across the Gulf of Thailand. The atmosphere here effortlessly combines vibrant energy with elevated luxury, high above the Pattaya coastline.



Torien Rooftop and Bar is sure to become a favourite new destination or both residents and visitors alike.

Opening Hours:

Restaurant Zone: Wednesday–Sunday, 17:00–23:00 hrs

Rooftop Bar: Wednesday–Sunday, 17:00–00:00 hrs

For reservations or more information, please call 033 168 542, book online, or visit www.pattayamarriott.com

Follow resort updates on Facebook and Instagram.





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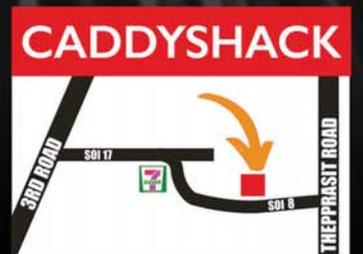
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Pullman Hosts a Celebration of Italian Wine with Italiasia



Italiasia Trading (Thailand) Co., Ltd. is one of Thailand's leading importers and distributors of premium wines, spirits, and beverages. Established in 1960 and headquartered in Bangkok, the company has played a significant role in shaping Thailand's modern wine culture.

It was therefore a pleasure for Discover Pattaya, together with representatives from some of Pattaya's finest hotels and dining establishments, to be invited to an exclusive wine tasting event at the Pullman.

As always, the Pullman proved to be an exceptional host, providing a steady stream of delicious canapés — perfect “soakage” for guests sampling an impressive selection of wines (with very few opting for the spittoon!).

Adding to the occasion were several owners from renowned Italian vineyards, long-standing partners of Italiasia. Their presentation, accompanied by an engaging PowerPoint, offered fascinating insight into generations of family winemaking traditions and the passion behind wines now enjoyed around the world.

Naturally, we couldn't resist presenting them with a copy of our magazine to enjoy on their flight home. The event concluded with a raffle drawn from business cards given in at registration — and the prizes? Fine bottles of wine of course.





To find out more about Italiasa, please contact Mauro Bonivento email: info@italasia-group.com
tel: +66 38 426 250 WhatsApp +66 92 131 9954

If you would like Pullman Pattaya Hotel G to host an event for you email:
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Location Map



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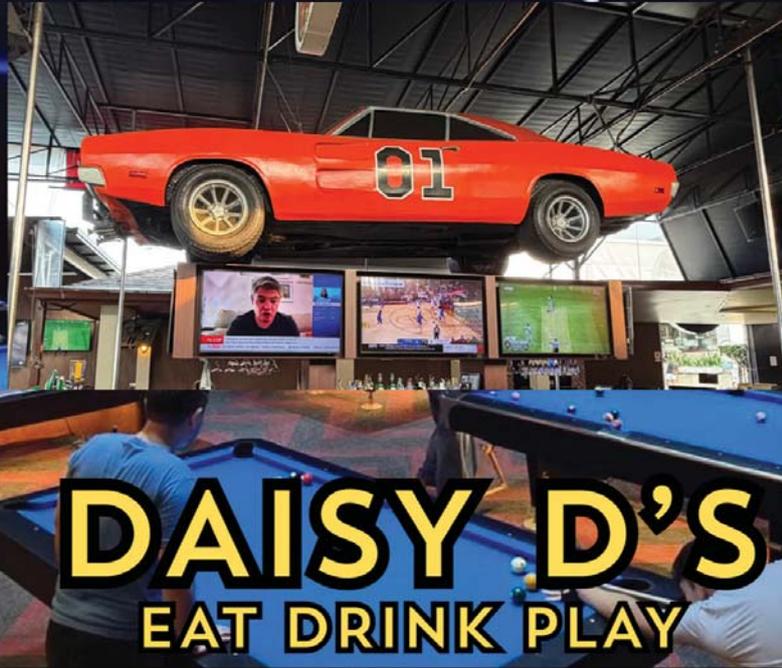
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Celebrating St. Patrick's Day at Dicey Reilly's PATTAYA

St. Patrick's Day may have begun thousands of miles away in Ireland, but every March, Pattaya transforms into a cheerful splash of green, music, and celebration. Whether you're an expat, a tourist, or simply someone who enjoys a good party, there's something infectious about the worldwide phenomenon of honouring Ireland's patron saint. Here in Pattaya, the celebration has grown from a few determined Irish drinkers in the early 2000s into a fully fledged cultural fest that blends Irish charm with Pattaya's famously lively spirit.

St. Patrick's Day was originally a religious feast honouring St. Patrick, the missionary credited with bringing Christianity to Ireland in the 5th century. Over time, the day has evolved into a worldwide celebration of Irish heritage. Open to anyone who enjoys good company, good music, and a good pint, Ireland's identity is wrapped in iconic symbols that come alive every March 17th. The shamrock, which St. Patrick famously used to explain the Holy Trinity, and the tall green top hat, now inseparable from the mischievous leprechaun of Irish folklore.

Traditional Irish music also plays a central role, with lively jigs, reels, and soulful ballads led by the unmistakable sound of the fiddle weaving energy and emotion through every gathering. You're likely to hear everything from traditional reels to ballads like Danny Boy, a world-famous melody that has moved hearts from Dublin to New York to, yes, beachside Pattaya. And of course, no St. Patrick's Day would be complete without the deep ruby-black pint of Guinness, its creamy head and rich history making it as much a symbol of the day as anything else in Irish culture.

This year, Dicey Reilly's at the Avani Pattaya Resort is gearing up for its biggest St. Patrick's Day yet. Expect green decorations, live Irish music, classic pub food with a Celtic twist, and of course, plenty of Guinness pouring all day long. And the highlight? A special appearance by none other than snooker legend and Dublin's beloved sporting hero Ken Doherty. The "Darlin' of Dublin" is known not just for his world-class snooker skills but for his quick wit, warm storytelling, and contagious charisma. Having him in Pattaya on St. Patrick's Day is like bringing a slice of Ireland straight to the Tropics.

Expect laughs, photos, autograph opportunities, and maybe even a few snooker tales that never make it onto TV. Whether you're here for the Guinness, the music, the laughter, or to meet a snooker icon, St. Patrick's Day at Dicey Reilly's promises a fantastic day of craic, camaraderie, and Celtic fun. So put on something green, warm up your singing voice, practice your jig (or at least your sway), and come celebrate Irish heritage Pattaya-style.

Challenge the Champion on St. Patrick's Day

Join Dicey's for a night of craic this St. Patrick's Day. Enjoy an extravaganza with a perfect blend of food, drinks, live music and a thrilling pool tournament featuring Ken Doherty, the legendary Darlin' of Dublin and World Snooker Champion of 1997 at Dicey's in the Avani Pattaya Resort. Watch the skill, soak up the atmosphere and take your shot as Ken takes on brave challengers for a St. Patrick's Day celebration with a sporting twist.

Tuesday 17 March 2026

4:30 pm: Live Irish band performance

6:30 pm- 11:00 pm: Snooker game

with Ken Doherty

Ticket: THB 1,000 net per frame per person

**DICEY
REILLY'S**



AVANI
Pattaya Resort

Oasis Beats Pool Party

Dive into Pattaya's coolest tropical pool vibes with DJs, live drums and standout performances. The ideal mix of music, sunshine and effortless paradise energy.

Date: 28 March 2026
Time: 2:00 pm - 6:00 pm
Venue: Main pool
Price: Start from THB 550++

Avani Pattaya Resort
218/2-3 Moo 10, Beach Road, Pattaya 20260
T: 038 412 120 E: pattaya@avanihotels.com
AVANIHOTELS.COM



CHALLENGE THE CHAMPION

on St. Patrick's Day

Enjoy an extravaganza with a perfect blend of food, drinks, live music and a thrilling pool tournament featuring Ken Doherty, the legendary Darlin' of Dublin and World Snooker Champion of 1997

Watch the skill, soak up the atmosphere and take your shot as Ken takes on brave challengers for a St. Patrick's Day celebration with a sporting twist.

**DICEY
REILLY'S**

17 March 2026

TIME:

4:30 pm: Live Irish band performance
6:30 pm- 11:00 pm: Snooker game
at Dicey's in the Avani Pattaya Resort.

038 412 120



TICKET

**THB 1,000 NET
PER PERSON**

6



Last month the Pattaya International Ladies' Club held their annual AGM with 48 members in attendance. After approval of the 2025 minutes the main purpose of the day was to hear reports from the executive committee about the last 12 months and then vote in the returning and any new committee members.



The PILC committee is made up of unpaid volunteers who give freely of their time to help the club. Each one was invited to say a few words starting with President Sue Saunders. As members know, the last year has been very challenging for Sue and she thanked all the club for their support and the committee members who stepped up to help when she had to be absent. Then Vice President Sue Smith also expressed her thanks for the help from the more experienced long term committee members who showed her the ropes and also how happy she is to have started the PILC's Book Club.

A financial summary of the last 12 months was then given by Treasurer Suzanne Beales and copies of this were also available for the members on each table. She also advised of the new accounts system which will help the committee make informed decisions about profitability of lunches, coffee mornings, events etc. Melissa Jenks Olivit advised that membership is currently at 101 but expected to increase as members return to Pattaya and renew their membership. She also advised that over the year many guests had also attended these events and that the "Newcomers coffee mornings" held each month at Terminal 21 had been a great success.

Lhen Lhen Mortella, the club's Welfare committee member helped by non-executive Liz Shepherd, advised that the club has supported 21 student scholarships through the Mercy Pattaya Foundation. Providing uniforms and school supplies with 114,000 baht through money raised by the club's monthly raffles and activities. A further 422,000 baht went for the food bagging programme that provides tons of food to the unfortunate, destitute of Pattaya.

Leesa Davidson, responsible for the club's social media, advised that there are now 21/2 thousand followers of the Facebook group and Instagram and LINE are also beginning to grow in numbers. She also reported on Hospitality where there have been 20 events over the year with new menus and locations added to the regular favourites and a couple of afternoon teas replacing the usual coffee mornings. Special events have included The Melbourne Cup, Christmas Fair and Christmas Lunch.

Then Violette Gauthier, a former club president and charismatic club member, advised that Trips and Activities have included afternoon tea at the Mandarin Oriental, a visit to the Tulip Farm and some very popular shopping trips to Bangkok. The members are advised to reserve their places early for these as the 2 minibuses fill up very quickly. She also welcomed any suggestions from the club members as to where they would like to visit (inside Thailand) in the near future.

Carol Johnson said that being the club's secretary for the last 12 months made her realise just how much hard work goes on behind the scenes to make each event a success. She is now handing over this position to Sue Smith with Vanessa Williams now becoming the club's Vice President. Other new executive committee members for 2026-2027 are Joyce Wijnhoud from the Netherlands who will be looking after Special Events Megan Scott in a new position to provide administrative help. Also Sharon Kingston and Ailsa Kneath who will jointly work on the club's monthly Hospitality occasions. We wish them all the very best in their new roles.

There was then voting to approve some changes to the club's constitution:

To be an Executive Committee member you must have been a PILC member for at least 6 months and committee members must serve at least 1 full term before being proposed as President. If a Committee member is absent more than 3 months in a year they must have someone ready to take over during their absence, excepting the President whose role is automatically taken by the VP.

Other business discussed included the new banking regulations which mean that the Treasurer is responsible for signing off on transactions, although the decisions to do so are agreed by all the committee and all accounts are audited. Also, for people who do not attend coffee mornings, lunches, events etc. charges will be made if cancellation is less than 24 hours notice, or in the cases of some venues 72 hours - this will be advised when the invitations go out. It was also suggested that some interesting speakers be invited to talk to the club at certain times - which is being considered. Then the meeting was wrapped up with all going off to enjoy lunch!

Pattaya International Ladies Club, usually known as the PILC, is a social club for women to make friends, attend events and support local charities. If you are interested in joining please message their Facebook page or contact pilcmembership@gmail.com or pilcpresident@gmail.com

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KOH LARN

Known for clear water, coral reefs, and soft, sandy beaches there are a small group of islands within easy reach of Pattaya. They are perfect for half or full day boat trips..

The one you probably already know is Koh Larn (Coral Island) which is about 7 kilometers from Pattaya. This is the most visited, being also served by a ferry service from Bali Hai Pier. It has two villages Baan Krok Makhan and Baan Koh Larn.

With several resorts, shops and cafes it also has many coves with white sandy beaches. such as Tawaen, Samae, and Tien Beach. So it's a great idea to rent a motorbike here for the day and visit several. Visitors generally come here for swimming, parasailing, sunbathing and the many seafood restaurants that line the shore.

KOH PHAI

Farther offshore (located 15 miles from Ocean Marina) lies Koh Phai, also known as Bamboo Island. Part of a protected marine area, Koh Phai is far more undeveloped and pristine, being meticulously cared for by the Royal Thai Navy. There are no hotels or shops, just soft sand, crystal-clear water, and vibrant coral reefs. Easiest to anchor on its east side, it offers a true "away from it all" experience.

KOH KROK, KOH RIN & KOH MAN WICHAI

Koh Krok is also a great island to visit for snorkeling. Often included in half-day tours, it has rocky shores and clear turquoise water and is popular with private boat owners.

Koh Rin, another notable island, highly regarded among divers features healthy coral formations and a variety of marine life, making it one of the better dive sites near Pattaya. Its one and only beach is 1km long and the bay in the southeast is the best to anchor.

Koh Man Wichai, also an amazing dive location, has a large sandy cove to the west and two more on its east side. This charming island really is a secluded paradise.

Pattaya's Islands



KOH SAK

A smaller island, Koh Sak is shaped like a horseshoe and ideal for snorkeling and beginner divers. Only 10 nautical miles from Ocean Marina you can generally find calm water here although its shallow coral reefs mean that there are only certain spots to access and anchor.

KOH KHARAM

Koh Khram is one of the most beautiful Pattaya Islands also owned by the Royal Thai Navy and largely off limits. However boat charter services from Ocean Marina Yacht Club sometimes make a short stop on the pristine beaches although visitors are only allowed to stay for 1 hour. Its smaller neighbour to the north Koh Kram Noi, also owned by the navy is uninhabited and is primarily known as a conservation area for sea turtles.

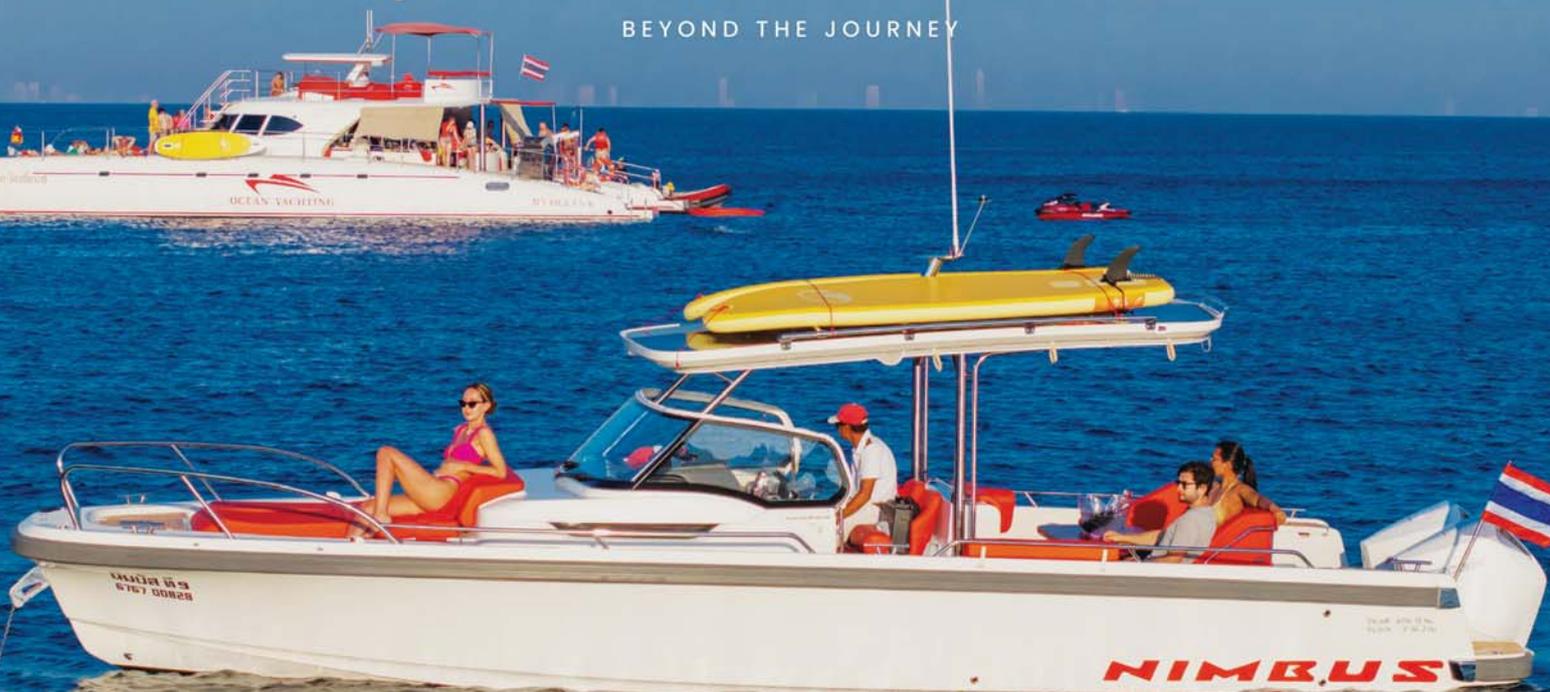
Monkey Island, Koh Klet Kaew, sometimes called Koh Ped, has a large resident population of crab-eating macaques. Thanks to regular visits by charter boats these monkeys are well accustomed to interacting with humans. They will come running at the first sound of engines to get fruit brought over by visitors

Together, these islands form a natural playground for sailing, snorkeling, and island hopping. For visitors staying near Ocean Marina, they offer a unique opportunity to visit peaceful beaches and vibrant underwater worlds, all within easy reach of Pattaya's coastline.



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HOW PRO-WRESTLING AND PATTAYA BECAME A THING.

By Jason Rupp

Man, let me tell you—if you find yourself in Pattaya and you're looking for a dose of home-grown chaos, skip the usual tourist traps and head straight for the ring. The man behind the curtain is SunnyZ. He's a Canadian-Chinese muscle powerhouse who manifested the Pattaya pro-wrestling scene into existence, albeit with a lot of sweat & brains. Five years ago, I met Sunny in Pattaya at a table with some other young expats who had all recently moved here too. He told me about how he fell in love with the excitement of this city and never wants to leave. We immediately clicked as friends. I learned that back in Toronto, he was a gym owner, and was a successful pro wrestler touring all over Canada and the U.S. It all sounded interesting. At that time, I never thought he would really combine his love of Pattaya and wrestling... but eventually he did.

Back in Canada, he was just checking boxes—job, money, house—until people started pointing out he was built like a tank. He studied and trained hard, got into pro-wrestling, since it felt like it was his calling. Whether winning or losing, he loves it when the crowd cheers out his name. He loves entertaining and thrives on it. But here in Thailand he was without it. After a number of months of being friends, he told me he felt "dead inside" without a pro wrestling scene in Pattaya and decided he would see if he could build it up organically... grass-roots style.

He found a prime space. Ordered a ring to be custom-made to the specifications for wrestling, from the same people who make Muay Thai rings. The problem is, where were the wrestlers? Luckily, he had a friend, a world champion, "The HUNbelievable" Benji, a Hungarian wrestler, who was a resident wrestler in Cambodia, and had just made Pattaya his home as well. Their plan was that if they couldn't find wrestlers here, then they would train anyone who wanted to learn. They started training anyone who had an interest and now they have a team of Thai and foreign wrestlers.

Their events have a cult-like following from the crowd, who hang on every more and cheer for the drama and the gore. The first time I walked into one of the PSE pro wrestling events, the humidity was hitting like a freight train, but the energy inside was even heavier. I'm talking beer-sloshing, lung-busting screams from a crowd that's 100% dialed in. It's not that corporate, shiny WWE stuff we grew up with back in the States, and it's definitely not that stoic, "serious" Japanese style. This is "Pattaya Style." You got guys like Blobtang – local Thai legend, built as big as a huge dump truck – literally puffing on a cigarette mid-match like it's no big deal while he's wrecking people. Then we have hero Ryan Rogan, with his long hair and 8-pack abs almost about to lose, but then absorbs the energy cheering him on and wins in the end. Sunny Z, with his long-blond hair comes out with an actual bathroom door and slams it over the head of his opponent to win his match. It's wild.





What I love about Sunny's vision is that he wants you to feel like you're in an underground fight club. Yes, the event is planned and rehearsed, and you wonder if they get hurt (and sometimes they do), but it's "Sports Entertainment" with a capital E. He wants us—the fans—to feel like we're part of the mayhem, not just sitting watching a play. He's all about the color, the noise, and the spectacle. It's interactive. You can stand ring-side, pounding your hand on the floor, yelling at the wrestlers, and cheering for who you want to win but there's one rule: Don't touch the wrestlers! If you think they might fly out of the ring, move. Often the fight spills out into the audience, you just move and cheer harder for them! Bang on the ring and feel like you are in the show. Where else in the world can you do that? Seeing that kind of passion and hustle makes me feel right at home.

I highly recommend you not to miss the next PSE event. It's loud, it's sweaty, and it's got more heart than a Rocky movie. If you're in town, look up Paradise Sports Entertainment (PSE) and grab a cold one. Trust me, it's low-key one of the best shows around

There are plans for the next big show this April on the 20th featuring some big Influencers set to battle it out, Check the PSE social media pages for news about this event and contact PSE if you're interested in taking lessons.



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Sports Update

For March by Steve Wade

March is a great month for sporting action and pride of place must go to Formula 1, where the season starts with a bang in Australia and continues into China and Japan later in the month. Mercedes are favourites to lift the constructors championship this year and they are followed by McLaren and Ferrari, as far as the bookmakers are concerned anyway. Naturally it follows that George Russell, Mercedes lead driver, is favourite for the drivers championship and second favourite is Max Verstappen from Red Bull, in spite of his team being behind Mercedes, McLaren and Ferrari in the constructors list. It looks like the skill and talent of Verstappen is being given a good deal of respect in spite of the trials and tribulations of the team he represents. Ferrari are not out of the race for the title either and with Charles Leclerc and Lewis Hamilton driving for them, any improvements they make through the season will see them fighting it out with the rest. Your dates for this month are Australia on the 8th, China on the 15th and Japan on the 29th. We should know a lot more about what shape the various teams are in come April.

If it's March, it must be Cheltenham. The greatest show on turf is with us again and the action starts on the 10th of the month and goes through until Gold Cup day on Friday the 13th. Although the domination of the meeting by the Irish is likely to continue, it does look like the British contingent are heading to Prestbury Park with a stronger team and there is some talk of a fight back this year, with English horses heading the betting in plenty of the Grade 1 events over the four days. Willie Mullins, the most successful trainer in the history of the meeting with over a hundred winners, will no doubt send another battalion of well fancied horses over from his base in Closutton but to my eye the team doesn't look quite as strong as in previous years and I think the race between Ireland and the rest to see who turns out the most winners will be a closer run thing than we have had for a good while. Whatever happens, we'll be seeing the best against the best over the four days and for us horse racing fans, there's nothing like it!

Other highlights in March include the round of 16 matches in the Champions League, being played on the 10th and 11th with the return legs on the 17th and 18th. We also have the Carabao Cup final being played at Wembley on the 22nd, which features a clash between Arsenal and Manchester City, which may have some psychological impact as the same two teams look the only realistic contenders to be the Premier League champions this year. I would think the first piece of silverware under the belt and a defeat of your opponent in a showcase final would be a considerable boost as the season concludes.





For a Brighter Future

I am using the term Patriot for a series of articles to feature in the magazine. Firstly because I love the alliteration, and secondly because I wanted a word to describe some very special people who live amongst us here in Pattaya. Sometimes given a military connotation, the word patriot actually describes someone who deeply loves, supports and defends their country (or, for the purposes of this article, their city). They often demonstrate loyalty through service, sacrifice, or civic engagement. True patriotism goes beyond mere pride—it involves striving to make improvements for all, for freedom, and for progress. If you missed any of the earlier Pattaya Patriots articles you can still find them online at our website pattayatrader.com

For this month I am featuring a lady I have known for many years. Her personal struggle in defeating breast cancer and undeniable energy for devoting herself to work for charities and raising money for worthy causes make her truly an inspiration. Here she describes for us her latest venture, a walk of over 1,000 kilometres from her home in Banglamung to Chiang Mai.

Pattaya Patriots



A Solo Foot Journey Through Thailand, Powered by Purpose by Claas Clements

In an age where comfort, speed, and convenience dominate everyday life, choosing to walk feels quietly radical—and profoundly human. Not for adventure alone, not to chase records or accolades, but to draw attention to a cause greater than oneself. That is the essence of Steps for a Brighter Future: a solo walking journey across Thailand undertaken to support education for minority communities in the North.

My journey did not begin with a headline or a ceremony, but with a simple decision—to lace up my shoes, travel by foot, and move steadily northward. The goal was to raise awareness and support for the Philanthropy Connections Foundation, an organisation dedicated to creating educational opportunities in vulnerable communities. The route spanned hundreds of kilometres, carrying me through towns and farming landscapes, ancient capitals and industrial zones, bustling markets, remote villages, and quiet national-park backroads. With every kilometre walked, the message remained clear: education changes lives, and opportunity should never be reserved for only a few.

The walk was physically demanding. Long days on asphalt and concrete, heat radiating from both road and sky, and unpredictable weather became constants. Fueling my body properly, staying hydrated, timing rest breaks, and planning each next leg—while remaining visible and safe along high-traffic corridors—were daily considerations. Yet the greatest challenges were often internal. Walking alone creates space for both determination and doubt. The horizon offers beauty and inspiration, but the repetition of movement requires emotional resilience. On the quiet stretches, it becomes clear that a journey like this is not only about reaching a destination, but about remaining faithful to the purpose behind every step.



That purpose is deeply personal. I believe education unlocks possibility. When children from under-resourced communities gain access to schooling, their futures expand. They become healthier, develop agency, and help lift the communities around them. A walk may seem simple, even symbolic, but symbolism carries power. This journey is a visible reminder that small, consistent efforts can lead to meaningful change. Walking across Thailand offers a perspective that cannot be gained by car or plane. There is time to notice details otherwise lost to speed: orchards hidden behind petrol stations, temples rising unexpectedly beside markets, the generosity of shopkeepers pressing water bottles into tired hands, and families emerging with smiles and questions. These moments shape the journey as much as the distance itself.

The kindness I encountered along the route became one of the strongest forces sustaining my march. Strangers became supporters. Curious children waved from school gates. Roadside vendors shared fruit, and hotel owners offered unexpected generosity. Each encounter affirmed the spirit of this country—a reminder that Thailand’s cultural strength lies not only in its history and architecture, but in its instinctive hospitality.

A journey measured in steps, sometimes tens of thousands in a single day, also demands patience. It teaches that progress can be slow yet meaningful, that challenges are temporary, and determination builds rather than breaks. It also teaches humility. Walking beneath the midday sun as motorbikes zip past and trucks thunder along Highway 1 makes one thing very clear: the world is vast. And yet, doing something small but intentional still matters. Walking long distances to raise awareness may not change everything, but it changes something. Often, that “something” is the spark that matters most.



The route continued northward toward Chiang Mai, where the foundation supported by this journey works closely with minority communities in mountainous regions. Their mission reflects a simple truth: when children are given the tools to learn, they gain the power to choose, to create, and to contribute. While many fundraising efforts rely on formal events and structured campaigns, Steps for a Brighter Future brings the cause directly to the very communities whose opportunities are being championed. It invites conversation, empathy, and participation. Those who follow the journey online become supporters. Those along the path become witnesses. And those who read about it—from cafés in Bangkok to homes in Chiang Mai—are reminded that positive change begins when someone decides to act.

Whether under the weight of a backpack, beneath the glare of a tropical sun, or beneath evening skies turning gold, this walk was carried by the goodwill of countless people met along the way, and the belief that education can reshape the future of communities. For me, the destination is not only Chiang Mai. It is a brighter future for children—a future where learning is a doorway, not a barrier. And with every kilometre walked, that future feels a little closer. For further information or to make a donation go to Claas’s social media.

www.philanthropyconnections.org/

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RUGBY SCHOOL
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SCHOOL INSPECTION
(JAN 2026)



As Rugby School Thailand approaches its 10th anniversary, it finds itself in the enviable position of having far more to celebrate than the simple passing of a milestone.

A recent independent inspection by British Schools Overseas (BSO) and the International Schools Quality Mark (ISQM) awarded the School the highest possible judgement of “Outstanding” in all areas and Gold Level accreditation, the highest possible award.

The report had an unequivocal message to deliver: *“Rugby School Thailand provides an outstanding quality of education for students aged two to 18 years.”*

The report praises high attainment and progress across all subjects, highlighting confident, self-motivated students with a strong love of learning, an innovative and imaginative curriculum, and exceptional university and careers guidance, with every student receiving an offer from a university of their choice.

The quality of boarding provision was also judged to be outstanding, alongside

a strong and active partnership between parents and staff.

This inspection success builds on an already impressive academic profile. The most recent IGCSE and A Level results saw one third of all grades at the highest level, and over half of all grades at A/A*. Independent Cambridge CEM data also placed Rugby School Thailand in the top 7% of international schools – and the top 10% globally – for the value it adds to A Level results. This is clear evidence of the School’s stated aim to “improve the outcome for every child”.

Quality assurance does not end there. Rugby School Thailand is fully accredited and a proud member of COBIS, ISAT and FOBISIA. It holds the rare distinction of double COBIS Beacon School status, recognised for excellence in both boarding and enrichment.

“Rugby School Thailand never stands still” (COBIS)

That forward momentum is visible across the campus. Already regarded as one of the most impressive school environments in Thailand, two major developments are

due for completion in 2026. A new 750-seat auditorium will serve as a cultural and performing arts hub in Chonburi, while a purpose-built Golf Performance Centre, operated in partnership with TPR Golf Academy, will offer a unique facility for students, parents and the local golfing community.

Reflecting on the recent inspection, Principal Bruce Grindlay noted: *“International education is a highly competitive market, and you simply cannot stand still if you want to remain among the very best. At the same time, we are educating young people in an era of rapid change, including the rise of artificial intelligence, where human skills, character and adaptability matter more than ever.”*

Founded with the ambition of bringing true British education to Thailand, the School has spent the past decade confidently delivering on that promise. For families seeking a trusted, all-through education from two to 18 years old, day or boarding - Rugby School Thailand represents a proven choice that is clearly progressing from strength to strength.

www.rugbyschool.ac.th



The pressures facing international schools in Thailand and what's coming next

Thailand's international school sector has long been viewed as one of the country's education success stories. New campuses continue to open, facilities are expanding and waiting lists still exist at some of the most established schools. Yet beneath this apparent growth lie deep structural pressures that school leaders, and parents, would be wise to understand.

Demographic headwinds: fewer children, ageing society

Thailand is now one of the fastest-ageing societies in Asia. According to data from the World Bank, Thailand's fertility rate has fallen to around 1.0 children per woman, far below the replacement level of 2.1. In 2023, the country recorded fewer than 500,000 births, while deaths exceeded births for the first time in modern history. The United Nations projects that by 2050 nearly one-third of Thailand's population will be over the age of 60. As a result, some commentators have characterised Thailand as the "sick man of ASEAN", a label that reflects not only its rapidly ageing population but also its economic slowdown following decades of rapid growth, particularly when compared with faster-growing regional neighbours such as Vietnam and the Philippines.

A paradox of growth

Paradoxically, the international school sector continues to expand. According to market analysis reported in the Bangkok Post, the number of international schools in Thailand has risen steadily over the past decade, with enrolments growing even as the overall school-age population declines. Several factors may explain this resilience: Middle- and upper-income Thai families increasingly seek English-medium education. International curricula are perceived as providing smoother pathways to overseas universities. Expatriate mobility linked to the Eastern Economic Corridor and tourism hubs continues to generate demand. However, this growth is uneven. Premium schools with established reputations remain strong; newer or mid-tier schools face rising competition and thinner margins.

Economic pressures: slow growth and housing risk

Demography is not the only concern. Thailand's economic growth has been relatively modest in recent years. The International Monetary Fund has forecast comparatively slow GDP growth relative to regional peers, while household debt remains high, close to 90% of GDP. Meanwhile, the property sector has shown signs of strain. Reports in The Nation highlight hundreds of thousands of unsold condominium units nationwide. While "bubble" is a strong word, oversupply combined with weaker demand creates fragility. For families, this means affordability pressure. International school fees, often ranging from 300,000 to over 800,000+ baht per year, represent a significant long-term commitment. In uncertain economic conditions, enrollment decisions become more cautious.

Potential future pressures

Looking ahead, several trends may intensify:

Increased competition from bilingual and private Thai schools offering international-style programmes at lower cost.

Market consolidation, particularly among schools without clear identity or strong governance.

Greater scrutiny of value for money, with parents expecting transparent outcomes and strong pastoral care.

Workforce challenges, as recruiting and retaining high-quality international teachers becomes more expensive.

What can schools do?

While these pressures are real, they are not insurmountable. Strategic schools can adapt.

Clarify identity and purpose

Schools must articulate clearly what distinguishes them. Is it academic excellence, holistic development, wellbeing, university pathways or community ethos? In a crowded market, generic messaging is no longer sufficient.

Strengthen value transparency

Parents are making high-stakes financial decisions. Schools should publish destination data, examination results and enrichment outcomes openly. Clear communication builds trust.

Broaden access thoughtfully

Flexible fee structures, scholarships and sibling discounts can widen the potential applicant pool without diluting standards. Partnerships with local industry may also support bursary provision.

Invest in teacher development

High-quality teaching remains the strongest differentiator. In competitive times, sustained professional development and strong safeguarding culture matter more than impressive buildings.

Diversify revenue streams

Summer programmes, adult education, facility hire and partnerships with overseas institutions can provide resilience beyond core tuition fees.

Plan for demographic reality

Long-term campus expansion decisions should be grounded in realistic population forecasts. Growth assumptions based solely on past trends may be misleading.

Thailand's international schools are operating in a complex and evolving environment. Demographic decline and economic fragility will shape the next decade. Yet schools that are agile, values-driven and financially prudent can not only survive but flourish.

For parents in Pattaya and beyond, the key question is not simply which school is newest or largest, but which one is most sustainable, principled and prepared for Thailand's changing future.

By James Kemp Deputy Head of Mooltripakdee International School



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MUDDY HANDS, MEANINGFUL LEARNING

Rugby School Thailand is the first and only officially recognised Archimedes Forest School in Thailand.

We spoke to Sarah Shuttleworth, Head of Pre-Prep, to find out why it's such a powerful part of education.



WHAT IS FOREST SCHOOL?

Forest School is a child-centred approach to learning that takes place in a natural woodland environment. It is not "playing outside" – it is a carefully structured programme led by trained practitioners, designed to develop confidence, resilience, independence, creativity, and a deep connection with nature over time.

HOW IS FOREST SCHOOL DIFFERENT FROM NORMAL OUTDOOR LEARNING?

Many schools use outdoor spaces, which is wonderful. Forest School, however, follows a specific philosophy and framework. Sessions are regular, long-term and build progressively. Children are encouraged to take supported risks- whether that's using tools, building dens or exploring uneven terrain- helping students develop problem-solving skills and self-belief. The emphasis is on process rather than product; there is no single 'right' outcome. It is a time for exploration and thinking 'outside the box'.

HOW DOES THIS BENEFIT CHILDREN?

The impact is profound. We see improved communication skills, stronger teamwork, greater perseverance and enhanced emotional wellbeing. Children learn to assess risk, collaborate and think in different ways. Importantly, they also experience awe and wonder first-hand. Something increasingly rare in a digital world.

HOW AND WHEN DO CHILDREN USE FOREST SCHOOL?

Schools who truly embrace Forest School build it into the curriculum with regular timetabled sessions. It is also used for enrichment activities and exciting projects that ignite a passion for learning in the real world. It is not an 'add-on', but a valued extension of how the curriculum is approached where muddy hands often mean meaningful learning.

WHY ARE INITIATIVES LIKE FOREST SCHOOL SO IMPORTANT NOW?

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Large Language Models (LLMs) are reshaping which skills will be most valued in the future. Creativity, the ability to think differently, and the application of problem-solving skills in real-world contexts are increasingly essential. Forest School provides a powerful way for students to begin developing these skills. As an educator with over 20 years' experience, I have seen first-hand the impact Forest School can have. Children thrive outdoors, gaining confidence, curiosity, and independence, and they carry this renewed inspiration and motivation back into the classroom.



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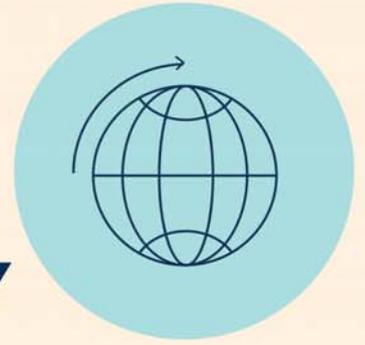
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ล้าลึกถึงรูขุมขน

Deep Clean Plasmalis Now Available at Special Trial Price By Gloria Jones

Plasmalis is a modern, non-invasive skin treatment that gently refreshes and deeply cleanses the skin. It works using plasma energy to ionize oxygen (O₂) and water (H₂O) in the air and create active ingredients: Ozone (O₃) Hydrogen peroxide (H₂O₂) and Hydroxyl (OH). However, don't let the science put you off, what this really means is that it exfoliates dead skin cells without scrubbing, kills acne-causing bacteria, yeast, and fungus, controls oily skin and clears out the pores. It's great for removing dull surface skin, calming congestion, minimising pores, and giving your skin an instant brightness boost.

Because there are no strong chemicals involved, it's usually suitable for sensitive skin too, and it can be used on areas like the face, neck, back, arms. The treatment is also amazing for really supere-cleaning the skin as the hydrogen peroxide produced during the process helps clear bacteria and fungus from the skin.

This is important as whether this occurs on your face, back, or elsewhere on the body, if left untreated, can lead to skin issues like dermatitis, so it's great knowing your skin is being properly cleansed.

What I loved about Plasmalis after having tried the treatment myself, is how effective it is without feeling harsh. After just one session, my skin looked fresher and more radiant and there was no downtime at all. The treatment itself takes around 30 minutes, and at Nicha Clinic it's made even more enjoyable with the most incredible facial massage beforehand.

The whole experience feels extremely relaxing. I really enjoyed it mainly because it was completely painless and felt like the very top layer of my skin was being gently refined. Another big bonus is how much better your skincare works afterwards. Once the skin is clean and refreshed, your creams, serums, and lotions absorb far more effectively. It honestly feels like dusting a table before you polish it. Everything just works better once the surface is clean and I found my face glowing and skin really smooth - I will certainly have it again.



084-292-4795

Nicha Clinic Pattaya
202/105-106 Moo 9, Nongprue
Banglamung, Chonburi 20150



Plasmalis Promotion

when you mention Discover Pattaya Magazine

Trial price 890.-/time

> Special package 7,900/ 10 times

> Combo with Total Radiance 3,500.-

“ I USED TO HAVE KNEE PAIN and a catching sensation every time I walked

due to boxing training and exercise. But after receiving PRP treatment at Taara Clinic, the knee pain and catching sensation have significantly improved. I'm now able to return to exercising normally. ”

Khun Yodsaenklai, a professional Muay Thai fighter.



TAARA MEDICAL CLINIC www.taara.clinic

033-003112 ,
063- 917 3777



ASIAN OPTICAL

When did you last have your eyes tested?



Like regular trips to the dentist having your eye tested is something we often forget to do and yet we should get them checked at least once a year.

There are many opticians in Pattaya and quite often on our Facebook sites Pattaya Trader - Discover Pattaya and Pattaya Trader Expat Ladies Group we are asked to give recommendations. Asian Optical on Pratumnak Soi 4 is the only one we recommend. This is because unlike some other opticians that are little more than shops selling glasses in Pattaya Asian Optical can give you a proper eye test and they also have a fantastic selection of frames, lenses and contact lenses.



Contact Khun Charn for an appointment
091 7499965 and remember that if you wear
contact lenses you need to take them out at least 3
hours before you are due to take your test.
FB Asian Optical email V_impress@hotmail.com
Soi 4, Pratumnak, Pattaya, Chon Buri
Telephone 081 001 0418, 0822151709
ID Line Kamol Meng



What Is a Vampire Facial?

by Gloria Jones



A Vampire Facial, clinically known as a platelet-rich plasma facial, is a cosmetic treatment that uses your own blood to stimulate collagen production and rejuvenate the skin. The procedure promises smoother texture, brighter tone, and a naturally youthful appearance, without surgery or synthetic fillers. If you're considering trying a PRP facial in Pattaya, Taara Medical Clinic is well worth a visit. Especially if, like me, you're not exactly a fan of needles.

From the very beginning, the team focuses on making the experience as comfortable and pain-free as possible, which makes all the difference. They start by drawing a couple of test tubes of blood from your arm. That blood is then placed into a centrifuge, where it is spun rapidly to separate its components. What emerges is platelet-rich plasma (PRP), a golden liquid packed with growth factors and proteins essential for tissue repair and cell regeneration. Platelets are best known for their role in blood clotting, but they also send powerful signals that stimulate collagen production, increase cell turnover, and encourage the formation of new blood vessels. Once the PRP is ready, attention turns to the skin.

Before anything else, a topical numbing cream is applied across the face and left to work for around 30 minutes, significantly reducing discomfort. Dr Patrick then injects the PRP into targeted areas using an ice press to further soothe the skin. For more sensitive zones, microneedling is done via a device fitted with ultra-fine needles that create tiny, controlled punctures in the skin. This dual approach works in two ways: it triggers the skin's natural healing response while also allowing the PRP to penetrate deeper into the dermis. After microneedling, the remaining PRP is applied directly to the skin and gently massaged in, maximising absorption.

The name "vampire facial" comes from the fact that the procedure is carried out with the patient's own blood. The upside of this? A greatly reduced risk of allergic reaction or rejection. You're quite literally using your own platelets to create targeted improvements in your skin. However, despite this intimidating name, the treatment is generally well tolerated. Over the weeks following the procedure, collagen production increases and cell renewal accelerates. The results aren't instant, but they are natural-looking and progressive. Many patients notice improved firmness, a more radiant complexion, and a reduction in fine lines, scars, and dark spots as time goes on.

The entire session takes around 60 minutes, and there is relatively little down time. It is important to only use a qualified Dr for the procedure and what sets Dr Patrick apart from other clinics, is his attention to aftercare. Too often, beauty treatments end with little guidance, leaving clients unsure of what to do next. After a vampire facial, aftercare is crucial. Avoiding sun exposure for at least 48 hours is obvious, but less obvious is the importance of leaving your skin completely alone. That means no makeup and no skincare products immediately after treatment. Dr Patrick advised me to avoid touching my face overnight, then gently cleanse the next morning using bottled or drinking water, as tap water may not be ideal. Only later the following evening should skincare products be reintroduced.

PRP facials help repair the skin by stimulating collagen production, which in turn smooths wrinkles, improves texture, and increases elasticity. As we age, our bodies produce less collagen which can lead to sagging, fine lines, and wrinkles, so by encouraging collagen regeneration, PRP offers a way to slow and soften these signs. In essence, the vampire facial is a modern blend of beauty and science. By working with your body rather than against it, it offers a refined, natural approach to skin rejuvenation—one that heals, restores, and improves over time rather than overnight.

Because the treatment uses your own blood, there is virtually no risk of allergic reaction and it is also minimally invasive, with little to no downtime. During the procedure I only felt a light pricking sensation as the fine needles went into my skin, but overall the procedure is relatively pain-free. Beyond aesthetics, Taara Medical Clinic offers PRP for a variety of regenerative medicine treatments. For example to help reduce chronic inflammation in tendons, ligaments, and muscles, and even to treat osteoarthritis. **Make an appointment with Dr Patrick today for a free consultation phone 033-003112 or 063-917 3777**

What's on The Small Screen



Ryan Gosling, Milana Vayntrub, Ken Leung

After waking up with amnesia on a spacecraft light-years from home, middle-school teacher Ryland Grace must use his scientific ingenuity to find a way to save a dying Sun from an extinction-level threat. Along the way, he navigates the memories of his past and forms an unlikely alliance with a mysterious companion to prevent a global catastrophe.



Hoppers

Jon Hamm, Piper Curda, Bobby Moynihan

A 19-year-old animal lover named Mabel "hops" her consciousness into a lifelike robotic beaver to infiltrate the animal kingdom.



If I had legs I'd Kick You

Rose Byrne, Conan O'Brien, Delaney Quinn

Linda is a fraying psychotherapist struggling to care for her daughter (Delaney Quinn), who suffers from a chronic illness.



Reminders of Him

Bradley Whitford, Maika Monroe, Lauren Graham

After serving five years in prison for a tragic mistake, Kenna Rowan returns to her hometown seeking redemption and a chance to reunite with her young daughter.



The Bride

Jake Gyllenhaal, Christian Bale, Jessie Buckley

In 1930s Chicago, a lonely Frankenstein's monster enlists the help of a radical scientist to resurrect a murdered young woman as his companion.

What's on The Big Screen



Scarpetta

Nicole Kidman, Jamie Lee Curtis, Ariana DeBose

Brilliant forensic pathologist Dr. Kay Scarpetta (Nicole Kidman) returns to her Virginia hometown to resume her former role and track a serial killer, all while navigating a fraught relationship with her sister, Dorothy.



One Piece: Season 2

Iñaki Godoy, Emily Rudd, Mackenyu

Monkey D. Luffy and crew cross into the treacherous Grand Line, where they navigate bizarre islands and face off against the a criminal syndicate.



Marshals: Season 1

Luke Grimes, Arielle Kebbel, Ash Santos

Following the events of Yellowstone, Kayce Dutton leaves the ranch behind to join an elite unit of U.S. Marshals



For all Mankind: Season 5

Joel Kinnaman, Michael Dorman, Sarah Jones

Set in the 2010s, Season 5 follows the thriving Happy Valley colony as it asserts its independence following the Goldilocks asteroid heist.



Young Sherlock

Hero Fiennes Tiffin, Zine Tseng, Holly Cattle

A disgraced 19-year-old Sherlock Holmes finds himself at the center of a murder mystery at Oxford University that threatens his freedom.



BEAT THE HEAT

Torras Coolify Cyber



The Torras Coolify Cyber is a flagship wearable air conditioner designed for the intense Thai summer. Unlike basic fans, it uses three thermoelectric cooling modules and a graphene surface to lower skin temperature by up to 20°C almost instantly. With its 360° airflow, sweat-drying back vents, and a 6,000mAh battery for all-day use, it creates a personal "bubble" of cold air that makes outdoor sightseeing comfortable even in the peak March sun.

Hidrate Spark PRO Smart Water Bottle

The HidrateSpark PRO is an essential tool for staying safe in the intense Thai heat, keeping water ice-cold for 24 hours with its vacuum-insulated stainless steel design. Its smart LED sensor puck glows to remind you to drink, automatically syncing with an app that adjusts your hydration goals based on local weather data and activity levels. This "no-sweat" bottle provides a critical line of defense against heat exhaustion by ensuring you stay perfectly hydrated while exploring.



JisuLife Handheld Fan Pro1 S

The JisuLife Handheld Fan Pro1 S is a high-performance tool built to cut through thick Thai humidity. Its 15,000 RPM motor delivers "hurricane" wind speeds of 9m/s—far stronger than typical portable fans—while a stepless scroll wheel lets you precisely adjust between 1 and 100 speed levels. Encased in a premium aluminum alloy body with a smart LED display, it provides a high-velocity blast that accelerates sweat evaporation for instant relief in crowded night markets or during long commutes.



Omius Cooling Headband

The Omius Cooling Headband is a professional-grade cooling accessory that uses advanced materials science rather than batteries to beat the intense Thai sun. It features 20 replaceable graphite cooling pieces that sit directly against your forehead, increasing your skin's evaporative surface area by 500%. By simply keeping the headband wet with water or sweat, the porous graphite pulls heat away from your body and evaporates it rapidly into the air, creating a consistent "refrigerated" sensation. This is especially effective for high-humidity environments like Thailand, as the technology provides a sustained local cooling effect that lowers your perceived exertion, making long walks through outdoor markets or morning runs along the coast much more manageable.





Eggs are one of the most useful things on Earth. They're cheap, portable, packed with nutrition, and somehow involved in about 70% of human cooking. If aliens landed tomorrow and asked what runs our planet, we'd have to admit "money, wi-fi... and eggs."

Because eggs don't just do one job. They do everything. They can be breakfast, lunch, dinner, dessert, a snack, a binding agent, a thickener or a meal-saving miracle. Eggs are the most efficient "I have nothing in the house" solution. The egg is the king of emergency meals, because eggs don't need a plan, eggs are the plan. Eggs actually make other foods behave. You crack an egg into a bowl and it immediately takes control of the situation pulling random ingredients together. Eggs are nature's instant upgrade button. They can turn boring food into better food with almost insulting ease.



Rice becomes egg fried rice, bread becomes French toast, noodles become carbonara. Eggs are nutrition in a shell, basically a compact package including protein, healthy fats, vitamins and energy. Eggs demand respect. They'll reveal your skill level instantly. If you can make perfect scrambled eggs, you're probably emotionally stable. If you can poach an egg, you're basically a wizard. If you can make an omelette, you deserve a certificate. Eggs are so useful because they're versatile, affordable, nutritious, fast and extremely useful.



So, one day I thought to myself, why has no-one written a song about what amounts to the most popular food on the planet? OK then, I'll do it and the title will be the saying ... 'Eggs Is Eggs'. What subsequently comes to mind is chickens laying eggs (of course the chicken came first) and the various many ways to use eggs in cooking or, indeed, as they come, boiled, scrambled, poached, fried, etc.. So fresh farm eggs were in my mind as I wrote and produced the track leading me to opt for a tractor as percussion, replacing the usual drums.

After asking around, your glorious editor, Gloria (see what I did there?), suggested she knew someone who could provide said tractor. None other than Carey & Tina from Kobb & Co restaurant who had a pristine Lambourgini tractor parked at their venue.

'Yee-ha' and away we went, with them kindly lending the vehicle for an appearance in the subsequent music video. I gathered together some friends and we had much fun performing my new eggs song with Tina cooking and dishing up different styles for us to all enjoy. The resulting eggs-ellent edited video can be viewed on YouTube ... Barry Upton – Eggs Is Eggs. How very eggs-iting. (insert your own puns here).

I have also filmed a few more episodes of BAZZA's BEACHWALKS for YouTube featuring some interesting and unique guests. Please check them out.



TWO ENGLISH SPEAKING RADIO STATIONS IN PATTAYA

88.25FM

www.pattayapeople.com



&

90.75 FM

Rotary

Radio



What has been for many years the very popular pop station 96FM, has now changed frequencies to 88.25FM - PATTAYA PEOPLE RADIO. This is because new Thai licensing arrangements have been brought in from the start of 2026. Frequencies had to be bid for and CEO Niels Colov was triumphant in successfully obtaining the only two available for English speaking stations in Pattaya.

So 88.25FM - PATTAYA PEOPLE RADIO is the same, same, but different mix of fun/upbeat/singalong/pop/rock/oldies, but now at a new frequency.

Online remains – www.pattayapeople.com

The other frequency, 90.75FM has been allotted to ROTARY RADIO under the umbrella of Pattaya People Media Group. ROTARY RADIO is now operational around Pattaya on 90.75FM and online at rotarypattaya.com/rotaryradio. 90.75 - ROTARY RADIO has an original concept which will not only entertain, but seeks to inform about Rotary clubs from all over the Pattaya region and, hopefully, beyond. The thought is that by having a one stop centre where people can learn about Rotary and it's many fund raising events, the city and individual Rotary clubs can benefit from 24 hour, 7 days a week radio exposure.

Rotary Radio features a much more 'easy listening'/'soft rock' vibe with artists such as Steely Dan, America, Fleetwood Mac, The Eagles, Chicago, James Taylor, Joni Mitchell, The Carpenters, Bread, Carole King, Cat Stevens, Enya, Jazz, Soul and Country classics with additional love song ballads from the Beatles and The Beach Boys. The station logo ident is 'Rotary Radio - Cool Music For Cool People'.

In between the wonderful relaxing music will be voice idents from Rotary members, useful information about Rotary in general plus details of upcoming events.



The Rotary Club of Pattaya is extending a hand of friendship to all other Rotary clubs in the area and it's very much hoped that they will respond by contributing to the radio output with events, personal voice idents about themselves and any relevant issues which can educate a wider public to the benefits of Rotary and the good deeds the organization provides. This is indeed, a project for our local community and beyond.

Both stations and playlists are supervised by radio production manager Barry Upton. He's maintained the popular sunshine mix on 88.25 - PATTAYA PEOPLE RADIO.

UPDATE: At the top of each hour on both stations is a worldwide news summary from FSN except for 8am and 6pm when the Thai National Anthem plays. So, we can all now enjoy two English speaking stations in Pattaya with two contrasting personalities.



ACCOUNTING FOR SUSTAINABILITY

CHAPTER 5 — Evaluating Quality of Business Growth, Goodwill, and Impairment

by Siriyothin Accounting & Law Firm

In the previous chapter, we discussed the advantages and disadvantages of organic versus inorganic growth. In this chapter, we will explore how to evaluate the quality of growth—beyond simply looking at headline figures—as well as the concepts of Goodwill and Goodwill Impairment.

Evaluating the Quality of Growth

1. Income vs. Collection

Key Question: Are we truly earning our revenue, or are we just “buying” it?

Monitoring Approach:

Compare revenue growth with the average debt collection period, commonly measured as Days Sales Outstanding (DSO).

- A high or rising DSO suggests overly long credit terms or excessive credit flexibility.
- This increases exposure to bad debt risk, meaning the revenue growth may not be sustainable or may not convert into real cash.

2. Profit Margin

Key Question: Where is our growth coming from?

Monitoring Approach:

Analyze income growth relative to profit margin.

- If profit margins decrease while revenue increases, it may indicate that growth depends on heavy discounting or low-margin sales.
- Such growth may be unsustainable, especially if it sacrifices long-term profitability for short-term volume.

3. ESG and Sustainability

New Perspective:

Growth achieved at the expense of Environmental (E), Social (S), or Governance (G) standards is considered low-quality growth.

- Violations of environmental regulations
- Poor labor practices
- Weak governance or transparency

All of these expose the business to long-term risks, including regulatory penalties, reputation damage, and operational disruption.

Integrating ESG considerations ensures growth is not only strong, but also sustainable.

Goodwill and Impairment

Definition of Goodwill

Goodwill represents the excess of the purchase price over the fair value of net assets acquired in a merger or acquisition.

- It is not a physical asset.
- It reflects the expected future benefits from synergies, reputation, customer relationships, or other intangible advantages.
- However, these expectations cannot be directly proven, making Goodwill inherently uncertain.

Risks That Accountants Must Monitor

- Goodwill is not amortized, but it must undergo an annual impairment test.
- If the acquired business underperforms or fails to meet expectations, a Goodwill impairment loss must be recognized.
- An impairment essentially signals that the acquisition was too expensive or that projected benefits failed to materialize.

Therefore, growth analysis must look beyond revenue and consider whether acquisitions are generating real economic value.

Next Chapter Preview

In the next chapter, we will analyze Capital Expenditure (CAPEX) and Free Cash Flow, two major tools for evaluating long-term financial sustainability.

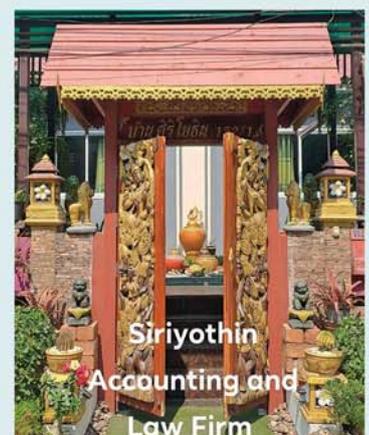
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Jomtien Beach Road Pattaya

Tel. 080-4432899

Email: sampattaya2020@gmail.com



SUDOKU MARCH 2026

SOLUTIONS ARE ON PAGE 49

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OPEN 24 HOURS

GOOD FOOD FOR GOOD HEALTH



PATTAYA-KLANG 0 3836 0171
PATTAYA- TERMINAL 21 0 3325 2000

IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

The Pattaya City Center 1337 then 9 for English



Emergency Hotline: 191
Pattaya Police Station: Soi 9
038 420 - 802
Tourist Police 1155



Fire & Rescue 199
Pattaya Fire Station
038 425 943



General Emergency 191 or 911
Bangkok Pattaya 038 259 999
Pattaya international 038 428 374
Pattaya Memorial 038 488 777



Electricity Pattaya
038 426 463
Water 1416 Press 9
For English
Garbage Collection
038 428 100



Airport Flight Information
Suvarnabhumi (02) 132 1888
U-Tapao Airport 038 245 593



Traffic accidents
medical assistance 1669
Highway Police 1193

SOLUTIONS

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Common Legal Mistakes Expats Make in Thailand

by Anthony Justice

Thailand is easy to fall in love with. The beaches, the food, the cost of living, the relaxed lifestyle—it's no surprise so many expats choose to build a life here. But from my experience overseeing foreign clients across Thailand, I can tell you this: the relaxed lifestyle does not mean relaxed laws.

Most expats who end up in legal trouble are not reckless. They're simply unaware. And unfortunately, "I didn't know" doesn't carry much weight under Thai law. Here are the most common legal mistakes I see—and how you can avoid making the same costly errors.

1. Treating Visa Rules Casually

Overstaying "just a few days" may not seem serious. In Thailand, it is. Immigration laws are strictly enforced. Even short overstays can lead to fines, blacklisting, or deportation—especially for repeat offenders.

Set calendar alerts. Apply for extensions early. Avoid questionable visa agents promising "easy fixes." Immigration compliance should be treated seriously.

2. Buying Property the Wrong Way

Thailand's property laws are very clear: foreigners can legally own condominiums (within the 49% foreign quota of a project), but generally cannot own land in their personal name. Yet I regularly meet expats who "buy" land or a house in a Thai partner's name, assuming trust is enough. When relationships change—or disputes arise—they discover they legally own nothing. If you want security, structure it properly. If entering into more complex arrangements, get proper legal documentation. Never sign contracts you don't fully understand. Trust is good. Legal protection is better.

3. Working Without the Proper Visa or Permit

This is one of the fastest ways to get into serious trouble.

Many expats offer consulting, coaching, teaching, or even online services while holding a tourist or retirement visa. Some assume remote work "doesn't count." It does. Operating a business or working in Thailand without the correct visa and work permit can lead to fines, deportation, or criminal charges. If you're earning income while residing in Thailand, get the correct structure in place—proper company registration, non-immigrant visa, and work permit. Cutting corners here is expensive in the long run.

4. Relying on Verbal Agreements

In Thailand, I often hear: "But we agreed verbally." Unfortunately, handshake deals don't stand up well in Thai courts.

This is common with landlords, contractors, and even business partners. When disputes arise, the lack of written contracts becomes a costly problem. Always get agreements in writing. Ideally bilingual (Thai and English). Keep receipts, emails, and copies of everything. For property or business matters, ensure documents are properly registered when required. Paperwork may seem like a hassle—but it's your safety net.

5. Misunderstanding Marriage, Divorce, and Custody Law

Family law is where emotions and legal reality often collide. Here are some frequent misconceptions:

- A wedding ceremony equals legal marriage. It does not. If it's not registered at the district office (Amphur), it has no legal standing.
- A foreign divorce automatically ends a Thai-registered marriage. Not necessarily—it must be recognized in Thailand.
- Being named on a birth certificate guarantees custody rights. For unmarried parents, the mother automatically has full custody unless the father legally legitimizes the child.

Thai courts prioritize the child's best interests—not nationality, income level, or passport strength.

If children or assets are involved, do not try to "handle it yourself." Get legal advice early. Understand marital property rules (community property is typically divided 50/50). Formalize custody arrangements through the court—not informal agreements. Family disputes become far more complicated when legal steps are skipped.

6. Facing Legal Disputes Alone

One of the costliest mistakes I see is expats engaging in disputes—business conflicts, landlord issues, police matters—without proper legal representation. Thai legal procedures may differ significantly from your home country. Missed deadlines or poorly drafted statements can permanently damage your case. Never sign police reports or settlement documents without understanding them. Always consult a qualified Thai lawyer when facing disputes.

Final Thoughts

Living in Thailand can be incredibly rewarding. But the key to long-term peace of mind isn't just enjoying the lifestyle—it's respecting the legal framework that supports it. Most legal disasters I encounter were preventable. A consultation before signing, registering, investing, or litigating is always cheaper than fixing a mistake afterward. Thailand welcomes expats—but it expects you to follow its rules. And in my experience, the expats who thrive here long-term are not the lucky ones. They're the informed ones.



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Savor Charlotte's Culinary & Cocktails: It's Worth a Trip to North Carolina USA

By Carla Marie Rupp With co-travel and food journalist Jason Rupp

The secret is out Charlotte “the Queen City,” its nickname, in the state of North Carolina, has reached international and media recognition as one of the world’s best food cities for culinary and cocktail creation. Many award-winning Charlotte chefs have taken foods in their restaurants to a whole other higher level using produce in season in innovative ways. Charlotte earned international recognition for the MICHELIN Guide American South, with 12 MICHELIN-recommended restaurants in 2025.

Food & Wine Magazine states that Charlotte is among the most exciting up-and-coming cities in the U.S, and Southern Living magazine has said Charlotte is “leading the charge” for North Carolina's restaurant scene. Over 100 new restaurants opened in Charlotte in the last year, a huge amount. One of them, Albertine, with Chef Joe Kindred, was named by Eater magazine as the “Best New Restaurant in 2025.” It continues to get raves with diners and is recommended to visit. Chef Chayil Johnson, from Community Matters Cafe is another important Chef we recently met at a James Beard Foundation event. The Foundation's motto is to “do good,” which is Johnson's aim as well. Customshop is also a Michelin-recommended Charlotte restaurant, with Chef Andres Kaifer.

We have been excited to meet some of the honored chefs and cocktail creators and try and enjoy what they make. So we'll let you in on the trending foodie city and what to do there and where to go. While we've been to Charlotte and its attractions, we heard a lot of updates at a special dinner event at the famous James Beard location, Platform JB inside Market 57, in New York City. Around a dozen chefs and cocktail professionals from Charlotte made us delicious food and creative drinks and told us what they do and how they serve visitors.

At our Charlotte evening—where Charlotte came to New York City—we learned that the ingredients for the dishes and drinks were carefully selected and brought north by vehicle to the big foodie event, while the chefs and tourism officials went by plane to the city. We could watch the food and cocktail pros at work in the James Beard kitchen and eat family-style and drink what they were making for us. It was an awesome experience for us food and travel writers. Courtesy of Bojangles Biscuits, a must-try in Charlotte, we first ate the scrumptious biscuits, made by Marshall Scarborough and Abby Riker, that you could top with sweet tea butter. Locals are called “Charlotteans,” and they rave about the biscuits; we can see why.

With coastal access to the water, many restaurants in Charlotte serve delicious seafood that includes crab cakes, gumbo and spicy shrimp. At our dinner, we had a new take on fresh flounder and scallops. The Scallop Tortellini made by Chef Brittany Cochran used North Carolina apple cream, pecan, sorghum and caramelized onion to make the appetizer extra tasty. She is a top chef at Charlotte's Stagioni Italian restaurant. Chef Callan Buckles made the Carolina Flounder dish with “Sumac beurre blanc and celeriac,” he said. The New York Times named Rada, where Callan is the popular chef, one of the top 50 restaurants in 2025.





Chef Sam Hart of the also-recommended Counter restaurant in Charlotte is the first Michelin-starred chef earning a star and a Green Star for his immersive tasting menu. Anthony Roldan also has gained Michelin recognition for dining experiences. Our recent dinner included squash and collard greens that never tasted so good in the vegetable dishes. The media colleague next to us relished them as much as we did. Also a staple of the Carolinas cuisine is, of course, barbeque; with top Chef Chris Coleman a master at it. He impresses diners with his smoked North Carolina pork belly, with hash arancini, sour cabbage slaw and barbeque field peas, among other specialties.

The tasty North Carolina sweet potato mousse cake dessert was not like anything we've ever had, a favorite made by Counter restaurant Chef Faith Morley, using black pepper meringue and milk jam along with the sweet potatoes, a popular ingredient in the South. Another dessert featured was Tres Leches Freedom Cake, with red-white-and-blue layers, from Chef Manola Belancur, of Manola's Bakery, which USA Today newspaper has rated the #2 cake shop in the U.S. We were sent home delicious corn bread also made in Charlotte. Vivacious drink specialist Colleen Hughes, who won the 2025 MICHELIN exceptional Cocktails Award and works at Supperland in Charlotte, serves up the most beautiful, colorful and delicious drinks. The ingredients were shared with us for her non-alcoholic drink called Crown Town Spritz (NA). They included Lyres Italian Spritz and non-alcoholic sparkling wine, and garnished with an orange slice. Colleen names her red-colored alcoholic drink "It's Giving Queen," and it includes Sutler's American Dry Gin with genmaicha green tea, a cordial of strawberry, pandan, palm sugar and coconut, bergamat and lemon juices and sherry. Her drink is garnished with lemon and fresh strawberry.

Charlotte mixologist Justin Hazelton shared a few of his drink ingredients from the Charlotte dinner party event. His Uptown Cornball drink includes Southern Star Double Rye Whiskey, roasted corn sorghum, seltzer and black walnut bitters, and finished with black pepper and popcorn shoots. Justin's delicious non-alcoholic drink specialty is called Carolina Spice, that used hibiscus, cinnamon, clove, allspice, tumeric, habanero and lime, all ingredients good for one's health. Definitely, the Charlotte bar Lorem Ipsum, where he works, is recommended: Esquire Magazine named it among the 15 Best Bars in America in 2025. As Chowhound magazine said, "Charlotte is rapidly expanding its reputation as a city worth visiting for the food." We hope to try some of these restaurants in Charlotte. Besides eating at some of the great restaurants, visitors can try an array of attractions. They can fly into the Charlotte airport. There are seven major air carriers, and nonstop air service with more than 188 destinations around the world.

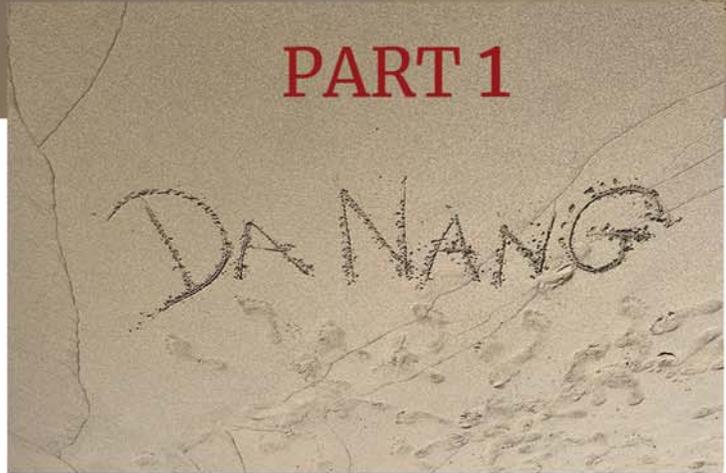
For Charlotte food info, see www.savorcharlotte.com and [@charlottesgotalot](https://www.instagram.com/charlottesgotalot) on Instagram. Also charlottesgotalot.com. Jason Rupp and Carla Marie Rupp are travel journalists reached at their emails of jasonrupp@gmail.com and carlaruppy@gmail.com.



TRAVELS TO VIETNAM

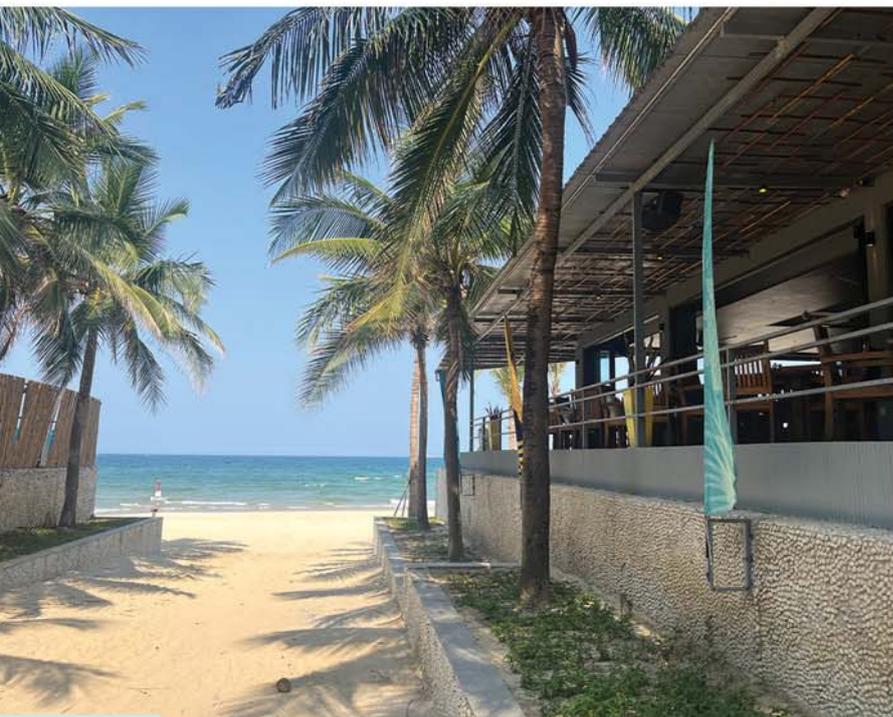


By Gloria Jones



Vietnam is fast becoming a must-see destination and one of the most desirable places to visit in Southeast Asia. Its rich natural beauty, diverse cultural heritage, and remarkably affordable food, accommodation, and transportation form a winning combination. Fueled in part by a shift in Chinese outbound travel, Vietnam has also been rapidly upgrading its infrastructure to support both locals and visitors, attracting investment into hotels, resorts, transport connectivity, and attractions, as well as access roads, seaports, and airports.

Year on year, foreign arrivals to Vietnam increased by 20.4 percent as of December 2025, and with Da Nang just 1 hour and 40 minutes from Bangkok’s Don Mueang International Airport, it felt like an obvious place to visit. So, in this first article of a series about my travels in Vietnam, let me say upfront that I wholeheartedly recommend visiting this extraordinary and fascinating country. Perhaps it might even inspire your next Songkran break.



My first impression of Da Nang was its amazing beach. Stretching for miles, it gives the city a distinctly Miami-style vibe, with great restaurants and beach clubs lining the waterfront.

Getting to the beach, however, can be an adventure in itself. It runs parallel to a very busy road, and crossing it requires a certain amount of courage. You can’t hesitate, slow down, speed up, or – worst of all – stop halfway across.

The trick is to “take the bull by the horns”: find a gap, step confidently into the traffic, and walk at a steady, consistent pace. The traffic — mostly motorbikes — will weave around you. It’s unsettling at first, but I quickly learned that crossing with locals and copying their approach helps. Alternatively, there’s always the Grab app, which offers very reasonably priced taxis and a far less hazardous option.



In fact, prices throughout Vietnam are generally very reasonable — once you get your head around the currency. The Vietnamese dong is worth around 0.0012 of a Thai baht, meaning that USD \$10 converts to roughly 259,638 VND. It's easy to feel like a millionaire when you visit an ATM (and there are plenty), though it's still advisable to carry some cash for smaller stalls and vendors.

Another Da Nang landmark worth mentioning is the Dragon Bridge, which spans the Han River and connects the beach area with the city centre. Inspired by the Ly Dynasty symbol of power and prosperity, the bridge is famous for its weekend night shows, when the dragon breathes fire and water, illuminated by colourful LED lights. Tourists and locals alike gather to watch the spectacle before heading off for a beer or coffee nearby.





And speaking of coffee — Vietnamese salt coffee, or cà phê muối, deserves special mention. It pairs strong Vietnamese coffee with a lightly salted cream foam. While you might expect it to taste salty, the salt actually enhances the sweetness and softens the bitterness of the coffee. With strong brewed coffee at the base and airy cream on top, there's no single "official" recipe. The cream can be made from heavy cream and condensed milk, fresh milk and condensed milk, or even with a touch of cream cheese for extra richness and tang. I found it completely addictive — one is definitely not enough. Almost like a dessert in a cup, it's creamy, indulgent, and still delivers a serious caffeine kick. There are also coconut and egg coffee variations, but more on those when I write about Hanoi.

I really love going to the beach but if that isn't your thing there's plenty of natural beauty to explore in the hills surrounding Da Nang. To the west, Ba Na Hills is a mountain retreat accessed by one of the world's longest cable cars, carrying you through misty forests to the famous Golden Bridge, held aloft by giant stone hands. On the Son Tra Peninsula (also known as Monkey Mountain), you'll find the Linh Ung Pagoda, home to an enormous Lady Buddha statue. The Marble Mountains offer caves and tunnels carved into limestone hills, many of which house ancient shrines. I skipped these on this trip, as I had already booked an overnight train from Danang to Hanoi — more on that next month.

We stayed at the Grand Mercure Da Nang, which was first-rate — and featured the best chair I've ever sat in. Shaped like a slice of melon, it was an ergonomic dream that I found very hard to get out of. I eventually managed, though, to make it down to the hotel's excellent first-class buffet breakfast, which really sets you up for the day.

The Grand Mercure Da Nang is located at:
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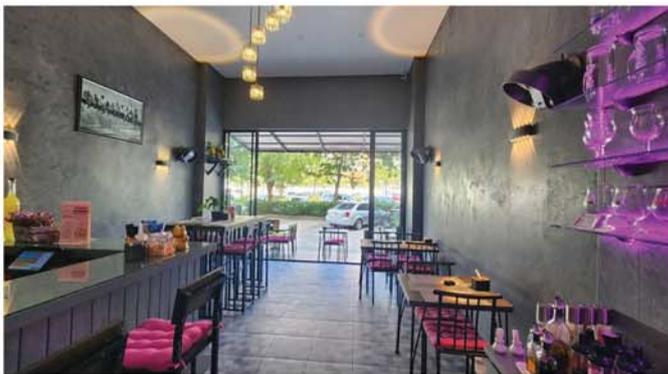
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